
Art Presswell

Ingersoll's Singing Soldier

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Introduction

Memories are a very precious gift. Photographs not only bring back specific memories, but evoke others. Unfortunately, photos fade and crack, get put away into a box at the back of a shelf somewhere or even get lost altogether. Others are saved but have no identification. This project is a compilation of both photographs and memories. It is also a tribute to a remarkable man - a Canadian soldier.

Art Presswell: a Soldier's Journey

By YVONNE HOLMES MOTT

There's no doubt about it: Arthur William Presswell has had – and still does enjoy – an interesting life. The 83 year old veteran, who is still known for his remarkable singing voice, literally sang his way to the beaches of Normandy – at the request of his sergeant-major, Dixie McDonald.

Art, as he is known to everyone in Ingersoll, was born in London, England in 1921. He came to Canada when he was five years old, but then went back, with his mother, May and brother, Frank, when he was 14. He had just completed Grade 9 at the Ingersoll Collegiate Institute. The young man stayed there for two years, working in the City of London, as a “gofer” for a ladies garment company.

In 1937 he came back to Canada with his family and went to work in the Dominion Store. That same year, he joined the Ingersoll Pipe Band, a decision that had a huge impact on the rest of his life. He still has fond memories of Ehon Goodall who tutored him on the drums.

Art vividly recalls the year 1939. He was working for Bill Forman in the Superior Store, near King Street East, with Keith Geddie. Bill McDougall was the manager. A barber, Mr. Goffin, used to put a loud speaker at his front door and broadcast Hitler's speeches out into the streets. “We couldn't understand any of it, but we knew we didn't like it.”

The next year he was playing with Ingersoll's competition pipe band in Embro and the band won first prize. While there he met Pipe Major Arthur Costorphine who was scouting for recruits for the Highland Light Infantry of Canada (HLIofC), and he asked Art if he would join them. He had just turned 19. Art enlisted on July 8, 1940 in Stratford and was given the rank of Drum Corporal.

Art explains, “Bandsmen were in an elite position at that time. Our duties included playing Reveille every morning at 6 a.m.; playing again every morning for the Battalion as it lined up for parade; and playing for every route march, whether they were two miles or twenty miles long. We also played for every special occasion in the Officers Mess, such as St. Andrews Night. We also had Parade Square duty and played Retreat, for the lowering of the flag, at Stratford every night.”

In December of that year he was ordered to Quebec City where the troops moved into Cofield Barracks, a former Prisoner of War camp. The long, wooden huts were heated with four pot bellied stoves that burned soft coal. “It was not a good environmental experience, but we lived through it,” he smiles. “You'd wake up with soot all over and your nose and eyes would be clogged up.” Since we had been covered with so much soot while we slept, the order was given that we would be “shaking blankets by numbers” as we coined it.

There were a lot of complaints about the food, particularly the tough meat, which was rumoured to be horse-meat. One day in the Mess, the Duty Officer exploded, “I don't mind if I have to eat horse meat, but don't leave the leather harness on it!”

It was a hard, cold winter and Art has many other interesting stories about how they coped. The Band performed for a church parade once a week. He recalls how the Band also arrived first and had to wait for the officers and Battalion to arrive. One day they were kept waiting so long the pipers' fingers and lips and cheeks were so frozen they could not play. The drummers had to keep the beat for the whole two miles.

After six weeks they were ordered by the Minister of Defence to move to Debert, Nova Scotia. At Debert they joined 10,000 men of the Third Division, the 7th, 8th and 9th Brigades of the Canadian Army.

They were there from February to mid July and even planted gardens there, in what they now called "Debert in de Bush". The Pipe Band went on a recruiting drive through Nova Scotia including Cape Breton Island and Prince Edward Island. They were opening a big Highland Park on Cape Breton and went to a dance in their kilts, mistakenly expecting a warm reception and at least some admiration for the way they were dressed. Competition came in the form of the Elgin Regiment's brass band. It was welcome competition, though, as it now meant there were eight Ingersoll men there, four from each Regiment.

