

## The Origins of the College Motto and Cap Badge

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In his research on College history the late Dr. Richard A. Preston, author of Canada's RMC, and, To Serve Canada, uncovered many significant source documents. One, a copy of an article from the, Royal Engineer Journal, of 1 April, 1878 entitled, "The Military College, Canada," was passed on to the RMC Museum some time ago. Given the recent discussions on the origins of our Coat-of-Arms, #2859 Prof. J. "Jack" G. Pike, Chairman of the RMC Museum Committee, recalled the article and subsequently brought it to my attention.

The article in question is a report on a prize presentation held at the Kingston Military College on 11 February, 1878. At that gathering, the College Commandant, Lieut.-Colonel Hewett, spoke to the Cadets. In his remarks (which fortunately are reported in full) he makes the first public announcement of the College motto and 'device' (i.e. badge). Although couched in the Victorian rhetoric of the time, Hewett's words on the meaning of, 'Truth-Duty-Valour,' still resonate today.

"—I now have to tell you Gentlemen Cadets, that a device and motto has been selected for the Military College. The device, a mailed arm bearing a maple leaf; symbolical of the position you, as the future officers of Canada, should hold towards your country as represented by the maple leaf. The motto, "Truth, Duty, and Valour,"- three simple words in plain English -that all who run may read. Truth, the noblest quality of manhood, of god-like manhood, truth unvarnished and fearless at all times, in all places and under all circumstances. Duty, young men, to your Queen, to your country, to your comrades, alike to the humblest and feeblest, as to the greatest and most powerful; duty for its own sake, without thought of gain, without hope of personal profit. Valour, gentlemen, as the heritage of the grand old stock from which we are all sprung, to be handed down to you as history, untarnished, through many generations in this fair land. Gentlemen, if you are true, if duty is your star, you are sure to be brave. Let, therefore, these three words be not only your rule here, but your guide through life, and you will pass through the world respected by your friends, honoured by your country and feared by your enemies; and when the end comes, whether in the strife of the battlefield, or in your quiet homes, it will be but as rest after good work done."

(An extract from the Royal Engineer Journal, April 1st, 1878, p.29.)



Hewett's "device and motto" as illustrated in the RE Journal.



First College Cap Badge (RMC Museum collection)

As the Mailed Arm, or, as we more commonly say today, the Mailed Fist, was not adopted for use on College buttons or on the Shako Plate (or the later Helmet Plate), it made its first appearance as part of the Cadet uniform as the cap badge for the Glengarry Forage Cap. The Glengarry was the standard infantry undress cap of the time having been taken into general use by the British army about 1871. Although apparently not part of the original 1876 uniform, the Glengarry was soon adopted for wear with the Cadet Undress Uniform (perhaps in 1878) and it remained in service until about 1898 when it replaced by the FS Cap.



Cadets of the, 'Class of 1895,' in Summer Undress Uniform-wearing the Glengarry Cap. The circular pattern College badge is evident on the cap of the Cadet sitting on the lower left.



The original version of the RMC Club of Canada badge.

While the original pattern College Cap Badge was eventually replaced, Hewett's "Device" is still with us today. With only some minor modification it became the badge of the RMC Club of Canada.