



Fort Fraser Despatches, May 2017

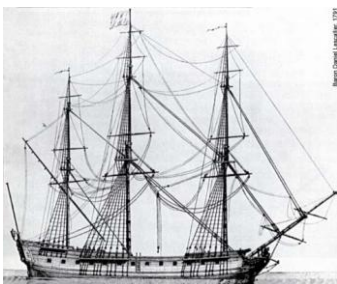
The relief of Quebec, May 1760:

After the disaster at Ste. Foy in April, Murray's force huddled inside the walls of Quebec and hoped the first ships up the St. Lawrence would be Royal Navy ships.

(from *Sergeant Thompson's diary as quoted in Col. Harper's The Fraser Highlanders*)

"On the 9th of May 1760, there came a Frigate in sight, and she was, for some considerable time, tacking across and across between Pointe Lévis and the opposite shore. We were at some loss to know the meaning of all this, when the commanding Officer of Artillery bethought himself to go and acquaint General Murray of the circumstance. He found the General sitting before the chimney his chair somewhat leaning backwards, and one foot resting upon the chuck of the Chimney, thinking of matters & things that had just taken place; not the most pleasant. On the officer acquainting him that there was a Ship-of-War in sight, the General was so electrified that he sprang himself over the back of his chair, and stumbled on the floor! He instantly got up, and in the greatest fury order'd the Officer to go to the Citadel, and to have the Colours hoisted immediately! Away he went, but de'il a bit could they get the halliards to go free, until at last, they got hold of a sailor, who soon scrambled up the flagstaff, and put all to rights in a jiffy.

All this time the Ship of War did not shew her own colours, not knowing whether the Town was in the hands of the French or the English but as soon as she perceiv'd our flag, she hoisted English colours, and shaped her course towards the town and was safe at anchor opposite to the King's wharf. Our men had been all the winter in bad spirits from coughs of colds and, their having been oblig'd to retreat from the French didn't help much to mend the matter, however, when they heard that an English Man of War was come, it was astonishing how soon they became stout-hearted, 'afaith they were like lions, and just as bold!"



“The Frigate proved to be the LOWESTOFF which had been detach'd from the main fleet below, with orders to make the best of her time thro' the ice and take up the earliest intelligence of the approach of the Fleet. Her sides were very much torn by the floating ice. Our having hoisted colours for the very first time since the conquest, and a ship of war having made her appearance, led the French to imagine that there was something strange going on—indeed they expected a fleet as well as ourselves and this arrival brought them out of their intrenchments as thick as midges; they appear'd to us like so many pigeons upon a roost.

While they were gaping at us in this exposed position, they received a salute from the whole line of our Guns, extending from the Cap Diamond down to the Barracks Bastions in number one hundred and one, and yet they went off almost like one volley.

It was funny (fearful) enough to see how they tumbled down off the top of their intrenchments, like so many sacks of wood!

Their seeing soldiers passing a-shore from our Frigate they thought that we had received a powerful reinforcement, and they scamper'd away, taking only their kill'd and wound'd men along with them. Our men soon were sent out and then regal'd themselves upon their soup and pork which they had left cooking on the fire. That single discharge disabled so many of our guns, that we had to get others from the lower town, and our men were so weakly that they could not drag them up but which was at last done with the help of the Sailors just arriv'd in this Fleet.

In about three days after the arrival of the LOWESTOFF, the remainder of the fleet came up to Quebec and finding that the French had some ships lying above Wolfe's cove, they went up to look after them. As soon as the French saw them coming on they slip'd their cables and endeavor'd to get out of the way with the help of the flood-tide, but the French Commodore's ship got upon a ledge of rocks and there stuck fast, and the crew took to the boats and got ashore leaving the ship to take care of itself. The French Navy have always been devilishly afraid of our Ships of War!”



May 1945; Victory in Europe!

The official end of the fighting in Europe in the Second World War was celebrated on 8 May 1945, after Germany's unconditional surrender. In cities and towns across Canada, a war-weary nation expressed its joy and relief at the news.

The war was not over, as conflict with Japan continued.



Canadians had been at war since September 1939. Over the course of the Second World War, the country's economy had been transformed, a generation of young men had been mobilized to defeat the Axis powers, and since 1942 a debate over conscription had divided both Canadians and the government of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King.

