



ON AIR

Till We Meet Again

A SOLDIER'S STORY



A SOLDIER'S STORY

In one segment of each act, the play tells the story of Gordon Watkins, a fictional soldier in the Canadian Army. Below is some of the material used for the story of Gordon Watkins and for other segments of the play.

We were extremely privileged to receive exclusive access to the personal World War II journals of Major Harold Elliott through his son, Mr. Michael Elliott of Hudson, Quebec. Michael's dad was a neurosurgeon who spent five years of the war (1941-45) in Europe in England, France, Belgium and Germany.

Major Elliott was a contemporary of Doctor Penfield (whose personal correspondence is reproduced elsewhere in this virtual exhibit). Because of his line of work, Maj. Elliott was a daily witness to the destruction and degradation that so pervaded those dark wartime years.

Maj. Elliott wrote extensively in his personal journal about his many experiences. He also collected maps, cartoons, photographs, drawings and other memorabilia that give us a real sense of what it was like to be so close to so much devastation.

Through it all, Maj. Elliott remained lucid, insightful and most of all, deeply human. Even in extremely stressful situations, his humour comes through in many of his journal entries. The fact that he remained hopeful, upbeat and resolute is part of the touching legacy left to us by all the men and women who served in the war.

What follows are just a few samples from the journals, plus commentary that we have added to foster greater understanding. We extend our humble and hearty thanks to Mike Elliott for sharing his precious family legacy with us and to his father for leaving us the tools from which we can learn so much.



MAJ. H. W. ELLIOTT

Surgical Division Member Ends Five Years Overseas

Major Harold W. Elliott, an original member of the Surgical Division of No. 1 Canadian General Hospital, was among those who arrived in Montreal yesterday from the Ile de France which docked at Halifax August 5.

He has had five years continuous service overseas. Before taking charge of the neuro-surgery division of the Canadian Basingstoke Hospital in England, he was in command of the Mobile neuro-surgical team which worked with the 1st Canadian Army in its push across the Rhine and through Germany.

Major Elliott is a native of Cache Bay, Ont. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Elliott, reside in Sudbury, Ont. He graduated from McGill University and prior to the outbreak of the war was attached to the neurosurgery staff of the Royal Victoria Hospital. He married the former Doris Gales who, with their two sons, Michael and Davis, live at Como, Que.

Give books and magazines—regularly—to the Services Book Room.

Till We Meet Again



JUST ANOTHER DAY DURING WARTIME

Here is a typical page from Maj. Elliott's journal. It is an entry made in July, 1944, when the fortunes of the war were finally beginning to turn.

Note the many different newspaper cutouts, including maps that show the progress of the Allied forces and cartoons designed to show the lighter side of war.

From the map we can see the advance of Allied troops through northern France.

Also notice the tiny clipping which indicates that this day, July 22, 1944, represents the 1,785th consecutive day of war.

