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Directorate of History
National Defence Headquarters
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0K2

July 1986

REPORT NO. 82
HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)
ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Operations in Northern Russia,
1918-1919

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Operations in Northern Russia.
1918-1919

1. A campaign, not without significance in the history of the First World War, took place in Northern Russia During 1918 and 1919 as a result of Allied intervention in that region. Because of Canadian participation, this Report gives a brief account of operations there. Fighting continued long after the war against the Central Powers had ended. At first it was “a side show... a hasty improvisation conceived without much previous consideration by either political or military experts, almost in desperation... to prevent the Germans from winning the war in France.” (Edmund Ironside, Archangel 1918-19 (London, 1953), 192.) Later, after the armistice with Germany, Allied operations took the form of holding off Russian Bolshevik attacks until White Russian forces could be sufficiently built up to stand alone.

REASONS FOR ALLIED INTERVENTION

2. The Treaty of Brest Litovsk signed by Lenin with the Germans 3 March 1918, raised grave fears in the minds of Allied strategists. No early end to the war could at that time be foreseen. Germany was, as a result of the treaty, at liberty to transfer further bodies of troops from East to West, and if this happened, the military situation in France would be seriously endangered. A German army of 55,000 men under General Von der Goltz was in Finland ostensibly to counteract Russian Bolshevik forces which had invaded that country during January 1918. It appeared that this German force could seize at will the ice-free port of Murmansk, the use of which as a submarine base would have dire results on the British convoy system, as naval defenses in the Straits of Dover could then be turned. “Here was the real and pressing danger which brought about the appearance of Allied troops in North Russia.” (Ibid., 17)
3. After Brest Litovsk, the British reacted swiftly. In April, a body of 150 marines was put ashore at Murmansk, followed by 370 more in May. With the co-operation of local Finns who were opposed to the Germans, this small force occupied the barracks close to the port, but was not strong enough to do more. (Ibid.)
4. Meanwhile, on 3 April, Allied ambassadors and military representatives in Russia recommended an intervention in Northern Russia.* (Leonid I. Strakhovsky, Intervention at Archangel (Princeton, 1944) 2.) The Supreme War Council at Versailles considered the matter. There were other reasons for intervention besides those already given. A large Czech corps of 70,000 men, formed from refugees and deserters, was now in the center of Siberia working its way to Vladivostok. Would not a landing in Northern Russia encourage them to turn back? Thus an eastern front would be re-formed and the effect would be felt quickly in France. There was a feeling that great support might be expected in the north from the sturdy and independent peasants. Furthermore, vast quantities of military equipment reported to be at Archangel must be saved from the Germans. (Archangel, 18-19.) On 3 June, the Allied

* They also recommended intervention in Siberia, from the Pacific. This was subsequently carried out by the Allies and a Canadian contingent was included. See [Report No. 83](#), Historical Section (G.S.), Army Headquarters.

Council with this in mind, sanctioned the dispatch under British command of a military expedition at once to Murmansk, and later, (or if possible simultaneously) to the White Sea port of Archangel, 370 miles to the south-east. (Intervention at Archangel, 2-3.)

ALLIED TROOPS AT MURMANSK AND ARCHANGEL

5. The British had anticipated intervention. The Finns, aided by the Germans, were rapidly gaining supremacy in Finland and it was obvious that the small force already at Murmansk must be strengthened. (Archangel, 17). A force, known as “Syren”, was to land there under the command of Major-General C.M.M. Maynard. In addition, a British Mission under Major-General F.C. Poole to be known as “Elope” was intended for Archangel, where it would help the muster anti-Bolshevik forces into trained formations. (Ibid., 17-18)
6. As early as 16 May 1918 a conference was held at the War Office to consider the composition of the “Elope” party. It was decided that this should not exceed 500 all ranks, none of whom need be fit for general service. A Canadian contribution of five officers and eleven N.C.Os. was suggested. (“Proceedings of Conference”, n.d., O.M.F.C. (G.S.) file A-77-33.) On 27 May, Sir Edward Kemp, Minister Overseas Military Forces of Canada, agreed to the suggestion, and the officers and men were obtained from units stationed in England. (Minute, initialed “A.E.K.”, from Brig.-Gen. H.F. McDonald to G.O.C., 24 May 18; McDonald to C.G.S., O.M.F.C., 31 May 18; ibid.) The party sailed for Russia in June. (C.G.S., O.M.F.C. to Minister, O.M.F.C., 24 Feb 19, O.M.F.C (G.S.) file o-10-36, Vol. 1.)
7. The “Syren” force of 600 British infantry, plus a machine gun company and a half-company of Royal Engineers, together with the “Elope” party, were off Murmansk on the 23 June as part of an Allied squadron consisting of two British, two White Russian, one American, and one French warship, all under British command. Both forces landed at Murmansk, thus averting the immediate threat to that port, but it was not until 31 July that a naval force, carrying 500 French infantry and 100 British marines under General Poole, attacked Archangel, and with the help of a local anti-Bolshevik uprising, succeeded in taking over the town. The wharves, captured intact, yielded far less in the way of useful stores than had been expected. It was now possible to transfer the “Elope” party from Murmansk to Archangel during August. Within two months of landing at Archangel, much had been accomplished. A large area of the northern region was cleared of Bolsheviks, and land communications were established with General Maynard’s force along the Murmansk-Petrograd* Railway. The military objectives, both at Murmansk and Archangel, had been achieved with few casualties. (Archangel, 17-21.)
8. During July the question of reinforcing the “Syren” force arose; on 12 July 1918 Canada was asked if she could provide an infantry battalion, as troops with experience of a rigorous climate were required. This implied, as opposed to the first request for a Canadian contribution to the “Elope” party, that the men must be fit for general service; and since that would reduce Canadian ability to reinforce the western theatre, the invitation was declined. (Letter, Assistant Secretary, War Office, to Secretary O.M.F.C., 12 Jul 18; letter, A.G., O.M.F.C. to Secretary