Then, in mid July the HLIs, joined by the Regimente de Chaudiere, boarded the HMS Strathmore with the HMS Malaya beside their ship and headed for Europe. Art, who slept in a hammock on the top deck, describes it as "an uneventful trip". This is good news since the men had been told that if anyone fell over-board, it would be too bad because the ship would not stop. He has fond memories of the Islamic Lascars who were part of the crew. "Their job was to keep the ship clean and they did. They also rolled their own cigarettes and prayed three times a day on their prayer mats."

They docked in Scotland, at Gourock and after playing there boarded a train for Aldershot. Art says that after the old train with cane seats they had travelled on in Canada, the perfect comfort of the 200 mile trip in England was amazing.

He recalls that at Crewe they had a break and the ladies at the station had tea ready for them. He also had a banana – the last one he would eat for four years. Art says the people were so happy there. They had gone through the Battle of Britain and survived. "Their spirit was inspiring to all of us."

They were billeted at the historic Televera Barracks which had the largest parade grounds the young soldier from Ingersoll had ever seen. They slept on the same bunks – iron beds, no springs – that the Duke of Wellington and his troops has slept on. "The mattresses were three hard "biscuits" as they were called. And the only visitors we had there were the ghosts of Wellington's troops."

Art also vividly remembers his first meal in an English mess. "It consisted of 'well bred' sausages. They were bread from end to end. And they were served with coffee that tasted like iodine." There was also strawberry jam "that had everything in it but strawberries, including turnip. While there he met three recruits from Ingersoll, the Rev. C. D. Daniel and Tommy Todd; later, in a café, he sat down with a Military Police Officer, Bill Gilling from Ingersoll.

When the three divisions were stationed in Britain, in the early stages of the war (1941) we were known as “MacNaughton’s three-ring circus” by German propagandists. One of the men on the German radio that broadcast to Britain was “Lord Ha-ha.” Apparently he was an Englishman that had defected to Germany. Their message was they knew where we were all the time.

In 1942 the U.S.A. joined the war and he met his first American soldier. “The soldier asked me how long I had been there. When I told him, he asked me if I had Rotation Leave coming up. I didn’t know what he meant. He explained that they have to have leave every two years. ‘We’re here for the duration’ was my reply.”

Art was posted to several different camps. “Bognor Regis was a nice little town on the south coast which we were guarding because an invasion was considered imminent. We really became part of the population there. We even had a Christmas party for the kids and I still have a picture taken there. There was a very good rapport between the locals and the Canadian soldiers.”

While there he was taught to play the bugle and still blushes when talking about the first time he played in the Cook House. “The men were lined up, ready to go and hungry. It didn’t come out very good and the men were shouting at me. It got so flustered I could have thrown the bugle away.”

The next orders took them to “Horrible Horhan”, called that because of its wet, isolated location. Not only did they live in crowded Bell tents, but there was only one pub for the 1000 men there.

They were stationed in the Horsham area twice on big estates – so big that Art had to ride a bike to get to the location where he was to play Last Post. Once, he had just finished playing and walked a few steps when he felt an electrical current go through him. “It was not enough voltage to kill, but it sure surprised me.”

One of the funniest stories Art tells involves a trip to London to visit his relatives. He took his buddy, Casey Sagan, of Kitchener, a piper, with him. After the visit they went back to Victoria Station, but got side-tracked at The Bunch of Grapes and Lord High Admiral, two pubs, before they boarded their train. A blackout was in effect on the way to Horsham, so the two men fell asleep on their way to Horsham. There was just one little light over the name of each station. When they woke up at a station the name was Ford. It was midnight and they were about 20 miles south of Horsham. When they asked when the next train to Horsham would arrive they were told by the station master it would be the next morning. Resigned, they found the road to Horsham and started to walk. They made it, dead tired, in time to hear Reveille and make their way, very surreptitiously, to their billets. They lined up for breakfast and learned they were to leave on a route march at 9 a.m. “We were to march with packs, no instruments and given German 42 machine guns to carry. Our route was straight back to where we had just come from! On top of that, when we got to South Downs we had to do some cliff climbing. We never went to sleep on a train again!”

