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The Netherlands and Canada: a wartime love affair

The mystery of an enduring relationship

Of the countries liberated by the Canadian Army during the Second World War – Italy, France, Belgium and the Netherlands – an exceptional relationship developed between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Canada. We are reminded of that relationship by the annual gift of 25,000 tulip bulbs to the City of Ottawa, Canadian military veterans' tours, the Netherlands Centennial Carillon in Victoria, and by displays in the Canadian War Museum. No comparable bond, forged in war, developed with the Italians, the French or the Belgians. Americans and Poles fought in the southeastern Netherlands and the British helped to liberate the eastern provinces – there is gratitude for them, but not on the scale shown to Canada's soldiers. Why did this special relationship between Hollanders and Canadians develop at the end of the Second World War?

Tenuous pre-war connections

One can attribute this bond between the two nations to the Second World War, because it was clearly absent before the 1940s. There was always a trickle of Dutch-speaking newcomers to Canada, starting with the Dutch-American Loyalists who migrated to the remaining colonies of British North America in the 1770s and 1780s.[1] The Dutch-American linguistic legacy is evident in the North American name for St. Nicholas: "Santa Claus," which is a corruption of the Dutch "Sinterklaas," the words "boss" (*baas*) and "cookie" – derived from *koekje* (little cake).[2]

Since the 1880s the Canadian government's immigration policy treated Netherlanders as preferred immigrants and they were encouraged to come to Canada by the government and by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.[3] By 1911 there were 56,000 Canadians of Dutch origin. Farmers were wanted and the Dutch were famed for their skill in agriculture. The promise of free farmland on the prairies led Dutch groups to establish agricultural communities, such as Neerlandia and Nobleford in Alberta, or Edam, Saskatchewan. Willem de Gelder, a settler whose correspondence has survived, heard of Canada in a public lecture and emigrated to Manitoba in 1910. He worked as a hired man and a labourer before obtaining his own land. He found the droughts, wildfires, isolation, brutal cold and other hardships of prairie homesteading disheartening.[4] Dutch immigrants were more adept at dairy farming, market gardening and in the cultivation of irrigated land than in raising grain on the drylands of Western Canada. Dutch skills were called upon for the reclamation of farmland from lakes in British Columbia's Fraser Valley before and after the Second World War.

Before the war Canada did not attract many colonists from the Netherlands. The Dutch East Indies were more appealing for adventurers and, since the mid-1800s, Dutch migrants to North

America were drawn to the United States, where there were well-established settlements, such as those in Michigan, Illinois and Iowa. For Netherlanders, Canada was peripheral to the American republic and scarcely recognized as a separate country. As long as there was prosperity at home, there was little incentive to come to Canada.[5]

Canadians, for their part, knew little about the real Netherlands.[6] It was proverbially a country of windmills amid tulip fields, populated by people in Volendam costume, wearing wooden shoes when they were not on skates. The book *Hans Brinker or the Silver Skates* (1865) formed the mental picture that North Americans had of the Netherlands. This children's story was written by an American widow who had not visited the Low Countries before writing her book. This explains curious details such as a boy plugging a leaking dyke with his finger.[7] This is an experiment that no one should try to repeat. For Canadians, that picturesque and fanciful image of the Netherlands would be changed by first-hand experience.

The catalyst of war and liberation

Canadians did not go to war against the Third Reich in September 1939 to liberate the Netherlands from Nazi rule. The threat to Britain was uppermost in Canadian minds and neutral Holland had not yet been invaded. The German conquest of the Netherlands in May 1940 and the flight of the royal family to Britain established a connection between Canada and Holland. In 1942 the future queen Juliana and her two daughters found a safe refuge in Ottawa, Ontario. A third princess, Margriet, was born there in January, 1943 – she is an authentic Canadian princess. Pictures of the little princesses in Canada appeared in propaganda leaflets dropped by aircraft over the Netherlands.[8] As one migrant said "Juliana had lived in Canada and everyone knew it. A princess had been born there in Ottawa, on a piece of ground proclaimed to be Dutch soil."[9] Canada, as a place of exile for the royal family, was slowly intruding on the Netherlanders' consciousness and the war increased awareness of this North American country that was not the United States.

The liberation of the provinces south of the Maas River in the autumn of 1944 was the first occasion for a meeting of peoples. Because of their British style uniforms, Canadians were first mistaken for English "Tommies." The impression given by Canadian soldiers was favourable, even if they were not as rigidly disciplined as Germans. In December 1944 the war diary of 2 Canadian Army Troops Engineers, RCE, noted "the average Canadian soldier has a genius for 'winning friends and influencing people' and the chocolates and cigarettes are only a part of his diplomatic stock-in-trade but his open handedness goes a long way toward removing the national distrust with which inhabitants of the liberated countries are prone to look at all soldiers."[10] Cooperation was already the pattern in military matters. Within the First Canadian Army was the Dutch Princess Irene Brigade, many of whose members had been trained in Canada. The Canadians also were assisted by Dutch resistance members who provided strategic information and guides.

