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'Ladies and Gentlemen, Soldiers and Artists:'

Canadian Military Entertainers, 1939-1946

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the role of Canadian military entertainment units during World War II, specifically those formed by the Navy, Air Force and Army from talent found amongst their own service personnel. These entertainment units, as part of Canada's active forces, toured extensively in Canada, the United Kingdom, Italy and Northwest Europe with an overall goal of increasing the morale of training, defence and combat troops while encouraging the enlistment of Canada's domestic populations in the war effort generally and the armed forces specifically. The focus here is on the development and organization of the units and their necessary supporting infrastructure, the material employed on stage, the actual working life of the entertainers themselves and the challenges they faced in that work, and the relationship performers had with both civilian and service personnel audiences. The formation of entertainment units boosted recruitment figures by glamorizing the forces through a satirization of military life, lowered, to an unmeasurable degree, battle exhaustion casualties, provided the performers with training in the arts and created audiences for live theater at home in Canada, thus encouraging the development of a distinctly Canadian culture.

The primary research on which this thesis is based includes personal interviews, a selection of secondary historical literature and the archives of the Department of Defence, specifically the war diaries of the units in question. The thesis begins with a brief statement of the historiographical tact taken and concludes with an analysis of the process whereby Canadian military entertainment units were phased out in the months following the surrender of Germany and the completion of the repatriation process.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

AC 1	Aircraftman First Class
AFHQ	Air Force Headquarters (Ottawa)
ASO	Auxiliary Services Officer
AVM	Air Vice-Marshall
CAS(O)	Canadian Army Show (Overseas)
CCS	Casualty Clearing Station
CSM	Company Sergeant Major (Army)
CRU	Canadian Reinforcement Unit
CWAC	Canadian Women's Army Corps
D.of P.	Department of Publicity (Air Force)
D.of P.R.	Department of Public Relations (Navy)
ENSA	Entertainments National Service Association (United Kingdom)
F/O	Flight Officer
FTS	Flight Training School
i/c	in charge
LAC	Leading Aircraftman
LAW	Leading Airwoman
L/Sea	Leading Seaman
NAAFI	Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes (United Kingdom)
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NWAC	North West Air Command
NWET	Northwest European Theater
O/C-C/O	Officer Commanding-Commanding Officer
USO	United Services Organization (United States)
PA	Public Archives of Canada
Pte.	Private (Army)
RCAF(WD)	Royal Canadian Air Force (Women's Division)
RCNVR	Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve
RG	Record Group
S/L	Squadron Leader (Air Force)
TC	Training Command (Air Force)
WRCNS	Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (Wrens)
W/O	Warrant Officer

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PREFACE

Introducing...

If there is one predominant theme in Canadian military historiography, it is one of Canadians being an "unmilitary people." Widely adopted as a perspective from which to analyze Canada's preparation for and its political development and performance in international conflicts after the publication of George Stanley's book Canada's Soldiers in 1954,[1] it has become the most popular assumption and jumping off point from which to study all issues arising from the Second World War. Stanley argued that, largely due to their relatively secure geographical location, Canadians "have displayed small interest in the problems of defense" and are basically a civilian population,[2] this despite having "borne arms" for three and a half centuries and being involved in several armed exploits that have both encouraged and then solidified Canada's status as a middle power on the international scene. Significantly, Stanley also details the important strides in skill Canadians took in waging war and points to a respectably steep learning curve in the practice of warfare. This theme makes the assumption that when called upon, via tenuous colonial ties, Canada will respond in force, ready or not. With a bit of experience, Canadians prove themselves to other more military nations out of necessity and then push issues of conflict from their minds as soon as possible. This indifference to military issues becomes apparent when the crisis is over. Stanley points out this easy transition again when he writes "No men have fought better; no men have as quickly discarded the skills of war to return to the farms and factories of peace."[3]

This assessment of Canadians as being "unmilitary" and prone to civilian status has influenced, both directly and indirectly, all war-related works in the history field and the consequences of being "unmilitary" is the primary focal point in Canadian military historiography. Bureaucratic confusion, political scrambling, the dearth of training and the lost opportunities for enhanced performance occupy the paths taken by most military historians outside the realm of pure chronological description. In no conflict's written history is this more true than that of World War II. A survey of some key texts in this

field reveals this connection clearly. John English explains that the overall disappointing performance of Canadians in Normandy was a direct result of Canadian senior commanders "neglect(ing) the essence of their profession and (forgetting) the lessons of 1914-1918." This occurs because in the interwar years they were preoccupied with keeping the small and inactive army afloat in difficult political waters.[4] English's conclusions and the precursor he describes can both be attributed to the reluctance of Canadians to give much time and attention to military topics. This is not to say that Canadian troops did not distinguish themselves when compared to other soldiers in both the Allied and Axis forces. Many explorations of WW II are unofficially dedicated to detailing the performance of Canadians on the front lines and recount a wide range of motifs including individual acts of heroism and the glorious history of a certain regiment or service. These books tend to be outside the realm of professionally done history, which focuses more on non-sharp end research, and is usually undertaken by past servicemen who wish to make known the micro-level of war. These types of works make the division between historical interpretation and eyewitness accounts quite clear, a division that is somewhat more blurred in Canadian women's war historiography.

If the inclusion of military history in the wider surveys of Canadian history is any indication, one would have to agree with the assumption that Canadians are still disinterested in military issues. Frustration seems to be the prevalent sentiment of most military and traditional historians as textbook after textbook is published with only the briefest of mentions of the significant Canadian involvement in international conflicts, an involvement that greatly influenced the population and government in a lasting way. While the tide may be turning as military history gains some exposure in popular culture through mainly American films and fiction, Anne Foreman's optimistic view that "students are interested" and "the public seems insatiable for military history" seems unfounded.[5] J.L. Granatstein, a respected Canadian historian, argues a much more convincing case for the lack of suitable inclusion that military history suffers as a result of recent political-correctness filters in the education system and describes a social climate that for various reasons, is becoming more and more "unmilitary."[6]

If military history is roundly ignored or inappropriately weighted in surveys of Canadian history, the history of women in the war effort is even less noticeably apparent in both general Canadian history and specifically military history. Women have been conspicuous by their absence in most of the military history completed thus far despite that history's typical reliance on non-front line perspectives. Because war is seen as exclusively within the male domain, women's role as active participants has been seen as outside the sphere of study. If they are mentioned within the text of Canadian research, one has to dig quite deeply to find references to them as mistresses and wives, the roles for which they are briefly mentioned in most work on this topic. While they have often been key to the careers of certain figures in the command structure of the Canadian Armed Forces, their impact in these types of roles is marginalized as well, as it is seen to be outside the primary objective of the research.[7] Even J.L. Granatstein neglects to discuss the mobilization of women's labor in his study of Canada's wartime government.[8] To gain information about women, the critical reader is forced to read between the lines of war history and without the benefit of some sort of context from which to do inferential reasoning. In this framework, discussions of wounded soldiers, for example, can be read for a subtext description of the work of female ambulance drivers and nursing sisters as well as the stress faced by a mother getting a telegram from National Defence and a wife's or girlfriend's uneasiness and uncertainty about the future. While seeking out the subtext within the typical Canadian military history is a start, it certainly does not come close to providing a clear picture of women in WW II.

Not only are women's efforts in WW II being ignored by Canadian military historians, they are largely overlooked by feminist historians, both internationally and nationally. This is not to assume that feminist historians are unconcerned with the issue of women and war generally - there have been some studies on women with military connections in the pre-confederation era and WW I for example.[9] Rather than focus on the roles women played ideologically near the front as nurses and administrators for example, feminist historians have examined how war affected women's lives and how conflict has demanded adjustments to proscribed gender roles. These studies deal predominantly with

home front happenings, including factory work, rationing, women for peace activism and changes in family structure.[10] It would seem that military history appears a hostile discipline for feminist research by historians, who perhaps view military infrastructure both past and present unassailably male in orientation.

Internationally, Canadian women are roundly excluded from the bulk of work done on women and the Second World War. Even British historians usually neglect to mention that Canadian women were part of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and involved in the Women's Land Army, for example, let alone do comparative research amongst the Allied forces in regards to women's involvement. As a middle power, Canada seems to have escaped the bulk of comparative work done on gender roles and propaganda for example, with historians more likely to include Britain, America or German as the primary research areas.[11] By contrast, Canadian historians are well behind British and Australian historians in chronicling their women's involvement in the national war effort.

The general reluctance of feminist historians to undertake research in military history is in no small way a result of the academic perception that all that needs to be said on the topic has already been said and the news for feminists looking for some evidence of progression toward equality in this period is not good. In the mid-1980s, Ruth Roach Pierson became the first and only professional historian to publish widely in this topic area. Her book "They're Still Women After All:" The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood was published in 1986, the compilation of several articles done in previous years.[12] The conclusions reached by Pierson have remained unquestioned and are adopted by all those doing any research on women in this time frame as her work stands as virtually the only secondary source in the field. Through an exploration of women's wartime work, the prevailing concepts of femininity and the nature of women's involvement in the Armed Forces, Pierson claims that although they underwent minor and brief adjustments, the sexual demarcation lines between men and women did not change in any significant lasting way and those who look to the war years as a time of greater power and liberation for women are mistaken in this assumption. With the exception of the sections dealing with labor force participation, Pierson focuses almost exclusively on

Canadian service women both at home and in Europe. The small amount of work done in this area since follows Pierson's lead and analyses women in WW II from a "temporary reprieve" point of reference. These histories do not allow for the possibility of any feminist progress and are basically descriptive of individual experience without placing that experience within the context of the women's movement. Pierson relies almost exclusively on military and government documents in her research, having read between the lines of, and uncovered previously unused, primary sources. With the exception of relatively rarely used private letters to the author, she excludes oral history as possible source material - this is the one facet of her research that has not been adopted by others in the field.

