

## The Padre



From over 3,000 years ago, there is historical evidence pointing to the beginnings of military chaplaincy in the Roman legions. They believed that somehow the pagan gods were extremely important forces behind victory in combat, so it was usually the military general who also performed these religious duties. In Biblical times, the high priest Aaron was a religious figure who travelled together with the military, demonstrating the ancient roots of the chaplaincy.

During the Middle Ages, in the fourth century, the cloak of Saint Martin of Tours, (cappa Sancti Martini), one of the most sacred relics of the Frankish kings, was carried everywhere the king went, even into battle, as a holy relic upon which oaths were sworn. The clergyman who served as custodian for the cloak in its reliquary, and by extension, those who officiated in chapels and sanctuaries became known as *cappellāni*, eventually known as *Chapelain* in Old French, later borrowed into English as chaplain. This sacred relic gave its name to the tent and later to the simple oratory or chapel where it was preserved with the custodian elevated to an ordained member of the clergy.

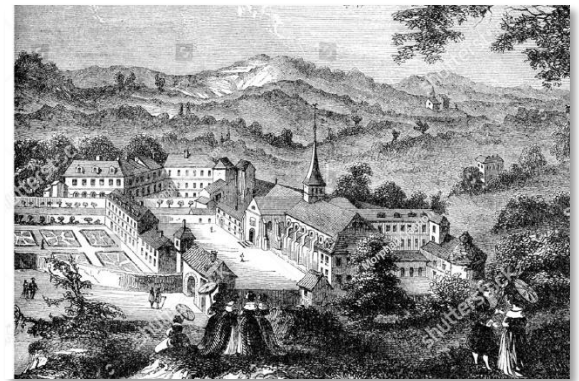


St. Martin of Tours' Cloak

Saint Louis was the king who gave legal status to the military chaplains, since chaplains serving under their lord in the Crusades were the first to be militarized. During Charlemagne's reign, his appointed cappellani lived within his royal palace, conducting mass for the King and created documents with the royal notaries.

The first English military-oriented chaplains were priests on board proto-naval vessels during the eighth century AD. Land based chaplains appeared during the reign of King Edward I, performing religious, medical and engineering duties. A priest attached to a feudal noble household would follow his liege lord into battle.

Before Canada was a country, military chaplains met the spiritual needs of soldiers and sailors. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Frobisher Expedition, Chaplain John Wollfall, on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1578 celebrated the first Anglican Eucharist aboard a Royal Navy ship in Baffin Bay. Immediately after the capture of Port Royal, Chaplain John Harrison held the first Anglican Devine Service in the French Chapel, on 10<sup>th</sup> Oct 1710, for his victorious Royal Navy sailors.(1)



Port Royal Engraving from 17<sup>th</sup> Century

In these early years, French and British chaplains who remained in Canada played a significant role in bringing Christianity to Canada. At first all chaplains to military forces stationed in Canada had to be members of the Church of England until 1802, after which other Christian faiths were invited to become chaplains.

A distinguished group of clergy made themselves available to support our military forces at the outbreak of the War of 1812, one of whom was the Reverend John Strachan who went on to become the first Lord Bishop of Toronto and who helped consecrate St. Paul's Cathedral London on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1944 in celebration of the Feast of Nativity of St. John the Baptist. These, and others like them, served well in their duties as chaplains; they gave comfort whenever they could, to the sick and wounded, and they also contributed significantly to the growth and culture of Upper Canada. (1)



Bishop John Strachan

The United States had declared war on Britain and her colonies twice, in 1776 and in 1812, so a military presence had been maintained in London, Ontario. With the Upper Canada Rebellion, better known as the Patriot War of 1838 with William Lyon Mackenzie amassing forces in the United States and attacking across several border points into Upper Canada and especially in force across the Detroit River, London soon became a British Army frontier strongpoint with rotating British regiments being garrisoned there. (2) The Reverend Benjamin Cronyn saw an opportunity for St. Paul's and applied for the chaplaincy of the army barracks. Church parades soon became a regular and colourful addition to the life of St. Paul's. The presence of the military contributed handsomely to the coffers of St. Paul's, weekly exceeding the civilian collections from the Parish. (3)