The reception given to the Canadian troops advancing into the western provinces in May 1945

overwhelmed them. Journalist Peter Stursberg recalled the welcome that he, as a Canadian, received after the German capitulation: "The war was over, and the next few days were a jumble of victory parades, wildly cheering crowds, and even the odd skirmish between Dutch Resistance forces and the German SS troops. The celebration began before we reached Utrecht, when a joyous mob descended on us and almost took over our jeep. I was pushed to one side, and the next thing I knew a pretty blond girl had squeezed next to me, and was stuffing golden tulips into my raincoat, and a boy was sitting on my knee. There must have been thirty or forty people on our jeep and trailer, and more were trying to get on as we entered Utrecht. ... the Dutch threw tulips at our troops; a well-aimed bunch of tulips could hit with quite a smack. Johnny Canuck, the ordinary Canadian soldier, was treated like a hero or a film star; he was mobbed by an adoring public, hugged and kissed by pretty girls, and he even had to sign autographs."[11] Captain (later Colonel) C. Sydney Frost remembered "we had some great parties, I'll tell you. It was a wonderful time to be with the regiment, a wonderful time to be alive. ... It all seemed worthwhile, all the wounds and the suffering, suddenly it all seemed worthwhile."[12] The sacrifices made were vindicated by the destruction of Nazi military power and acknowledgement of the benefits brought by the Canadian liberators. The victory parades, military reviews and official celebrations continued until the end of June.

The delirium with which people greeted their liberators in May 1945 is explained by the coincidence of the end of the Nazi occupation with the coming of peace and the ending of a famine that was particularly hard on city residents of the Western Netherlands. They had been denied regular food supplies, household gas and electricity after the railway workers went on strike in September, 1944. Trees were felled, wooden paving blocks lifted, and abandoned houses were demolished to obtain wood chips to feed the tiny "wonder stoves" that warmed darkened rooms in that chilly winter. The urban population subsisted on thin potato soup, sugar beets and adulterated black bread. This diet was insufficient to maintain life and, by April 1945, half of the deaths occurring in the Western and Northern Netherlands were attributed to starvation. Even the central soup kitchens to feed the needy ran out of food. Women acted as food gatherers because men who appeared in public could be forcibly conscripted for work in Germany.

One writer tried to explain what freedom meant that May: "There will be food again; gas, light and water; trains and trams will be running; our men will come back from forced labour in Germany; our prisoners of war and students will return; I will be able to go out whenever I want; ... I don't have to be afraid when a car comes into the street; nor when the doorbell rings at night; ... families will be reunited ... I can ride my bike without fear of confiscation, and I can listen to any radio station I choose."[13] The dark night of terror, confiscations and oppression had lifted.

As one Dutch observer remembered, Canadians "passed out the food and showed the little kids pictures of their own little kids. ... Big men, tough. ... Good, though. I thought I'd like to live ... in a country where these kind of men came from, killing Nazis one day, giving chocolate to little

children in The Dam [square in Amsterdam], the next."[14] Coming out of a winter of hunger and after five years of deprivation, the Dutch found the generosity of the Canadians overwhelming. Soldiers billeted in private homes shared army rations with their hosts, and troops in barracks ate less so that their remaining food could go to the hungry population. Soldiers' food parcels from Canada provided additional treats. By the end of May 1945 the Canadian Army was delivering about 3,000 tons of food to the Dutch population every day. This benevolence made a lasting impression. A Dutch emigrant who arrived penniless in Toronto felt that he would have been fed if he had asked. "Canadians would have taken me into their hearts and fed me. Not because I was Dutch and our Queen had spent the war in Ottawa. No, not that, but because Canadians have huge hearts. They have a great gift for helping."[15]

In a country whose industrial machinery had been dismantled for removal to the Third Reich, whose means of transportation, from locomotives to bicycles, had been stolen, whose port facilities were demolished, economic recovery was a challenge. The destruction of housing had left a sixth of the population homeless. The flooding of farmland to impede Allied advances and the Nazis' seizure of livestock reduced food production. The free spending Canadians and their surplus equipment helped the Dutch economy and society to begin a slow recovery. Nine hundred army trucks were donated to furnish transportation and the Canadian government provided a twenty-five million dollar credit to the Netherlands administration to assist reconstruction. Soldiers set to work to replace demolished bridges, to clear canals of obstructions, and to remove rubble from the streets of war-damaged towns. The trees that the Nazis had felled to block roads were also removed and cut up to supply firewood to civilians. Those Canadian soldiers still in Holland in the late summer of 1945 helped to bring in the harvest.[16] Of lesser value was the booming trade in Dutch souvenirs sold to Canadians: miniature and full-sized wooden shoes were sent or taken home and they show up frequently in Canada's antique and flea markets. They usually bear the inscription "Holland 1945."[17]