It is clear from the state of Canadian women's war historiography that a great deal of research remains to be done on the topic - the field is virtually wide open. Most of the information gathered to this point, with the exception of Pierson's book and a handful of other articles, is tabloid in nature and is useful only when the reader has enough contextual information to be critical about the source.[13] Through work that has centered predominantly on gender roles and labor on the home front, it has been concluded that women are doubly "unmilitary" through being feminine in nature in addition to being Canadian. This view negates an explanation of those women in close contact with the battlefield and the consequences of warfare. The CWAC members who were the first to enter Caen after its liberation for example, those in entertainment troupes just behind the lines and nurses in forward medical areas, albeit relatively few in number, are all in a position to refute previous claims that women are outside the purview of war historians. Whether or not drastic and lasting changes occurred in gender roles in the years following the war is not the question - as an "unmilitary" people, all Canadians were anxious to revert to pre-war social standards and get back to work and family. No one would argue that men in the armed forces just forgot what had happened from 1939-1945 and it is ridiculous to assume that women's memory (the history) of that time had no effect on how they lived their lives after it.

What is absolutely key to future studies of women in WW II and to the topic at

hand is that these characters be analyzed as "military people" under the rubric of military history and not women's history. Researchers in this area must adopt the tactics found in the military historiographical tradition so that this missing section of Canada's military history can be co-ordinated with what we already know about the war. These researchers will have to be generally more flexible with regard to sources, relying to a greater extent on oral sources for example, because of the fact that women are not included to any great length in the documentary evidence. The conclusions made via this research can then be used in the wider area of women's history and will resound more clearly there because they were arrived at in an appropriate context, that of the overall Canadian effort in World War II. To that end, this thesis intends to examine a facet of military life heretofore neglected by historians, an area that demands an examination of Canadians as "military people" and insists on the coordination of women within that definition.

While the breadth of military history has grown in recent years to include history of a more social nature, there has yet to be a full-scale contribution on the topic of recreation. While we know that troops, both at home and overseas, entertained themselves in a number of different ways under informal organization, formal and militarily derived diversions have not been explored in any detail. By charting the development, function and existence of Canadian entertainment units during World War II, we can begin to grapple with the tension between military and non-military sectors of the Canadian nation and the construction of gender within the military itself. Entertainment units, referred to in this study as those developed by the Army, Navy and Air Force from talent found amongst their own service personnel, aimed to increase morale among training troops and those on defence duty both at home and overseas while encouraging recruitment into the services. With these goals, entertainers walked a fine line between civilian and military populations. While the Navy had only one main show, the "Meet the Navy" production, the Army had a number of shows, including "The Tin Hats," "Rhythm Rodeo" and "Repat Rhythm," to name just a few. The Air Force toured shows like the "W-Debs," the "Joe Boys" and the "Blackouts" that appeared in some of the most isolated areas of Canada and the U.K. These shows were inspired by the vaudeville performances

popular in earlier years and included dancers, singers, musicians and comedy skits as well as contortionists, magicians, marionettes and other such specialized acts. While military marching bands, civilian entertainment groups and POW camp troupes all entertained service personnel at home or overseas, my focus here is on the variety entertainment units of the navy, army and air force that were organized from within the military structure. Seen and heard by a large percentage of the national population, they had by far the most important impact of any wartime entertainments on the Canadian military and civilian psyche. Because these troupes were publically funded on the initiative of the Department of National Defence and thus the Canadian government, the formation and operation of these groups can be seen as likely the first expression of a distinctly Canadian culture, cultivated by government subsidies explicitly for Canadian consumption. While subject to American and British influence, WW II entertainment units operated with Canadians at the helm, Canadians on the stage and Canadians in the audience and in the final analysis created a uniquely Canadian brand of entertainment that resonates in national broadcasting in this country even now. The effect on Canadian culture these groups had cannot be underestimated.

There is a decided lack of secondary sources relating to Canadian entertainers during the war years. The book The Half-Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946[14] is perhaps the only widely-read volume of Canadian military history that mentions Canada's entertainment infrastructure during the war, as C.P. Stacey and Barbara Wilson have included some information on Canadian musical entertainment with an eye toward the diversions available to Canadian troops while in England. In the chapter entitled "Keeping the Troops Happy," the authors have summed up the organizational history of the groups and the reactions of their audiences but, as such an in-depth exploration was outside the scope of their work, have neglected to provide much other information. W. Ray Stephens, in his three books on the subject, has taken a wide perspective and included virtually every source of musical entertainment available to Canadian troops.[15] A member of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and several musical groups, Stephens was certainly qualified to begin to uncover the importance of entertainers in this period but

the books are poorly edited and constructed in an autobiographical-scrapbook format that actually delivers little information. Importantly though, what information does exist is supplied in the form of letters to the author by some of the key players in this story and those contributions appear to some extent here. In addition, Stephens has gathered together programs, posters, newspaper clippings and a collection of relevant photographs that have been held by private citizens since the war. To Stephens' efforts in this topic area are added a number of Canadian servicemen's song books[16] that give us some idea of how service personnel entertained themselves and perhaps some indication of the type and nature of material entertainers offered up in their shows. Those sources alone make up the available secondary literature on this specific topic.

While very little secondary literature exists on Canadian entertainers during World War II, parallel studies of the United Services Organization (USO) and the Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA) provided some ideas on how to tackle a description of this particular type of military life. Books like The Greasepaint War, Always Home: Fifty Years of the USO and Stars in Battledress[17] detail the American and British experience in raising the morale of their troops with a great deal of personal anecdotes, photographs and chronologically presented organizational information. However, while both associations had a significant amount of contact with their Canadian corollaries, their histories remain silent on that topic. These studies invariably focus on the strangeness of injecting civilian entertainers into the military arena and thus are set in opposing position to the experiences of Canadian troop performers.

With regard to primary sources, this project relies heavily, perhaps too heavily, on the archival documents of the Department of Defence, specifically the war diaries, which by their nature skew the study a great deal. The Army was the only service to keep these particular day by day records, which had as their goal "the accurate and detailed reconstruction of circumstances, conditions and actions" and were used when on active service.[18] So while I have attempted to balance the information used here among the three services, this study perhaps emphasizes the Canadian Army Shows over those of the Air Force or Navy. This is possibly appropriate given that the CAS toured the most widely

and had the greatest number of shows available. War diaries were a conscious attempt to preserve all documentation for posterity and as such were subject to the personal whims of the diarist. Usually kept by the commanding or warrant officer in charge of the unit, the diaries relevant to entertainment units vary greatly in their contents. Some focus primarily on weather conditions and distances traveled while others were used as a more personal journal by the diarist. While of great interest to the historian, some diarists at times chose to wax poetic in the journal and at other junctures to rant about the behavior of co-workers, including a surprising number of comments concerning the unit's mental health. It was a difficult and time-consuming task to keep the diary up, especially for large units on extensive tours. One diarist pointed out the impossibility of including all important details:

> The War Diarist sat in on the conference (with one of Canada's military historians) in order to give the historian some idea of the many duties involved in the production of a stage show - the seemingly unimportant facts which seldom find mention in the Diary but which are, in reality, empowered to either make or break a show. But even so, it is impossible to tell all the details under discussion...[19]

All three branches of the Canadian military have retained additional information, outside of the war diary format, that includes policy papers, correspondence, information on publicity and the like that very substantially fill out the rest of the story. Taken together and despite the shortcomings of the war diaries, the perspective of the military infrastructure is readily available to the historian.

Reviews or comments regarding military shows published in newspapers or magazines were not employed to any great extent in researching this project. Those items were almost invariably compilations of official military press releases and due to the fact that it was not deemed publically appropriate to criticize military personnel who were attempting to increase morale for the duration of the war, reviews were always favorable. For what it is worth, every news item concerning these shows was positively glowing in their reports and related an early fetish for celebrity that glamorized entertainment units to the point of falsity while overtly promising a small piece of that glamour to anyone who choose to see a show or join the services. I have, however, used press releases and

clippings that were available in the DND files for descriptive purposes, in that they hold promising indicatives of the material presented and the flow of the shows.

What is rather conspicuous by its relative absence in this study are the reminiscences of those involved with these shows, either as cast or crew members, administrative personnel or audience members. The valuable contribution oral history could make to a study of this nature cannot be overstated and given the growing importance and recognition of oral sources in military history, is a serious shortcoming in this research. So while this research begins to introduce this particular aspect of military history to the discipline, it is not complete. Oral interviews, a complete photographic section, a more thorough examination of gender construction and a more detailed analysis of the stage material used would be necessary in order for the topic to show its true colors.

In addition, while I make some claims regarding the effect these troupes had on the development of a distinctly Canadian popular culture, it is not my intention to explore that issue to any significant length. Authors such as Andrew Clark, Greig Dymond and Geoff Pevere have already drawn a significant amount of evidence together to chart the family tree of pop culture in this country back to the World War II era.[20] Likewise, although the creation and propagation of a Canadian identity on the international scene via these groups had no calculable dollar value, the public relations work done by these performers in Italy, Northwest Europe and the United Kingdom for Canada contributed in no small way to the new- found respect this nation earned in the eyes of those countries touched by World War II. Attempting to estimate the efficacy entertainers enjoyed as Canadian ambassadors is beyond the scope of this study but what is important in both these claims is that the advances were made not only on the Canadian government's dime but on the Department of National Defence's leadership, possibly making Canada the only country in the world to have planted the seeds of its own popular culture with public funds and military caretakership.