Rt. Rev Benjamin Cronyn  
Bishop of Huron

After Canada's Confederation in 1867, clergymen were eager to follow regiments during The Fenian Raids of 1866 and the Northwest Rebellion of 1885, as well as the Boer War, so the government was reluctant to create an official Canadian Chaplaincy, although there was much pressure from Canadian Churches of every denomination. The South African campaign confirmed that a chaplain's influence was directly proportional to the amount of danger and hardship they shared with the troops, and the provision of chaplaincy became an important consideration within the Canadian military from this time forward. (4)

In 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, one honorary chaplain was authorized for each battalion to provide spiritual and pastoral support, with the provision that no expense to the public would be incurred. This was the beginning of the current form of the Canadian military chaplaincy.

The Canadian military chaplains were honorary officers usually of the rank of Captain or above. They had no executive authority and were not required to bear weapons. As far back as recorded history attests, warriors have relied upon the support of their deities when they went into battle. Chaplains use what influence and authority they have on behalf of those who consult them or seek their advice. The chaplain's military career remains in the hands of the Chaplain Branch. A chaplain, because of his or her specific status, is one of the few military members whose career cannot be jeopardized when advising a unit Commanding Officer and is the one officer who can confront his commanding officer for non-ethical behavior. (5)

In 1914 Canada was only a Dominion, as it was still a colony of Great Britain. When the Mother Country became embroiled in war, the rest of the British Empire was expected to provide martial support. Canada immediately rose to the occasion and punched well above its weight in support of both materiel and manpower. As most Canadians had never experienced war, it was viewed by many as a great adventure, somewhat like a Kipling novel, not to be missed, with an expectation the war would be over within six months. Many who enjoyed the rich freedoms which Canada offered, were determined to help save Britain's allies from the jackboot of tyranny. Most Canadians were God-fearing members of churches. Many clergy were very supportive of their members serving 'King and Country' and many tried to join themselves, but Minister of Militia Sir Sam Hughes only initially authorized 33 clergy to serve overseas as chaplains with the first contingent at the Western Front in France. He also appointed an associate of his, the Reverend Richard Steacy, an Anglican priest from Ottawa, as the Director of the Canadian Chaplain Service.

No young man wanted to be the one left behind, especially in the midst of whole clubs and senior high school, college and university classes heading to the recruiting stations. Regiments like the 18<sup>th</sup> Western Ontario Battalion of 1150 soldiers and 45 officers, were stationed in London Ontario for 6 months training. The Anglican Priest, H/Capt Arthur Carlisle from All Saints



Major R.H. Steacy





Church in Windsor was their chaplain. St. Paul's Cathedral was their spiritual home until the 18<sup>th</sup> was mobilized to Britain on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1915.

At first, the use of chaplains was misunderstood by the Canadian Army resulting in official complaints being registered. Chaplains were being used to look after canteens and organize entertainment. Eventually these duties were handed over to auxiliary forces such as the YMCA and the chaplains moved forward into the front lines. Years of suffering and sorrow stripped away every personal disguise and every religious trapping. Denominational barriers faded as the chaplains called upon every spiritual resource that they could muster to meet the challenges of suffering and death. (6)

The Canadian Army realized that chaplains were particularly important in combat because the idea of the chaplain is both to bring the blessing of God to the cause of the army, but also to strengthen the fighting power, the morale, of individual soldiers and of providing the sacrament to soldiers who are prepared to kill other people and also soldiers who are risking being killed themselves – the idea that they go in a blessed state to their death. (7)

In Germany and Prussia the population was 95% Christian, so it is not surprising that they also had Christian and Jewish chaplains serving in their armies. Many Canadians wondered how two Christian nations could declare war on each other. The difficult question oft asked was, “Whose side is God on?” (8)



WWI German Army Christian Field Service

The First World War caused many to realize that the British Army had not kept pace with equipment and the tactics of the armies of Germany, Prussia and the Ottoman Empire. Most of the British Generals were using outdated tactics from previous wars. The devastating 1916 Battle of The Somme, resulted in the death of 60,000 British Expeditionary Force soldiers and