The Canadian soldiers' sojourn in the southern Netherlands in the winter of 1944-45 and, later, throughout the country for several months of 1945, as they awaited repatriation to Canada, allowed social relationships to develop. The number of Canadian soldiers in the Netherlands reached a peak of 170,000 in the late spring of 1945. Even troops stationed in war-ravaged Germany preferred to spend their leave in the Netherlands, where they were regarded as liberators rather than as conquerors. Amsterdam was the official leave centre for the First Canadian Army. Tours were one means of relieving the boredom of soldiers who were feeling "browned off" by the slow process of repatriation to Canada. A points system determined who would be allowed to return home first and the passenger vessels available were overtaxed. For the remaining troops in Europe, organized sports, entertainment and educational programmes provided distractions, but the soldiers were impatient to get home. In late June 1945 one Canadian wrote to his friend "I've suddenly developed a terrific case of home-sickness. Since VE day I've been thinking and planning my return to civvy street. ... Holland is beginning to pall a bit. The welcome we received was genuine

enough. These people are anti-Nazi – at least an effective section of them are. Too many are pro-German or just pro-themselves. They are the ones who are amassing fortunes now through black market manipulations. The resistance movement has had a difficult time converting itself from the simple political problem of killing Germans and sabotage to the more complex problems of directing the affairs of a devastated country. The bureaucracy imposed on top isn't making it easier. ... I long for the sight of a western Canadian city again."[18] In July a soldier in "a camp 5 miles out of Nijmegen, Holland," lamented "There is nothing to do at all and the fellows are going slowly mad. I ... am still waiting to get out of here."[19]

Leave hostels and military clubs hosted parties and dances or showed films that brought the civilian residents and soldiers together. In liberated areas in 1944 and again, in December 1945, Canadian troops hosted St. Nicholas Day and Christmas parties for children.[20] At one party a black Canadian soldier played Zwarte Piet (Black Peter), the saint's companion. At the time very few Netherlanders had seen Negroes. Older boys had whispered to the younger children that, if they pushed up Zwarte Piet's sleeves, they would find that he was as white as they were. They were shocked when this rumour proved to be untrue.[21]

At commemorative anniversaries people recall the postwar harmony and good will between Canadian servicemen and the people of the Netherlands. The relationship, however, had its strains. In a conservative, formal and family-centred society, some Canadians seemed brash and ill-mannered. Soldiers had to be reminded to stop smoking in theatres while films were being shown and to remain in their seats during live entertainment. Lt. R.H. Ellison of Toronto wrote in August 1945 "when the fighting was still going on, we came as liberators, but now we are here as guests only."[22] Maria Haayen recalled that "my sister and I met our first Canadians about a week after the liberation, when we were sitting in a little restaurant with some of our girlfriends. A whole bunch of soldiers came in and one guy asked me to dance with him. I didn't want to because he was short, but he wouldn't take no for an answer. We thought that their manners were rough. ... nevertheless, they were our liberators."[23] Prudent young ladies enquired about their suitor's marital status. When a Canadian officer, with whom Wilhelmina de Jong was drinking, claimed to be a bachelor, she asked him for proof. He produced his army pay book as evidence that he really was unmarried.[24]

Interest in the opposite sex was not one-sided. At Winschoten in the Northeastern Netherlands, the Canadian garrison's dances attracted more single women than could be accommodated. "Dutch maidens ... are on the offensive," reported the garrison newspaper and, it added, "a few chippies [women of loose morals] persist in crashing gunner dances." The maximum number of unescorted, single women to be admitted to 47 Battery's dances had to be set at thirty-five and Canadian and Dutch supervisors at the door to regimental parties ensured that all other women had been invited and were eighteen or older.[25] One gunner wondered if "the swell lunches and spot dances" for prizes explained the crowds of women coming to unit socials.[26] Chocolates and other goodies were awarded to the dancers. The Canadian Legion's garrison gift shop sold "silk stockings, ladies' silk

underwear sets, silk scarves and hankies, compacts, perfume, bracelets" and Belgian lace.[27] These gifts were ammunition for the regimental Romeos in pursuit of *meisjes* (girls) in what was laughingly called "dear hunting." A joke that made the rounds had a gunner complaining of "a stab in the back" when his friend moved in on his girlfriend but, as the story concluded, "both have lost out. Her husband is home now."[28]

Dutch writers of popular songs reflected the amorous climate. In addition to the grateful "Thank You, Boys!" and "Canuck Song," which was "dedicated to the Canadian Troops in Holland, May 1945," music sheets appeared with titles such as "Mijn Tommy uit Canada" (my British soldier from Canada) and "Trees heeft een Canadees" (Theresa has a Canadian boyfriend). Cover illustrations on the song sheets showed young women with a Canadian serviceman.[29] (See the illustrations on the cover of this issue. - Ed.) This "fraternization" had consequences.