* Later Leningrad.

War Office 20 Jul 18; O.M.F.C. (G.S.) file A-77-33. “Borden Papers”, letter from Kemp to Borden, 1 Aug 18, P.A.C. file O.C. 518(1)).

9. On the 30th, the War Office further requested 18 Canadian officers and 70 N.C.Os. for a special mobile force being formed in the Murmansk area from Allied contingents and local levies. Infantry, machine gun and artillery personnel were required to act first as instructors, and later for regimental or administrative duties in the units raised. A total of 92 officers and N.C.Os. – all volunteers -- commanded by Lieut.-Colonel J.E. Lockie, sailed from Leith, Scotland, for Murmansk on 17 September. (Letter from War Office to O.M.F.C., 30 Jul 18; letter from C.G.S., O.M.F.C., to Minister, 24 Feb 19; O.M.F.C. (G.S.) file o-10-36. “Borden Papers”, letter form Borden to Kemp, 2 Aug 18, P.A.C. file O.C. 518(1).)

10. This was not the last request for Canadian troops to serve in Northern Russia. The United States failed to include artillery in its Archangel contingent. On 3 August Canada was asked to provide two batteries. The 16th Brigade, C.F.A., consisting of the 67th and 68th Batteries, was formed from the Canadian Reserve Artillery and left Dundee for Archangel on 20 September. Its strength was 18 officers and 469 other ranks; almost all had been on the Western Front and all elected to serve in Russia. Throughout the voyage the commander, Lieut.-Colonel C.H.L. Sharman, shared a table with Major-General W.E. Ironside, the British officer who was soon to succeed General Poole. (Letter from War Office to O.M.F.G., 3 Aug 18; letter C.G.S., O.M.F.G. to Minister, O.M.F.G., 24 Feb 19; O.M.F.G. (G.S.) file o-10-36. Report of the Ministry, O.M.F.G., 1918, 21-2. Unofficial Diary, 16th Brigade C.F.A., 21 Sep 18. Archangel, 26.)

11. Allied forces, both at Murmansk and Archangel, were very mixed. Contingents were drawn from Britain, the United States, Italy, France, and Canada. These were joined by anti-Bolshevik Russians in both areas; and at Murmansk Finns and Karelians worked with the Allies, together with Serbians who had fought their way north from Odessa. An estimate of contributions compiled in December 1918, gave the following distribution:

	Murmansk	Archangel
British and Canadian	6,832	6,293
American	-	5,302
French	731	1,686
Italian	1,251	-
Serbian	1,220	-
Russian and other locally raised troops	4,441	2,715
Totals	14,475	15,897

(Tel. From War Office, London, to C.G.S. Ottawa, 9 Dec 18, file “Archangel Party,” D.H.S. Folder 15]).

The locally recruited Russian forces fluctuated considerably through recruitment and defections, but total forces at Murmansk and Archangel at no time exceeded 35,000 men. (Lt.-Col. H.F. Wood, “Adventure in North Russia”, the Canadian Army Journal, October 1957, 116.)

12. The total Canadian contribution, including both artillery and instructional personnel at Archangel and Murmansk, was 41 officers and 544 other ranks.
13. The inhabitants of Northern Russia welcomed the Allied forces. At Archangel they expelled the Bolsheviks and set up a local administration, establishing the seat of the Provisional Northern Government there under President Nicholas V. Chaikovsky, with Colonel B.A. Douroff as Governor-General. In January 1919 Chaikovsky left for Paris to take his seat on the White (anti-Bolshevik) Russian Council there. He was succeeded by Mr. P.J. Zoubov, while Douroff was succeeded as Governor-General by Lieut. General Eugene K. Miller, a White Russian of Baltic origin, on 8 February. The provisional government co-operated fully with the Allies. (Winston S. Churchill, The Aftermath, (New York, 1929). 88. Archangel, 37-8, 105, 107. Intervention at Archangel, 132.
14. Operations in the two areas were carried out independently of each other. It is not possible in a limited account of the Northern Russia affair to record in detail the moves and counter moves which occurred in both commands. Because Canadian units were employed as such in the Archangel operations, emphasis will be placed on that campaign. Conditions were similar in both theatres, and the over-all picture at Archangel applies generally to Murmansk.

