



# Sabretache

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF  
THE CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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December 2019

## The Sevastopol cannons in Canada

The siege of Sevastopol (at the time called in English the siege of Sebastopol) lasted from October 1854 until September 1855, during the Crimean War. The allied forces (British, French and Ottoman) landed at Eupatoria on 14 September 1854, intending to make a triumphal march to Sevastopol, the capital of the Crimea, with 50,000 men. The 56-kilometre (35 mi) traverse took a year of fighting against the Russians. Major battles along the way were Alma (September 1854), Balaklava (October 1854), Inkerman (November 1854), Tchernaya (August 1855), Redan (September 1855), and, finally, Sevastopol (September 1855). During the siege, the allied navy undertook six bombardments of the capital, on 17 October 1854; and on 9 April, 6 June, 17 June, 17 August, and 5 September 1855.

Sevastopol is one of the classic sieges of all time. The city of Sevastopol was the home of the Tsar's Black Sea Fleet, which threatened the Mediterranean Sea. The Russian field army withdrew before the allies could encircle it. The siege was the culminating struggle for the strategic Russian port in 1854–55 and was the final episode in the Crimean War.

The Treaty of Paris ended the war in March 1856, and the allies collected some 4,000 Russian guns. Half of these went to France, and about 1,500 went to England, along with hundreds of brass guns at the end of the Crimean War. Many of the guns captured at the great Russian Naval base of Sevastopol in the Crimea were offered for display in towns and cities throughout the UK and the British Empire.

20 of these captured guns were presented to Canada, and in the fall of 1857 they were put on display in Montreal before being distributed to other cities. Guns were sent to Brantford, Cambridge, Galt, Hamilton, Kingston, London, Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec City, Stratford, Trois Rivieres, Toronto and Windsor. 18 of these guns still survive.



Russian 24-pounder (TBC) SBML Gun Brantford, Ontario

### CMHS Meeting

The next meeting will be held on

**Tuesday, December 17th**  
**2019 7:00 pm**

At the  
Petty Officers' Mess

**Letter to all members from the President  
on Page 3 and Page 4**

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CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The  
CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

is a non-profit registered society  
which fosters the study of the  
military and the police, and the heritage of  
Canada, the British Empire, and the world  
as well as the preservation of military  
artifacts and records.

The CMHS meets once every calendar month  
at: Petty Officers' Mess  
HMCS Tecumseh  
1820 - 24th Street SW  
Calgary AB T2T 0G6

## Notice of Next Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on  
**Tuesday December 17th, 2019**  
**19:00 (7:00 pm)**

At the Petty Officers' Mess, HMCS Tecumseh.  
Members are reminded that a Donation to the Legion Food Bank is considered  
your unofficial entrance fee to our regular scheduled meetings.

The unofficial agenda of this meeting will be:  
Introduction of guests, Minutes of last meeting Correspondence, Membership re-  
port Treasurer's report, Old business / New business Break, Show & Tell  
The President, **Dave Love** would like to invite everyone to remain after the meet-  
ing for an informal time of fellowship.



Queen's Square  
Cambridge, Ontario



Russian Cast Iron 24-pounder 50-  
cwt Smoothbore Muzzleloading  
Gun, by Butyenev, with double-headed  
Eagle, Crimean War trophy, (Serial No.  
29619), 24. Captured by the British in  
the Crimean War, and given to the city  
of Galt in 1863. Now Mounted in  
Queen's Square, Cambridge. The left  
trunnion carries the serial number, the  
name of the maker, the right trunnion is  
engraved with the calibre, type of gun,  
weight, and date of casting.

***This cannon would kill again  
See Page 4***

## A Letter to the Members from the President

Hi, this is Dave Love. Given that our last meeting was cancelled due to weather and illness, I thought as your new President that I would pass on a few thoughts and information that I was going to mention.

First, though, my apologies for the last minute cancellation of our November meeting. I realized from last minute emails from most of the Executive that due to illness and a prior commitment, we would not have the necessary quorum of three Executive members at the meeting. Thus no formal business could be conducted. Also, from the condition of roads I also assumed regular member attendance would most likely be very low. Therefore, in consultation with a couple of the Executive, I decided to cancel the meeting and a broadcast email was sent to all members. I know this was a last minute thing but I hope most of you saw the email before leaving for the meeting. If that was not the case, my sincere apologies.