Two thousand women became Canadian war brides.[30] There were also some 3,400 "liberation children" or "war children" – most fathered by Canadians outside marriage and left behind in the Netherlands.[31] That was the dark side of the liberation that followed the initial euphoria and celebrations. Rape, however, was rare though, in one case, when a woman took off her skirt at home to prevent it from being creased, the Canadian soldier mistakenly saw this as a prelude to more than a kiss.[32] Captain Donald Pearce's wartime journal recorded the joint efforts of the mayor and priest of a Roman Catholic village to deal with the Canadian soldiers' apparent threat to public morals. "The man of God delivered sermons on the immorality of soldiers, and the burgomaster (or 'masterbugger' as we commonly called him) threatened to cut off the supply of electric power in homes where soldiers were staying. The priest dissuaded the girls from attending our dances." Two soldiers used threats, backed with Sten guns, to have the electrical power restored.[33]

There was the black market "cigarette economy" in which everything could be had for a price, in tobacco. Single cigarettes achieved the purchasing power of one guilder; their value was more certain than that of the wartime paper money or zinc coins. Civilians preferred to be paid in cigarettes. Canadian Herbert Gater paid his wedding expenses with tobacco: "eleven hundred cigarettes for the rings and photographer, and cigarettes and chocolate to settle the hotel bill."[34] My late father's Dutch housemaid was convinced that men had been released from Canadian prisons to serve in the army – a suspicion undoubtedly based on the misdeeds of some servicemen. Canadian offenders were more likely to be guilty of selling military supplies on the black market, heavy drinking and of reckless driving than of violent crimes. Road accidents seemed to be common. A Canadian complained of "people crowding the roads on foot and bicycles, reluctant to clear the way for faster traffic."[35] The Dutch regarded Canadian drivers as dangerous speeders.[36] Mayor F. De Boer of Amsterdam recalled Lt.-Gen. Guy Simond's "pithy pronouncement [that] neither all Canadians nor all Amsterdam people are angels. But the difficulties arisen [sic] were always solved in harmony between the military and civil authorities."[37] Occasional Canadian misdeeds were treated with indulgence: "*Canadezen, Zij kunnen een potje bij ons breken*" (the Canadians can break

some of our crockery any time).[38] On the other side, a letter writer to the *Winschoten Exile* who identified himself as "Tired Standing" bemoaned the number of Dutch civilians, especially children, who occupied theatre seats at shows reserved for Canadian soldiers.[39]

In a farewell letter to the Canadians, Mayor Alexander Jacobus Romijn of Winschoten acknowledged "complaints and frictions" between the Dutch and their unexpected guests. He nonetheless thanked the Canadians for their "unselfish effort ... to help us in all our economic and social difficulties," for their "contribution to our social recovery" and for a "line of conduct recommended by the higher military authorities," which produced a "good understanding in the relations between garrison and civilians."[40] Canadians had welcomed Netherlanders to their social and sports events and participated in community celebrations. Soldiers stationed at Winschoten had delivered food supplies and coal, rebuilt demolished bridges, and even provided a bus service in the absence of public transit.

Yetty (Enk) Roos spoke for Winschoten's residents when she wrote "we will always have nice memories of the many happy evenings spent together with you on [sic] your parties, in your mess, while seeing your shows or in our houses. We have laughed a lot together and learnt the funniest expressions like – that you have to 'twist the arms' of people, who are 'on the wagon,' to get them [to] accept 'one for the road.' Some months ago that would have been 'Double Dutch' to us. (By the way, it is amazing how easily you can twist the arms of even the strongest Canadians.) Well, I hope that you all will be very happy back in Canada. Farewell. I wish it could be 'Au revoir.'"[41] The happy times shared by Canadian servicemen and Dutch civilians were remembered with nostalgia and affection.[42]