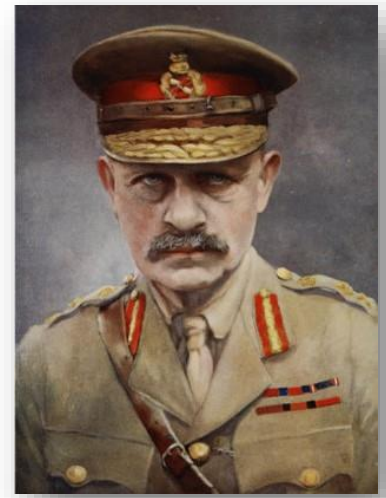


Canadian Padre with dead soldiers at the Somme battlefield

456,000 casualties. At first light on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, in the first 30 minutes, the 778-man strong Royal Newfoundland Regiment attacking from its trenches, almost shoulder to shoulder and became caught-up in barbed wire entanglements and was destroyed by German machine-guns, causing 710 casualties of which 324 were killed. In Newfoundland, their war dead are annually honoured on 1<sup>st</sup> July, Memorial Day and also in the name of Memorial University. The prevailing attitude of British military leaders continued to keep sending attacking wave after wave of soldiers and wear the enemy down through attrition. Some weary soldier was heard to quip that the generals in the rear would order another devastating attack, just to move their liquor cabinet 100 yards closer to the enemy.

By 1917 the war had been going poorly for the allies. Although they had stopped the advance of the Germans, there was widespread unrest in the French Army, with many soldiers refusing the near suicidal attacks demanded by their generals. An Allied Forces victory was sadly needed! The British Expeditionary Force (BEF in which the CEF was included) had a very robust component, the four-division strong Canadian Corps. At 100,000 men, it was at the strength of most British armies which had two or more corps in their makeup. The men of the Canadian Corps were extremely sturdy soldiers and many of the officers and men had worked side by side in civilian life, very different from the class distinction of the British Army. They had a deep respect and trust for each other. The officers bravely led from the front, instilling confidence and many would not order their men to do dangerous missions that they were not prepared to do themselves.

The Canadian Corps was commanded by the very accomplished unorthodox and daring British Lieutenant-General (LGen) Sir Julien Byng, (later to become Governor-General of Canada) and the commander of its 1st Canadian Division was Major General (MGen) Arthur Currie, born near Strathroy Ontario. Both men had one underlying belief in common and that was to ensure that not one of their men's lives would be needlessly sacrificed in any military operation. Medically, the Canadian Corps had the only soldiers on either side who received compulsory inoculations against disease as well as good dental care, both resulting in very



LGen Sir Julien Byng

low sick rates. The Corps had very efficient casualty dressing stations to treat the wounded before evacuation. LGen Byng sent MGen Currie to investigate with our French and British allies why the previous battles of the war, especially The Somme, had such poor outcomes. As a result, major innovations were made in the way that the Canadians conducted battle. Current weapons were modified, massive increases in the numbers of Vickers machine-guns per division, and experimental very effective indirect machine-gun fire, more artillery guns of every nature, new artillery 106 mm proximity fuzes for cutting enemy wire upon contact with the ground, scientifically pin-point accurate locating of enemy artillery to within 10 metres, new creeping barrage tactics to protect our attacking soldiers and the platoons now reorganized into self-contained combat teams, trained to immediately neutralize enemy machine gun posts, along with many more incredible tactics. Each soldier knew each other's job and were trained to immediately neutralize a strongpoint without waiting for orders to do so and for a first anywhere on the Western Front, every soldier had a battlefield map. Byng and Currie developed tram railways for quickly bringing up ammo and supplies, then used for speedy casualty evacuation to hospitals in the rear and often wounded soldiers being in England within one day of the battle. The Allies scoffed at these innovations, but after they were successfully demonstrated in battle with stunning results, they were quick to adopt the Canadian model.