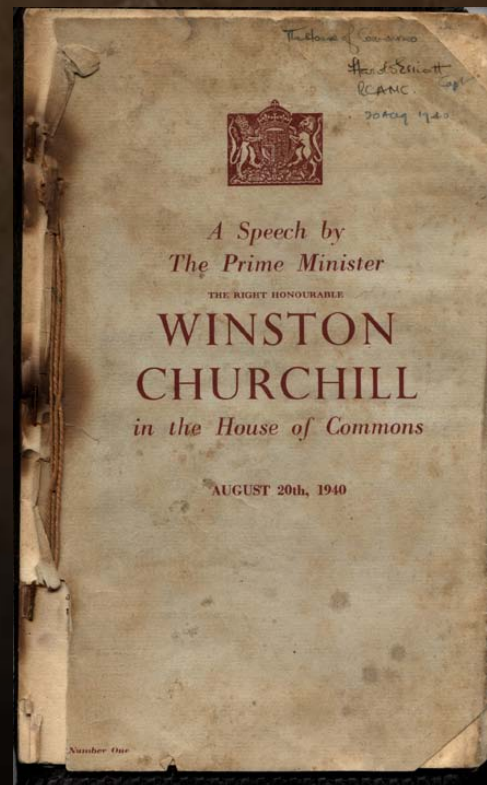
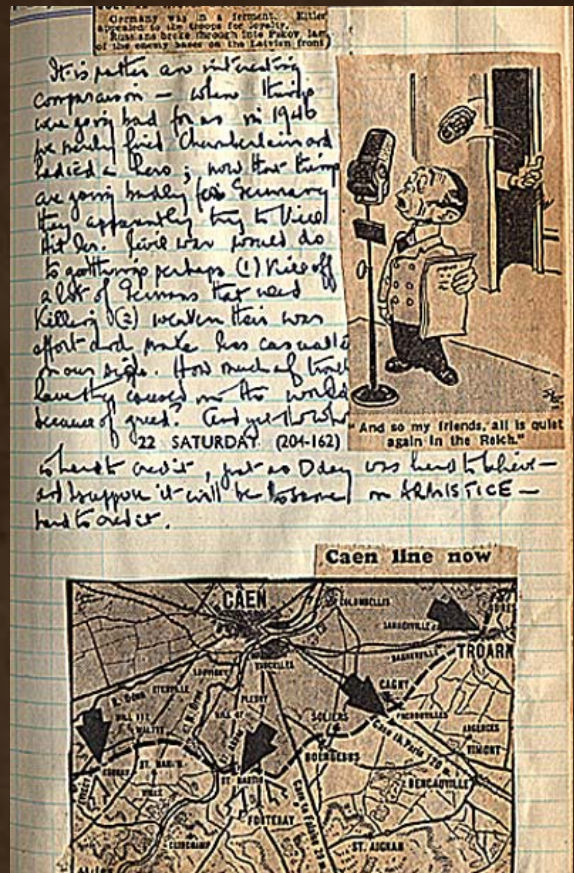
Maj. Elliott wonders about the Nazis: "How much trouble have they caused in the world because of greed?"

AN HISTORIC SPEECH

Maj. Elliott was actually present in gallery of the British House of Commons on the day Winston Churchill made the famous speech that is "re-broadcast" during the first act of *Till We Meet Again*.

Those present on that day (August 20, 1940) received a commemorative printed copy of the speech bound in a tooled leather sheath.

The title page of Maj. Elliott's copy of the speech is reproduced here.





A DAY AT THE ARMY HOSPITAL

To our right is a copy of the daily schedule for doctors at the Canadian General Hospital overseas.

The schedule for January 25, 1945 includes the presentation of such unpleasant-sounding medical conditions as traumatic arterial aneurysms, regional ileitis and acute hepatic necrosis. Medical challenges like these were faced by Maj. Elliott and the other surgeons on a regular basis.

HOSPITAL DAY - 25 Jan 45
#22 Cdn. Gen. Hospital
(Map Location - Aldershot Sheet 298525)

MORNING SESSION

Assemble for coffee - 1000 hrs., Ward M.O.3.
Clinical Programs - 1030 hrs. to 1245 hrs.

<p><u>Medical: Ward M.O.1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Penetrating Cardiac Injury (Case report) - Major Ford O. Dixon 2. Regional Ileitis (Case report) - Major Henry Seott 3. Observations on Chemotherapy in Infected Hemothorax - Capt. David J. MacKenzie 4. Fatal Acute Hepatic Necrosis in a Casualty from the Battle Area - Major H. E. Taylor 	<p><u>Surgical: Ward S-13</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traumatic Arterial Aneurysms with presentation of cases - Lt.Col. J. R. F. Mills 2. War Wounds of the Urethra with transection - presentation of 2 cases with repair - Major E. Stephenson 3. Some Dislocations in the region of the Ankle with report of cases - Major F. R. Tucker 4. Internal Fixation in Compound Fractures - Report of cases - Major R. D. Coddington 5. Presentation of cases of some anomalies of Upper Urinary Tract - Capt. J. F. Tysoe
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Luncheon: 1245 hrs. - 1330 hrs., Ward M-11

AFTERNOON SESSION
1415 hrs. to 1600 hrs.