After two wars against Germany within thirty years, Canadians did not want their soldiers who had died in that country to be buried in it.[43] Their bodies were interred in military cemeteries on the Dutch side of the border along with the 7,600 Canadians killed in the liberation of the Netherlands. This policy explains the large size of Canadian war cemeteries, such as those at Bergen-op-Zoom, Holten and Groesbeek. The ample evidence of lives sacrificed and the generally good conduct of Canadian troops in the Netherlands meant that Canada became a preferred destination for emigrants leaving postwar Europe. They felt that they now knew something about Canada thanks to personal contact with Canadians.[44] "We hope," wrote J. Nikerk of the Amsterdam tourism office in 1945, "that Canada will be among the first of the new ties we shall make overseas, and that perhaps many of our children, who are feeling the lack of space here in Europe, may in the future contribute to the development and prosperity of your people and country."[45] Other writers spoke of emigration, not as a pleasant choice, but as a cruel necessity to free the Netherlands of the homeless, the unemployed, and even of low-ranking Dutch Nazis.[46]

Former destinations for emigrants were not as open as Canada. The American quota system limited the flow of foreign immigrants into the United States. The loss of the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) in 1949 had two consequences: it closed off an outlet for overseas migrants and imposed a burden on

the Netherlands with the return of former colonists and native allies of the Dutch armed forces. These arrivals added to the demographic pressure upon a small, exhausted country. Refugees from the former colony often re-embarked for Canada. The Netherlands government and religious associations aided the placement of Dutch migrants with Canadian employers. The movement of people was propelled by harsh, postwar living conditions at home and by optimism about life in Canada.[47]

The blend of motives leading to emigration was apparent to Donald Pearce in April 1945 after a conversation with a young Dutchman in the resistance, whose brother had died serving with the German Waffen SS and whose father had been denounced as a resister and deported to Germany. "Prematurely disillusioned, he hopes (as how many Hollanders I have spoken to) to start a new life all over again in 'The New World,' – in Canada, which is to them a fabulous land of peace, prosperity, and vast fertile farms, where life is perfect and labour a pleasure; a giant pre-war Holland, full of people as gay and pleasant as the Canadian soldiers who have liberated them. 'You are so healthy compared to the Germans, or us,' they say. And they think of their own children and want them to resemble us."[48] The well-fed, muscular Canadian soldiers stood out from the pale, emaciated civilians and it is not surprising that women were attracted to them.

Dutch war brides were the forerunners of a large wave of newcomers in Canada in 1947-1950 – the largest migration of Netherlanders to Canada. From 1947 to 1970 nearly 200,000 moved to Canada. Chain migration was common, as war brides sponsored their relatives who, in turn, aided the departure of friends and kin. Private correspondence encouraged others to follow. One woman from Rotterdam recalled "my sister married a Canadian soldier after the war was over, and she'd write back telling [me] how wonderful it was in Canada – how beautiful the country was and she now had a baby girl and her husband had started a hardware store in Vancouver and [how] the government had given him $5,000 to buy it and it never got cold there, and I thought why am I here in Rotterdam?"[49] When a young man told his parents that his ambition was to migrate to the United States, his mother was angry: "You will go to Canada. They are our friends. ... You will go there or you don't go."[50] The Dutch government facilitated this migration, although it put strict limits on the amount of currency that could be taken out of the country.[51] Emigrants bypassed this restriction by converting their money into goods and taking these possessions with them. Dutch immigrants to Canada were famed for their large, wooden crates of "domestic effects."

Although there are now nearly a million Canadians with Dutch ancestors, these people are largely invisible in the European stock population. The institutional frameworks that set them apart are provided by Christian Reformed congregations and by Calvinist Christian Schools. The focus is on religion rather than on language or ethnic traditions; there are few secular Netherlandic associations. There is also a vague dietary ethnicity. Wherever there are Netherlanders, there will be an Indonesian restaurant close by and, perhaps, a grocery that provides a few familiar delicacies, such as apple butter, breakfast cake, rollmops, meat croquettes and *zoute dropjes* (salted licorice). What is distinctive about the

Dutch Canadians is that they do not stand out from the rest of the population. They do not insist on public acknowledgement of their existence. As a consequence, their presence goes unrecognized, just like the identity of General (now Senator) Roméo Dallaire's mother, who was a war bride from the Netherlands.

Conclusion

The role of the Canadian armed forces in the liberation of the Netherlands and the temporary presence of the First Canadian Army started a wartime romance with lasting consequences. It produced a solidarity between the two nations. Canadian soldiers remarked on the extraordinary welcome that greeted them in Holland, in comparison with their reception in other countries. One veteran, Victor Murgaski, offered his explanation for the "sort of kindred feeling" he feels for the Dutch rather than for the French or Belgians. "When the Canadians had been in France it was wartime, and everyone was preoccupied with survival; in Belgium, half the population had been sympathetic to the Germans; but in the Netherlands the Dutch saw us liberate their country and saw our soldiers give up their lives. All during the war, the Dutch had despised the Germans who mistreated them. The Canadians were the first friendly people on the scene, the first people to show respect and warmth. ... The Dutch knew that Canada had not hand-picked the Netherlands, but they liked Canadians."[52] Like many romances, this one resulted from a chance encounter. Like other successful relationships, there was an equality of sorts: two constitutional monarchies – small in population terms[53] – that value orderliness, decency and compassion for the unfortunate. These are two countries that are attempting to maintain in an intolerant world. These shared values have cemented a cordial relationship that was born out of war.

