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DRAFT SCRIPT

19/ans/42

by Capt. A.L. MacLaurin, Montreal.

Apr 14/44

The Royal Highlanders of Canada, that is the Cdn Black Watch, provided a company of men for special work with the Royal Regiment of Canada and five mortar detachments of which I was in command. We were under the control of one of the brigades. The four mortar detachments were with me in our Tank Landing craft- or T.L.C. as we call it, and the fifth detachment was attached to the Royal Regiment, and was in a separate craft. Our particular role was to fire smoke and high explosive mortar bombs at the headlands on the left entrance to Dieppe harbour and assist the attack of the Royal Regiment in this way. Let me say that I cannot speak too highly of the conduct of my men, as they were simply magnificent under the terrific fire that was pouring into the vessel from all angles. Our ship was being hit repeatedly by small arms fire, mortar and explosive 2 pounder. We were struck on the door of the ship's magazine, blowing it off, and blowing the high explosive shells out of their cases.

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Through some freak, the magazine did not explode. We were struck through the stern, damaging an engine, and causing the ship to take water. We were hit several times on the bridge, by shellfire, which put both our 2 pounders out of action. A mortar round got a direct hit on the 2 pounder ammunition locker on the bridge blowing out the rounds, and these again, fortunately did not explode. Our drawbridge on the bow of the vessel was shot away, so that it couldn't be closed. When we withdrew from the beach, we attempted to repair this door, so that we could make a fresh landing. This was found to be impossible. All this time the vessel was leaking, and was in a very crippled condition. We remained off Dieppe until around 2.30 p.m., when due to the condition of the vessel, the skipper decided to return to port. We put into the nearest port from Dieppe, rather than proceed to our base, because of the damage done to our craft. The naval crew showed the utmost courage and disregard for danger throughout the entire action.

Now I'd like you to hear from Cpl Joe McCouan who

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was with me at Dieppe, and who will give you his  
impressions.....

TALK BY CPL. J. McCOUAN

DIEPPE RAID

The crossing itself was uneventful and pleasant. The tanks beside us on the ship give a feeling of security and confidence. About 4.00 a.m., we could see Boulongne getting hit hard by our places. And as zero hour approached.. 5.20 for us.. all hell let loose, and the boys above us in the tank turrets could see everything, and were relating it to us. By that time, it was almost broad daylight. Then the front door of our ship, which works on a drawbridge principle, opened, and that seemed to be what Jerry was waiting for, as everything was thrown in at us. The leading tank was hit, but kept on going. In fact all the tanks were hit, but kept going, one in particular was hit four times. Then one of our tanks fired 2 shots at an enemy tank, and blew it up. The scout car, which had managed to get ashore safely was last seen tearing up Marashal Foch Boulevard at top speed. Jerry ran like hell when he saw the tanks and our two Vickers gunners, Toronto Scotties, took a heavy toll of them. Two of our Vickers gunners

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were wounded, but their place was quickly taken by spares. They put up a darn good show. A shell hit out front door just after the tanks landed, and it fell into the water. The skipper backed off to try and land again, but the door dragging prevented the boat from getting close enough to the shore. It prevented us from landing, as there was absolutely no way to fix the door.

As we were backing off shore, a shell hit the magazine for the Bofors guns, and put the ship's two gun crews of 6 men out of action. Our boys went up on deck, and brought them down below for medical care, and the docs did a magnificent job without a murmur- brave men all. Every man on board was calm and ready for a landing if it were possible, and I know I speak for all the boys of the Black Watch who didn't manage to make it this time, when I say that I hope we will, next time.