Art was billeted in Scotland twice. While in Oban at Loch Sunart he met two spinsters “old enough to be my mother” who took an instant liking to him. Art was in charge of the base post office and regularly had to take the mail to the local post office where Jeannie and Amy MacPherson would make him tea and scones on a “girdle”, not a griddle, took him home for full meals and even allowed him to have a bath in their home. “They wrote to me after the war for about four years. I was almost like a long lost brother to them. Jeannie played the piano and we sat there listening to her play many good old Scottish tunes, some of which we played in the band. It was a home away from home.”

Next came a posting to Rothyse, the second time they had been on the Isle of Bute, across the river from Glasgow. “We got there during the two week August Bank Holiday and the town was inundated with thousands of Glaswegian kids. Our band was directed to play for incoming visitors. Every day we would march down Victoria Street, the main street, and as we played we were swamped by eight to 12 year old kids. They would walk in among us and pull the ribbons off the pipes, dislodging them from the pipers’ arms and hit the batter head of the drums with a stick. It was all done in fun and the kids had a good time.”

Then it was back to the south coast at Bournemouth, preparing for invasion. Next was Angmering and then Dosport where the barracks had a flat roof. That flat roof not only provided a place for clothes lines to be hung, but it was where Art had to go, lifted up by jaws, to play Reveille. At Southampton their camp was right across the road from black and white American units. It still bothers Art that you would never see the black and white Americans sitting together. “But the Canadians were happy to sit with the Black Americans.”

By spring 1944 they were quarantined at Botley Camp, so “we knew something was up.” They played poker, “anything for a diversion.” They had been inspected by Monty, “a unique figure who would come across the field wearing a beret, leather jacket and medals. He was the only general of any rank who allowed the soldiers to stand at ease until he started to talk to them. He was unorthodox in many ways. He told us where we were going and that some would not be coming back.” They were also inspected by General Eisenhower. The band was scheduled to play for the March Past and were kicking a football around while waiting for ceremonies to get underway. “I turned around and was face to face with Ike. ‘Excuse me, sir, I said. He replied, ‘That’s all right, son’.”

On June 5 they got their orders to get their gear. Sixty hundred-weight trucks were waiting to take them to a debarkation place. On the boats they carried a 60 pound pack, wrapped in a bed roll; a 48 hour food pack (Spam, biscuits, hard candies, a cube of oatmeal and a little burner to cook it on; a short handled spade to dig fox holes; a collapsible bike; 303 rifle, Commando knife) and a Mae West jacket wrapped around them. On June 6 they departed. Art remembers these events as if they happened yesterday.

“On our way across the channel, my company Sergeant Major, Dixie McDonald (later killed in action), said, ‘Come on Art; get the men singing!’ I did, but I don’t remember what we sang. We were on a LCIL (Landing Craft Infantry Large) and we were below deck. When the time came to disembark, we came to the deck, picked up our bikes and proceeded down the

ramps into waist-high water. We didn't know it at the time, but the beach we landed on was at Benieres-sur-Mer.

“There were the North Nova Scotians, the Stormont, Dundas and Glengary Highlanders and H.L.I., known as the only Canadian Highland Brigade. The 7th and 8th Brigades had landed and were pushing toward Caen.

“The scene before us at Benieres-sur-Mer was one of total destruction. The scene around us from the channel was full of boats and from the distance we could see a British dreadnought firing its large 16” guns inland. It gave us a sense of security. We owe a debt of gratitude to the RCN. Their boys did a great job getting us to the beaches.

“We proceeded up the beach to a small village road. On the village road we cut off our Mae Wests and laid down our bicycles. The conditions were such that we couldn't use our bicycles anyway. The opposition was very heavy and the advance had been slowed down. We were reinforcement troops and our job was to proceed inland, pass through the lines that had been established by our troops, and then help them take over the front.

Art vividly remembers the first time he saw a dead soldier. “The first casualty I saw was one of ours, probably a private from the Queen's Own Rifles regiment. We had passed through the Queen's Own and the Chaudieres who had just recently finished a skirmish with the Germans, and once again we saw the high cost of war. As we proceeded through the skirmish sight we came upon a German staff car that had been hit with phosphorous bombs. It was completely burned out with the four Germans still in the car. It was not a good sight. I recall feeling that it was just like a dream; I had not imagined sights like this. Were we scared? Yes! But we didn't have time to dwell on it.

