SHERWOOD LETT

His Life and Times

REGINALD H. ROY

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The life of Sherwood Lett was one that was dedicated to service–to his country,to the legal profession, to education, and to his family. This extraordinary man was a model for achievement, and Reginald Roy has written a carefully researched biography which testifies to the integrity of the man's contributions.

The book tracks Sherwood Lett's distinguished career from his days as an undergraduate at the then-new University of British Columbia and follows him through his life of many honours, including the Rhodes Scholarship which enabled him to take legal training at Oxford. It relates how, when he returned to Vancouver, he embarked upon a range of community involvement that included church, athletics, and especially UBC, where he was one of the founders of the Alumni Association. His service to the university included thirty-three years as a UBC Senator, a period of time on the Board of Governors, and finally a term as its Chancellor.

Roy puts to good use the diaries that Sherwood Lett kept during the years he served in the Great War, excerpting the young man's impressions in a manner that throws new insights on that time, recreating both the terror and the excitement of the day. Enlisting in the Irish Fusiliers of Canada while still a student, he served in France after 1916 and was awarded the Military Cross. He returned to active duty in the course of World War Two and was appointed commander of the South Saskatchewan Regiment and then the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade. He was wounded twice, at Dieppe and in Normandy, for which he was awarded the DSO and the CBE. Later, he went on to serve his country as High Commissioner to Vietnam during the difficult years of the fifties when the Cold War dominated the political scene.

Yet Sherwood Lett was likely best known for his career in law, which was as distinguished as all of his other endeav-

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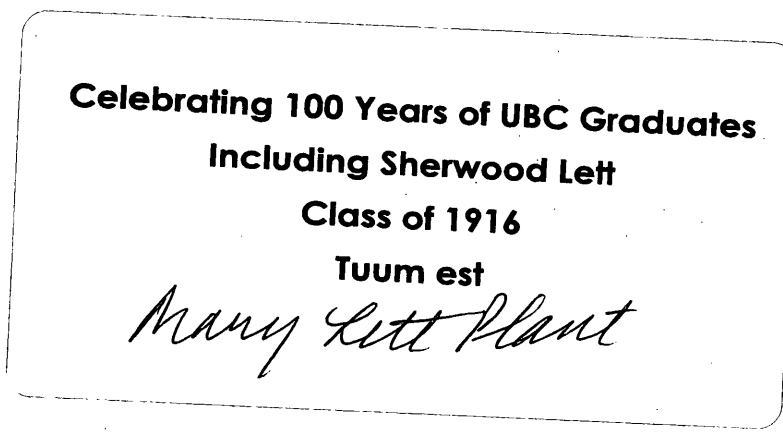

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UBC Alumni Association
University of British Columbia

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Mrs Lett has gifted the manuscript of this book to the University of British Columbia. All profits from sale of the book will be directed to the Sherwood Lett Scholarship Fund, thereby increasing the value of the scholarship established in his name in 1964.

UBC Alumni Association
6251 Cecil Green Park Road
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To Evelyn, Mary, and Frances

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Sherwood's father, the Reverend Francis Graeme Lett. Courtesy City of Vancouver Archives

Sherwood at 18 months. Courtesy Mrs. Evelyn Lett

F.G. Lett family. Courtesy Mrs. Evelyn Lett

Sherwood at 12 years, the prize winner for selling subscriptions of the *Saturday Evening Post*, Pembroke, Ontario, 1908. Courtesy Mrs. Evelyn Lett

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Captain Sherwood Lett, MC, Adjutant of the 46th Battalion, CEF, 1918. Courtesy City of Vancouver Archives

Sherwood as goalkeeper in a lacrosse game, about 1922. Courtesy City of Vancouver Archives

Sherwood posed with a group responsible for presenting UBC with its first totem pole, 1927. Courtesy Mrs. Evelyn Lett

Evelyn Lett and her two daughters, Mary and Frances, Christmas 1940. Courtesy City of Vancouver Archives

Major Sherwood Lett on his arrival in England, 1941. Courtesy Mrs. Evelyn Lett

Brigadier Lett, recently wounded in the Dieppe raid, returns to Vancouver in November 1942. Courtesy Mrs. Evelyn Lett

Foreword

The Honourable N. T. Nemetz, CC, QC

If a legal historian were asked to recite the names of the fifteen Chief Justices of British Columbia, he or she would falter. However, it is likely that the questioned historian would remember one of its most distinguished members – Sherwood Lett.

I have read Professor Reginald Roy's admirable biography. He did not know the Chief Justice, but assiduously he was able to piece together the life of a man who gave so much to the province. I congratulate him.

Sherwood Lett was a reserved, quiet person who applied himself to the job at hand without finding it necessary to resort to any stratagem or shortcuts to achieve his goals. He became a student leader at the University of British Columbia in its early days. He joined a top law firm and attracted clients from all segments of our society. As a very young man he served in the First Great War and again in the Second World War. He became Chancellor of his university and Chief Justice of this province.

It was my great privilege to meet him in the early 1930s when he was a junior partner at Davis & Company. I well remember the event. I was then an articled student in another law firm. It was my practice to pick up a student for lunch who worked at the Davis firm. On the day in question Sherwood was instructing that student on some matter and delayed our lunch by half an hour. He had not noticed the time. But as he came out of his office he saw me standing and waiting. Quickly he introduced himself and apologized for keeping me waiting. I could hardly believe my ears! A partner in a prestigious office was apologizing to a student. I have never forgotten the incident.

His courtesy was legion. As a lawyer and judge, he rarely interrupted and always displayed the foremost attributes of genuine and kindly civility. And this was in a period when such civility was in

judicial short supply. His kindness to the younger members of the bar will not be forgotten.

We are indebted to Evelyn Lett for initiating the publication of this work. During their marriage she was an able partner in the Lett household. This biography is really a biography of a team – Sherwood and Evelyn.

It was a great honour to be asked to write this preface to a book that not only is well written, but also provides an instructive commentary on service to one's country.

Introduction

Several years ago, when I was asked to write this biography of Sherwood Lett, I knew little about him. I had heard about him in the course of writing other books, more particularly *The History of the Vancouver Club* and *1944: The Canadians in Normandy*. With the biography now finished, my one regret is that I never had the opportunity to meet him.

I was fortunate to be able to interview his wife and two daughters, together with other relatives who had warm memories of their Uncle Sherwood. Fortunately, too, I was able to visit and interview a number of his friends and to correspond with others in various parts of Canada. They have all helped to round out this biography and I thank them for it.

At the beginning of my research there was a small group of Sherwood Lett's friends who helped me in my task. The late Judge David R. Verchere, himself an author, was generous with his suggestions as was C.C.I. Merritt, a well-known Vancouver lawyer and soldier who, like Lett, took part in the Dieppe raid. Professor Robert Osborne and Mrs. Laurenda Daniells were most generous with their time and advice when I was writing about Lett's long association with the University of British Columbia. Laurenda's experience as an archivist at UBC was particularly valuable as she smoothed my way through the university's archives while I looked for information on Lett as a senator, as a member of the Board of Governors, and ultimately as chancellor. The staff at the university's archives was always courteous, eager to help, and most patient with my numerous enquiries. The Honourable Mr. Justice A.B.B. Carrothers, another member of the group, had articled under Lett and later became the family lawyer. His memories of Lett span the period from 1946 to 1964 and, naturally, his comments and suggestions were most useful. The Honourable Nathan T.

Nemetz, Alfred Watts, and D.M.M. Goldie all knew Sherwood Lett very well and gave generously of their time and advice. Michael Goldie wrote an excellent account of Lett's handling of the BC *Electric* case and I have drawn heavily on his description in my last chapter. Another long-time friend of Lett is Colonel D.F. Spankie. He joined the Irish Fusiliers of Canada in the 1920s and served with Lett in this unit for many years. His knowledge of the unit's history is unsurpassed.

Aside from this group or 'history committee,' there are others to whom I am most grateful. The Sherwood Lett Papers in the Vancouver City Archives contain a mine of information. Susan Baptie, the city archivist and her staff were most helpful in my researches. These Papers were deposited by Evelyn Lett and are the largest single collection of material relating to Lett's career. Of particular interest is the daily diary he kept during the Great War and, later, as a Rhodes Scholar. He wrote exceptionally well and, where possible, I have used his own words from his diary or his letters to describe what he saw and how he felt. I have not thought it necessary to footnote exactly every single quotation from these sources as I feel they are obvious.

Lett's multifaceted career led me to other archival sources. While he was the Canadian Commissioner in Vietnam he carried on a considerable correspondence with officials in the Department of External Affairs. He also kept a very detailed daily diary. The Historical Section of DEA gave me access to both. Papers, war diaries, battle reports, and so forth of the units and brigades in which Lett served are available at the Directorate of History, National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa and at the National Archives. The Law Society of BC gave me permission to examine the minutes of the meetings of the Benchers during the time Lett served on that body. The Brockville City Archivist was helpful in sending material relating to the Lett and Sherwood families in Ontario.

The number of individuals who provided information, either through letters or taped interviews, are too numerous to mention individually but I deeply appreciate their help. Of all, my particular thanks go to Evelyn Lett, Sherwood's wife. She was a fount of information. Whenever they were separated, they carried on a voluminous correspondence and, fortunately, Mrs. Lett kept these letters. She has allowed me to read most of them. Those that Sherwood wrote while he was overseas during the Second World War and later, in 1954-5, when he was serving in Vietnam, proved to be very valuable. These are not available to the public and are held by Mrs. Lett, who also has numerous old newspaper clippings relating to the Sherwood and Lett families in Ontario. Once again, I have made generous use of Lett's

own words in his correspondence as they bring an immediacy to the events in which he was involved.

Finally, I want to thank Mrs. June Bull of the History Department of the University of Victoria. She transcribed the numerous tape-recorded interviews I had with Lett's family and friends. She also typed the manuscript and became as interested in Sherwood Lett as I was. My wife, Ardith, has shown her usual patience as I spent an increasing amount of time in my den rather than in the garden. For a Victorian, that is quite a sacrifice which I appreciate.

R.H. ROY

Sherwood Lett: His Life and Times

CHAPTER ONE

Roots and Branches

In 1912, when Sherwood Lett moved to Vancouver, he arrived in a bustling city of about 130,000. It had almost tripled in less than a decade owing to the amalgamation of various municipalities and immigration to the city rather than natural increase. In many ways, Vancouver was just emerging from its comparatively recent status as a frontier town. 'Old timers,' that is people who had been resident in Vancouver for twenty years, could remember when most of the downtown streets were unpaved, the beginning of daily mail service, the installation of the first pay telephones, and the introduction of street lighting. The first Granville Street Bridge had been opened for traffic only three years before the Letts arrived. On Hastings Street, construction was forging ahead on the completion of the Rex theatre which, when completed in December 1912, was to be called by *The Province*, the 'most modern movie house in the world.'

There were signs of growth everywhere. Only a few years earlier the city's residents were able to boast Vancouver's first skyscraper, the Dominion Trust Building on the corner of Hastings and Cambie streets. Construction on the courthouse and the Vancouver Block went hand in hand with the building of Piers 'A' and 'B' by the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Kingsway between Vancouver and New Westminster was being completed and plans were ready for the construction of a second Hotel Vancouver on the corner of Granville and Georgia streets.

One of the signs of progress was the increasing number of automobiles in the city. Traffic still flowed on the left side of the street and would continue to do so until after the Great War. Traffic lights, curbside meters, and parking lots were non-existent, and the horse and buggy was as common as the automobile. Indeed, the latter were beginning to be something of a problem as drivers were constantly

being hauled up before the magistrates for exceeding the speed limit of nine miles an hour. In all of Canada in 1912 there were an estimated 50,000 cars and, although Vancouver had its fair proportion of them, the majority of its people depended on the electric tramways, their bicycles, or horse-drawn vehicles to get about.

In many ways, it was a city with a future. For the Lett family, the long train journey from Eastern Canada must have been exciting. Although they had moved frequently enough, never had they travelled so far before. The immensity of the prairie provinces had to be seen to be believed, and as the train rolled on through the peaceful countryside, it was difficult to believe that only a quarter of a century earlier, the Riel Rebellion had been put down, even as the railway was being completed.

Beyond Calgary, they got their first sight of the Rocky Mountains, and as the train made its way through the spectacular scenery for mile after mile, it also seemed to add yet another barrier between them and their friends and relations back in Ontario. Everything was so different, and as the train wound its way along the Fraser River Valley and neared Vancouver itself, the Letts got their first sight of their new home. Along the river, they could see log booms of immense size. Numerous sawmills dotted the shoreline, while great piles of lumber were waiting to be loaded on ships.

Nearing the CPR terminal, the Letts would get a better view of the immense harbour and the snowcapped mountains to the north and west which provided it with a magnificent backdrop. They were accustomed to the scenery around the Great Lakes and the upper St. Lawrence River, but the sheer size and rugged grandeur of their newly adopted province was to make a lasting and favourable impression. Young Sherwood, in later years, would travel around the world several times, but he was always to prefer living in Vancouver. When the Reverend Frank Lett and his wife, Dana, stepped off the train in Vancouver, they were accompanied by their seven children - Lalie, Ralph, Mary, Heber, Sherwood, Emily, and Jessie. Of the three boys, Sherwood carried his mother's surname, one that went back to the time when the United Empire Loyalists were flocking north over the border following the American Revolution. On both sides of the family, there were deep roots in Canada, and although Sherwood was to come to consider himself a British Columbian, it is worthwhile to sketch his Eastern connections.

The Sherwoods originated in England. In 1634 Dr. Thomas Sherwood and his family arrived in Boston on the ship *Francis* from Ipswich, Suffolk. About a decade later, he moved to Stratford, Connecticut, where his descendants lived for many years. One of these

was Seth Sherwood. Born in June 1721, he was to move to a large tract of land near Fort Edward, New York, on which he settled around 1762. By this time, the Seven Years War was coming to an end. Both Louisburg and Quebec had been captured, the French colonies in Canada were occupied by British garrisons and, in the following year, all of Canada would be ceded to the British Crown. The long series of border wars was obviously coming to an end, and British colonists were feeling more confident about settling in frontier areas which for years had been in dispute.

At the same time, with the French threat removed, there arose a demand for independence among the old British colonies, which resulted in the American Revolution a dozen years after Canada became part of the British Empire. The revolutionary cause split many thousands of American families, some members supporting the revolution, some remaining loyal to King George III.

Seth Sherwood's family faced this dilemma. His eldest son, Thomas, decided to remain loyal to the Crown. His two younger sons, Seth and Adiel, opted for the republican cause. Seth became a captain in the Continental Army and later, after the war, became a county judge. Adiel was only twenty-six years old when the war broke out and he, too, joined the Continental Army. He rose to the rank of colonel, was taken prisoner and in later years served in the state legislature of New York. One of his sons became a judge, another an eminent minister in the American Baptist Church.

Thomas, the eldest son, was born in 1745. When the family moved up the Hudson River to Fort Edward in 1762, to homestead in the area, he went with them. Shortly after the war began, he is reported to have rendered important intelligence to British authorities before assuming a more active role as a subaltern in the Corps of Rangers commanded by Major E. Jessup. Jessup's King's Loyal Americans, later known as Jessup's Corps, served during the Burgoyne Campaign, saw service on the frontier, and was disbanded in December 1783 when the revolutionary war ended. Along with other loyalist units, it was assigned land in present-day Ontario, and among those who decided to remain loyal to Britain and to live under the British flag was Thomas Sherwood.

Land grants to Loyalists were made according to their rank and the number of children in their family. The majority of the men and their families from Jessup's Corps settled in the Augusta and Elizabethtown (Brockville) areas. Thomas Sherwood was granted Lot 1, Concession 1, drawing 500 acres. Here, according to local accounts, he became the first Loyalist settler in the County of Leeds. On his lot, he cut the first trees on the north shore of the St. Lawrence for the

purpose of clearing a farm, and planted the first corn and potatoes on the concession. 'In the settlement,' a newspaper account relates,

> he took commanding rank, as one of the first Commissioners of the Peace, he had a part in the adjudication of disputes, the administration of justice and the solemnization of marriage. Although not a qualified surveyor, he ran lines for the early settlers and it was in his house that the New Oswegatchie Lodge, one of the earliest Masonic organizations in the province, held its opening meeting on October 10, 1787. He also acted as Postmaster of Augusta and as a trustee of the public schools of the Johnstown district, and held the rank of captain in the 1st Leeds Militia.[1]

This remarkable man, who lived until he was eighty-one years old, left a family of eight sons and two daughters. The three eldest boys were born in the American colonies and had come to Canada after the revolution with their parents. When the War of 1812 broke out, two of the sons served with the 1st Leeds Militia. The eldest, Reuben, was a surveyor who became Captain-Superintendent of Guides and rendered valuable service during the war. A third son, Adiel, was seventeen years old when he was commissioned an ensign in the 1st Leeds Militia in 1796. He was a teacher in a school about three miles south of Brockville. During the war, he served as a captain and as paymaster in the Eastern and Johnstown districts. He continued to serve in the Leeds Militia, later becoming the colonel of the regiment.

Adiel Sherwood was what is sometimes called a member of the 'little' Family Compact. He was appointed Deputy Clerk, Commissioner of Branch Roads, and a member of the Land Board for the District of Johnstown in the post-war period. In 1829, he was appointed Sheriff of the district by Sir John Colborne, a post he was to hold for the next thirty-five years. He was also among the founders of the first Presbyterian Church in Brockville, the superintendent of the Sabbath School there formed in 1811, president of the Brockville Bible Society for some years and a founding member of the local Masonic Order. He lived to be ninety-five years old.

Adiel and his wife had eight children – seven daughters and one son. Two of the daughters married prominent politicians, the Honourable George S.B. Jarvis and the Honourable George Crawford. The other daughters also 'married well.' The last of their children was William who was born in 1825. For a while he apprenticed to his uncle, Reuben, as a land surveyor and civil engineer, but later studied law. He was called to the bar in 1854 and for the remainder of his life was a successful lawyer in Brockville. William, like many others in the family, was commissioned in the 1st Leeds Militia and

became the unit's paymaster. He was also an official of the Wall Street Methodist Church and one of the leaders in the temperance movement of the counties. William died in Brockville at the comparatively young age of sixty-seven years, leaving a family of seven girls and two boys. His second daughter, Dana Anne Jane, married the Reverend F.G. Lett in 1885, which for the first time united the Sherwood and Lett families. Their youngest son, Sherwood Lett, was to carry the surname of both families.

The Lett family name goes far back in English history. One source suggests that the Letts, Leets, Letes, Lytes, Hamlets, Howlets, and others whose names have a like ending were all part of the Letts, or Lettish tribe, inhabiting Lithuania and Latvia. At some unknown time before the Norman conquest, a few families must have come to England, as the name Lett is mentioned in the great Domesday survey ordered by William the Conqueror and completed a year before his death in 1087.

The Letts in Ontario trace their ancestry to one Captain Thomas Lett of Warwickshire, who came to Ireland with Cromwell's army in 1649. Cromwell's ruthless measures against the insurgents are remembered to this day, but if he thought he had solved the 'Irish problem,' he was greatly mistaken. For his part in serving Cromwell, it would appear Captain Lett was given land taken from dispossessed Roman Catholic insurgents in County Wexford. Here he settled with his three sons, thus establishing a branch of the Letts in Ireland. Their descendants were involved in various uprisings in Ireland in the eighteenth century, most – but not all – defending the Crown.

Two of the Wexford County Letts, Samuel and Thomas, came to Canada in the mid-nineteenth century, settling near Eganville in Wilberforce County, a small village about 100 miles northwest of Brockville. Thomas' son, Ralph, had been born in Ireland in 1825 and, when eighteen years old, had come to Canada several years earlier than did his father. Ralph, or 'Red Rafe' as he was known, died in 1903 and was buried at Lett's Corners. He was a strong Methodist, worked diligently in the church's Sunday School, and 'took a prominent part in municipal and educational affairs.'[2]

'Red Rafe' was the eldest in a family of nine children, and he and his wife, Sarah, were the parents of eight. Among these was Francis Graham Lett, Sherwood Lett's father. He was born in 1856 in Eganville. His early education was received at the Pembroke Grammar School, after which for a few years he became a teacher. He joined the Methodist Church when about fifteen years old, and considering the strong religious influence in his home, it is not surprising that he accepted the call to the ministry in 1880. He attended Victoria College

in Toronto, was ordained in May 1885, and a few months later, married Dana Ann Jane Sherwood, the daughter of William Sherwood, barrister, of Brockville, Ontario.

The Reverend F.G. Lett, called Frank by his friends, was to spend most of the thirty years of his ministry in Eastern Canada, and most of that within the bounds of the Montreal Conference. He served in Huntingdon, Athens, Iroquois, Portage, Hemmingford, Merrickville, a second pastorate in Iroquois, Stanstead, Sherbrooke, Ottawa, Pembroke, and Smiths Falls. He was well liked and much respected. In 1907 he was elected to the presidency of the Montreal Conference. He was a member of four General Conferences and also a member of the Central Book Committee. Intellectually he has been described as 'thorough and penetrating,' a man who 'delighted to get foundation facts and causes.' He was a good preacher, and when he came with his family to Vancouver, he became President of the Methodist Ministerial Association of that city.[3] The Reverend Lett's pastorate of the Grandview Methodist Church was to be all too short for he died only two years after taking over his new responsibilities.

The Reverend Frank Lett and his wife had seven children. Their youngest son, Sherwood, was born on 1 August 1895 in Iroquois, Ontario. Since his father was moving from one parish to another, Sherwood did not attend school until the family had moved to Ottawa and his father had assumed ministerial responsibilities for the Methodist Church on MacLeod Street. After four years in Ottawa, the family moved to Pembroke, where Sherwood entered what was termed the 'Junior 4th grade.' He did so well that he completed the normal year's work in half the required time and was promoted to the 'Senior 4th grade' and again finished his year's work in half the normal time. He also passed the Ontario Entrance Examinations for students wishing to enter high school. Sherwood was not only the youngest candidate to pass these exams – he was also, in 1907, the youngest student ever to enter Pembroke High School. In the three years he passed all of his examinations successfully and took honours in History, Science, and English Literature.

He was not only an intelligent student but also very active in school, church and community activities. He enjoyed music and sang in the School Chorus Club and Boys Quartette. He became captain of the Public School Hockey Team, a player on the baseball team, and class representative on the basketball team. In his senior years at Pembroke High School, he was a player on the Intermediate High School Hockey Team and also on the senior baseball and basketball teams. A popular student, he was voted by his class to the executive of both the Lyceum (a students' organization) and the Literary Society. He was

also an active member of the high school class of the Pembroke YMCA His obvious leadership qualities, even as a young teenager, were noted by the YMCA staff who selected him as a gym leader and also appointed him as a group leader of one of the Y's Bible study classes. Whether the fact that his father was the local Methodist minister had anything to do with the latter appointment is hard to tell. Certainly his upbringing as a minister's son left its mark on him for the rest of his life, and on at least one occasion a fair amount of pressure was brought to bear on him to enter the Methodist ministry.

From Pembroke, the family moved to Smiths Falls in 1910. Sherwood was now in his mid-teens and with his wide variety of interests, one can assume he must have kept himself informed of what was going on in the world about him. In that year Sir Wilfrid Laurier was still the prime minister of Canada and had brought in a bill in the House of Commons to establish a Canadian Navy. It was the year when King Edward VII died, and, after a lengthy period of mourning, there followed months of excitement as preparations were made for the coronation of the new monarch, George V. In Russian imperial circles, the monk, Rasputin, was gaining increasing influence over the Czarina and, through her, Czar Nicholas II. In Germany, Emperor Wilhelm II was putting his influence behind the creation of a large German navy and indulging in an erratic foreign policy leading to ever increasing tensions in Europe. In the United States, Barney Oldfield made headlines when he drove his Benz at 133 miles per hour. The automobile was faster than the airplane since it was still considered newsworthy to report that an aeroplane (piloted by Henri Farman) flew some 300 miles in only a little over eight hours. As the same pilot had been the first to fly 100 miles only a year previously, it was clearly an item which had considerable interest for a generation which was becoming more intrigued with flying even as it was becoming more accustomed to seeing automobiles.

For Sherwood, it was the fourth time he had moved and settled into a new manse. By this time his two younger sisters had been born, and, with seven children (minus many of the modern conveniences) his mother's time was fully taken up both as a housekeeper and as the minister's wife. It was a busy but happy household. Each of the children had his or her chores – cutting kindling, keeping the coal scuttles full, cleaning the stove, washing and drying dishes, taking out ashes, mowing the lawn, lending a hand to their mother when she was spring housecleaning or preserving fruit in the autumn, helping their father put up the storm windows, or shovelling snow in winter. After dinner, there was usually one or two hours of school homework

to be done, and even on Saturdays there was usually some preparation for Sunday School the following day.

Like his brothers, Sherwood earned what money he could to buy his books and clothes and still have some left over to buy skates or a bicycle. One of his earliest money-raising ventures was digging up, stripping, and grinding horseradish roots. It was really a 'tear-jerking' job, especially the grinding. Another job he had was selling the *Saturday Evening Post*. At twelve years of age, Sherwood must have knocked on the door of almost every home in Prescott selling this magazine. In any event, he won the prize for selling more subscriptions than any other boy in Ontario. The prize was a beautiful little pony. Unfortunately, he was not able to claim it since a minister's salary did not cover the cost of feeding and caring for it. The incident, however, indicates something of the young boy's character which continued to develop as he matured – a driving energy, a determination to succeed, and a charming and attractive personality.

Smiths Falls, an old Loyalist settlement, lies roughly midway between Ottawa and Brockville on the Rideau Canal. It was a small town, and the move to the new parsonage brought Mrs. Lett closer to her numerous relatives in Brockville. Here Sherwood entered the Smiths Falls Collegiate Institute and for the next two years took a number of courses in which he achieved honours standing. Although he did well in his science work, his major interests were in English, History, and French. His marks at the end of the two years gave him easy entry to the University of Toronto. He would have no trouble gaining acceptance into any of the major universities in Canada, but the question was which one to choose and, particularly, how to pay for his university education once he was accepted.

At Smiths Falls, Sherwood continued to be involved in church, community, and sports activities. He became a member of the snowshoe club and the skating club. He was a member of the ice hockey team, which won the championship of the town. He was captain of his school's basketball team and a player on the baseball and football teams. He learned how to play the flute and became good enough to become a member of the church orchestra as well as the school orchestra. The Boy Scout movement, started by Lord Baden-Powell only a few years earlier, interested Sherwood and, in connection with a local church, a troop was organized in Smiths Falls by one of the schoolmasters. Sherwood was appointed a patrol leader in the troop, a task he took to like the proverbial duck to water. He enjoyed singing and, possessing a good voice, he sang in the school's Glee Club and Special Male Quartette. In church affairs he had gone beyond the Sunday School level and during the two years he was in Smiths Falls, was

elected president of a Bible study class in his father's church. As usual, he made friends wherever he went and when his father informed the family in 1912 that he had accepted a call to the Grandview Methodist Church in Vancouver, one can only assume that to young Sherwood it was a chance to meet new people, see a part of Canada far from his native Ontario, and also live in a city where he could go to a university without the expense of having to pay board and lodging as well as tuition fees.

NOTES

1 'Leeds and Grenville Families,' *Brockville Times*, 20 Dec. 1927.
2 The Lett Reunion Committee, *Letts Remember Letts Remember Letts*. Privately published, 1988, 48.
3 Ibid., 61-2.

CHAPTER TWO

'Tuum Est'

It did not take long for the Letts to settle into the manse at 1857 Parker Street. As it was common practice for a Methodist minister to move to a different parish every three years, moving had become routine. But never had the family been so far from the numerous relatives, both Letts and Sherwoods, who were scattered about from Montreal to Kingston. They now seemed very far away. On the other hand, there were new challenges to meet, a new city to explore, and a new congregation who would be interested to see the new pastor who had been so warmly recommended to them by Victor W. Odlum, a prominent church member and local businessman.

One of the first things Sherwood did was to look for some way to earn money. In Ontario he sold magazines, worked for a summer on his grandfather's farm and, at the age of eleven,

> became a valued employee of the Colonial Lumber Company of Pembroke, as a shingle packer. In those days the packing in bundles was done by hand by boys too young to work around the saws. The pay was eight cents per thousand. A smart packer could pack eight or ten thousand in a nine hour day ... [Later], in Smith Falls he tacked aprons for binders for the farm machinery manufacturers, Frost and Wood.[1]

After making a variety of enquiries, Sherwood found a good job as a clerk in the grocery department of David Spencer's Department Store.

In later years he augmented his income through part-time work. He had inherited a wooden flute from his grandfather, Adiel Sherwood, and had learned to play it in Ontario. In Vancouver he was to join the 'Apollo Concert Orchestra' led by Charles F. Ward, bandmaster of the Irish Fusiliers of Canada and a concert violinist of some distinction.

This five-piece orchestra gave concerts in the villages of the Fraser Valley. As he recalled later:

> The concerts would usually be followed by a dance for which the orchestra also performed. The whole evening [was] included in the price of admission (50 cents) and it would be well on in the morning hours when they would catch the interurban train back to the city just in time to change and get to early classes. His family didn't quite approve of these late hours, but the Fraser Valley concerts did not occur too often so he could manage to work them in.[2]

During the summer vacations of 1913 and 1914 Sherwood was to find a job which paid better than did clerking in Spencer's – he managed to find employment working on a railway construction team. A railway was being built between Cowichan Lake and Alberni to serve logging companies in the area. He was a good, reliable worker and although comparatively short, he had no trouble keeping up with the rest of the crew.

Aside from his search for a job when he arrived in Vancouver, another concern was to find out more about the steps he should take to become a college student in a province which, in 1912, did not have a university. With his usual zest he began to make enquiries and, in so doing, became acquainted with the relationship between provincial politics and provincial education. It was something which interested him and in which he was to be involved for decades to come.

The idea of establishing a university in British Columbia had been tossed around for some twenty years before the Letts arrived. In the 1890s the rivalry between university graduates living on the mainland and those on Vancouver Island, together with the rivalries among denominational groups, had resulted in no firm action being taken by the provincial government. As a result those wishing to obtain university degrees left British Columbia to continue their studies elsewhere.

By the turn of the century, however, students were able to take their first courses towards a university degree. Through an affiliation with McGill University and the Vancouver School Board, first year Arts courses were offered by the staff of the Vancouver High School. A few years later, second year courses were added and by 1908-9, through the generosity of McGill and one of its major benefactors, academic work in the third year was made available.

Two bills were introduced in the Legislature in Victoria as a result of this progress. One was 'An Act Respecting McGill University,' which allowed McGill 'to establish a University College or Colleges' and 'An Act to Incorporate the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learn-

ing,' which contained proposals for increasing the work of higher education in the province under the aegis of the Board of McGill University. The latter bill drew opposition from University of Toronto graduates in the province who saw it as a device by McGill to establish a feeder institution to draw graduate students to its university in Montreal. Nevertheless, the bills were strongly supported by the premier, Richard McBride, and the majority of the legislators. Both the Vancouver and the Victoria High School took advantage of the affiliation, and college courses became available in both cities.

Higher education by affiliation was one way of overcoming the difficulty of paying for a college or university, but the population was increasing steadily and with it the demand for active measures to establish a university. Finally, in 1908, the Legislature passed the Universities Act. It gave authority to create a provincial university, but where it would be located was as bitterly contested as it had been in the previous decade. The present site of the University of British Columbia was first suggested by Walter Moberley. A number of outside academic advisors were brought in by the provincial government and, late in 1910, the government reserved 175 acres of land in Point Grey. Additional acres were reserved later, but at least the core of the campus had been determined.

Meanwhile, McGill University College had been established based on the students taking college courses at the Vancouver High School. The constant increase in college students soon resulted in overcrowding of the facilities available at the high school. To overcome this problem, the college was forced to move to a site where the city council was erecting the Vancouver General Hospital. By the spring of 1912 two buildings – the first of several – were erected on the Fairview site and occupied by the college for the 1912-13 session. In that year, 190 young men and women, mostly from the Vancouver area, were enrolled. Among the freshmen was Sherwood Lett, seventeen years old – as he would say later, 'a little fellow with short trousers, starting in with fear and trepidation.' One of the first things he was told was not to appear on campus again in short trousers.

Sherwood was in his first year when Dr. F.F. Wesbrook was selected as the first president of what was to become the university. A medical doctor with an excellent reputation as a scholar and administrator, Wesbrook came at a time when the trees were still being cleared on the new campus. He also arrived when the 'boom or bust' economy of the province had slumped, thus reducing provincial revenues. To look ahead, Wesbrook had anticipated moving to the new campus and occupying new, modern buildings within a reasonable time after his arrival in February 1913. Instead, he was to encounter considerable

difficulty in securing a firm commitment from the government to pay faculty salaries and to obtain sufficient funds to establish the basic needs of a university.[3]

Instead of moving to a new campus, the college remained where it was, with additional temporary wooden buildings ('the Fairview Shacks') constructed as the need arose. Student enrolment increased steadily – 190 in 1912–13, 290 in 1914–15, and 379 in 1915–16. It was not until 1915 that the University of British Columbia, with a teaching staff of 34, officially opened its doors, having absorbed all the students and most of the faculty of McGill University College. More years would go by before the university would move to the new campus. At the time, not even the most optimistic supporter of the university would have believed that half a century later the student enrolment would increase almost a hundredfold.

Sherwood, like most freshmen, may have felt a bit awed when he started to take his first courses. His teachers were now professors, and some wore their academic gowns when lecturing, which gave them an even greater aura. Instead of being under the direction of a teacher almost every hour of the day, Sherwood found that he needed to attend only two or three classes each day and that the remaining hours were his. He soon realized, however, that these hours away from classes were not free. He was expected to read and study, research his term papers, write his reports, prepare book reviews, and attend to a multitude of other tasks relating to his courses. As a college student, he was now addressed as Mr. Lett rather than Sherwood, and in classes he was expected to express his own opinions rather than, as he had in high school, merely accept instruction without comment or criticism. The college library was small but good and as the weeks went by, Sherwood became more comfortable in the academic environment.

Sherwood had registered to take English, Latin, Psychology, and Geometry. When he first entered college there was no tuition fee but there were various expenses to be met, ranging from the purchase of books to transportation to the college. Fortunately he lived at home. Had he not done so, good board and lodging could be obtained in the vicinity of the college at about $25 per month. A list of suitable boarding and lodging houses, whose sanitary conditions were required to be properly certified, could be obtained from the YMCA. Although living at home, he was expected to do his part to provide for himself to the extent that he could.

Considering the relatively small size of the student body, it was natural that Sherwood quickly began to make friends. Gregarious by nature and with a very affable outlook on life, he was asked to join a

number of college organizations. He had played ice hockey most of his life, and he became a strong proponent of what became the McGill Hockey Club. By 1914 it was entered in the intermediate city league, consisting of the 'Towers,' the 'Arena Vics,' and 'McGill.' Lett was the goalie, a position he later held in the early 1920s with the 'Towers' team. He was to be credited in the college annual as having 'built up an Ice Hockey Team that is the dread of all comers,' and his skill as a goal keeper also won praise.

Sports was one of his interests, playing the flute in the college orchestra was another. The orchestra was under the direction of Herbert M. Drost, who played bass, was also its conductor, and later was to be the founder of the Vancouver Bach Choir. This musical group of young men began to practise when Sherwood was in his second year. By the early spring of 1914 they were feeling sufficiently confident to make their debut before a college audience on 17 March. Their first performance was very successful and 'came in the way of a mild surprise to the doubting Thomases,' as the editor of the *McGill Annual* put it.

Sherwood was also on the executive of the Literary Debating Society in 1914-15. During that academic year there were not many debates with outside organizations but the inter-class debates were termed 'very interesting and exciting.' In this pre-radio and pre-television era, far more attention was paid to debating than is the case today. For those involved it provided an excellent opportunity not only to practise public speaking, but also to hone one's skill in presenting a logical (hopefully winning) argument by marshalling facts and figures to enlighten the audience and confound one's opponents. It was good training for future lawyers, politicians, and diplomats, to mention only the most obvious future careers for students taking Arts courses.

A good topic always brought out a good audience. In the 1914-15 academic year, the *McGill Annual* reported that 'probably the keenest and most exciting discussion was on the subject of universal military training.' Sherwood and a fellow third year student, W. Dawe, argued in favour, while their opponents, two second year students, argued against. Lett and Dawe won the debate by a narrow margin.

One feature of the debating program that year was a mock trial arranged by Sherwood and a fellow student, A. Munro. They decided that the debate would take the form of a trial, with the debaters acting as counsel, and with some two dozen other students on stage acting as the judge, jury, court officials, witnesses, and so forth. Lett acted as the prosecuting attorney in a case which dealt with a breach of promise. The 'trial' brought in a record attendance of between 200 and 300

students. In the end, Lett won the case and the 'jilted fiancée' was awarded modest 'damages.'

Sherwood's activities on the campus kept him in the public eye. He was a popular student, friendly, full of fun, and a willing worker. His enthusiasm was infectious, and when he undertook to do something his fellow students knew they could rely on him to carry it out to the best of his ability. It is not surprising that Sherwood became involved in student government. In 1915, when the new University of British Columbia was preparing to absorb McGill College, the Alma Mater Society of the college appointed a committee to act with a faculty representative in drawing up a constitution for the student body of the new university. Evelyn Story, Sherwood Lett, and J.E. Mulhern were asked to serve with Professor H.T. Logan. They worked throughout the summer of 1915 drafting a constitution of the Alma Mater Society of UBC, which was adopted provisionally until the beginning of the fall term in 1916.[4] Commenting in his diary about his work with the committee, Sherwood wrote later: 'I have done my best to get the student affairs organized and systematized and I don't think I have failed altogether.' His fellow students apparently agreed, and the members of the Alma Mater Society, that is, the entire student body, unanimously elected him president of the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia. It is interesting to note that while the University Act did not deal with student government, the new draft constitution gave the student body a far greater degree of independence than was provided for in the old College Alma Mater Society. Although amended and revised in later years, it remains the basis of student government today.

By the time he completed his third year in the spring of 1915, Sherwood had been voted by his fellow students to a variety of offices. He was representative to the Executive of the Literary and Debating Society, a member of the Class Executive, class president, an executive member of the Men's Athletic Association, and president of the McGill Hockey and Skating Club. He was also an active player in football, and he had organized and coached the McGill Ladies Ice Hockey Club, which he had trained during the year.

He was developing into a good speaker as well as a good debater. When the first reception was held for UBC freshmen in 1915, Sherwood, as president of the Alma Mater, was asked to make a brief welcoming speech. Only part of it has been kept, but its contents reveal something of the ideas and opinions he held at the time. He said in part:

> You have the honour of being the first freshmen class in an institution of which the future lies in your hands. The provincial government has done

its part, the president by his patient and unceasing efforts has done his part. It now remains for us, as the graduates, to do our part and in a special degree does that duty devolve on you as freshmen. You will lay the foundations of university traditions, yours is the making or marring of future college history. Or if I may be permitted to state it, in the words of our motto, 'Tuum est' – it's up to you.[5]

During the years he was studying at McGill College and UBC, Sherwood was also active in church work. By this time, of course, he was a member of his father's Grandview Methodist Church, the leader of the Sunday School Orchestra and for one term, President of the Epsworth League. His older brother, Heber, was to become superintendent of the church's Sunday School, but it was Sherwood who organized the senior class and infused it with a tremendous spirit. In 1924 he was asked to be the speaker at the Sunday School's Rally Day and in his speech, one can catch something of the enthusiasm he exuded at the time. 'It is just a little over fourteen years ago that I first became a scholar in this Sunday School,' he told his young audience.

[At that time] it was the second largest Sunday School in Vancouver. It was not only big but it was good. In fact, it was the best Sunday School in British Columbia. And the reason it was the best was because of the people we had in it ... hardworking, loyal people ... whom I see still around me here ...

I will tell you about one class [his own]. It was a boy's class and it was called 'The Bulldogs' ...

There were 36 of them on the roll of the class and, like bulldogs, they were very tenacious and ... very loyal. The average attendance used to be 32 during the winter months. This Sunday School taught those boys to be loyal. They were loyal to their class, their Sunday School, to the church and to themselves. And when the time came for them to show their loyalty to their King and Country, the spirit of loyalty was so strong in them that 22 out of that 36 went forth from this Sunday School to do battle ... It is a record unsurpassed as far as I know in any Sunday School in Canada.[6]

* * *

When Sherwood first came to college, the idea that he might be involved in a war probably never entered his mind. Wars were events which happened elsewhere. Nevertheless, as a growing boy, he would have heard his parents speak about the South African War, the Spanish-American War, and the Russo-Japanese War. These had been

sharp but short and seemed to pose no threat to Canada. Nevertheless, as the new century wore on there were signs that the major powers in Europe might find themselves in conflict, which would result in a tremendous clash of arms. Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy had a strong defensive alliance while Great Britain, France, and Russia, having resolved their colonial disputes, had reached an understanding and were referred to as the Triple Entente. Britain was becoming very apprehensive over the growing naval might of Germany. German war plans, once set in motion, were designed to knock out France and then attack Russia. In the Balkans, Russia posed as the protector of the Slavs while the Austro-Hungarian Empire feared a rising Slavic nationalism which had already caused a series of minor wars in that area, the most recent being in 1912. The assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne late in June 1914 provided the spark to explode the Balkan 'powder-keg.' A crisis was reached late in July which led to the mobilization of European armies and the declaration of war. When Great Britain declared war she brought the entire empire into the conflict. In the first days of August, Canadian regiments had long lines of recruits at their armouries waiting to enlist. It was felt that the war would be short and glorious and many of these anxious young men were afraid the war would be over before their units arrived overseas.

When the war broke out, Sherwood was in the militia. A year earlier the 11th Regiment, Irish Fusiliers of Canada, had been formed in Vancouver. Sherwood was eighteen at the time and possibly the combination of his Irish background coupled with the suggestion of the unit's bandmaster (the leader of the Apollo Concert Orchestra) led him to join up as a member of the unit's band. Being a militiaman did not mean one was automatically committed to serve in time of war. He was working on the railway on Vancouver Island when hostilities broke out and evidently, on his return to Vancouver a month later, he felt he should finish his degree as a first priority.

Immediately after the war began, an Officers Training Corps was formed at McGill University College. A year later it became the University of British Columbia Contingent, COTC, and when students returned for classes in September 1915, military training in the COTC was made obligatory. This involved two hours of training each week, with some men volunteering for an additional three hours.

Sherwood joined the Officers Training Corps in 1914, and decided to take the additional courses which would qualify him as an officer in the militia. With his usual drive, Sherwood obtained his 'A' and 'B' certificates and in time was commissioned as a lieutenant.

Later that year the University of Manitoba sent two of its COTC offi-

cers to various western universities to advocate the formation of an overseas battalion recruited from the universities. In January 1915, at a conference in Edmonton, the four presidents of the western universities agreed to approach the Minister of Militia, Sam Hughes, and suggest the formation of such a unit. Hughes agreed to authorize the 196th Western Universities Battalion, the idea being that each university would supply one company. Sherwood could have received a commission in this battalion but turned it down. As it turned out, this unit, after a brief existence, was broken up and absorbed into the reinforcement stream for the troops going to France.

The idea of concentrating university students into one battalion was ridiculous from the start. When President Wesbrook had approached Sherwood about serving in the unit in January 1916, the war had been in progress for a year and a half. The casualty rates had soared beyond anyone's expectations – it was not unusual for a battalion to lose a quarter or a third of its manpower in one battle. The 196th Battalion, had it reached the front, could expect to experience the same rate of casualties. The loss to Canada of these university students would have been a gross piece of mismanagement. Their potential as future officer material alone should have been recognized, and if the university presidents lacked the military wisdom to see this point they were not enlightened by the erratic Minister of Defence. By the end of the war, the university had 697 of its students join up. Of these, seventy-eight were to be killed in action.

The reason Sherwood turned down the offer to join the 196th Battalion was that two weeks earlier he had been accepted as a lieutenant in the recently formed 121st Battalion ('Western Irish'), then based at Queen's Park, New Westminster. His own Irish background and his five months' service with the Irish Fusiliers in Vancouver perhaps made it a natural selection. As of 22 December 1915, he was officially in the army.

NOTES

1 Barbara Strong, 'The First Quarter,' in Barbara Strong (ed.), *About Town*, 4: 8 (Aug. 1958): 5-7.

2 Ibid.

3 See F.H. Soward, 'The Early History of the University of British Columbia,' unpublished MS.

4 H.T. Logan, *Tuum Est: A History of the University of British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC 1958), 62.