MGen Arthur Currie



Canadian Corps Tram Railway



## Vimy Ridge

This was an eight-kilometer escarpment rising 470 feet above the plain below from which any allied movements could be viewed uninterrupted for many kilometers by the enemy. It had been occupied and well fortified with cement bunkers by the Germans and was the vital key to their Western Front defence. Two previous unsuccessful Allied attempts to take Vimy Ridge had resulted in 150,000 French casualties and in the last attempt the British had suffered 30,000 casualties. Vimy Ridge was believed to be impregnable by the BEF High Command but had to be taken! After the Somme Offensive, when LGen Byng stated emphatically that “*My Canadians can take Vimy Ridge!*”, he was eagerly given the objective, but the High Command did not believe that it could ever be done.

For four months the Canadian Corps trained, mostly far away from prying enemy eyes. They practised the ‘*Vimy Glide*’, hugging the protection of a creeping barrage, while advancing and keeping pace at 100 yards every three minutes. The Canadian Corps had developed into an incredible close-knit fighting force with great camaraderie and each soldier was extremely self-confident, soon believing that they could handle any impediment that the Germans could throw at them. They proudly referred to themselves as ‘*Byng’s Boys*’! LGen Byng and MGen Currie developed a very cunning attack plan using stealth, deception, overwhelming fire-power, speed



Canadian Artillery ‘*shock & awe*’ 1,000 guns firing during the Battle of Vimy Ridge

and violence. This would be one of the first examples of military '*shock and awe*'. The Canadian Corps' combat ability and readiness was best described as '*white hot!*', with secrecy being paramount, where only the commanders knew the Spring 1917 attack date.

## The Padres

At their every opportunity since Canadian soldiers arrived in France in 1915, each chaplain strove to be with his flock, his fighting soldiers. Eventually they were allowed access to visit and live with their soldiers. They not only blessed and shared the meagre rations, they also shared in the irritants of knee-deep cold mud, lice, huge rats eating the partially buried flesh from previous battles and the constant harassing accurate sniper bullets, sporadic enemy machine-gun fire, and indiscriminate artillery and mortar rounds, as well as poisonous gas attacks. Although church parades were not mandatory, most of these young lads had been brought up in religious homes and the church parades were always well attended. The chaplains became confidants and friends, buoying the soldiers spiritual and everyday life. Often the Eucharist was celebrated in a partially destroyed building, with a makeshift altar with the Crucifix and candles while using the Union Jack as a frontal. Sung, were Easter hymns and most likely '*O Jesus, I have promised*' (sung at St. Paul's on 10 Feb 2029), '*Onward Christian Soldiers*' and '*I Vow to Thee My Country*'. The term of endearment was no longer the somewhat cold and more formal descriptor '*chaplain*', but rather the softer and more friendly term, '*Padre*'. For many soldiers they would soon be advancing towards the Calvary of their trial by combat. Padres assisted the soldiers in handling personal matters from home such as sickness, death of loved ones back home and often assisted with the difficult notification to primary next-of-kin of soldiers wounded or killed in action. After WWI some Padres visited the next-of-kin of the heroic war dead and often it was the only much desired hauntingly descriptive capture of their loved-one's last moments, just prior to the shedding of their earthly coils.



Chaplain conducting a field service

Some errant soldiers were the recipients of punishment for violation of the King's Rules for Good Order and Discipline and found themselves often under arrest and behind bars. It was often Padres like H/Capt Mike Dalton who visited, praying with them and admonishing the soldier for his miscreant deeds, pointing out how he was letting down his comrades-in-arms and counselling the wayward soldier to adopt a change of attitude and to better serve not only his



fellow soldiers, but God and Empire! This stern counsel by the Padre usually had the desired effect on most soldiers and struck a chord of redemption that a dressing down by a sergeant-major or commanding officer likely would not have achieved.

Although Padres were usually not allowed to go on operational attacks, as they were needed to assist with the wounded back at the battalion dressing station, but many disobeyed that well-intended direction, opting instead to be with their flock where they were needed during the most trying time for a soldier, in the very midst of mortal combat.