My second piece of information is that Dave Gale is willing to continue as our Editor. That is very generous on his part and for that I give my heartfelt thanks. I am sure the membership at large share in those thanks. Dave did mention he always welcomes articles from the membership and thanked those who have done so over the past year.

Thirdly, we are still without an elected Secretary for the upcoming year. Susan Elve, bless her heart, has agreed to continue as Interim Secretary until year end but that is coming quickly. I wish to stress that the job is not onerous with little time commitment. But it is necessary, not only because we need to record our business, etc. but also it is a Provincial requirement under the Alberta Societies Act, that each registered Society have a Secretary as part of the Organization's Executive. Please re-consider and if you can, volunteer for that position.

Fourthly, I would like you to give consider recommendation(s) for a venue and date for our annual dinner. You might remember we passed a motion to move the venue from year to year if there was a wish to do so. This will be discussed at the December meeting.

Lastly, you will note the Resolution printed below concerning a change to our Constitution This is the formal notice of such Resolution. Any Resolution must, under our existing Constitution, be advertised prior in the newsletter prior to the vote. It arises because of an oversight we had concerning our recent elections and notification of such to our out of town members. We see a need to formalize things to ensure all members are kept in all loops. If you cannot attend the meeting, you are invited to pass on input if you feel the need. Also a reminder that all members who have a valid reason for not being available to vote, are welcome to vote by proxy. Simply contact an Executive member with your vote and I will submit it, in confidence, as part of the larger vote at the meeting. You can contact me by phone (403-818-0831) or by email ([dlove@davincibb.net](mailto:dlove@davincibb.net)).

Thanks for your attention. Hopefully I will see most of you at the December meeting. If not, have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

## RESOLUTION

Article IX, Section 2 currently reads: The Society at its discretion shall designate either the September or October General Meeting each year as its Annual General Meeting at such time and place as shall be determined by the Committee.

**Be it Resolved that:** The Society at its discretion shall designate either the September or October General Meeting each year as its Annual General Meeting at such time and place as shall be determined by the Committee. **Prior notice of said meeting shall be given to all persons entitled to receive such notice through the Society Journal and/or Society website and by direct communication at the preceding General Meeting. Such notice shall specify the place, date and hour of said meeting.**

**Resolution continued on Page 4**

## **Resolution by President Dave L. Continued from page 3**

An invitation shall also be included to forward nominations of eligible individuals to fill one or more positions on the Committee. A proxy vote, as applicable, can accompany each nomination. To be accepted, all nominations must have prior approval of the individual being nominated.

By point of clarification, 'Committee' is the term used in our Constitution for the 'Executive', as per government requirements. Also, proxy votes are also welcome for election to any Executive position. This is now part of our Constitution. However, given that nominations are closed at the time of the meeting in question and are voted on at that meeting, we cannot communicate the nominated individuals in real time

## **THE GALT (CAMBRIDGE) GUN continued from page 2 (That would kill again)**

Galt had been a strong supporter of the British Empire and at the time was the largest municipality in Waterloo County. In December 1864 the Russian Gun arrived at the Galt railway station, where reports of the day claim it attracted "considerable attention."

The gun was initially mounted on a wooden carriage and put on display in Queen's Square. In 1866, a group decided to cap off the town's Victoria Day celebrations with "a royal salute of 21 guns fired from the Russian Gun."

The gun was taken from Queen's Square to the top of the hill overlooking Dickson Park. In *A part of our Past: Essays on Cambridge's history* the story goes: "Mr. (William) Boge was assisted by Mr. James Armstrong, who attended to the ramming of the muzzle loading the gun, and by Mr. David Galletly who was working the vent of the gun. Three rounds had been safely fired when the powder for the fourth round was placed in the muzzle. Next came the wadding, which consisted of sod, with Mr. Boge and Mr. Armstrong ramming it home.

**"Suddenly and unexpectedly a fearful roar rent the holiday air as the powder exploded prematurely."**

The account goes on to say Boge and Armstrong were blown seven yards from the mouth of the gun.

"Both were frightfully disfigured."

Three other people were injured in the blast including Galletly, whose hand was burned, and two boys who were bystanders. They were both struck in the face and cut by flying debris.

The two men who died were both members of the Galt Fire Brigade. At their funeral service, their bodies were placed on Fire Engine No. 1 and taken to St. Andrew's cemetery for burial.

The cannon was left at the top of the hill Dickson Park for several weeks before being returned to Queen's Square, never to be fired again.

In May 1910 the Daughters of the Empire had the Russian Gun remounted on the concrete base where it sits today.