5 Vancouver City Archives, Sherwood Lett Papers, Vol. I, File 4. Sherwood

added in the letter containing the above quotation: 'The day before the freshman reception I mentioned this interpretation of the motto to ... Dr. Wesbrook and his remark was, "That is a happy translation and contains precisely the idea".'

6 Vancouver City Archives, Sherwood Lett Papers, 1924.

CHAPTER THREE

'A Call to Arms'

When Sherwood Lett reported to the Adjutant of the Western Irish a few days before Christmas, he was pleased to hear he had passed his lieutenant's examinations and had been proclaimed medically fit by the medical officer. He had a brief interview with the battalion commander who told him he was 'very young for an officer.'[1] His fresh complexion, curly hair, and short stature did make him appear younger than he was, and he was only a few months past his twentieth birthday when he joined the battalion.

There was a great deal to learn. His previous military experience consisted of five months with the local Irish Fusiliers as a bandsman. Generally the militia units drilled once or twice a week in the evenings with perhaps a week's summer training at a nearby camp. He would have had minimal exposure to military instruction there. He also had six months in the Canadian Officers Training Corps. Here again the emphasis would be on foot and arms drill, but with additional instruction given in such topics as map-reading, military administration and organization, basic tactics, military law, et cetera. But if he had a lot to learn, so did the other officers. As he noted in his diary: 'There are [sic] always a lot of discussions in the mess about military matters and if the men knew how ignorant the officers are, they would not have much confidence.'[2] For himself, he was determined 'to start in to train and study in earnest now and see what I can make of this military business.'[3]

For the first few weeks Sherwood was appointed to command a rifle platoon, but soon he became interested in signalling. Considering the casualty rate of infantry officers in the front line, it was an interest which, in the long run, probably saved his life. When he was asked by the commanding officer if he would like the appointment as signalling officer, he jumped at the opportunity. When the appointment was

made official a few days later, he confided to his diary with unconcealed delight,

> Today I have won my spurs. I was appointed signalling officer ... This means I am a mounted staff officer now with all his privileges, responsibilities and obligations. It entitles me to wear spurs, which I feel is a great honour. It means long sieges of study and more hard work but it will keep me busy and not allow my mind to dwell on the job I have enlisted for, or the place I am going to, and this is exactly what I need.[4]

Sherwood, now with a specialist platoon and thus unlikely to be shifted from one company to another, worked hard to bring it to the highest stage of smartness and efficiency. He went riding early in the morning and late in the afternoon to improve his horsemanship. He learned semaphore and Morse code and drilled his men in both. Soon he was able to tap out messages at the rate of twenty-five words a minute and to receive them at fifteen words per minute. He learned everything he could about field telephones, setting up a telephone network and switchboard, repairing lines, and a variety of other tasks he and his men would be called upon to perform. He was learning, too, how to handle men, most of whom were older than himself. It is interesting to note that, in his diary, he rarely if ever complains about their behaviour or poor discipline. It is apparent that, as an officer, he not only felt his responsibility to instruct them, but went out of his way to do what he could to keep them content and happy. It helped, of course, that all were volunteers, but Sherwood learned quickly that it was better to lead by example than merely to exercise the rights of his commission.

While the 121st Battalion was recruiting and getting outfitted in New Westminster, Sherwood maintained his keen interest in the new university. On 3 January 1916, for example, he noted:

> This afternoon we held a meeting of the Students' Council [of UBC] and considered the constitution of the affiliated societies. We met again at 7:30 p.m. and worked until about 10:30. I handed in my resignation as President of the Alma Mater Society and it was accepted. Takes effect on January 10th. I had a long talk with Dr. Wesbrook in regard to the formation of a Western Universities Battalion for overseas service ... I feel rather sorry to think I have resigned my position as president of the AMS because it means the end of college days and I will miss all the friends so much. But I am glad I did it for such a good reason.[5]

It would seem that in this period his social life developed as never before. He went to skating parties with young ladies, sometimes

invited them to tea at the officers' mess, or perhaps took them to see the latest Charlie Chaplin or Mary Pickford film. As he wrote at one point: 'I'm really getting to be quite a "fusser" – a different girl every night for five nights.'[6]

Up to this time Sherwood had never gone to a dance except as a member of the dance orchestra. Dancing was discouraged by the Methodists, but when the officers of the Western Irish brought in a dancing teacher to improve their style, Sherwood decided to learn how to do the one-step and the waltz. Ten days later he attended the first annual dance of the Arts Men's Undergraduate Society. 'It was a very formal affair,' he wrote, 'dress suits and very low-necked dresses. On the whole it was very fine. I broke my record and danced – the first time in my college days. Perhaps it was wrong but it showed all the students that I could if I wanted to.'[7]

A few days later he paid one of his frequent visits to Elsie Knight and told her about the dance. She was about eighteen years old at the time, 'dainty and sweet and very nice.'[8] She was the only daughter of a wealthy businessman in Grandview, who was one of the leading supporters of the Grandview Methodist Church. Probably they had met when the Letts first came to Vancouver. At this time Sherwood visited her more frequently than any of his other girlfriends. 'She listened to me tell her about going to dances,' Sherwood wrote, 'and she began to be afraid that I was not living up to my convictions.' This suggestion that his high ideals and strong Christian outlook might be weakening rather annoyed him. 'Perhaps I have changed and perhaps I have not,' he ruminated. 'One thing I do know and that is that my ideas and determination to live a straight life have not waivered whether I have changed my form of recreation from hockey to dancing or not.'[9]

There were other young ladies he went out with, almost invariably referred to in his diary as Miss Coy, Miss Story, or Miss MacMillan. These three, 'very fine girls, clever and jolly,' were all members of the first student council at UBC After attending the Science Undergraduate skating party with them in mid-January he reflected: 'The affair was a great success but it makes me feel rather out of it to hear them all talking about affairs of which I now have no part.' Another good friend was Dorothy Trapp, daughter of a pioneer automobile dealer in the city and a girl with whom he sometimes went riding.

Early in May, when the university had its first graduation ceremony, Sherwood and Dorothy shared a jitney to come to the affair. Since there were still no buildings on the Point Grey campus, and since there was no suitable room for the ceremony at the 'Fairview Shacks,' it was decided to have the ceremony at the Vancouver Hotel. The

procession of graduates assembled at the Court House and, led by the BC Company of the Western Universities Battalion, proceeded in full academic costume to the hotel's ballroom. There, with all the pomp and ceremony the faculty could muster, the first UBC graduates received their degrees. Sherwood was among the nine BA graduates who, on the recommendation of the Faculty and Senate, were granted their degrees without examination since they had enlisted for overseas service. It was a day to remember.

On the war fronts, meanwhile, there were developments which were causing a great deal of sober thought. It was very obvious that this was not going to be a short war. Further, casualties were increasing steadily and Great Britain had brought in conscription. Several new elements had been introduced to increase the intensity of war – poison gas, the first tanks, submarine warfare, and the increasingly widespread use of zeppelins and aircraft against both military and civilian targets. When Sherwood was receiving his BA degree, the Battle of Verdun was being waged – a battle which was to continue for months. Shortly after, the Battle of the Somme began, and it, too, lasted for months. By the time these battles ended, each side had suffered about a million casualties.

There is little doubt that Sherwood had any illusions about the trials that lay ahead. A month after he joined the Western Irish he noted in his diary: 'I've got to keep working at something or I start thinking about what I am going into and I shouldn't.' A week later, when told of his appointment as signalling officer, he added,

> It is more dangerous and responsible but I'm not afraid of the responsibilities or the danger. I believe that if there is something more for me to do in this world, then I will not be buried in France and if there is nothing greater for me, well, I have done what I could for other people and I am quite ready to make way for someone else. This is very near fatalism, but a man must be a fatalist to some extent when he is playing this war game. There are only two courses open to him; either he must go and be killed or he must stay at home and live out his life in uselessness. Thus far, man must choose for himself but no man worthy of the name would choose the latter. 'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will,' and in spite of our hewing and hacking the divinity will round out the finished product to His own satisfaction.[10]

This is the writing of a young man, not yet twenty-one, but he expresses at this early age a philosophy which will not change in the years to come. He felt that all one could do was to follow one's conscience, behave in a Christian manner, and that if one was guided by

these principles one should be willing to accept the consequences without complaint. He had faith in God's wisdom and mercy, and rarely was that faith shaken. One could but do one's best, play the game 'straight' as he would put it, and leave the rest to Providence, who would guide him along the proper path.

Sherwood sometimes needed to call on that inner faith and belief that he was doing the right thing. His patriotism was obvious. He felt it was not only right to take up arms in defence of Canada and the Empire but, in so doing he felt, as did thousands like him, that he was fighting to preserve a Christian, democratic way of life. His older sister, Mary, however, held very strong views about war and all it implies. It is quite likely she let her youngest brother know her opinion when he visited home. Even when he was in England and on the verge of going to France, she would write:

> I know we don't see things in the same light. I've tried to see things as you people do, but to me you are all labouring under a monster delusion that is dulling your sense of right and wrong. Five years ago you had the same horror of murder that I have today. You would have been scandalized if I told you that I had deliberately killed a man. And yet now you wonder that I should not glory in the slaughterhouse in France. Five years ago you would have considered it an insult to be asked to take part in a little skirmish that you know would result in untold misery and pain to people who were as absolutely innocent of wrong as you yourself. But today, because it is on a world-wide scale, you are proud to have a hand in it. Oh of course I know that side of it is smothered out of your thoughts by the luminous smoke of 'patriotism.' Yes, patriotism to what? Patriotism to the devil's cause of murder and destruction."

Rumours had been going around in May that the Western Irish would soon be leaving for advanced training in the military camp at Vernon. Early in June the unit was told it would leave on the evening of the fifth. At the railway station Sherwood's numerous friends were on hand to see him off. His family was there, except for his mother;[12] they had said their goodbyes earlier. It was close to midnight before the train pulled away from the cheering crowds. 'Altogether,' Sherwood wrote, 'this has been one of the most wonderful days of my life and certainly I shall never forget it. Perhaps I shall see Westminster again and perhaps not, but I will have pleasant memories of it anyway.' Actually it would be three long years before he returned.

Vernon was a pleasant camp. The men were in tents and the weather so warm they were issued with large straw hats. The officers doffed their tunics and wore their Sam Brown belts over their shirts. A day

later the officers were wearing black crepe bands on their arms in mourning for Field Marshal Lord Kitchener, who had lost his life when HMS *Hampshire* was torpedoed.

Training at Vernon went on smoothly with a major interruption in the schedule caused by an inspection by the Minister of Militia, Major-General Sir Sam Hughes, a vain, colourful, egotistical man who enjoyed inspecting the troops in uniform. As Sherwood recorded: 'I shook hands with him and he said to the colonel: "This is an innocent looking boy, McLeland." And the colonel said: "Yes, sir, young but one of the best." So I felt quite tickled. Old Sam said: "Oh, he'll be all right, he'll be all right".'[13] Sherwood's boyish looks were later to earn him the nickname 'Kewpie' among his fellow officers.

The battalion remained in Vernon for over two months. During this time Sherwood trained his platoon as best he could with the equipment he had. He would find that neither the time they spent in flag drill for semaphore work nor even using Morse code on the Lucas lamps would be of much use in the trenches. Telephone communication both by voice and by buzzer were to be far more vital. Also, although it was great fun riding one's horse in the area to establish long distance station work or even to visit Vernon, he enjoyed learning to ride a motorcycle shortly after he arrived in camp.

Although he had been a signalling officer for only six months, constant study and practice apparently gained him a reputation as an expert in the field. As a result he was asked to conduct a brigade school in signalling and in July was made Camp Signal Officer 'with rather heavy duties to perform.' Added to that and his normal work, he also contributed to *The Western Irish*, the unit newspaper. On weekends, there were numerous invitations to teas or swimming parties from local residents, and on Sundays, aside from the usual brigade or battalion church parades, he and some friends also attended church services in the evenings.

The months at Vernon passed pleasantly enough, but early in August orders came for the Western Irish to proceed overseas. By this time the unit was looked upon as a trained battalion, tanned and hardened by exercises and manoeuvres in the Okanagan Valley, and accustomed to military life and discipline.

As usual, the railroad trip to Halifax was long, but not altogether tedious. The train made numerous stops to allow the men to get off, stretch their legs, and sometimes they even had time for a short route march. When the train entered Ontario and began to wind its way down the Ottawa Valley, Sherwood looked forward to meeting, even briefly, some of his friends. 'At Pembroke,' he wrote, 'it seemed that the whole town was looking for me. All the cousins from the country

were there in force and the boys and girls I went to school with. Unfortunately, we stopped there only for a few minutes.' At Smiths Falls, even though it was two o'clock in the morning, some of his high school friends were on the platform to meet him. Later that day, when the train entered Quebec, Sherwood encountered a considerable change. 'From [Montreal] on,' he wrote,

> we travelled by Intercolonial Railway. All the way along we see French people on their little strips of farms. The reception in this country is very cold. Their knowledge of English is as lacking as their respect for the King's uniform. We had a route march at Chaudiere Junction, a pure French town. Here our reception was a very cool one. No applause or cheers, no good wishes or goodbyes, only stony stares or hostile glances greeted us on all of the streets. We were glad to get away and get out of this miserable town ...
>
> On Saturday we got out of Quebec into New Brunswick and you would not believe it was the same country. The people are so patriotic and so good to the soldiers that it did our hearts good to see them and receive their good wishes at every point.[14]

On 14 August, some 6,000 officers and men, including the Western Irish, were taken on board the troop ship, *Empress of Britain*, in Halifax. Painted a slate grey, 'with nearly every vestige of luxury removed,' the officers were crowded into cabins, while below decks the men were given hammocks which were slung from hooks on the deckheads of the space where they would both eat and sleep. Once on board there was no leaving the ship without a pass. However, Sherwood had never been in Nova Scotia and wanted to get at least a glimpse of Halifax before he left. Unable to obtain a pass he stuck a pencil behind his ear, took a handful of official-looking papers and 'looking as important as I could,' he recounted, 'I strode down the gangplank and past the first sentries.' Meeting a friend on the dock, he continued his bluff and both managed to get a glimpse of downtown Halifax. That evening the *Empress of Britain* pulled away from the dock and left to join its convoy on the fifteenth.

The Atlantic crossing was uneventful. Eight days later the ship entered the mouth of the River Mersey, and Sherwood was overwhelmed with the reception they received. 'Talk about your shipping,' he wrote,

> I never saw such a congestion of traffic in ships. Both banks were lined. We passed the 'Aquitania' fitted out as a hospital ship and other famous ships with the flag of their native land pointed on their sides. We sailed past Birkhamhead Beach ... and up into the shipping district. I don't

think any boat [sic] ever received such a welcome. It was just at 7:15 p.m. when the ferries were loaded with people coming from work. Every boat we passed would whistle wildly its greetings and cheers answered cheers from ship to ship. The crowded ferry seemed a mass of waving handkerchiefs as they circled about us. All four [battalion] bands filled the harbour with joyous Canadian music, and sirens, whistles, cheers and songs resounded from one shore to the other. We dropped anchor just opposite the ferry wharf and all the boats came circling about us on their way in and out. The men lined the sides and filled the rigging and answered heartily the saluting toots of all the steamers, from big ocean freighters to the little ... coal barges ... Far into the night the cheers were kept up as the ferry boat came sweeping in close to us.

But each cheer brought a new flood of tears to my eyes for no reason at all. I'm not an emotional chap nor given to tears at all, but something in those welcoming sounds of the people of England to her loyal Canadian boys touched me deeper than the mind could feel and flooded the emotions with strange fancies. Some gave vent to theirs in cheers but mine must express themselves in flooding tears and a choking throat. I never had this sensation before and could not understand it at all. Lester came up and stood beside me. He was similarly affected as were numerous others. 'To me,' he said, 'there is something profoundly melancholy about this.' And I could feel exactly what he meant. The pathetic side of it all came home to me - so many working girls, so many tired women, welcoming with hearty cheers the men who had come thousands of miles to a strange land to fight side by side with their menfolk, and to lay down their lives together for their protection and the upholding of an honour so long revered and unbesmirched in their little island homes.[15]

From Liverpool the Western Irish, along with the other units, went to Bramshott Camp located about ten miles south of Aldershot and some forty miles southwest of London. Bramshott had become a base reserve depot, and by the time the unit arrived, the 4th Canadian Infantry Division had left for France. A Canadian Training Division was established, composed of training brigades, and it was into this organization that Sherwood's battalion was placed. When the 121st Battalion was organized and trained, both officers and other ranks hoped and expected they would go into action together, presumably as part of the 5th Division. This, however, was not to be the case. With four divisions at the front, the casualty rates of those killed and wounded were much higher than anticipated. If those divisions at the front were to maintain their full strength, casualties had to be replaced by a continual stream of reinforcements. These, in turn, were to be

drawn from those battalions recently arriving from Canada, of which the 121st Battalion was only one of dozens. This reorganization was in its early phase when the battalion arrived at Bramshott.

The first duty of the unit's officers, once they had settled into their barracks, was to assemble with officers of other battalions in a local theatre to hear a speech by Major-General Sir Sam Hughes. He had inspected them only a month or so ago in Vernon, but he never missed an opportunity to inspect or speak to 'his' troops. With that over, both officers and men were given disembarkation leave and many, like Sherwood, headed for London.

There was a tremendous amount to see and do. London was crowded, but even on his first day there Sherwood and his friends covered a large area both by bus and on foot. Albert Hall, Kew Gardens, St. James Park, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, the House of Commons, Downing Street, and a brief stop for lunch at Simpson's on the Strand. Then on to Picadilly Circus, Madame Tussaud's Waxworks, back to their hotel, and then to the Criterion to see a play. After the show they walked to their hotel along Picadilly, where, Sherwood noted, 'we were accosted time after time by questionable girls, most of whom are well dressed and rather good looking. They are of all ages, sizes and nationalities. But they were not my style so we left them alone.'[16]

In the week they were there, Sherwood and his friends visited almost every place they had heard or read about – churches, cathedrals, theatres, palaces, and so forth. It was in London, too, that Sherwood heard the first guns fired in anger. He was sound asleep when, around 3:15 a.m., the action began. As he wrote at the time:

> I was awakened up by a furious bombardment of guns and people running through the corridors and shouting in the street. I got up and looked out of my window and saw hundreds of searchlights chasing each other all over the sky. The shelling was quite furious and shook the building ... The explosion of the bombs and of the shrapnel was very loud and sounded uncomfortably close. After some fifteen minutes the shelling ceased and suddenly the sky was lit up by a dull red light which grew in intensity as it descended rapidly. I could just barely discern the form of the burning zeppelin falling towards the earth. It dropped down behind some buildings and was lost to view. The searchlights continued to search around the heavens but the bombardment ceased and I went back to bed.[17]

When Sherwood returned to his battalion a few days later he took the opportunity to go to a signalling course which was being run by

the British in Aldershot. It lasted a full month. The class was given a thorough training in both the theoretical and practical aspects of signalling and Sherwood did very well in it. In his reading and sending tests, he scored 398 out of 400, and did well in his practical work as well. For the first time, too, he met a number of officers, both British and Canadian, who had front-line experience and from them was able to gain some idea of what life in the trenches was like. On one weekend he visited the large aerodrome at Farnborough, just outside Aldershot, and for a while was intrigued with the idea of joining the Royal Flying Corps. During his stay in Aldershot the area was subjected twice to zeppelin raids, and one can imagine that the prospect of training as a pilot to combat these huge aircraft must have had some appeal to him.

In mid-October, Sherwood was back with the battalion, and a few weeks later the Western Irish began to send drafts of men to France to fill the large gaps left by casualties during the Somme campaign. This was the beginning of a process which would continue for months, and it was disheartening to see the unit begin to break up in this way. Late in November, however, Sherwood received a call from the Divisional Signalling Officer, who wanted him for a special job. Sherwood was hoping to be promoted to become a Brigade Signalling Officer and he was told if he did well on this task, the brigade appointment would probably follow. The proposed job at Divisional Headquarters was confirmed on 22 November. Sherwood was delighted and confided to his diary:

> This is certainly the chance of a lifetime and will be the biggest thing I have undertaken in my life. It means handling a great many officers and men and I will be getting the knowledge of Divisional and Brigade organization which it does not fall to everyone's lot to acquire first hand.
>
> . . . . .
>
> My work . . . is to organize the Bramshott area with its five or six brigades . . . with a common system of [signalling] training. I will inspect and report on each section and keep track of the signalling work in this area generally . . . I will be given a free hand in my work and all the backing I require. I will have an office up at Divisional Headquarters and a sergeant to conduct my inspections with me . . . There are 19 battalions in this area at present and it is going to mean some work to get through with them but I think I can manage it all right.[18]

His appointment as a signals inspector and instructor did not bring Sherwood a promotion, even though it gave him far more responsibil-

ity and authority. It did allow him, as he anticipated, the opportunity to get a much broader view of army life, far beyond what he experienced as a regimental officer. Basically, what he was doing was drawing up syllabi for training regimental signallers, making sure the level of instruction was being carried out among the battalions, and ensuring that signallers sent on drafts to France were competent. At the same time he was instructing at the Divisional Signalling School.

It was interesting and challenging work and, generally, he kept a cheerful outlook on life. Sometimes, however, he got homesick. Usually, on New Year's Day, he would sum up his thoughts on the past year and make resolutions for the new one. 'This is to be Kitchener's year,' he wrote on the first day of 1917, 'that is, he said it would be a three-years war which will, I hope, prove correct. I am tired of war, I want to get back to productive work not the study of destruction. I am not dissatisfied and would not wish to be anywhere else but in France. But life is so short and there is so much to be done that I want to get back to civil life again.'[19] One thing which depressed him was to see his own battalion being constantly reduced as drafts of officers and men were posted to other battalions in France. By early January what was left of it was absorbed into a Training Reserve Battalion in Seaford, while Sherwood himself was attached to Divisional Headquarters at Bramshott.

It was a comfortable staff job, but Sherwood, although more than competent in his work, began to feel more uncomfortable in it. Basically, he felt he should have service in France. He had seen his own battalion sent over in drafts to the front, at officers' messes he kept meeting officers who talked about life in the trenches which he had not experienced, and he began to feel as if he was not pulling his weight. 'A staff job is very nice,' he wrote, 'but I am anxious to see some active service now.' At the same time, he was skilled in a particular task, and he wanted to use his knowledge to the best advantage.

Early in January Sherwood applied for a transfer to the Signal Company of the Canadian Engineers. This group was performing the highest level of signal work at the time, including wireless communication. He also wrote to a family friend, Brigadier Victor W. Odlum, then commanding a brigade in France, letting him know he would like to get to France if a vacancy occurred. He enquired about a signalling position with the 15th Brigade, then located at Witby, since there was a possibility it might be sent to France as part of the 5th Division. He was just about to take on this task when he was offered the opportunity to take a month-long course in advanced signalling in London. It promised to be interesting and, as he wrote, 'I hope . . . that it will lead me to France pretty soon.'[20]

When the course was finished, Sherwood returned to find that he had been appointed to be Signal Officer of the 6th Infantry Reserve Brigade. He organized a Brigade Signal School, with an establishment of four officers, twenty NCO instructors, and 260 men. It was in many ways a repetition of what he had been doing before going to London, and very soon he began to yearn for a more active role. 'It is very uncomfortable,' he wrote, 'to sit in a mess where nearly everyone has been out to France and to hear them talk of battles and scraps and not be able to join in. I wish they would let me get over to France, even if it were only as a private. I would gladly go but they seem to think I am more use here so they will not let me go across.'[21] A few days later came the news of the capture of Vimy Ridge by the Canadian Corps. It was marvellous and exciting news, but it also made Sherwood more dissatisfied that he was not at the front.

One of his problems was his own qualifications and experience. He was doing an excellent job where he was. A constant stream of new signallers had to be trained for reinforcements, and Sherwood had demonstrated a particular aptitude for the job. He was the square peg in the square hole, and his attempts to get a transfer were turned down. Rumours in May that he might be promoted and take over as Divisional Signalling Officer if the latter were posted to France did not develop, and by July he wrote 'I'm thinking seriously of transferring to the Royal Flying Corps as I am quite fed up with signalling . . . '[22]

When the opportunity came, Sherwood grabbed it. On 6 August a call came for a signalling officer for the 46th Battalion. Sherwood immediately volunteered for it and asked his brigade commander for permission to accept. The brigadier agreed, and wired the Canadian military authorities in London to seek the release of Lieutenant Lett from his appointment. A few days later the final hurdle was overcome. At long last, Sherwood was en route to the Western Front.

NOTES

1 Personal diary of Sherwood Lett. Lett kept a diary from 1915 to 1922. It is held by the Vancouver City Archives.
2 Ibid., 6 Jan. 1916.
3 Ibid., 4 Jan. 1916.
4 Ibid., 25 Jan. 1916.
5 Ibid., 3 Jan. 1916.
6 Ibid., 15 Feb. 1916.
7 Ibid., 25 Feb. 1916.
8 Letter, Mrs. Sherwood Lett to author, 27 Dec. 1989.

9 Personal diary, 27 Feb. 1916. Except where specified, the quotations which follow are from Sherwood Lett's personal diary.
10 Ibid., 24 Jan. 1916.
11 Letter, Mary Lett to Sherwood Lett, 7 Jan. 1917, in Sherwood Lett Papers, Vancouver City Archives, Finding Aid 84, Vol. 2, File 1. Mary's letter goes on for several more pages in the same vein. It is interesting that Sherwood retained the letter. Mary was not alone in her stance; see Thomas P. Socknat, *Witness Against War, Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945* (University of Toronto Press 1987).
12 His father had died in 1914.
13 Personal diary, 28 June 1916.
14 Ibid., 12 Aug. 1916.
15 Ibid., 23 Aug. 1916.
16 Ibid., 31 Aug. 1916.
17 Ibid., 3 Sept. 1916.
18 Ibid., 22 Nov. 1916.
19 Ibid., 1 Jan. 1917.
20 Ibid., 17 Feb. 1917.
21 Ibid., 5 Apr. 1917.
22 Ibid., 26 July 1917.

CHAPTER FOUR

In Action

The 46th Battalion was formed in the summer of 1915 in southern Saskatchewan. Later that year it was sent overseas and trained in the Bramshott area in the south of England. It became part of the 10th Infantry Brigade, and in August 1916, it was sent to France with the 4th Canadian Infantry Division. The division saw action in the Ypres Salient, took part in the Somme campaign, and in April 1917, the division was engaged in the hard fighting to capture Vimy Ridge. By the summer of 1917 the battalions in this division were veteran, battle-wise, experienced units.

Sherwood Lett left England on 13 August and a few days later reached the transport lines of the 46th Battalion near Souchez. 'We are just west of Vimy Ridge,' he wrote, 'and the old trenches of the Ridge are in full view. We can see the Huns potting at our airplanes and at one time could see a very heavy artillery barrage over towards Lens.'[1] On the following day Sherwood went forward to Battalion Headquarters on the outskirts of Lens. He described his first days in the line as follows:

> Got my first taste of heavy fire on the way up as the Huns were shelling all around the road.
>
> I discovered that we were on the eve of a big scrap and I will be in for it right away . . . The battle has been raging all day long . . . I paid my first visit to the front line today and made the acquaintance with real mud away up over my boots. Early tomorrow we are attacking in a 'show.' I must confess I have been nervous at times under the severe shell fire of this morning and this afternoon.
>
> This morning [August 21st] about 1 a.m. [we] moved up to advanced headquarters. We were shelled on the way up and two of my party were wounded.
>
> At 4:30 our barrage started and the men went over the top . . .[2]

Sherwood's task as signalling officer was to maintain communication between Battalion Headquarters, where Lieutenant-Colonel H.J. Dawson and the Forward Company Headquarters were located. This was done primarily by using runners or by stringing telephone wires. It was essential for the commanding officer to be kept informed of the progress of his sub-units. If they encountered particularly stubborn resistance, he could call on the artillery for support. However, with companies and platoons in the attack and with shellfire frequently cutting the wires or wounding or killing signallers, it was no easy task. Moreover, communications had to be maintained night and day, both to the forward companies and back to Brigade Headquarters. In his first tour of duty in the trenches, Sherwood endured heavy shelling, both high explosive and gas, and began to be accustomed to machine-gun and rifle bullets whizzing by him as he carried out his duties. It was also exhausting work, but exciting. As he put it, 'I was very sleepy, scared but not nervous and rather enjoyed my first experience.' When the battalion was relieved several days later, he noted with some pride: 'I was the last man of the battalion to get out as I remained sending in reports until the last man had been relieved. Then I came out with my headquarters of 17 men including signallers and runners . . . On the way out we were shelled but not heavily and had no casualties.'[3] In its week in the trenches, however, the battalion lost thirty-eight killed and 224 wounded.

In the weeks that followed his initiation into trench warfare, Sherwood was to learn a great many lessons. There was a pattern which was followed fairly regularly. After five to seven days in the front line, the battalion would be relieved and go into a supporting role. This meant it was out of direct contact with the enemy and could get some measure of rest. At the same time there was a great deal to be done – new equipment or weapons were issued to replace those damaged, broken, or worn. There were the usual parades – for pay, for baths, for inspection, and so forth. There were always work and fatigue parties needed to repair trenches and barbed wire defences, to dig or improve dugouts, help repair roads, build huts, help the engineers to maintain transportation routes, carry supplies up to the front line areas at night, recover material which could be reused – the list was endless. Although, as signals officer, Sherwood was spared much of the routine duties, he sometimes went scavenging for signalling equipment which could be used.

If the battalion was rotated into a reserve role things were better. While in support there was always a trickle of casualties, but in reserve one was usually beyond artillery range although still within striking distance of aircraft, which would do their best to disrupt one's activi-

ties. Training never stopped, but at least there was more time for relaxation, visiting friends in neighbouring battalions, or perhaps dropping in to a French estaminet where one could get a glass of wine and a blessed relief from army rations. But sooner or later the word would come that the unit was going back into the line and, loaded with ammunition, grenades, and other warlike stores, the companies would once more assemble in the gloom of night and start marching towards the front, passing the exhausted, weary men they were relieving en route.

The Canadian battles for Lens and Hill 70 were diversionary attacks in a much larger operation in which the British armies were involved. Space does not permit an elaboration of the strategic goals of the British and French forces for 1917.[4] It is sufficient to note that Russia had been shaken by a revolution in the spring of 1917; the French Army, hard hit by heavy casualties, was in no position to take on an offensive role, and although the United States had entered the war, American presence on the battlefield would not really be felt until 1918. For these and other reasons, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig felt it essential to carry out an active offensive against the Germans in the northern part of the line. This would wear down the enemy, take some pressure away from the French and, if his campaign was successful, capture a large section of the Belgian coastline where German submarines were based and striking hard at British shipping.

All during the summer Haig launched a succession of attacks, making limited gains at considerable cost. In the autumn he decided to bring the Canadian Corps north into the Ypres sector, where it would be given the task of taking Passchendaele Ridge. On 21 October, following an inspection by Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Currie, the 46th Battalion began its move into the Ypres salient as a preliminary to entering the line. 'I will never forget my first sight of Ypres,' Sherwood wrote later. 'After three years of war on the day we entered it was being shelled continuously. Horses and men lay dead in the street and an automobile was blazing furiously in the public square.'[5] The Passchendaele area had been fought over prior to the Canadians' arrival, and the constant shellfire had completely destroyed the drainage system which, at one time, had made it a pleasant, green, shallow valley. Moreover, the October rains had made things worse. The regimental historian of the 46th describes the battalion's approach to the 'front' as follows:

> Out through the ruins of Ypres they marched, passing the Menin gate and onto a plank road built on top of the original road now under inches of oozing mud. Shattered and discarded equipment littered the area.

> Smaller items had vanished in the mire, but trucks, artillery pieces and tanks lay partially submerged on all sides. Into this vast sea of slime enemy shells plunged and sank before exploding with a muffled roar and a shower of mud and filth.
>
> As night fell, the men marched into new horrors. They left the road and headed cross-country on duckboard walks which twisted across the miles of swamp. With every step the duckboards swayed drunkenly. On all sides lay the unburied dead who would eventually sink into unknown graves.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> There were no trenches to take over. There were in fact no visible signs of defensive works except for two battered pillboxes captured weeks earlier. The pillboxes were used as headquarters, and the men were scattered about, ostensibly in shell-hole posts. However, every shell-hole was filled to the top with slimy water . . . and a few feet of liquid mud. When morning came . . . the men stared about them aghast. How could anyone have sent them to fight in such an impossible place?[6]

The 46th went into the line on 22 October and for the next four days huddled in shell craters (when they could) or worked on labouring parties in the exhausting work of attempting to create some order in the sea of mud. Sherwood, with Battalion Headquarters, was fortunate. He and several other officers occupied a captured German concrete bunker, so at least he could find some shelter at the end of the day. Working in the mud was bad enough, but the rain and bone-chilling cold added to the misery.

The attack went in on 26 October. The battalion, which initially occupied the support lines, was to make the initial assault for the entire division. The companies were to advance about 600 yards over a quagmire, where they would seize a low ridge. An artillery barrage would precede the attack, and at 5:40 a.m. the infantry would go forward into the featureless waste towards a well dug-in and prepared enemy.

At first the attack went well, but casualties were heavy. In mid-afternoon the enemy launched a counterattack causing the forward companies to withdraw slightly. This, coupled with the stream of wounded coming back and heavy casualties among the officers, resulted in the whole line retiring. 'At Battalion Headquarters,' the commanding officer reported later,

> the first intimation of a counter-attack was the opening of the Machine Gun barrage. This called attention to . . . the sight of men streaming back

> ... The 46th Battalion Headquarters consisting of runners, signallers, orderly room staff and batmen were ordered to stand to, and the crowd of men falling back, who proved to be carrying parties and stretcher-bearer parties, were ordered to turn about. One company of the 47th Battalion was found in shelter trenches near Battalion Headquarters and I gave the order for all to advance. The whole of this body of men at once advanced under Lieuts. Lett, Martin, McLean, and an officer of the 47th Battalion.[7]

It was the first time Lett had led men into action and the conditions under which he and the other three officers rallied the withdrawing troops can only be imagined. The original battalion objectives were recovered under great difficulty and with the assistance of reinforcements. By nightfall the battalion was relieved, and of the 600 who went into the attack 53 were killed, 287 were wounded and 62 were missing. Within a twelve-hour period, half of the attacking force were casualties. That was the first day of the battle. Other units in the division and in the corps slogged their way forward for another ten days.

Lett, who kept a daily diary during the war, did not keep it up for the time he was at Passchendaele, but the memory of it never left him. Many years later he wrote about it in a letter to Brigadier-General Victor W. Odlum, who had sent him an article in which he defended Haig's decision to execute the attack in the Passchendaele area during the rainy season when critics felt Haig should have gone on to the defensive weeks earlier. Lett had bitter memories of the action. He wrote in part:

> I planned my small part in the Passchendaele show on brightly coloured maps supplied by GHQ [General Head Quarters] which pictured charming little green spots like 'Orchard Copse,' 'Hillside Farm,' 'Sanctuary Wood' and 'Burghomaster's Park.' It was not until October 26th, when I watched six hundred of my battalion comrades ... wallow to their deaths in the slime and blood-soaked mud around 'Heinie House' that I realized GHQ must actually have believed those maps represented the ground, or they never would have sent men in to do things which even a muskrat would never attempt. It was on October 28th – two days after the offensive began, that for the first time I saw Staff Officers in the forward area looking over the battle-ground from the vicinity of Harry Logan's gun positions, and heard one say: 'Good God – , imagine us sending men into a mess like that.'
>
> Sir Douglas made a fundamental error when he forgot the elementary maxim of offensive warfare – 'Time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted.'

> He erred again in selecting a battleground which offered no objective of strategical importance ...
>
> He was mistaken in selecting the most northerly sector ...
>
> Haig's fourth and most unforgivable error was in continuing the offensive after September 15th when the rainy season set in.[8]

Sherwood had every right to be bitter. When his battalion moved out of the line to Potijze a day or so after the attack, and when the last of the wounded had been brought back, it was found that, from beginning to end, it had suffered over 400 casualties. Everyone was exhausted, the battalion needed reinforcements, and the new men given final training as they were integrated with the veterans. During this lull Sherwood managed to get two weeks leave which he spent in England and Scotland. He returned on 22 December, spent Christmas 'very pleasantly,' and four days later he and his signallers were back in the support lines. As usual, on the last day of the year, he summed up the previous twelve months in his diary:

> The last day of 1917 and the war still goes on with no end in view ... I spent the latter part of the year in France where I sometimes doubt whether I have been successful or not. But at least I hope I have saved the lives of some of our own men by my communications and I sincerely hope I have helped to exterminate some Boche. I have been through two operations ... and done quite a few trips in the line. I have seen a great deal of France and Belgium ... I have lived through so far 31 officers ... and about 825 men of the Battalion either killed or wounded. During that time I have had [among my signallers] three men killed and roughly 40 wounded.[9]

Perhaps it is no wonder that, a few days later, he wrote in his diary: 'The war seems so useless, so senseless and so interminable. To think that we are wasting the most valuable years of our lives in a meaningless slaughter of men who have no more reason to be in it than we have. What things we young fellows could be doing if only we had been in Canada and Canada at peace. Surely there is something which can take the place of such a thing as war.'[10] When Sherwood wrote these words the battalion was back in the Hill 70-Lens area in a fairly quiet section of the line. Almost every day brought a few casualties - the deadly trickle which never ceased as work-parties came within reach of German artillery or when the unit was rotated into the front line. During the early spring there was continual training and Sherwood was able to get away briefly to attend a wireless course in February.

During the next few months the battalion was kept busy. There were frequent moves in and out of the line and particular care was taken to be prepared for longer moves. In March 1918, having withdrawn many divisions from the Eastern Front owing to Russia's collapse as a military ally, the Germans concentrated massive forces and launched major attacks against the British both to the south and north of the Canadian positions. They made tremendous gains during the next three months, retaking much of the ground won earlier at such hard cost.

Late in March, for a short period Sherwood was made Acting Adjutant of the battalion. Apparently he must have performed his new duties well since on 12 June, when Lieutenant-Colonel J.H. Dawson went on leave, there was a reshuffling of appointments and Sherwood was again given the task. 'The Adjutant's job means long hours and lots of work and responsibility,' he wrote, 'but I hope it may bring a third pip if I make good at it, and it will be an interesting change from signalling for a time at least.'[11]

Although during late spring and early summer the Canadian front had been relatively quiet, on the British and French fronts the fighting had been desperate and almost continuous. With slightly over 200 divisions in the line, the Germans pushed both the British and French steadily backward, but at great cost. For the Germans, it was a crucial gamble to win the war before American divisions arrived in appreciable strength. It was a gamble which did not pay off. By mid-July the Germans had advanced to the Marne, but that was the limit of their endurance. It was now the Allies who seized the initiative, and a major attack was planned which would see the Canadians in the thick of the fighting.

On the last day of July, Sherwood was appointed Adjutant of the 46th. As the unit's chief administration officer, he was in close and constant contact with Lieutenant-Colonel Dawson. He not only kept the battalion's records but was also responsible for issuing the orders which kept the battalion running smoothly. Sherwood was exceptionally busy in the last week of July, for he had to plan for the move of the unit, under the greatest secrecy, from its position near Lens south to Amiens, where the Canadian Corps was to spearhead an attack against the enemy. The move was to be made under the cover of darkness. Deception plans were put in motion to conceal the transfer of the corps to a new section of the line, for by this time the enemy regarded the Canadians as élite troops, and when they were encountered, an attack might be expected. The attack was to be launched on 8 August. All four Canadian divisions were involved. Initially the 4th Division would be in reserve, ready to advance through the gun

positions and then leap-frog the attacking divisions when they had reached their initial objectives.

Sherwood gives an excellent eyewitness description of the first day of the battle:

> We left at 7:15 p.m. for our assembly position. It was a long march . . . to a position on the Amiens-Roye Road.
>
> The whole army seemed to be on the move, all branches of the service. But the traffic arrangements were very good and we arrived after a strenuous march in a field where we stayed for the remainder of the night until zero hour at 4:20 a.m. At zero hour . . . the barrage was certainly some sight. We were not to move off for an hour so we had an excellent chance to watch the show. First the guns roared out and crashed all around us and we knew that two miles in front, the boys of the 1st and 3rd Division were [going] over the top . . .
>
> Infantry was forming over the fields in open order and long lines of tanks snaked and puffed their way along the roadsides. The roads themselves were a kaleidoscope mass of traffic moving in either direction. Motor traffic only was permitted and lorries and ambulances, cars and motorcycles were speeding forward. The cavalry and artillery were pressing on over the paths and fields at a steady trot and overhead the air was literally alive with airplanes, large and small, sputtering and humming as they circled about and darted off to their various tasks.
>
> At 5:20 a.m. we began to press forward in the flood and, mounted on a fiery steed whose main object seemed to be to show me he was very alert to the guns, the CO [Lt.-Col. Dawson] and I headed the Battalion. We started on, up through the booming guns which fairly grunted a chorus of satisfaction as their shells whine smoothly overhead on their mission of destruction. Then in among the thumping howitzers we passed and we found the gunners here working at a terrible rate, taking their turns in relays and causing one continual roar. On past French Domart Wood we went, passing through lines of field guns which added their staccato bark to the thundering roar. Only after passing Domart Wood did we receive some attention from the Boche gunners, and even then it was only an occasional shell which did no damage and caused no casualties.
>
> About 10 a.m. we arrived at the south bank of the River Luce and here we waited until the 11th and 12th Brigades [of the 4th Division] crossed the river. On the other bank we could watch the infantry massing for the attack, with heavy screens of tanks and large squadrons of cavalry in front of them. About 11:30 we started to move forward again down into the valley of the Luce into Hangard village. Just outside the village, on our side of the river, ran the old German front line. As we swarmed

down into the village we could see what our boys had been doing during the early part of the morning.

A village in ruins, a road blocked with debris, some dead Boche lying as they fell only a few hours before, some ransacked dug-outs and scattered equipment, was all that remained of the bloody battle of the morning.

Across the River Luce the Engineers had thrown three bridges . . . On the other side of the river, a road leads up from each of the bridges. Just back of the slope of the bank, commanding the bank, the wiley Boche had sited his machine-guns. There must have been a hot little encounter there and imagination could not help picturing that gallant little battle, gallant on both sides judging from the little heaps of khaki and grey which lay along the roads. But they could not hold out in the face of such an attack. As we got to the [German] gun positions we found the guns themselves with 'CMR' [Canadian Mounted Rifles] inscribed on them in chalk . . .

One little picture I will not forget. The badges of several of our fellows lay in a heap in front of an emplacement and just behind, at the entrance to a dug-out in the bank, lay the body of a Boche, killed by a bayonet wound in the neck. In his hand he clutched a sandwich, now soaked with his own blood. It was quite evident what had happened. The section had been held up and nearly wiped out by the machine-gun. But our stout fellow had worked his way around behind and just as he reached the bank had observed the Boche emerging from his dug-out with his breakfast in his hand to see what the firing was about. He never knew . . .

A little further on, across the river, we stopped in the field for lunch. Only a few hours before Fritz had felt secure as he ate his breakfast in this very area, but his feeling of security was nothing compared to our elation at being behind his line and preparing to push on.[12]

The last time the 46th had been in a major attack had been at Passchendaele, where the indescribably muddy conditions had made for advances measured in yards. This attack was so completely different as to make a comparison impossible. In mid-afternoon, about twelve hours after the attack had started, Sherwood's battalion was over four miles beyond the original corps' start line and his battalion had not yet been committed. At this time, too, he was able to watch an entire cavalry division go into action. It was, he wrote, 'a regular battle such as one reads about in books on tactics. The advance seemed like a steam-roller. Soon Beaucourt-en-Santerre fell into our hands and we saw our tanks and cavalry advancing beyond them, while our field

guns galloped into action and harrassed the retreating Boche with parting shots of shrapnel.'

That evening Sherwood and his best friend, Eugene Phillips, the unit's bombing officer, managed to find a couple of German stretchers from a dugout and, with some German groundsheets and raincoats, made themselves comfortable for the night. By the end of that day the Canadians had penetrated about eight miles into German-held territory. General Erich von Ludendorff was to call it 'the black day of the German army in the history of the war.'

On 9 August the advance continued and the 46th Battalion was ordered to consolidate part of the line gained. While it was engaged in this work, a further advance of three miles was made by the forward divisions. After two days of strenuous fighting, it was time for the 4th Division to move forward and lead the attack. It was ordered to move through the positions gained by the 1st Division. At 4 a.m. on the tenth, on the commanding officer's instruction, Sherwood got out his orders to all companies. Once again he gives a vivid account of the attack, this time with his own brigade in the lead.