On this 2019 Good Friday and Easter Sunday, as we sit in our comfortable pews, in a warm Cathedral prayerfully thanking our Savior for the ultimate sacrifice He made for us and how He secured everlasting life for all believers, let your minds wander back for a few moments to the cold mud of Vimy Ridge as our grandfathers and great uncles prepared for the impending battle. The church parades were well attended during the final preparations. Each soldier's mind dwelling upon being faced with taking enemy lives and the very real likelihood of being wounded or killed himself. Each made their personal peace with God, with the comforting help of their Padres, encouraging them to do their duty. As with so many previous battles, final letters of love and farewell were written to family, and tragically for 3,598 young Canadians, these letters would be delivered after the Ridge was taken.

The attack was to have commenced on Easter Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April 1917, but the French needed another day for their concurrent preparations nearby, so our attack was postponed until Easter Monday. At 5:50 a.m. 1,000 artillery guns opened-up, destroying 85% of the German



A Canadian soldier writing a final letter



Canadians going over the top, Easter Monday 1917

artillery with pinpoint accuracy and shortly thereafter the first wave of Canadian soldiers went over the top and accompanying many of the soldiers were their unarmed Padres, all advancing while hugging the creeping artillery barrage. A fortuitous vicious snow, driving into the eyes of the German defenders covered much of the early morning attack by the Byng's Boys.

Throughout the fighting, the soldiers would occupy overtaken enemy trenches before moving forward again. It has been said that, ***“When the artillery rounds are exploding overhead and machine-gun bullets are splashing into the ground close by, there are no atheists in the protective slit trenches!*** It was great spiritual comfort for a soldier to see his Padre in the next trench, or moving above-ground, during intense fighting, providing first aid to the wounded, help to disoriented soldiers and providing final comfort, or the last rites, to the dying, reaffirming to them, that theirs had been ***‘duty nobly done!’*** and each were commended into God's hands.

Many soldiers performed great acts of gallantry to assist their buddies in sweeping the enemy from the escarpment, such as the 18<sup>th</sup> battalion's Lance-Sergeant Ellis Sifton VC from Wallacetown, his act of extreme valour earning him the Victoria Cross, one of three awarded during this battle. While taking Vimy Ridge, there were also great acts of heroism performed by many Padres, while under withering enemy fire and many of these acts were observed, some being reported by survivors, often resulting in decorations of valour being awarded to Padres. Sadly, some were awarded posthumously, such as Father Rosaire Crochetiere, the beloved chaplain of the Royal 22<sup>e</sup> Regiment, who was killed in an artillery barrage near Flanders, in France, on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1918. Padre Crochetiere was described by the men of his battalion as being like “a father, a brother, a confidant, and a friend.”



L/Sgt Ellis Sifton VC

Generals, like Field Marshall, First Viscount Byng of Vimy, CGB (Knight Commander Grand Cross Order of the Bath) , GCMG (Knight Commander Grand Cross, Most Venerable Order of St, Michael & St, George), MVO, (Member of the Most Venerable Royal Victorian Order) and General, Sir Arthur Currie GCMG (Knight Commander the Most Venerable Order of St. Michael and St. George) and KCB (Knight commander Most Venerable Order of the Bath) , had paved the way to success through superior training, weapons and tactics for their Canadian Corps, to sweep the Germans from Vimy Ridge. However, when just before any battle, each soldier is faced with taking enemy lives and his own inevitable wounds or even death, his

courage to face these adversities is greatly bolstered and comforted, knowing that his Padre, is spiritually and sometimes physically by his side on the battlefield.

The Battle of Vimy Ridge was an unqualified tactical success. Many historians view that Easter Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1917 and not any other day, Canada became a Nation. The inspirational leadership as well as the steely determination of the soldiers is usually given the credit for this major victory, but I would challenge that the Padres instilled significant spirit and confidence in every soldier on that escarpment especially with their observance of the Easter message.

### **A few Examples of some of our Gallant Padres....**

H/Capt A.E. Andrew, an Anglican Padre to the Royal Canadian Regiment, was awarded the Military Cross for his work with casualties (including stepping in to lead, when most of the officers had been killed or wounded).