My goal, then, in this study is two-fold. Firstly, as this topic has not been given the attention from historians I believe it should, I have adopted a highly descriptive rather

than analytical style. I hope in doing this that a clear picture will begin to emerge of the lives of these entertainers and their work and provide a solid foundation for further research. Secondly, the study is focused specifically on the troops themselves rather than on political or higher ranking figures in the more traditional style. Many academic studies of military history have, at times, failed to individualize the rank and file in their methodology and the people at "the sharp end" are lost in the shuffle. In an attempt to avoid that, I have chosen to name names in several places throughout this thesis so that personalities and a certain human component can be easily seen. Although I describe incidents involving particular people, I have only related those stories which are representative of the wider experience of entertainers or directly relate to the state of mind and physical conditions of the time. Where possible, I have used specific stories or comments gleaned from correspondence within the Department of National Defence or on the few interviews I was able to conduct, so that the actual historic participants could speak directly.

Having said that, it became important then to make this study connect quite clearly to military history as it is generally known, namely the story of battles involving servicemen whether on the ground, in the air or at sea. Due to the nature of entertainers' work, sometimes this connection is not readily apparent and the scene described so very far removed from the battlefield. To this end, I have conceptualized entertainers as a smaller unit unto their own but within a wider context, stubbornly plugging away at their assigned tasks without benefit of historical illumination or glorification, and this study as a type of regimental history.[21] It is important to remember that, although the distinction is blurred at points, these entertainers were service personnel and while not on the front lines as such, were nevertheless an integral part of the Allies' eventual victory in this conflict. This project hopefully will begin to shed some light on this facet of Canada's military past and while doing so, perhaps will change the way we think of military history.

Lastly, throughout this paper I discuss various hardships and dangers members of entertainment units were subject to during the war years. My frame of reference in doing this includes two factors; what they would have been doing as an occupation in peace time

and their duties in the military before they were assigned to one of the shows. I realize that compared with the sharp-end duties of combat troops, these hardships are minuscule and perhaps it is disrespectful to those types of contributions to bring up issues involving such things as sickness and accidents that interfered with entertainment work. At no time do I mean to infer that entertainment enlistees had a difficult time in comparison to combat troops. Instead I mean to point out the differences in existence that this line of work created as opposed to peacetime and non-front line military activities.

CHAPTER 1

Production Number

In one sense, troop entertainment during World War II was a reinvention of the wheel. Prior to the twentieth century, British and French army and navy groups stationed in Canada developed garrison theatre that served to exert some sort of influence over both military personnel and local populations. Literally playing out French-English conflict on the stage in the production of farces and comedies, garrison theatrical activity increased "in periods of political or cultural crisis...(and was used) as a velvet-glove method of cultural assertion."[22] As both were employed as a means to assert civil stability, the parallel between garrison theatre and how military theatrical amusements manifested themselves in the 1900s is clear, though in later years, these similarly developed entertainments strove to engineer the emotional climate of populations affected by armed conflict rather than culture *per se*. Variety type entertainment for Canadian troops began during World War I, with the Canadian Concert Parties,[23] the most famous unit of which was the Dumbells. Having just recently been given long overdue credit for being the earliest form of Canadian national theatre, the Dumbells and groups like them became a sort of prototype for entertainment during the Second World War and set the standard for at least those troupes established in the first part of the conflict. While there were other more poorly marketed entertainment troupes in WW I, the most prominent being the Princess Patricia's Comedy Company whose four original members performed while not on active duty, the Dumbells were the first official group to be seen by both a great number of front-line troops in France and mass public audiences in England. Created in August of 1917, for the remainder of the war the Dumbells were composed of 16 members, the key personnel being members of the Canadian 8th Field Ambulance unit of the 3rd Division. As the popularity of the troupe increased, the men were released from other duties to be able to do the typical twice daily shows of two and a half hours each. During the Battle of Passchendaele however, some members were called back to their units for combat duty, while others were periodically assigned work as stretcher bearers.

The Dumbells act included female impersonators, characters in black face and from historical events, and mocked-up military officials. They specialized in sketch comedy, which usually focused on some satire of military life. Musical numbers included American and British hit songs like "Those Wild Wild Women are Making a Wild Man of Me" and "Zig Zag." The troupe was a hit and managed to translate wartime success with post-war fame. Following a very profitable tour of Canada, the Dumbells opened a Broadway show in May of 1920. It was extremely well-reviewed and profitable but, faced with audiences that no longer wanted reminding about the war, the Dumbells split in 1922 and its original members were left to adapt to civilian life in relative obscurity and in some cases, poverty.[24] The beneficial impact of the Dumbells on the morale of Canadian troops was not forgotten though - the connection between formally organized entertainment and morale had definitely been noticed by the Canadian military.

The issue of poor morale during World War II arose not long after Canada declared war on Germany in 1939 and increased in importance following disaster in Hong Kong and at Dieppe. Popular opinion held that by early 1943, Canadians had failed to distinguish themselves in the war and that inactivity was reeking havoc with the mental health of predominantly the 1st Canadian Infantry Division that had been repelled from the coast of France in June 1940. "The Winnipeg *Free Press*...demanded that a division be sent somewhere, anywhere. The Montreal *Gazette*, with great conviction but no evidence, reported widespread mental illness in the Canadian army because of inaction."[25] While there may have been little evidence that Canadian troops were breaking down under the strain of training constantly for battles of an indefinite date, Ottawa took note of the distinct possibility that morale was decreasing rapidly. The small-scale entertainment infrastructure set up in response to the pre-Sicily invasion period of low morale, including canteens, dance halls and civilian billeting, was useful but something more was needed - active combat. Leaders throughout the Canadian military structure were sensitive in varying degrees to pressure from the Canadian public and its government and it has been claimed that breakdown theories and jealousy were the very reasons Canadians were sent to Sicily, an expectation that "a little bloodletting"[26] would solve several problems at once.

The exhaustion casualties[27] resulting from action in the Mediterranean theatre forced authorities to rapidly update their perception of the condition and how they dealt with it. While exhaustion was still widely thought to be a result of lax discipline, by 1943 organized military entertainment was established to combat the problem. The nature of battle in Sicily and Italy, its high killed, wounded and missing figures, its duration and the resulting wastage rates became the reference point for the Normandy experience and contributed to an over-all greater stringency in handling exhaustion casualties in a time when the manpower shortage was most extreme. The contribution of battle exhaustion to increased wastage rates added to the wider manpower crisis facing the Canadian Armed Forces, a serious point of contention on the home front and one that threatened both to augment the already tense French-English factionalism in Canada via the conscription issue while putting into jeopardy the possibility of a comparatively short conflict in the Mediterranean and European theatres through a limited supply of rank and file soldiers, most specifically infantrymen. Once it was regarded as fundamental to relaxation, government supported entertainment was eventually used as both a political and military tool against battle exhaustion and poor morale and the problems it created both overseas and at home.

The first entertainment units to be created and brought up to full establishment figures during the Second World War were the military staff bands. Building on a tradition of musical accompaniment for the armed forces, by late 1940 Canadian Army Command had formed 10 military bands consisting of roughly 27 musicians and one bandmaster each. All members were military personnel that were mustered as bandsmen in either the Navy, Army or Air Force. With a strong horn section and sheet music in hand, these bands performed for parades of all types, dances and funerals, along with a great number of civilian engagements. Army bands traveled more extensively than either Navy or Air Force groups, throughout the U.K., Italy and Europe under harsh conditions and lent official military affairs dignity and pomp. On beaches, in bombed out streets and often on the road for years at a time, bands like the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corp Band, the Royal Canadian Armoured Corp Band and the 1st and 2nd Canadian Infantry Division

bands traveled just behind the troops and thus were on hand for a number of significant events such as the march past of the entire 3rd Canadian Infantry Division in Utrecht, Holland on June 6, 1945.[28]

For all that troops appreciated the military bands, that kind of entertainment did not allow for laughter or sing-alongs and continually reminded them of the job they were there to do. Military bands were not, to any great extent, subject to musical trends, functioning as they did to perpetuate the timelessness of armed struggle and the tradition of the Canadian Armed Forces. While hearing regimental songs and instantly recognizable tunes from military bands was stirring to a serviceman's morale, horns and drums did not present a full spectrum of entertainment to troops who no doubt wanted to relax, sit back and be distracted by dancers, singers and comedy routines that allowed them even for a short time to forget where they were, the fear they felt and danger that was in store for them. The rise in popularity of the big band sound in the U.S. had changed the ear of Canadian audiences in general, who soon grew to greater appreciate the musical layering of bands that included string instruments and singers, for example, and allowed listeners to express themselves through the latest dance fads as well. American cinema, too, was modifying the expectations audiences had for their wartime entertainment. Huge production numbers, newly in vogue amongst Hollywood studios, meant audiences demanded visually stimulating acts that could easily blend comedy, dance, music and vocals with elaborate costumes and props. Satisfying these modern demands was the task undertaken by the Canadian Army, Navy and Air Force entertainment units of WW II who are the focus of this study.

While military bands were not the light entertainment sought by service personnel on most occasions because they did not allow for an escapist type of recreation, civilian groups seemed too out of touch with the military to relate to them in any way through music. As civilians, they seemed unable to increase comradeship and teamwork because they themselves were not members of the military team and thus unfamiliar with service conditions. Although bands like Mart Kenney and His Western Gentlemen were insanely popular with civilian audiences in Canada and did a great deal of work for the war effort

through Victory Loan drives and free entertainment for troops,[29] they still were not entirely engaging to military personnel because they lacked any relation to military life and were strictly dance bands, not variety acts of the vaudevillian sort. The answer then was to form variety groups from the ranks of each service.