> At 7:15 a.m., after a hasty breakfast of sandwiches and tea, I started off with the CO to the assembly position. The companies formed up and ... we moved forward unmolested by Fritz to our jumping off position ... just behind the Vrély-Warvilliers road ... at 7:20 a.m. The tanks (8 per battalion) were in front of us ...
>
> At 10:15 we ... started to advance. As the tanks crossed the Vrély-Rouvray road the [artillery] barrage opened up with lifts of 200 yards every five minutes. We passed through the battalions of the 1st Division which were holding the line and started on towards our objective. At first it was not even exciting and I was too much worried about the direction of the advance to notice a few shells which dropped. I was very busy keeping my 'company' – which consisted of headquarters, sigs, scouts, snipers, 40 engineers, medical section and field ambulance – spread out from the centre as they were inclined to bunch up directly behind the CO and myself.
>
> As we advanced the shelling became more intense, the odd man dropping here and there as Fritz poured his artillery and machine-guns into us ... Several times we were held up momentarily, but always the white flare showing 'all clear' would follow and the advance continued. At one point we ran into very heavy direct machine-gun fire and quickly sought the comforting shell-hole until it got some other target.[1]

By noon the battalion had advanced about two miles and was closing in on its objective. Soon 'the advancing troops came across some-

thing more ominous than anything they had seen in weeks. Before them stretched hundreds of crumbling, weed-covered trenches ... These were the long-abandoned trenches of the 1916 battles of the Somme.'[14] It was into this line – or really double line – of trenches that the Germans had rushed in their reserves, determined to stop the Canadian breakthrough, which, by this time, had reached twelve miles from its original start-line. The enemy was determined to hold it, and the exhilarating advance over open fields experienced by the Canadians in the last three days was to slow down. Sherwood continues his account:

> At 12:40 we arrived at our objective and Fritz seemed to know all about it for he did strafe us with everything he had. Besides the artillery, the machine-guns from our right were very active and forced us to keep below in the trench ... We notified Brigade [Headquarters] that our objectives had been reached and I set out forward to reconnoitre the objective and, if possible, help the companies locate themselves and get consolidated. The shelling was still severe and machine-guns seemed to whistle around everywhere.
>
> At first we went overland but as we reached 'C' Company area I came across poor old [Lt.] Elding and his NCO. Elding had just been killed by a machine-gun so I decided to keep to the trenches. The trenches were a horrible maze but I managed to locate 'C' Company and straighten them out on the map. With considerable difficulty I located 'A' Company's right flank and worked along their line which was being established to 'B' and 'D' Companies. I met [Lt.-Col.] Page of the 50th looking for his battalion and told him where I had seen some of them. I got the location of all the company lines and went back to Battalion Headquarters about 5:00 p.m. to report to the CO.[15]

Sherwood's account of his actions during the day reflect his own modesty, and certainly Lieutenant-Colonel Dawson was so impressed with his performance during the battalion's advance that he decided to submit his name for the award of a Military Cross. The citation read in part: 'for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He personally delivered instructions to the companies during an advance through heavy fire of all kinds. He later made a valuable reconnaissance of the situation, permitting quick and necessary action to be taken. He worked unceasingly and showed great ability throughout.' Sherwood had 'won his spurs.'

The Battle of Amiens, as it was called, continued on for another week. The Germans tried valiantly to regain some of their losses and for several more days the 46th remained at the front, beating back

counterattacks and inflicting heavy losses on the Germans. Finally, on the nights of 13/14 August, the battalion was relieved. During the time it was in action it had some 125 casualties, a number which had been lost in Passchendaele in a matter of hours.

The hard defeat suffered by the Germans at Amiens made their High Command realize that it would be almost impossible for them to achieve victory by military means. It led the kaiser to agree to consider peace negotiations, but it did not weaken his government's resolve to negotiate, if possible, from a position of strength. On the Allied side, having contained the German advances in the spring of 1918, the military commanders were elated with their successes in the summer and were determined to keep hitting the enemy time after time to keep him off balance and prevent him from stabilizing his line. For the Canadians, it meant they would be thrown into a series of attacks in one area and then another with little respite between battles.

Sherwood, except for a two-week furlough he was given late in September following the battle of Arras, was with his battalion when it was engaged in these attacks. After an all-too-short visit to England and Ireland, he returned to take part in the Cambrai operation. On his return he was pleased to find out he had been awarded the Military Cross and had been promoted to the rank of captain. He had been doing a captain's job ever since he became the unit's adjutant and the recognition of his ability was welcome.

During October, the 46th was involved in the great push towards Mons. Once again, as at Amiens, the Germans were forced steadily backward, and although they were never routed, they withdrew from one defended position to another, using all their skill to hold up the advancing Canadians. But there was no longer the type of trench warfare there had been in the earlier years of the war. Now it was war in the open fields. Advances were made in miles rather than in yards, and although casualties could be high when the Germans had time to prepare defences, at least one could show some gains. In the latter part of October, too, the battalion experienced something new – being welcomed by a cheering civilian population at Roeulx after four years of German occupation. Further ahead lay Denain and Valenciennes.

Each attack meant casualties, and although Sherwood was now hardened to the sight of dead and wounded, he was especially hurt when, in the attack on Valenciennes (in which he was involved), he lost his best friend, Lieutenant Eugene Phillips, MC. His diary entry reflects his agony:

> Gene was the finest friend I ever had, a prince of fellows and a very gallant soldier . . .

> I have seen hundreds of dead men and lost many friends but never one that tore the heart as strangely as Gene. We have been such friends that our friendship has been almost like two children. We have lived together, fought together and saved each other's lives, and he came back from England [on furlough] because he said he wanted to be with me. He was as unhappy without me as I was without him. Only last night, before our assembly [for the attack] I rode along beside him and he told me how he felt that this would be the last great battle of the war, and we talked about how fine it would be to get home again.[16]

As it turned out, the battalion's battle at Valenciennes was the final engagement in which it was involved. In comparison to other battles the casualty list was modest – 'only' 125 killed and wounded. For Sherwood, however, Phillips' loss was hard to take, and, following his burial, he made arrangements with a Belgian family to tend his friend's burial plot.

Ten days later, just as the battalion was preparing for front- line duty again, word came that firing would cease at 11:00 a.m., 11 November. At that moment the guns fell silent and in the town square of Valenciennes there was a brief ceremony to mark the occasion. Although there was rejoicing in Vancouver and elsewhere, there was no cheering or hilarity in the square – rather a sense of grim satisfaction and the feeling of sadness that so many good men who had contributed to the victory were not alive to celebrate the result.

For Sherwood, another blow came two days later when the padre called to tell him that his older brother, Heber, had died in England. It was only five months earlier that Sherwood had heard that Heber had enlisted in the artillery and was in England. His brother had not reached France, but while still in England, he had come down with influenza which had reached epidemic proportions by late 1918. Heber had been one of thousands who died from the flu while serving in the army. He was buried at Kinmel Park in Wales. Earlier, in December 1916, Sherwood had learned of the death of his uncle Wellington who, for a short time, had been in Bramshott Camp with him before he preceded Sherwood to France.

Following the armistice, the battalion began to march north. Many felt the division would cross the Rhine and become part of the Occupation Forces, but this was not the case. The battalion was billeted at Wavre (a town about fifteen miles from Brussels) for a short period, and although it was moved to other towns and villages in the following months, it never left Belgium for Germany.

Sherwood saw out the old year in style. In Brussels, a huge ball on New Year's Eve had been planned, and Sherwood was a member of

the Canadian committee. At 9:00 p.m. the guests began to arrive. 'There were all kinds of beautiful women and otherwise,' he wrote.

> The armies of Britain, Canada, Australia, France, Belgium, Italy and Japan were represented, and there were Dowager Duchesses, Ladies, Countesses and Royalty present. The Prince of Wales and all the various ambassadors were there.
>
> Dancing was rather crowded but easily enjoyable. The picture of such a gathering in such a magnificent setting in the historic Hotel de Ville is one which I will not soon forget. I had many pleasant dances and met some very charming young women who were most interesting to talk to as well as good dancers ...
>
> The dance lasted until about 3 a.m. with a very lively march behind the pipers to bring in the New Year.
>
> After the dance I went down town and saw a city actually mad with joy. It was the Brussels New Year celebration, and this year they surpassed themselves for it was the first time for four years that they could let themselves [go] free and sing and go mad without Boche restraint. There were thousands of people in the street singing ...
>
> I visited a number of the cabarets and saw the night life of Brussels which would make London appear like a country village.[17]

In some ways Sherwood had changed from the young man who joined the army three years ago and who, at that time, had never danced in his life. Basically, however, his ideals had not been shaken. As he summed up 1918 in his diary, he felt it had proved to be 'a remarkable and satisfactory year' in which he had enjoyed 'personal gains ... and happiness ... tinged by the deepest griefs ...' As for the future, he wrote: 'Well, I'm still a soldier and a soldier does not worry about the future. He knows that he will get his orders when the time comes and I am thankful that I have learned that there is a Great Commander of the world who issues His orders even to the lowest of his subordinates and I am under His orders and will obey as best I can.'[18]

From the time the armistice was signed there was one predominant thought in everyone's mind – going home. While waiting in Wavre for the order to move, Sherwood took the opportunity to visit various parts of Belgium and, with friends, made a trip to Cologne and Bonn in Germany. He was an indefatigable tourist, determined to see every historic building, visit the local galleries, and attend concerts, operas, theatres, and so forth, whenever he could. Late in March he was able to get a furlough to England. One of the first things he did was to visit his brother's grave at Kinmel Park near Rhyl. When he arrived he

found no markers or crosses on the graves and had some difficulty finding Heber's grave. This infuriated him and he gave those in charge of the camp a tongue-lashing which they would not forget. Normally, Sherwood rarely showed anger, but on this occasion, the administrators of that military camp must have felt a whirlwind had hit them. Like a good adjutant he returned a month later to satisfy himself that Heber's grave, and indeed some dozen others, had been properly marked. They were.

If his furlough started off on a sour note, it ended on a happier one. He returned to London and on 5 April he went to Buckingham Palace where he was invested with his Military Cross. A few days later he was en route back to the battalion, but spent a few days in Paris seeing the sights. At Wavre he plunged into a mass of work as the battalion was preparing to leave France on the first stage of its homeward journey. It returned to Bramshott Camp in England, and while it was there, Sherwood was one of the officers selected from the unit, with a small representative group from the 46th, to be part of the march of overseas troops through London. A few weeks later the battalion was scheduled to leave for Canada, and on 28 May, the unit boarded the *Empress of Britain* at Liverpool. Sherwood described the scene and his own feelings in his diary:

> The ship's sides were crowded and a band on the dock supplied music for us. All during the afternoon the Red Cross people bombarded us with oranges, chocolates and buns. Finally, at 4:30 p.m., we pulled out into the Mersey to the tune of 'Good-Bye' and 'Auld Lang Syne' and thousands of cheers from shore and ship. We were all very happy, I guess, but somehow I could not help contrasting today's crowd with the boys on board this same ship on that August day in 1916 when we landed here in Liverpool. So many have not come back, but be in their little graves in France. These were the boys who won the war; they paid the price while we reap the fruits of victory.

NOTES

1 Sherwood Lett, personal diary, 19 Aug. 1917.
2 Ibid., 21 Aug. 1917.
3 Ibid., 25 Aug. 1917.
4 See Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer 1962), Ch. 10.
5 Personal diary, 11 Nov. 1917.

6 J.L. McWilliams and R.J. Steel, *The Suicide Battalion* (Edmonton: Hurtig 1978), 109-10.
7 National Archives of Canada, RG 9 III, Vol. 4939: War Diary, 46th Battalion, CEF, October 1917, Appendix 12, 'Report on Operations Against Passchendaele Ridge, October 26th, 1917,' 11-12.
8 National Archives of Canada, RG 30, E300, Vol. 7, Odlum Papers, Correspondence with Sherwood Lett, letter, Lett to Odlum, 23 Aug. 1934.
9 Personal diary, 31 Dec. 1917.
10 Ibid., 11 Jan. 1918.
11 Personal diary, 16 June 1918. A 'third pip' meant being promoted to captain.
12 Ibid., 8 Aug. 1918.
13 Ibid., 10 Aug. 1918.
14 McWilliams and Steel, *The Suicide Battalion*, 155.
15 Personal diary, 10 Aug. 1918.
16 Ibid., 1/2 Nov. 1918.
17 Ibid., 31 Dec. 1918.
18 Ibid.

CHAPTER FIVE

Rhodes Scholar

It was marvellous to be back in Canada and everyone in the 46th Battalion was pleased to board the train at Halifax, which was to carry them back to their loved ones whom they had not seen for years. En route they encountered washouts and forest fires, but finally the train reached Moose Jaw, where the unit was given a tremendous welcome home and the men received their discharge from the army. Sherwood, as Adjutant, had to go with the commanding officer to Regina to tidy up the last administrative details of the battalion's stand-down. That finished, he took the next train to Vancouver, arriving there on the morning of 13 June, three years after he had left on the first stage of his trip to Britain.

Almost everyone in the family was at the station to meet him. 'Truly I was glad to be safely back but I longed to have Heber there too, and I felt lost without my old friend Gene Phillips,' Sherwood wrote. 'Had these two men been home, I would have felt that victory indeed was ours, but with them gone I felt the price of victory had been too great.'[1]

Among the friends welcoming him back to Vancouver were Elsie Knight and her mother. Although there was not an 'understanding' between Sherwood and Elsie, there was something akin to it before Sherwood left. He did not want to become engaged before leaving in 1916, but during the next three years they wrote each other constantly. Elsie, and admittedly other young ladies, had sent him numerous parcels all during this time, and as he confided to his diary, 'I know it was her influence and her letters which kept [my spirits] up and to which I looked forward during those dark days of the past three years.'[2]

Sherwood, however, had changed in the three years since they had met, and Elsie had not. The change became apparent after just a few meetings with her. As he put it: 'Love, they say, is blind and mine for her was not. It was ruled absolutely by my head. I sized myself up and

with my differing ideals, my change in views and altering opinions, I seemed to see that I was never in any degree suited for her ideals and "superior" outlook. It seemed plain to me ... that she looked for something bigger, better and purer in every way than I could ever hope to be.'[3] Sherwood had matured, Elsie had remained the idealistic romantic. She was to marry a minister and remained good friends with the Lett family for decades.

Sherwood, meanwhile, had been thinking of his future career. It seems that even before he returned home he had decided to study law. At least two of the senior officers in his battalion were lawyers, and this may have had an influence on him. There was no Faculty of Law at the University of British Columbia, so the normal practice was either to enroll in a law faculty in a university outside British Columbia and get a degree there, or article as a student with a law firm within the province. If one did not have a university degree, a student could anticipate being an articled student for five years before taking the law examinations and being called and admitted to the Bar. With a university degree, one could go through the same process in half the time. Before the war it was not uncommon for an articled student to pay a law firm a symbolic one dollar for the privilege of the experience the law firm would give him. At the same time he was expected to undertake a considerable amount of legal clerical work for the firm. The shortage of manpower during the war was one factor which helped to change this situation. Nevertheless, when Sherwood applied for and was accepted as an articled student under Albert N. Daykin, of Daykin and Burnett, his pay was only $40 per month.

Sherwood began working for the law firm three weeks after he returned to Vancouver. With his military background he was particularly useful in the firm's legal work for the Soldiers' Settlement Board. In the next five months, as he described this period of his life, 'I studied as much as possible and picked up as much information as I could regarding legal and business affairs. My heart was in my work, my interest was there and I saw plainly that I liked law as a profession and, from what my principals told me, I was liable to make a success of it.'[4] During these months Sherwood renewed old acquaintances and made new friends. As usual, he plunged into a round of activities. He was elected the first president of UBC's Alumni Association and was initiated as a member of the Alpha Iota fraternity which, he wrote, 'consists of the best fellows from the college.' He became the secretary-treasurer of the 121st Battalion Association, teacher of the 'Bulldogs' Bible class in the Grandview Methodist Church, played the flute in the church orchestra, 'and numerous other things.' He did not feel he had been active in church circles, although he did preach one

night at the Methodist Church in Marpole and talked to various groups belonging to the Grandview Church. Both the ministers at Marpole and Grandview made strong appeals to him to enter further into church work. However, Sherwood felt that, with his other activities, it would take too much time. 'Besides,' he wrote, 'I believe that perhaps my principles require readjustment before I would re-enter the church work on the same plane as before I went to the war.'[5]

It is impossible, at this distance in time, to describe exactly why Sherwood felt his ideals had to be re-examined at this stage of his life. From his diary entries it would seem that the disillusion he felt after meeting Elsie following his three-year absence had led to a great deal of soul-searching. He seemed to have an almost mystical view of the ideal woman he would marry, and that reality, when it came, was something of a blow. Perhaps the closest explanation of his feeling is found in his diary entry for the last day of 1919. He wrote:

> I do not believe that the year has been without a certain mental growth and this necessarily involved readjustment of some very firmly planted roots and ideals. I think I can say that a greater change in my ideas has taken place in the short time I have been at home than in the whole period I have been overseas. Partly I attribute the change to [Elsie] or perhaps I should say that she, being the nearest to me outside of my own family, mirrored my own changed ideas more perfectly than anyone else.
>
> Formerly I had two very strong principles which kept me and which I kept all my life. I had a very firm belief in a Divine ruling Providence and I also had the highest opinion of a woman as being the earthly embodiment of all those heavenly qualities which we so rarely find in a man's relation to another man. Both these principles have been shaken and the result is that I have felt at times the very instability of things. Naturally I turned to the church to find there the reinstatement in me of my uprooted ideals. The church did not do that for me ...
>
> Therefore I looked for something which would help me secure a real foundation, as it were, for life. I thought I might find something in Oxford which would lead me back to the principles which I have believed true, something founded on reason and knowledge, which will convince me that the beliefs gained in childhood are distinct from the Santa Claus stories and fairy-tales of the same period.
>
> This was one of the strongest factors in making me apply for the Rhodes Scholarship. Whether I find it at Oxford or not remains to be seen but if I do not, it will not be for lack of trying.

This may have been one of the strongest factors but it was not the only one. As early as mid-May 1919, when he was still in England,

Sherwood had visited Dr. George R. Parkin, who was the first organizing secretary of the Rhodes Scholarship when it was established in 1902. Parkin was a Canadian by birth, the former headmaster of Upper Canada College, and a strong imperialist. There were few men who knew more about the subject. From him Sherwood would have found that Cecil Rhodes

> had directed that his Scholars should 'not be merely bookworms,' and that in addition to their 'literary and scholastic attainments,' their 'fondness of, and success in, manly outdoor sports,' their 'qualities of manhood, truth, courage, devotion to duty, sympathy for, and protection of, the weak, kindliness, unselfishness and fellowship,' as well as 'moral force of character and of instincts to lead' should all be taken into account.[7]

It was not until he returned to British Columbia that Sherwood decided to make an application for the scholarship. 'My idea,' he wrote, 'was that since I must put in three years [articling] in law, I might as well put it in at Oxford as in an office here, and then there were other advantages, educational and financial, which decided me.' The financial advantages were obvious. His yearly 'salary' as an articled student would be $480. As a Rhodes Scholar he would get more than three times that amount plus the cost of his tuition. It was estimated that an income of 300 pounds in pre-war England would permit a student to live in 'modest affluence.' With inflation during the war this amount had been increased by an additional fifty pounds, which would allow the student to travel in Europe as well as Britain without feeling pinched. Added to that, of course, was the fact that Sherwood would not be putting any strain on family finances. His mother had left the church manse some years earlier and, as a minister's widow, she had only a tiny pension. Sherwood himself was living temporarily with his sister, Mary, and although everyone helped each other, their total resources were modest.

The educational advantages were attractive also. A degree from Oxford carried with it a great deal of prestige. The old examinations in Latin and Greek for entry into the university had been eliminated in 1918, so that was a relief. Moreover, the qualifications for the scholarship stressed character as well as intellect. Although Sherwood did not lack intellect, his examination marks in his second and third years were down, owing partly to his father's death just before the exams in 1914 and partly to his tremendous involvement in church, college, and community affairs in 1915. When he appeared before the provincial Rhodes Scholarship Selection Committee on 18 November 1919, the

chairman, Chief Justice Hunter, queried him on his marks, and after being assured by Sherwood that he really could study, Hunter and the rest of the committee felt that he should be awarded the coveted prize. The announcement was made in late November, and early in December Sherwood left Vancouver, having received permission from the BC Law Society to be absent from the firm with which he was articling.

Sherwood took a leisurely three weeks to reach England. From Vancouver he went to Calgary and stayed for a day to visit his Uncle Charlie, then north to Edmonton to visit his sister Lalie. In Regina and Saskatoon he visited a number of old 46th Battalion friends, and in Toronto he looked up Dorothy Trapp from Vancouver, who was attending St. Hilda's College. In Ottawa and Brockville, there were more relatives and friends, and even in New York he was met by his Uncle Ralph, with whom he stayed until his ship, the SS *Cedric*, finally sailed for Southampton a few days before Christmas. He shared a cabin with three other congenial gentlemen, joined in the Christmas festivities on board, and at a concert for the second-class passengers after dinner where everyone contributed their talent, Sherwood recited 'The Cremation of Sam Magee.'

A few days later the ship docked in Liverpool. On the last night on board, Sherwood wrote in his diary:

> It will be good to get settled down to something definite again. For over four years now I have been almost always on the move, jumping around, dabbling in this and that. Soon, at last, I am to get settled into my real work and I am bound I will make it go. I have decided that success in any worthy line consists of 99 per cent hard work properly mixed with one per cent luck. I am determined to work and if work brings success, I am going to have it.[8]

Sherwood had two weeks in London. There he met Dr. Parkin, who had talked to him about the scholarships the previous May. He also met Sir Francis Wylie, the Oxford secretary of the Rhodes Scholarships, who looked after and helped to guide the scholars in Oxford itself. From them he found he had been accepted by Trinity College, and he was also advised to write Mr. J.L. Brierly, who would be his tutor in law. From Brierly he would receive a list of books which he was to read while waiting to start the term at Trinity in mid-January.

Sherwood was to find Oxford very, very different from the University of British Columbia. It was an ancient university, renowned throughout the world for its teaching and the scholars it produced. It also had ancient customs and traditions which took time to learn, especially for those students who came from Canada and other parts

of the Empire. Sherwood was to note on the second day he was there: 'Dress customs and dining manners are a bit queer but I presume we shall get used to them and even like them before long.'

He found lodgings on Parks Road, and with him, in the same house, was Julian L. Hagen, another new Rhodes Scholar from West Virginia. They got along well together and tended to be drawn even closer as they both faced the strangeness of their new environment. Fortunately, Sherwood had been asked to write about his impressions of Oxford by the editor of the McGill Annual, and the following extracts of the article he wrote give some idea of what it was like at the time.

> The dress of the students is ... most noticeable. The accepted uniform for all occasions is a loose-fitting golf jacket ... grey flannel trousers, heavy woolen socks ... low heels, soft collar and a [colourful] tie ... This wonderful regalia is partially obscured by a short, black, sleeveless gown, about hip length ... which is always worn, even at dinner ...
>
> One common idea prevalent among the people of Canada is the supposed opportunity offered here for the barbarous, semi-savage Colonial to mingle with the refined and cultured English youth ... [But] the Oxford gentry are typically reserved and, while I was prepared for this by previous experience in England, some of our American friends found it rather disconcerting.
>
> One American Rhodes man, possessing ... an over abundance of that spirit of benevolence and altruism so characteristic of American colleges ... seated himself at the dinner table of his college on his first night and, being anxious to show his kindly interest ... for the solemn-looking youth opposite him, he announced, with his most enticing smile, 'My name is Gilpin, Gilpin from Carolina.' The worthy representative of British traditions, opposite, slowly elevated his patrician nose, carefully adjusted his monocle to the obscurity of his arched brow, and, after leisurely surveying the source of this familiarity, casually replied, 'Ah, really! Is it!' and proceeded to examine his cutlery.[9]

Opposed to this sort of chilling reception and deliberate put-down, there was another side to Oxford, one that Sherwood enjoyed. 'One is here but a short time,' he continued, 'before he finds that, away from our Freshman capacity ... the people show us that cordiality and hospitality ... is lavishly practiced ... in Oxford. The ladies of Oxford, the wives of tutors, professors and officials, hold 'open house' on many afternoons, where friendships are made and acquaintances ripen over the harmless but convivial cups of tea.'[10] It did not take Sherwood very long to adjust to his new environment and to become part of it. In the first year there was a tendency for the

'foreign' students to group together. Canadians, Americans, South Africans, and Australians, for example, found they had much more in common with each other than with their British counterparts. This, in time, broke down not only under the impact of innumerable 'teas' to which they were invited, but also through mixing with the British students in the various clubs at the college.

Three days after he arrived in Oxford, Sherwood reported that he 'turned out for football for Trinity against Hereford College. They put me in centre forward but I managed to stand the pace for 78 minutes. We beat Hereford 4-2 and I was lucky in scoring two of the four goals.'[11] In addition to playing soccer, Sherwood enjoyed tennis and joined the Lacrosse Club. He was elected treasurer of the latter in the spring of 1921. He joined other clubs as well. At McGill University College he had been an active member of the Debating Society, so shortly after he arrived at Oxford he joined the Oxford Union Society. It had good clubrooms and a library and held a weekly debate on some topic of current interest. This was a well-known society, which, in years past, helped to sharpen the minds and debating skills of many of its members who were to become members of parliament both in Britain and abroad. It was also good training for lawyers. Sherwood joined the Moot Club, a law students' debating club and, later, became a member of the Colonial Club. The latter was made up of students from the British Dominions and Colonies from around the world, a number of whom, like Sherwood, were Rhodes Scholars. The Colonial Club was strictly social, and its main purpose was to provide a place where overseas students could meet and be entertained. There was also a British-American Club which Sherwood joined. He was elected college secretary of this club in the spring of 1921.

Although Sherwood was active in sports and enjoyed the social life of an Oxford student, he did not neglect his studies nor the opportunity to broaden his education beyond the university. Among other topics in law he read Real Property, Evidence, Jurisprudence, Roman Law, Constitutional Law, Equity, Contracts, and Personal Property. Since Oxford was regarded as being among the best universities in Great Britain – some would say the world – its various colleges attracted some of the outstanding academics in the country. As a result, when Sherwood attended lectures, he was able to hear some of the best authorities on a variety of topics. One, for example, was Sir Paul Vinogradoff, who had held the Corpus Christi chair of jurisprudence since 1903. Another, an expert on torts, was W.T.S. Stallybrass, then vice-principal and tutor at Brasenose College. A third was Sir H. Earle Richards, the Chichele Professor of International Law and Fellow of All Souls. These men – and there were many others – had pub-

lished widely, were regarded as authorities by their peers, and had been employed by the British government as advisers on matters of state. In brief, the quality of the lectures available to the students was excellent. Unlike his Canadian experience as a student at UBC, Sherwood found that Oxford placed far more emphasis on tutoring and individual study than it did on hours spent attending lectures. He was expected to read a great many books, become familiar with their contents, prepare papers for his tutors, and be able to defend the conclusions he reached when the tutor scrutinized them.

In addition to the lectures he heard given by the Oxford dons, Sherwood had the opportunity to hear a number of prominent men who were invited to speak to the students. Among those, Sherwood noted particularly Winston Churchill, Horatio Bottomley, Lord Haldane, Dean Inge, John Masefield, Lord Birkenstead, Dr. Wellington Koo, and various others, all eminent men in their fields of work. Moreover, when he went to London periodically, he visited the House of Commons, where he enjoyed listening to such people as Lloyd George, Bonar Law, Herbert Asquith, John Redmond, and other well-known political figures. He also visited the Law Courts to hear and learn from many eminent counsel.

During the year there were several vacations during which many students, Sherwood included, visited the Continent. Generally, these were 'working' vacations, that is, the students were expected to read and study but at the same time take every opportunity to learn everything they could about the countries they visited. Shortly before Sherwood was to go on his vacation to Italy, he received a telegram from his brother, Ralph, that his sister Emily died just a few days before she was to take her examinations. Sherwood was devastated and wrote in his diary:

> My heart goes out to mother for whom the shock will be very great . . . I wish I were there to help them all and to be with them at such a time. That was the one thing I feared when I was leaving. I seemed to know some of them would be gone before I got back . . . God knows I never expected it would be my little pal 'Buttie' . . . I feel so like a miserable deserter leaving them all there to bear their troubles alone without any help from me. For two pins I would chuck Oxford and go back to them and try to bring happiness where now every day they have nothing but worry and trouble . . .
>
> If there is such a thing as Heaven, [Emily] is there with father and Heber and the rest and is happy. But my doubt is whether there is such a place at all. I try to believe there is . . . If there were such a place, and a God in it who controls such matters, surely He would not pile up moth-

> er's griefs and burdens to the breaking point as He is doing. My own faith is very weak and I can only admit it.[12]

It was fortunate, perhaps, that this sad news came only a few weeks before Sherwood went on vacation. He and another Trinity College Rhodes student had planned to visit Italy. The idea was good but the timing was not the best. There had been considerable political turmoil in Italy since the end of the war. Italy's expectations as an ally of the victorious Great Powers had not been met, and within the country, new political parties were vying for dominance. Among the latter was the Fascist party led by Benito Mussolini.

Sherwood and his friend, Griffin, travelled by train first to Paris then through the Alps to Milan. He describes his overnight stay there as follows:

> There were labour and political disturbances there at the time. In Milan, workmen with red flags and rifles patrolled the factories and industrial areas. Syndicalists and Bolshevists with bombs and bayonets guarded entrances to offices from which they had driven the capitalist owners. Street fighting was almost continuous and troops and workmen were in constant conflict. The afternoon of my arrival, 23 men had been killed in a riot in the city square. My first hour's sleep was interrupted by a murderous burst of machine-gun fire just below my windows, and I had an excellent reserve seat at one of the bloodiest miniature battles I have ever witnessed.[13]

From Milan they pushed on to Turin, and here Sherwood ran into more trouble. As he reported: 'I watched the street fighting in Turin between workmen and soldiers in which rifles, revolvers, bombs, swords, machine-guns and a battery of field artillery were employed. When the smoke cleared I ventured to raise myself from the rather undignified posture I had assumed on the pavement, over 300 Italian citizens lay dead on the street.'[14]

It was not an auspicious beginning to a quiet vacation. They travelled across Italy to Venice, where they stayed for three weeks and, late in July, moved once again to a small lakeside town on the shore of Lake Garda; there, all was peace and quiet, and Sherwood remarked that it was 'the most delightful spot I have been in for years. It is cool and comfortable and we have swims twice per day with eight hours of study ... There is fishing, boating and mountain climbing when we feel so inclined.'[15] San Vigilio was a delightful spot, but periodically Sherwood would feel a pang of conscience. 'I am unhappy in a way,' he wrote,

> for I cannot help feeling mean and guilty when I think of those at home not enjoying any of this with me. I used to feel that Emily almost shared these little trips of mine with me and I looked forward to the time when we should talk about them. I wanted her to live until I was able to do something for her, but that was not to be. I only hope that nothing happens to the others until I have a chance to do something for them. Some day I will make up for it all if only I get a chance.[16]

These periodic moods of self-recrimination did not last long, however. Time passed quickly. He kept at his studies constantly because he faced examinations when he returned, and, although he found Griffin to be far more argumentative than he had anticipated, this was more than compensated by the friendly Italians he met. 'Truly they are very fine people,' he observed. 'They drink too much wine and grow too many grapes for the good of their country's prosperity, but their hearts are in the right place.' Sherwood spent his twenty-fifth birthday in San Vigilio and presumably enjoyed more than one glass of wine to celebrate the occasion.

Back in Oxford his exams went well – so well that he won a first prize of ten pounds' worth of books. In the new term he began to live in college rather than 'in digs.' Now more accustomed to Oxford's ways, he felt more relaxed, participated more in the Oxford Union, made more friends, and kept up a tremendous correspondence with old friends and relatives in Canada. He continued to worry about the family. At one point he wrote:

> Often during the year I have felt very selfish enjoying all these comforts and advantages ... I often feel like chucking the whole business and going back and taking a job to earn some money and put the family on a comfortable basis. I have written Ralph, mother and Mary to that effect various times and they have always been against me doing so. My difficulty now is that if I did go back it would be like being a quitter and those at home would be disappointed in me.[17]

He was concerned about his family, and at the end of the year, when he summed up his life during 1920 and thought about the next, he reveals something of his deepest thoughts about himself. The future, he knew, was always a 'closed book.' He remembered he had written that he 'had faith in the Great Commander whose operation orders I know will be revealed in time for the zero hour.' He felt he had 'been rather a heathen in his church-going' but despite that, he wrote,

> I still have faith in the Great Commander. He guided me through [troubled] times in war and since in peace, and however unreligious I may

appear, I believe that at heart I have the old trust in Providence which I once felt I had when I first earnestly said 'Thy will be done' before & during the crisis once in France.

So what the future holds I cannot say ... Of what I plan, of course, I know, but this year more than any other I have learned that God's plans, not ours, are those which ultimately fructify, and in those plans I will have faith. 'To live honestly, to injure no one, and give every man his due,' is as Ulpian says a motto for all. To this I may be able to live up.[18]

During 1921 Sherwood continued to work hard at his studies as well as to take advantage of his scholarship to travel in Europe. With his degree from UBC, he was eligible to be examined for his Oxford Bachelor of Arts degree in the summer of 1921. If successful, he thought, he would then take the exams for his Bachelor of Civil Law degree in June 1922, then try to get permission to write the BC Bar exams in Oxford in the following month. That would still leave him five months before his scholarship ended. In that time he planned to try to get permission to submit a thesis for a Bachelor of Literature degree by December. He even had a thesis topic in mind dealing with Canada's foreign relations – 'it may be only a pipe dream,' he wrote, 'but it has possibilities ...'[19]

It was a rather ambitious program, and although it was possible to achieve, much depended on his getting a first class standing at each phase of his work. He wrote his exams in mid-June, but, as will sometimes happen, he 'blew' his exams on torts and contracts, an unhappy event which can occur with even the best of students. A month later he had his *viva voce*, or oral exams, and with that over he was ready for the long vacation.

Sherwood first went to Rotterdam and then Amsterdam, where he studied law and made side visits to various parts of Holland, enjoying the country's art and architecture. Early in August he decided to visit Germany and Poland, 'travelling easily and without any strict itinerary' to tie him down. He went to Berlin, but a strike of Polish railwaymen prevented his crossing into that newly created country.

Germany was an excellent place to visit for a tourist. When Sherwood was there the rate of exchange was between 300-315 marks to the pound. 'One can get an excellent meal for 15 marks which is less than one shilling, sixpence,' he wrote, 'and hotels cost about 20-30 marks per night.'[20] From Berlin, Sherwood went to Dresden, Leipsig, and then Munich. En route to Munich he encountered an Austrian girl whom he found 'interesting, pretty, sensible, good, with a pair of eyes which to many an actress would mean a fortune or a title.' They were both travelling third class, and her excellent English

had been helpful to Sherwood when they were delayed at the Bavarian border. There was considerable unrest in the area with numerous political parties attempting to seize power. Sherwood was quite struck with her, and his comments give some indication of the type of young lady in which he was interested. 'She is the most sensible and pally girl I have met in many years,' he wrote, 'and yet as straight as a good girl can be made, and with a frankness and open-mindedness which is refreshing after English girls and their meaningless twaddle and girls I have met in other countries where the standards of right and good are supposed to be so far superior to those of Austria and Southern Germany.'[21] She joined him in seeing the sights of Munich and made the visit that much more pleasant. However, as in his visit to Italy, Sherwood ran into trouble. They had finished dining out and had left the cafe. 'We walked into the main street,' he wrote, 'and found great excitement.'

> There had been riots of the unemployed, men had been shot in the station square and troops, cavalry, infantry, cyclists and police and an armoured car were being rushed to the scene of the riot.
>
> It was very exciting for a while, however, until we got back to the hotel. [At 11 p.m.] I went to my room and watched the mounted patrols and the crowd of rowdy rioters beneath my window. At midnight things had calmed down considerably, and the crowds were being kept moving by large patrols of mounted lancers.[22]

It was from among these unemployed, hungry, and desperate men that a young German veteran, Adolph Hitler, would attempt to overthrow the government with the aid of the newly formed Nazi party. Sherwood left Munich the next day to go to Frankfurt and there decided to take a leisurely trip down the Rhine to Holland and then back to England.

When he was in Amsterdam he had word that he had passed his examinations for his BA degree. He had started studying Roman law in anticipation of taking his civil law degree, but he found that subject most uninteresting. As he put it:

> Roman Law seems such a tremendous waste of time that I hesitate to put the effort into it which I might be using on other topics. If I once get someone to show me clearly the utility of it to me, I might approach it from a different attitude. But it all seems so futile, so remote, so academical and so unpractical that I positively cannot induce myself to take a live interest in it, try as I may. The alternative is to do some special work on various subjects and study up my subjects for the BC Bar exams. The BCL

> [degree] is a nice thing to have but to me it is a luxury, only to be sought after if, in acquiring it, I can at the same time secure the necessaries to equip me for future practice.[23]

In the end, Sherwood decided the BCL degree was not worth it. While in Holland he had laboured away at translating four books written in Latin, and, although he worked at it assiduously, he felt that the result would not be useful in a practical way. Moreover, he had been in Oxford for two years, and, although he thoroughly enjoyed the college and the university, he felt it was time to get down to serious work. He was now twenty-six years old and anxious to return to his family and give what help he could to ease their burden. During the last months at Oxford, therefore, he used the time to read subjects which would be beneficial for his bar examinations.

He returned home in the spring of 1922 in a rather unusual way. In the previous year, Sherwood, who played lacrosse, had been elected treasurer of the team. Early in 1922 the team's captain, H.O. Hopkins, arranged for the team to play a number of American universities from mid-March to early May. The players travel expenses were guaranteed, so here was an opportunity to 'play' one's way, or most of it, back to British Columbia. More than that, he would be travelling with friends. Two recent members of the team, Lester Pearson and Roland Michener, were to be the prime minister and governor-general of Canada, respectively. They were good company and became warm friends. The team won the International Inter-Collegiate Lacrosse Trophy despite stiff American competition, and everyone had a marvellous time.

It would be some years before Sherwood visited Oxford again, but he would never forget the two glorious years he spent there nor the friends he made at Trinity College and elsewhere. The experience broadened his understanding, sharpened his mind, and disciplined his thinking. In time he would become a member of the Rhodes Scholarship Selection Committee in Vancouver – but that was a little way down the road.

NOTES

1 Vancouver City Archives, Sherwood Lett Collection, personal diary, June-Dec. 1919.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 31 Dec. 1919.
7 Lord Elton, *The First Fifty Years of the Rhodes Trust and the Rhodes Scholarships* (Oxford: Blackwell 1955), 20.
8 Personal diary, 28 Dec. 1919.
9 McGill Annual, 1919-20, 36, 37, 105.
10 Ibid., 116.
11 Personal diary, 18 Jan. 1920.
12 Ibid., 18 May 1920.
13 Sherwood Lett Papers, Vol. I, File 4. Extract from a MS lecture on 'Citizenship.'
14 Personal diary, 25-7 July 1920.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid., 6 Sept.-30 Dec. 1920.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., 8 Apr. 1921.
20 Ibid., 23 Aug. 1921.
21 Ibid., 25 Aug. 1921.
22 Ibid., 26 Aug. 1921.
23 Ibid., 31 Aug.-16 Sept. 1921.

CHAPTER SIX

Building the Foundations

The thought that he might return to Europe to take part in another major war probably never entered Sherwood's mind when he made his way to Vancouver in the late spring of 1922. Yet, oddly enough, in both Italy and Germany, he had encountered some of the social and political unrest which was to breed the formation of both the Fascist and Nazi parties. Mussolini was to march on Rome in the same year, and, a year later, Hitler was to attempt a 'coup d'état' in Munich which led to his arrest.

Europe was in a process of change as it grappled with the impact of the Great War and the terms laid down by the Versailles Treaty. New states such as Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia were created while the old German and Austro-Hungarian empires were whittled down and their ruling families exiled. In Russia, after five years of turmoil, a new Soviet Union was proclaimed and the autocracy of the Czar was being replaced by the even more efficient and severe autocracy of the Communist party. In Great Britain, even the political genius of Lloyd George could not prevent the formation of the Irish Free State. There seemed to be trouble and turmoil everywhere, and with hundreds of thousands of men with military training trying to find jobs and resume their former civilian lives, political life was becoming more challenging.

In Canada, Sherwood returned only a few months after the election of a new prime minister, W.L. Mackenzie King. Instead of the traditional two-party system, he found that a third – the Progressive party – was playing a considerable role in the political arena. In England he was an admirer of Lloyd George and the Liberals. In Canada he was to become a staunch Liberal and follower of Mackenzie King. Although in the 'twenties and 'thirties he never ran for political office himself, he was an active supporter of the party. At one point, in the

early 1940s, a Vancouver journalist suggested that it was likely he would be appointed to a cabinet post and be given the opportunity to run for election in a local riding. Sherwood's political interests and involvement grew with the years. He worked behind the scenes rather than on the platform, but he did get to know most of the Liberal members and cabinet ministers from the Vancouver area and was a fundraiser for the party in Vancouver for a number of years.

Since Sherwood had left Vancouver in 1916, the city had undergone considerable change. Women had been given the vote, John Oliver had become the new premier, the city's fire department had become fully motorized, and, while he was in Oxford, Vancouverites had witnessed the end of the first trans-Canada flight. While he was in England, Vancouver's first radio station had gone on the air, and by 1925, radio station CNRV was broadcasting regularly on Tuesday and Friday evenings.

Possibly the greatest changes Sherwood noted were not only the growth of the city but also the ever increasing number of automobiles. The police department had to establish a traffic department, and at the main intersections constables wearing white gloves and using white batons were needed at rush hours to direct the traffic. Moreover, when Sherwood left to go to Oxford traffic had flowed on the left side of the streets and roads as it did in Britain. When he returned, it had switched to the right.

In many ways Vancouver was poised for almost a decade of development. The automobile brought with it greater mobility for more people, and areas once considered remote or in the country were to become potential sites for urban development. There was talk of building a bridge across the First Narrows, and in time Sherwood was to become involved with the British Properties in West Vancouver. It was in the 1920s that the Grouse Mountain Chalet was built, while in downtown Vancouver the new Hotel Georgia opened its doors and Spencer's Department Store moved to its new location at the corner of Hastings and Richards. Neon signs began to make their appearance, and, as if to add to the colour of the downtown streets, the city installed its first traffic lights. The city's population grew with the amalgamation of Point Grey and South Vancouver until, by 1929, it could claim it had 240,000 people within its boundaries. In brief, Sherwood returned to Vancouver at the beginning of a decade which was going to be termed the 'Roaring Twenties.' It was a decade of growth and development, and Sherwood was determined to seize the opportunity to establish himself in his chosen career, the law.

There were various ways for a lawyer to start practising law. One was to rent an office, hire a secretary, hang out a 'shingle,' and hope

clients would pound a path to his door. Another was to join forces with another lawyer, form a partnership, share office and overhead expenses and, again, await results. Yet another was to join an established firm as an associate and, if competent and successful, wait patiently to be elevated to the status of junior and then full partner.

When he returned to Vancouver, Sherwood first had to pass his bar examinations, which he did with flying colours. With some eleven others, a rather large group for the time, he was called and admitted to the Bar on 30 July 1922. He was invited to join a firm composed of young lawyers, some of whom, like himself, were veterans. Among those in the firm were D. Neil Hossie, a Rhodes Scholar in 1912; Ghent Davis, a veteran and son of the well-known lawyer E.P. Davis; and one or two others, including Peter Marshall, also the son of a partner with E.P. Davis. Sherwood and Marshall joined as associates. This youthful and short-lived firm had offices in the Royal Trust Building at 626 West Pender Street as Davis, Lawson, Armour, and McLorg. The relationship between the two was so convivial that the junior firm went in with the senior firm in 1923 to form Davis, Pugh, Davis, Hossie, Ralston, and Lett. Five years would pass before Sherwood would become a partner, but as a lawyer working for the firm his name was included in the letterhead.

The older firm had its origins in 1892, when E.P. Davis, who was then thirty-two years old, came to Vancouver from Calgary where he had established a large law firm. He was an excellent lawyer, an outstanding counsel, and quickly established a reputation in the booming seaport on the Pacific Coast. With his new partners he soon had some of the leading businessmen of the city as his clients, among whom were David Oppenheimer, H.O. Bell-Irving, and others. He was one of the earliest members of the Vancouver Club, a gentlemen's club whose members included many of the élite of the business and professional men in Vancouver. Indeed he became the club's solicitor and later its president in 1913-14. By the time Sherwood joined the firm, it had become one of the largest in the city, with a solid reputation and numerous clients.