RECENT INVESTIGATIONS IN INFECTIVE HEPATITIS
- Colonel John Beattie, R.A.M.C.

1600 hrs.
Tea - Sisters' Mess

DEMONSTRATIONS

CORRESPONDENCE FROM HOME

Not every message sent to servicemen overseas was from family and friends.

Here is a letter dated December 28, 1944 that was received by Maj. Elliott from Dr. Wilder Penfield, whose name was later given to a street in Montreal.

Michael Elliott said he believes that his father and Dr. Penfield were rivals of sorts. However, we can see from the letter (right) that the two were at least cordial to one another on paper.

MONTREAL NEUROLOGICAL INSTITUTE

Director
WILDER PENFIELD
Chief of Neurological Service
COLIN KUSSEL
Chief of Neurosurgical Service
WILLIAM CONNOR

Neurophysiologist
ARTHUR E. CHILDE
Neuropathologist
HERBERT ZASPEK
Sensory-Motor
J. NORMAN PETERSEN

Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery
of
McGill University

8801 University Street
Montreal, Canada

December 28th, 1944

Major Harold Elliott,
Basingstoke Neurological and
Plastic Surgery Hospital,
Canadian Army Overseas.

Dear Harold:

Merry Christmas to you. I received your last letter and have forwarded it to Don McEachern, after showing it to him, as the enclosed carbon shows.

I hear excellent reports of your work, which please me. You certainly have had a lot of activity, and the meeting of the British Neurosurgeons there at No. 1 must have been very interesting.

I am wondering whether you still plan on going into neurological surgery or whether you will use this as a partial training for general surgery. It is, of course, impossible for me to predict the future, but as things stand now at the Neurological Institute I do not think that you can look forward to working into service on this staff in any permanent position. I think it is fair to tell you this. It does not mean, of course, that some Hospital in Montreal might not want you to carry on for them here or that you cannot carry out neurosurgery elsewhere, but I should urge you, as I have before, to consider taking up general surgery or some other aspect of medicine. You have served well in this war and I am most anxious that you should get recognition and reward. You must begin to think of the next step, and if there is anything that I can do by way of getting you into touch with opportunities for work here in Canada be sure to let me know.

With best regards from all the family,
As ever yours,
Wilder Penfield

WCP/AD
Encl.

CARTOONS SHOW THE LIGHTER SIDE OF WAR

It's never easy to keep your spirits up when you're in the middle of a war zone. However, these cartoons collected by Maj. Elliott show that the Canadian Forces knew how to laugh like the rest of us.

The caption to the photo above right says: "Yep, we're Canadians, an' incidentally we ain't been near Aldershot fer two years."

On the lower left, the cartoon reads: "Can't understand it, dear. We haven't opened up a new front since yesterday morning." In the lower right: "And so my friends, all is quiet again in the Reich."