THE SITUATION AT ARCHANGEL

15. The Canadian field brigade reached Archangel on 1 October and disembarked two days later; General Ironside arrived in the same convoy, and thus had a fortnight with General Poole before taking over command from him. Ironside found that the Bolsheviks, after their expulsion from Archangel, had been closely pursued by Allied troops "to make elbow-room for the enlistment of as many Russians as possible during the winter." In the face of stiffening Bolshevik resistance, Poole's force was now consolidating "in order to make his defence secure for the ordeal which was to come." (Archangel, 27-8) Five columns had been pushed forward. Of the two main columns, one had reached a point 100 miles down the Vologda Railway, which ran due south from Archangel. The second was upstream of the confluence of the Dvina and Vaga Rivers, south-east of Archangel, with forces on both these waterways, these along the Vaga being closer to the railway. This column -- about 260 miles from Archangel -- was the most advanced, due to the aid given by a monitor of the Royal Navy, Brig.-General R.G. Finlayson, a British officer, commanded both columns -- British, French, American and Russian troops -- despite the intervening distance which, in the event of advance, would widen further. Two smaller columns protected the flanks of the railway column, at the Yomtsa River on the east and Onega (on the White Sea) on the west. The fifth column, a minor one, was at Pinoga, on the river of that name, a hundred miles east of Archangel. (Ibid., 27-8, 31, 118. N.R.E.F., 16th Brigade C.F.A. (Toronto, n.d.), 6.)
16. The front was not continuous; in fact, the actual front of the Vologda railway column amounted to little more than a thousand yards. The troops were housed in blockhouses protected by wire. Administrative arrangements were complicated in that all supplies, except for the railway column, must be brought up by water and then be transferred to carts. Snow would necessitate the use of sleighs to reach the advanced positions. Russian ponies and sleighs had not as yet been organised, a point of immediate concern to Ironside. Meanwhile it was necessary to ship

as much of the winter supplies as possible before ice sealed the rivers. Communications between the isolated columns in a vast forest -- a swamp in early and late summer, with deep snow in winter -- were extremely difficult. The Canadians were the only troops trained in skiing or snow shoeing, and these were not as yet brought forward. (Archangel, 29-31.)

17. Before assuming command, Ironside learned from the Dvina and Railway columns that the local population was apathetic, evincing no desire to fight the Bolsheviks. On his return to Archangel, he discussed with General Poole the subject of raising Russian forces, and inspected two local units -- the Slavo-British Allied Legion numbering 500 men, all volunteers, and the Polish Legion. The former "did not lend themselves to being formed into a fighting unit"; but the latter, 300 strong, "would very soon be ready to take their place in the line." The reports of Allied Liaison officers, "unanimous in saying that little was being done" by the Provisional Government to raise local forces, appeared to be correct. Ironside resolved to approach the Government on the subject as a matter of supreme importance. (Ibid., 29, 35-6).
18. Despite advances made, the overall situation was not reassuring. A great area was held by very few troops. An Arctic winter approached, its effect on men and weapons unpredictable. One thing was certain -- ice would shut off Archangel from Europe all winter, so the force must subsist on what it had. The tenuous columns, thrust forward as they were and vulnerable to Bolshevik infiltration, caused most concern. "Our positions would have to be wired in all round and made into fortified areas, which could hold out until relieved." (Ibid., 29, 30, 32).
19. Ironside's immediate decisions were these: in view of transport difficulties in the winter, the two main columns must be placed under separate commands. Finlayson was to command on the Dvina, the more important column, and another commander for the railway column would have to be found. The two Canadian batteries were to strengthen the Dvina forces urgently. The War Office should send out 60-pounder guns on the next ship. Finally, more locally raised troops must be found. In an effort to recruit more Russians, Ironside visited the gaols of Archangel during October and began to expand into a battalion a company of the Slavo-British Allied Legion under Capt. Dyer, one of the Canadian Instructors. This unit was later known as "the Dyer battalion" in honour of its founder, subsequently killed in action on the Dvina front. (Ibid., 33, 35, 43-5. Intervention at Archangel, 196).