Typically, within a law firm it is usual for the partners to specialize in certain fields and to gain reputations as experts in marine law, insurance, corporate law, wills and estates, and so forth. Sherwood found himself attracted to corporate law, which brought him in contact with businessmen not only within the province, but, as time went on, on a national and international scale. Vancouver and its environs were growing, and persons wishing to invest large sums of money on some potential development were wise to examine its legal ramifications. Banks, trust companies, and insurance companies, for example, were

always sought after clients because they insured a steady flow of legal business in the course of their normal transactions. Sound legal advice given promptly was a valuable asset to them, just as a reputation for competence was a valuable asset to the legal firm itself – in either case, as one's reputation grew, the number of clients tended to increase.

Like any other lawyer, Sherwood had much to learn in the first years he was with the firm. His legal training at Oxford gave him a sound grounding in legal theory and historic practice, but he had to become thoroughly familiar with both Canadian and provincial law. Even in his own field this took considerable time, but with experience, coupled with his determination to make a success of it, he steadily gained a reputation not only among his clients but also among his peers.

Aside from his legal talents, one of the things Sherwood possessed was an affable nature. He made friends easily, had a good sense of humour, and was a good conversationalist. He had a wide range of interests – the church, the university, sports, business development, military matters, and foreign affairs. He had a keen sense of community spirit and gave a considerable amount of his time to organizations whose purpose was to assist the less fortunate. For example, he was one of the original members of the Vancouver Advisory Board of the Salvation Army. He gave 'unstintingly of his time and ability in all matters connected with ... Salvation Army interests.'[1] Later he became one of the founders and a member of the Board of Directors of the Cancer Institute. These positions he accepted once his career was firmly on track.

Even in the 1920s, however, he was involved in various activities, some of which reflected his pre-war interests. When attending UBC, he had been on the university's hockey team. When he returned to Vancouver he became a member of the Towers Athletic Club and was the goalkeeper when the club won the hockey championship for the 1925-6 season for British Columbia and Alberta. He was thirty years old at the time, and although remaining an avid fan, he later turned to golf and fishing for relaxation. He was a member of the Jericho Golf Club for many years, and later the Capilano Golf Club.

Sherwood joined two men's clubs during the 1920s. The first was the University Club of Vancouver. Then located on Robson Street, not far from his office, this club, founded in 1911, was not connected with UBC, but had among its members many university graduates. There were doctors, professors, clergymen, engineers, journalists, architects, realtors, and lawyers. Sherwood knew many of the members, including Dr. L.S. Klinck, then president of UBC, and Dr. R.E. McKechnie, a noted surgeon who was the university's chancellor for over two dec-

ades. When he joined in 1926, the club was a popular place among young professionals for having lunch on weekdays, and it offered various entertainments during the course of the year, both formal and informal.

Three years later, in 1929, Sherwood became a member of the Vancouver Club. This was a highly prized membership since this club, located in an imposing five-storey building on West Hastings Street, was looked upon as 'the' club in the city, if not the entire province. The entrance fee was $300, then considered rather stiff, and membership was limited to 550. The club boasted a magnificent diningroom, an excellent chef, a beautiful view over the harbour, and the usual club facilities, such as a billiard room, card room, library, and so forth. More particularly, perhaps, it offered the opportunity to become acquainted with the leading business, government, and professional men in Vancouver. It was to remain Sherwood's favourite club for almost forty years. It was a place where he could have lunch, entertain guests, attend some of the club's famous gourmet dinners or balls, or take his family and friends to enjoy the delights of the diningroom on more informal occasions. Although a social club, there is little doubt that the men he met there would have some impact on his own career and profession, if only indirectly. It was fortunate he joined when he did. A year later, with the onset of the Great Depression, the University Club was forced to close its doors.

There were one or two organizations which Sherwood joined out of personal interest. One was the Round Table, which consisted of a small group of men who, then as now, meet regularly on Tuesdays at lunch time, to discuss matters of general interest. The group was kept small and intimate so they could talk about major events of common concern and debate points of view without having to use a microphone or platform. Their interests were wide-ranging, and if someone in the group could bring a guest who was expert in some particular field or who was knowledgeable about a specific area, so much the better.

He was also a longtime member of a more structured organization, the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. As its name implies, this was a national institute with branches in most large Canadian cities. Its members were interested in foreign affairs, and particularly in Canada's role in the League of Nations, the British Commonwealth, and Canadian-American relations. Guest speakers, seminars, and study sessions were used to keep the members informed about events on the world stage and about something of the forces at work behind them.

Of all his activities outside the legal profession, Sherwood probably

spent more time on military affairs than on any other. Before the war Sherwood had served briefly with the 11th Regiment, Irish Fusiliers of Canada, shortly after the regiment was organized in 1913. He had been trained as an officer while in the COTC of McGill University College, and when he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, he had served with the 121st and 46th Battalions. When he was discharged in July 1919, he was given brevet rank in the Irish Fusiliers on the same day, but it was a latent rank and position, which he did not assume until December 1922, some months after he came back from Oxford.

Sherwood's return to the Irish Fusiliers marked the beginning of an association which was to last for fifteen years. Serving in the Non-Permanent Active Militia took a fair amount of dedication on the part of all ranks. Although for the officers there was a certain social prestige attached to their rank in the inter-war years, there was little pay, coupled with a great deal of work needed to maintain the unit's efficiency.

The various militia regiments received only the minimum of support from the Department of National Defence. Having gone through the Great War, the nation faced large war debts. Equally important was that having defeated the Central Powers, and with Russia more concerned with her internal problems than with external expansion, there seemed to be no threat to Canada. The Royal Navy was still a dominant force, the United States was friendly, and certainly to Prime Minister Mackenzie King the situation within the Canadian Armed Forces seemed to be the least of his problems. As a result, the budget of the Department of National Defence was kept at a bare minimum, and if it was not for the determination of men such as Lett to maintain some degree of military competence, the militia would have withered away from neglect.

On the regimental level, when Sherwood joined the unit as its Adjutant, he found that it was using as an armoury the upstairs floor of a building on the corner of Pender and Howe Streets. The unit was usually on parade two evenings a week, but the quarters were so confined that half of the battalion could train there on one set of two nights and the other half on a different set. The commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel F. Fairey, managed to obtain slightly larger quarters in a building on the corner of 25th Avenue and Main some years later, and ultimately it moved into the Stanley Park Armoury which had been converted from the old Horse Show Building.

Sherwood, who had been promoted to major in December 1923, soon found that, aside from decent quarters, unit efficiency would depend, among other things, on a steady flow of recruits, equipment, and training. Most of the senior officers were veterans, so there was

no lack of expertise and experience among those responsible for teaching the recruits. The same held true of the senior non-commissioned officers. The unit's equipment, weaponry, and uniforms, however, were all of Great War vintage. Worst of all, this continued to be the situation for the entire time Sherwood was with the battalion. The signal platoon, for example, used the same equipment he had used in 1916, and even ten years later there was no issue of modern radio equipment (which was becoming common in other armies). There were no mortars, no modern machine-guns, no vehicles, no anti-tank weapons, and so forth. It took a great deal of imagination and persuasion to retain men who had joined the unit. They became bored with repetition, and it was a constant concern of the officers to make their training as interesting as circumstances allowed.

When Sherwood was appointed second-in-command of the battalion in July 1929, unit training became one of his responsibilities. The Irish had moved into the Stanley Park Armoury by this time, and it could now parade all of its companies on the same two nights of the week and had space for offices, lecture rooms, and quartermaster stores. Training the men presented difficulties which were not easy to overcome. Spending three hours twice a week at the armoury from autumn to spring allowed a certain amount of military knowledge to be imparted, even allowing for some absenteeism. Everyone was a volunteer, most worked extra hours without pay, and everyone looked forward to seven to ten days at summer camp, where they lived under canvas, performed some basic manoeuvres, and got to meet some of the other militia regiments. There was an indoor rifle range at the Beatty Street Armoury which the Irish Fusiliers could use, and sometimes, if the summer camp was located near an outdoor rifle range, the men might get the opportunity to have some live practice with their 1914-18 rifles and Lewis guns. All of this, of course, depended on whether or not the Department of National Defence provided sufficient funds for the militia battalions to go to camp – and sometimes it did not.

Despite public apathy about military affairs and the government's neglect of them, Sherwood continued to devote his energies to his regiment. As one young officer remembers:

> [He] rarely missed a parade all the time I knew him [when] I was serving in the regiment too. He was a keen and enthusiastic soldier and he displayed a tremendous amount of interest in the younger people coming in. When I became an officer he encouraged me to line up my sights to take the militia staff course and he said 'You will learn more about the army in that course than in anything else.' He would do the same with

> the other young officers. We were people with no fighting experience because we had been too young for the First War.[2]

In the autumn of 1932 Sherwood had passed his qualifications to be a lieutenant-colonel. Nine months later, on 2 July 1933, he was appointed to command the Irish Fusiliers of Canada. He had started his military career with the unit as a private; now he had reached the top. Since the battalion also perpetuated the old 121st (Western Irish) Battalion, CEF, it probably gave him an extra bit of pleasure when the change of command ceremony took place.

When Sherwood assumed command, Canada was in the midst of the greatest economic depression it had ever endured. There was massive unemployment, the wheels of industry almost ground to a halt, wages were slashed, and even the weather seemed to take a hand when drought hit the prairies at a time when wheat prices had plunged. The demands on Ottawa for government relief and assistance had risen dramatically. Unemployed men were 'riding the rods' from one place to another seeking work, and 'hobo jungles' were springing up in various cities as the unemployed built shack towns for shelter which was not elsewhere available. Government expenditures on defence were drastically reduced. Between the fiscal years 1930–1 and 1932–3, expenditure on militia, naval, air, and associated services dropped from $23,732,000 to $14,145,000.[3] To look at it another way, even three years later, in 1936, on the basis of a per capita expenditure on defence, Canada was paying $1.41, Belgium was paying $4.59, and France was paying $16.79.

These were the harsh realities of life for Sherwood during the next several years, when he commanded the Irish Fusiliers and strove to maintain its strength and efficiency. As with other units, the Irish had an honorary colonel, Brigadier-General Victor W. Odlum, CB, CMG, DSO, a local businessman whose support to the regiment was very helpful. Some assistance was also available from 'Friends of the Regiment.' 'These were businessmen in Vancouver who manifested a certain amount of interest in the militia. When there was a need, for some special reason, for funds, the Friends of the Regiment would respond, and Sherwood was very much a part of that.'[4]

It was important, then as now, for militia regiments to have good relations with the public. During the 'Roaring Twenties,' the Irish Fusiliers used to have an annual regimental ball held at the Vancouver Hotel, which was one of the social events of the year. With the onset of the Depression, this was changed to having an annual Barrosa Dinner. A great deal of the planning, especially the paper work connected with both functions, was done in Sherwood's law office, where he

could use his secretary to send out invitations, arrange ticket sales, and attend to the many administrative details involved in such functions. Of greater concern, however, was the impact of the Depression on the men in the ranks. Late in 1933, a former officer relates,

> a special camp for unemployed members of the militia was set up in the University area ... The men were employed in clearing and road construction ... [receiving] the accepted provincial unemployment relief scale. Men ... in the camp were required to attend their unit parades. Transportation between the camp and unit armouries was provided at unit expense. Lett ... took a great personal interest in the functioning of this camp. He was also chairman of the regimental welfare committee ... which kept in touch with the less fortunate members of the regiment. [It] was responsible for the assembly and distribution of food hampers.[5]

* * *

On 30 December 1920, Sherwood made his usual long diary entry in which he summarized his life during the past year and set down his thoughts and reflections on the events which had touched him. In his comments he wrote:

> When I was summarizing last year I remarked about Elsie Knight. This year we have only corresponded very occasionally – possibly I have written her a half a dozen times but not much oftener. Women and work do not mix, even if one is 8,000 miles from the other. Perhaps I will meet a girl, *the* girl, but so far I have not. Perhaps I should not say I have not met her for sometimes I have an idea that I have. She is a girl mentioned in the early pages of my diary, but so far I scarcely ever correspond with her. Perhaps some day I will be in a position to know her better.

Certainly someone who fits the description is Evelyn Story. Sherwood had met her when he was a student at McGill University College, the forerunner of UBC. Evelyn was born in the small town of Wawanesa, Manitoba – a town which her father had helped to establish in 1889. He owned a successful general store which he sold in 1910, when he moved to Vancouver with his family. Evelyn went to college a year after Sherwood, but with the student body so small the students soon knew each other even if they were in different years.

Evelyn soon made a name for herself in a variety of ways. When Sherwood became president of the Alma Mater Society, Evelyn became vice-president. Sherwood was a member of the Men's Literary and Debating Society. Evelyn became president of the Ladies

Literary and Debating Society. Sherwood played on the hockey team, Evelyn was a member of the girls' ice hockey team. She was also a member of the McGill YWCA Cabinet, and when the war broke out and a branch of the Red Cross was formed on the campus, she became a member of that as well. She was on the staff of the college annual – in fact, like Sherwood, she was deeply involved in a variety of college activities and probably as well known on campus as was he.

Their paths crossed in a variety of ways. Sherwood coached the girls' ice hockey team and they met when the girls practised. During the summer of 1915, Evelyn, Sherwood, J.E. Mulhern, and Professor H.T. Logan spent many hours together drafting a constitution for the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia, which came into existence that year. They met at social functions. As she wrote later:

> I first became acquainted with him when he coached the Girls Ice Hockey Team. During the two years I served on the Alma Mater Executive with him and on the Constitution Committee in the summer of 1915, I became well acquainted with him. He was able, direct and knowledgeable but never overbearing. He also had a great facility with words. While standing for no nonsense, he had a great sense of humour and got things done without unnecessary friction. He was always fair and open minded.[6]

When Sherwood joined the army and the Red Cross group of college girls was organized, Evelyn recalls that the group 'did the usual bandage rolling, but also sent socks and parcels of goodies and letters to our UBC comrades. At that time, my chief recipient was not at UBC but I did have many of our fellow students on my socks, letter and parcel list. One of these was Sherwood.'[7] They corresponded occasionally during the war, but at war's end, Evelyn's parents had moved back to Wawanesa. She thought she would meet Sherwood when his battalion was demobilized at Moose Jaw, but her stern Presbyterian father reminded her that nice girls did not meet troop trains, so that was that.

When Sherwood was at Oxford, Evelyn was teaching school on the prairies and was also involved in establishing and organizing Canadian Girls in Training groups in Alberta. She took her vacations in Vancouver, where she had a married sister and brother as well as many friends. 'In the summer of 1922,' she recalls, 'I met Sherwood at a gathering of old college friends. It was great to see each other . . . I saw him a time or two on my two weeks' vacation and when I got back to Calgary our correspondence picked up again. For the first time,

something more than a friendly tone appeared in one of his letters. I realized at once that if he was interested in me, I didn't want anyone else. He had everything!'[8]

It cannot be said that either Evelyn or Sherwood rushed into marriage. Indeed the courtship, for a variety of reasons, continued for about six years with the usual ups and downs. Long separations did not help. In 1924 Evelyn quit her job with the Girls Work Board of Alberta with the intention of obtaining her Master's degree at Edinburgh. Family illness prevented this, so she decided, instead, to return to UBC, take some extra courses, and try for her graduate degree in History. She registered in 1924, was fortunate to have Professor Fred Soward as her tutor and supervisor, and obtained her degree in the spring of 1926. By this time, the university had moved completely to the new campus.

With her double degree and the teacher's certificate she had obtained earlier in Regina, Evelyn was hired as the Director of Physical Education for Girls at John Oliver High School in Vancouver. Now that she was living in the city, she and Sherwood began to see more of each other. As she wrote later:

> I was 28 years of age and had been 'running my own ship' for quite a while. At thirty, Sherwood was not accustomed to taking orders from anyone. However, we managed to solve our differences and finally became engaged. He explained that he did not wish to marry until he was a [partner] of Davis and Co. 'If I'm married, they will have a handle on me. If I'm single, I can dictate my own terms.' This suited me, for I had a good job and salary and was busy filling up my 'hope chest.'[9]

Sherwood was invited to be a partner in his law firm in 1928, the same year he proposed to Evelyn. They were married in the Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, a large church on the corner of Quebec Street and 10th Avenue to which Evelyn's family belonged when she was going to college. Afterward they went to California on a three-week honeymoon, and, considering the state of highways at the time, this was something of an adventure in itself.

When they returned to Vancouver, the Letts moved into a lovely house which they rented for $75 a month. Both wanted their own home, so Sherwood bought a lot on the corner of 33rd Avenue and Angus Drive, and they moved into their new house two years later. Eight years later they moved again. 'By this time,' Evelyn said, 'We were very active socially and Sherwood liked to entertain at home instead of having to go to a club. I did too. So we looked for a bigger house and we bought a house on 40th and Angus. We sold our house

on 33rd Avenue for $9,000 and bought the house on 40th and Angus for $12,000.'[10] They moved into it in 1938.

Evelyn and Sherwood had many interests in common, with the University of British Columbia being the most lasting. Evelyn already knew many of his close friends, such as A.M. ('Buster') Brown, Arthur Lord, Fred Soward, and Edward Mulhern (whom she knew at the college). She was to meet many of his 'military' friends, such as Eddy Ryan, Ken McLennan, Don Spankie, and others from the Irish Fusiliers. Later, when the war broke out, she helped to organize the regiment's women's auxiliary, and her circle of friends grew wider.

She knew fewer of his business friends, and perhaps she had her first meeting with many of them when E.P. Davis, the head of Sherwood's law firm, invited them to a formal dinner to celebrate both Sherwood's entry into partnership and his engagement. The Davises had built a magnificent mansion in 1912 at the top of Point Grey called 'Kanakla.' She described the scene many years later:

> Twenty-four guests were seated and were served by more waiters than I had ever seen before, except in a restaurant. I was thrilled, but also considerably awed by the lavish beauty of the appointments. However, I thoroughly enjoyed it all until confronted by a two-hour session of bridge, following the delightful dinner. I could play '500,' but bridge was another matter. My kind partners of that evening I still remember with gratitude.[11]

Sherwood's growing expertise and reputation in corporate law meant that many of his clients ranked high in the business and social world. 'This posed a problem for me at times,' Evelyn said. She continued: 'I recall one "senior" socialite who queried: "And who were you before you were married?" "I was nobody," I replied, and I don't remember being asked that again. My reply was actually not quite true, for in Manitoba my family was well known, and my work in Alberta brought me in touch with some of the top administrators and educators of that province.'[12] The Letts had a busy social life. Both were active in a variety of fields, both made friends easily, and the various clubs to which Sherwood belonged were always promoting social affairs on special holidays, which the Letts frequently attended. Sherwood resigned from the Towers Ice Hockey team to take up golf, and once they moved into their own house, gardening became his greatest hobby. They bought a summer home at Crescent Beach and during the summer he enjoyed sailing and swimming. It was a place where they could go and relax and, for a time at least, get away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Although he entered a new stage of his life in 1928, Sherwood never forgot his own family and their needs. He came from a close-knit family, especially, perhaps, on his mother's side. His mother and her four sisters, although widely separated during most of their adult lives, wrote a 'round robin' letter every week until the last survivor, aged ninety-one years, was including the other members of the family, ranging down to great nephews and nieces.[13]

Sherwood, himself one of seven children, had been brought up in a tradition of caring and had a very strong sense of family responsibility. When he returned from Oxford he became 'the self- appointed senior male of a very tight family grouping consisting of a widowed mother, a widowed sister with three small children, and three other sisters, two of whom were still in training programs. The five single women, all with meager incomes, were in need of encouragement, guidance and sometimes financial assistance.'[14] In no small way, Sherwood shouldered family responsibilities before he was married.

One brother, Heber, had died in England of influenza while in the army. His sister, Emily, who was in training as a nurse, died during optional surgery in 1920 when Sherwood was at Oxford. His eldest sister, Lalie, trained as a teacher. Unfortunately, she became increasingly deaf, which prevented her from teaching in classrooms. 'For years,' her niece recalled, 'she supported herself minimally, in rented housekeeping rooms, by teaching English to New Canadians. Eventually she became so angry and bitter that she had to be hospitalized in the provincial mental institution . . . as dangerous to herself and family members.'[15] To look ahead, it was Sherwood who had to make the extremely difficult and sad decision to commit her to the institution in 1940.

Sherwood's older brother, Ralph, was married and busy establishing himself in business in the 1920s. He was very active in Sunday School work and in the Vancouver Rotary Club, but was never as interested and concerned about family matters as was his younger brother. Another sister, Mary, trained as a teacher and was teaching at a Methodist Mission School at Sandspit on the Queen Charlotte Islands. There she met and married a young Scotsman, William Fraser, early in 1917. They had a young son, and Mary was pregnant with twins when her husband was killed in an accident when working at the Coquitlam shipyards in December 1918. Fortunately, he was covered by death benefits, thus Mary and her three young children had a regular, if small, pension during the years the children were growing up. The youngest sister, Jessie, trained as a teacher at the Vancouver Normal School.

Sherwood's mother, Ann Jane, had been left with a very small

pension from the Methodist Church when her husband died in 1914. For some time she lived with her widowed daughter, Mary, and her children in Marpole. Sherwood visited them every Sunday, year after year. 'Sometimes,' his niece Emily recalls, 'he did not stay long for he was a very busy man. But he did visit us all, checked up on the situation and did what was necessary – advice, moral support and sometimes financial help if needed.'[16] A major financial worry in those days was the cost of medical care. On two occasions Sherwood assumed large medical bills for major surgery, once for his mother and once for his sister, Mary. His niece, Emily, who later became a child welfare worker, remembers her Uncle Sherwood with fondness. She wrote in part:

> During my childhood [he] always appeared as the first authority in all matters. He was always a kind adviser, a wise consultant, and often a bearer of 'treats' for the children . . . There were always stories and jokes which delighted the children and always made us feel there was a magic quality to this uncle's visits.
>
> When Sherwood married, his wife Evelyn quickly assumed the same kind of gentle support and assistance . . . For instance, the first spring after their marriage I went to their home for part of my Easter holidays. I was eight years old. This became an annual event. Usually there was some special 'treat,' such as 'together' aunt Evelyn and I would sew a new dress to outfit me for spring. Such was the importance of Uncle Sherwood and Aunt Evelyn to our whole family that, over many years at Christmas, the first gift, and the most important one, which we children opened was always the gift from Sherwood and Evelyn.
>
> Sherwood was always 'there' in the background and the statement which recurs in my memory is 'We'll ask Sherwood about that on Sunday.' In fact he became a resource for all the special neighbors in our small community for advice on Sundays.[17]

In 1930 Mary was married to her husband's older brother. He was an excellent father but with the onset of the depression became unemployed. Sherwood arranged an opportunity for him to work at Boyle Brothers Diamond Drilling Co., where he was employed for many years.

Sherwood also helped to put Emily through UBC to obtain a degree in social work, while Ralph assisted her older brother to receive training as an optometrist at the University of Toronto. Sherwood's assistance to Emily was in the form of a loan sufficient to see her through five years of university, with the idea that she would pay him back in small annual amounts once she had graduated and obtained employ-

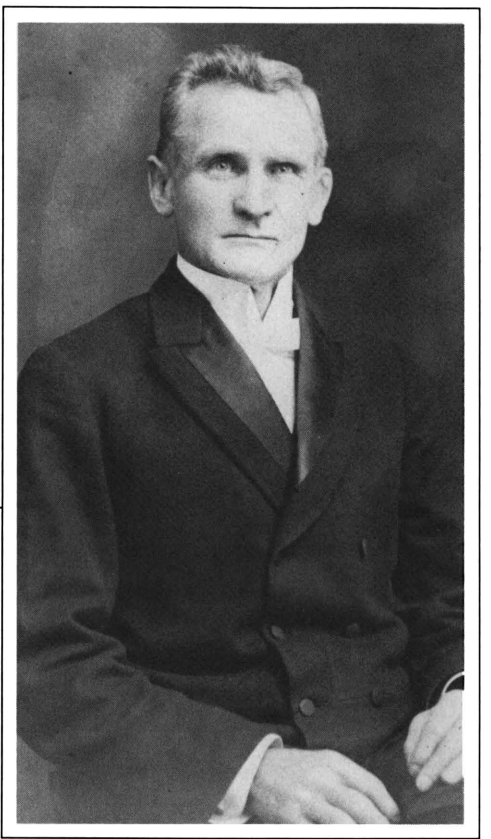
ment. This she did for a number of years until one day, after she was married, she and her husband decided to adopt a baby. They went to give Sherwood the news and, at the same time, to find the amount of the university loan still owing. As Emily relates: 'Sherwood replied that because we were going to have this new responsibility, he thought he would cancel the remainder of the debt. I recall saying, "But how can I ever repay you?" He answered: "But you don't have to – you will do some kindness to someone else. A kindness need not be repaid to the person who was kind to you." That has been one of my guiding principles ever since.'[18] Recounting other instances of how Sherwood and Evelyn worked to maintain and strengthen the family bond, she continued: 'Another facet of the gifts [they] gave to the family was arranging events when the family gathered together. They had many family parties – at holiday times, for special events, for visiting relatives, etc. so that, as children, we were acquainted with all the Lett family and the Story side of the family too.'[19]

Aside from his involvement with his family, legal work, and community services, Sherwood also spent a great deal of time on UBC affairs – so much so that his contribution deserves special attention, since it covers several decades of involvement at a critical period of the university's development.

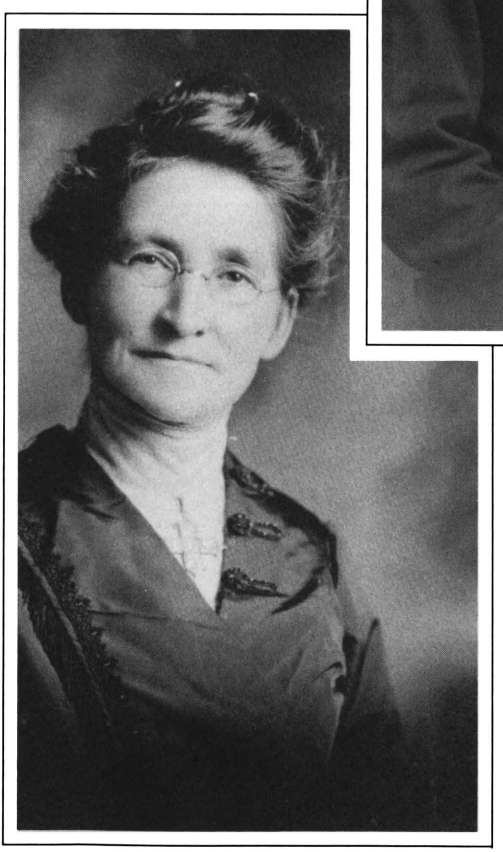
NOTES

1 Salvation Army, *War Cry*, 1 Aug. 1953.
2 Author interview with Col. D.F. Spankie, 19 July 1989, 12.
3 C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments* (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer 1970), 1.
4 Spankie interview, 19.
5 Letter, Col. D.F. Spankie to author, 8 Aug. 1989. Mrs. Lett formed a Women's Auxiliary of the regiment. It gathered and distributed clothing and food to needy families of men in the unit. A room in the Lett home was the 'supply depot' where clothes were cleaned, mended, sorted, and distributed.
6 Evelyn Lett, MS, 'Biography of Sherwood Lett,' 4. Manuscript in possession of the author.
7 Ibid., her 'chief recipient' was later killed in the Somme.
8 Ibid., 8-9.
9 Ibid., 10.
10 Interview with Mrs. S. Lett by Dr. R.H. Roy, 27 June 1989, 42.
11 UBC, Special Collections, talk given to the UBC Faculty Women's Club by Mrs. Sherwood Lett. The house was donated to UBC by a later owner, Dr. Cecil Green.

12 Mrs. Sherwood Lett interview, 10-11.
13 Letter, Emily Campbell to author, 12 Oct. 1989.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.



Sherwood's father, the
Reverend Francis Graeme Lett



Sherwood's mother,
Anne Jane Sherwood Lett

Sherwood at 18 months

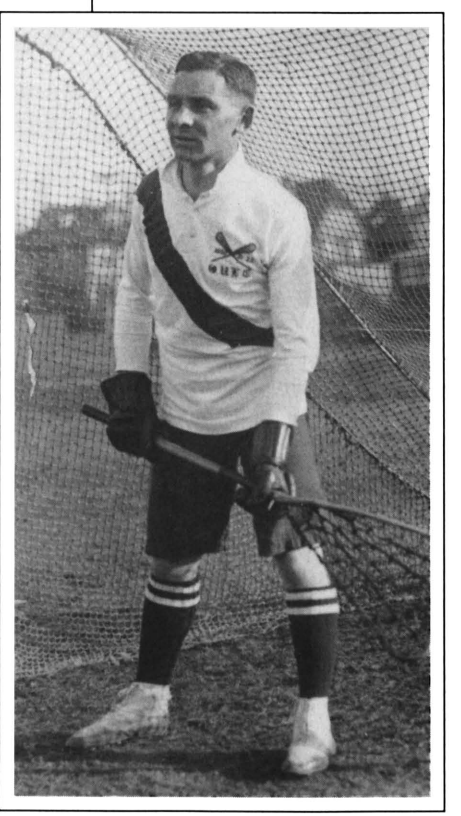
F.G. Lett family. Back row: left to right,
Frank, Lalie, and Anne Jane.
Second row: Heber, Mary, and Ralph.
Front Row: Emily, Jessie, and Sherwood

Sherwood at 12 years, the prize winner for selling subscriptions of the *Saturday Evening Post,* Pembroke, Ontario, 1908

Private Sherwood Lett, age 18, 11th Regiment, Irish Fusiliers of Canada, at the unit's first summer camp, 1914

Sherwood's graduating portrait, UBC, May 1916

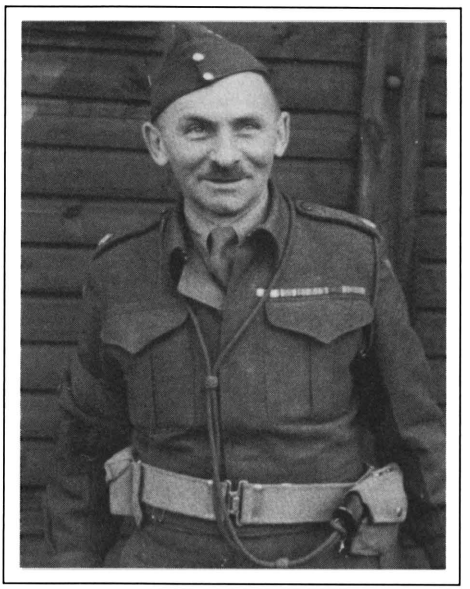
Captain Sherwood Lett,
MC, Adjutant of the
46th Battalion, CEF, 1918



Sherwood as goalkeeper in a
lacrosse game, about 1922

Sherwood (standing, second from left) posed with a group of Musqueam Indians responsible for presenting UBC with its first totem pole, 1927. Evelyn Farris is on Sherwood's left. In front of her is Tom Brown. On the far right (back row) is President Klinck, and in front of him is William Murphy

Evelyn Lett and her two daughters, Mary and Frances, Christmas 1940



Major Sherwood Lett on his arrival in England, 1941

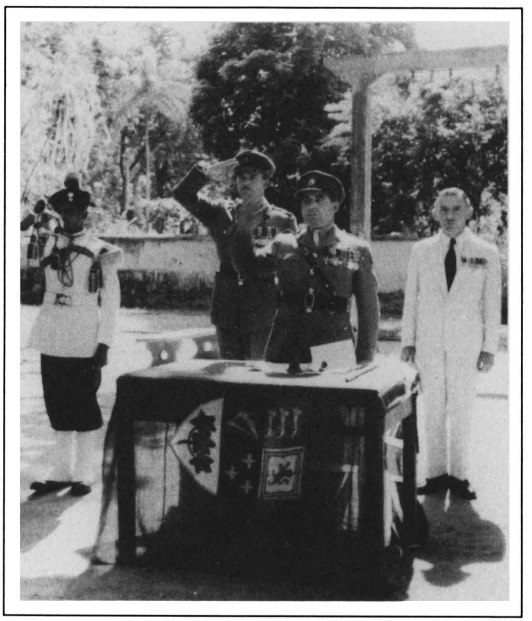
Brigadier Lett, recently wounded in the Dieppe raid, returns to Vancouver in November 1942. He is greeted by Evelyn, his daughters Mary and Frances, and his good friend Arthur Lord

Brigadier Sherwood Lett, CBE, DSO, MC, 1945

Brigadier Sherwood Lett (right) and General H.D.G. Crerar (centre) with British officers inspect the Canadian military cemetery in Hong Kong, summer 1947

Formal portrait of a special occasion–Mary's wedding day, September 1954

Sherwood with his two daughters, Mary and Frances, Mother's Day 1948



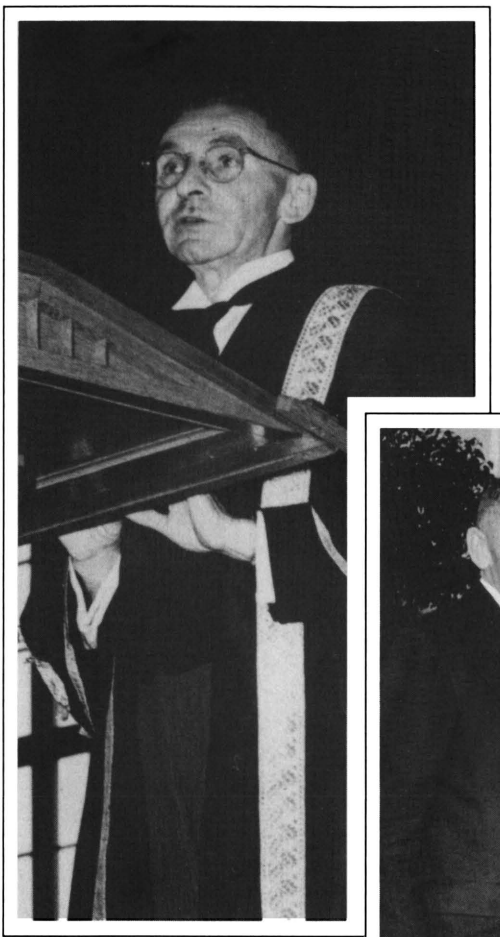
Hanoi, Vietnam, 11 November 1954. Sherwood Lett (right) at a Remembrance Day ceremony. Also shown are Guardsman Rupa Singh, Colonel A.J. Tedlie, and Major David Brennan

Sherwood Lett supervises Christmas dinner for some of the military and civilian staff at the Canadian Commission, Vietnam, 1954

Full meeting of the Supervisory Commission in Vietnam, 1954. Sherwood Lett is to right of chairman, Mr. Manilal J. Desai (in white suit). Polish commissioner, Mr. Ogrodzinski, on his left. Senior advisers, including Vietnamese interpreters, are in attendance

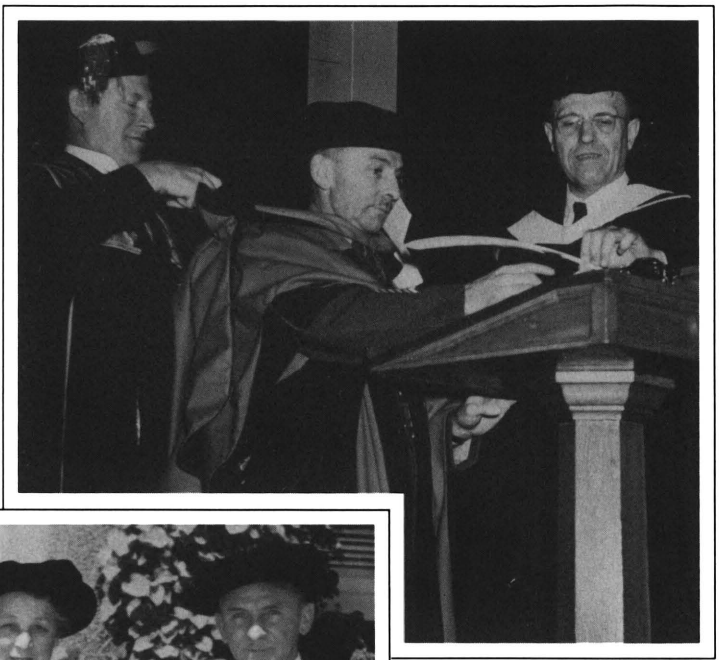
Haiphong, May 1955. Canadian strategy session. Opposite Lett is Saul Rae. On Lett's right is Colonel A.J. Tedlie, and on his left, Lieutenant-Colonel Benny Potto

Haiphong, May 1955. Sherwood Lett (left), chairman of the Commission, Mr. Desai (centre), and Polish commissioner, Mr. Ogrodzinski

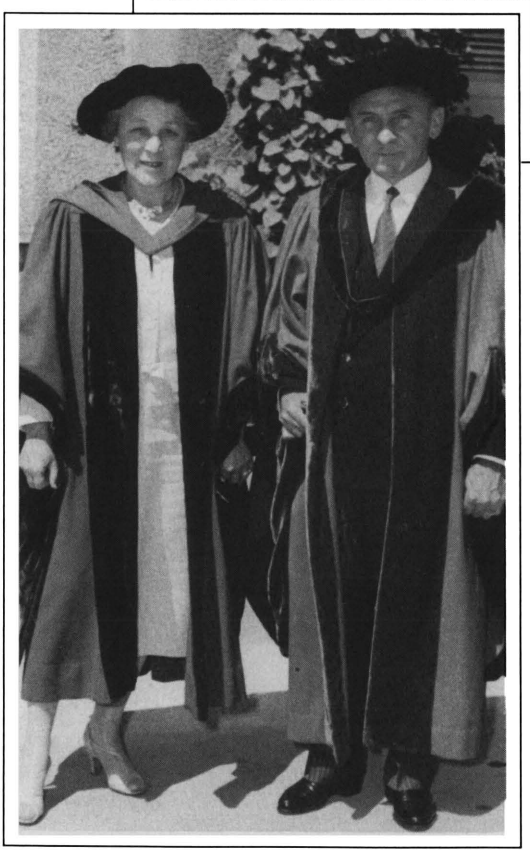


Sherwood as chancellor of UBC addressing a graduating class

Sherwood, chairman of the UBC Board of Governors, with President N.A.M. ('Larry') MacKenzie

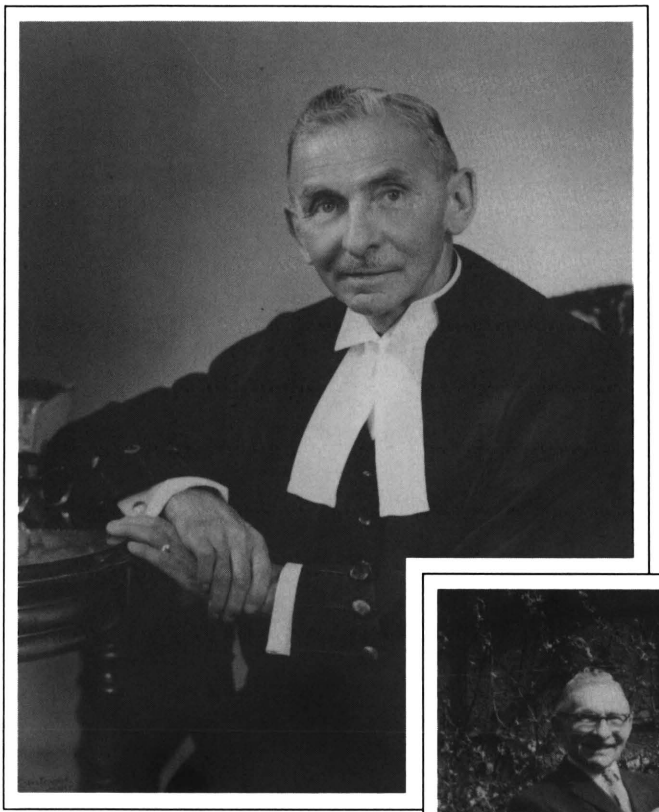


Sherwood receiving honorary doctor's degree from UBC. President MacKenzie presents Sherwood with his hood



Evelyn and Sherwood at Evelyn's honorary Doctorate of Law presentation, May 1958

Chief Justice Sherwood Lett presides at a meeting of the Supreme Court of British Columbia



Sherwood in the robes of the
Chief Justice of British Columbia,
a portrait taken a few weeks before
his death in 1964

Chief Justice Sherwood Lett and his
youngest grandson, David Plant,
spring 1964

CHAPTER SEVEN

Supporting the University

From the time he was a teenager until his death, Sherwood Lett was keenly interested in the progress and development of his Alma Mater. It was a golden thread which ran through the fabric of his life. This interest began when he was a first year student at McGill University College and continued beyond the time when the university community voted him into its highest office, the chancellor of the University of British Columbia. In peace and in war, at home and abroad, Sherwood did more than merely keep in touch with college and university affairs - he became a fighter and promoter for any measure which he felt would benefit the students and faculty. He accomplished a great deal, both directly and in co-operation with friends, to increase the variety and scope of academic departments and faculties, to add to the building of the campus itself, and, in general, to help the university in any way he could to achieve the status it holds today. Space does not permit a detailed account of all of the endeavours in which he was involved relating to the university, but at least a sketch of his activities will give some idea of his life-long interest.

When he was overseas, both in England and in France, Sherwood wrote numerous letters to his university friends and to President Wesbrook. In February 1917, for example, he wrote to Wesbrook regarding the formation of an alumni association. The president replied in part:

> I have talked to Mulhern, to Miss Story, to Miss McLeod, and to some of the other graduates concerning the formation of an Alumni Association. I think you will find that your idea is being forwarded. It was very fine of you amidst all the other things which must have been pressing upon you to think of your Alma Mater in such a constructive way ...
>
> Whenever any of us get together, we are very apt to speak of Sherwood

> Lett. I do not know whether you realize how much we all came to depend upon you whilst you were here.[1]

On the same day Wesbrook wrote his letter, a small group of graduates met at the 'Fairview Shacks' to organize an alumni association, as Sherwood had suggested. They did so in a remarkably short time. The association's original constitution was also brief and to the point, its basic aim being to assist the university and to maintain links among the alumni. The first president was a member of Sherwood's graduating class, J.E. Mulhern. Among the first elected executive were Sherwood, representing Arts, 1916, and Evelyn Story, representing Arts, 1917. Another veteran on the executive was Merril Des Brisay, who had been invalided out of the army with serious wounds. Mulhern had taken over the presidency of the Alma Mater Society from Sherwood when he went overseas.[2] It was three weeks later that Sherwood heard about the association's formation, his own election, and later, that membership in the association was conferred on all graduates on active service without payment of fee.

In his letter to Sherwood, Wesbrook had mentioned that at the May graduation ceremony, he had read out the names of thirty-one college students and graduates who had died so far in the war. The toll was to increase. Sherwood wrote the president in February 1918 saying, in part:

> There does not seem to be nearly so many of the old UBC boys around now as there used to be. The Hun has certainly taken his toll of our little college, and although we used to meet each other whenever we came out on rest, now it is only occasionally that we find one of the old UBC or McGill fellows. When you do meet them, you find the old spirit is always there no matter what they have been through.
>
> I read Dr. McIntosh's appreciation of Captain Leroy in the 'Ubicie' a short time ago . . . It was indeed a sad day for us all when poor old Pete passed out. I remember him the day before he was killed. I came upon him almost up to his knees in mud with a rum jar tucked under his arm. Quite oblivious to the shelling and the rain, he was issuing the customary '1/64th' to his men. Even in the midst of that desolation, just this side of Passchendaele, Pete had his little joke and cheery word for everyone. When the issue was finished, I sat with him for a few moments in the shell hole which served as his Company Headquarters while he told me one of his numerous funny yarns. The next morning, just before he went over the top, I watched him go among his men, cheering them up. We shook hands, and I can picture him yet, standing there, caked in mud, but smiling in that jovial way of his and telling us not to worry about him.

> Soon afterwards a barrage opened and he was 'over the top' for the last time.[3]

It may have been that, to commemorate the valour of the many university men who died during the war, Sherwood somehow arranged to send three captured German machine-guns to the Alma Mater Society.[4]

When Sherwood returned to Vancouver in 1919 he was welcomed by his old university friends and was elected in short order as president of the alumni association, succeeding Merrill Des Brisay. He entered into his new task with his usual enthusiasm, but when he left later in the year to go to Oxford, he had to resign and turn over the position to Kathleen M. Peck (the only woman, incidentally, to be an alumni president in its first fifty years). When he left he received a warm letter of appreciation from the alumni executive, thanking him 'for the time and thought you have spent in making and carrying out many new plans for its advancement.' 'It is due to your leadership,' the letter continued, 'that the Alumni this year has made more progress than ever before, and we will try to continue the work you have begun.'[5]

When he was at Oxford he continued to correspond with his alumni friends, wrote an article for publication on his experiences at Oxford, and sent two 'letters to the editor' to *The Province*. One of the latter outlined his interpretation of UBC's motto, 'Tuum Est.' The other, which appeared in March 1921, was in support of additional funds from the provincial government for higher education. Sherwood argued that in 1920, the productive value of industry in British Columbia was almost $233 million, yet the provincial grant for the university the same year was a mere $125,000. This, Sherwood felt, was not enough, and in his letter he urged that strong pressure should be brought on the provincial government to further the university's progress.