ART DURING WARTIME

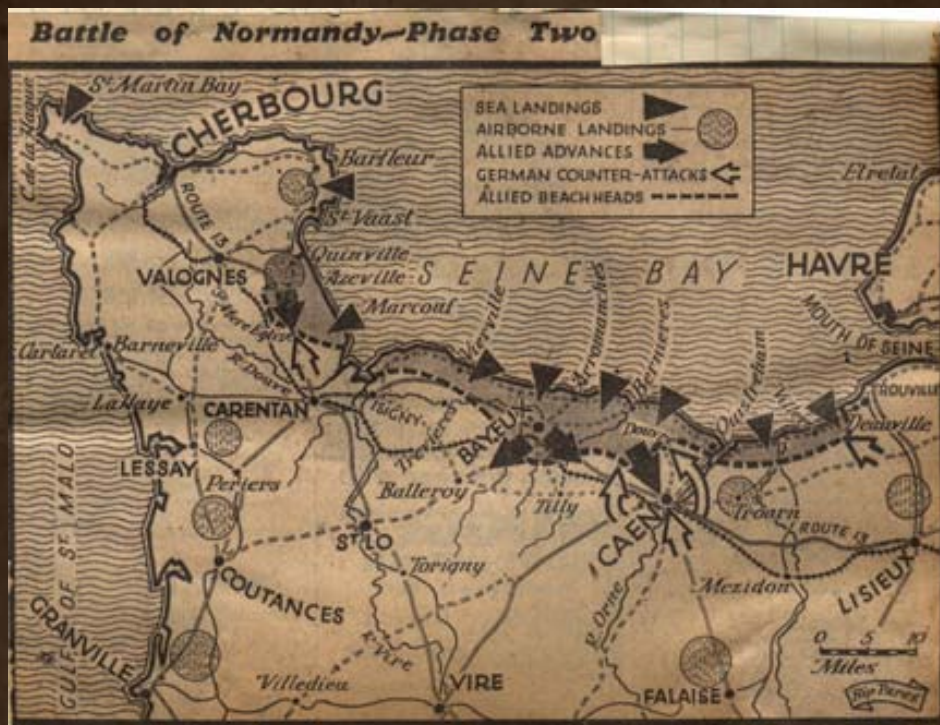
These pencil and chalk drawings were cut and pasted from another notebook. The identity of the artist does not seem to be Maj. Elliott. The drawings depict soldiers and civilians on a train in England during World War II.

From top to bottom and left to right, the captions read: "Sandwich lunch on first class coach", "Royal Canadian Corps of Signals out of hospital on a 16-day leave", "White haired naval commodore on the Dover train with his kit", and "Sleeping Beauties: Am. G.I., Br. officer".



CHANGING THE COURSE OF THE WAR

Below are newspaper cutouts from 1944 illustrating the advances on various fronts by Allied forces, including the invasion of Normandy. These events are described in the third act of TILL WE MEET AGAIN by Canadian soldier 'Lt. Gordon Watkins'.



WOMEN IN THE MILITARY

We usually tend to remember only the men who fought in World War II. However, Major Elliott's journal reminds us that many women were called into service, directly and indirectly, during the war.

Here are three photographs showing just a few of the ladies who also made a lasting contribution to the war effort.

In the top photo, we see a hospital scene with a male patient being tended by three women, two dressed for work as nursing sisters, the other in military garb.





PRISONERS OF WAR

Maj. Elliott eventually had to tend to German prisoners of war, including members of the Hitler Youth group.

In the pages below from his journal, he writes about one such boy named Pfeffer (pictured on the left in the photo below) who claims to be an adult. "His letters etc. show his relatives know him to be much younger.

'You are a big man now and big men must eat.' But his muscles and build are those of a 14 yr. old boy and I speak as a doctor when I write this."



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16



POW.
Pfeffer who says he is
near 18

His letters etc show his relatives know him to be much younger. "You are a big man now and big men must eat" But his muscles and build are those of a 14 yr old boy and I speak as a doctor when I write this.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 17



1

Friends
of
Pfeffer
in
the
Hitler
Youth

2



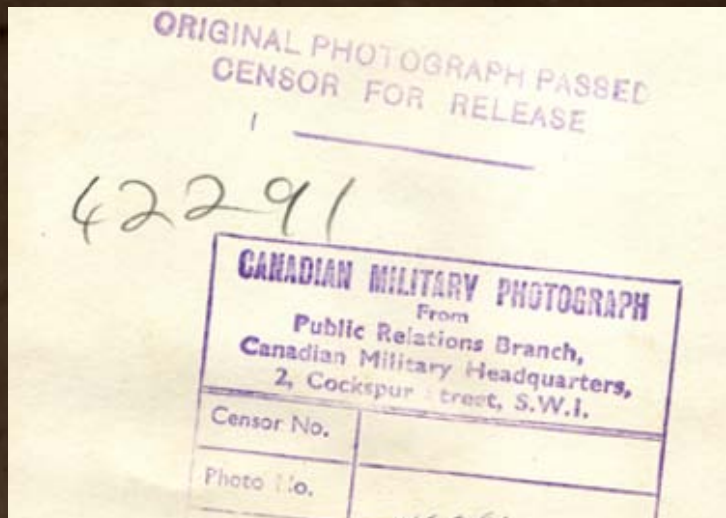
3



* Sounding the
code - presumably
Pfeffer or J -
may be to
Batie:
My patients say these
are the photos - of
me who fig - as