OPERATIONS OF THE CANADIAN FIELD BRIGADE

20. The 16th Brigade C.F.A. was temporarily split, three officers and 26 men joining the Vologda railway column to man an armoured train until January 1919. The 68th Battery was not complete, having left the guns of one section at Dundee. A party under Major W.C. Hyde, the battery commander, was detached to Seletski in support of American infantry of the minor column operating on the Yemtsa river between the River Dvina and the railway. It was not until December that this party rejoined the brigade, leaving one section in action until April, when the brigade was complete again. Meanwhile the balance of the brigade, consisting of the 67th Battery and what was left of the 68th Battery, proceeded by barge to the junction of the Dvina and Vaga Rivers. Columns were fighting about 40 and 70 miles respectively up each of these rivers. The 67th Battery was detailed to the Dvina River, and the truncated 68th to Shenkursk, the most southerly defended town on the Vaga. Lieut.-Colonel Sharman was appointed C.R.A. to the Dvina Force comprising both river-columns. (N.R.E.F., 16th Brigade C.F.A., 6-8, 30).
21. On 14 October, the 67th Battery (Major F.F. Arnoldi) was deployed with one section on the left bank of the Dvina in the village of Tulgas, and one opposite on the right bank at Kurgomen. "We found we had facing us some 22 armed water craft, including several gunboats armed with 6" and 4.1" naval guns... three batteries of field guns and as far as we could find out, approximately 3,500 troops facing our force of one six gun 18 pounder battery... one naval 5.1 gun mounted on an old iron barge,... and a grand total of between 900 and 1,000 all ranks." (Ibid., 17).
22. Worse than this disparity in numbers was the fact that the Canadians were hopelessly out-ranged. The naval gun barge kept the enemy "at respectful range" until 20 October, when it was sunk by a Bolshevik naval gun. The Bolsheviks brought craft forward "within easy range for their guns, yet well out of range of our 18 pounders, and cheerfully shelled us over open sights." Even the field guns which the enemy brought into action outdistanced Canadian guns;"... his field guns ranged up to 9,000 yards, while our old type buffer 18 pounder... was not graduated above 6,600..." Ice appeared on the river on 24 October, the naval craft were withdrawn, affording some respite until 10 November, when mild weather permitted gunboats to reappear as a prelude to the Bolshevik attack on Tulgas the next day. (Ibid.)
23. The 11th was a day memorable in the annals of the Canadian artillery. At daybreak a heavy enemy bombardment opened, followed at eight o'clock by a frontal Bolshevik infantry attack. The right section guns were immediately engaged in support of the Allied infantry. An hour later, a large body of enemy infantry about 600 strong, pushed through the woods in the rear of the Canadian guns, to be discovered by the twenty drivers of the section when only 200 yards distant. Armed with rifles the drivers rushed out, temporarily checking the Bolshevik advance, then fell back to the gun pits, fighting all the way. Their action gave warning to the gun crews, firing to the front, so that one gun was run out of its pit, and reversed, opening up on the enemy. Due to a rise in ground in front of the gun, the Bolsheviks were able to advance within a hundred yards of the pits, where they formed a circle and opened up with machine guns and rifles, while gunboats kept up a continual bombardment from the river. A platoon of The Royal Scots was sent to assist the guns, and throughout the day the little force held the enemy at bay

until late afternoon, when dusk permitted the second gun to be reversed -- impossible before because of sniping. The enemy withdrew into the woods, leaving sixty dead and wounded including one battalion commander, in Canadian hands. In this action two Canadians -- a corporal and a driver -- and ten Scots were killed. By 15 November the enemy, having failed to take Tulgas, had retired to his previous positions. Of the Canadian action Colonel Sharman said "General Ironside told me... that the exploit of the 67th Battery at Tulgas on November 11, when the drivers saved the guns... is one which has only occurred twice before in the history of British Artillery, once in the South African War and once in 1811." One Military Cross, three Distinguished Conduct Medals, and three Military Medals were awarded.* (*Ibid.*, 17, 19. Leonid I. Strakhovsky, "The Canadian Artillery Brigade in North Russia, 1918-1919", *The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. xxxix, No. 2, June 1958, 135-6. W.D. 16th Bde C.F.A., 2 Dec 18.)