NOTES

[1] A few individual Dutch speakers from the Netherlands, Flanders and New York arrived in the pre-1760 French colony of New France where they were all known as "Flamands" (Flemings). Without accompanying families, they married into the *Canadien* population and were rapidly assimilated.

[2] Another Dutch inspired word in North American English is "stoop" (from *stoep*) for a porch or front step. The North American use of "poop" to mean excrement is probably derived from the Dutch *poep*.

[3] This was based on an ethnic stereotype and upon experience. The Netherlanders were thought to be clean, hard-working, and efficient farmers who integrated well into Anglo-Canadian society.

[4] W. de Gelder (H. Ganzevoort, trans.), *A Dutch Homesteader on the Prairies* (Toronto, 1973).

[5] A general survey of Dutch migration to Canada before 1980 is Herman Ganzevoort, *A Bittersweet Land: The Dutch Experience in Canada, 1890-1980* (Toronto, 1988).

[6] The common use of the word "Dutch" in nineteenth-century North America to describe German-speakers reveals the lack of distinction made between Netherlanders and Germans.

[7] Mary Mapes Dodge's story of Hans Brinker was well known to American tourists and, to gratify them, statues of the mythical Hans were erected at Spaarndam (1950) and at Madurodam in The Hague.

[8] "De Prinsesjes groeien op," in *De Wervelwind,* Mei 1942, p.22.

[9] Barry Broadfoot, ed., *The Immigrant Years: From Europe to Canada, 1945-1967* (Vancouver, 1986), p.29. The "piece of ground" was a room in the Ottawa Civic Hospital. Broadfoot never identified the subjects of his interviews, the location of their home or their exact origins, although some of this information comes out incidentally. Perhaps Broadfoot hoped that anonymity would ensure his informants' candour. The lack of context as well as the absence of the interviewer's questions, to which the subjects were responding, are serious defects in these interviews. The result is tantalizing and frustrating because the recorded testimony cannot easily be verified. Broadfoot destroyed the audiotapes before donating his records to Malaspina University College in Nanaimo, British Columbia. He died in December 2003.

[10] War Diary of HQ (RCE), 2 Canadian Army Troops Engineers, 5 Dec. 1944, Uden (Noord Brabant). The apparent author of this statement is the adjutant, Capt. N. Sadlier-Brown. This war diary is located in the Royal Canadian Engineers' Museum, CFB Gagetown, NB.

[11] Peter Stursberg, *The Sound of War: Memoirs of a CBC Correspondent* (Toronto, 1993), pp.260-1.

[12] Quoted in Lance Goddard, *Canada and the Liberation of the Netherlands, May 1945* (Toronto, 2005), pp.214-5.

[13] Anonymous author quoted by Henri van der Zee, *The Hunger Winter: Occupied Holland, 1944-5* (London, 1982), p.286. There is no footnote for this quotation.

[14] Broadfoot, p.33.

[15] *Ibid.*, p.74.

[16] The benevolent and constructive role of the Canadian armed forces in postwar Holland is chronicled in Norman Phillips and J. Nikerk, *Holland and the Canadians* (Amsterdam, c.1945).

[17] Sgt. Ted Hogg of Toronto itemized the Dutch souvenirs he was sending to his parents in November 1945: "2 souvenir spoons," a diamond polisher's disk, a "little plaque from Volendam" to match one already mailed, and a child's cap from Marken. He asked "How do you like the picture of yours truly & friend Ernie dressed as Volendamers?" 28 November, 1945, letter of Sgt. A.E. Hogg at Apeldoorn, in the Netherlands, to Mr. and Mrs. Fred J. Hogg in Toronto, Ontario, in the author's collection of seventy-three letters to and from Canadian servicemen in 1941-46.

[18] 18 June 1945 letter of Bdr. Bill Tuomi in the Netherlands to Craig Miller of Vancouver, author's collection. Bdr. Tuomi admired the social democratic parties of Britain and Canada and this political outlook may have affected his impressions of the Netherlands.

[19] July 1945 letter of Pte. H.W. Bond to Marie Welcher of Winnipeg, author's collection.

