

Recent Acquisitions of the RMC Museum

The RMC Museum holds a remarkable collection of material relating to College history, the service of ex-cadets and, to a lesser extent, the early military history of Point Frederick. The vast majority of this material comes to us as donations from ex-cadets, from their families, or from other friends of the College.

Recently the Museum has acquired some important artefacts. These acquisitions include:

- a) A large collection of items belonging to #621 Major-General C.F. Constantine, CB, DSO, Commandant of RMC 1925-1930. Maj-Gen. Constantine, the son of a Superintendent of the NWMP who had served with the likes of #13 Perry and #151 Macdonell, attended RMC 1902 to 1905 and on graduation took a regular commission in the Canadian Artillery. On the outbreak of War in 1914 he was appointed Brigade Major, 1st Canadian Division Artillery, but subsequently held various command and staff positions –OC 4th Battery CFA, BM 2nd CDA, GSO II 2nd Cdn Div and OC 5th CFA Brigade. Constantine was awarded the DSO in 1917. He subsequently was awarded a bar to his DSO for gallantry whilst commanding 5th Brigade and the Legion of Honour from France. In the post-war period Constantine was on staff at the College both as an instructor and as Commandant. Prior to his appointment as Commandant RMC, Constantine was OC RCHA and Commandant of the Royal School of Artillery. Subsequently he was GOC MD 7 and during the Second World War served as DOC MD 6 before being retired from the army in 1944. He was made a Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (Military) in 1944. In his day Constantine was an outstanding athlete and the RMC hockey arena is named after him.
- b) A family grouping of three medal sets relating to #667 Lt-Col. E.G Hanson, DSO ; his son, LCpl. E.A.G. Hanson and son-in-law # 2438 Major A.P. Boswell. Edwin Hanson attended RMC 1904-1907 [He would have been a ‘recruit’ when Constantine was a Senior. His younger brother, #764 C.S. Hanson, attended RMC 1907-1910.] After graduation Hanson attended Cornell University and later became an investment broker in Montreal. He served in the militia and with the outbreak of War in August 1914 he joined the CEF as a Major in the 5th Battery CFA. He was promoted to Lt-Col in July 1916 and commanded the 13th Brigade, CFA. He was awarded the DSO in the New Years Honours List 1918. Following the War he returned to his civil occupation and was admitted as a Partner in the Firm. His son, LCpl E.A.G. Hanson served in the Hastings & Prince Edward Regiment during the Second World War and was KIA in Italy. Hanson’s daughter married into another RMC family. # 2438 Allen Boswell attended the College 1935-1937. [His two brothers were #2310 Henry Boswell and #2559 Robert Boswell. #784 Hugh Boswell and #1314 James Boswell were related in some way-possibly uncles.] Although on graduation his two brothers took regular commissions in the British army with the Royal Engineers, Allen (to the envy of his Classmates) had to withdraw from the College to take over the family business-a Montreal brewery. He served as a militia officer with the Black Watch

then, with the outbreak of War in 1939, went on Active Service with the RHC. His war service was very unusual in that he was one of the very few Canadian army officers sent to serve with the British army fighting in Burma.

c) Painting, watercolour on paper, “Old Kingston Block House” by Thomas H. Wilkinson. This painting (c.1890) depicts Block House #5, the last surviving (but sadly no longer existent) Block House built during the War of 1812. During the War the Point Frederick Naval Dockyard was the most important strategic location in Upper Canada and the adjacent town of Kingston was hastily fortified with a stockade wall and five block houses.

d) Tunic, Canadian militia officer, c. 1850-60. This is a rare artefact. Before the withdrawal of the British garrisons in 1870-71 the British army had provided schools of instruction for the Canadian militia. With the departure of the Regulars standards at these schools soon fell. The creation of RMC was, in part, an effort to provide professional instruction to the militia. Although this tunic pre-dates the College it never-the-less represents an important part of the College’s story- i.e why the College was created!

Photographs:

1. Constantine – A General Officer Forage Cap, a Breech hammer and a photograph of Constantine as Commandant Royal School of Artillery.
2. Constantine- His RMC drawing kit displayed with a his First World War era compass and a field sketch showing enemy positions and his Battery’s arc of responsibility.
3. Constantine- Companion, Order of the Bath
4. Constantine- Decoration and Medal group; DSO and bar, 1915 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal with MID oak leaf, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, 1939-45 War Medal, King George V Coronation, King George V Jubilee, King George VI Coronation, Legion of Honour (France).
5. Boswell –Medal Group of # 2438 Major Allen Boswell
6. Hanson – Medal Group of #667 Lt-Col. E. G. Hanson, DSO, ED,RCA; DSO, 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal with MID oak leaf, King George VI Coronation, Queen Elizabeth II Coronation, Colonial Auxiliary Long Service, Canadian Efficiency Decoration.
7. Hanson- Medal Group of LCpl. E.A.G. Hanson (son of #667) KIA in Italy whilst serving with the Hasting & Prince Edward Regiment.
8. Watercolour- “Old Kingston Block House”

9. Tunic- Canadian militia officer c. 1850-60.