24. The battery settled in for the winter, using defensive wire around the gun positions as a precaution against further infiltration. Positions remained static. To offset superior Bolshevik ranges, guns were pushed forward of outposts "without any possible means of support out in the open... Any time we were worried by...[his guns] during the winter, they were effectively dealt with in this way." The arrival in January of a section of 4.5 howitzers and of two 60-pounders on 3 April at last put the Bolsheviks within range of the Canadians. (*N.R.E.F.*, 19, 21, 23).
25. In the meantime, the Solotski detachment of the 68th Battery had seen constant action, although there were no major operations until 30 December. On that date two companies of the 339th U.S. Infantry Regiment, supported by a company of the French Foreign Legion, attempted to drive the Bolsheviks out of Kadish, situated at the river-crossing of the Yemtsa River about twenty miles upstream of Solotski. Kadish was cleared, but next day the Bolsheviks counter-attacked in force. Two sections of the battery in Kadish not only "did not surrender the position", but were instrumental in driving off the enemy. (*Ibid.*, 34. Strakhovsky, "The Canadian Artillery Brigade in North Russia", 140.).
26. The armoured train manned by Canadian gunners under the command of a British naval officer as part of the Vologda railway column was composed, in order, of a flat car with sandbag machine gun emplacements, a coal car mounting an 18 pounder and machine guns, the locomotive, a second coal car with two naval pieces and machine guns mounted, and cars for accommodation. During October the railway column achieved a slight advance. And the position reached was maintained while the Canadians were on this front. In January the gunners rejoined the 68th Battery which, with the exception of the Seletski detachment, was not at Shenkursk on the Vaga. (*N.R.E.F.*, 49-50.)
27. On 19 January the Bolsheviks, ordered to start a general offensive to drive the Allies out of Archangel, attacked American and Russian troops at Shenkursk. It was during this engagement that Capt. O.A. Mowat of 68th Battery was wounded, and later died. The town was practically surrounded; only one exit remained open, through which the Allies retreated 25 January to a new defensive position on the Vaga thirty miles north at Kitsa. Of the retreat,

* A nominal roll, showing all awards to the brigade, is appended.

Ironside said “Great praise is... due to the Canadian battery, which brought their guns safely through the long march.” (Archangel, 103. Strakhovsky, “The Canadian Artillery Brigade”, 140-1.)

WINTER CONDITIONS – MORALE – THE GENERAL ARMISTICE

28. The enemy did not follow up his success at Shenkursk, but his morale was high while that of the Allies was correspondingly lowered. Though conditions favoured the defensive – no attack could be long, and cover must be secured at the end of it – it was difficult to keep up the spirits of the men if they were never to leave the security of the blockhouses. “We had to sit passively awaiting attack... which is never satisfactory for any troops”, said Ironside. In the blockhouses the manipulation of arms was easy; in the open it was a different matter. “Woollen gloves with a separate compartment for the trigger finger were essential. When the fingers became numbed there were gauntlets strung round the soldier’s neck, into which they could be thrust until the circulation came back. To touch metal with the bare hand was like grasping a piece of red-hot iron... If a machine-gun jammed, the only way of getting it going again was by taking it apart and boiling it. This precluded their use in the open.” (Archangel, 66, 86, 91. Strakhovsky, “The Canadian Artillery Brigade”, 141). The hours of darkness, twenty out of twenty-four, were telling on the men, but above it all it was the seeming purposelessness of their mission in Northern Russia which affected and dispirited the troops.
29. With the Armistice of 11 November 1918, the original aims had disappeared. Why then were troops still fighting an enemy with whom they were not at war? No explanation was ever offered to the troops; though it must have been obvious to them that at the time of the armistice the port of Archangel was ice-bound, forcing them whether they liked it or not to stay and fight in Northern Russia throughout the winter. Their operations had, however unwittingly, become a phase of the Russian Civil War and there were clamorous outcries in the British Press for the soldiers’ return. Ironside himself had no clear orders “... by the middle of January I still had no definite instructions as to the future policy of the Archangel force when the thaw came.” (Archangel, 106.) In a general review of the situation in Russia which he received from the War Office at the end of April, he was still left without instructions, though it was now clear that his main objective was to be “a peaceful evacuation of all Allied forces before the coming winter.” (Ibid., 129.) The decision to evacuate was in fact taken in March. The Supreme Council in Paris lacked any unity of purpose towards the Russian Civil War, (Ibid., 194) and in the absence of a common policy “on 4 March the War Cabinet decided to press the Allied Representatives... to agree to the early evacuation of North Russia by the Allied troops.” (Aftermath, 248).
30. Meanwhile the disaffection of the troops revealed itself in mutinies. On February 26, a British battalion sent from Murmansk to reinforce Ironside’s force, refused to proceed to the front. The trouble was quickly suppressed, the battalion marching the same day. (Archangel, 112). A company of French Colonials refused to go to the front at the beginning of March, and this incident was followed at the end of the month by the refusal of an American company to return to the forward posts. (Intervention at Archangel, 162-3.) One section of the Canadian Field

Brigade refused to obey orders.* (Letter from Colonel Sharman to C.G.S., 13 Apr 19, cited in Precis of Correspondence relative to North Russian Force” prepared for Sir Robert Borden, 17 May 19, “Borden Papers”, P.A.C. file OC 518(2).).