“A few miles up the road we could see casualties on each side of the road, attended to by the medics. We finally reached our goal, the village of Le Boisson where we dug in a farmer's field beside his house. On our front was a stone wall with the back entrance open which was typical of the buildings in this rural village. We had to draw our water from the only well in the village that we could find, a well located at the centre of the village. There was always the danger of lingering German snipers. They were everywhere, hidden in the trees, fields and woods. They would run out of ammo and walk boldly through the back entrance of the farm where we were after firing at us, calling out “Nicht schiessen, nicht schiessen!” Mind you, this was after taking pot shots at us and trying to kill as many of us as they could.

“We slept on the ground under a tarpaulin. Since we never took off our clothes or our boots, we were ready for any emergency. We cooked over a fire pit on which lay several iron bars, bars that would later be involved in my own accident.

“Before coming to Normandy, our regiment gave out to each company a yellow flag that was to used to protect us from friendly fire. On one occasion this flag came in handy. We were holding the front from an anticipated counter attack (which didn't come at that time) and we could see German activity in front of us. All of a sudden we were under fire. It seemed like about fifteen minutes of constant machine gun fire. Word came that it was friendly fire.

Our CO was able to get into the house and up to a second floor window to wave that flag and let them know we were there.

“At the time, we didn’t know who was firing on us. Most of the men were dug in. My buddy and I, Bert Harris, were runners. We had to be ready to carry messages, so we weren’t dug into our slit trenches but lying unprotected on top of the ground. There were 50 calibre bullets ricocheting off the stone walls, hitting the turf beside us. We had nowhere to go. I was looking at my buddy and told him not to move. I could see the turf being hit all around us. When it was all over, we found that we’d been lying in a patch of stinging nettles. It only started to bother us after the event was over. We found out later that it was a Canadian tank regiment that had mistaken us for the enemy because of a lack of communication. I remember one of the tank crew coming out and literally feeling horrified at the mistake. Battle conditions sometimes got very chaotic and it’s a wonder there weren’t more of these incidents.”

Eventually, they took over the Normandy front. Their food ran out, but their CSM was a farmer and he “could take the feathers off a chicken “faster than anyone I have ever seen’. He also killed a pig to feed his men. It was while Art was helping out with the cooking that a fuel container exploded, seriously burning him. One of the red-hot iron bars had ignited the container. His CSM saw Art afire and wrapped a blanket around him, saving his life.

He was sent back to England on a Red Cross ship where he was operated on several times by a plastic surgeon. Treatments followed in rehab hospitals in England and France. In the hospital at Bayeau, two medical corps workers from Ingersoll helped tend to him: Howard Payne and Wilf Jillings. Eventually he was re-classified as B category and told there would be no more front line fighting for him. He was in demand as a bandsman and helped however he could in whatever hospital he was in.

Art Presswell came home in April 1945. He remembers arriving at Wolsely Barracks and eating his first hamburger in six years. “Don’t Fence Me In” was playing on the juke box and he had his first Coke ever. That night he came home to Ingersoll to surprise his mother, who was doing war work at Morrows.

His bride, Joyce, RCAF (WD) and he had met while he was stationed in Stratford. She had written to him all the time he was away. They were married on June 16, 1945, and Art was discharged from the army on June 18.

The newlyweds lived in Stratford for a year while Art went to an army trade school to learn carpentry. He got an apprenticeship in Stratford and worked hard at his new trade. But Stratford was very cold and it became obvious that Art should be working indoors. So in the winter of 1946-1947 they moved to Ingersoll and war time house #7. Art started work at Morrows where he stayed for 25 years.

He and Joyce have seven children, 16 grandchildren and one great grandson, who now lives in Finland.

Art is active in the Beachville Baptist Church, the *Ingersoll Historical Society* and the *Ingersoll Choral Society*. People still love to hear him sing and, true to his nature, he appears in benefit concerts. He also volunteers as a Remembrance Day speaker at schools in Ingersoll and area.

Art Presswell served his country well and continues to serve his community.