The three branches of the military each had their own entertainment units made up of performers drawn from their own personnel but their formations, structures and life cycles were quite varied for groups that had fundamentally the same operational goals. Without exception, entertainment groups were formed to increase morale among servicepeople and recruitment to the services and a means by which the military could control service personnel's off-duty hours; military-generated diversions meant servicemen did not usually have to leave their base and could be watched over by their officers and the military police. While stationed in Canada, the goal of enhancing recruitment was paramount while overseas entertainment troupes sought to boost morale. The content of the shows, discussed later in this study, changed accordingly.

Canadian Army Show

The formation of the Canadian Army Show (CAS) occurred largely in response to American efforts toward maintaining the morale of mobilizing troops in the U.S. With the development of the United Service Organizations (USO) from a number of national citizen committees in February 1941, the Americans were already anticipating the need for such a service before they had actually entered the war. With the success of such shows as Irving Berlin's "This is the Army," Canadian officials became convinced that this country required a parallel and permanent confederation of interests in troop welfare and recruitment. Proposals for just such an entity were developed within the war committee of the cabinet in the summer of 1942 and forwarded for approval in October. At that time, the purpose of producing such a show was clearly laid out; a touring Broadway-type show and its subsequent radio broadcasts would become "a new medium for recruiting" while increasing public and army morale. Approved by the Minister of National Defence and the Chief of the General Staff and funded through both the national government and the National Recruiting Campaign, the new concert party had already begun to gather talented

army personnel and planned a national broadcasting schedule by December.[30] The Unit, by now a recognized section of National Defence and part of the active force, was comprised of 19 male dancers and singers, 24 female dancers and singers, 37 orchestra members and a stage crew of 19 assembled under the name "The Army Show." Sent on a Canadian tour in March 1943 after about six months rehearsal and organization at Victoria Theater in Toronto, the show included Frank Shuster and Johnny Wayne as writers and performers and singers Roger Doucet and Jimmie Shields. Officially organized under the War Charities Act (proceeds for the welfare of the troops) and under the sponsorship of the "Army Show Fund,"[31] this original group was eventually split into five smaller lettered units (two musical revues and three variety shows) of about 20 members each that were shipped to the U.K. in December of 1943. There they joined 4 Canadian Concert Parties (Army) that had been formed on the initiative of members of McNaughton's 1st Canadian Army in the Spring of 1942. An early, successful though not entirely adequate distraction for the quarter million Canadian troops based in the U.K. in the months preceding the invasion of Sicily, "The Tin Hats," "The Kit Bags," "The Bandoliers" and the "Forage Caps" all enjoyed great autonomy in terms of locations and material but were soon administratively reined in by CAS officials. While the focus of operations had changed to England, a small troupe remained in Canada, the "About Faces of 1944" that, in addition to continual touring, functioned to siphon reinforcements overseas. The standard tour of duty rotation for shows included Great Britain, France, Italy and then back to Canada. When posted to either the Northwest European Theatre (NWET) or the Mediterranean theater, Canadian Army Shows were often brought up to slightly higher establishment figures and always given numbered detachment identifications that reflected their overseas attachment to the Auxiliary

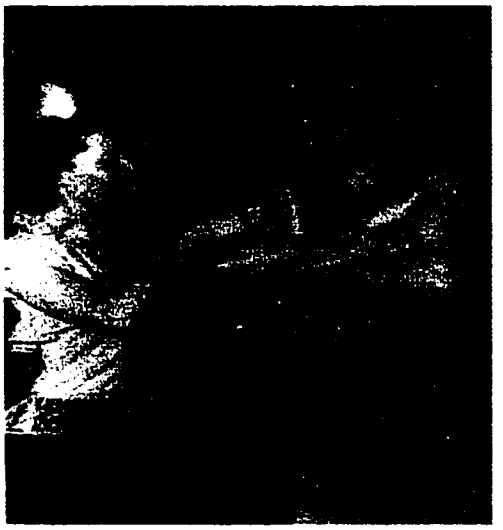

Figure 1 Two members of the original Army Show, Toronto.

Services Section. These groups, whose names, nominal roles and stage material were changed after each tour, increased in number during the war to total over forty detachments by 1946. Unlike the navy and air force shows that just quietly stopped operating, the entertainment infrastructure of the Canadian Army went out with a bang after it became undeniable that the demand for shows was approaching zero. By October of 1945, most army shows, including those that had been touring hospitals in England, were disbanded. At this time there were still six shows in Europe, one in rehearsal and one en route back to base. Those entertainers who wished to remain in the U.K. were posted to the "Rhythm Rodeo," a show whose over the top nature was a late answer to the "Meet the Navy" show in elaborate production numbers. Based at Pepper Harrow, eight miles south of Guildford, England, "Rhythm Rodeo" included 91 cast and crew members, including 29 CWACs. Corrals and stables had been build there to accommodate the 70-odd horses needed to conduct the tent show. Eventually some 55 horses were shipped over 150 miles by rail from the North while the cast rehearsed for about nine weeks, preparing for their opening on December 15th. By January 15, 1946, "Rhythm Rodeo" had folded up its tent and by the end of March 1946, all live entertainment in the Canadian Army was dispensed with.

The Navy Show

In contrast to the CAS, there was only one Naval production and rather than fluctuating quite drastically in establishment numbers, it steadily grew until its disbandment in 1946. The Navy was the last of the three services to produce widely-seen troop entertainment and had, in the early years, relied on the services of other military revues and volunteer and civilian shows like the all-girl Eaton's employee group Eaton's Masquers and the very popular Lifebuoy Follies Revue. At times, service groups like the Salvation Army formed and fully sponsored non-military groups such as the Red Shield Concert Party to entertain Naval personnel.[32] Navy officials began in 1943 to direct most of their attention to establishing one large show from their own ranks that would provide for the "entertainment of naval, army and air force personnel on active service, promotion of recruiting (and the) maintenance of public morale and good will."[33] Following the

Army's lead, in mid-1943, a small naval concert party called the "HMCS *Bytown*" had been formed. The "Bytown" show had the same spirit as "Meet the Navy" eventually would. It showcased "25 delightful Wrens (the Dancing 'Curvettes') who looked as though they'd never seen a uniform, so trim and light of foot they were"[34] and introduced the song "The Boy in the Bell Bottom Trousers." Its cast, including eventual show favorites like singer Oscar Natzke and dancers Allan Lund and Blanche Harris (later Lund), was absorbed to form the nucleus of the much bigger production "Meet the Navy." "Meet the Navy" featured 38 Wrens and 41 male performers along with 27 musicians and many more in technical positions for a show that was said to combine "the saltiness of the sea, the freshness of Canadian youth and the precision of Broadway." They did two tours of Canada after their premiere in September 1943, including smaller break-off shows for hospitals and Victory Loan drives, playing to an audience totaling some half a million people.[35] Profits made from civilian audiences went to the Canadian Naval Service Benevolent Trust Fund, a donation that totaled just under $300,000 by October 1946.[36] After receiving rave reviews in Canada, the group then proceeded overseas for shows in Scotland and England in October 1944 under the auspices of Britain's Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA) with all profits to be placed in the King George Fund for Sailors. Although the Army and Air Force had organized their own overseas tours, the Canadian Navy deemed ENSA's assistance as unavoidable and put them in charge of coordinating tours in the U.K.'s larger cities and through the largest concentrations of Allied Forces on the continent. With ENSA's help, "Meet the Navy" traveled through France, Holland, Belgium and Germany in the summer and fall of 1945.

Figure 2 The chorus line of "Meet the Navy" in Ottawa.

"Meet the Navy" continued to grow to a cast and crew of just under 200, enjoyed a great deal of media attention that eventually culminated in a British feature film and only

contracted in size in late 1946 after most of its members had applied for discharge and the demand for the show had decreased. Total audience figures for the show's three year run are estimated at one and a half million service personnel and civilians.[37]

Royal Canadian Air Force

The Air Force led the Canadian military in forming entertainment units and many of their successes and failures were noted by officials in the army and navy. As air fields, bases and Flight Training Schools (F.T.S.) were generally located in more isolated and remote locations, the air force realized early on that an effort had to be made to increase morale by entertaining airmen who had few available forms of recreation. By July 1942, a proposal to form entertainment groups in the various air command areas of Canada had been forwarded for action. In that these entertainment groups, comprised entirely of service personnel, were initially conceived as entertainment exclusively for air force personnel, the program's original goals varied slightly from the other two services. Certainly they sought to bolster morale and recruitment figures but in addition, RCAF officials aspired to provide "desirable after-duty activities and entertainment."[38] Shows by and for service personnel then were seen to be a morally correct way of distracting airmen and airwomen from less healthy forms of recreation. This important early goal of the program was to greatly affect the choice of material throughout the duration of the war. Shows were thus to be of a high moral standard and many pains were taken to protect air force members from racier programs.

Development of the entertainment groups in the RCAF first involved the commanding officer in each training command completing a survey of talent in their area. Those undergoing training in aircrew or ground crew categories were not eligible to be involved in this recruitment until they had completed their basic training regime. In this way, detailed lists of skilled performers, both of amateur and professional backgrounds, were forwarded to AFHQ in Ottawa. Eventually enough talent was found to develop, in succession, an entertainment group (deemed a "major show") in each training command, along with more sporadic formations of "minor shows." "Minor shows" were minor only in size, for their purpose was to fill in the gaps of entertainment between appearances of

the "major shows" who had much larger areas to cover. "Minor show" personnel, usually numbering less than 10 people in total, were also responsible for stimulating self-entertainment in each area and conducting radio broadcasts that were thought to increase recruitment figures. The radio program in the RCAF got its start in Alberta where the oil industry made the broadcast of commercial free shows possible,[39] an arrangement that was eventually mimicked all over the country.