31. During February neither the 67th nor the 68th Battery had any serious engagement. On 1 March, the 68th Battery participated gallantly in the defence of Vistavka, a forward outpost of Kitsa which after the fall of Shenkursk was the advanced position on the river Vaga; and on 9 March it helped repulse a stronger attack. The Seletski detachment rejoined this battery during April “and this was most welcome news.” In March, the 67th Battery, still in position at Tulgas and Kurgomen on the Dvina, handed over the Tulgas side of the river to a Russian battery hitherto “scattered amongst us for safety and training purposes”. Tulgas was defended by a force of Russian infantry. On April 25, the Russian infantry mutinied, killing seven officers, and handed Tulgas over to the enemy. The Russian battery did not join the mutineers, but joined the Canadian battery, bringing their guns with them. “One of the proudest things on which the 67th Battery can look back [is] that the Russian battery, which they had “mothered” and trained by precept and example... should stand firm.” The loss of Tulgas created a most precarious position for the Canadians at Kurgomen. The position lost, only 2500 yards away, “were considerably higher” and the Bolsheviks “could see all our guns without any difficulty.” The enemy used every means, such as his river flotilla, to capture Kurgomen; but with the clearing of the ice two British gunboats mounting 6-inch guns came upstream from Archangel. Joint efforts on land and water forced the Bolsheviks back, and Tulgas was recaptured on 18 May. (N.R.E.F., 12, 23, 25-29.)

THE CANADIAN WITHDRAW

32. On that day the Canadian Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden) addressed the British Secretary of State for War (Mr. Churchill) insisting that the Canadians should be withdrawn from Northern Russia immediately. Two previous requests in March had elicited the information that this could not be possible before the early summer because of ice. In his letter Borden emphasised that “the demobilisation of the Canadian Corps and the withdrawal of Canadian troops from Siberia render any further continuance of our forces at Archangel absolutely impracticable,” and pointed out that the port of Archangel was now open to navigation. The same day Borden wrote to Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, enclosing a copy of his letter to Churchill, and emphasising his request. (Letters, Borden to Churchill, and Borden to Lloyd George, 18 May 19. “Borden Papers”, P.A.C. file OC 518(2).)
33. His wishes were at once complied with in the case of the 16th Field Brigade, which was relieved in little over two weeks. This was possible through the dispatch from England of a relieving force of two brigades, each with a battery of howitzers, which arrived on 27 May and 5 June respectively, and by putting further Russian forces in the line. The Provisional Government was enlisting men more quickly. Numbers grew from a monthly total of 70 in September 1918, to 1894 in October, and by the end of April in the following year General Miller, the Russian Governor General, had organised a force of 16,000 men. (Archangel, 94,

* It is not known what action was taken. War Diaries (Brigade H.Q., 67 & 68 Batteries) are missing for this period in April, though all continue in May.)

127, 140-1, 147.) There were mutinies, notably that of the Dyer battalion of the Slavo-British Legion on 7 July, followed by a mutiny of the Onega column, now entirely Russian, where all positions were handed over to the Bolsheviks. Elsewhere, Russians fought steadily and well and there was hope they would hold Northern Russia for the anti-Bolsheviks after the evacuation of the Allies. (*Ibid.*, 152, 156, 158, 161, 164, 172.)

34. On 11 June, at Archangel, General Miller inspected a farewell parade of the brigade. He addressed the troops and, in the words of Colonel Sharman,

informed them that his heartfelt thanks went out to the Government of Canada for the magnificent work of their troops. Although four of the officers had been awarded Russian Decorations during the winter, he stated that he would not allow a single officer of the Brigade to leave Russia without some mark of appreciation from his Government. All officers not previously decorated were then awarded the Order of St. Anne or the Order of St. Stanislaus. The Governor-General also presented to the Brigade ten St. George's Crosses and ten St. George's Medals (The Russian equivalent to the Victoria Cross and D.C.M. respectively). These were given to the men in recognition of their splendid work and following the Russian custom, the men of each Battery chose the ten bravest...

(*N.R.E.F.*, 12)

Ironside also addressed the men; the Canadian commander went on to say that "General Ironside, the Commander-in-Chief... told them... what the Canadian Artillery had meant to him during the winter. Over and over again the C.F.A. had saved the force from destruction and the highest traditions of the Canadian Corps had been fully maintained." (*Ibid.*)

35. Canadian casualty figures for the campaign were: killed in action, five; died of wounds, one; died of sickness, one. (*Ibid.*, frontispiece.)
36. The brigade embarked 11 June for England, followed by the party from Murmansk, retained with Canada's approval in response to an appeal by Maynard, and the instructional party from Archangel; both were evacuated by September 1919, thus ending a most unique experience in the history of the Canadian Armed Forces. (*Ibid.*, 12. Letter from C.C.S. to Ministry of O.M.F.C., 26 Aug 19, H.Q. file 4-21, "Murmansk Force (Syren Party)." [D.H.S. Folder 15]. Tel from Churchill to C.G.S., 21 Jul 19. "Borden Papers", P.A.C. file OC 518(2).)