Col the Rev Canon John Almond CMG – Canadian Chaplain in the Boer War, and the 2nd Director Chaplain Services in WWI, was made a Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George (CMG) for his extraordinary wartime service.



Col The Rev Canon J. Almond

Maj the Rev Canon Frederic Scott, CMG, OBE was an Anglican Padre for the Canadian Corps' 1st Division. Described as one of the most beloved men in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, Canon Scott became a respected confidant, friend and spiritual guide to all his soldiers. His son, Infantry Captain Henry Scott was killed by an artillery strike on 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 1916 during the attack on Regina Trench, near Courcelette, where the St. Paul's Cathedral brothers Leonard Innis Carson and Pte Robert Carson had both been killed side by side on the same day, at the same time. When Canon Scott went searching for his lost son's body shortly after the battle, the artillery strike blast had buried his son, except for one arm partially exposed, upon which Canon Scott identified his son's signet ring, unearthed his boy and later conducted his interment service.



Maj the Rev Canon F. Scott



On 10 November 1918, Canadian soldiers moved in to clear out Mons. After causing a few last minutes casualties, the Germans melted into the mist. At eleven, the Armistice took effect. Already a riotous celebration was brewing up in the city centre. It was *St. Martin of Tours Day*, the patron saint of chaplains.

During the First World War, 524 clergymen served in the Canadian Chaplain Service. Of this number 447 served overseas, and a number of those chaplains served with great distinction, such as George Anderson Wells, CMG, an Anglican priest serving with the Fort Garry Horse, who actually finished the 1st World War highly decorated. In the chaotic months following September 1939, Canada's military leaders fought frantically to rebuild a fighting force that had largely been disbanded after the First World War. The last thing on the military mind was the need for a chaplain service. Enter: Anglican Bishop George Anderson Wells, Bishop of the Diocese of Cariboo, and to this day the most decorated chaplain in the British Commonwealth. From his home in Victoria, through high-ranking Militia contacts, Wells offered to serve in any capacity that was needed. Within weeks he was on his way to Ottawa, with his First World War files in hand, in order to re-establish the Canadian Chaplain Service.

During WWII there were 1,400 Canadian Padres who served our Canadian Forces. St Paul's Cathedral's Suffragan Bishop and Bishop of North Bay, the Rt. Rev Harold Appleyard was awarded the Military Cross for valour as a Padre, providing medical assistance and evacuating the wounded soldiers while under fire.

WWII Anglican Padre to the Essex Scottish, H/Capt Joseph Cardy continuously went from trench to trench while under fire, medically assisting wounded soldiers and pulling them to safety during numerous battles in France and Holland. Padre Joe was awarded the Military Cross (MC) and was also mentioned in despatches (MiD). He remained in the Canadian Army until 1973, attaining the rank of Brigadier General in the appointment of Chaplain General to the Canadian Forces.



BGen the Very Rev Joe Cardy

WWII Roman Catholic Padre to the Essex Scottish, H/Capt Michael Dalton also served up front in the combat actions in Northwest Europe. For Padre Mike's unwavering bravery and devotion to his soldiers, he became the first Roman Catholic to be made a member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE). A road in London, ON, is named after Padre



Major the Rev Mike Dalton with Major Childs

Dalton. After Padre Dalton's 99<sup>th</sup> birthday, I picked him up from a R.C. retirement home in Courtland, near Delhi, ON and took him to Chatham where the Sisters at the Ursuline Order and a nurse looked after him overnight. In the late Saturday afternoon, I brought him in his wheelchair into a large regimental '*Field of Valour*' dinner at the old Chatham Armoury. He was swarmed by approximately 30 of his WWII surviving veteran soldiers, each of whom in every religious denomination, he had served with in combat. Most had not seen him for well over 30 years and the tears were freely flowing. Such is the bond formed in the crucible of war, between a Padre and his flock. Padre Dalton passed away at 106 years of age his funeral officiated by the Most Reverend Bishop Ronald Fabbro of London.

