

United Canadian Army Popular, Veterans Say

Ottawa, April 29 (CP).—Transfer of the 1st Canadian Corps from Italy to the Western Front was a "great morale booster," said veteran Canadian fighting men from the Mediterranean who have arrived in the Dominion, but that was nothing to the boost in morale these men had when they were whisked from the Western Front to Canada on leave.

Almost 600 of these Italy front veterans returned to Canada, along with hundreds of other fighting men back on compassionate leave, home for discharge and re-entry in civilian life, on tri-wound leave or to take new posts in Canada after duty abroad.

The largest single group of Canadian Forestry Corps men yet to return from jobs well done in the Scottish timberlands. Not the least important job they did was providing timber for construction of huge floats which played their part in the invasion, while some of their product found its way into bridges thrown across the Rhine by Canadian and Allied engineers.

The returning foresters, headed by Major James S. Scott of Fredericton and Major Ernest R. Allen of Hamilton, were made up of men whose medical category had been lowered below overseas requirements. Other members of the corps are chopping their way through the forests of Belgium, Holland and Germany.

Reunion Was Popular

Men of the Canadian 1st and 5th divisions who had slogged it out through the campaigns of Sicily and Italy were "pleased as punch" by the move that reunited them with their comrades on the Western Front. They had a keen ear for the latest war news, and felt that Germany was just about as good as licked, in fact, "it's just a matter of days."

Their transfer from the dreary, grinding Italian campaign was just "like a shot in the arm," as Major B. A. Smith, Montreal officer of the 4th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards phrased it.

"The fellows in Italy felt they weren't getting the proper credit after the invasion of France," said Col. A. T. Patterson, DSO of Montreal, summing up the chief reason for the men's happiness over their transfer. They were buoyed up over the prospect of getting in on the final mop-up of the house of Nazion.

In the latest contingent of returning Canadians were a number of airmen, CWAC's, RCAF Women's Division girls, nursing sisters and physiotherapists, and a group of Canadian firefighters.

Major Heathcote Home

Major Eric Thomas Heathcote of Toronto, senior historical officer at Canadian Military Headquarters in London, returned with the group on a brief tour of duty. He will confer with the Historical Section of National Defense Headquarters on the possibility of wider distribution in Canada of paintings and drawings by official war artists who covered the troops in action.

Major Heathcote termed the work of Canada's nine official war artists as "tops," and said Canada is "getting the best coverage of any troops in the British Empire."

Among the last Canadians to leave Italy was Lt-Col. V. W. Mills, DSO, of Calgary, formerly adjutant-general at No. 2 Echelon in North Africa and Italy.

He first went overseas in October, 1939, with the advance group to Canadian Military Headquarters.

Major Gershow Levi of Montreal, first Jewish chaplain appointed to the Canadian Army, returned to confer with officials in Ottawa. He had been on the Western front.

One of the returning nursing sisters had been with the South African Army after volunteering three years ago. She was Mary Colledge of St. Thomas.

149
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