THE ALLIED EVACUATION

37. The overall situation in the Archangel sector of Russia was now this. Troops who had fought throughout the winter had been withdrawn, and in June the relieving force and the Russians were holding the line, which was much the same as during 1918. On 18 November 1918 Admiral Alexander V. Kolchak had set up a Government at Omsk and assumed command of all the White armies in Russia. There was hope that the Czech Corps would strike through the Archangel from Siberia, thus uniting the northern and eastern fronts; but Kolchak quarrelled with the Czechs, and only one of their leaders, General G.R. Gaida, supported him. Of

Kolchak's semi-independent armies, only Gaida's wanted to make a junction with the Allies at Archangel. The others pursued different objectives; as a result, despite success on all fronts up to the middle of 1919, all failed eventually and had to retreat. Gaida, as early as 24 December 1918, had advanced to within 400 miles of Ironside's nearest posts on the Dvina; but in June 1919, when Archangel was open and fresh troops were arriving, he was falling back to the Urals. (Archangel, 87-9.)

38. There was now no alternative to turning over the Archangel and Murmansk areas to the local Russian forces before the evacuation of all Allied forces; the War Office sent out General Lord Rawlinson on 4 August to supervise this. Rawlinson had further reinforcements from Britain at his disposition: three additional infantry battalions; one marine battalion; one machine-gun battalion; two batteries of artillery; a field company of engineers, and five tanks. Powerful naval forces, including monitors which could ascend the Dvina river, also came and ample shipping. Rawlinson launched offensives to cover evacuation in both theatres. Both were successful. That in the Archangel area, carried out by British and Russian troops under Ironside, began 10 August on the Dvina front. It resulted in the development and destruction of the whole Bolshevik front, and the capture of 3000 prisoners at a cost of 145 killed and wounded. (Ibid., 167-8. Aftermath, 251-2.) "The enemy having been temporarily paralysed, a swift and unmolested withdrawal was made" first to the inner defences which Ironside had established around Archangel during the previous winter, thence to the ships. Food and arms were left with General Miller and his Russian troops. The British evacuated by sea six thousand refugees who had elected to go. By 27 September the evacuation of Archangel was completed, followed on 12 October by that of Murmansk. "Those who remained to continue the civil war did so of their own free will... Safety was provided for every Russian man, woman and child who wishes to leave." (Aftermath, 252).
39. Nevertheless, the sequel was dismal. Russian forces at Archangel collapsed five months afterwards (Archangel, 187.) on 19 February, followed by those at Murmansk two days later. The soviet Government re-established its rule on the shores of the White Sea; and though General Miller escaped, mass executions of officers and leaders quenched the last hopes of anti-Bolshevik life and freedom in Northern Russia. (Intervention at Archangel, 253-4. Aftermath, 254).

CONCLUSION

40. What had Allied intervention accomplished? There are lessons to be learned from the campaigns in Northern Russia. Militarily, they were a success, since they foiled German designs to use the northern ports as submarine bases, and played their part in checking the flow of German troops from east to west. Politically, as support to the North Russian counter-revolution, they were a failure; Allied policy after the German collapse was singularly lacking. In no Allied country was there sufficient weight of public opinion to justify armed intervention against the Bolsheviks on a decisive scale. Forces committed were wholly inadequate to achieve a junction with the Czechs in the east; they could do little more than protect free Russians in a given locality. Thus, operations, which we now know to be wise, were wrecked by lack of aim and half-heartedness. (John Buchan, A History of the Great War, Vol 4, (London 1922), 295-6. Intervention at Archangel, 257-8. Archangel, 192.)

41. This report was compiled by Capt. J.A. Swettenham R.C.E.

(G.W.L. Nicholson) Colonel
Director Historical Section

Honours Awarded 16th Brigade CFA

BRITISH HONOURS

M.M.

C.M.G.

Col. C.H.L. Sharman, C.B.E.

BAR TO D.S.O.

Major F.F. Arnoldi, D.S.O.

MILITARY CROSS

Capt. W.J. Bradshaw

Capt. O.A. Mowat (deceased)

Lieut. J.S. McRae

Lieut. J.D. Winslow

Lieut. J. Roberts

Lieut. W.S. Newton

Lieut. S.C. Evans

BAR TO D.C.M.

302618 Bdr. W. Birkett, D.C.M.

42253 B.S.M. A. Frame, D.C.M., M.M.

D.C.M.

302618 Dvr. W. Birkett

34728 A/Sgt. F.J. Frape

41438 Sgt. W.F. Armstrong

300812 Cpl. F. Wheeler

87933 Cpl. R.L. Seaman

100340 Sig. J.N. Jordan

40103 B.S.M. T. Thompkinson

43800 Sgt. C.D. Winegard

85697 Bdr. C.H. Colwell

BAR TO M.M.