By the spring of 1945, Canadians had waged war against a relentless enemy on the North Atlantic, at Dieppe, Hong Kong and Normandy, in the air over Germany, and most recently, in the Netherlands and the Rhineland. More than a million Canadians had served in the armed forces — 42,000 had been killed and tens of thousands more were wounded or awaiting liberation in prisoner of war camps.

The country was in an expectant mood — eager for victory and ready for peace.

The military surrender agreement for the German forces was signed in Rheims, France, at 2:41 a.m. local time on 7 May 1945 by Colonel General Gustav Jodl, the German army's chief of staff; Lieutenant-General Walter Bedell Smith, chief of staff for the Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower; General Ivan Susloparov for the Soviet Union; and General François Sevez for France. Allied headquarters ordered the news to be withheld for 24 hours, although Germany announced the surrender.

Mackenzie King, who was in San Francisco on 7 May attending the founding conference of the United Nations, wrote in his diary: "This has been a good day, a happy day, one in which the burden has been greatly lightened from the knowledge that Nazi militarism has, at last, been destroyed."

In a radio address the next day, Mackenzie King told Canadians, "You have helped to rid the world of a great scourge."



A book plug: (available for purchase)

The Fraser Highlanders

Second Edition Revised & Indexed, 1995

J. R. Harper

Published for The David M. Stewart Museum Montreal, Quebec

MUSEUM RESTORATION SERVICE Bloomfield, Ont. Alexandria Bay, N. Y.

“Since the first edition of this book was published 16 years ago, the demand for information on The 78th Regiment, Fraser's Highlanders has continued to grow. When Colonel J. Ralph Harper wrote his first book entitled *The Fighting Frasers* in 1966, the Regiment was a little known part of our history. Now, the Regiment's unique influence on North American, Canadian, Quebec and Montreal history has been recognized by historians, military re-enactors and genealogists, warranting this reprint.

As an amateur historian with a passion for military tradition, Colonel Harper successfully pieced together his years of research on the Regiment's history into this fascinating book full of anecdotes and personal comments. It was never intended to be a scholarly work and modern research techniques might now question some of his conclusions. It remains an excellent account of this Regiment and its short-lived history. This edition simply corrects typographical errors and includes an index compiled by Mrs. Elizabeth Hale, the Museum's Librarian Emeritus.

In the intervening years, the three men most responsible for this book and the re-raising of the regiment with a small group of students to portray this history in Montreal since the mid-1960's are no longer with us. Colonel David Macdonald Stewart passed away in 1984, Colonel Harper in 1988 and Brigadier Lord Lovat in 1995. With the expansion of the re-raised Regiment throughout North America, the prime objective established by these three leaders endures—that of passing onto our youth this important page of history and respect for our common military heritage. This edition, therefore, is dedicated to these three very fine Officers and Gentlemen.”

Mrs. David Macdonald Stewart, Honorary Colonel

The 78th Fraser Highlanders

President The David M. Stewart Museum (1995)

Lord Lovat's foreword to the first edition of *The Fraser Highlanders*:



1979 - "Colonel Ralph Harper is an old friend, a brother Scot and a tried comrade in arms. Our paths first crossed, or it might be more accurate to say that we first touched down together, 35 years ago in Normandy on the morning of D-Day.

Since then we have gone our respective ways. Ralph has had the good sense to remove himself to Canada and start a new life in that great

Dominion. There, he has taken an immense amount of trouble and hard work to resuscitate and equip the reraised Old 78th Fraser Highlanders. The arms drill and turnout, but above all the enthusiasm engendered in this fine body of young men, largely recruited from local schools and universities, now delight the North American continent, not only at guard mounting at the Old Fort but at tattoos and other military occasions all over the country. Her Majesty the Queen was particularly struck by their manly bearing when she inspected a Guard of Honour at Expo 67.

I was a proud man myself that day, having a son on parade in command of them on loan from the Scots Guards. "The garb of Old Gaul" and a good pipe band can still stir the blood even in this age of science fiction and advanced technology.