The Pictures

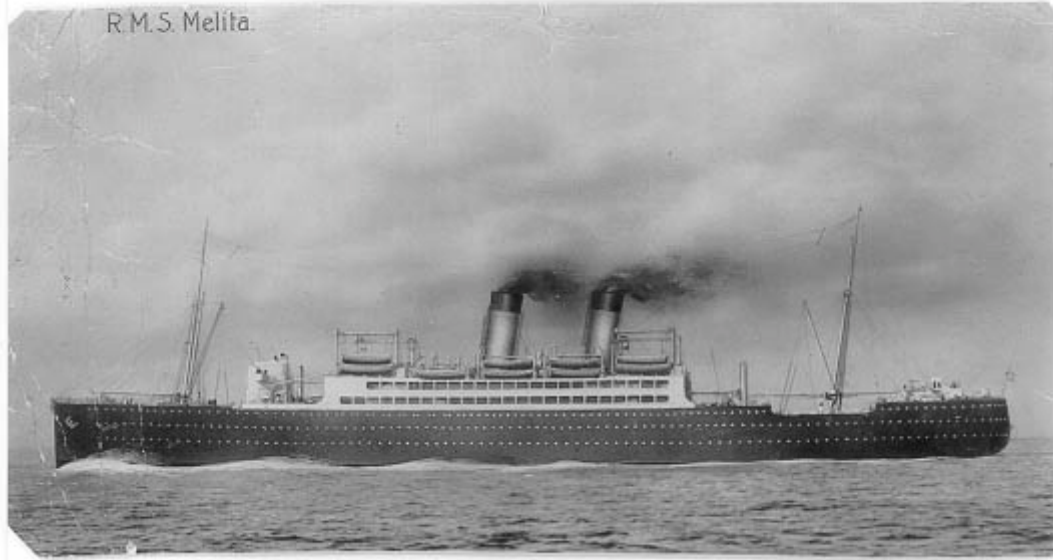
The pictures on the following pages were scanned in from Art's original photographs and saved as JPEG files. The photos have not been retouched; they are near-identical copies of the original image.



Turn-of-the-century coalmen. My grandfather is on the extreme right in the light apron. He was a coal porter and his job was to alert overhead rail cars (coal carriers) when to empty their load. He was accidentally killed when a load was dumped prematurely and covered him. His name was Edward (Ted) Shoults and he lived in London, England.



This is my father as a young navy man. He joined when he was 16 and was invalided out in 1924 with TB and died the same year. I was three years old at the time. He was writing for his Chief Petty Officer position. He was on minesweepers at the end of WWI and was rewarded with a special armband indicating they had blown up mines. He also fought in the Battle of Jutland.



This is the RMS Melita that took us to Canada from my home in London, England in 1925. Notice that age of the ship by the square promenade and all the portholes. We landed at Quebec City in the summer.

Ladies Auxilliary of the RCL, Branch 119, Ingersoll, ON. This picture was taken some time in the thirties. My mother, May Presswell, and her sister, Ellen Smith are in this picture.



This is a picture of my mother and myself at Embro in 1939. I am dressed in the uniform of the Ingersoll Pipe Band and we were playing at the July 1st, Embro Highland Games.



A new recruit! This picture was taken in July 1940 when I joined the forces. It was taken in Ingersoll on the corner of Thames St. South and King St. East.



This picture was taken shortly after I joined the army in Ingersoll. This is me and the drum sergeant and friend, Ehon Goodall.



“All aboard.” Leaving Stratford for Quebec City in January of 1941. I am just inside the coach.

Art ready for action. This was taken in January, 1941 at Cofield Barracks, Quebec City. The barracks previously served as a POW camp.



Me, after six months in the army, Quebec City. This was taken in January of 1941.



Outside our billets at Cofield barracks in January of 1941. This is pipe major Arthur Costorphine and myself.



Another picture at Cofield Barracks, Quebec City. On fatigue duty.
L-R: Cliff Walpole; Art, Ken McLean; Bill Smith; Bill Mallard; Bert Harris; Albert Mitchell; Dave McCutcheon.



This is the nightly ritual of playing retreat, lowering the flag. The bugler is Jack Hart. Taken at Debert, NS. Taken in about June of 1941.