When Sherwood returned to Vancouver in 1922, he became active once again in the alumni association and was again elected its president in 1924-5 and in 1927-8. Since 1918, the alumni association had started to nominate graduates to the university Senate and to conduct a campaign for their election. This was one way they could have a voice in one of the two groups which governed the university. Sherwood was nominated and elected in 1924, and he was to continue to serve as a senator for the next thirty-three years. It was a remarkable term of service, during which the university grew and expanded beyond his wildest dreams. Later, in 1935, he would be elected to the Board of Governors as well.

When elected to the Senate in 1924, Sherwood was one of three UBC graduates who were serving on that body. One of these was Arthur E. Lord. Like Sherwood, he was a former veteran and a very good friend. Lord was Sherwood's best man when he was married, was an 'uncle' to his children, and both men were to follow similar paths in law and in service to the university.

When Sherwood took his seat on the Senate, the university was still located in the 'Fairview Shacks.' The hope of Dr. Wesbrook that it would move to the Point Grey campus had not been realized, and his successor as president, Dr. Klinck, who took over in 1918, was unable to persuade the provincial government to grant the necessary funds to accomplish the move in the post-war years. It was not until 1922, following a massive organization of the alumni and students, that sufficient pressure was exerted on the government to move the university to the new campus. By 1925 the university was finally occupying the site where Wesbrook hoped it would be ten years earlier.

One of the proposals which Sherwood favoured and promoted in the Senate was the teaching of Oriental languages, more specifically, Japanese. Even in the mid-1920s, he was sufficiently foresighted to see that, in time, there was a great potential for growth in Canadian-Japanese trade. As a lawyer with a particular interest in corporate law, he became very aware of the need for Canadians, particularly British Columbians, to learn more about Japan, its language, culture, and history, which would in turn provide a core of experts who would be most useful in trade relations.

Early in 1925 he supported a recommendation of Senate to the Board of Governors 'that provision be made as soon as possible for the institution of a course in commercial Japanese, such course to include the Japanese language, economics, economic geography, Oriental trade, statistics and Japanese accounting, Japanese history, Oriental government and other institutions and other such subjects as may be deemed advisable by the faculty responsible for such course.'[6] It was a tall order, to put it mildly. It would involve a number of departments, require the hiring of additional faculty and staff members, and mean a considerable outlay of money by the university library to purchase books in the various fields. Since the Board had control of the university's purse-strings, and since the move to the new campus was already straining the budget, it had little choice but to turn down the suggestion.

Later in the year, Dean Coleman and Sherwood came back with a somewhat revised proposal, which took into account the financial difficulties. This time, on behalf of the Committee on Oriental Languages, it was proposed

> that the Faculty of Arts and Science approve and endorse a course of study of Oriental subjects to be inaugurated in the university under the joint auspices of the Vancouver Board of Trade and the University Alumni Association in the academic year 1926-27, providing financial assurance is received from responsible organizations sufficient to ensure the establishment of such a course and its maintenance for a period not less than five years, without expense to the University Board of Governors.[7]

Once more the Senate passed the committee's recommendation but, in short, nothing happened. In the following year, Sherwood, seconded as he frequently was by Arthur Lord, tried again with this motion:

> Whereas it has come to the knowledge of Senate that certain monies from the Boxer Indemnity had been set aside by the Imperial Government for educational purposes, that Senate request the Board of Governors ... to make immediate application to the Boxer Indemnity Commission for a monetary grant out of the proceeds of such fund to be used for the establishment and maintenance of a course in Oriental language and Pacific trade and commerce.[8]

Sherwood and his friends continued to work on this proposal for several more years. It was not until after the Second World War that their original vision was realized and the Department of Asian Studies was formed. It was then that more funding was available for such projects. The teaching of Oriental languages was competing with demands that other topics be taught. Perhaps Sherwood was a few decades ahead of his contemporaries - at least on the Board of Governors - in his vision of the growth of Canadian-Japanese trade. Even though he could not push through the scheme at the time, one cannot but admire his ingenuity in proposing means to finance it.

One of the proposals before Senate which Sherwood favoured and which received approval, was the establishment of sororities and fraternities on campus. They were urged to request official recognition late in 1926, and those that did so were accepted early the following year.

It was not until 1926 that UBC had its first Homecoming, and one of the events planned was the presentation of the Memorial Tennis Courts to the university. These were built on Memorial Road on the site of the present Buchanan Building. Sherwood, as past-president of the alumni association was asked to say a few words. It may have been on that occasion, 8 November, that Sherwood made one of his most moving speeches. It is too long to reproduce in full, but even extracts from it give some idea of the depth of his feeling as he

reflected on the war which had ended only eight years earlier. To a hushed crowd he said:

> To some of us this gathering and the silence we have just observed recalls another silence. Our minds go back to that memorable day – the day of the first convocation of this university. Amid the splendor of the robes and the galaxy of hoods and applause a name was called – Edward Berry! And back came the answer, 'Absent on Active Service.' There was a pause, a silence such as this, then came the Chancellor pronouncing the words: 'Admitto Te' – and thunderous applause. Name after name was called and back came the answer: 'Absent on Active Service.'
>
> What did that answer mean . . . ? There are some here today who know its meaning to the full . . . They are that gallant company of men who here, in this university, laid aside their cap and gown and went forth in uniform to give their services to God, King and Canada . . .
>
> [Sherwood then recounts some of the bloody battles in which the men from UBC were involved, mentioning some of those who lost their lives, such as Claude Anderson, Dave Boyes, Fred Campbell, 'old rugby men and hockey men and tennis men'; Duncan Lawson, Joseph Seidleman, Captain Pete Leroy, and others.]
>
> Then came the last great Hundred Days – Amiens with its thrill and flush of victory to come – of scattering enemy and breaking lines of trenches; the cracking of the Hindenburg Line and the great advance into the enemy's territory . . .
>
> We live again the thrilling days of Valenciennes and Mons. Overhead the wings of skilled Canadian airmen – Guy Moore, Don Trapp, Carl Clement, and others . . . who had gone forth from this university, and in the forefront of the attack leading their comrades on to victory we see Gene Phillips and Reg Bateman . . . The tide of battle swept through ruined villages and fortress lines to Mons and so to victory.
>
> And there on a November day that greatest silence of them all descended on the far flung battle line. It hushed the guns and put to rest the engines of destruction . . . Peace [was] bought at a price of blood. Out of 697 enlisted members of this university, 78 laid down their lives . . .
>
> And so today it is fitting that we should pause a moment and reflect in silence – not that our minds may recall the long lines of silent crosses in the distant fields of Flanders . . . but that we may this day renew our faith with those who died . . .[9]

Sherwood's eloquent dedication of the tennis courts must have affected his audience, and the men he mentioned who died in battle were all friends of his whose memory he cherished.

At the next Homecoming, in 1927, one of the events was the presen-

tation of two totem poles to the university. These had been spotted by W. Tom Brown and Cyril Bowden in 1926. These two teenagers, both Boy Scouts, were out cycling and were wandering around the Musqueam Indian Reserve where they noticed the two totem poles lying under a building. Tom mentioned them to his father, A.M. Brown who, like Sherwood, was a veteran. Moreover, Brown was past president of the Canadian Club and Sherwood was president. They were old family friends, and knowing Sherwood's close connection with UBC, Brown felt they should be preserved there, possibly with assistance from the Canadian Club. Sherwood swung into action. He was again president of the alumni association and, with its help, he used Homecoming to make the presentation on its behalf. The totem poles were both ancient and valuable. As one expert put it, 'they are the only surviving specimens of totems of that particular tribe and are among the finest instances of early Indian art in existence.'[10] Money to purchase and install them in what is now Totem Park was raised by the Class of '27, the alumni, and by donations. One of the people whom Sherwood was to thank for 'raising the necessary funds for the restoration of the poles' was Victor W. Odlum. Sherwood had known him before and during the war, and later as a member of the Round Table.[11] Odlum supported the university in various ways and became a member of the Board of Governors.

Sherwood, at this time, was the Alma Mater Society's lawyer. One day in 1927 he was visited by J. Ross Tolmie. Tolmie was a member of the Students' Council, and the students at UBC wanted a gymnasium. Tolmie, together with Mary Carter, the president of the Women's Undergraduate Society, were asked to try and arrange with the government of British Columbia to advance funds to the students to build a gymnasium. Tolmie wrote later:

> [We] went to Victoria to see Dr. S.F. Tolmie who was the Premier. The result of that trip was, unfortunately, very negative. We came back to the Students' Council and reported that no money was likely to come from the government of BC. Under advice, I went downtown to see Sherwood Lett in his office at Davis and Co. Sherwood took off his coat and went to work with me and produced the brilliant idea of incorporating the student body into a company to which all students, both present and future, would contribute in purchasing their shares, the unexpired portion of their caution money which, roughly, averaged six to seven dollars a year. Out of this we were able to raise a bond issue of $60,000 at the 'exhorbitant' interest rate of 3½ percent and we built the gymnasium. Since that time this incorporation of the student body has produced many of the buildings used by the students on the campus today.[12]

The new gymnasium was opened with considerable flourish on 9 November 1929, as a special feature of Homecoming. The Lieutenant-Governor, the Minister of Education, the Chancellor, and the university's President were all there, and Sherwood, 'speaking to an enthusiastic audience of undergraduates and alumni, praised the untiring efforts of A.M.S. Past-Presidents Ross Tolmie and Leslie Brown, and of all the others whose planning and hard work had given the University a long-overdue athletic centre.'[13]

Before the gymnasium was built, and before Sherwood had come up with the idea of how to finance it, there had been some hope that the Dominion Government would make sufficient funds available for a gymnasium-drill hall if the university would re-establish a unit of the Canadian Officers Training Corps. The COTC had been suspended in 1919 at the request of the students in the wave of anti-military feeling which swept across the country following the Great War. By the late 1920s, interest in the corps began to revive. In 1928 Dean R.W. Brock, a veteran himself, started a campaign to revive the COTC while President Klinck, a Quaker, was away on sabbatical. In the Senate, a committee was formed to consider military instruction and its relation to the university curriculum. Sherwood was on the committee and used his not inconsiderable influence to reinstate the corps. Major-General A.G.L. McNaughton, a well-known and highly respected officer who was visiting Vancouver, attended a Senate meeting and gave a favourable opinion of the plan. Although there was some opposition to it, both the Students' Council and the Senate approved the idea, with the result that the COTC was re-established on campus in January 1929. It was to be on a voluntary basis, of course, and lectures on military topics were not given academic credit. Sherwood's old friend, Lieutenant-Colonel H.T. Logan, assumed command of the corps. In time, some of the COTC graduates, when they received their commissions, served in Sherwood's own regiment. Two decades later, incidentally, Sherwood was the seconder of a motion to establish a squadron of air cadets at UBC.[14]

During the 1920s the university grew in size and stature. By the end of the decade, the student population was over 1,500, the facilities on campus were being improved, and plans were being considered for additional buildings on campus to house new faculties. The provincial government grant for the academic year 1929-30 was $625,000, – a sum which was 'in relation to the students served by it, the most generous which was made until the 1950's.'[15] However, there were dark clouds rising on the horizon, and these were to have a major impact on Sherwood's cherished Alma Mater.

Much has been written about the crisis which cast its shadow over

UBC in the early 1930s. Part of the difficult situation was due to the appointment of the Reverend Joshua Hinchliffe as the Minister of Education. Particularly problematic was the devastating impact on the provincial government of the Depression, which started with the crash of the stock market late in 1929 and which brought the 'Roaring Twenties' into the 'Dirty Thirties.' Sharply declining revenues, depressed markets, closed factories, growing unemployment, and economic distress in all areas made it necessary for the provincial government to slash its budget – but nowhere did the blade fall more sharply than at UBC.

It was a very complicated situation. In brief, the Senate was primarily interested in academic matters, but academic growth was dependent on funds which were granted by the Board of Governors. Only the president sat on both organizations and had a considerable voice in the proceedings of each. The main source of funds for the universities came from grants from the provincial government, and with the onset of the Depression, these were sharply curbed. This, in turn, meant laying off staff, buying fewer books and journals for the library, cancelling proposed buildings, and so forth. This, in turn, led to a considerable amount of heated debate about which departments and faculties should be trimmed or even eliminated.

To give an example of the problem, one might cite the furor caused by the Minister of Education's unusual visit to a Senate meeting on 27 January 1931. The Board of Governors had brought to the attention of the minister the problem of overcrowding. Classes in many courses were too large for effective teaching, and there was a fire hazard factor as well. Hinchliffe was of the opinion that the government had two options – increase the accommodation or reduce the registration. Owing to a large debt and reduced revenues, Hinchliffe said that, as it was impossible to provide for increased accommodation, the only alternative was to limit registration, which should be based 'in order of merit as their names appear on the Matriculation List.'[16]

The Senate had considered the possibility of limiting attendance several months earlier, but unless it had some long-term commitment from the government respecting funding, it could do nothing. After Hinchliffe's pronouncement, Sherwood was quick to propose that the Senate would be pleased to offer its assistance in helping the Board resolve the academic problems which presented themselves as a result of funding limitations. Later, the Senate stated it could not accept the minister's method of limiting attendance, but did agree to stiffen entrance requirements. In March, Sherwood proposed – and the Senate agreed – that 'the moneys available be devoted to the cost of teaching and such research work as may be necessary thereto.'[17] In a

second motion, again agreed to by the Senate, he set his sights on the Faculty of Agriculture, which, many thought, was receiving favourable attention and appropriation at the expense of other faculties. His recommendation to the Board was that most of the funding for research in agriculture should come from the provincial Department of Agriculture rather than from the university's decreasing budget.

This was to stir up a hornet's nest. Later in the year, a few days before Christmas, the Minister of Education advised President Klinck that the government grant to UBC would be cut to $250,000, which represented a cut of fifty-seven per cent in two years. Moreover, when meeting a delegation from the university in January 1932, he stated that in his opinion 'those departments which contributed most to the development of the natural resources of the Province should be the last to be affected adversely as the result of the decrease in the appropriation.'[18] In the months which followed, there were numerous stormy meetings of both the Senate and the Board. There were questions, particularly, about the budget of the Faculty of Agriculture, about raising students' fees to $125.00, about the role played by President Klinck, and the proposed distribution of university funds. The Senate began to demand more information about the budget and the university's administration, which the Board felt was within their purview. The situation reached such a stage that Sherwood introduced a motion in Senate that that body 'regrets . . . it has lost confidence in the President of the University, and feels that the best interests of the University cannot be served under his leadership . . .'[19] The motion was passed at the next Senate meeting, but four days later the Board passed a motion expressing confidence in him. The end result was that the government appointed a commissioner to look into the problems faced by the university. Among the recommendations he made was that there should be greater liaison between the Senate and the Board and that the University Act be amended to provide for the election of three senators to the Board for three-year terms. When this came into law in 1935, Sherwood was one of the three elected to the Board, a position he was to hold for many years and which was interrupted only by the war.

Having a position on both the Senate and the Board of Governors meant spending more time on university affairs. At the same time, Sherwood was now the commanding officer of the Irish Fusiliers, which brought more responsibilities and demanded more time. He was a member of the executive of the Japan Society, and in 1931, he became a member of the BC Rhodes Scholarship Committee and for the next five years was its secretary.[20] Later in the 1930s Sherwood also became a president of the Regional Council of Canadian Clubs

(1936-7), and in 1937 he became president of the Institute of Pacific Relations.

Despite all his other interests and activities, however, Sherwood continued to participate fully in the government of the university both in Senate and on the Board. He believed the public should be aware of Senate business, and as early as 1930, his motion had passed that 'a press committee consisting of one faculty member of Senate and one non-faculty member of Senate ... be empowered [as a committee] to give to the press a report of the proceedings of Senate promptly after each meeting ...'[21] Naturally, Sherwood was appointed as the non-faculty member of the committee.

As a senator, Sherwood served on almost every Senate committee. In this way, and with his additional work on the Board, he was able to gain a tremendous insight into the operation of the university. In general, he favoured expanding the university's influence to the extent he could and fighting those who would try to curb it. He was outraged, for example, when the report of the Kidd Committee was made public in August 1932. This report was the result of the investigation of five businessmen serving on a committee under the chairmanship of George Kidd. The province's finances were in a very poor state, its debt seemed insurmountable (over $143,000,000 in 1932), and the Depression seemed unending. The Kidd Committee suggested, among other things, that the provincial government could operate on an annual budget of $6,000,000 rather than on $25,000,000. As far as UBC was concerned, the report suggested the government might not be able to finance the institution and that university students might have to go outside the province to get an education.[22] The impact of the report on the student body of UBC was immediate and brought with it mass rallies and petitions to keep the university's gates open.[23]

It was under these harsh conditions that the university operated. Only in the latter part of the 1930s was the university's grant from the province slowly increased, and even as late as 1937-8 it was only $400,000 (with a student enrolment of over 2,000). Several proposals which Sherwood suggested during this period, for example, were turned down owing to fiscal limitations. For many years Sherwood had favoured the idea, proposed by the benchers as early as 1922, of establishing a Faculty of Law at the university. Late in 1938 Sherwood, representing the Board, and his good friend, Arthur Lord, representing the Senate, once again presented a statement to Senate favouring the representation of the Law Society of British Columbia that such a faculty be established. For decades anyone wishing to obtain a law degree had to obtain it outside the province. To become a lawyer,

therefore, most candidates faced a five-year term as a student articled to a law firm at very low wages. In this period he or she was expected to become familiar with the actual practice of the legal profession while studying law with some guidance from his or her principals. It was a grinding experience and the benchers of the Law Society wished to improve the system. Once again fiscal restraint prevented the acceptance of the proposal, but Sherwood was to come back to it again, some years later - this time as a bencher himself.

Sherwood had always been interested in sports, so possibly it was not by chance that he was appointed chairman of the Senate committee for the establishment of a Department of Physical Education. A great deal had been accomplished by the students themselves in order to provide sports facilities ranging from the tennis courts to the gymnasium and, later, to establishing an oval and cinder track. But more was needed, and Sherwood's committee, early in 1939, proposed 'that vigorous efforts be made to improve the gymnasium and stadium facilities in order to strengthen the existing voluntary program of Physical Education.' It went on to suggest that compulsory physical education for first year students be established for the 1939-40 session 'if sufficient funds can be made available for equipment and staff' and 'that as soon as possible thereafter a Department of Health and Physical Education be established.'[24] The Senate favoured the idea, the Faculty of Arts and Science approved it, the students had been pushing for it, but here again there were other and more urgent demands for courses, and, with limited funds, it could not be established at that time. The wartime years brought with them an increasing emphasis on physical fitness, and, eventually, in 1945, the committee's proposal became a reality.

The 1920s and '30s were both exciting and harrowing decades for the university. It had one of the liveliest student bodies in Canada, the core of a very good faculty, and, once it had moved to Point Grey, the site of one of the most beautiful campuses in the country. Space permits only a limited sample of the areas of UBC's growth and development in which Sherwood was involved. He worked actively behind the scenes in many instances to improve its growth, widen the scope of its academic offerings, and improve the quality of instruction. Working with people such as Arthur Lord, Fred Soward, Dal Grauer, Harry Logan, and a host of others, he swung his considerable influence to reach goals which would benefit the students and the quality of their education.

In a way, the tremendous energies which he had devoted to the church before the war were channelled into education after the war. He had been fortunate to attend one of the finest universities in the

English-speaking world, so he knew the benefits a first-class institution could bestow, not only on the students, but on the larger community. Perhaps it was with that in mind that he spent so much time on, and struggled so consistently for, his Alma Mater.

NOTES

1 UBC Archives, Wesbrook correspondence, letter, Wesbrook to Lett, 14 May 1917.
2 Frances Tucker, *The Alumni Association of the University of British Columbia: The First Fifty Years* (Vancouver: UBC *Alumni Chronicle* 1966), 3.
3 Wesbrook correspondence, Lett to Wesbrook, 3 Feb. 1918.
4 Letter, Marjory G. Peck, secretary, Alma Mater Society to Captain S. Lett, 15 Jan. 1919. (Letter in possession of Mrs. S. Lett. What became of these machine-guns is not known. Probably the wave of anti-military feeling in Canada resulted in their disposal to some off-campus organization. It is interesting to note that a veteran member of the Vancouver Club presented one which was on display in the club lobby for some time.)
5 Letter, Miss I.G. MacMillan, secretary-treasurer, alumni association to S. Lett, 3 Dec. 1919. (Letter in possession of Mrs. S. Lett.)
6 UBC Special Collections, Minutes of Meetings of UBC Senate, Vol. 2, 18 Feb. 1925, 406.
7 Ibid., 16 Dec. 1925, 433.
8 Ibid., Vol. 3, 12 Nov. 1926, 496.
9 Undated manuscript, in the possession of Mrs. S. Lett.
10 Tucker, *The First Fifty Years*, 7. These totem poles were the first acquired by UBC and are housed in the Museum of Anthropology.
11 Public Archives of Canada, RG30, E300, Odlum Papers, Sherwood Lett file, letter, Lett to Odlum, 15 Nov. 1927.
12 Letter, J. Ross Tolmie to author, 22 Mar. 1990.
13 Harry T. Logan, *Tuum Est, A History of the University of British Columbia* (Vancouver: The University of BC 1958), 105.
14 Minutes of Meeting of the UBC Senate, Vol. 12, 15 Dec. 1948, 1461.
15 Logan, *Tuum Est*, 104.
16 Senate minutes, 27 Jan. 1931.
17 Ibid., 18 Mar. 1931.
18 Sherwood Lett, 'Events Leading Up to the University Investigation,' in *The University of British Columbia Graduate Chronicle* (May 1932), 5.
19 Senate minutes, 16 Mar. 1932, 206.
20 Among those selected for scholarships in those five years was Tom Brown, who had discovered the totem poles mentioned earlier, and E. Davie Fulton, who became a federal minister of the Crown. Much later, in 1951,

when Sherwood was still serving, John Turner was selected. He, too, became a well-known politician.

21 Senate minutes, Vol. 4, 19 Feb. 1930, 73.

22 Logan, *Tuum Est*, 119; M.A. Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History*, (Toronto: Macmillan 1958), 448.

23 A good idea of the temper of the times can be gleaned from the author's interview with Dr. James Gibson, 19 June 1990. Manuscript is with Lett Papers.

24 Senate minutes, Vol. 8, 15 Feb. 1939, 687-8.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Peace and War

During the 1920s Sherwood's legal practice had developed steadily. When he was accepted into full partnership in 1928, he went beyond the stage of being a lawyer working for a salary in the firm and became eligible for a share of the profits. As the years went by and as he gained more experience, he brought more clients into the firm, which, in turn, yielded Sherwood an increasing annual income.

The years of the Depression, however, slowed down the rate of the firm's growth and profits. The tremendous slump in the demand for British Columbia's lumber, fish, minerals, and other products had an impact everywhere, but business did go on, even if at a much reduced rate. As an expert in corporate law, Sherwood was kept busy not only in the 1920s but in the 1930s as well. He was a careful, cautious, and meticulous lawyer. Naturally, as he gave a corporation or institution good legal service in one area, they would return to him for legal advice again. Since many corporations were national or international in scope, he was sometimes called away to Ottawa, Toronto, New York, and elsewhere on business matters. In the earlier years this meant days travelling by train, but as the 'thirties wore on, he began to use airplane travel more frequently, although it was not until 1939 that one could fly directly between Vancouver and Montreal.

Even in the 1930s Davis and Co. picked up some major new clients. One, for example, was British Pacific Properties Ltd., a company which was interested in developing part of the North Shore into a residential area with a magnificent view over Vancouver and its harbour. When the Guinness family in Great Britain decided to back the development, much of the legal work was left in Sherwood's capable hands. He was responsible for the legal work involved in acquiring considerable land in West Vancouver, the development of the initial four thousand acres and acquiring the Marine Building. He incorpo-

rated the First Narrows Bridge Company to build the Lions Gate Bridge. He was also faced, as one former lawyer and colleague put it, 'with formidable negotiations with the Federal Government concerning the causeway through Stanley Park, held by the City of Vancouver under lease from the Department of National Defence, and with the matter of the required width between bridge towers and the height of the bridge deck above navigable waters.'[1] The bridge was open to traffic in 1938 and officially opened in 1939 on the occasion of the visit of their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. With easier and quicker access, the development on the North Shore blossomed.

Sherwood advised many large corporations as well as individuals with major interests. Among the latter was Charles A. Banks, who was involved, among other things, with the Bulolo and Placer developments. Later he was to play a behind-the-scenes role in persuading Banks to accept the lieutenant-governorship of British Columbia. Sherwood was also a good friend and advisor to Eric W. Hamber, a well-known Vancouver businessman who was the province's lieutenant-governor from 1936 to 1941, and later, chancellor of UBC. Yet another was Victor W. Odlum, an old friend of the Lett family who had numerous business interests.

One of his interesting clients was Boyles Brothers, a firm which has since disappeared into a large conglomerate. This firm started in Salt Lake City, Utah, as a hardrock drilling company. It began operating in the interior of the province during the mining boom, flourished for several decades, but with the Depression it fell on hard times. In 1936 several men, including Sherwood, decided to purchase and reorganize the firm. Sherwood became a director, secretary, and shareholder in the company as well as its legal counsel.

Under its new management Boyles Bros. became a worldwide manufacturing and drilling company based in British Columbia. 'It had two large plants located in Vancouver and in Hull, England, where it developed, manufactured and supplied diamond and carborundum bits and wheels of all sorts, together with all kinds of drilling equipment and pumps.'[2] To glance ahead, it was the Boyles Bros. drillers who honeycombed Ripple Rock (in Johnstone Strait) with tunnels and drill holes to be loaded with explosives. These created the largest ever non-atomic explosion – an explosion which disintegrated this long-standing navigation hazard to rubble on the channel floor. This was in the 1950s, and Sherwood was there to see it.

Davis, Pugh, Davis, Hossie, Ralston, and Lett was considered to be one of the largest law firms in Vancouver, and its strength allowed it to weather the Depression without foundering. Competition was keen but not cut-throat, and even during the worst years of the Depression,

Sherwood continued to earn an income which allowed him to live in modest affluence. When he was married, he moved into a rented house on Wolfe Avenue. Two years later, he was able to build a house on a lot on 33rd near Angus Drive. By this time, Sherwood and Evelyn had their first daughter, Mary, who was born in 1930. Six years later, they adopted a second child, Frances. Both parents were very active socially, and since he preferred to entertain at home rather than at a club, they decided to buy a larger house near the corner of Angus and 40th Avenue.

It was a busy, active household. Fortunately they had a maid and a part-time gardener. Sherwood himself liked to garden and was particularly proud of his hollyhocks and fuchsias. More especially, it gave him some peace and quiet, away from the hustle and bustle of the office. For vacations, the family started to rent a cottage by the beach at Tsawwassen, but later they bought a seaside cottage at Crescent Beach. Here they could enjoy swimming and sailing and Sherwood could continue to putter in his garden. There was no telephone, which meant more peace, and although the cottage had only a wood-burning stove, the maid usually came with them to help out. As the years went by, Frances became increasingly interested in athletics and became exceptionally good at swimming. Sherwood, who had been a keen athlete himself, was surprised at how long she could swim without stopping. At one point, when she was a teenager, he promised her ten dollars for every mile she could swim. 'I challenged him on the spot,' Frances recalled. 'We were out rowing until sunset as I went on, mile after mile and poor father was a little tired in the rowboat trying to keep up with me.'[3] The weeks at Crescent Beach seemed to fly by all too quickly. It was only a two-hour drive in the family Plymouth to get there, and once back to his busy routine, Sherwood looked forward to the weekends for relaxing either in the garden, on the golf course, or perhaps out fishing.

Both Sherwood and Evelyn were busy. Among other things she joined the Vancouver Tennis Club, the University Women's Club, and various other social and charitable organizations. She became a member of the Christian Education Council of BC, an interdenominational group which promoted camps, sports, and studies on an interdenominational basis. Shortly after they were married, she recalls,

> I was asked by the Council to chair, for two weeks from 9 to 12 a.m., a Summer Play School at Trinity United Church. I accepted, without a thought, but met an angry husband. 'How can you be away every morning for two weeks and look after my home and me properly?' Well, I did both, and when at the end they brought a lovely tribute to our home one

> day, he accepted that I had done a good deed and that he had not suffered too much.
>
> But from then on I watched my territory carefully, and while he never accepted the claims on my time beyond the home, he became happier. One example I love. When he was a member of the Advisory Committee to the Salvation Army, it was having trouble with the Home for Unwed Mothers. Colonel John Peter Mackenzie said 'Sherwood, get Evelyn to organize a Women's Auxiliary.' That evening he made the request when he came home. 'But,' I said, 'you say I'm already doing too much!' 'Oh, but this is different, ' he replied. Well, I set up the Auxiliary over forty years ago and it is still functioning.[4]

Despite an active social life, Evelyn still found time to serve on the board of the YWCA, to chair the women's section of the United Way, to serve on the board of the Vancouver General Hospital, to teach in the Shaughnessy United Church Sunday School, and to be president of the Women's Association (i.e., Ladies Aid). When plans were made to build a new church, she became a member of the finance committee and prodded Sherwood, who had experience as a fund-raiser, to become a member of the building committee. In time, too, she became one of the founding members of the auxiliary to the Vancouver Art Gallery, and later, the Vancouver Community Arts Council. She also became a member of a garden club where, as she put it, 'I learned some things my gardener-husband already knew.'[5]

Sherwood would have liked to have had more time to spend at home, but it was not easy. He had numerous business trips, but he tried to write the girls a note when he was away, asking about their school work or music lessons or telling them about his own travels. Even at home there were schedules to be met. 'I can remember sitting on the sofa one week,' Frances recalls, 'and it was like watching a ping-pong match. Both of them were reading off their calendars what they had on given dates and whether they could be together for such-and-such an organizational dinner . . . '[6] The family planned to have at least one night a month when they could all go out skating or see a film or enjoy some other form of entertainment. It was not always easy. Sometimes, when everyone was at home, they would have a 'musical evening,' with Sherwood playing the flute and the girls playing other instruments. Dinner, when there were no guests, was always a private affair where family and other matters could be discussed, plans made, et cetera, with minimal outside interruption.

By the latter half of the 1930s the Depression began to ease slightly, although the unemployment rate continued uncomfortably high in Vancouver and elsewhere. There were more cars on the streets, and

with gasoline selling at twenty-five cents per gallon, the suburbs began to expand. The radio became one of the favourite means of home entertainment, and in the city some major construction work was under way. In 1936 the new Seaforth Armoury and the City Hall were completed, and two years later, the Lion's Gate Bridge was opened to traffic. Workers were completing, at long last, the new Hotel Vancouver, which would open its doors in 1939, the same year the city welcomed the King and Queen when their Majesties arrived late in May.

But while the dark clouds of the Depression were lifting, there were other events which were casting a somber shadow over Europe and, indeed, the entire world. It was during the late 1930s that the beating of the war drums began to sound louder year by year. In 1935 Mussolini and his fascist government decided to invade Ethiopia. The League of Nations did nothing, and in the following year Hitler ordered his troops to occupy the Rhineland. By 1937 a civil war was raging in Spain, while in China, the Japanese were seizing more and more territory in their ruthless and relentless march into the heart of that ancient kingdom. In 1938 came the Munich Crisis, with the result that German troops occupied the Sudetenland in October. In the newsreels one could see the huge flights of German aircraft flying over massed divisions of panzers as they passed in review before Hitler.

Despite the immense armaments being piled up in Germany and the creation of an ever increasing number of divisions, there were many in Canada who either felt that war would not break out or who believed that it would be short, with Germany being starved by blockade. Others, some in high places, believed Canada should remain isolated from European affairs. Sherwood had retained his keen interest in world events as his membership in the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, the Round Table, the Japan Society, and the Institute of Pacific Relations indicates. He was well aware of the dangerous game being played by Hitler and Mussolini, and when he stepped down as commanding officer of the Irish Fusiliers in July 1937, Lieutenant-Colonel Lett was well aware of the shocking state of unpreparedness of the Canadian forces. When war came in September 1939, he was not surprised.

Orders to start mobilizing the militia into CASF (Canadian Active Service Force) units began a few days before the outbreak of war. Owing to the limited supply of uniforms, weapons, and equipment, Canada planned to send the 1st Division overseas as quickly as possible while raising a second infantry division at a more leisurely pace. The German army launched a massive and successful attack on Poland, but after that rapid victory there was comparatively little

action on land. This was the period of the 'Phoney War' or 'Sitzkrieg,' as it was termed. During the winter of 1939-40, the Canadian economy began to improve markedly as there was a rush to build barracks, aerodromes, coastal defences, and other military defence installations, but these measures became far more urgent when, in April, German forces invaded Norway and when, in May, they began their victorious 'blitzkrieg' attack on the Netherlands, Belgium, and France. It was in May that the war touched Sherwood and ended the peaceful tranquility of the Lett household.

He was sitting in his office when Captain David Verchere called to see him. Verchere had been his articled student in the late 1920s, was with the firm briefly as a lawyer, but was presently serving on the military headquarters staff in Vancouver. He brought with him a deciphered telegram from Major-General Victor Odlum asking if Sherwood would be willing to serve as a Brigade Major in Odlum's 2nd Canadian Infantry Division. It meant a drop in rank, and it would also mean a much reduced income. But Odlum had let Sherwood know earlier that he was one of the officers he wanted should he get command of the division. With the Germans beginning to rampage through France, the 2nd Division was to go overseas as quickly as possible. Sherwood did not hesitate. He accepted the appointment as Brigade Major of the 6th Canadian Infantry Brigade on 22 May. Within a very short time he was en route to Camp Shilo, and within five months he was once more on a troopship headed for Great Britain.

In a way it was almost like turning back the clock when the ship landed in Liverpool. The crowded docks and warm welcome were familiar, although this time the uniforms were different. France had fallen and the Battle of Britain had been raging overhead for the past few months as the German Luftwaffe attempted to gain dominance over British skies. Churchill had replaced Chamberlain in the same month Sherwood had enlisted, and as he travelled south to Aldershot, Sherwood could see on every hand the barrage balloons, air raid shelters, anti-aircraft gun positions, and evidences of German bombing. Blackout regulations were strictly enforced, and everywhere one encountered signs urging the people to conserve fuel, plant victory gardens, reduce waste, buy victory bonds, and so on. There was an air of determination among both the military and civilian population alike, but with Dunkirk still very fresh in everyone's memory, there was the realization that it was going to take a tremendous effort to build up the nation's defences before any thought could be given to offence. Moreover, even though the 2nd Division was overseas, 'it was very incompletely trained at this time.'[7]

Two decades of Canada's neglect of its militia were apparent at every

level. Sherwood, though a former commander of the Irish Fusiliers, had never exercised a full battalion in field exercises in his life. The brigade commander, an old acquaintance of his, was Brigadier D.R. Sargent, who had commanded the 2nd Battalion, the Canadian Scottish Regiment, between 1930 and 1934. He, too, was a Great War veteran, and his militia training was similar to Sherwood's. The commander of the division, Major-General V.W. Odlum, was in the same boat. He had commanded a brigade in the Great War, but that was twenty-two years ago. At the outbreak of war, he was the Honorary Colonel of the Irish Fusiliers (Vancouver Regiment) and was probably the only general officer commanding a division who wore medal ribbons from the South African War. The experience these men had in the Great War was valuable and welcome, but neither Odlum nor Sargent would lead their formations into action.

During his first six months in England, Sherwood was exceptionally busy. As the senior staff officer at Brigade Headquarters he was the brigadier's right hand. His job was to co-ordinate the activities of the three battalions in the brigade, to ensure his commander's orders were properly carried out, to oversee the administration of the brigade, to assist, when he could, the commanding officers of the battalions, and to help Brigadier Sargent in any of a dozen matters which inevitably came up when the brigade was training to reach the highest possible state of efficiency in the shortest possible time.

There was a tremendous amount to learn. The old concept of defence by miles of barbed wire and trenches was scrapped. If German tank regiments could break through the concrete fortifications of the Maginot Line, they were not going to be held up by trenches and dug-outs. Sherwood had to learn new tactics, as did the other officers. Laying minefields was more important than laying barbed wire. The tremendous number of military vehicles required greater traffic control and convoy practice by day and by night. Co-ordinated infantry and armoured training was stressed, as was training to combat possible airborne landings. Sherwood had to soak up an immense amount of knowledge in a short time, as did everyone in the Canadian Corps in Britain.

Sherwood's ability marked him for promotion, and early in June 1941, he was delighted to hear that he was going on a four-month's course at the Staff College in Camberley. This was a rigorous yet necessary testing ground for most field officers seeking a command appointment. In wartime it was a cram course covering almost every aspect of military knowledge, one which widened the students' knowledge, made them familiar with military theory and practice, brought them up to date with everything from weaponry to tactics,

and tested their skills in analysis and decisionmaking under stress. There was not the leisure to read and contemplate and argue as Sherwood had experienced while studying at Oxford. It was hard, exhausting work, with the instructors observing the students' abilities almost every hour of the day.

The results, for Sherwood, were gratifying. Apparently he was able to get a copy of the report on him when the course was over. It read: 'Classification AB – has steadily improved and has been a very good influence. Cheerful, easy to work with and imperturbable. Painstaking and most reliable with sound judgement. Fit for command, instructor staff college or G2 armoured division or preferably corps and [to] be considered for upgrading before long.'[8] When Sherwood sent this copy to Evelyn in a letter he added:

> I'm rather proud of this which I have just managed to get a peep at. The satisfactory part is that they rarely class anyone above B. Straight A's are practically unknown at Staff College and usually if a fellow is recommended for any one of the three, that is, command, G2 or corps, he considers he has done pretty well. But to get recommended for all three, with 'instructor Staff College' and 'upgrading' thrown in, is a bit unusual. And I understand it is the first time they have recommended any Canadian as fit to act as Grade II staff officer for any armoured division. So I guess it paid to work hard.[9]

He was right; it did pay to work hard. When the course was over in mid-October, Sherwood was promoted to Acting Lieutenant-Colonel and appointed GSOI (General Staff Officer, Grade I) to 2nd Canadian Infantry Division Headquarters. Here, he would be in close contact with Major-General V.W. Odlum until the latter left early in November to assume other assignments. Sherwood was pleased with his new position. His rank brought more pay and would help Evelyn at home trying to look after a large house, the two girls, and to carry on with her Red Cross and other wartime activities. Sherwood's new responsibilities revolved around plans and operations and, while in England, training. Five weeks into his new job, he wrote to his wife:

> I am really enjoying my work and am getting things organized to my liking. I always knew I could train a Division the same as a Brigade and with the same enthusiasm on the part of everyone, and it begins to look as if it can be done alright. Just as one example, in the new type of Battle Drill . . . I arranged for 12-15 officers of the Division to see a special demonstration of it yesterday . . . Actually nearly three times the number of officers turned up for the demonstration . . .

> Even after only a month of it here I notice the difference in their attitude towards training and towards Div. H.Q. ... The new GOC [J.H. Roberts] ... backs me up splendidly in everything I propose.
>
> [On] the operations side ... I can say that after a lot of messing around, our Acting Corps Commander, Gen. Pearkes, is really *doing* what everyone always said was the proper thing to be done, but never able to do.[10]

Even as he was writing to his wife, Sherwood was aware of the fact that he was being recommended to assume command of the South Saskatchewan Regiment, a unit in his old brigade. 'As you know,' he had added, 'the Command job appeals to me even more than this staff work.'[11]

Sherwood got his wish a week later. The commanding officer of the Saskatchewans, Lieutenant-Colonel J.E. Wright, who had mobilized the regiment and brought it overseas, was no longer able to maintain the physical demands of the task, which left the appointment vacant. Sherwood was ordered to take over the command on 1 December 1941.

It was not easy to take over a regiment from a popular commander. A regiment, in many ways, is very much a 'family' affair, and the 800 officers and men would usually hope that one of their own officers would be promoted. Nevertheless, Sherwood had not only the experience but the qualifications for this particular position. He was aware that his first task was to gain the confidence and respect of all ranks. He was quickly accepted, and immediately after the Christmas holidays he began to put his own imprint on the unit.[12]

One of Sherwood's outstanding characteristics as a soldier was his ability to train men, and in the last six months of 1941 the need to have more combat-ready troops was obvious. German troops had swarmed through the Balkans, occupied Greece, and seized Crete. That accomplished, Germany launched a massive attack on Russia and thrust to the gates of Moscow. In North Africa, General Rommel brought blitzkrieg tactics to the desert, and in the Pacific, a week after he had assumed command of the South Saskatchewans, the Japanese had struck a devastating blow at Pearl Harbor. By January 1942, the Japanese were on the march to the south, and, in mid-February, they had captured Singapore and were still advancing on other fronts.

Sherwood worked hard to prepare his own regiment for battle. Early in 1942 he wrote Evelyn: 'I started a new system of training with my officers and also another new system with my men, and I don't know whether it is harder on them or on me.' He continued:

> They were a little slow in warming up to it, but now they are so enthusiastic that I can't get them to lay off. Friday night, Saturday afternoon,

Sunday morning, noon and night they have been over here working at a cloth model I had made of one of our positions. The officers are getting keen, and even the NCOs [non-commissioned officers] took their afternoons off to come in and study the model to see how they can work out their problems. I have adopted the Camberley method of cloth models, playlets, discussions, demonstrations and a bit of realism to battalion, company and platoon work and it has 'taken on' in a big way. I am getting a great kick out of it, but it is certainly strenuous work to keep up with them. The other night I had all the officers of the artillery, machine-guns, anti-tank battery and carrier platoon in at our demonstration and they loved it. Some of my own officers said they learned more about defence in one evening than they had learned in two years of lectures and reading the books.

Tuesday night I have a play arranged, with all the suitable properties, to show exactly how it should *not* be done. Then we show them how we *are* going to do it on a cloth model which is set up as a replica of our actual positions. Hills, trees, woods, roads, rivers, villages and all the defensive positions are actually laid out on the floor before them. The guns, machine-guns, anti-tank guns, weapon pits, trenches, etc. are all actually shown on the model which we have made ourselves out of odds and ends.

They are like kids with new toys, and they learn more from the jokes alone than they can learn from all the pamphlets and courses. Thursday night we have arranged to fight the actual battle. Dive-bombing attacks on our positions will be as realistic as can be. We have a loud-speaker in the room which will give all the sound effects, assisted by a few score blank cartridge fired off in the corners of the room and a series of magnesium flashes in the darkness. Then the actual parachute companies will land on the defence positions. We have made parachutes (one half inch in diameter) in the exact number of the German parachute battalion and we will 'land' them at the proper moment from frames suspended over the model.

The Intelligence Section has learned more about German parachutists in making the models of them than they ever knew before. The officers and NCOs are studying up their tactics as never before and the joke of it is that, in preparing their 'script' for the 'show,' they are actually working out to the last minute detail their own defence plans and they scarcely realize it. It's great fun, but as they have never done it before, you can imagine how much directing it takes.[13]

By the end of his second month with the battalion, Sherwood was feeling quite pleased with his new command. 'The South Saskatchewan people – officers and men – have been very nice,' he wrote.

'Without exception they are gradually coming around to a loyalty to me which is really most satisfying.' He achieved this not by pampering them, but rather by fair treatment, his own personality, and his determination to improve every aspect of the regiment's life. He continued in his letter:

> I've made some very drastic changes, and have even 'kicked out' some individuals who are occupying important jobs but were inefficient. And there are others still to go. Yesterday I had a 'blitz' on one company and before the afternoon session was over I had relieved one man of his job which he had 'held down' for months, and replaced another on the spot for inefficiency in looking after the men. So it goes, and in both training and administration I can see the decided change.[14]

Early in February, Sherwood was informed that his battalion was to be inspected by Lieutenant-General B.L. Montgomery, GOC South Eastern Command. Montgomery was to be appointed to command the British Eighth Army in North Africa some months later. He was known as a keen, critical, and demanding commander. Sherwood prepared for his coming inspection with great care. Beside the saluting base a spotless white flag pole carried a brand new Union Jack. Uniforms were pressed, every NCO wore new stripes, all equipment was covered with the same shade of blanco, and the regimental band and buglers sported dress caps and white cross belts. He sent an orderly officer to meet Montgomery and his ADC, sent another officer on a motorcycle to make sure he followed the correct route, had military provosts stationed at crossroads to direct traffic, and as he came to the regiment lined up in a large field, he arrived exactly on time. The Union Jack was broken at the masthead, Lieutenant-General Crerar met him, and the inspection began.