[20] See, for example, "Arnhem Kiddies Feted by Canucks," *The Maple Leaf,* 8 Dec., 1945: "3,500 children from the 44 schools in the area parade[d] with St. Nicholas to Sacrum Hall where a gala Christmas party was given by No.1 Canadian Army Equipment Selection unit. The parade led by St. Nicholas, mounted in a three ton truck, was accompanied by an artillery band and a local brass band. The children were entertained in three groups and were served hot chocolate and cakes."

[21] The late Capt. Lorne Mackenzie, a veteran of the 8th Reconnaissance Regiment (RCAC), told me this story.

[22] *The Winschoten Exile*, 31 Aug., 1945, p.2. The *Exile* was a weekly newspaper published for the 5th Canadian Light Anti-Aircraft (Artillery) and 17th Field Artillery Regiments, RCA, in 1945. Lt. Ellison was the newspaper's editor. Several weekly Canadian regimental newspapers, such as *The Staghound, The 8th Hussar,* and the *Teepee Tabloid,* were published in the Netherlands, but very few copies have survived. My own collection of *The Winschoten Exile* was given to the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation. *The Maple Leaf* was a newspaper for all Canadian troops and, thanks to its large press runs, issues of this journal are easily found.

[23] David Kaufman and Michiel Horn, eds., *A Liberation Album: Canadians in the Netherlands, 1944-45* (Toronto, 1980), p.118.

[24] *Ibid.,* p.146.

[25] *Winschoten Exile,* 25 Aug., 1945; 21 Aug., 1945.

[26] *Ibid.,* 29 Sept., 1945.

[27] *Ibid.,* 13 Oct., 1945. The Oct. 6th issue described "one of our promising young Romeos" who "carries around with him at all times a pair of silk stockings, which he dazzles [dangles?] in front of the girls' eyes."

[28] *Ibid.,* 17 Nov., 1945.

[29] I am indebted to Dr. Erik Somers of the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, Amsterdam, for providing me with this information. The writers and composers of these tunes were different people; there was no duplication in the names.

[30] One cynical soldier suspected that marriage to a Canadian was a convenient escape for his former Dutch girlfriend from the hardships of postwar life to the imagined comforts of Canada. On Dec. 12, 1945, Cpl. A. "Jack" L. Arnold at Vernon, B.C. wrote to Signalman William Jones "I received a letter from my beloved in Holland ... and Joe I've been jilted, yes she's going to marry some Canadian sucker and come to Canada. ... I was intending to see more of her when I got back overseas. She was the one I went 8 months with in Nijmegen, the one that taught me to speak Hollands fluently. Ja ik ken [sic] goed Hollands praet, en feel [sic] ook." From the author's collection.

[31] Olga Rains, a war bride who has taken an interest in these children, has estimated their number at 6,000. This figure is repeated by Jacqueline Chartier, "Canada's Forgotten War

Babies," in *Esprit de Corps,* Vol.12, issue 4 (April 2005), p.40. Since this figure exceeds the total number of illegitimate children born in the Netherlands in the year after May 1945, it is too high, even if some children fathered by Canadians were born to married women with absent husbands and registered as legitimate conceptions.

[32] This story came from my late father, Lieut. Col. W.J. Moogk, then a senior staff officer of 21st Army Group Headquarters (Combined Operations Training), who was a judge at the soldier's court martial.

[33] Donald Pearce, *Journal of a War: North-West Europe 1944-1945* (Toronto, 1965), p.136. The war diary of HQ, RCE, 2 Canadian Army Troops, noted on 31 January 1945, "VD incidence reached a new low – maybe the curfew enforced by the local Clergy on the village maidens [of Uden] has something to do with that." The same diary's summary for the month of May, 1945, reported that at Emmen "from all reports the fraternizing is very good in that part of Holland." All "fraternization" with German women and men was officially forbidden.

[34] Kaufman and Horn, *A Liberation Album,* p.146.

[35] *Winschoten Exile,* 27 Oct., 1945.

[36] See the newspaper *Het Parool: Dagblad voor Apeldoorn en omstreken,* 9 Oct., 1945, "Veilig verkeer" in which the author writes "zijn wij, weggebruikers, nu midden in het snelverkeer geplaatst. Er wordt in 'Canadeesch' tempo gereden." The 12 Oct., 1945, issue of this newspaper reported the death of a local boy who was struck by "een militaire vrachtauto." The army truck almost certainly was Canadian. Dutch drivers since then have acquired a similar taste for speed.