Some members of the Highland Light Infantry of Canada Pipe Band. Taken on the steps of the billets at Debert Camp, near Truro, Nova Scotia where the 3rd division billeted before departing for overseas.

L-R, back row: Art, Lloyd Livingstone; next row: Bill Smith, Dave McCutcheon, Cliff Walpole. Next row: Bert Harris, Kenny McLean; next row: Art Costorphine (pipe major), Bill Melville (pipe corporal).

Not in the picture: Bill Gibb, Casey Sagan, Albert Mitchell, Dave Bowden, Bill Bowden, Clare Cole, Bill "Ducky" Mallard, a player for the Hamilton Ti-Cat football club, Bill Norrie, and Patty Stratton.





This picture is taken in Debert, NS. The band is lined up ready to play the retreat which was part of the ritual of lowering the flag in the evening.



Our band posing at Debert, NS. Debert is the residence of 10,000 Third Canadian Division prior to crossing the ocean.



A picture for posterity. The picture was taken at Debert Camp in Nova Scotia. L-R: Art Corstorphine (pipe major), Bill Smith, Bert Harris, Art, Dave McCutcheon, Lloyd Livingstone, Cliff Walpole, Bill Melville (pipe corporal).

That same year, I joined the Ingersoll Pipe Band, a decision that had a huge impact on the rest of my life.



Art, shortly after arrival in England. Taken in London (Stratford), England. I'm in the uniform of the Highland Light Infantry. The kilt is MacKenzie. We wore the kilt as bandmen and were the only ones to wear the kilt. I was a lance-corporal drummer, and I had to teach the other bandmen drummers.

L-R: Art Presswell, Miriam Jordan, Jim Jordan. This picture was taken in 1941, London, England, where I was visiting family. The people in the picture are my cousins.





L-R: Art Presswell, Albert Mitchell, Casey Sagan. This picture was taken in 1942 in London (West Norwood), England while I was visiting my cousin, Betty Derrick.



L-R: Art Presswell, the young lady was a friend of my cousin Betty and Casey Sagan.



Pictures of our band on parade in Bogner Regis, on the south coast of England in Sussex. Watching us are the locals from the town.





The "X" is me on parade with the HLI Pipe Band. This is probably taken in 1941. Location is probably somewhere in NS before going overseas.



Bill "Ducky" Mallard interviewed by Ross Munro, a war correspondent with the Toronto Star. Picture taken in 1942 at Bognor Regis, south coast of England.



We gave a Christmas party for the children of Bognor Regis. Here is a picture of 4 band members. I am second from the left. We were holding four of the children. They would now be in their sixties.



This is Patty Stratton and myself. Perhaps had a few too many, but we could stand up for the picture anyway (as long as we leaned on one another). This was taken in front of the hotel in Bognor Regis (on the coast of Sussex, England). That area of the English coast was ours to defend in case of a German invasion. They moved us when Germany invaded Russia, and the threat of invasion was less likely.

We became part of the community and were accepted by the people. Some of our comrades took a bride from amongst the Bognor girls.

Since Canadian army rations weren't that palatable, we often went to the local café to have our breakfast. Toast and margarine was a staple. It was in Bognor that the regiment ordered the drummers to become buglers which was the biggest mistake they ever made. We were trained by Walter Hulme, the Unit Bugler, who was later killed in Normandy. Walter's son was born just before he left for the war. I later met his son and he wanted to talk to me about his father whom he had never known. His question to me was "Was my father one of the boys?" He asked this because his father had been brought up in the Salvation Army and had been part of their band. My reply, "Of course! He certainly was! And he was a good friend of mine." Later, his son went to Normandy and the padre took him to the very spot where his father died.

He recalls how the Band also arrived first and had to wait for the officers and Battalion to arrive. One day they were kept waiting so long the pipers' fingers and lips and cheeks were so frozen they could not play. The drummers had to keep the beat for the whole two miles.

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1942. The entire pipe bands in the Cdn. Army en masse in Hyde Park, London, England. We're playing *The Wings for Victory* parade.



The 9th Highland Brigade combined pipe bands (H.L.I. of C. and S. DrG's North Novies). Our mascot was the dog (although I can't recall the name). We provided the martial music for troops training to become 1st Guards Regiment RSM from British Guards Regiment in charge of training.