LOOSE LIPS SINK SHIPS...

...Or so it was often said during World War II. We have a photo of officers from different branches of the Canadian and British military. We also see the stamp on the back of the photo indicating that it has been cleared for public viewing.





SOUVENIRS OF BRUSSELS 1944

This journal entry from 1944 includes four photos of Brussels, including one taken from Maj. Elliott's hotel window (lower left), one of the Gare du Midi train station (upper left) and two that appear to be from the Grand' Place in the center of the city. Also visible is a folded instruction sheet for enlisted personnel and a ticket stub that indicates a special price for the military.





ARTIFACTS FROM A COUNTRY IN TRANSITION

This excerpt from Maj. Elliott's journal includes samples of French francs. As the date printed on them is 1944, they were probably put in circulation just after the Germans were driven from the country.



OH, WHAT I'D GIVE FOR A HOME-COOKED MEAL!

Far from home, a soldier could easily become nostalgic for a home-cooked meal. The illustration (center, right) shows a menu from a base in England, featuring Canadian apple pie. It includes a picture of a camp with its domed structures. Above and below it are scenes near the army hospital.



Directly below is an article about conscription from a Canadian news source.

Mackenzie King Has Given Way 16,000 Conscripts for Front

From Daily Mail Correspondent
OTTAWA, Thursday.

MR. MACKENZIE KING compromised to-day on the conscription issue, and promised 16,000 home defence troops for overseas immediately, with a continuance of the volunteer system for subsequent reinforcement.

Already the Minister for Air, Mr. Power, representing Quebec City Riding, has resigned because of the decision.

The Prime Minister read before the House of Commons an Order in Council authorising the 16,000 to be sent to the United Kingdom, Europe, and other war zones, including the Pacific.

The Order says that the provision of adequate reinforcements is essential to the national interest and to the effective prosecution of the war.



...MENU...

HORS D'OEUVRES

Celery hearts - Pickles.

SOUP

Cream of Oyster.

ENTREE

Assorted cold cuts - Chicken Salad
stuffed tomatoes.

DESSERT

Canadian Apple Pie and Cheese.


Till We Meet Again



THE SHOW MUST GO ON

Even during wartime, life continues to go on. It was important for morale that soldiers have an opportunity to be entertained from time to time.

Below is the program to "Arsenic and Old Lace", which was a runaway hit during the war years both in North America and England. Of special interest are some of the advertisements aimed at military personnel for such things as a personal introduction service (see lower right).