[37] *The Maple Leaf: Northwest Europe Edition,* 10 Nov., 1945, "A Message from the Burgomaster." Prime Minister Prof. W. Schermerhorn also alluded to the difficulties that arose as Canadians and Netherlanders came to know each other better after the liberation: "That closer acquaintance may not always have been idyllic, and we have been surprised at each other sometimes, perhaps even annoyed." His message to the departing Canadian troops appears in the same issue of *The Maple Leaf.*

[38] Quoted by Alan Edmonds in an article originally printed in 1967 in *Maclean's* magazine and reprinted in *The Canadians at War* (n.p., 1969), 2 vols., Vol.2, p.652. This was a Reader's Digest publication.

39 *Winschoten Exile,* 13 Oct., 1945. Some Canadian soldiers, who thought that they should pay nothing to attend movies, had to be cajoled to pay the two guilder theatre admission.

[40] *Ibid.,* 24 Nov., 1945.

[41] *Ibid..*

[42] "Nan" from Utrecht wrote on 15 Dec., 1945 to Signalman William Jones, a Canadian in England en route to Canada, "I have never been dancing since your departure. ... We are talking much of you there [here]. It was a fine time was[n]'t it? ... It was a pity of that Tango but when you had been staying here longer, I could have learned it better. It was so quickly that you must start for England.

You asked me if I had a boy friend again. No Bill! I don't – no Dutchman and no Canadian. I thank you again for the pleasant time we have had though I couldn [sic] understand you sometimes. Now mijn grote jongen do you understand that words? I will say cheerio. ... Write soon, Love, Nan." Author's collection.

[43] The 708 Canadians buried in the Reichswald Forest Cemetery within Germany are airmen. Royal Canadian Air Force personnel shot down over Germany and other Canadians who died in captivity were also buried in Germany. At Adeghem Cemetery in Belgium the Canadian dead from the battle of the Breskens Pocket and from the Scheldt campaign were buried. These men were casualties in the campaign to liberate the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

[44] Potential immigrants were informed about the peculiarities of North American life by postwar books. One of the earliest publications was Walter Mees' *Stars and Stripes en Maple Leaves: Leven en Streven in Amerika en Canada* (Amsterdam, 1945). Walter Mees (1904-84) had gone to North America after his marriage in 1935 with the intention of becoming an American citizen. In Canada he had worked as a salesman in a Toronto department store during the late 1930s. Mr. Mees was employed by a weigh scale manufacturer in Rotterdam in May 1940 when the Nazis invaded. In the last year of the war he was hiding from the compulsory German labour service and used his time as an *onderduiker* to write his book. Mr. Mees later moved to Venezuela and then to the United States with his wife and daughter. He was employed by DuPont Industries in Wilmington, Delaware, until his retirement. He ended his life in the Netherlands. This biographical information was provided by his widow, Hendrika (Ott de Vries) Mees, in 1987 and by their daughter, Madelon van Ruyven, in 2007.

[45] *Holland and the Canadians,* p.28.

[46] Dr. W.M.A. van de Wijnpersse, "Emigratie!: Een Vreedzame Oplossing van onze Overbevolking," in Nijmegen's weekly newspaper *Het Kompas,* 2de Jaargang, Nos.22-23 (Oktober, 1945). The high-ranking Nazis were to be put on trial and punished. The destinations he mentions are the Netherlands Indies and South America. Getting rid of the Dutch Nazis was part of the post-war "cleansing" (*zuivering*) of the Netherlands that analysts felt was necessary and it included the replacement of wartime zinc coins with silver and bronze ones.

[47] The motives impelling people to leave the Netherlands in recent years were different. Take, for example, the testimony of Martina ter Beek, who emigrated to Prince Edward Island in 1985: "we wanted something better for ourselves and especially for the children. In Holland we were very limited by our inefficient farm, high taxes, and the chronic over-regulation that exists there in everything." See Trudy Duivenvoorden Mitic, ed., *People in Transition: Reflections on Becoming Canadian* (Markham, 2001), p.40. Since 1995 the tension and conflicts created by large communities of unassimilated, non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands have produced a new surge in Dutch immigration to Canada. See Doug Saunders, "It just doesn't feel like Holland any more," in *The Globe and Mail,* 23 April, 2005. Canada has the largest number of Dutch citizens living abroad, even greater than the number in Germany, in

Belgium or in the United States of America.

[48] Pearce, *Journal of a War,* p.170.

[49] Broadfoot, *The Immigrant Years,* p.184.

[50] *Ibid.,* p.251.

[51] According to Trudy Duivenvoorden Mitic and J.P. LeBlanc, *Pier 21: The Gateway that Changed Canada* (Hantsport, 1988), p.133, the limit was $100 per adult and $50 per dependent child.

[52] Kaufman and Horn, *A Liberation Album,* p.161. Historians do not confirm Murgaski's impression of great pro-German feeling among the Belgians.

[53] In 1941 Canada had a population of eleven and a half million while the Netherlands population was about nine million.