It went exceptionally well. Even a watery sun broke out as Montgomery spent a full hour with the troops, talking to some, watching them march past, his eyes missing nothing. After the inspection, Sherwood had arranged for a lunch in the White Hart Hotel in Lewes. Here, in a magnificent old historic room, he had arranged the tables with great care, even borrowing the hotel's best linen and silverware and flower vases. As a special attraction, and aware of 'Monty's' past service with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, he had obtained from Warwickshire a piece of old seasoned oak and had napkin rings carved from it with the initials of each officer and guest burned into it. These were to be souvenirs for all who attended. Montgomery, he wrote, 'had a special ring made in sterling silver with our regimental crest on one side and an inscription along the other side . . .'[15] A brief

regimental history was beside each plate, the last page describing the dinner itself. 'That tickled everyone,' Sherwood said.

Certainly Montgomery was impressed, and he sent Sherwood a longhand note by special despatch rider expressing his pleasure. He added: 'There is no doubt that you have a fine battalion; the men drill well and they are steady on parade; they are a first class lot of men, tough and hard, and will give a good account of themselves in battle.'[16]

The amount of time and effort that went into the inspection was not wasted, and in his letter to Evelyn he explained the reason.

> As you know this battalion has, from the beginning been considered the sort of Cinderella battalion in the division. Yesterday the men were sticking out their chests a mile as being the only battalion in the Corps which a British Army Commander has yet visited. After his very complimentary remarks to the troops, and my special order of the day, and his letter to me in the evening (which I have circulated to all ranks), their heads are so high in the air they will scarcely speak to a Cameron.
>
> Besides this . . . *Canada's Weekly* ran a series of photographs of us doing the new Battle Drill, and last week the CBC invited us to send our orchestra, band and concert party to London to broadcast over the BBC in England and later to be rebroadcast in Canada.
>
> Then, too, for the first time we were represented in the divisional finals of the Army Boxing Championships last week.
>
> You will probably be thinking what kind of a war is this . . . when a thousand men can waste time on such things and apparently have time to do everything but fight a battle. Well, it's all part of the game. Can you picture what it would be like to be running a girls' camp, with the same girls continually for two solid years, trying to keep up their morale and interest all the time, and still keep training and working and maintaining fitness for the battle which must come some day, and which will be won by spirit and morale or lost by the lack of it.[17]

Sherwood had summed it up in a nutshell, and he wrote with the experience of a veteran.

At about this time Sherwood received a long letter from Major-General V.W. Odlum, who had left the division to accept the position of Canada's high commissioner to Australia. He had heard about Sherwood's promotion and commented in passing: 'I firmly believe you will find [it] a stepping stone to other and more important things.'[18] His prediction was correct. On 1 March Sherwood was promoted to the rank of brigadier and appointed to command the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade. To be promoted from major to brigadier in

a five-month period was a remarkable leap forward and showed the confidence the senior army officials had in his abilities and potential. He was sorry to leave the South Saskatchewans. At the final parade with them 'he expressed his belief that this was one of the finest regiments that he has ever worked with and that he would always speak of it as his regiment.' As the war diarist added: 'He has been with the regiment a little over three months and in that short time he has left a mark which has been felt by all.'[19]

The journey from the Lewes area, where the South Saskatchewans were located, to Rotherfield, Sussex, where headquarters of the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade was established, was not far. Once again Sherwood found himself replacing a popular officer, Brigadier C.B. Topp. Under his command Sherwood now had the Royal Regiment of Canada, the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, and the Essex Scottish Regiment. All were from Eastern Canada, and during the next few months Sherwood made it his business to visit them constantly, to know their officers and to get some firsthand knowledge of their training and efficiency. What he saw he liked, and something of the enthusiasm he felt is obvious in the letter he wrote Evelyn about three months after he assumed command:

> We have had a busy week on training. The men are very keen and enthusiastic. The new training hours just now are 7-12 a.m. and 1-5 p.m. and three or four nights a week. I have been out all day every day and each evening but one, covering each battalion right down to companies twice each day. We have breakfast at seven, take our haversack lunch, and usually don't come back to the mess until evening for dinner ...
>
> It makes for a long day, for we are usually busy again in the evenings either watching night training or planning further programmes ...
>
> I never cease to marvel at the things these men of ours can do. Nothing seems impossible to them now. This week I have watched them for hours do things which even six or eight months ago they would have thought impossible themselves. They are hard and fit and skillful in their work. They look so tough and weather-beaten too, and there has been a good deal of muddy work in this week's training. They have been soaked to the skin and caked with mud and yet you see them, whistling their way along the narrow roads, marching miles on end in pouring rain.
>
> I still get a lump in my throat when I see men marching. You would think I would get over that after all these years, but I never have. When I watch a thousand men march past I always see their faces and their eyes, and their clothing and shoes and their armament and bearing and all the things an inspecting officer should see. But I also, always, see a thousand wives and mothers and fathers and sweethearts and kiddies shouting

> and waving at their daddies as they march, and women standing at the roadside looking so proud, yet so concerned.
>
> A thousand marching men represent so much – so many people and so many things. And it always takes me back to the days of the last war when we used to march past Currie or Byng or Rawlinson . . . before or after a battle. Our men always marched with such confidence and assurance. And they do the same today. They are a splendid lot, and I'm certainly proud to command them.[20]

When Sherwood wrote these words his brigade had just been moved to the Isle of Wight. He had attended a meeting four days earlier where he and the other brigade commanders had been told their units would undergo intensive training in combined operations. This would involve, in particular, training with the Royal Navy in various types of craft designed to land troops on a hostile and defended shore. Small-scale commando raids on the French coast had been in progress for some time. The training the 2nd Division would practise would be similar in nature but on a much larger scale. It was, in brief, to be the beginning of training for the Dieppe raid.

A great deal has been written about this raid, but it is the intention here to confine our attention to the event as it affected Sherwood. The idea of the raid originated at Combined Operations Headquarters in April 1942. The idea was to test both the technique and material that had been developed to facilitate combined operations, which would be a preliminary and essential phase in opening a Second Front. It would give future assaulting formations experience and, if successful, would raise morale at a time when war news from the front was discouraging. The target, Dieppe, was selected by the British and the plan was developed by them. Lieutenant-General Crerar, who had recently taken over the 1st Canadian Corps, was particularly anxious to see Canadian troops in action. Both the RCAF and RCN had been involved in combatting enemy forces since the war began. The army had not. When Lieutenant-General B.L. Montgomery approached the Canadian Army Commander, McNaughton, suggesting that a Canadian division be used, the idea was welcomed.[21]

During June, Sherwood's brigade was involved in various combined operations exercises. Detailed plans for the Dieppe raid were drawn up, but not until the troops were actually on board the landing craft on 2/3 July were they informed they were going into battle. Poor weather cancelled the operation, however, and the troops were returned to their camps. One can assume that Sherwood and many other Canadian officers were surprised when the operation was revived in mid-July. Not only was it revived, but Operation 'Jubilee,'

as it was called, was aimed at the same target. Once more Lieutenant-General A.G.L. McNaughton sanctioned the operation. There were some minor changes - and the change which Sherwood and others questioned was the reduction in the preliminary bombardment prior to the assault.

On 17 August, the 4th and 6th Brigades of Roberts' Division, together with the commandos, the tank regiment, and other supporting troops moved to the ports to embark in the 237 ships which would take them across the English Channel. They would be landing in five different areas, the extreme right being about ten miles from the extreme left. The attacks on either flank, timed to land at dawn, would go in half an hour earlier than the main assault on Dieppe itself, so that Sherwood's brigade, even if the plan went perfectly, would meet an alerted enemy manning the beach defences - to say nothing of the artillery which commanded a sweeping view of the beaches. The Germans, as it turned out, had no foreknowledge of the raid until part of the Canadian-British force bumped into a few German naval vessels shortly before the attack. Nevertheless, enemy forces defending the coast knew that the weather and season was ripe for a seaborne assault somewhere along the coast and were on the alert.

Sherwood had done everything he could to prepare his brigade for action. He had been given the plan for the attack 'right down to the battalion and company level.'[22] He had confidence in his staff and felt the plan had a fair chance of success. He would have preferred a heavier bombardment, but accepted the limitations other factors imposed to lighten it.[23] Satisfied that everything possible had been done, Sherwood went to sleep as his ship, an LCT (Landing Craft, Tank) plowed its way towards Dieppe. His ship, aside from carrying tanks to be landed on the beaches, would hold his Tactical Headquarters until – and if – he could get established on the beach.

The assault started on either flank. Space does not permit a description of the battle itself, but in the centre the infantry was soon pinned down to the beaches, with the result that very few infantry or tanks managed to penetrate the town itself. From the commanding heights the Germans poured a terrific volume of fire at anything that moved, and naturally, landing craft approaching the beach became special targets for every weapon within range.

As Sherwood's craft neared the shore it was fired on by machine-guns as well as by light anti-aircraft guns. It was a few minutes after 6 a.m. that it reached the beach and the first tank went down the ship's ramp. However, this tank 'bellied' in the thick shingle and blocked the ramp. The craft pulled back and made another approach, but shellfire, which had been hitting the craft, severed the cables of the ramp so

that it fell into eight feet of water. It was obvious that to land more tanks at this spot would be foolish. The commanding officer of the 14th Canadian Army Tank Regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel John Andrews, suggested another attempt be made further along the coast. Sherwood was in communication with Major-General Roberts and with his battalions on the beach, though only sporadically with the latter, as they were getting a pounding. They asked for support and Andrews wanted to get the remaining tanks on shore where they would do the most good to the infantry, who were, for the most part, pinned down by withering enemy fire.

Possibly the best description of the action was written by Sherwood to Evelyn in a letter he sent a few weeks after the event. After describing the approach to the beach, he continued:

> We first landed at Red Beach where the Essex [Scottish] composed the first wave of the main landing force. We got one tank ashore under very heavy fire but it got bogged down in the shingle and stuck there but with all its guns blazing away at the Huns in the houses in front of us. Our Engineer party, which tried to land, was mowed down by machine-gun fire and our craft came under very heavy shell and mortar fire. So Johnny Andrews said he could not land any more tanks there and asked if we could land further west along the beach on White Beach, where we had already landed our first flight of tanks.
>
> To this [suggestion] I agreed, so we pulled off and turned west to go into White Beach, opposite the Casino. The craft was under quite heavy fire but we were having few casualties and I was in good wireless communication with the Essex and the RHLI [Royal Hamilton Light Infantry] and the Force Command Ship, and had good control of the battle on my sector except that I had not had a word at all from the Royals [The Royal Regiment of Canada][24] who had landed earlier a mile or so to the east of the town on another beach.
>
> I was, of course, very busy with the battle giving targets for the air [forces] to bomb or smoke, getting the naval fire on to a position, and passing back information to the Force Ship. Then they came and told me the craft was heading for Green Beach (the South Saskatchewan Beach) instead of White Beach. So I went up to the bridge and got that straightened out with the naval commander. We got headed in again for White Beach and ready for our second touch down. I had learned that our tanks were unable to get through the road blocks as the roadblock demolition parties had been shot down on landing. So Col. McTavish [the senior engineer officer] had agreed to use men and explosives which he had [on the LCT] and we would have another try at the roadblocks. As we approached White Beach, we really did come under fire of all kinds.

But we kept on going on to the shore. Johnnie Andrews drove off in his command tank and just as he did so they shot away his water-proofing and he sank with only his turret showing above water.[35] He baled out and swam to a small landing craft and was taken aboard but, in a few minutes, it was set afire and we did not see him again.

Meanwhile we were under a regular hail of fire of all kinds from in front and from the headlands on either side. They shot away the ramp in front so that we could not land any more vehicles or get ashore, they disabled the engines and finally the steering gear of our craft so we could not move in or out, and twice they shot away the aerials from my wireless set which ran up about six feet over our heads and the boys replaced them twice so that we kept touch throughout.

Then the skipper ordered 'abandon ship' and we were all supposed to jump into the water and set out swimming the sixty miles back, I suppose, but the idea didn't appeal to me, particularly as I had good communication still and was able to give supporting fire to my units as they requested it and I had control of the tanks on shore through the remaining control tank which was still with me and which was in touch with the tank squadrons ashore.

It was as we lay there that we suffered our very heavy casualties. Col. McTavish was killed as was Captain Insinger, the Intelligence Officer and Murray Fairweather, my Liaison Officer, the crew of my pom-pom gun. My two signallers were wounded but carried on. I called for someone from the Engineers to see if they could get the [ship's] engines going and they, with two naval chaps and my Staff Captain [Garneau] succeeded in getting one engine going.

We got some steering gear rigged up too and after what seemed like a couple of weeks we got off shore a bit and out of the worst of the fire. The dive bombers took an odd crack at us too but our planes looked after them in short order. It was while we were lying up, trying to get our engines going, that I was hit. They put me on a stretcher near the [wireless] set and I was still able to take an interest in the proceedings. Finally, after we had got through the order for the withdrawal to our units and to the tanks, we pulled back out to the boat pool. A naval craft came alongside and the wounded were transferred to it. Then they decided to transfer everyone to the naval craft as it looked as if our LCT was going to sink. They tell me now that we had thirty-seven direct hits on the craft and she looked a bit like a sieve. However, they finally took her in tow and brought her back to England.

I was wounded about nine thirty and we finally started back to England about two o'clock and arrived safely at an English port about nine thirty at night. It was a lovely, mild August afternoon and I lay on the deck on a stretcher with the odd shot of morphia and frequent tea and

> cigarettes ... The Luftwaffe tried to take the odd peck at us on the way back but without much success. They finally hoisted my stretcher off onto the dock about eleven and by midnight I was rolling along in an ambulance train towards this place [No. 7 Canadian General Hospital] where we arrived at seven the following morning. My turn in the operating room came that evening ...[26]

It was probably the most incredible day Sherwood had ever spent in his life. It is interesting to note that among those Sherwood recommended for awards on board his craft, he first listed the four signallers who helped keep open essential communications. Major Paul Garneau, his staff captain, came in for high praise, as did the young naval sub-lieutenant who remained on board after the skipper ordered the 'abandon ship.' He also called the divisional commander's attention to Major Ben Cunningham, his brigade major, in LST 10 operating nearby. Indeed, the story of those on board LST 8 between five in the morning and two in the afternoon has enough drama and danger to fill a book. For his own 'splendid leadership and the highest kind of personal courage,' 'his soldierly handling of a difficult situation and cheerful, confident and effective leadership under stress,' Sherwood was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.[27]

The news of the Dieppe raid made headlines in all the Canadian newspapers. In Vancouver, of course, Sherwood's name was mentioned prominently in all the articles, and while still in hospital he received a flood of mail from his numerous friends and acquaintances. He even had a letter from his batman, who had served under him during the Great War. One very touching letter which he received, and which he kept, came from a private in the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry. It read: 'I, Pte. Cecil H. Dyke, wish to express to you my best wishes for the gallant way you took us all through the raid on Dieppe ... and pray for your speedy recovery. Sir, we are all proud of you and looking for that day to come when one of the best brigadiers, such as you have been, will be able to lead the RHLI on to victory. Hold your chin up, keep smiling and the best of luck to you.'[28]

Sherwood had been hit by a piece of shrapnel in the upper part of the upper right arm, which shattered the bone. It was a painful injury, and for some time small fragments of bone would come to the surface and have to be removed. Naturally he had to give up the command of his brigade and, as soon as possible, he was sent back to Canada where he came under further care and treatment by Dr. W.G. Penfield of the Montreal Neurological Institute. He was to regain almost complete control of his arm.

Sherwood arrived back in Vancouver by Trans Canada Airlines on

20 November. Evelyn and the two girls were there to meet him, and never did he receive a warmer welcome. The press and photographers were there as well, anxious to ask questions, but once that was over the Letts went home – Evelyn happy with the thought that not only was he home, but he had four months' sick leave.

In Vancouver, Sherwood was swamped with invitations. The Vancouver Club members invited him to a club dinner where he gave a talk on Dieppe, his friends in the Round Table wanted to hear all about it, his partners in his law firm wanted to find out if he would be returning to practice, and there were standing invitations to dinner from a host of friends. He found Vancouver bustling with activity. Since the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor, thousands of troops had poured into the province to defend the Pacific Coast. Major-General G.R. Pearkes had arrived from England to take over Pacific Command only a short time before Sherwood returned. What he felt about this concentration of troops, anti-aircraft guns defending the city, and practice air-raid precautions is not on record, but one can imagine what he thought. He found there was some rationing in Canada since he left – butter, gasoline, liquor – but compared to Britain it was hardly noticeable. Canada was still a land of plenty, and with the war economy getting into high gear, it reminded him of the boom years of the late 1920s.

Every day Sherwood exercised to improve his arm. There were visits to the hospital for therapy and additional work to be done at home. He wanted to regain his medical 'A' category which he would need to get back overseas. He knew that both McNaughton and Roberts wanted him back, but even if he reached only 'B' category, he felt, as he wrote to Major-General Odlum, 'it is most likely that Ken Stuart and Letson would want to use me here, as they have already indicated.'[29]

There were a number of senior officers who wanted Sherwood, and for the next year and a half he spent most of his time in Ottawa as Deputy Chief of the General Staff. In this position he was mainly concerned with training, and this, in turn, sometimes brought him out to British Columbia, where there was a large concentration of troops. By 1943 the course of the war began to turn in favour of the Allies. Rommel was defeated in North Africa, the submarine menace lessened to some extent, the Japanese threat to India had been turned back, and that summer, British, American, and Canadian troops invaded Sicily and Italy. In Russia, the German forces were being ground down in bitterly contested battles. Among the Western Allies preliminary plans were being made for an invasion of France, and many of the bitter lessons learned at Dieppe were being translated into new assault techniques and landing craft.

In British Columbia, as we have seen, the initial fear of invasion or raids by the Japanese resulted in a tremendous buildup of forces on the Pacific Coast. This fear was heightened by the occupation of two of the Aleutian Islands, Attu and Kiska, by Japanese forces in June 1942. By June 1943, Major-General Pearkes had about 35,000 troops under his command, and he was doing his utmost to train them for offensive operations. Early in 1943 the Americans launched an attack to retake Attu, and in a brief but bitter battle, the Japanese were overwhelmed late in May.

The next target was Kiska. Pearkes, among others, was anxious to have Canadians participate, and the Americans were happy to include a Canadian brigade in the assault. An agreement to launch a combined American-Canadian assault was agreed upon in June, and training at the Combined Operations Training School at Courtenay was started. There were few, if any, senior officers in Canada who had as much experience in combined operations as did Sherwood. He became the liaison officer between Ottawa and Vancouver and lent his experience to the planning staff.[30] From June until mid-August, when the attack went in, Sherwood was involved in Operation 'Greenlight,' doing what he could to ensure that the 5,000 Canadian troops which were to assault Kiska had the benefit of all the advice he could offer. As it happened, when the troops landed they found the Japanese had left the island, and it was occupied without a battle.

As 1943 came to an end, Sherwood began to fret about returning overseas. It was obvious that an invasion of France must come soon, and he wanted to be there leading his brigade. Finally, in January 1944, he was informed he would be returning to England in the following month. This time he flew over the Atlantic. After a few days' rest, he went to the headquarters of the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade where, on 27 February, he took over its command from Brigadier J.E. Sager.

Sherwood found numerous changes in the brigade and the division. The new GOC of the division was Major-General Charles Foulkes, and all of the brigade commanders were experienced but new. His former brigade major, D.G. Cunningham, was himself now commanding a brigade in the 3rd Division. The very heavy losses suffered at Dieppe had resulted in many changes among the officers in the three battalions of his brigade. One of the first things Sherwood did was to become well acquainted with the new commanding officers and to make sure their battalions were up to his standard of efficiency.

Sherwood's first four months with the brigade were extremely busy. There was one exercise after another as the entire division was tested and retested in field manoeuvres to prepare for coming operations. There was no doubt an invasion of France would come during the

summer, but when and where were tightly held secrets. In between field manoeuvres there were inspections - by Montgomery, King George VI, and Eisenhower. New equipment came to the brigade with less effort than before, and in the spring there was a tremendous buildup in Southern England as the assault divisions began to concentrate for a cross-channel attack.

In the midst of this training in mid-May, Sherwood received an invitation to meet the prime minister of Canada, who was visiting London. Sherwood probably knew the reason for it. He had been in England for less than three weeks when he received a telegram from the Minister of Justice, channelled through the highest military authorities, enquiring if he would accept an appointment as a judge of the Supreme Court of Canada. It was a tremendous temptation in many ways, and somewhat unusual. As his friend, the Honourable Ian MacKenzie put it (and MacKenzie admitted that he 'did have something to do with the recommendation'), 'it will always be a great honour to have been invited from the battlefield to the Supreme Court of Canada. It has never happened before in Canada as far as I know.'[31] Sherwood had considered the contents of the telegram for several days before he replied as follows: 'I shall be obliged if the Hon. Minister of National Defence would be kind enough to convey my respects to the Hon. Minister of Justice and assure him that I am deeply appreciative of the great honour accorded to me by his request. After careful consideration, however, I beg leave to decline.'[32]

When Prime Minister Mackenzie King met him on 19 May, he once again approached Sherwood to take up the appointment. With the knowledge that the invasion was imminent, and with his strong sense of duty, Sherwood once more declined. 'The reasons which you mention for continuing on active service,' the prime minister wrote later, 'must, I believe, be conclusive.'[33] Sherwood wrote Evelyn about the offer, and she, as usual, supported his decision. As she wrote in part: 'I knew you would have already made your decision. Whatever you decide is all right with me ... So far as prestige for myself is concerned - no matter what career you choose, you will always make for your wife a position quite adequate for any ambitions I might have.'[34] Her reply must have warmed his heart, especially as he knew she would have been delighted to have him home and out of danger.

The Allied attack on the beaches of Normandy began on 6 June. It was a massive assault. Some 5,000 ships and vessels crossed the English Channel at night, two divisions of airborne troops landed just after midnight, and in the early morning hours, the German defenders were pounded by bombers and a torrent of artillery and rocket fire. The mistakes made at Dieppe were not repeated, and, indeed, liter-

ally thousands of lives were saved on the Normandy beaches as a result of the lessons learned at Dieppe.

It was several weeks before the 2nd Division moved to France. Sherwood left his brigade in Kent to go over in an advance party. As he wrote Evelyn, it was 'quite a thrill to see the coast of France again and not be met with a withering fire as on the last occasion.'[35] In Normandy, Sherwood was busy absorbing every bit of information he could, spending some time with Brigadier 'Ben' Cunningham, whose Highland Brigade had been involved in hard fighting since 7 June. It was not until 7 July that Sherwood's own Brigade Headquarters arrived, and a few days later Sherwood and the other senior officers of the division were called together for General Montgomery's briefing on present operations. 'Monty' was in good spirits, as Caen had just been captured. 'I have never in my life met a man who inspires greater confidence than he does,' Sherwood wrote. 'He is certainly a great little chap. He made a point of seeing me afterwards for a personal chat, and enquired about my arm, etc.'[36]

With Caen in his grasp, Montgomery gave orders to seize Vaucelles and the open territory beyond the Orne River in order to launch his armoured strike south to enlarge the lodgement area. At the moment troops were crammed for space. The Canadian Corps was to play a major role in Operation 'Atlantic,' as it was called. Sherwood's brigade, on the extreme right of the Canadian attack, had the initial task of capturing Louvigny, a village in the Orne River valley overlooked by German positions on high ground. Sherwood planned his first attack with care. There would be good support from the artillery, heavy mortars, and a squadron of tanks. The initial attack by the Royal Regiment of Canada was made at six in the evening, and after an initial advance over open wheat fields, it ran into hard resistance as it closed in on the village. As the attack slowed and communications began to break down, Sherwood went forward to assess the situation. It was about ten in the evening when he was wounded and the liaison officer with him was killed.[37] The Royals, Sherwood would be pleased to learn, captured their objective the following day. However, he had collected a 'Blighty,' a shrapnel wound in the leg which resulted in his being sent back to a hospital in England for treatment and recuperation.

This time the wound was not as bad as the one he had received at Dieppe. 'No trip to the operating room, no sleepless and painful nights, no plaster casts,' he wrote. 'Just sleep and rest . . . '[38] A few days later, he added:

> No word yet as to what they intend to do with me once I get out of here [No. 11 Canadian General Hospital] . . . No doubt they want me back in

> France as they tell me CMHQ [Canadian Military Headquarters] keeps phoning here every day to see how I am getting along. But I have not made any decision myself yet and quite possibly it won't be my decision which will settle the matter. However, I am not worrying at all and I hope you will not. Whatever happens will be all right.[39]

As it turned out, Sherwood did not return to France. He had had letters from Neil Hossie, now the senior partner in his law firm, urging him to return to help share the growing burden there. He felt, too, that having led his brigade into action and having been twice wounded he 'could quite honorably afford to let some of the others take a crack at it now.' If he was offered the command of a division, that would throw a different light on matters, 'I should probably go back willingly and take it, for I am quite confident I could command one in action now as well as anyone who is doing it.' However, there was another consideration. 'I think you and the scamps deserve a break too,' he wrote Evelyn, 'and as time goes on, the strain on you does not become any less by my going back as a brigadier.'[40]

By August, Sherwood had recovered sufficiently so that he could travel, and on the twenty-fourth he was flown back to Canada. In Vancouver, while posted to No. XI District Depot, he was given several months' sick leave. It was while he was here that he had word his name was among those mentioned in despatches for his action in Normandy, and, more important, he had been awarded the CBE.[41] On 3 February 1945, he was discharged as medically unfit and placed on the Reserve of Active Officers, General List.

This did not mean he cut his ties with the army. As early as 1936 he had been an official British Columbian delegate to the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps. He became its vice-president in 1937, and at the first annual meeting after the Second World War, he was elected president. He later became Honorary Colonel Commandant of the Corps from 1948 to 1956. Also, as we shall see, he was to be asked to perform special tasks by the federal government relating to military affairs.

Of the numerous letters Sherwood received upon his award of the CBE and his retirement, there was one from the former Minister of National Defence, the Honourable J.L. Ralston, which nicely sums up his army career. He wrote:

> You can feel as great a glow of satisfaction as any man in the army on the record you leave behind you for actual fighting, and also for selfless devotion to the job at hand . . . Really, I think you have had an amazing career in this war, to say nothing of your achievements in the last one.
>
> You were at Dieppe, seriously wounded, regained sufficient recovery

to have had a crack at training in Canada. Your background of experience in England ... and your organizing ability made that assignment a genuine success.

When the opportunity came, and even with incomplete recovery, you grasped the chance to get back to your old job at the front ... and got the warmest of welcomes there from your troops. You went to France ... and did another chore there and it was a good one. You stuck it until the medical people drove you out.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your work and I count it a general privilege and a great good fortune to have had you as a co-worker and, above all, as a friend.[42]

It was a nice tribute – and well deserved. A little over two months after it was written, the war in Europe ended.

NOTES

1 Letter, the Hon. Mr. Justice A.B.B. Carrothers to author, 26 Oct. 1989.
2 Ibid.
3 Transcribed taped childhood memories of Mrs. Frances Hale, July 1990.
4 'Notes on Married Life, 1928-1940,' Mrs. S. Lett, in letter to author, June 1990.
5 Ibid.
6 Mrs. Hale's childhood memories, 14.
7 Colonel C.P. Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War*, Vol. 1, *Six Years of War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer 1957), 235.
8 Letter, Lt.-Col. S. Lett to his wife, n.d. This letter is in the possession of Mrs. Sherwood Lett.
9 Ibid.
10 Letter, Lt.-Col. S. Lett to his wife, 23 Nov. 1941. During this period a number of over-age officers, including Odlum, were being transferred to less demanding positions.
11 Ibid.
12 During this time he received a letter from his old friend, Charles A. Banks, who was in charge of the London Office of the Department of Munitions and Supplies. He wanted Sherwood as his assistant or deputy, but Sherwood preferred to remain where he was. (Vancouver City Archives, Lett Collection, Additional Manuscript No. 361, Vol. 3, File 3, Banks to Lett, 19 Dec. 1941.)
13 Letter, Lt.-Col. Lett to his wife, 4 Jan. 1942.
14 Ibid., 25 Jan. 1942. A few days later he chided Evelyn: 'Please note this regiment is *South* Saskatchewan Regiment, not Southern. Terrible when

the CO's wife sends a letter with the wrong name!' (Ibid., 1 Feb. 1942.)

15 Ibid., 22 Feb. 1942.

16 Ibid., Appendix, Montgomery to Lett, same date. It should be noted that Montgomery fought in the Great War with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, which was affiliated with the South Saskatchewan Regiment. When he was made aware of this during an informal visit to the unit on 28 January, he expressed a desire to make a formal visit.

17 Ibid.

18 National Archives of Canada, RG30, E300, Vol. 7, letter, Odlum to Lett, 2 Feb. 1942.

19 National Archives of Canada, RG24, Vol. 15, 261, War Diary, the South Saskatchewan Regiment, 2 Mar. 1942. Lett was replaced by Lt.-Col. C.C.I. Merritt three weeks later. By coincidence, Merritt was also a Vancouver lawyer.

20 Letter, Lett to his wife, 24 May 1942. Sherwood was also impressed with his brigade major, Major D.G. Cunningham, whom he found extremely helpful. Cunningham was later promoted and commanded a brigade in Normandy.

21 The GOC, 1st Canadian Infantry Division, Maj.-Gen. G.R. Pearkes, let it be known that he did not favour the plan, and, although it was the 'senior' division, it was passed over in favour of the 2nd Division.

22 National Archives, MG30, E507, 'Transcript of Interview with Brigadier S. Lett re the Dieppe Raid.'

23 Basically, higher authorities feared it would kill too many French civilians and, by knocking down buildings, would obstruct passage of the tanks through the town.

24 The Royals were hard hit from the outset and suffered more casualties than any other assault unit. Lack of communication, and therefore intelligence, was to play a major role in the decisions made by Major-General Roberts.

25 According to Maj. M.E.P. Garneau, a shell broke the remaining chain holding up the ramp, which fell and jammed in the sand. The tank left just about this time. The craft was not in sufficiently shallow water for it to move. Andrews was killed on the beach.

26 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 20 Sept. 1942.

27 He was presented his DSO at Buckingham Palace on 27 October 1942.

28 Vancouver City Archives, Lett Collection, Dieppe File, letter, Dyke to Lett, n.d.

29 National Archives, MG30, E300, Vol. 7, letter, Lett to Odlum, 8 Dec. 1942. Odlum had suggested to Lett several positions he might be interested in. Lt.-Gen. K. Stuart was Chief of the General Staff and Maj.-Gen. H.F.G. Letson, an old UBC friend of Sherwood's, was the Adjutant-General.

30 R.H. Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery* (Vancouver: UBC Press 1977), 185-8.
31 Letter, MacKenzie to Lett, 6 Apr. 1944. MacKenzie, a Liberal MP from Vancouver, was Minister of Pensions and National Health at the time.
32 Memorandum, Lett to Major-General in charge of Administration, Canadian Military Headquarters, London, 21 Mar. 1944.
33 Letter, W.L.M. King to Lett, 20 June 1944.
34 Letter, Evelyn to Sherwood, 10 June 1944. It is interesting to note that Sherwood's salary as a brigadier was about $5,500 per annum. As a judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, his salary would have been more than double that amount.
35 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 24 June 1944.
36 Ibid., 10 July 1944.
37 See D.J. Goodspeed, *Battle Royal: A History of the Royal Regiment of Canada, 1862-1962* (Brampton: published by the Regiment, 1962), 422, and National Archives of Canada, RG24, Vol. 14,092, War Diary, 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade, July 1944.
38 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 22 July 1944.
39 Ibid., 25 July 1944.
40 Ibid., 26 July 1944.
41 Commander of the Order of the British Empire.
42 Letter, Ralston to Lett, 27 Feb. 1945.

CHAPTER NINE

Back in Harness

The old firm was happy to see Sherwood return to the office. The wartime years had taken their toll. The senior partner, E.P. Davis, had died only a few months before Sherwood left early in 1940, and the second senior partner, John Pugh, died later in the year. Three new associates had been taken into the law firm in 1940, but all three had joined the armed forces. Altogether about a dozen men had left the firm to enlist in one of the services, and of these, five were killed in action.

Once again Sherwood soon found himself with all the legal work he could possibly manage. He did a lot of work for Leon Koerner, who had escaped from Czechoslovakia in 1938 and had come to Vancouver in 1939. He established the Alaska Pine Co., a thriving lumber enterprise which flourished during and after the war. The Letts and the Koerners were to become very warm friends. In the post-war period he renewed his contacts with many large corporate clients he had served before he joined the army, and many people whom he knew in the army came to him to seek his advice. For example, Odlum, Brown and Co. had been a partnership before the war, but W. 'Tom' Brown now wanted it incorporated. Sherwood had known Odlum for over two decades. He had met Tom Brown in the 1920s when he was a Boy Scout, helped him when he returned from Oxford after his Rhodes Scholarship had ended, and had welcomed him into the Irish Fusiliers as a young officer.

His abilities as an expert in corporate law brought new clients to the firm as the Canadian economy began to surge ahead. In 1949, for example, Sherwood was called in by the BC Telephone Company to lead a team of lawyers for the first of three rate applications to the Board of Transport Commissioners of Canada. There had been no such applications since the 1930s. The five-cent telephone call, like the

five-cent chocolate bar, was on its way out. Sherwood was to represent the company on two subsequent rate applications.

Another extraordinary task he undertook was advising on the construction of the Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line in the early 1950s. 'This,' reported one of his colleagues, 'involved searching title to and acquiring rights of way and easements over occupied lands and wilderness all the way from Edmonton to Burnaby. The detailed organizations of title searches from aerial surveys involved teams of lawyers for months on end in the Land Registry offices at Kamloops and New Westminster.'[1]

Aside from plunging back into the legal business of the firm, Sherwood also accepted a number of appointments relating to the practice of law. In 1945 he was elected president of the Vancouver Bar Association, and in the same year, he was elected a Bencher of the Law Society of British Columbia. This was the governing body of the province's lawyers, and as such, had always played a major role in professional matters.

One of the matters with which the Law Society had long been concerned was the education and training of potential lawyers. Although the University of British Columbia had been in existence for thirty years, it did not have a Faculty of Law. Young British Columbians, wishing to enter the profession, had to obtain their law degrees outside the province prior to articling or, alternately, spend five years as an articling student with a law firm. Numerous lawyers had tried to improve the system, and none was more involved than Reginald H. Tupper of Bull, Housser, and Tupper. Even before Sherwood was retired from the army, he was asked by the Treasurer of the Law Society to be a member of a committee 'to expedite the establishment of a Faculty of Law' at UBC.[2] Sherwood was a member of the UBC Senate, as was Arthur Lord, so one can assume his appointment to this committee was not accidental.

There was a certain urgency about the matter as well. The war was coming to an end, and close to a million veterans would be seeking to re-establish themselves in civil life. The federal government had promised to support those seeking a university education, and there was no doubt that, among the professions, many would choose a career in law. Thus while Sherwood and Arthur Lord supported the move in Senate to establish a law faculty, both worked equally hard as benchers to promote it. It called for a lot of co-operation by many individuals, but by the time university classes began in the autumn of 1945, the first law students were enrolled. A month later, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of BC, R.H. Tupper, and Sherwood were appointed to be conjoint examiners with the faculty at UBC.[3]

During his service as a bencher, Sherwood became a member of the executive and served on just about every committee – finance, library, discipline, credentials, and reporting. It all took time, but again it was a professional duty which needed to be done. One enjoyable task he had was drafting a resolution which the society adopted, relating to a proposal to give a gold medal to the student with the highest aggregate marks in her or his final year in the Faculty of Law at UBC.[4] That done, Sherwood, who was chairman of the Gold Medal Committee, submitted a design for the medal itself.[5] The benchers found it very acceptable.

Another committee Sherwood was asked to form was one to consider ways and means to facilitate students – mostly veterans – to obtain articles. At that time, if a law firm had four or five partners, such as E.P. Davis and Co., it was considered large. With the advent of the new law school, there was a dramatic increase in the number of law students. The law library at UBC was small and had no case books. Moreover, law students in the new faculty were required to article during these early years in order to get office experience as well as to be able to use law office libraries to read cases. As one of his students recalled: 'That is how I came to article to Sherwood Lett. He and his committee would interview students and find them a lawyer who would take them under articles. The [eight] articling students at E.P. Davis and Co. outnumbered the partners.'[6] Sherwood, along with other senior lawyers in the city, was sometimes asked to lecture on his fields of expertise at the Faculty of Law.

In the years following the end of the war, Sherwood accepted a number of commissions from the federal government, which sought his advice and expertise. The first one came in 1946, when he was asked by the Minister of Defence to be chairman of a Committee to Study the Provision of Officers for Canada's Post-War Army. The question put to the committee by the Minister of National Defence, in brief, was whether or not the Royal Military College in Kingston should be reopened to cadets who would be a major source of officer material for the post-war army. The minister instructed that the committee 'should deal primarily with the qualification and standard that would be required of Officers in the Post War Active Force, and the methods whereby such qualification and standard could best be achieved.'[7] Among the committee members were Dr. J.S. Thomson, president of the University of Saskatchewan; Monsieur L'Abbe Arthur Maheux from Laval University; Brigadier S.F. Clark, Deputy Chief of the General Staff; Lieutenant-Colonel W.F. Hadley; Lieutenant-Colonel J. Douglas Watt; Dr. O.M. Solandt, and Dr. W.A. Mackintosh. All in all it was a powerful

committee representing the views of the Army, the universities, the Conference of Defence Associations, the Royal Military College Club of Canada, Defence Research, and Finance.

The meetings began on 20 May. Naturally, there were numerous points of view to consider. How large was the army to be? The first chill of the Cold War had come with the revelations of a large Soviet spy ring in Canada following the defection of Igor Gouzenko late in 1945. Canada was saddled with a huge war debt and the federal government wanted to reduce military expenses to the barest minimum, more or less returning to its pre-war attitude towards defence spending. How much money would it take to operate a revived military college? And would it not be less expensive to recruit officers from university graduates who had been with the Canadian Officers Training Corps? Did an army officer need a university degree considering the accomplishment in war by thousands of Canadian officers who had none?

Sherwood spent a busy but fascinating few days in Ottawa. The committee members represented various shades of opinion, and his task was to arrange for them to read a variety of submissions made by interested groups from all across Canada, hear their comments, summarize the consensus of their decisions, and ultimately submit a report to the Minister of Defence. After several days of intensive work in May, the committee met again in June. This time Sherwood had the pleasure of meeting his old friend, Brigadier D.G. Cunningham, who, as president of the RMC Club of Canada, made a powerful argument for continuing the military college. At the June meetings there was a parade of senior army and university officials to be heard and many submissions to be debated. Sherwood and his committee members examined both the British and American methods of training officers. They had to consider the pre-war difficulty experienced in securing an adequate supply of French-speaking officers, and whether it might be advisable to establish a military college in Quebec – and perhaps one in western Canada as well.

In a committee such as the one chaired by Sherwood, it was easy to get into discussions and arguments which went far beyond the specific problem the Honourable Douglas Abbott asked it to consider. After several days of discussion, however, the committee's work came to an end, and Sherwood wrote his report. It recommended that the Royal Military College in Kingston should be reopened, but that the cadets should be given the opportunity to obtain a university degree. It also stated that university graduation with COTC training should be another source of army officer recruitment, and that if a person had the technical, professional, or executive training and experience

required, and what was considered to be the equivalent of a university degree, then that would make him eligible for a commission as well.[8]

The Lett Committee, as it was called, ended its work in June with the submission of its report. It had set basic academic standards, which were accepted. Later recommendations to create tri-service colleges were accepted by the government, but the basic standards were not changed. Sherwood's two trips to Ottawa gave him the opportunity to meet a number of friends and relatives in the area, but the next request from the government was to take him to a part of the world he had never visited.

In the summer of 1947, Sherwood received a call from General H.D.G. Crerar. Crerar had commanded the First Canadian Army during the war. The two men had met overseas and had a warm regard for each other. Crerar told Sherwood that at the invitation of General Douglas MacArthur and Lieutenant-General H.C.H. Robertson, Commander-in-Chief, British Commonwealth Occupation Forces, Canada was to send an official party to Japan. It was to be a 'fact finding' mission. It would see the results of the occupation and secure certain information regarding Japan which might assist Prime Minister Mackenzie King and the Canadian government in formulating its policy in connection with the Canberra Conference (in September) on the Japanese Peace Settlement. It would also examine certain aspects of potential Canadian-Japanese trade and, in general, glean as much information as possible respecting military, economic, and political affairs in Japan.

Although it was Crerar who would head the small group, it was Lester Pearson who asked Sherwood if he would be a member of the mission on the two and a half weeks' visit. He jumped at the chance. The small party was flown to Japan in a converted Liberator bomber, island-hopping its way across the Pacific to start their work on 2 August. From the beginning it was a hectic pace. A few days after his arrival, Sherwood wrote his daughter: 'Our trip is so tremendous I cannot begin to describe it. Reviews of troops, luncheons, dinners, official interviews, attendance at the war trials, and numerous conferences. However we are to get two days at a resort in the mountains this weekend . . .'[9]

With the backing of the Canadian government, Crerar and his mission were given access to the highest Japanese authorities. On 8 August, for example, they met with representatives from the Japanese government at the official residence of the prime minister of Japan, Mr. T. Katayama, with about half a dozen of his ministers. Among the questions that were asked by the Canadians were what steps Japan was planning in order to curb inflation, the type of revenue the gov-

ernment intended to use, when the international rate of the yen could be fixed, what type of imports and exports between Canada and Japan could be anticipated, and whether, in the future, Japan felt its principal trade would lie more with the Asiatic or with the Western powers. The mission members were also interested in the potential rise of Japan's pre-war ultranationalism, and whether or not it would be likely that those Japanese officials, purged from the government following Japan's defeat, would remain without influence in the years to come.

Day after day the mission continued its work, and in between meetings and conferences they had the opportunity to visit various parts of the country, talk to numerous people, and see for themselves something of the ravages of war which had been inflicted on the country. The economy was operating at only thirty per cent of its pre-war level, destruction in many cities had been devastating, the once-powerful Japanese merchant marine reduced to a mere shadow, and the Japanese still so stunned with their defeat and so busy adjusting themselves to a post-war shattered economy that the political future of the country was very much in doubt.

Before returning home, Sherwood and the others on the mission had the opportunity to visit Hong Kong, and also China, where they had a meeting with Chiang Kai-shek. Finally, on 25 August, the three-man mission (Crerar, Sherwood, and a Mr. Bach from Montreal) started their homeward journey by way of Manila, Guam, Honolulu, San Francisco, and Vancouver.

One of the things that disturbed Sherwood during his visit to Hong Kong was the situation regarding the interment of Canadian soldiers who died there defending the island in December 1941. There were far too many unmarked graves, for one thing, and perhaps it reminded him of the time he went to visit his brother Heber's grave in Wales in 1918 and found it unmarked and unattended. He felt so strongly that he wrote the prime minister about the matter.[10] Sherwood's letter did get action. He was also pleased to receive a letter from both the prime minister and his old friend, Lester Pearson, now Deputy Minister of External Affairs, thanking him for his contribution to the valuable report on Japan turned in by General Crerar.[11]

When he returned to Vancouver, Sherwood was deluged with requests from service clubs to speak about his trip to Japan and to give his personal impressions. There were some groups he could talk to – the Round Table and the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, for example – where he knew the audience would be restricted and the press not present. It was not until 28 January 1948, when he spoke to the Canadian Club, that he made a more public speech and felt free

to give his own opinions on what he saw and heard on the trip. He had high praise for General MacArthur and his staff. He described the demilitarization of Japan and the attempts being made to introduce democracy into Japanese political life. The alternatives, according to Sherwood, were a return to feudalism, emperor worship, or possibly, Communism. He spoke at some length on the Japanese economy, noting the country's need to trade but commenting that at the time, 'Her currency is valueless for purchasing products abroad.'[12] To achieve democracy, stability, and a measure of hope and contentment in Japan, Sherwood felt that the coming peace treaty with Japan must be stern but realistic, one 'which will enable the people of Japan to attain a reasonable standard of life . . . and which will ensure a political and economic structure in which democracy can flourish and prosper.'[13] Sherwood was well aware of the treatment the Japanese had meted out to those they conquered, and knew full well their treatment of prisoners-of-war. Nevertheless, having seen what had happened in Europe after the harsh Treaty of Versailles, he stressed that 'vindictiveness cannot bring back the dead and vengeance is not a firm foundation for a lasting peace.'[14] Some of what he said may not have gone down well at a time when the atrocities of the Japanese were still being revealed at the war trials. At the same time, it was the speech of a statesman.