Entertainment groups were established in all Commands in an attempt to ensure a more equitable distribution of entertainment and were regionally situated for administrative purposes in the early years.[40] An entertainment group first toured their own training command area and then proceeded to tour other commands throughout Canada before proceeding overseas. The first RCAF musical revue to travel widely was "The Blackouts of 1943," seen by some 70,000 service personnel as No. 1 Entertainment Group attached to No. 4 Training Command (Alberta). RCAF HQ Overseas had made provisions for the attachment of entertainment units to that location by July 1943 and this group of 33 proceeded to England for a premier at the London Comedy Theatre in January of 1944 under the name "The Blackouts." The "All Clear" show followed that act with a cast of 34.[41] Shortly a few quite small all-male groups and one all-girl revue of six or seven members were formed that toured extensively in each Air Command area of Canada. For national tours, all were administratively attached to RCAF Station Rockcliffe in Ottawa instead of their regional training command areas and given Entertainment Group numbers. It was widely thought that the RCAF showed the best spirit in entertaining the troops and had not been uneconomical or vainglorious in their operations. At times, these shows were presented to domestic POW camps, the only service of the three to venture into these venues. The smaller troupe sizes of RCAF shows, to which a small number of Women's Division personnel (WDs) were added, were ideal for touring Britain's bases and hospitals. RCAF groups did not tour in Italy or the NWET as air force personnel were concentrated in England. The first in, the RCAF were also the first to downsize their entertainment units. By October 1945, all RCAF entertainers in Canada had been released from services while only 69 performers remained overseas, awaiting repatriation in

England.[42]

Unique means of administering control over entertainment units were established in each service. In the Navy, the Directorate of Special Services handled the "Meet the Navy" show from both National and Overseas Headquarters, while Entertainment Services was responsible for Air Force performers. Auxiliary Services, attached administratively to the Army, governed shows within and between all three services as a means to ensure, outside of those methods already provided for under existing regulations, the mental and physical well-being of military personnel both in training and on active duty and by far had the most complicated and developed organizational structure with Canadian, British and European officers who steered and planned for entertainment in those areas. In Canada, groups like the Canadian Red Cross Society, the Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire, *La Ligue de la jeunesse feminine* and the Montreal Soldiers' Wives League volunteered assistance that the Department of Defence sought to somehow coordinate. Auxiliary Services was formed to handle these contributions to best advantage and four organizations were eventually chosen to directly delegate and "administer programmes and services in keeping with military requirements." Canadian Legion War Services Incorporated, Canadian Knights of Columbus War Services, the Canadian Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Salvation Army Canadian War Services all acted within the jurisdiction of various Canadian military districts in providing social distraction and entertainment. Although there was actually a great deal of overlap, each of these citizen groups became responsible for one facet of troop recreations, the Canadian Legion taking on concerts and variety entertainment shows. While representatives of the Legion were mainly civilian based, they handled billets, arranged for performance space and non-military transportation when necessary, advance publicity and virtually any other business related to touring groups, including raising emergency funds for the purchase of replacement strings, laundry services and chemical supplies for magician acts, for example. Representatives were placed, via these organizations, throughout all theaters of operation and in Canada and were directly responsible to the Department of National Defence. The position of Auxiliary Services Officer (ASO) was a stressful and demanding job, the

challenges of which are often documented in the units' war diaries as being either successfully met or not. The positions were invariably given to men, as it was thought that only a man could perform the job to satisfaction. The occupation required constant liaising with the British Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes (NAAFI), the Naval Directorate of Special Services, the RCAF Entertainment Services and other organizations in the various touring areas as well as being mandated to serve all Canadian service personnel in the three branches of the military. In London for example, under the command of the Assistant Director of Auxiliary Services, ASOs provided "concerts, motion pictures, recreational centers, canteens, hostels and leave centers, books and magazines, hospitality and leave arrangements, sports equipment and facilities and educational service." In addition, the wives of ASOs were often called upon for assistance in making costumes, doing laundry and art work, and supplying personal items for female cast members. For bureaucratic purposes, all touring army detachments were eventually attached to Canadian Auxiliary Services.[43]

The establishment of entertainment troupes within the military necessitated detailed and special financial arrangements with all parties attempting to balance the need for entertainment with the need for the responsible and prudent expenditure of public funds. The arrangements finally made reflected a virtually perfect combination of cost recovery, profit and charitable contributions that left no room for debate among the public. In their infancy, all three services very vocally reported that no public funds were to be used in the operation of the troupes but in reality, all "borrowed" capital from the Department of National Defence (DND). The Army Show financed $7000 to get started while the Navy Show budgeted for $100,000 to cover transportation expenses during their Canadian tours. Both shows were then able to pay these loans back from door revenues, their domestic tours so well-received that they helped finance overseas forays. The Air Force varied in this somewhat because their income from ticket receipts was quite low compared to the Army and Navy. The Air Force often played to more isolated groups, separated from civilian populations in some cases, and never charged American troops, who made up a good portion of the audiences here in Canada, to see the show. AFHQ handled

budgeting and before production, each show submitted a cost analysis that had to be approved before the show was able to tour. Most shows in the Air Force cost around $1500 to get established, including costumes, scenery, lights and public address system, with a few hundred dollars a year for upkeep on the shows in operation and the Department invariably covered these costs,[44] knowing that with such small shows and the impossibility of heading into Italy or Europe, future costs would be kept relatively low. The Air Force shows put any profits back into AFHQ to pay off these loans and was not associated with any charity, except that they often allowed auxiliary organizations to accept donations before the show. Like other units within the military, health and dental care (including cosmetic work that was viewed as essential to a favorable stage appearance), wages and room and board were provided by the DND and all other expenditures were reviewed by Department accountants, subject to periodic audits.

When it was made clear to the public that war funds were not being used on entertainment, demand to see the show increased and donations started to roll in. Many wartime entertainment units accepted gratefully the donation of costumes, funds and equipment from private businesses in Canada and the U.S., some of which were made without any expectation of advertisement or public endorsement of their generosity. The Robert Simpson Company, later Simpson-Sears, donated the costumes for the "All Clear" unit of the RCAF for their show overseas, a gift that was said to "be an important factor in the entertainment of our personnel overseas."[45] The Simpson Company was helpful continuously throughout the development of entertainment units in the air force. Together with the T. Eaton Company, which donated two pianos, Simpson's supplied the gowns and curtains needed to outfit the "W-Debs" in May of 1944.[46] By far, the Navy Show received the greatest amount of private funding, though the predominantly American investment in this show was partly motivated by a desire on the part of certain film companies to secure the rights to produce an exclusive feature film on the troupe. In the late summer and fall of 1943, money began pouring into the show's coffers. The Robert Simpson Company and Marine Industries in Montreal appear to be the only two non-film and Canadian donors of significant size, offering $1500 and $250 respectively. When it

came to film companies however, the Famous Players Canadian Corporation's donation of $2500 was soon reduced in importance when compared with the much larger American companies. Twentieth Century Fox donated $3000 in 1943, followed by $2500 from RKO Radio Pictures, and $5000 from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures by the request of Louis B. Mayer himself.[47] Not only did these American film companies want rights of first refusal on the movie version of the Navy Show, they also put great pressure on administrators to purchase their show equipment from the U.S., which they did do finally. Captain Connolly, Naval Director of Special Services, rationalized that the American money would be "used to make purchases in the United States in order to equip the Navy Show with cosmetics and scenery not obtainable in the Dominion of Canada."[48]

While donations and government-supplied startup costs enabled the shows to begin touring, money and financial bureaucracy troubles soon plagued the shows of the Army and Air Force, most acutely after arrival overseas. Away from Canada, the shows no longer had access to civilian ticket money in any great amount as they only periodically charged British, Italian and European populations to see the shows, operating on a servicemen first seated policy. This reduced cash flow meant that personnel in charge of the shows were forced to send pleas to both overseas and domestic Defence headquarters for funds to reequip worn out or stolen equipment, a process that took extended periods of time and often hampered the quality of the show. Officers in charge of the units or the relevant ASO often had some money for small purchases (which was only useful when the goods were available for sale) but larger expenditures were delayed or refused outright. Faced with a policy of financial restraint, both the Canadian government and the shows' financial committees (holding money in Canada) were reluctant to release funds for what they viewed to be questionable purchases. They were perhaps too stingy, even considering that the money allotted for refitting would decrease the amount later given to charity or re-funneled back into the DND. Shoes, for example, that had been danced in for two years of two shows a day, six days a week needed to be replaced but government bean counters often pointed to the original shipping inventories that claimed everyone already had a pair of shoes. Purchases of make-up, stockings and feminine hygiene

products were subject to the most intense scrutiny, as all three services viewed these items as personal and unnecessary to the operation of the groups. In the worst situation, the DND was initially reluctant to purchase musical instruments for its personnel and several entertainers were forced to use their own equipment that the DND paid a very small rent on and provided insurance for.[49] After years of touring, the instruments invariably wore out or were lost or stolen in transit and replacements overseas were especially hard to get. While Canadian entertainers routinely "liberated" instruments from civilian populations, this was not the ideal source for new equipment and no doubt encouraged civilians to steal from the shows, which they did often in every theatre. Everything from chocolate to PA systems, trucks to bell-bottomed trousers and harmonicas were lifted by thieves overseas. While some items were eventually recovered, loss of equipment usually meant the show concerned had to change a portion of its numbers permanently.