<p>FIRTH SHEPHERD'S 3 CURRENT ATTRACTIONS</p> <p>STRAND Evenings at 6.30 Matinees Thursdays and Saturdays at 2.30</p> <p>2nd Year of "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE" "Biggest laugh of the war-time Theatre."—"Daily Herald."</p> <p>LILIAN BRAITHWAITE MARY JERROLD NAUNTON WAYNE LLOYD PEARSON EDMUND WILLARD MARTIN MILLER EILEEN BENNETT CYRIL SMITH</p>	<p>Strand Handbag Repairs</p> <p>408a STRAND (Dept. 8) W.C.2</p> <p>TELE. 7594. Post or Bring Bag for Estimate.</p>	<p>Ask for Gordon's at the bars</p>	<p>STRAND THEATRE LONDON PROPRIETORS: THE EXECUTORS OF THE LATE JOSÉ G. LEVY LICENSEE & DIRECTOR: LIONEL L. FALCK</p> <p>EVERY EVENING at 6.30 Matinees: Thursdays and Saturdays at 2.30</p> <p>FIRTH SHEPHERD 6^D presents "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE" A New Comedy</p> <p>PROGRAMME</p> <p>THE MAGAZINE PROGRAMME <small>owing to the paper restrictions order, we are compelled to suspend our usual Magazine features, but they will be resumed as soon as normal publication becomes possible.</small> Grantley & Co., Ltd., 61/65, Piccadilly, London, W.1.</p>
<p>SAVOY Evenings at 6.30 Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.30</p> <p>"THE LAST OF MRS. CHEYNEY" A Comedy of the Day before Yesterday CORAL BROWNE ATHENE SEYLER AUSTIN TREVOR JAMES DALE MARGARET SCUDAMORE and JACK BUCHANAN</p>	<p>Ask for BOOTH'S DRY</p> <p>IN THE HEXAGON BOTTLE</p>	<p>Plentiful again when victory is won</p> <p>"Presta" MINERAL WATERS</p> <p>Beverages of Distinction</p>	
<p>ALDWYCH Evenings at 6.45 Matinee, Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.30</p> <p>"TOMORROW THE WORLD" A New Play "Definitely a winner."—"Daily Sketch"</p> <p>ROBERT HARRIS ELIZABETH ALLAN JEAN CADELL LILLY KANN JULIEN MITCHELL JOYCE MARTYN DAVID O'BRIEN</p>	<p>"BULL DOG"</p>  <p>BASS, WORTHINGTON GUINNESS On Sale at all Bars of this Theatre</p> <p>Coffee is served in the Auditorium dur- ing the intervals.</p>	<p>JENNER'S PALE ALE</p> <p>ON SALE AT ALL BARS</p>	<p>"REGENT" INTRODUCTION BUREAU</p> <p>Introductions arranged for Men and Women (Forces and Civilian).</p> <p>Partners arranged for Dances, Theatre, Dinner.</p> <p>Phone, call or write: 74a, REGENT STREET (Entrance Air Street) Phone: REG. 1961</p>



THE WAR ENDS AT LAST

Here we see a page in Maj. Elliott's journal from early May, 1945. Included is a copy of the document with which Germany finally surrendered to the Allies. This meant an end to the war in Europe, although fighting in the Pacific against Japan continued until August of that same year..

Major Elliott would soon be able to return home to Canada. His authorization to wear military decorations is shown above.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
(ARMY)

This is to certify that No. _____ Rank **MAJOR**
NAME Harold William ELLIOTT
UNIT CANADIAN ARMY (ACTIVE)

is entitled to wear War Service Badge "General Service Class".