Several years later a new Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Brooke Claxton, called on Sherwood to perform another task. This time it was secret, so much so that even Sherwood's friends did not know what he was up to. In October 1953, he was requested to go to West Germany and, on behalf of the Canadian government, attend, as an observer, the hearings held by the Mixed Consultative Board (British zone) in Bonn. This Board was established by the United Kingdom High Commissioner in September 1953. The Board consisted of five members, two appointed by the Federal Republic of Germany, two by Great Britain, and the chairman designated by the High Commissioner. The Board's task was, 'without calling in question the validity of the convictions, to make recommendations for the termination or reduction of sentences, or for parole, with respect to prisoners held in the British Zone as war criminals.'[15] The members of the Board, as well as Sherwood himself as an observer, were 'required to execute an undertaking of secrecy regarding the proceedings and deliberations.'[16] Even eight years after the end of the war, memories of atrocities committed against Allied Troops were keen, and the aim was to review the sentences without the glare of publicity which might prejudice the proceedings.

The reason Sherwood was asked to attend was that two of the

eighty cases under review were cases of convictions by Canadian military courts. One was well known - Major-General Kurt Meyer, who commanded a regiment, and later, the 12th SS Panzer Division in Normandy. During the fierce fighting after D-Day, men from his division had shot and killed a number of Canadian prisoners-of-war. Meyer was tried as a war criminal, found guilty, and ordered to be executed. This sentence was revised to life imprisonment. The second prisoner was Corporal Johann Neitz. He had been charged with shooting a member of the RCAF who had parachuted into Germany when his aircraft had been disabled. Although Neitz fired two shots with intent to kill, the unarmed airman survived. Neitz was serving a life sentence.

When their sentences were re-examined, Sherwood had complete access to all the documents in both cases. Also, he sat in on the Board's deliberations. He, himself, advanced no opinions on either case. The Board recommended unanimously that, in both cases, the sentences should be reduced to fourteen years imprisonment. Sherwood also noted, in his report to the Minister of National Defence, that according to his understanding, 'if the recommendations of the Board were approved by the clemency authority, the prisoners could by good conduct earn a remission of one-third of the sentence as mitigated.'[17]

After reading the documents and listening to the Board's deliberations, and further noting that the British authorities, prior to the establishment of the Board, had reduced all life imprisonment sentences to twenty-one years, Sherwood suggested to the minister that the Canadian government should reconsider the sentences of Meyer and Neitz. 'There would appear to be little justification for different standards of punishment of war criminals,' he wrote, and added that clemency should be considered when the authorities in Ottawa made their decision. On 15 January 1954, the Minister of National Defence wrote the Governor General recommending the clemency suggested by the Board and Sherwood.[18] It was granted.

* * *

From the time he arrived home from overseas, and even while recuperating from the wound he received in his leg in Normandy, Sherwood once more became involved with the University of British Columbia. The university's president, Dr. Klinck, was on the verge of retirement after serving UBC for a quarter of a century. There was great speculation about his replacement, and among those proposed to replace him was Sherwood. But so, too, were his good friends Professor 'Fred' Soward, Dr. Henry Angus, Dr. Gordon Shrum, and others.

The gentleman selected, however, was Dr. N.A.M. MacKenzie. A veteran, lawyer, and former president of the University of New Brunswick, he was installed as president by Chancellor Eric W. Hamber in October 1944. Among those who tendered him an official welcome on behalf of the alumni association was Sherwood. The two men became fast friends. Sherwood was still a member of the University Senate, and MacKenzie probably soon realized that there were few who could match Sherwood's knowledge of the university's background.

The problems facing the university were tremendous. The government's promise to provide veterans the opportunity to obtain a university degree led to a massive influx of students, and this in turn meant the university had to find accommodation for them.[19] There was a shortage of professors, and those on staff found themselves teaching huge classes. There were demands for new courses and faculties, but with much valiant endeavour and a tremendous amount of work and innovation, the university managed to cope.

There was one very pleasant ceremony which Sherwood attended shortly after the university began its first post-war autumn term. It had decided to grant honorary doctorate degrees to ten of its most distinguished graduates, and Sherwood was among them. He was the oldest, having graduated in 1916, but close behind him were his old friends Major-General H.F.G. Letson, and Dr. Hugh L. Keenleyside, who graduated in 1919 and 1920, respectively. The group represented a mixture of the three services, together with several who served the government in non-military ways. By this time Sherwood had been appointed King's Counsel, which gave him recognition in his own profession. His honorary doctorate of laws was given not only for his distinguished war record, but for his long service to the university since he was a teenager.

Several years later the university community gave him the highest honour it could bestow – he became chancellor of the university when Eric W. Hamber stepped down from that office in 1951. Sherwood was nominated by the UBC Alumni Association, and as there were no other nominations, he assumed the highest position at the university by acclamation. As the editor of the UBC *Alumni Chronicle* put it: 'Graduates warmed to the nomination and election of a man who is held in high regard and much affection everywhere for his years of quiet and efficient service to UBC over the first quarter century and more of the University's history. It couldn't have happened to a nicer man in their unanimous opinion.'[20]

Sherwood presided as chancellor from 1951 to 1957, completing the two three-year terms which the university's constitution permitted.

The position he held was primarily ceremonial, but at the same time it carried considerable influence. He became an ex officio member of the Senate and the Board of Governors. He had been a regular elected member of both. Should he wish to attend the meetings of both it would enable him to keep a close eye on every facet of the university's development. Moreover, he could add his weight to argument or debate, voice his caution to a course of action which he felt wrong, and give his advice on a myriad of matters which came up in the course of the rapid development of the university.

The chancellor was most visible at ceremonial and social occasions. As the university's 'head of state,' he was invited to both civic and provincial functions, he attended the openings of new buildings and the laying of cornerstones, and he entertained visiting dignitaries and persons upon whom honorary degrees were to be bestowed. He could have considerable influence in attracting the business community to donate private funds to the university. Sherwood, for example, was a good friend of Leon and Thea Koerner, and indeed, as a lawyer, had set up the foundation they established. He was consulted in their donation to establish the Faculty Club and the Graduate Student Centre (Thea Koerner House). His law practice brought him in contact with many wealthy people in the city, and it is quite likely that, in his own quiet way, Sherwood would be consulted when they decided to donate considerable sums to the university.

Sherwood was particularly prominent during the pageantry attending the graduation ceremonies. In his splendid chancellor's robes, he was the central actor in admitting students and postgraduates into the ranks of their new academic status. When he became chancellor, his eldest daughter, Mary, was in her third year of studies at UBC. She had the unique opportunity of being given her degree by her own father. In fact, she graduated at the same time as President 'Larry' MacKenzie's daughter. The registrar arranged that Mary would be last in line of the students whose surname began with 'L.' MacKenzie's daughter was to be first in line of the 'M's.' As a result, both daughters came across the platform together, both were given their degrees, and both were kissed by the president and the chancellor of the university. It was a nice touch and received a round of applause from the other students attending the ceremony.

Sherwood's resumption of his successful legal career, his involvement with the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps as Honorary Colonel Commandant, his various activities as chancellor of UBC, and his wide-ranging interest in various community affairs meant that he had less time to spend with his family than he would have wished. Evelyn was busy, as usual, with her various activities, but she coped with the

additional demands Sherwood's many offices placed on her. At home there seemed to be innumerable receptions, dinners, and cocktail parties. Evelyn did much of the cooking herself, hired outside help to serve, and, of course, her two daughters helped as well. Relatives were not forgotten, and they were frequently included in the social life of the Lett family.

But active and busy as he was, Sherwood could not refuse a call to duty. In the summer of 1954, another one came from Ottawa. This time it was from Lester B. Pearson, the Minister of External Affairs. Would Sherwood be willing to represent Canada on a special mission to Vietnam? He agreed to do so, and in the next year Sherwood was to embark on one of the most hectic and interesting periods of his life.

NOTES

1 Letter, the Honourable Mr. Justice A.B.B. Carrothers to author, 6 Feb. 1990.
2 Also on the committee was his old friend, Arthur Lord. Archives, Law Society of BC, RG1, Vol. 17, Benchers minutes, 1940-4, Oct. 1944.
3 Ibid., 1945-9, Oct. 1945.
4 Ibid., May 1947.
5 Ibid., 10 Jan. 1948.
6 Carrothers, letter to author. Carrothers had fought and had been wounded in Normandy. He was to remain with the Davis firm and ultimately took over Sherwood's practice. Later he was appointed to the Court of Appeal of British Columbia.
7 Directorate of History, File 113.3M3.009 (D7): 'Report of Committee on Provision of Officers for the Canadian Post War Army,' Minutes of meeting, 20 May 1946.
8 Ibid., 'Report . . . to the Minister of National Defence.'
9 Letter, Sherwood Lett to his daughter, Mary, 6 Aug. 1947.
10 Vancouver City Archives, Add. MSS No. 361, Vol. 4, File 2, Lett to Mackenzie King, 2 Sept. 1947.
11 Ibid., King to Lett, 5 Sept. 1947, and Pearson to Lett, 10 Sept. 1947.
12 Ibid., File No. 6: 'Address to Canadian Club of Vancouver - A Mission to Japan,' 28 Jan. 1948.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Directorate of History, File 159.95 (D1): 'Report of Sherwood Lett . . . on the Proceedings of the Mixed Consultative Board (British Zone), Germany . . ., 6 Jan. 1954,' 3.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid., 6.

18 Ibid., letter (secret), the Minister of National Defence to the Governor General of Canada, 15 Jan. 1954.

19 In the April 1945 issue of the UBC *Alumni Chronicle*, Sherwood wrote an article entitled 'When You Come Home.' It gave sound advice to graduates and undergraduates in the service who planned to return to academic work.

20 UBC *Alumni Chronicle*, March 1951, 7. Sherwood was the first UBC graduate to hold that office.

CHAPTER TEN

Canadian Commissioner in Vietnam

With the surrender of Japan in August 1945, most people felt that after six years of war, the world would return to its once peaceful state. The establishment of the United Nations was looked upon as an organization which would resolve potential armed conflict. The United States now possessed a nuclear weapon whose awesome power was so massive that warfare, surely, must be looked upon as obsolete. The dictators had been defeated and it was felt that the Allies, with their dominating power, would concentrate on disarming their forces and rebuilding their war-warped economies.

Unfortunately, these wishes and expectations were not fully realized. Despite its great wartime losses the Soviet Union emerged as one of the dominant powers in the world. It used this power to impose Communist control over much of Europe and to support pro-Communist movements overseas. In 1949 it, too, acquired nuclear weapons. Fearing for their safety a number of West European countries, together with the United States and Canada, united to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The Soviet Union responded by forming the Warsaw Pact. The 'Cold War,' as it came to be known, was well under way, and once more, Europe was rearming.

Elsewhere, the war's end had brought tremendous changes. Japan had overrun great parts of the British, French, and Dutch empires. For centuries these European powers had controlled the lives of millions of Asiatic people. The Japanese had shown them that the Europeans were no longer supreme, and latent nationalism was encouraged in former colonies. This desire to be free of domination burned with an even higher flame once the Japanese were defeated. Adding to the unrest and conflict in the Far East was the great power struggle in China, which resulted in the mainland of China falling under Communist rule. In Malaya the British were fighting to suppress the Com-

munist guerrillas. Korea, divided into a pro-Communist north and pro-American south, became a powder-keg which exploded in 1950. Open warfare developed on a major scale for over two years, and an agreement to begin peace talks was not reached until 1953. Further south the Dutch had been forced to release their hold on Indonesia, while in Indochina the French had been engaged for years in a long struggle to maintain their former control over Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

France's attempt to keep its control over Indochina, and in particular over Vietnam, was extremely costly. Supported by Communist China and the Soviet Union, and led by General Vo Nguyen Giap, the military forces of North Vietnam waged an unceasing war against French troops. It was basically a struggle for independence, which gained momentum at the end of the war and continued for nine years. In 1950 Communist China and the Soviet Union recognized the Vietminh regime and its political leader, Ho Chi-Minh, an avowed Communist. The United States and Great Britain recognized Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos as 'Associated States within the French Union.' North Vietnamese guerrilla attacks against the French resulted ultimately in a major victory for General Giap at Dienbienphu. Even while the attack on this French stronghold was taking place, France agreed to negotiate peace talks at Geneva early in 1954. After a great deal of wrangling at Geneva, representatives from the Western powers, the Soviet Union, China, and the countries involved, an agreement was reached on an armistice in Indochina which would divide Vietnam at the 17th parallel. To supervise the armistice and to make sure its provisions were carried out, India, Poland, and Canada were asked to serve on the International Supervisory Commission, which the Geneva Conference established late in July. Canada accepted primarily because it felt that 'if the military and political situation, as it was [in May 1954] had continued it would have resulted within a fairly short time either in a much more general and serious war or in the extension of Vietminh control over the whole of Indochina.'[1]

There was a limit set upon the time when the articles of the agreement should be completed, so the three supervisory nations had to act fairly quickly. The most important area to be supervised was Vietnam. Shortly after Canada agreed to accept the task as one of the mediators, Sherwood was asked if he would accept the appointment as the Canadian representative. Why he was chosen is not recorded in his files, but he was a good friend of Ralph Campney, the Minister of National Defence; he was a long time acquaintance of Lester Pearson, the Minister of External Affairs, and he was known to the Prime Minister, Mr. Louis St. Laurent. His military background could be

valuable and his legal experience would be another benefit. Moreover, Sherwood felt it was a call to duty – and that was something he could never refuse.

The official letter appointing him commissioner was dated 24 August. In it Pearson stated that the commission had started its work at Hanoi on 11 August. 'It would be appreciated,' Pearson wrote, 'if you would proceed to Hanoi as soon as possible to take up your duties.' He added:

> The task you will be undertaking on behalf of Canada of participating in the supervision of the cease fire in Vietnam, will be an extremely important and difficult one, and one for which there are no precedents in Canadian experience to guide you. You may rest assured, however, that you can count on the full cooperation and assistance of this Department. We will provide you with the best military and civilian advisers available, as well as the best possible facilities to enable you to do your task effectively.[2]

Pearson advised Sherwood that the function of the supervisory commissions, as set out in the agreement, involved supervision, observation, inspection, and investigation. These functions were particularly related to the movement of armed forces, the introduction into the country of military personnel, arms, and war material, the release of prisoners and civilian internees, the free movement of people, and the demarcation of lines between the regrouping areas and the demilitarized zone. He stressed that 'the Commission's functions are supervisory, judicial, and mediatory.' It made recommendations to the parties of the agreement, but it had no power to enforce them. He added that 'it will be necessary for you to act on your own independent judgement in relation to most disputes which come before the Commission, since the evidence would be available only to you.' It was necessary 'at all times ... to maintain an attitude of judicial impartiality in the performance of [your] duties,' Pearson wrote, and added that this might be made easier since Canada had 'no particular axe to grind in Southeast Asia.'

Pearson listed four main objectives of Canadian policy in Southeast Asia. The first was the maintenance of peace. The second was to encourage the development of the Southeast Asia Defence Organization as a shield against further Chinese Communist aggression in the area. The third was to contribute to the economic and social strengthening of the countries in the area in order to eliminate the conditions which were a seedbed for communism. He added that despite the sympathy felt for France and its long struggle against the

Vietminh, it seemed highly unlikely 'that the shoring up of France's remaining foothold in Indochina, particularly by means of external military aid, will do anything to halt - and may do something to assist - the extension of Communist influence.'[3]

Pearson advised Sherwood about what he might expect to find when dealing with both the Indian and Polish representatives on the commission. Relations between Canada and India were extremely good. The Indian representative would be chairman of the commission, and Sherwood's relations with him would be of the 'utmost importance.' India was pursuing a policy of non-alignment in the Cold War between East and West. It favoured independence for former colonies, and it was 'inclined to accept Communist China's assurances of good will more readily than we are.' At informal meetings Pearson thought Sherwood might have the opportunity to suggest to the Indian representative, whose country was suspicious of the motives of the United States, 'that Senator McCarthy and Hollywood are not the only manifestations of the American way of life.'[4] As for the Polish representative, Sherwood should expect him to act 'in the interests of the USSR, Communist China, and the Vietminh, probably in that order.' He might expect the Polish representative to 'put on a devious performance on the Commission [and] combine a show of cooperativeness with varying degrees of obstruction, deceit and bad faith.'[5] Nevertheless, he advised Sherwood to try to establish good working conditions with him, avoid friction if possible, and shrug off probable abusive language.

There were nine pages of instructions and advice, but Pearson went to some pains to point out that Sherwood would be expected to make his own decisions. Ottawa expected to be informed on major matters, but otherwise he was on his own. He ended by extending his best wishes on behalf of the government and added his own personal gratitude 'for the spirit of service to your country and to peace which has inspired you to undertake its leadership.'[6] It was this deep-seated spirit that was the major reason for Sherwood to agree to be separated from Evelyn for almost a year.

There was a tremendous amount to be done. Arrangements had to be made at the firm to transfer the work he was doing for his clients to Brian Carrothers. His various duties as chancellor would have to be assumed by the vice-chancellor while he was away. He had to be inoculated for various tropical diseases and also had to get a tropical wardrobe. He was advised to bring with him a good supply of personal necessities, ranging from mosquito repellant to shaving cologne, and further, to make arrangements to have liquor and cigarettes sent out. From Undersecretary of State for External Affairs, John

Holmes, he received a variety of documents to read, including biographical notes on Mr. Przemyslau Ogrodzinski, the Polish commissioner, and Mr. Manilal Jagdish Desai, the Indian commissioner. Sherwood also read up on everything he could about Indochina and finally, on 12 October, started on a journey which would take him to the other side of the world.

The first stop was Ottawa. Here he spent three days being briefed by senior officials from both External Affairs and Defence. In the Canadian commission there would be more personnel from the latter than the former, and, indeed, many were already in Vietnam getting established for their roles. Among others he met Pearson, John Holmes, General Foulkes (Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff), and A.R. Menzies of the Far Eastern Division. A highlight, perhaps, was a luncheon given in Sherwood's honour by Pearson, which the Prime Minister attended. 'St. Laurent,' Sherwood wrote in his diary, 'asked me privately to thank Mrs. Lett on his behalf and on Canada's behalf for letting me take on this job and be separated from her.'[7]

A few days later Sherwood arrived in London. Here he met Norman Robertson, the Canadian High Commissioner who was a former Vancouverite, UBC graduate, and student at Oxford. He took Sherwood to meet several men from the British Foreign Office who were at the Geneva Conference and other top-ranking officials who were familiar with Indochina and some of its leaders. He also had a long talk with General Sir John Harding, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, who had served in the Far East and was pessimistic about the outcome of events in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. As Sherwood noted:

> He [Harding] does not see how the Commission can prevent the Communists from using terror, intimidation and all sorts of pressure upon the people prior to elections.
>
> The important thing is that the Geneva pact gives the Communists an opportunity to conserve and re-group their forces, re-train them and prepare them for further efforts in S.E. Asia, particularly against Siam, Burma and on towards Singapore.
>
> I gathered he considered the work of the Commission as one in which we should salvage what we can out of a bad mess. He wished me luck but was not at all optimistic that the results would be anything more than the Communists taking over the whole of the three countries.[8]

Sherwood's half hour talk with Sir John was open and frank, but it probably did little to cheer him up. Nevertheless, it was better to have this sober estimate than to have false expectations.

On the following day Sherwood was on the BOAC flight to Delhi. In

his brief stay there he met with several members of the Indian Department of External Affairs, who mentioned their doubts about those presently in power in South Vietnam. From Delhi he flew to Calcutta and then to Saigon, where he met and was briefed by some members of his military staff who had arrived earlier. He also met R.M. MacDonnell who had been acting in Sherwood's place on the commission until his arrival. They had a lot to discuss, but Sherwood also had long talks with the British and American ambassadors in Saigon as well as with various others. Finally, on 29 October, he flew to Hanoi in North Vietnam where the main headquarters of the supervisory commission were located. As he wrote Evelyn that evening:

> The reception here was terrific. At the airport all the local Commission members and their suites were there to welcome me as I stepped from the plane including Maj.-Gen. Megill, Marcel Cadieux, Ray Crepault, and the Poles, Indians, etc.
>
> But as we drove into the city, the streets were strung with red banners and red flags, and lined with cheering crowds of people. They sang and clapped and saluted me and cheered as my white car, complete with flags, drove down the streets to the Metropole Hotel.
>
> However, they mistook me for the Russian ambassador whose plane was due a half hour later from Moscow and for whom the whole show had been laid on. I hope he doesn't mind my stealing his acclaim.[9]

Sherwood was in Hanoi only a short time when he realized that one of the first things he had to do was to improve the relationship between the two groups which, together, made up the Canadian commission – that is, the diplomatic and the military. As one member of the group later recalled:

> Lett brought reason and . . . a very strong sense of discipline to the work of the delegation which was lacking when he arrived. He was kind to, and considerate of, the military staff. He was able to cement relationships between the members of the Department of National Defence and . . . the Department of External Affairs . . . This was no easy task because there was a wide disparity between the living conditions of the diplomatic staff living in Hanoi and Saigon, and the military members of the Fixed and Mobile Teams. In many cases they lived in extremely primitive conditions, sometimes clearings in the jungle or in small villages in bamboo huts. There was also, at that time, a great disparity in salary ranges between the military people and the members of External Affairs . . . particularly in diplomatic allowances.[10]

These administrative matters were attended to during Sherwood's first few months on the job. There is no doubt that the Canadian military group, which was by far the largest section of his total staff, were more than pleased to have a former brigadier as their new leader.

Sherwood's first task was to meet and to be briefed by his political and military advisers who had been in Vietnam since August. They were the people who had met the initial difficulties in attempting to carry out the terms of the Geneva Agreement. Although Canada's role in Vietnam has been described elsewhere[11] and need not be repeated here, the way the International Supervisory Commission operated determined the scope of action for Sherwood and his staff.

Basically, the Geneva Agreement provided for the removal of French and pro-French Vietnamese troops north of the military demarcation line at the 17th parallel and the removal of Vietminh troops from South Vietnam. When the agreement was signed, both sides had troops scattered throughout the country. Further, the agreement contained provisions for the transfer of civil authority and for the release of prisoners of war and civilian internees, and the free movement of persons from one zone to another. There were also provisions for regulating the introduction into the country of military personnel and of all kinds of arms, munitions, and war materials. The initial main task, of course, was to maintain the peace by separating the forces of the two parties into zones assigned to them on either side of a demilitarized buffer area. The other tasks could not be carried out should the war start again.

The functions of the commission, as mentioned earlier, were supervisory, judicial, and mediatory. It could make recommendations but had no means of enforcing them. It was required to set up fixed and mobile inspection teams made up of an equal number of officers appointed by the three countries concerned. These military teams were under the direction of the commission and did the actual supervisory work. They also held on-the-spot investigations into any incidents or alleged breaches of the cease-fire agreement by either side. However, Vietnam was a large country with a rudimentary transportation and communication network ravaged by war. Initially, the commission had to rely on the French to provide them with vehicles and later, as the French withdrew in North Vietnam, on the Vietminh. To reach some trouble spots quickly, helicopters were needed, and these could not always be provided. There was a language problem as well. No one in the Canadian commission spoke Vietnamese, although quite a few could speak French or at least 'get along' in that language. This meant one had to use interpreters. These were used at the

meetings of the commissioners, although all three of them spoke English. At the meetings of the three commissioners there was a common desire to reach a unanimous decision, in part because it was realized this would have a greater impact on the two contending powers. Reaching a consensus, however, as Sherwood would learn, was frequently a long, tedious, and wearing chore, which required much argument and massive patience. Even if the three commissioners agreed on a course of action it was not necessarily going to get quick results. 'One thing I have learned the hard way,' he wrote later, 'is that the Asiatic conception of speed with which things might be accomplished is to put it mildly, somewhat at variance with our own.'[12]

Almost from the moment he arrived, Sherwood was busy. His quarters and those of his staff were in the Metropole Hotel, which also housed the Indian and Polish delegations. The hotel was guarded by the Indian Army. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam also had sentries around the hotel, each armed with loaded tommy-guns. Five blocks away was the Burma Shell Building, which housed the Canadian headquarters with its offices, signals centre, officers' mess, and canteen. Two blocks away, also surrounded by guards, was the Chamber of Commerce Building where the commission met.

It was late in the afternoon when Sherwood arrived at the hotel, and at 7 p.m. he was visited by Major-General Megill (his senior military adviser), Marcel Cadieux (his senior political adviser), and Frank Ballachey, another adviser from External Affairs, who had been among the first to arrive in Hanoi to organize the reception of the Canadian delegation. Work was to begin at once. They told him that on the following day a special meeting of the commission had been called 'to consider the most important matter of principle which had yet come before [it].' He continued in his letter to Evelyn:

> I will not bore you with all the details of the complicated question of the Catholic refugees from Phat Diem, but I assure you it was really intricate to start with. However by 4:30 [Saturday] I had a pretty clear picture and had prepared a reasonably good brief, as I had been warned my Polish colleague was going to raise some tricky points.
>
> Well, we met and the proceedings went on for about three hours. We managed to hold our own and prevent an adverse decision being taken, and agreed to adjourn until 4:30 p.m. today (Sunday) when we would further consider the matter. In the meantime our Sub-Committee on Freedom [of Movement] was to meet and bring us in further reports and recommendations.
>
> We had dinner, and then returned to the office to consult on the stand

to be taken in today's meetings. It was nearly midnight when I finally turned in.

This morning I got up at 6:30 and figured out a brand new argument, based on the Geneva Agreement itself. I arranged for a meeting of my political and military advisers for later in the morning, and drafted my new argument for their consideration.

Well, at lunch time (1:25) I hoped to get a siesta and rest before the meeting at 4:30 p.m. But the Polish ambassador asked for a private discussion with me. Then along came the Indian ambassador for a private discussion. Then came Cadieux, my political adviser and finally Ray Crepault to report on the proceedings of the Sub-Committee which had been meeting since 8:30 a.m.

By the time I had finished with him it was time to leave for the Commission meeting where the dog-fight lasted for two solid hours of diplomatic argument and sidestepping. It ended finally with the Indian chairman deciding in our favour, and the Polish ambassador in the minority and, I hope, without any grounds for effective propaganda in China, Vietnam or Russia.

It was quite a business to be forked into, and both Cadieux and Crepault admitted it has been the most strenuous and hair-raising two days since the Commission started.[13]

Considering that Sherwood had just arrived after a trip that had taken him two-thirds of the way around the world, to go directly into the commission's work within twenty-four hours of his landing at Hanoi must have been quite an experience.

Sherwood was to find very quickly that the first two days of his work were to be typical of the pace which would be followed in the weeks and months to come. The members of the Geneva Conference expected the advisory commission to complete its major task within 300 days, by which time the people of Vietnam would be able to make a political decision regarding their future. There was a tremendous amount to be done in a short time, but everyone was aware that the decisions and recommendations made affected tens of thousands of people.

Normally, Sherwood would arrive at the former Burma Shell Building, where the Canadian delegation had its offices, at 9 a.m. There he would first dictate his diary for the previous day and evening. Then he would go through the incoming wires, inspection team reports, new submissions to the commission, and a lot of other paper work. Then, with his advisers, he would prepare the Canadian line of action for the commission meeting. Usually it met every day in plenary session at 11 a.m. with advisers, interpreters, secretariat, reporters, and press

liaison officers. There the problems of the day would be thrashed out until lunch, and frequently it would continue until late afternoon before adjourning. Then he would return to the office to clean up the paperwork and possibly meet again with his advisers. Dinner at the hotel followed, frequently with Cadieux, Crepault, Ballachey, Megill, and sometimes Colonel Tedlie or Arthur Kilgour, the Canadian representative on the General Secretariat. Generally, too, the commission did not meet on Wednesdays and Saturdays unless there was an emergency.[14]

Frequently, however, the pace could get quite hectic. Sherwood had been in Hanoi for about a month when he described one day which is best told in his own words.

> When I went to the office [on Sunday] we found Monday's agenda in for the Commission meeting at 11 a.m. It had five items, of which four were virtually emergency items all demanding the dispatch of mobile teams immediately. Cadieux and Crepault were down the coast for a brief respite, so Ballachey and Megill and I went at it to read the reports ...
>
> That took until 8:45 when I said I would study the remaining reports later. We came back to the hotel for dinner which we finished at 9:30 p.m. Then I was handed another wire from one of our mobile teams asking for immediate instruction on a difficult refugee situation. By 10:00 p.m. the Secretary General sent word that he had just received word that the Prime Minister of Burma was arriving by plane between 11 and 12 o'clock on Monday and we would have to postpone the [Commission] meeting until 3:00 p.m. as he had been asked to meet the Prime Minister at the airport.
>
> No sooner had I got this message around to my delegation when Ballachey came in and said the Foreign Minister had just expressed a wish that the Canadian ambassador and two advisers should be at the airport to meet the Burmese Prime Minister. This, of course, I had to accept immediately. Then I got word that there were at least two more shootings or threatened massacre telegrams in, and there would be a supplementary agenda for the Commission, detailed reports would be forwarded later on in the morning.
>
> By 11:30 p.m. I had finished the reports and was just writing up my notes for the meeting when Cadieux and Crepault returned and reported about their trip and some ideas of theirs for the meeting on Monday. That took until 12:30. By the time I finished my notes it was 1:15 a.m., so I went to bed.
>
> I was up at 7:00 a.m., met Megill for breakfast and a discussion on Phat Diem and other matters, got to the office and found a raft of stuff from the Laos and Cambodian Commissions and an important wire from

Ottawa suggesting certain matters (which required study) be placed formally before the Commission as soon as possible. I put someone to work on that and got our final notes for the meeting ready by 10:30 a.m. Then we dashed back to the hotel to change into formal clothes for meeting the Prime Minister of Burma (U Nu). Megill, Cadieux and I attended there while Crepault struggled with the Poles in the Freedom Committee, getting out instructions to mobile teams (due to leave for the south today) to investigate serious 'incidents' there. While changing at the hotel, the office phoned to say that I had just received a formal invitation from Ho Chi Minh to dine with him . . . at 6 p.m. at the Palace in honour of the Burmese Prime Minister.

At the airport the chairman of the Commission told me he had just issued a supplementary agenda with some urgent items and I informed him of Ho Chi Minh's dinner at 6 p.m. So we arranged to call our meeting at 2:30 p.m. and go on until 5 p.m.

As soon as we could break away from the airport reception, brass bands, cameramen, newsmen, etc. we drove back to town for lunch and called a conference at our headquarters for 1:45 p.m. to get the reports and consider the stand we should take at the 2:30 meeting. At 2:25 we drove to the Commission's headquarters and started in on the agenda.

There were three major discussions – really battles – during the afternoon in which a person has to use all the skill and ingenuity he or his advisers have, and half a dozen 'minor' decisions to make, almost any one of which in ordinary life would be considered a major decision for anybody to take. At 5 p.m. my advisers all went back to the office to prepare for tomorrow's agenda and I got my clothes changed, shaved, etc. and . . . left for the Palace.

. . . . .

Today [Tuesday] the Chairman came out boldly after six or seven weeks of what he calls caution – and I call procrastination, and agreed with me in ordering certain decisive action in connection with the refugee problem.

I understand the US press and also the Canadian and French public are terribly upset over the matter of Catholic refugees moving south. I have been too. Don't get too alarmed over the criticisms of the Commission. We have not been sitting down doing nothing as some reports suggest. The same is true of the secret movement of arms into the north and south. But what we in Canada and the USA consider slow and dilatory cooperation is by Oriental and Asian standards considered expeditious and wholehearted cooperation and assistance.

So don't let the press reports make you ashamed of or fearful of the

> reputation of your old man. I have been fighting the battle here with many delicate factors and considerations determining the action to be taken, I cannot prevent many things occurring which have occurred, but I can have some influence in preventing them happening again. And what has occurred is only a drop in the bucket compared to what would have occurred had the Commission and its teams not been here and functioning.[15]

Working under constant pressure, as were all the members of the delegation, Sherwood frequently expressed to Evelyn his annoyance at the press reports about events in Vietnam, both in the West and in North Vietnam. He felt both were exaggerated for propaganda reasons. The commission might get a complaint that 10,000 people were assembled waiting to go south but were prevented from doing so. A mobile team would be sent and might find nobody or perhaps a few dozen who had applied for permits. 'The same day we might get an urgent complaint that 24 people have been murdered in a certain place, 300 have been massacred by troops and half a dozen buried alive as a torture against Communist agents. We . . . [will] find that 24 people were arrested in a riot in some village of whom possibly 20 had been released and four held in custody.' 'Instead of 300 having been massacred,' Sherwood wrote,

> a crowd of 300 attacked the authorities and were dispersed with a few or no casualties at all, and that several recently buried people died of natural causes have been dug up in the cemetery and taken to the market-place in the village as proof positive that they were buried alive. Such an investigation may take a mobile team several weeks to complete and get at the facts.
>
> The whole business is so fantastic and incomprehensible that it is most difficult to express one's feelings about it. But to become excited and emotionally upset – as one would normally be on receiving such reports each day – would just be to make oneself so overwrought as to be useless after a week or two.[16]

Despite the frequent false alarms there were many complaints which were based on fact and had to be dealt with. With a limited number of military personnel available, and with a good percentage of these located in permanent or 'fixed' positions to monitor the movement of arms and so on, the mobile teams were strained to the limit to carry out their tasks.

Things were not made any easier by the Polish commissioner at the commission meetings. Like Sherwood, he was a good lawyer. They

crossed swords at the first meeting and most of the subsequent ones. Sherwood had been instructed to maintain a judicial and impartially objective attitude. Sir John Harding had warned him that he should not expect the Polish commissioner to have the same idea. After a month or so of daily association, Sherwood became convinced that whatever his early instructions had been, 'he is definitely now playing the Communist game of obstruction, evasion, stalling, double-talk, legalistic and technical objections, and any other tactics he can employ to assist the DR [Democratic Republic] authorities to carry out the provisions of the Geneva Agreement to the exclusive advantage of Communist policy.'[17]

Sherwood did not underrate Mr. Ogrodzinski for one moment. He described him as 'the Polish version of Machiavelli.' 'In debate,' Sherwood wrote, '[he] is a formidable opponent, equally agile in logic and in law and well versed in the tactics of attack and diversion.' He 'is a very subtle and shrewd negotiator ... resourceful and ingenious, plausible, flexible and quick.' Sherwood felt the Soviet bloc could not have had a more effective representative. He added that Ogrodzinski 'has the famous Slav charm of manner and smile. But, again, experience has been useful and when Mr. Ogrodzinski smiles in the course of a discussion, I realize that some particularly nasty move is about to be made: the Canadian delegation immediately takes up combat positions.'[18]

The Indian commissioner, who was also chairman, was more to Sherwood's liking. He was a 'prodigious worker' who liked to do everything himself. 'He finds it difficult to delegate authority and to take advice,' Sherwood wrote, and thus had certain shortcomings as an administrator. Nevertheless, Sherwood continued, 'in a moment he makes up his mind as to the best course to follow, and I am bound to recognize that he does not make many mistakes.' He added:

> Mr. Desai presides over the meetings of the Commission with firmness and dignity. Meetings must be punctual, orderly and conducted with decorum and despatch. Ordinarily he displays great patience even when forced to listen to repetitious submissions and the introduction of irrevelant matters. Occasionally, however, he cuts short a session brusquely and abruptly and 'dictates' what he conceives will be a compromise statement, acceptable to both sides.[19]

On the whole, Sherwood found that Desai's general assessment of a situation and his approach to possible solutions showed 'great maturity and flexibility.' On the other hand, his slow and deliberate approach to problems relating to arms control and freedom of movement some-

times provoked feelings of resentment and exasperation among the Canadians. Sherwood felt Desai seemed to lean towards Ho Chi Minh and the North Vietnam positions of an argument, but he could be tough on both sides. 'On the whole,' Sherwood wrote, 'I consider [him] . . . as a very capable, industrious and outstanding man . . . '[20]

Holding the equivalent of an ambassador's rank, Sherwood frequently had the opportunity to meet some of the senior leaders in both North and South Vietnam. He was in Hanoi only a week when he first met Ho Chi Minh, the president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The occasion was a dinner party in honour of the new Russian ambassador. It was held in the Presidential Residence, the former palace of the Emperor Bao Dai. The whole affair lasted three and a half hours. 'Ho Chi Minh was a charming host,' Sherwood wrote, 'he spoke English to me, Russian to the Russian ambassador, French to Mr. Sainteny, Chinese to the wife of the Chinese ambassador sitting on his left, and made his main speech of welcome in Vietnamese. He is quite a man.'[21] Later, when he got to know the president better, Sherwood described him further in a letter to Major-General Odlum: '[He] is a most extraordinary character. To meet him one can scarcely credit the tales of the ruthlessness of his past. . . . He has a great sense of the dramatic, is an expert showman and a person of extraordinary intellectual capacity. He follows the Nehru pattern of simplicity and austerity in dress and living.'[22] The two men developed a warm respect for each other, so much so that on their sixth meeting, at a reception given by the foreign minister, Sherwood wrote Evelyn: 'He told me to tell you that any time you would like to come to Vietnam he would be very pleased to have you. So there you are. It is like getting a personal invitation from Stalin himself.'[23]

Another person who intrigued Sherwood was the outstanding North Vietnamese general, Vo Nguyen Giap. He was forty-two years old, had taught high school, and studied law at the University of Hanoi. It was Giap who created the Vietminh military organization which had defeated the French at Dienbienphu. Sherwood was interested in how he had managed to bring four divisions through the jungles in such physical strength as to fight a major battle. The two hit it off immediately. 'He is about my height, very alert mentally, physically fit and with an air of determination and decision about him as one would expect from his record.' It was at their first meeting, a reception given by the Canadians, that they first met. 'Later,' Sherwood continued, 'he remarked to Marcel Cadieux . . . that the Canadian Government had shown good judgment in sending an ambassador to Vietnam who was at least their own size physically.'[24]

Whenever they met at cocktail parties, dinners, receptions, and other

occasions, the two men seemed to gravitate towards each other. Sherwood invariably found him interesting, whether he was talking on military topics or, at times assuming the mantle of a history teacher, explaining Vietnamese customs. It appears he trusted Sherwood and, in informal ways, Giap could express his and his government's concerns about events occurring in South Vietnam. Sherwood, on his part, valued the cordial friendship with the man who was both Minister of Defence and Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Democratic Republic.

Although Giap called himself an amateur soldier he was always interested in learning more about military matters. The war in Northwest Europe interested him, and since Sherwood and his two chief military advisers, Major-General W.J. Megill and Colonel A.J. Tedlie were all veterans of that campaign, Giap would sometimes pump them about the battles in which they fought.[25]

Sherwood also established a good relationship with the foreign minister of North Vietnam, Phan Van Dong, who negotiated the agreement for the Vietminh at Geneva. He had spent seven years at hard labour at 'the Alcatraz of Indo China' for his Communist activities under the old regime. 'Physically,' Sherwood wrote, 'he is full of malaria and his body racked with tuberculosis.' He continued: 'Although we could never agree on ideological view points, we respect each others opinions and I think there is a mutual regard for the manner in which we watch each other in the refusal to sacrifice principles.'[26] Sherwood had been on the job only two months when the foreign minister, at a dinner reception, told him 'that any time I felt he could be of help, or that I wished to discuss any matter with him, I was to let him know and we would have a private and personal chat at his house or in my quarters, and that I need not be afraid of protocol as he would welcome a discussion with me at any time.'[27]

Although the burden of work at the commission meetings never let up, the various functions Sherwood went to and the invitations he was obliged to accept did provide some relaxation as well as an opportunity to meet informally with many of the senior political and military people who played crucial roles in the ultimate success of the commission's work. Sherwood also had dinners and receptions himself, and these, apparently, were always popular with the senior Vietnamese, Polish, Indian, French, and other officials he invited. He was also very conscious of the welfare of his own delegation, including those on the fixed teams in remote areas of Vietnam. Shortly after his arrival, for example, he had made arrangements not only to improve the mail service to Canada, but to ensure that his people would have supplies flown in for a traditional Canadian Christmas celebration. It would be the first Christmas since 1944 that he would be separated

from Evelyn. That had to be accepted, but he was determined his staff would enjoy themselves as much as circumstances allowed.

As it turned out, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day was almost everything he could have wished for. There were no decorations, so the staff made them by hand, using tinsel cigarette paper saved by everyone for weeks. The dining room, Sherwood wrote, 'was completely decorated with chains, streamers of red, white and blue, each link (and there were hundreds of them) made and pasted by hand by the NCO's of the security guard down at our main door over the past six to eight weeks.'[28] The turkeys and hams from Canada had arrived on time, there were plenty of flowers for table decorations, corsages for lady guests, and even a small Christmas tree. On Christmas evening, the staff attended midnight service, after which they went to the Canadian mess for supper. 'It was a gay affair with our Indian friends, British, American, Canadian, French, Swiss interpreters, etc. all joining in hymns and carols,' Sherwood wrote. 'I left just before 3:00 a.m. and walked home along the deserted streets passing little brown sentries in each block and guarding the office quarters and hotel.' On Christmas Day itself, the military personnel followed an old tradition whereby the officers served the non-commissioned officers in the latter's mess in the hotel. Each NCO had a 'stocking' made out of mosquito netting sewn with red woollen thread. 'They were filled with a bottle of beer, cigarettes, nuts, candies, oranges, etc. to which we had all contributed from our personal stocks,' Sherwood added. Then, once the dinner began, Major-General Megill and the senior officers started to carve and other officers served. It was a marvellous affair. Writing Evelyn that evening, Sherwood remarked: 'Some of the NCOs I met later in the day told me it was the best Christmas Mess party they had ever attended and I am sure it was.'

The new year brought with it a change in living quarters. Lett, Cadieux, and Megill moved to a villa from the hotel and were able to have more privacy. It meant, among other things, that they could talk around the dinner table without being overheard, particularly if no servant was in the room, and they made a habit of inviting several of their senior staff to dine with them by rotation so as not to lose touch.

There were numerous problems that came up constantly. One was the question of the exchange of prisoners-of-war. 'The whole question ... of what constituted a prisoner-of-war would make a book in itself,' Sherwood's deputy military adviser stated later.

> The Communist side always claimed that it was possible for a soldier to change sides in the middle of a war because of a change in his political leanings. Therefore, that which you or I would call a deserter, they

> started to call rallies. They were, without doubt, one of our biggest headaches. If a man deserts in the face of the enemy he is a deserter and should be returned to his own army for whatever disciplinary action they want to take against him. Of course the Communist side did not believe this because they thought these people had become politically acute during the war, saying to themselves: 'I am no longer a member of the French Foreign Legion, I want to join the other side.' A lot of prisoners were in that particular category. They were taken prisoner, they were brainwashed, and some of them decided they wanted to stay.[29]

The numbers involved ran from about 14,000 French Union Forces to some 7,000 PAVN (People's Army of Vietnam), who were supposedly prisoners-of-war and unaccounted for. There was naturally a strong public demand from France for the return of soldiers presumed to be prisoners, but there were questions as to whether soldiers were actually prisoners or dead. Then there was the Canadian view that a soldier who deserted should be returned, and the Polish view that such a soldier was a 'rallie,' – a soldier who had 'seen the light' and switched sides and who was thus not really a prisoner. Many in the French Foreign Legion, who were not French-born, had been taken prisoner, and the North Vietnamese apparently were helping them to return to their home countries via China rather than returning them to the French authorities. In the South, PAVN soldiers who were captured were claimed by the North to have received rough treatment. And so on it went, day after day.