Bandsmen were in an elite position at that time. Our duties included playing Reveille every morning at 6 a.m.; playing again every morning for the Battalion as it lined up for parade; and playing for every route march, whether they were two miles or twenty miles long. We also played for every special occasion in the Officers Mess, such as St. Andrews Night. We also had Parade Square duty and played Retreat, for the lowering of the flag, at Stratford every night."

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The kids in Bognor got quite a kick out of our stick beats when I played them.

... the town was inundated with thousands of Glaswegian kids. Our band was directed to play for incoming visitors. Every day we would march down Victoria Street, the main street, and as we played we were swamped by eight to 12 year old kids. They would walk in among us and pull the ribbons off the pipes, dislodging them from the pipers' arms and hit the batter head of the drums with a stick. It was all done in fun and the kids had a good time.

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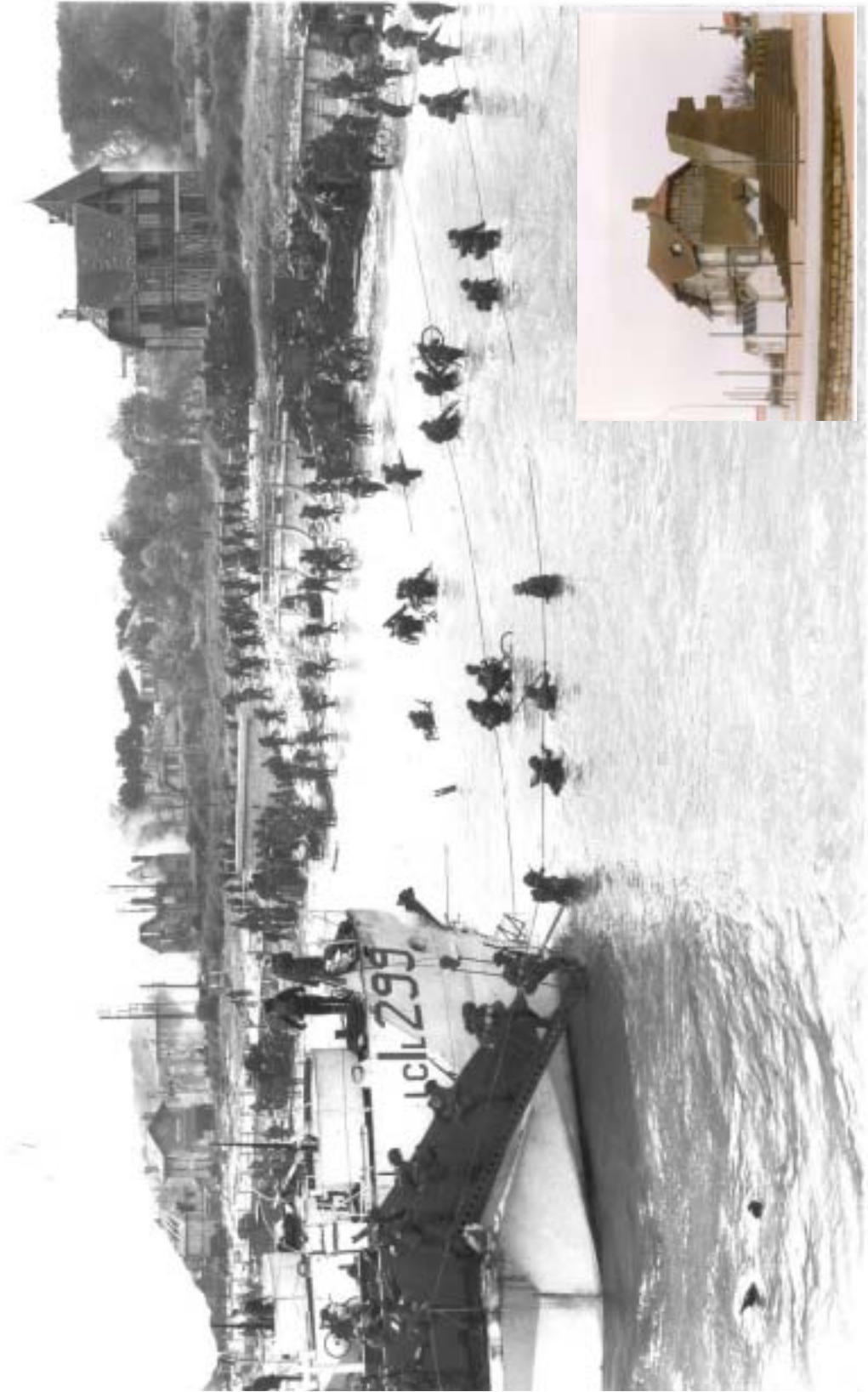