Publicity and what amount of it was respectable was an important topic of conversation for all three services. The Department of National Defence itself was reluctant to put much effort into advertising shows for civilians and while that was done to some extent in donated spaces in newspapers across Canada, they basically left each service to conduct their own public relations. The Navy was well set-up for the distribution of their publicity as the service had a Department of Public Relations (D. of P.R.) and hired private publicists to spread the word while overseas and act as a clipping service as well. Navy officials took great pains to fact check the information these civilians were disseminating and every item was passed by Canadian administrators in the U.K. Within the Army, the only massive effort to alert civilians to the performances occurred during the tour of the original Army Show. When that troupe was broken up into smaller touring groups, the ASO in each area was in charge of getting the word out to service personnel through posters and the like at each barracks or base. Promotional material was sent out by HQ, both at home and overseas. This system disintegrated while touring in Italy and Northwest Europe and low attendance figures were often blamed on poor advertising that did not indicate either where the performance was to be held or when. In any case, virtually identical posters and handbills were used for the CAS during

the war, with just the name of the group inserted. Promotional material was important, as Canadian entertainers felt that they could potentially be mistaken for an ENSA production and thereby have their audience numbers reduced. The Air Force put forth probably the smallest public relations effort but was justified in that as they normally toured in locations where word of mouth and a few posters were sufficient. RCAF show posters basically described the show and named the cast, like those in the "Swing Time" unit:

> This fast moving, humourous, modern show of professional entertainers was organized by Air Force Headquarters for the entertainment of Service Personnel. Through primarily designed for swing addicts, the folks who enjoy sweet music and hearty laughs haven't been forgotten and the compact Swing Time unit programme offers you mirth...music...magic with
> Cpl. Len Moss - Boogie Woogie pianist and accordionist
> Cpl. Rube Super - Comedian master of gags and patter
> LAC Dave Davies - vocalist from NBC/CBC, an internationally known singer
> LAC Denis Thyne - a magician, probably the best illusionist in Canada
> LAC Jimmy Riccio - swing guitarist and tops as saxophonist
> LAC Jack Kostenuk - violinist and string bass with the Rhythm quartet
> LAC "Van" Kington - impersonator and master of ceremonies
> Appearing at:[50]

An average allotment of posters for a unit of this size while in England ran about 2000 copies for the entire tour. This minimalism in RCAF advertising was based on their opinion of the practices of the other services. Officials in the Air Force operated under the impression that the massive publicity campaign for the Army show had met with some criticism "which ha(d) tended to retard the progress of the show rather than accelerate it." As service personnel were the key target group, publicity was seen by some in the Air Force as an unnecessary expense and the development of an involved infrastructure to handle it sure to attract protest from those concerned about the cost of the entire entertainment program. It was originally recommended "The Blackouts of 1943" tour not be supported by general public press releases or radio advertising but they eventually reached a compromise position of a "little dignified and tasteful publicity."[51] What publicity there was came from the Department of Publicity (D.of P.). The D.of P.'s greatest contribution to the entertainment effort, as the area in which all clerical and records work was done, was their ability to coordinate with Entertainment Services in

both establishing the shows and then putting them on the road in a sort of administrative partnership. Lastly, all shows had publicity pictures taken before heading on tour, a procedure that was more formalized in units that contained women. Their "glamour shots" were often the ones posted outside the different venues, as it was assumed a larger audience would attend the show if they could be made aware that women were to perform.

Building on the success and failures of entertainment groups that operated during WW I, military officials reinstituted military troupes in WW II to increase recruitment and combat poor morale and later, its resulting battle exhaustion casualties. Variety groups made up of service personnel were seen to be an improvement on both military bands and civilian-generated entertainments and thus groups were formed in all three services, the development of the Canadian Army Show following the appearance of the Air Force shows in the late summer of 1942, and the Navy show in mid-1943. Auxiliary Services, Special Services and Entertainment Services were created to support the operations of these groups and coordinate the efforts of a number of citizen committees. Once financing was set up, partly from government contributions and from community donations, the question of publicity arose, with each service establishing their own substructures for alerting both service personnel and the general public to the existence of the shows.

CHAPTER 2

Featuring...

Before large scale production numbers were established at HQ in Ottawa throughout the three services, military personnel were encouraged to develop shows in their own respective camps and bases located here in Canada. Among a number of other recreations, small theatrical and musical shows, along with quiz programs and amateur hours with prize money awarded, were organized for a limited run, and rarely moved from the base or camp they were created in. While somewhat helpful to morale on the short term, it was thought that these groups were unlikely to remain together long enough to complete the rehearsals necessary to raise their performing quality. An unequal distribution of talent, the continuous movement of personnel, remustering and the appearance of new recruits created circumstances in which encouragement and inspiration were a constant requirement, and thus the need for more stable productions that would be able to travel was realized. These local groups were stimulated by the shows the RCAF, Army or Navy brought in to their areas in Canada and their presence was routinely encouraged by traveling bands. "Self entertainment," as it was called and often developed in conjunction with the contribution of local civilian talent and donations, was relatively more prevalent in more remote areas where there was limited access to other amusements.[52] In addition to increasing morale on the stations, local bands and revues provided a concentrated source of talent from which major shows could draw reinforcements. The Army and Air Force shows, preferring to travel across Canada with a minimum of members, would usually choose their additional cast members from local entertainment groups. Rather informal auditions of the applicant's own material were often held for these few but sought after cast positions and the results of these auditions would be forwarded to Ottawa to be reviewed as possible additions to the regular shows, so that MHQ might begin to classify talent across the country and be aware of how many tap dancers, vocalists and guitar players, for example, were available to the larger shows. Auditions for fill-ins were arranged without much warning by either the visiting unit or by

a local officer in charge, who acted as a liaison between the unit and one or more of their charges who wished to be auditioned. Auditions were conducted with one to several servicepeople hopeful for a moment in the spotlight - in a way, these auditions supplied entertainment of a sort to the personnel of traveling entertainment units. There was no limit to the range in occupation of these amateurs. In the RCAF, chefs, timekeepers, parachute riggers, airframe mechanics and trainee pilots all hoped to perform with the shows. While most fill-in performers never received an invitation from HQ to permanently join an entertainment unit (though more would as the war went on), the nature of the regular shows' touring schedules meant that several amateur performers got an opportunity to play with the larger units and were grateful for the chance to perform for one or two evenings.

Of course some servicepeople were lucky enough to be called to HQ and remustered as entertainers. For those unhappy with their assigned duties, jobs that perhaps left them feeling they could better contribute as entertainers, the call to remuster was a definite bonus. Remustering meant that personnel underwent a drastic change in their wartime duties. In the RCAF, for instance, fire fighters became vocalists, service police became comedians and general clerks became pianists. Other enlisted men and women got their chance to be in the spotlight when certain scripts demanded the participation of service personnel selected from the audience or a group of parading soldiers was needed for a sight gag of some kind. Bringing up a member of the audience in a spontaneous manner always went over well with the troops as they enjoyed the incorporation of one of their own ranks into the show. When "Mixed Fun's" Major Sanborn brought a soldier up from the crowd of servicemen to conduct the last part of the show during an engagement on Anzio Beach, Italy, "screams of laughter" were heard from the audience, no doubt partly because the serviceman was "a trifle under the influence."[53] The Navy Show's incorporation of 35 former POWs in one of their performances brought the house down, with "pandemonium reigning for six or seven minutes" while the entire audience cheered and sang "For They are Jolly Good Fellows."[54] Other comedic sketches demanded the participation of "Army parties" which were volunteers contacted on the day

of the performance from military personnel in the area.

Auditions for direct placement in the major shows of the three services were more formal. Because all Canadian performers in these groups had to be military personnel, the three services were faced with either delving into their current rosters to find people with talent or recruiting talented people into the service.[55] The commanding officer of each unit was in charge of the auditions of both groups and always provided some biographical and physical details about the show hopeful to unit headquarters. An amazingly wide range of talent was auditioned and most applicants were skilled in several different areas. It was not uncommon for a man to be "a comedian, female impersonator and manipulator of marionettes," for example, and a woman to exhibit her talents at "hand-balancing, tumbling and adagio dancing." Without exception, auditioners were seeking multi-talented artists with stage presence and in the case of Wrens, CWACs and WDs, an attractive appearance. Appearance is seldom mentioned in relation to male performers[56] while it was of primary concern when viewing possible female additions. The results of a RCAF audition in North Battleford, Saskatchewan shows the radical difference in criteria that show units had for men and women, the first for a Sgt. Aspery and the second concerning Airwoman Cpl. Sjoquist:

> Humorous recitations and lightening sketches on the blackboard. This N.C.O. is definitely clever and he has obviously had experience....although he is an artist by profession he also is a very good comedian and should be a great help in any stage entertainment as he would most probably be able to do scenery etc. as well as his own work and help in sketches.
>
> 5'7", brunette, vocalist, straight semi-classical. Rather out of practice at the moment, but could no doubt work up very well in a short time. Is rather heavy in appearance but has good personality. Has done three shows for the Air Force and has made concert tours through different parts of B.C...[57]

Even after all the shows were up and running, this fixation on appearance came into play. The Navy Show, especially, sought to replace less attractive female performers with more attractive reinforcements as they were discovered while the show was en route:

> ...to contemplate replacing certain members of our present navy show personnel who are less talented and perhaps not quite so attractive with applicants such as these ("attractive" applicants with "excellent figures") ...we would eventually have one of the most attractive chorus lines of any revue that has been produced.[58]

Auditioners could be quite ruthless in conducting auditions, no doubt confident that they knew what would work in their shows and what would not. Aside from the physical attributes of the female candidates, two other characteristics are often mentioned. People with some slight handicap were seriously considered if they had a special talent (at least for duty in Canada) but the degree of disability was always articulated. For those that failed to meet the quite high health standards of the services, entertaining the troops was one way they could contribute to the project. Secondly, if the applicant was anything but Caucasian in appearance that was mentioned as well. Several "coloured" people auditioned for service entertainment units, most as dancers of some nature. The auditions of non-white military personnel stand out in the files. In places those names are listed first-last instead of the usual reverse order, placed together on the list where comments on their performance tended to be quite brief, something like "Tap dances good (coloured)."[59] There does not seem to have been colour barriers to participating in the shows as some of those artists eventually did make it into groups that toured overseas. However, it appears safe to say that those recruits had to exhibit an extraordinary amount of talent to be considered.