Number **659599**

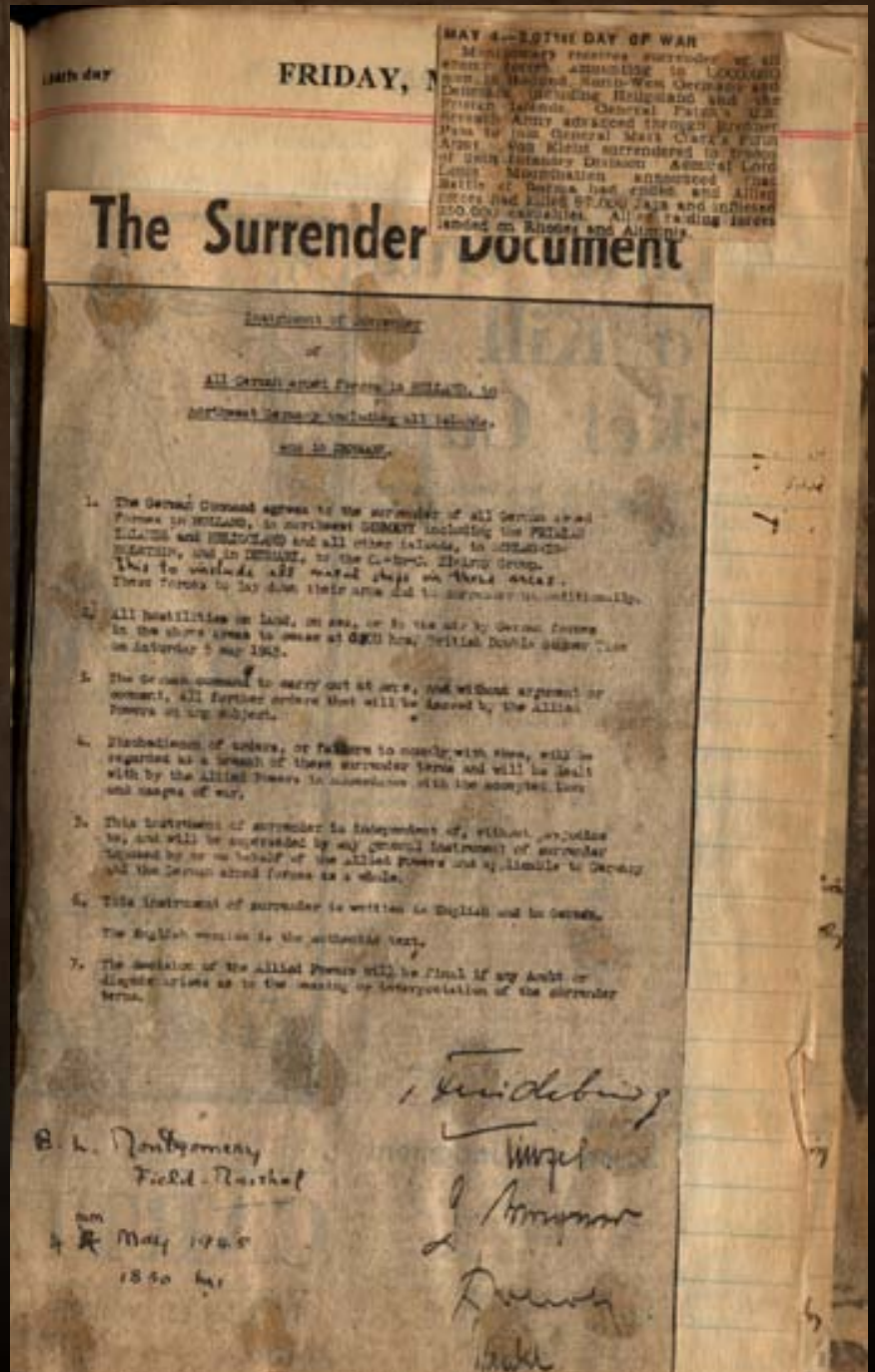
Signature of Holder *Harold Elliott*

W. J. [Signature]
 (Signature of Issuing Officer)

APR 1 1945

Issued at Ottawa, this _____ day of _____ 194...

M.F.M. 95
 100M-2-45 (6003)
 H.C. 177-39-1625





HOME AT LAST

Here is the telegram Maj. Elliott sent to his parents to announce his return from the war in July, 1945. We can only imagine the joy and relief his parents must have felt when they finally held this message in their hands.

NEVER FORGET

By the same token, it is impossible to forget the pain of other less fortunate families of that era. Approximately 40,000 Canadians never got to send a telegram like the one above because they perished during the war.

EXCLUSIVE CONNECTION WITH WESTERN UNION CABLE SERVICE FORM 1111

 **CANADIAN NATIONAL** 

W. M. ARMSTRONG, GENERAL MGR. TORONTO 419PM5 **TELEGRAPHS**

RAJ128 10=NEWQORK NY DEC 7/45 NFT

MR & MRS WM ELLIOTT=
558 HOWEY CRES SU=

ARRIVED ON QUEEN ELIZABETH LEAVING ON SPECIAL ARMY TRAIN
TODAY=

A D ELLIOTT₂

TELEPHONED
30446
1437
B

will call