Roughly the same sort of problems came up with the 'Freedom of Movement' articles of the Geneva Agreement. In brief, civilians from either side of the 17th parallel were supposed to be able to move either north or south as they wished. They were to be assisted, where necessary, and no impediment placed in their way. The commission found, especially in 1955, that those wishing to leave the North for the South were encountering more difficulties and delays. Some of these were imposed by local authorities. Mobile teams would be sent to investigate, accompanied by a North Vietnamese liaison officer and interpreter, and would try to resolve the matter, but it was not always easy to do so. Many of those wishing to go south were Roman Catholic refugees, and there was considerable pressure on the commission to see that these people were moved. Sometimes, as Sherwood told Evelyn privately, their plight was felt particularly strongly by some of the Canadians. On one occasion, he wrote:

> Mr. Cadieux has been very much upset with things this week. We've had another major occasion in which Catholics have been prevented from

> moving south. He is a very devout Catholic and his sense of frustration on these occasions, when one seems to be so helpless to prevent them, that he gets terribly wrought up and nervous. I will be most sorry to lose him as he has been a most valued adviser, but for his own sake I am glad he is to be relieved soon. I don't think his temperament and religious faith would allow him to stand the strain much longer. The rest of us, too, get the same feeling of frustration but our make-up is different, I guess. Megill and I have been having quite a time keeping Marcel's judgement reasonably impartial where Catholic interests have been involved.[30]

The problem of freedom of movement was not confined entirely to the North. In the South, the Diem Government, supported temporarily by the French and to a growing extent by the Americans, was also accused of placing obstacles in front of the movement of citizens wishing to go north. The Geneva Agreement stated that not only should there be the freedom to move, but persons wishing to do so should be given assistance. To add to the problem, the government in South Vietnam was not a signatory to the Geneva Agreement. As in the North, delay and harassment could take numerous shapes and forms, including attacks on the mobile teams sent to investigate complaints.[31]

Periodically the members of the commission flew south to Saigon where they had a sub-headquarters. These visits usually lasted a week, and there Sherwood had the opportunity to meet all the senior officials, including President Diem. There were the usual discussions and complaints, visits made to some of the fixed teams, and invitations from British, French, and American officials, as interested in hearing Sherwood's opinions of events in the North as they were in providing him with their own.

It was while he was in Saigon in February that Sherwood was told he would be able to have a short vacation home. He left at the end of March. In London he met with both British and Canadian officials to brief them on events in Vietnam, then arrived in Ottawa on 4 April where he was met by Cadieux, whose health had resulted in his leaving in February. In Ottawa he had talks with Pearson, St. Laurent, John Holmes, and the governor-general, together with interviews by the press and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reporters. From Sherwood's point of view, the most important person he met there was Evelyn. After a few days they flew to Vancouver for a week's vacation and a reunion with a host of friends – the Cunninghams, Sowards, Tobins, Lords, Koerners, Storys, and others, – all wanting to hear about his experiences. Then, all too soon, it was time to fly back, this time across the Pacific via Tokyo, Hong Kong, Okinawa, and then to Saigon and Hanoi.

The trip back to Canada, rushed as it was, provided a much needed break, which both the Indian and the Polish commissioners had enjoyed several months earlier. 'I thought I would hate to come back,' he wrote Evelyn on his return, and added

> Well, actually I did not. I came back with much more confidence and assurance than when I first came to Indochina last October. Probably the first reason is that now I know there is a termination of my job – just when that will be remains to be determined after May 18th. The second reason is that I was returning to a job which I know about, even if I do not know what the results of the job will prove to be. Thirdly, I know that Ottawa, and the people I have talked to in Canada, feel we have not fallen down altogether in the job we were asked to do. And perhaps because most of all because I felt (as it was so evident at the reception) that the members of the delegation were glad to have me back. Their welcome seemed so genuine and sincere. Captain Berube, one of our ebullient French-Canadian officers (who was at Dieppe with me as an NCO . . . and was wounded there) at one stage took down the Vietnamese worded welcome banner which the boys had made, draped it over my shoulders and led the crowd in singing 'Il a gagné ses epaulettes' and 'He's a jolly good fellow.' When the military and External crowd get that enthusiastic, you cannot feel otherwise than that they are glad to see you back.[32]

Among others happy to see him back was Saul Rae, who had replaced Cadieux late in February as Sherwood's senior political adviser. Even happier was Major-General Megill, who felt Rae was not as tough at the bargaining table as was Sherwood.

Sherwood found that the work on the commission had not lessened. With each passing week the final date for the free movement of citizens to the North and South, as well as for the transfer of territory, came closer. Two weeks after his return, for example, the time had come for the turnover of the Haiphong city sector to the Communists. Sherwood and the others were there to watch what he called 'rather a sad sight.' As the turnover proceeded, people who decided to stay would come out of their house, place a picture of Ho Chi Minh in their window, and hang up the new flag. They looked 'apprehensive and perplexed.' Were they doing the right thing, or were they jumping from the frying pan into the fire, which 'would consume families and liberty and personal freedom and happiness?' Sherwood wondered about their fate and added: 'I could not help but feeling as I watched the last of the French ships sail slowly down the Red River towards the sea, with the tri-colour of France floating over the stern, that we were seeing the last of the Western world that would ever be seen in these

parts, handing over to the Communist regime with the finality which was tragic to think of.'[33]

In mid-May the 300-day period which marked the final phase of regrouping north and south of the Provincial Demarcation Line had been reached. Moreover, the period had passed without a resumption of hostilities. This had been a crucial objective for the commissioners and Sherwood was pleased with that achievement, although he fully realized the commission had not been able to resolve the innumerable problems involved in the armistice agreement. Canada had about 170 military and civilian personnel on the commission, of whom 135 were military. The latter served mostly on the mobile teams which, like fire brigades, were dispatched to various parts of the country, both north and south, to investigate complaints. Then there were the fixed teams, whose primary task was to try and monitor the movement of military arms and personnel. In a word, the task of the commission was not matched by adequate supervisory personnel, and at that the Canadians provided the smallest of the three delegations in Vietnam.

There were numerous other problems which the commission had to deal with after the first 300-day period had ended. Sherwood had hoped to see a democratic election take place, but this became increasingly remote as the weeks rolled by.[34] It seemed obvious that others, both in the North and in the South, did not want it, and that 'free and open' elections would be almost an impossibility to monitor. Moreover, there seemed to be no doubt that the North was infiltrating agents into the South, and possibly arms as well.

By the summer of 1955, Sherwood was making plans to return to Canada. When he accepted the task it was on the understanding that he would fill the post for one year. In August, the commission would be moving its main headquarters to Saigon, and Desai, the commission's chairman, would be back after a six-week holiday in India. Sherwood would prefer time with his replacement, David Johnson, to ensure a smooth turnover, but he also wanted a brief vacation himself. As he wrote Pearson, 'the job has been an interesting one but exhausting, and not one which I would like to do more than once in a lifetime.'[35]

Sherwood received word from Ottawa authorizing his return to Canada in late July. There was a round of formal and informal farewells during which Sherwood was invited to return to North Vietnam with Evelyn any time he wished to come. He received parting gifts from his staff, including some pictures of Indochina from his secretary, Jay Bell, which were to serve as an unforgettable reminder of the country and its people. From General Giap he received a beautiful cigarette box, and from Ho Chi Minh he received a set of three lacquer

boxes and a large lacquer panel. Both Ho Chi Minh and Giap, incidentally, were to send Sherwood Christmas cards until his death.

When he arrived in Saigon, where he was to meet Mr. Desai and then start on his way home, Sherwood ran into a situation which was as unexpected as it was dangerous and which illustrated on a major scale some of the difficulties encountered by the mobile teams on a smaller scale. Sherwood and various others from the commission were staying at the Majestic Hotel. On 20 July he had gone to the airport early in the morning to meet Mr. Desai. On the way to and from the airport he had noticed a considerable number of demonstrators and paraders, many of whom had been brought in to the city by trucks. Arriving at the hotel he found a large number of Vietnamese outside the entrance. What happened next is best told in his own words:

> At 9:02 a.m. a parade with banners and a loud speaker arrived in front of the Majestic ... and the head of the procession stopped at the hotel entrance. The street and the bank of the Saigon River just across from the hotel were jammed with people. The paraders shouted a few slogans in Vietnamese. A loudspeaker mounted in a jeep turned about gave directions to the paraders. Then the head of the parade broke off and entered the hotel ... There was no police interference of any kind ...
>
> The paraders kept coming along the street until there was a mob below jamming the entire street ... They were shouting and screaming and finally started throwing rocks and stones about the size of potatoes. Saul Rae and Rae Crepault were watching from their balconies in Rooms 408 and 409 (mine was 407). When the rock throwing began in our direction we all went in and closed our shutters down. Binh, the Chinese floor boy, had chosen to stay in my room with me. He was very nervous.
>
> Saul Rae then came in to my room and I suggested he should bring his classified papers in and his personal belongings ...
>
> I popped out on the balcony once or twice but each time the rock throwing started from the mob below ... We could hear pounding and shouting below us and breaking of glass. I took several more looks from the balcony and could see things being hurled into the street, at first papers, then clothing, bedding, mattresses and finally furniture and luggage, uniforms and clothing. Someone down below had started burning things up, including the white cars used by the Commission. The last time I looked out there was no sign of the police or any firemen.
>
> We could hear the breaking of glass and smashing up of the furniture on the floors above and below. Finally they came along our corridor and began knocking and beating on the door. We refused to open it so they proceeded to burst it in with poles and finally a long plank. We explained

> we were the Canadian Ambassador and his officer. They were all for searching the room and asked if there were any Vietnamese or Poles in the room. We said no, but they could search, which they proceeded to do. Tran Van Binh [the Chinese hotel boy], had turned almost white with fright. Meanwhile, we kept talking to the others who were shouting and crowding in the door but being held back by one or two of their own crowd. They completed their search and asked if there was anyone in the big cupboards. We said no and they finally left . . .
>
> There was no sign of the French Union Forces or Viet security police during all this and the mob on the street was getting pretty noisy and cars were still burning below.
>
> Finally we heard machine-guns and bombs and revolver shooting outside and a few minutes later in the hotel itself, and the crowd below began to disperse. However, the police allowed the paraders to come back and retrieve their bicycles. The firing was all in the air and I could see no one hurt.[36]

When the police finally arrived, Sherwood, after checking on the safety of his own staff, immediately enquired about the whereabouts of the Indian and Polish commissioners. Both were missing. He ordered a South Vietnamese colonel to find them, promptly, and report back to him. He began to receive telephone calls from the British, American, and other embassies offering to put up the Canadian staff, but he insisted that the senior commander of the French Union Forces, General de Beauport, make the necessary arrangements for all the delegations and to ensure their safety. That evening, relieved that the Indian and Polish ambassadors were safe, Sherwood wrote: 'Rae, Megill, Crepault and I then settled in our luxurious quarters in the residence of the Commissionaire General with French National Guard forces guarding us inside the compound, and a couple of platoons of heavily armed Vietnamese army and paratroopers guarding the outside . . . It had been quite a day.'[37]

Two days later Sherwood left Saigon flying to London, Ottawa, and finally to Vancouver. His task was over. As one of the senior Canadian officers wrote to his wife: 'A good many of us saw him off at the airport – and there was hardly a dry eye in the house. A wonderful fellow.'[38] As for Sherwood, he left with mixed feelings. 'I do not want to run off at a time when it could be said I had not stayed to the bitter end of the freedom of movement question,' he had written Evelyn a few weeks earlier. 'On the other hand, all other matters have reached a stage where Rae could carry on as well as I could . . .'[39] He had accomplished a great deal under difficult circumstances. He had hoped that, ultimately, free elections might unite Vietnam, but was realistic

enough to feel this might not happen. He felt the Americans should not get involved militarily in the area in order to fill the vacuum being left by the French as a counter to a Communist takeover of the whole country. However, he realized that such a scenario might occur. It had been quite an experience in so many ways, but now it was over and, as he told Evelyn, 'it will take more than Mike Pearson and Louis St. Laurent to pry us apart for any more fancy jobs.'[40]

NOTES

1 Vancouver City Archives, Sherwood Lett Papers, Add. MS., No. 361, Vol. 4, File 7, Letter of Instruction, Pearson to Lett, 24 Aug. 1954.
2 Ibid., 1.
3 Ibid., 4. These were prophetic words in view of the later intervention by the United States.
4 Ibid., 5.
5 Ibid., 7.
6 Ibid., 9. Sherwood's salary as commissioner was to be $12,000 per annum with an additional $2,500 separation allowance. To put this in perspective, when he arrived in Ottawa in October, his hotel bill at the Chateau Laurier was $12.50, his breakfast ninety cents, and the taxi fare from the airport to the hotel was one dollar.
7 Vancouver City Archives, Sherwood Lett Papers, 'Mission to Indochina Diary,' 15 Oct. 1954.
8 Ibid., 20 Oct. 1954.
9 Ibid., 27 Oct. 1954.
10 Author interview with Maj.-Gen. A.J. Tedlie, 23 Mar. 1990, 1-2.
11 See, for example, D.A. Ross, *In the Interests of Peace: Canada and Vietnam, 1954-1973* (University of Toronto Press 1984) and James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada, Indochina: Roots of Complicity* (University of Toronto Press 1983).
12 UBC Archives, N.A.M. MacKenzie Papers, Main Correspondence, Box 32, Folder No. 32-6, Lett to MacKenzie, 12 Jan. 1955.
13 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 31 Oct. 1954. Sherwood refers to 'refugees' but these were really citizens who wished to exercise their rights under the freedom of movement clause to go to South Vietnam. They were supposed to be assisted.
14 Ibid., 10 Nov. 1954.
15 Ibid., 28 Nov. 1954.
16 Ibid., 6 Feb. 1955.
17 Vancouver Public Archives, Add. MS. No. 361, Vol. 4, File 8, letter, Lett to Lester B. Pearson, 2 Dec. 1954.
18 Department of External Affairs, Archives, Diary, 1954-5, Sherwood Lett,

Commissioner, Canadian Delegation to the International Commission for Supervision and Control, Hanoi, Vietnam, Indochina, letter, Lett to Pearson, 13 Feb. 1955, 188.

19 Ibid., 184.

20 Ibid., 186.

21 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 4 Nov. 1954. Sainteny was head of the French Mission to North Vietnam.

22 National Archives of Canada, RG30, E300, Victor W. Odlum Papers, Vol. 7, letter, Lett to Odlum, 23 Mar. 1955.

23 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 18 Jan. 1955.

24 Lett to Odlum, letter.

25 Tedlie interview, 22-3. Giap also knew Tedlie had taught at the Staff College in Kingston, Ontario, and spent some time questioning him on how that institute operated.

26 Odlum Papers, Lett to Odlum.

27 Diary, Sherwood Lett, Commissioner, 25 Dec. 1954.

28 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 25 Dec. 1954.

29 Tedlie interview, 6-7.

30 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 16 Jan. 1955.

31 See, for example, the entry for 7 July 1955, in the diary Sherwood kept as the Canadian commissioner.

32 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 1 May 1955.

33 Ibid., 15 May 1955.

34 See D.A. Ross, *In the Interests of Peace: Canada and Vietnam, 1954-1973* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1984), 153-60.

35 Letter, Lett to Pearson, 3 June 1955, in Commissioner Lett's diary, 316.

36 Ibid., 20 July 1955.

37 Ibid.

38 Letter, Colonel A.J. Tedlie to his wife, 20 July 1955.

39 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 12 June 1955.

40 Ibid.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Chief Justice of British Columbia

One month before Sherwood left Saigon, he received a telegram from the Honourable Ralph Campney informing him of the death of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, Wendell Farris. Sherwood knew him, of course, and was saddened at the news of the death of an old and respected friend. Campney had approached Sherwood earlier to see if he would be interested in a judgeship under Farris. 'I told him I would not be interested,' Sherwood reflected, and added jocularly that 'if anything ever happened to Wendell, he had better send me a wire before he did anything else about it.'[1] Campney not only sent the information, but he also asked Sherwood if he would be interested in accepting the now vacant position.

It was a tremendous honour to be asked, but Sherwood felt he should consult both Evelyn and the senior partner of his law firm, D. Neil Hossie. He sent a telegram to both and, at the same time, sent one to Campney saying he was, indeed, interested. Having sent the telegrams, Sherwood immediately wrote Evelyn a long letter in which he summed up the pros and cons of accepting even before he received her reply. 'By the time you receive this [letter],' he wrote,

> We will have decided whether or not to take it. I can almost guess your answer will be to the effect that you think it might be a good idea but you will be prepared to do whatever I decide. I'm not quite sure what Hossie will reply. I think I mentioned ... I asked him to cable me (1) did he advise me to accept and (2) would it be agreeable to my partners and senior employees. I had in mind getting approval of Brian [Carrothers] and the others who agreed to stay on upon the understanding I expected to return to the firm within a year or two. I would not want them or the partners to feel I was reneging on an understanding and would thus leave them at a disadvantage in obtaining a partnership deal with

Hossie. If they object I would not necessarily turn down the job for that reason, but I would consider their objection.

On the other hand the Chief Justiceship is not offered more than once in a lifetime and if I should turn it down this time, it would be the last time it would be offered. As I see it, the advantages and disadvantages are pretty much as follows (among other considerations). Advantages:

1) a rather honorable step in anyone's legal career.
2) an assured income for the rest of my life of not less than $18,500 ... plus steno, free office space, clerks, library, etc. ... until I choose to retire.
3) a considerably more leisurely life than we have ever had or be likely to have in private practice, with Christmas and Easter vacations and a long vacation ... every summer.
4) no liability or financial responsibility for maintaining an expensive office and staff and meeting their payroll.
5) a chance to make a contribution to the development of the law and respect for the Bench ...
6) an opportunity, at age 60, to have more time to devote to the things you and I might like to do but have never been able to take time out to do.
7) the duties of Chief Justice, while no doubt they keep one busy, are not nearly as arduous as the ones I would probably be in for the next few years ...
8) There would probably be a certain amount of interest for you in being a Chief Judge's wife ... and I am quite sure they would not be as strenuous or exacting as those of the Chancellorship at times ...

The disadvantages are:

1) it would mean giving up the active practice of law which I have enjoyed so much over the past 33 years with its hurly-burly and setting one's wits against his fellow practitioners and people like the tax authorities.
2) it would mean giving up all the directorates and other remunerative offices I hold ... The association with these different companies and their personnel has been interesting over the years and I would miss that. The compensation, of course, would be more leisure and probably less responsibility.
3) our income would be considerably less than it has been these past few years ...

On the whole, if I can arrive at a satisfactory arrangement with the firm, it looks as if it might be a good idea to accept the job ... It will let us live in BC where we want to live and other jobs we have been offered would not.[2]

It took a few days before Sherwood heard from both Evelyn and Neil Hossie. Evelyn was strongly in favour of acceptance, Hossie supported the idea, and so, too, did Sherwood's other legal partners. With his elevation to the Bench, Sherwood felt: 'it would be much easier for the boys to keep my clients and the business I have built up since I will not be starting any competition with the Davis firm or any of its partners or employees.'[3] Moreover, with Sherwood leaving, there would be more of the partnership profits available to the junior partners, and he felt that this would be more than welcome. He wired his acceptance of the position on 2 July, adding that he wanted and needed a vacation. He suggested he would prefer to accept the appointment in late August or early September. This was agreeable to all concerned. 'It was quite a decision to make,' he wrote Evelyn, 'but now that we have taken the decision I am sure we shall never regret it. So we will plan to do the job well and have fun doing it.'[4]

It was a long trip back. Sherwood left Saigon on the evening of 24 July and flew westward via Calcutta, Karachi, Beirut, Nice, Paris, and London. After a short stopover in London, he went on to Prestwick and then to Montreal and Ottawa. He stayed there two days, reporting to various ministries, briefed his successor, David Johnson, and had a long talk with the prime minister, the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent. He also made a point of seeing Lieutenant-General Guy Simonds, the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff, to whom he made strong representations for a Christmas airlift for the Canadian troops remaining in Vietnam. Typically, he also suggested as strongly as he could that Major-General Megill's rank, which was acting while he was serving in Vietnam, should be made permanent. After two full days in Ottawa, he spent another day in Toronto visiting his brother, Ralph, and finally arrived back in Vancouver on the evening of the twenty-ninth. Here he was met by his family as well as a group of newspapermen and photographers. After a brief session with the press, he was happy to be taken home, unpack, and go to sleep in his own bed again.

Sherwood needed a rest. He had lost twenty pounds, but a week or so at Crescent Beach brought about great improvement in his health. He was fortunate, too, that both his daughters were on hand to greet him. Mary, after she had received her bachelor's degree in Arts in 1952, had gone to the University of Toronto, where she obtained a Bachelor of Social Work in 1953. She had worked in Toronto at a settlement house for a year and had met George Plant, whom she married just before Sherwood had gone to Vietnam. The Plants had just recently moved to Vancouver and, indeed, were living temporarily with the

Letts while George was house-hunting. Evelyn and Sherwood were to be presented with five grandchildren from that marriage.

Frances was at home too. An excellent swimmer, she had won the BC synchronized championship three times. To improve herself even more, her parents allowed her to take the last years of high school at the Sarah Dix Hamlin School in San Francisco. At this private boarding school, she could compete in the American Athletic Union, which offered greater competition. She was a member of the school team which won the AAU synchronized swimming championship. When Sherwood arrived home, Frances had received word she had been accepted as a student in physical education at McGill University. However, she had met a young American, Dwight W. Stratton, and they were married in 1957 before she completed her degree. After several years service in the US Army Security Agency, Dwight entered into a banking career with Wells, Fargo. Frances became interested in interior designing, and her talents in this field led to her becoming a professional. Sherwood enjoyed visiting his American grandchildren, a boy and a girl, when he and Evelyn were able to take a vacation in San Francisco.

Being appointed the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court brought with it a considerable number of changes in Sherwood's life. One of the things he had to do was give up a number of positions which, as a lawyer, had helped add to his income. He was an adviser to the Toronto General Trusts Corporation and on the Board of Directors of the Excelsior Life Insurance Co., the Canadian Stevedoring Co. Ltd., Boyles Brothers Drilling Co. Ltd., Island Mountain Mines Ltd., International Traders Ltd., and Canada Shipping Co. Ltd. He had to resign from all of them. He remained chancellor of the University of British Columbia until his second term was finished in 1957, when the office was taken by his old friend, Dal Grauer, who, like Sherwood, was a UBC graduate and onetime president of the alumni association.

Even when he left the chancellor's office, Sherwood was frequently consulted on university affairs.[5] In the same year he stepped down as chancellor, Sherwood was delighted to receive the Great Trekker Award. This was named after the Great Trek of 1922, when the students and alumni of UBC organized a tremendous demonstration in the form of a march to the Point Grey campus. Its theme was to convince the provincial government of the need to abandon the 'Fairview Shacks' and to establish the university on the campus, as it had promised to do years earlier. Sherwood, then just returned from Oxford, had joined the march. The award had been created by the UBC students and given by them to the UBC student who had continued his or her interest in the university and made outstanding contributions

to the community. It was a highly prized honour, and certainly Sherwood was a deserving recipient.[6]

There were other things he gave up also. He was no longer a member of the university's Senate or Board of Governors, although his interest in the university never diminished. He had resigned his position as a bencher of the Law Society, and although he had been president of the Vancouver Bar Association, in his new office he had to leave that association as well.

As a judge, and particularly as Chief Justice, he had to interpret the law and show no favouritism whatsoever. It was not always easy. As he wrote to a friend about three years after he had been on the bench:

> I finally submitted my report on the Second Narrows Bridge disaster. The whole business took a full five months of my time, including all of July and August, and I was glad to finish with it. Holding my old client of 30 years (Dominion Bridge) responsible, and my old friend Bill Swan to some degree responsible for lack of care, was not easy to do. But one must say what he finds on the evidence regardless of where the chips may fall.[7]

When Sherwood began his career as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, he was called upon to deal with a wide variety of civil litigation. A quick review of his judgments up to 1962, when he concentrated on the BC Electric case, reveals something of the diversity of the legal problems that came before him. A few of these are summarized in terms of the questions which confronted him as the trial judge:

1) Are the parents liable for a minor child's negligent use of an automobile when the minor is the owner of the automobile?
2) Are the parents liable for injury to the child's playmate as a result of the child disobeying instructions in the use of firearms?
3) Was the constitution of a bargaining unit by the Labour Relations Board appropriate?
4) Was the owner of property expropriated by a municipality entitled to additional compensation as allowance for compulsory taking?
5) Was the respondent's uncorroborated admission of adultery sufficient to support a divorce decree?
6) Was the buyer of a house entitled to rescind the contract upon discovery of infestation of carpenter ants?
7) Was the valuation of an industrial plant for assessment purposes affected by the fact that it operated at less than capacity?
8) Is insanity a ground for annulment of a marriage?
9) Was an Idaho divorce to be recognized in British Columbia?

These are but samples of the judicial business that came his way. He would be familiar with some of them. As a former lawyer he had made himself an expert in commercial and taxation law, and, as a result, his familiarity with commercial problems was unsurpassed by that of any of his colleagues. In other areas he would be confronted with novel questions, but in all he applied to his judicial work the qualities that made him a great lawyer – precision of thought, analytical skill, and painstaking care.

In addition to the variety of civil litigation illustrated by these examples, a judge of the Supreme Court is called upon to preside over criminal trials and to undertake in rotation the vast amount of judicial work not requiring the formalities of a trial. Moreover, Sherwood, as Chief Justice, was an administrative head of the court, and was responsible for the smooth working of the court and relations with governments, particularly in respect to the need for additional judges.[8] In this last capacity, Sherwood excelled – as he did in the general administration of the court.

Of all the cases which came before him, there was none more difficult and none that attracted more attention than what became known as the BC Electric or BC Power case. It was to take up 144 days of court time, which, at the time and for some years to follow, was a record in Canada for a civil case. In one respect, Sherwood was well suited to preside over the case since it involved the determination of commercial and corporate issues (for which his practice had prepared him). In another aspect, the case required consideration of a number of complex constitutional issues, some of which had never been litigated in Canada, let alone British Columbia. Since it was given so much attention, and since the judgment has such a major impact in several areas, a brief review of the case is appropriate.

The case has its origin in the desire of the Social Credit government of the day to stimulate development in the northern half of the province. To this end the then premier, W.A.C. Bennett, interested the Swedish industrialist, Axel Wenner Gren, in resource development on a concession basis. One of the resulting schemes involved the development of the hydroelectric potential of the Peace River in the northeastern part of the province. A company called Peace River Power Development Co. Ltd. was incorporated in the late 1950s. A number of responsible European and North American financial concerns put up the money to undertake the preliminary surveys of a power site on the Peace River near Hudson's Hope. These surveys were favourable.

In the circumstances, there was only one customer for the very large amounts of power which would have to be transported hundreds of

miles from the point of generation to where it could be used in the southwestern corner of the province. That customer was the British Columbia Electric Company Limited – the 'BC Electric' – all of whose voting shares were owned by the British Columbia Power Corporation Ltd. – 'BC Power.' BC Power, in turn, was owned by the public, that is, its voting shares were owned by over 14,000 shareholders, mainly in Canada, but with sizeable holdings in the United Kingdom. The latter was a reminder that the original source of capital for much of BC Electric's pre-First World War expansion had come from Yorkshire – as had indeed, some of its senior management.

By the mid 1950s, BC Electric had weathered the transition from a pre-war utility, heavily dependent on its street railway system, to a utility which was successfully meeting a phenomenal post-war demand for electricity, had converted its old manufactured gas system in order to introduce natural gas into its mainland service area, and had largely substituted trolley buses for streetcars. To do all this, it and BC Power raised capital in amounts then unprecedented in the province's history – nearly $400,000,000 in the five years between 1955 and 1960. This was very largely the achievement of Dal Grauer, a native son, Rhodes Scholar, member of one of Canada's Olympic Games lacrosse teams, onetime chancellor of the University of British Columbia – a man whose memory remains bright in the minds of those who knew him.

BC Electric needed long-term sources of electric energy. The financing of the Peace River's cost of close to a billion dollars could be achieved only on the basis of a long-term contract with BC Electric – a 'take or pay' contract. By the 1950s, BC Power was wholly Canadian in its outlook and management. A holding company in name, it was in fact almost entirely concerned with the businesses of BC Electric. Its directors were the directors of BC Electric, and, anticipating by decades the corporate structure adopted by Bell Telephone and the Canadian Pacific, it was the non-regulated parent of a public utility – BC Electric. By 1958, BC Power had begun to undertake non-regulated activities which, by virtue of the Public Utilities Act, lay outside the activities of BC Electric. Western Development & Power Ltd. was incorporated by BC Power to investigate and invest in these non-regulated interests.

Amongst other things, Western acquired an interest in Peace River Power. It thus was in a position to evaluate the technical worth of the feasibility studies that were being made and, most important of all, to measure the financial impact on BC Electric if it entered into a long-term contract to buy the output of the Peace River Project.

By late 1960, this evaluation process indicated two things: first, the cost of power from the Peace, when financed on a private enterprise

basis, would be higher than the system average. Second, the principal reason for the higher cost of private power was income taxes. The prospect of cost overruns on a more massive project than the aluminum company's smelter and power plant at Kitimat and Kemano exacerbated the problem.

These findings faced the directors of BC Power with a difficult decision: if BC Electric tied itself to Peace River Power and there were a series of rate increases required to maintain the financial integrity of BC Electric, it was by no means certain that these would be allowed in full by the Public Utilities Commission. There were, it appeared, alternative sources of energy which were smaller and no less satisfactory, but whose cost forecasts were more reliable. Furthermore, there was a real prospect that rate increases, if granted, would lead to a demand for the nationalization of BC Electric. Early in 1961, Grauer informed the premier that BC Electric would not give Peace River the contract it wanted, as risks to BC Power were held to be too great. Thereafter, silence – until 1 August 1961.

As later transpired, a select few, led by the attorney general, had been directed by the premier to devise legislation which would expropriate BC Electric cheaply and quickly. Their solution, The Power Development Act, 1961, was given first reading on 1 August 1961 at a special session of the legislature. It turned out to be an early version of a leveraged buy-out: the directors were removed, the voting shares of BC Electric were to be taken away from BC Power for an artificially low price, and BC Electric was to raise the money for the purchase. The nature and effect of this act was a prominent feature in the proceedings before Chief Justice Lett. The premier obviously believed he had solved the income tax problem, and the 'new' BC Electric was directed to develop the Peace River project.

1 August 1961 was not only the first day of the Special Session, it was Dal Grauer's funeral. The progress of his illness, diagnosed as leukemia, was swift. He died on 28 July, and the large service in Christ Church Cathedral was attended by many. No doubt amongst them would have been his predecessor as chancellor of the University – Sherwood Lett.

One other preliminary item should be added to this long introduction: BC Power's initial reaction to the takeover legislation was that the shares of BC Electric had been seriously undervalued. It attempted to obtain a better deal and requested the province for a fiat – the lieutenant governor's permission to file a Petition of Right seeking compensation from the Crown. This was refused in the fall of 1961, and it was then that BC Power challenged the validity of the takeover legislation. The action was commenced on 13 November 1961. The trial before the

Chief Justice began in May 1962, and his judgment, running to 289 pages in the *Western Weekly Reports*, was delivered on 29 July 1963.

The theory of the case presented by BC Power was dictated by the nature of the legislation. The act vested all BC Electric's voting shares in the Crown and directed BC Electric to pay its former shareholders their book value – $110,985,045. BC Power said the true value of these shares was not less than $225,000,000. The act then extended to BC Power an option to surrender its remaining assets and undertakings, said by BC Power to be worth about $11,000,000, to BC Electric, for which it would receive $68,612,873. This 'option' would expire on 31 July 1963. The apparent reasoning behind this odd division was that the total would provide each shareholder of BC Power with the equivalent of $38 a share – the highest price BC Power's shares reached in the six months preceding the takeover. Whatever the reasoning, the effect was plain: to obtain the full amount offered, BC Power would have to go out of business. In doing so, it would lose the right to complain. This indirect but effective coercion was argued by its counsel to be an impermissible provincial interference with a company incorporated under the laws of Canada. There were other grounds said to support the attack on the legislation: one was that BC Electric's undertaking extended beyond the bounds of the province and so was beyond provincial interference.

Before the trial started, the province introduced a second piece of legislation. This version fixed the value of BC Electric's common shares at $171,833,052, purported to forbid recourse to the courts to challenge the value so fixed, declared the value 'full, fair and adequate compensation,' stated the amended Power Development Act, 1961 to be retroactive, and amalgamated BC Electric with the existing publicly-owned British Columbia Power Commission. This legislation was termed by Mr. Justice Davey of the Court of Appeal as 'unprecedented' as violating constitutional conventions and the rule of law. The province's answer was the shield of Crown immunity from the process of law. This gave rise to a collateral proceeding which reached the Supreme Court of Canada in a remarkably short time. From the judgment of the judge in chambers, who appointed a receiver to preserve the identity of BC Electric in the face of the amalgamation, through the Court of Appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada took only three months. Such was the setting of the trial.

Chief Justice Lett's conduct of the trial was agreed by all counsel to be impeccable. Never one to raise his voice, he controlled sometimes fractious counsel with urbanity and good humour while he absorbed the technical, accounting, and engineering evidence with apparent ease. His judgment in favour of BC Power was a powerful affirmation of the rights of a company incorporated under the laws of Canada. A

commentator of the day remarked: 'One of the outstanding features of the judgment of Chief Justice Lett is that he "pierced the corporate veil" and spelled out the business and economic truth of just what it was that the provincial takeover legislation would really do.'

The Chief Justice, with the assistance of his assessor, the senior partner of a national accounting firm, sifted the mass of evidence and determined that the total value of BC Electric's common shares to BC Power was, on 1 August 1961, $192,828,125. He declared the Power Development Act, 1961, its 1962 amendment, and the British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority Act all invalid. The effect was to restore to BC Power its ownership of BC Electric.

That was not the end of the Chief Justice's connection with the case. When the judgment was pronounced, BC Power, through its chairman, A. Bruce Robertson, announced that BC Power was prepared to sell its BC Electric shares to the province for the price determined by the Chief Justice plus compensation for the period 1961 to 1963. Otherwise, Robertson said, BC Power was prepared to resume its management of BC Electric.

After a series of meetings, the province agreed to Robertson's proposal and, to determine what sum should be added to the figure in the judgment, BC Power and the province approached the Chief Justice and requested him, in his private capacity, to fix an amount which, when added to the amount he had judicially determined to be the value of the shares on 1 August 1961, would represent their value in September 1963. He did so, and in the result, the final compensation to the shareholders of BC Power was nearly $200,000,000.

It is difficult to imagine a greater tribute to the Chief Justice's integrity than this request by BC Power and the provincial government. His judgment, although no longer law, on the status and powers of federally-incorporated companies, was never appealed, and the declarations of invalidity of the takeover legislation stand to this day.

The judgment on the BC Electric case was handed down on 29 July 1963, and two days later Sherwood was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal - 'the pinnacle of the judicial hierarchy in British Columbia.'[9] The vacancy had been caused by the death of Chief Justice Alexander Des Brisay. The promotion to the Court of Appeal brought with it some additional income and greater responsibilities, as he was now the Chief Justice of British Columbia. Aside from his strictly legal work, it meant that in the absence, illness, or other inability of the lieutenant governor of British Columbia, he might be called upon to execute the office and functions of the vice-regal incumbent in his capacity of administrator of the government of British Columbia. The incumbent in Government House in Victoria, Major-

General G.R. Pearkes, was an old friend of Sherwood's. Both were veterans of the Great War and the Second World War, and Sherwood had been the liaison officer between National Defence Headquarters and Pearkes' Pacific Command Headquarters during the latter stages of planning for the Kiska operation. As it happened, although the Letts were frequent visitors to Government House on formal occasions, Sherwood never needed to be called upon to fill the office.

As Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal and the presiding judge of that court when it sat, Sherwood dealt with a diversity of legal problems. This time, however, it was in the environment of an appellate court sitting in panels of three or five judges and concentrating on the correctness or otherwise of the trial court's application of legal principles.

Sherwood's tenure as Chief Justice of British Columbia was tragically short. On January 1964, while in Victoria attending the opening of the new session of the Legislature, he suffered a heart attack. As his old friend Arthur Lord reported,

> I was sitting next to [him] at the House opening when he turned to me and said: 'I'm feeling terrible.' I suggested to him that he should leave the floor and lie down for a while in the offices nearby. Sherwood said: 'No, I'll stick it out – I don't want to interrupt the ceremony.' So he sat through the whole, long Speech from the Throne, suffering.
>
> That was typical of him. He was one of the most self-effacing men I ever knew.[10]

Immediately after the ceremony, Sherwood was rushed to the hospital and it was while he was being examined there that the doctors discovered he had cancer. Although he recovered from his heart attack and was able to return to his home in Vancouver, he was unable to combat the cancer which ultimately claimed his life in July, just a few days before his sixty-ninth birthday.

When the word of his death spread, there was a sense of both loss and shock among the hundreds of friends he had made during his lifetime. Tributes to him appeared in all the city's newspapers. Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson said: 'I know of no Canadian who has served his country in war and peace with greater distinction and more unselfishly.'[11] Robert Bonner, then attorney general of British Columbia, remarked that 'his career was a model which young people in this province should study and on which they could pattern their own lives.' An editorial in the *Vancouver Sun* picked up the theme that Sherwood's life 'is an inspiration for young men and women.'

Sherwood's funeral was held at St. Andrew's-Wesley United

Church. It was completely filled to its 1,800 seat capacity with men and women from every walk of life.[12] In the city, flags flew at half mast, while inside the large church, Major the Reverend George Turpin gave the memorial address.

After the service, six of Sherwood's nephews carried his flower-draped coffin past a guard of justices of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal into the warm July sunlight. As it left, Pipe-Major G.R. Snow of the Irish Fusiliers struck up the lament, 'The Flowers of the Forest.' Slowly the congregation moved out of the church. Their grief during the service was evident, but outside, when they began to talk about Sherwood and the cherished memories they had of him, it is likely that they appreciated all the more the warmth, humour, and compassion of a man whose sense of duty and service they would never forget.[13]

NOTES

1 Letter, Sherwood to Evelyn, 3 July 1955.
2 Ibid., 26 June 1955.
3 Ibid., 3 July 1955.
4 Ibid.
5 An example was the period when Dr. N.A.M. MacKenzie was nearing retirement and a search was made for his replacement. See author's interview with the Hon. N.T. Nemetz, 14 Mar. 1990, 4.
6 He was equally delighted when Evelyn, in the following year, was granted an honorary doctor's degree by UBC.
7 Letter, Lett to Leon Koerner, 15 Dec. 1958, in UBC Archives, Special Collections, Leon Koerner Personal Papers, Folder No. 12.
8 While he was Chief Justice, the number of judges on the Supreme Court increased from nine to fourteen. The first of these appointments in Lett's time was Arthur Lord, his old friend from UBC. He was to follow Sherwood to the Court of Appeal as well.
9 Manuscript, 'Sherwood Lett and the BC Electric Case,' by D.M.M. Goldie, 11. The author is tremendously indebted to Mr. Goldie for this memorandum as well as his 'Memorandum With Respect to Sherwood Lett as a Judge.' The pages in this chapter describing Sherwood in this capacity have been based primarily on Goldie's own account.
10 *Vancouver Sun*, 25 July 1964, 11.
11 Ibid.
12 Services were held in St. Andrew's-Wesley rather than Sherwood's 'home' church, Shaughnessy Heights United Church, because the former had over three times the seating capacity of the latter. The Reverend

T.M. Badger, of Shaughnessy, conducted the service assisted by the Reverend George Turpin who, in his address, gave an excellent summation of Sherwood's life and personality. It is reproduced in its entirety in the appendix to this book.

13 After his death, 'The Sherwood Lett Memorial Scholarship' was endowed at the University of British Columbia by his friends and colleagues. Later, one of the university's residences was named after him as another tribute. As a matter of interest, his wife, Evelyn, had a playing field named after her in 1987.

Appendix

Address
Major the Reverend George Turpin, DD*

The flags on public buildings throughout our Province have been flying at 'half Mast' during the past days and the name of the man so honoured has been spoken with deepest respect and genuine affection. His name has appeared in the press and his titles and honours were recorded.

And here, on this day we have gathered to share in a fellowship of sympathy and remembrance and to offer prayers of thanksgiving for the life and service of the Chief Justice of the Province of British Columbia – Brigadier Sherwood Lett, Commander of the Order of the British Empire, Distinguished Service Order, Military Cross, Canadian Decoration, Efficiency Decoration, Doctor of Laws, Bachelor of Arts.

To the official tributes which have been and are being paid, we who have gathered here today add our personal acknowledgments of the value of the life and service of our friend and comrade, the Chief Justice.

We remember his loyalty as Canadian – as Citizen and Churchman.

We remember him as World Citizen, fulfilling in his life the hopes and dreams of the one who founded the Rhodes Scholarships with the aim of training an elite in our Empire and Commonwealth to serve as World Citizens.

His mature mind, youthful spirit and deep interest in youth led him into close association with his beloved University of British Columbia, serving in many ways – the student body, Alma Mater Society, Senate and Board of Governors; he was named Great Trekker and Chancellor.

We remember the Chief Justice as one who in peace and war trained with his beloved regiment, the Irish Fusiliers, in order to serve and to lead. Who, because he valued so highly our way of life, our institu-

tions as they are based on Freedom, Justice, and disciplined lives, was willing to lay down his life in defence of this way of life. In this service he was grievously wounded. On recovery from his wounds he felt that he was spared in order to serve.

As Chief Justice of the Province of British Columbia he brought to this position, in addition to training and experience, special qualities of life, keenness of mind and concentration of energy. He accepted, cherished and enriched the great traditions of the legal profession and the judiciary.

Time does not allow the enumerating of the many ways he has served or of the many organizations to which he has given leadership or of the details of his many actions which showed his respect and affection for the officers and men serving in the various police forces, defence and public safety departments and civil service.

This we must say:

Chief Justice Lett was a Tower of Strength in all the duties and decisions of High Office – he was a radiant personality in all human contacts and in times of relaxed fellowship.

Best of all, we remember Chief Justice Sherwood Lett for his warm and generous friendship. Of him – Canadian, World Citizen, Soldier, Scholar, Chief Justice, Friend – it can be said that he served to the uttermost and one can almost hear him say as he passed from this life into the keeping of the Eternal Lord: 'Here my powers end, and here my heart stops beating.'

Surely! Such a life and the memory of it calls for a special act of remembrance and rededication on our part; therefore, I ask you all to please stand with me for a moment of remembrance and prayer.

For every precious memory,
  for all enduring hopes,
and for the ties which bind us
  to the unseen world,
we give Thee thanks, eternal Father. Amen.

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* Address delivered during the service for Chief Justice of the Province of British Columbia, Brigadier Sherwood Lett, held 28 July 1964, at St. Andrew's-Wesley Church in Vancouver

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ours. Instrumental in changing the face of the province, from his work on legal details for development of the Lions Gate Bridge to perhaps his most famous case of all, that of the BC Electric dispute, he remained a man of integrity and enthusiasm, always ready to accept life's challenges. He also played a key role in establishing UBC's Faculty of Law, and was one of the earliest visionaries to see the necessity of an Asian Studies Department. Before his death in 1964, Sherwood Lett had received almost every possible accolade, including that of being named Chief Justice of British Columbia. Yet notwithstanding all the honours, the man described in Reginald Roy's book is one with time and love for his family, a man who enjoyed athletic pursuits, a man with a warm and gregarious nature.

It is fitting that on this, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the graduation of UBC's first Bachelor of Arts students, the most distinguished member of the charter class, Sherwood Lett, should be honoured with this publication.

REGINALD H. ROY is a professor emeritus in the Department of History at the University of Victoria.

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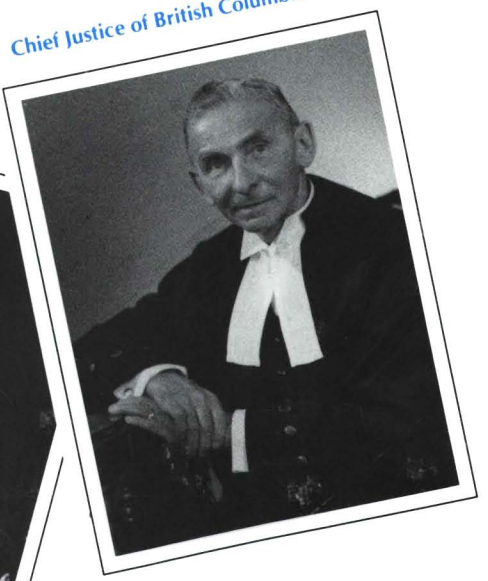
SHERWOOD LETT

His Life and Times

THIS IS THE STORY OF A REMARKABLE BRITISH COLUMBIAN. A VETERAN OF THE FIRST AND SECOND WORLD WARS, HE WAS PROMOTED FROM LIEUTENANT TO BRIGADIER AND RECEIVED MANY AWARDS FOR HIS BRAVERY AND LEADERSHIP. AS ONE OF THE FIRST STUDENTS AT UBC, HE WON A RHODES SCHOLARSHIP, SERVED ON THE SENATE AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS, AND WAS LATER ELECTED CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY. AND AS A LAWYER TRAINED AT OXFORD, HE ROSE TO THE CHIEF JUSTICESHIP OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Brigadier Sherwood Lett, CBE, DSO, MC

Chief Justice of British Columbia



Chancellor of UBC