For those not able to try-out in person when the military talent scouts appeared, sending a letter to the relevant section of DND sometimes worked in getting them a tryout the next time an entertainment unit passed through their area and in a few cases, the DND brought the candidate to Ottawa for a scheduled audition. DND only brought civilian performers to HQ in situations where the person was already established in the profession and was intending to join up. Application letters came from civilians all over Canada, written by the performer themselves, their parents and friends and community leaders. Parents who had participated in some musical entertainment in the Great War were especially eager for their sons and daughters to contribute in the same manner, the most well-known example of this desire being the presence of Doug Romaine, son of the Dumbells performer Don Romaine, in CAS Unit D overseas. WW I veterans themselves, from which there were several

applications, were usually deemed too old by the Department of National Defence for traditional active service but could certainly function in administrative or technical positions within the entertainment infrastructure, with the added bonus of being familiar with Canadian military protocol. Many prospective entertainers had some deficit in health that kept them out of the regular service but wanted to enlist specifically to entertain troops. Physical shortcomings ranging from simple colour blindness to serious deficits in mobility kept certain applicants from fully participating in the military but did not necessarily limit the contributions they could make in entertaining other military personnel. Others had some skill as performers and since their husbands were occupied with the war, wanted to join up as well, having "had so much experience and much time at my disposal," as one woman in Saskatchewan put it. Some that applied for auditions had friends in a particular service and wanted to join them. One very qualified musician from Toronto claimed "some of my boy-friends are in the Second Air force Show and I would like nothing better than to be able to join it too."[60] Some had failed at their own ventures in show business and wanted to give it another try, like an aircraftsman stationed in Toronto, who in 1939 launched his own production company to tour the Maritimes with a take-off on Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. He admitted in his application that the show was a complete failure, largely because "Nova Scotians have no sense of humor."[61]

It is unclear from their letters whether these performers wanted to join up to assist the war effort or to further their careers and training but it is probably safe to say they were compelled to apply through some combination of both. One Corporal on General Duties for the RCAF wrote to AFHQ that he "would appreciate...very much...(a) candid opinion of (his) sketch and (his) chance of serving (his) country in the profession that (he) love(d)" while another aircrew member wrote "because I honestly believe I would be more of an asset to the RCAF in such work; capable of more work toward the War Effort and in consideration of my previous experience in the entertainment field I would like to apply for such an audition."[62] However, all agreed that performing in military shows was an improvement on what they were currently doing, as one woman expressed by saying "I can do more by helping to entertain our servicemen than in the work I am now doing."[63] J.L. Jackson, Wing

Commander at the No. 4 Training Command in Calgary, brought a certain airwoman to the attention of AFHQ in what was a typical reference letter:

> LAW Marshall has had at least 10 years experience in entertainment work and in addition to being the possessor of a very fine singing voice she has a very good stage personality. It is considered by those who have heard her that she is miscast in the trade of an M.T. driver and she herself is very keen indeed to be remustered as her heart and soul are wrapped up in music and it is along that line she considers she can make her best contribution to the war effort.[64]

By enlisting to be performers though, civilian and amateur entertainers took the risk of being assigned to duties outside those of entertainment units, as no guarantees of placement could be made. In fact, even incredibly talented military personnel were often refused remustering if they were employed in an "urgently required" trade. In these cases, the requirements of every other military unit came before the need for personnel in entertainment units. In early 1945, the RCAF, for example, refused to allow entertainment remustering for anyone in, among others, the hairdressing, butchering, telephone or safety equipment fields.[65] During the same time, the Canadian Army Shows' search for qualified musicians was stalled when it was reported that although "countless musicians of high caliber (are) in the Canadian Army...the great percentage are earmarked for Infantry and are therefore 'untouchables.'"[66] To get around this problem, the services turned back to an emphasis on the enlistment of civilian performers during staff shortages.

While auditions were tough for the ratings, the requirements for administrative officers, those who would act in liaison positions between the units and the DND, were even more detailed. Although all female personnel reported to the highest ranked woman attached to their entertainment unit, men were always chosen for these kinds of employments. The RCAF had an itemized job description for such positions that had more to do with personality than administrative skill, including such qualifications as a keen interest in show business, the ability to make friends easily but retain "the dignity of his commissioned rank and authority," be single so that home responsibilities would not interfere with military duty and "be able to keep his relationship with the WD personnel on a strictly impersonal basis" while those same personnel should "feel free to approach him regarding their personal problems, of which experience has shown there are many."[67]

Keeping check on the RCAF all-girl show, a position for a female section officer, required a reduced focus on personality and an emphasis on administrative ability and appearance. A candidate for this occupation was also not necessarily to have experience in show business but had to possess a "smart appearance, tact and good judgement in handling show personnel."[68]

The demographic backgrounds of Army, Navy and Air Force show personnel were fundamentally a reflection of population densities across Canada, that is, most came from central Canada. The province of origin was only evenly distributed geographically in the Air Force where the first entertainment groups were recruited locally and then toured across the country. The "Swing Time" unit of the RCAF, for example, claimed "75% of the airmen have homes in the West."[69] The Army shows often reflected a central Canadian focus but this was partly due to the placement of rehearsal and outfitting space in Ottawa and Toronto and the easier nature of getting local personnel. In September of 1945, an army show of 22 members gearing up for overseas duty showed 17 from Ontario, 2 each from Saskatchewan and British Columbia and one from Quebec.[70] This was representative of both earlier and later nominal roles in the Canadian Army Shows. The Navy show "Meet the Navy" had perhaps the greatest variation in cast and crew, largely due to the manner in which skilled performers and technical people were recruited for the show. Unlike the army and air force who usually found personnel among those already in the service, the Navy show generally found talent and then persuaded them to enlist with the Navy. The resulting mix was thus different from the other two services (see Table 1).

Table 1 Country or Province of Last Address of the Cast of "Meet the Navy"[71]

British Columbia	4	Ontario	75
Alberta	3	Quebec	21
Saskatchewan	2	Nova Scotia	5
Manitoba	18	New Brunswick	3
France	2	Ireland	1
New Zealand	1	England	2
United States	1		

Not much information survives concerning educational background but we can assume the average educational level of wartime performers was a reflection of the times. Only a very few had university degrees or training, mainly those in their thirties and forties, and this qualified those people for officer rank and positions with higher status and pay. Captain J.P. Connolly, Director of Special Services for the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserves (RCNVR), had a law degree and was practicing in Halifax when the war broke out. Frank Shuster and Johnny Wayne were in the process of getting their Master's degrees at the University of Toronto when they signed up to enter the Canadian Officer Training Corps and later joined the Army Show as Sergeants. The rank and file, however, had probably left school around the age of seventeen and recently struck out into the work force or military. The D'Allaire family from Montreal, five of whom were performers in "Meet the Navy," perhaps are representative of the most restricted amount of education. Happy to be performing with her four brothers in the show, Anita D'Allaire's contribution to the show was well-known. She was one of the first members to be recommended for promotion, although "D'Allaire did not reach a high educational standard and has been out of school for some considerable time and French being her native tongue, English composition is almost impossible for her." Despite these shortcomings, her hard work had been noticed.[72] A look at the jobs personnel were doing prior to the war indicates both their level of education and designation of amateur or

professional status within the arts. Those with the most public backgrounds were put in the most esteemed positions and as with the wider military, any experience or training in Britain advanced one's career. Three rough categories can be established for performers; professional artist and well-trained in the U.K.; semi-professional, often with club and banquet experience in larger city centers; and amateur, informally trained and often with only family performing experience.