This picture was taken in North Africa. The man on the left is my cousin, Bill Cotton. This is a German fighter aircraft, ME-109 that was downed and captured by the allies. The other person is an unidentified Italian soldier.



Photo taken at the pier at the LCL. The soldiers are waiting for the unknown.

June 5. Waiting to board LCL. For the unknown.



101 LANDING NORMANDY JUNE 6 1944

The unknown. Juno Beach, landing in 3 ft. of water carrying a collapsible bike, spade, backpack, bedroll, Mae West life jacket and other equipment. Notice the remodeled house in the inset above.



This was taken in 1945 after returning from Normandy while I was recuperating from war wounds.

My two brothers-in-law. Sgt. David S. Benner, Navy Obs N^o 7 For mother Halifax Bomber 102 Squadron downed in October 1942 in the North Sea. No known grave name is on memorial in Runnymede. Age, 21.
Charles A. Benner killed in the mountains of Italy 1944. Sgt. Intelligence Section, Perth Regiment. Buried in Commonwealth Grave, Naples, Italy. Age, 30.





My brother, Staff Sgt. Frank Presswell, Special Service Force serving in Italy and wounded there. With him is a young relative, Ron Purkiss in East London, England.

*his noble heart would not surrender
the night grew fierce; some hid, some cried
the morning light he will be remembered
the way he fought, the way he died*

— *A Brave Soldier* by Bruce Gardiner



The Equipment Assistance Program at RCAF Trenton. Joyce is in the 3rd row, 6th from the left.



This young lady is LRC Joyce Benner whom I later married. We had seven children, 4 girls and 3 boys.



A cousin, Bud Cotton, US Navy (1942-45).

The happy couple shortly after their wedding. Standing in front of Mrs. Benner house (Joyce's mother) on Romeo Street, Stratford, ON, CA.





Joyce and I. This was taken in Ingersoll, Ontario, Canada on Canterbury Street shortly after our wedding in Stratford. We were married in St. Paul's Anglican Church, Stratford, ON, CA on June 16th, 1945.



A memorial wall in our house on which we have placed our treasured pictures. It contains a picture of my father, of Joyce's two brothers, Charlie (army) and David (air force) who both paid the supreme sacrifice. Also miscellaneous pictures of our band with the ninth highland brigade and archival pictures of our landing in Normandy. There is also a picture of Joyce's unit (air force).



Joyce at the cenotaph in Stratford.



Another stellar performance on Robbie Burns night at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Ingersoll. Taken in the '70s.

Art as drum sergeant of the Ingersoll Pipe Band. This picture was taken at Embro, ON, CA some time after the war in Matheson Park at the annual Highland Games, held every July 1.



Taken on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Ingersoll Pipe Band.

Receiving award from RCL Br. 495, Beachville for services as chaplain.



Woodstock Little Theatre production The King and I in the 1960's. Presented at WCI. The guy in the robe is me.



The Great Sebastians, Woodstock Little Theatre production, 1960's (top). All my Sons, Woodstock Little Theatre production, 1950's (bottom).





Another scene from All my Sons.

Drumming in my old age is not quite as easy as it was nearly 60 years ago. But I had to please my grandson, Nathan Archer and his bride Stephanie at his wedding in Ancaster. But it was even harder to keep up with my son, David, the piper, who is a A1 piper.





My eightieth birthday at First Baptist Church, June 2001. I'm being presented with a plaque from Ted Hunt, town administrator.

*So bow your head
And stand in silence
And lift your eyes and sing this song
About a brave Canadian soldier
That gave today the life that's gone
— A Brave Soldier by Bruce Gardiner*