WWII Presbyterian Padre H/Capt John Weir Foote, served The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry and was part of the ill-fated 19 Aug 1942 raid by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Division on the French coastal port of Dieppe. During 8 hours of intense combat, Padre Foote calmly walked the machine-gun raked beach, giving first aid then evacuating wounded soldiers off the beach on numerous trips and was hauled into the retiring landing craft as it moved off under intense enemy fire. Padre Foote instead of remaining in safety, decided to jump off and go back, stating, "***My boys on that beach needed me more!***". The Padre provided spiritual sustenance, Eucharist and hope, as well as medical assistance to our boys who were '*the guests of the Third Reich*'. Padre Foote was one of 1,950 prisoners of war taken by the Germans that day, most being wounded. 900 were killed in action during the Dieppe Raid. Padre Foote was one of only 6 Padres to ever be awarded the British Empire's highest award for valour, The Victoria Cross. It was stated that on the Dieppe beaches, there were no cowards that day, all soldiers doing their duty, until ordered to surrender. The seasoned German soldiers greatly respected the grit and tenacity of their Canadian enemies to continue fighting under overwhelming odds until ordered to surrender. The Germans, out of respect for truly dedicated fellow '*comrades in arms*' adversaries, buried the 900 Canadian dead with full military honours of a firing party and a carrying party. It is the only Commonwealth War cemetery built in the German tradition, of the Glorious Dead being laid head to head.



LCol the Rev John Foote



Commonwealth Canadian War Cemetery  
Dieppe, France

H/Captain Walter Brown, as a Canadian Anglican Padre, was a member of the Sherbrooke Fusiliers, taken prisoner on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944 during his 'D' Day landing, which had been highly contested by the German defenders. German SS soldiers lined him up with other prisoners and executed them, although Germany had signed the Geneva Convention which prohibited such atrocities towards POWs. Padre Brown was identified by his communion kit found beside him in a ditch. He is buried in France, but his chaplain's communion kit was donated to the Huron College Chapel, in London, ON., where it is still used during worship services.



Padre Brown's Communion kit



H/Capt Rev Walter Brown

Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy was an Anglican priest in Worcester, England, who served as a chaplain with the British army during the First World War. In his poem *'His Mate'*, he wrote about his work as a chaplain on the front line. It says, in part:

*I remember how I reached them.*

*Dripping wet and all forlorn,*

*In the dim and dreary twilight*

*Of a weeping summer dawn.*

*All that week I'd buried brothers*

*In one bitter battle slain;*

*In one grave I laid two hundred,*

*God, what sorrow and what pain!*

*And that night I'd been in trenches,*

*Seeking out the sodden dead,*

*And just dropping them in shell holes,*

*With a service swiftly said.*



*For the bullets rattled 'round me,  
But I couldn't leave them there,  
Water-soaked in flooded shell holes.  
Rift of common Christian prayer. (9)*

His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, previous Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada's Armed Forces, communicated the approval by Buckingham Palace, to reinstate the prefix 'Royal', on the commemoration of the 100th anniversary in 2014, of the start of the First World War.

*"Wherever our Canadian Armed Forces members may be found, at home or abroad, you will find military chaplains providing invaluable care and support. The restoration of the Royal prefix to the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch honours this community of service men and women who have humbly sacrificed so much in service to our country."*

*Honourable Rob Nicholson  
Canadian Minister of National Defence*



2012 Chaplain Branch Badge

**NOTE from the Writer:** Although I am not a historian, I do consider myself to be a student of military history. The information in this article has come from the memories of veteran soldiers and Padres who I been honoured to have called my friends, as well as from the writings of very accomplished historian of the Canadian military chaplaincy, Dr. Duff Crerar as well as the Anglican History of the Canadian Chaplaincy and other sources.

*Vocatio Ad Servitium (Called To Serve)*

*Greg*

G.T. (Greg) Childs, CD

Major (Retired)

Regimental Major of The Essex and Kent Scottish, and

Member of the St. Paul's Cathedral's Wardens' Team