46869 Sgt. J.A. Beddow, M.M.

89096 Bdr. L.W. Dippell, M.M.

335115 Sig. R.A. Dunbar
85743 Gnr. F. Meehan
446031 Gnr. W. Maxwell
43840 Gnr. V.J. Cunningham
83866 Gnr. C. Meloney
1250730 Sig. A.E. Halladay
415400 Sig. W.M. Dowling
301697 Sgt. E.R. Skaife
305601 Cpl. P.L. Debney
334824 Gnr. T.J. O'Connell
91580 Bdr. J.M. Crockett
1251864 Gnr. C. Robertson
340248 Dvr. G. Watters
300364 Gnr. W. Perryman
335297 Gnr. J. McLean
40060 Sig. J.P. Breiter
301771 Cpl. T.B. Greaves
304085 Dvr. W.J. Donahue
41445 Sgt. A.S. Hicks
40186 Sgt. W.G. Higgins
305605 Cpl. W. Hughes
300746 Bdr. J.A. Francis
506279 Gnr. C.C. Cordell
332881 Gnr. C.S. Wilson
304579 A/Bdr. W.O. Cook
41459 Gnr. G.F. Atherton
65657 Gnr. J.W. Murphy
334756 Sig. W.R. Harrison
2040627 Sig. D.W. Buchanan
318988 Gnr. F.C. French
415354 Dvr. M. Kennedy
87350 Bdr. L. Armitage
85988 Sgt. E. Marshman
42091 Dvr. C. Hainer
315949 Sgt. C.A. Hugues
42613 Dvr. G. Worthington

M.S.M.

42050 B.Q.M.S. W. Rudge
5424 R.S.M. T. Hewitt
42944 F/Sgt. W.G. Fisher
40905 F/Sgt. E. Dunford

RUSSIAN HONOURS

ORDER OF ST. APOSTOLIC AND
GRAND DUKE VLADIMIR

(4th Class with Swords and Bow)

Col. C.H.L. Sharman, C.B.E. Major W.C.
Hyde, D.S.O.

ORDER OF ST. ANNE

Capt. J.A. Bruce, M.C. (3rd Class)
Lieut. J.D. Winslow, M.C. (3rd Class)
Capt. W.J. Bradshaw, M.C. (3rd Class)
Capt. A.a. Gillis, M.C. (3rd Class)
Capt. A. McCuasland, M.C. (3rd Class)
Capt. R.H. Gale (3rd Class)
Capt. H.V. Schwalm (3rd Class)
Capt. T.H. Rungerford (3rd Class)
Capt. W.J. Holliday (3rd Class)

ORDER OF ST. STANISLAS

Major F.F. Arnoldi, D.S.O. (2nd Class)
Major W.C. Hyde, D.S.O. (2nd Class)
Lieut. G.Y.L. Crossley (3rd Class)
Lieut. W.F.L. Edwards (3rd Class)
Lieut. S.C. Evans, M.C. (3rd Class)
Lieut. G.W. Hague (3rd Class)
Lieut. T.C. McConkey (3rd Class)
Lieut. J.S. McRae, M.C. (3rd Class)
Lieut. W.S. Newton, M.C. (3rd Class)
Lieut. J.R. Papineau (3rd Class)
Lieut. J. Roberts, M.C. (3rd Class)
Lieut. A.E.L. Wetmore (3rd Class)

ST. GEORGE'S CROSS

85671 Bdr. K.A. Walker, 67th

87292 Sgt. H.N. Taylor, 67th
89764 Bdr. E.A. Ingram, 67th
85988 Sgt. E. Marshman, 67th
42253 B.S.M. a.H. Frame, 67th
305605 Cpl. W. Hughes, 68th
348287 Gnr. E.G. Kerr, 68th
43799 A/Cpl. A.R. Winegard, 68th
337879 Gnr. T. Gray, 68th
302375 Cpl. W.P. Davy, 68th

ST. GEORGE'S MEDAL

323951 Bdr. D.J. Morris, 67th
42691 Gnr. C. Hainer, 67th
301550 Cpl. E.J. Peto, 67th
86009 Cpl. Ftr. D.M. Slipp, 67th
301957 Whr. J. McMaster, 67th
341272 Dvr. H.A.R. Wood, 68th
90128 Dvr. H. Stewart, 68th
336829 Sig. L.W. McCaw, 68th
324000 Gnr. J.M. Watson, 68th
336845 Bdr. G.E. Windsor, 68th

MEDAL OF ST. STANISLAS (1st Class)

5424 R.S.M. T. Hewitt, Headquarters

MEDAL OF ST. ANNE (2nd Class)

42119 S/Sgt. F. Forsyth, Headquarters

MEDAL OF ST. STANISLAS (2nd Class)

300620 A/Sgt. E.A.J. Wicks, HQ
304492 A/Sgt. M.J.E. Hudson, HQ
3131094 Sig. C.V. Walters, Headquarters