It was a happy thought to perpetuate the arms and martial attire of the clansmen who joined the 78th (down to their very shoe buckles) just as they sailed away from Scotland in the year 1757, in the dark days when the kilt had been proscribed by the Hanoverian government and even the bagpipe constituted an instrument of war!

Now Colonel Harper has again raised his sights: this time he has taken on a herculean task, writing a history of the Frasers, and the stirring part they have taken in Canada's early history. Highland descendants on both sides of the Atlantic owe him a debt of gratitude for the time and research that has gone into this book, written without frills by a soldier. The Sons of Simon will wish him well; he has mined a lot of new information. I have heard it said by those outwitted by my wily and resourceful clan that the Frasers must trace without fear of contradiction back to the Lost Tribes of Israel! Be that as it may, we have surely stood the test of time. It is certain that, long before they sailed with William the Conqueror to defeat the Anglo-Saxons, the Emperor Charlemagne had sent a Fraser ambassador with messages to England. Charles Simplex was regaled with a gift of strawberries 1200 years ago - hence the strawberries in the armorial bearings.

In the Highlands we first hear of Frasers in Scotland early in the twelfth century. There was the Bishop of Saint Andrews, but the greatest was Sir Simon Fraser, known as the Patriot. Fighting as first general under William Wallace and Robert the Bruce, he added the three crowns to the strawberries (fraises) in the Fraser shield, for defeating three English armies in succession at Roslin Moor.

He later suffered the same fate as poor William in the Tower of London, being hung, drawn and quartered while still alive, and his head nailed above the gate.

The Fighting Frasers prided themselves on courage and endurance; history records that one diehard clansman, fighting for the Stuart cause under the great Montrose during the winter foray against Campbell of Argyle, furiously kicked a snowball pillow from under the head of one of his sleeping sons lying exhausted in the snow, declaring that in all his campaigns he had never met such degenerate and effeminate behaviour! There are many worthwhile tales to tell, good and bad.

Our activities were not confined to the Old World, and there are more Frasers to be found today in Canada than in the Highlands of Scotland. In the unity of a family lies its strength. The Frasers, fortunate in this respect, have held their place in Scotland's history down the arches of the years; it is good to know that the sons of the men in Colonel Harper's book have written their names across a vast continent. We recall with pride that Simon Fraser, the great explorer, was one of the first Canadians to see the sun set into the Pacific Ocean.

Good luck to Ralph Harper. The Frasers, wherever they may be, are still a united family and a proud one at that. Touch one and you touch them all. This book I am sure will be a good one—or several thousand broadswords will be out to make the acquaintance of the author to know the reason why.”

Lovat

Brigadier the Rt. Hon. Lord Lovat, D.S.O., M.C., C.St.J., T.D., LL.D., J.P., D.L.,
(1911 – 1995)

24th Chief of Clan Fraser of Lovat

Balblair, Beaulby by Inverness, Scotland





"The proper drinking of Scotch whisky is more than indulgence; it is a toast to a civilisation, a tribute to the continuity of culture, a manifesto of man's determination to use the resources of nature to refresh mind and body and enjoy to the full the senses with which he has been endowed."

David Daiches, writer and critic, in "Scotch Whisky" in 1969.

The Fort Fraser 2017 Highland Tour will likely investigate this assertion during its travels in June, passing perilously close to:

- Edradour distillery near Pitlochry
- Dalwhinnie distillery just beyond Blair Atholl
- Tomatin distillery as we approach Inverness
- The Lost Millburn distillery near Inverness
- Glen Ord distillery near Beaulieu
- Ben Nevis distillery near Fort William
- Oban distillery in Oban
- Etc.
- Etc.



Not to be missed:

- **13 May** - 15FD RCA Change of Command ceremonies
- **14 May** - Louisbourg BBQ – OC residence
- 19-21 May - Victoria Highland Games
- 03-17 Jun - Garrison Scotland Tour (*fully booked/waiting list*)
- 17 Jun - BC Highland Games, Coquitlam (*no 78th due to tour*)
- 23 Sept - Plains of Abraham Commemorative Dinner
- 11 Nov - Remembrance Day – **LEST WE FORGET**
- 25 Nov - Feast of Saint Andrew Dinner



Be kind to one another, stay calm and carry on – whatever happens!