There were a number of professional people within the entertainment groups and in their capable hands was laid the musical and production expertise needed to mount shows of this nature. This was especially true of the technicians, writers and leading musicians, who usually had quite a bit of experience writing, playing or doing voices for CBC productions and were only too happy to join up and continue their work within the military. Robert Farnon, appointed conductor of the Canadian Army Show orchestra for its London broadcasts and musical Director for the entire show, was already fairly well known as "the Versatile Bob Farnon" of the CBC radio show "The Happy Gang." Formed in 1937, the worst year of the Depression, "The Happy Gang" was extremely popular both before and after the war. Eric Wild, conductor of the "Meet the Navy" pit orchestra, had a significant amount of experience on both Canadian and British radio. Those put in charge of each CAS unit overseas usually had a significant amount of experience as well, most on par with someone like Sgt. Major Bill Harding (i/c CAS Unit E) who was a character actor who had toured with ENSA since the outbreak of war. Eric Nicol, who briefly wrote for the Air Force shows, was in the process of getting his Master's degree and had considerable newspaper credits to his name when he was called up. Entering the show with the rank of Sergeant, he recalled his experience:

> On the tenuous strength of my comedy writing, I was assigned to beef up the company of service personnel of both sexes mustered to produce The Air Force Show. Interservice rivalry to entertain the troops had been sharpened by the success of The Army Show. That show's stars - Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster - were having a banner war. The navy was also making waves on stage. Someone at AFHQ believed the honour of the junior service was at stake and was hustling me into the breach. I wrote little of the show. Mostly, I just helped to warm the theatre by sitting in the front row with the director and watching Georgette, one of our WDs

> turned chorus girl, do things with her hips that couldn't fail to get an entire squadron airborne, or at least the part that mattered.[73]

The Navy Show had perhaps the highest percentage of professionals among its cast. John Pratt of that show became famous for his rendition of "You'll Get Used To It" but his time spent as a member of the Montreal Repertory Theatre meant he was already a relatively well-known professional actor, in addition to being qualified as an architect.[74] Other professionals were imported to work on "Meet the Navy." The Navy Show had the most American influence, in everything from financial assistance to creative control. Louis Silver, a Hollywood producer, and Broadway choreographer Larry Ceballos were brought north to work on "Meet the Navy" and undoubtedly had the greatest creative impact on the show. Many of the performers and technicians came from other countries as well, including Stuart Robertson, the well known English baritone, Noel Langley, the novelist and playwright from South Africa and the Australian John Farrow, who was famous there for his plays and books as well as for his successful career as a movie producer and director.[75] The CAS tended not to rely on outside American help but did hire Miss Felicia Sorel, a dance instructor from New York City, to coordinate dance routines and train dancers, at the CAS's Toronto base. She arrived on duty in October of 1943, after the show had completed several performances across Canada. Sorel filled the shoes of another American dance instructor, Miss Ada Broadbent from Hollywood, who got the dance routines up and running before the Canadian tour. CAS officials were so anxious to receive the full benefit of her instruction that they suspended basic training for CWAC personnel in order that they might practice their dancing.

The question of professional status came up when actor, stage hands and musician unions in Canada registered their disapproval of the shows' use of non-union labor. As many performers were not professionals, very few of them belonged to such unions and this caused many headaches for entertainment officials, as they invariably believed that because the entertainment was part of the war effort and was conducted by service personnel, they should be exempt from union pressure. Alas they were not. In the case of the stage hands, who were sometimes hired on site and civilians, the conflict with unions

was further complicated. The stage hands union representative visited with Captain Wren of the Canadian Army Show early on in Toronto and warned them that such employees had to be paid in advance, in conjunction with union rules, or the shows in that city would be prevented from continuing. Wren aggravated the situation further by replying that the union could do nothing to stop the Army Show as its own personnel were trained in such tasks and implied that the entire issue called the patriotism of the union into doubt. The Army Show did not back down and stage hands were paid at the end of the week's run via a bill submitted to the Show from the union. The bill, for 4 civilian and 2 troop shows and 2 broadcasts, was for just over $2000.00 and included some scenic repainting charges. Wren refused to pay the bill as he judged it too high. The tab was eventually partly paid and CAS officials called "the whole business...a bloody racket."[76] The Air Force, too, attempted to dodge unions by avoiding paying royalties to the Dramatists' Guild on material that they had borrowed for their shows. They were successful in this, partly because the USO shows had secured an arrangement in which a number of plays and sketches were published for the use of those in military entertainment and later loaned to the Canadians.

Semi-professional performers were also recruited or transferred to these special divisions and included performers who had had some number of paid shows under their belts, sometimes before audiences that had included military personnel. This personnel usually had some radio experience and were featured performers in amateur hours and contests across the country. One WD recruited for the Air Force shows, for example, had sung over CJCJ Calgary as a soloist and in duets with her sister and had some background in amateur vaudeville shows. Also in her favor was that the Air Force thought she was Egyptian and "could possibly perform Oriental Dances."[77] Another old hand at radio was LAC A.G. Dolman, who claimed he was well-known in the prairie provinces as 'Slim Wilson,' the cowboy singer on station CJRM Regina who received 300 or more pieces of fan mail each week.[78] Generally, the first RCAF performers had some limited experience with CBC radio as well. Semi-professional performers often included clippings from their local newspapers that described or pictured their talent in their applications, most quickly

accepted, to entertainment groups within the service. In the Air Force, for example, groups like the "Adroits," a head and hand balancing, tap dancing musical quartet from Toronto and individuals like a tap dancing member of the "Will-O-Bees" all had significantly sized portfolios that they sent to the DND.

Amateurs made up the bulk of personnel in the Army and Air Force Shows as well as the chorus line of the Navy Show. Whether through a fundamental lack of talent or because the public's willingness to pay for live entertainment had been low during the Depression, these performers would make their first appearance in front of a demanding audience from within the military. Most were interested in show business and saw a unique way to gain experience and training in this area through the armed forces. One applicant stated that he had "joined the Air Force in 1942 as a fitter, hoping to join an Air Force show at the first opportunity. (He) intend(ed) to follow a musical career after the war and (was) sure that the experience gained by being in this troupe (would) be of immense value to (him)."[79] Some were amateur performers but had solid military backgrounds. Acting Commanding Officer of the Navy Show during one tour to Newfoundland, Sub-Lieutenant Dixie Dean, for example, had been a rating on board a corvette before he joined the show but also had been a relatively well-known amateur accordionist in Toronto prior to enlisting.

Ages, too, are difficult to assess as they do not appear on nominal rolls. From other records, the majority of the rank and file appear to have been unmarried and ranging in age from 18 to 25, while the officers and head administrators were often married with families and significantly older. Given that men in the Canadian army could be posted overseas at age eighteen and women had to have reached age twenty-one, the actual age demographic of entertainers appears to have been at times in contravention of this regulation. While many men were known to have lied about their ages in order to sign up and serve overseas, it appears that women could and did do the same thing. When Unit D was gearing up to be shipped to the Mediterranean, it was discovered that one Pte. Hooker (CWAC) had lied about her age. She was not allowed to proceed to that theater as "her age (was) much lower than her documents show(ed)." Hooker was apparently not

sent home but was retained on duty in England.[80] It appears that, in the case of entertainers, age restrictions were either ignored by the personnel themselves or overlooked by administrators in an effort to get the shows up and running.

Age, performing status, education and military experience all played a part in the assigning of rank when attached to an entertainment unit. The "Meet the Navy" show traveled with a Lt.-Commander as OC, 7 Lieutenants, 3 Sub-Lts and one Nursing Sister with the ratings holding ranks from Petty Officer to Leading Seaman. A number of the male ratings were classified as Leading Bandsman or Able or Ordinary Seaman, while all female ratings were Leading Wrens aside from 2 Petty Officers.[81] Rank became important, aside from the obvious reasons of status and increased pay, because the higher the rank, the more responsibility a person had within the unit. In the "Blackouts" group of the RCAF, 11 out of 33 members held rank ranging from a Flight Lieutenant, who ultimately was responsible for the entire group, to four Corporals, who represented the officer in charge in advance party surveys of stage facilities. Promotions in rank often occurred when a certain administrative position, held concurrently with performance duties, became available. Those groomed for a particular job were given that job's rank before taking on those responsibilities. For those that remained strictly performers, incentives were put in place to increase lettered class trade pay in lieu of promotion in an effort not to punish personnel whose careers suffered from a lack of available positions. For example, Bandsman "C" designations within the army and air force could be upgraded to "B" and result in a slightly higher wage.

Some evidence of religious background can be found in the groups' daily orders and in certain personnel files of the services. Both Catholic and Protestant church service parades were held with some frequency and it was stated within the CAS that "no officer or soldier of the Jewish faith will be obliged to attend services of any religious body other than his own."[82] Other performers' successful applications to entertainment units include letters of reference from organizations such as the Young Men's Hebrew Association of Montreal while still others stated that they would be available to join the shows "when the Jewish High Holidays are over."[83] Members of both the Catholic and Jewish faith in the

"Mixed Fun" unit were later, in 1944, on hand for a visit with the Pope in Rome. It was said that the "CWAC personnel caught his eye and he carried on a conversation in French with Cpl. Maranda. Those of the Jewish faith of the unit were blessed in faultless Hebrew."[84] Likewise, racial backgrounds are difficult to determine. If the surnames of enlisted personnel are any significant indication, most were of Anglo-Celtic, French or Ukranian extraction. While photographs of the period show some African-Canadians, there are very few references to them made in the DND files. No mention is made of personnel visiting relatives in England, Italy or Europe, though surely in England at least, this did occur. Lastly, one member of the CAS "Mixed Fun," a Private Rosati, was said to have a good working knowledge of Italian and was useful in communicating with Italian civilians concerning theater arrangements.[85] It is realistic to assume that the racial character of entertainers reflected that of the wider Canadian Armed Forces.

The cultural meaning of the numbers performed for troops in this era were usually clear from the outset and needed no deep interpretation from the audience member - they were kitsch in the way critics of mass culture have defined the word. This is not a coincidence, as the shows were created to solicit an immediate and uncomplicated commonality of knee-jerk sentiment among their audiences who, after all, had a war to win. The military's variety shows consistently included elements of cabaret, vaudeville and burlesque as they were known at that time. While shows were seldom held in cabaret-type settings, they did include elements of that theatrical genre in that songs, sketches and individual presentations often were based on a satirization of current political and social events. Shows were also partly based on burlesque, whereby military life was mocked through comedic skits and musical numbers and was a style that could mask a lack of talent in any area, most notably in dance routines. Traditional burlesque normally featured a certain amount of sexually suggestive material and while officials attempted to steer productions away from that kind of entertainment, inevitably costumes and the roles women especially played lent a certain titillation to the shows that could be picked up on by audiences willing to make those kinds of inferences. Finally, the past popularity of vaudeville was seen in the shows in the sheer variety of acts presented. Characters in

black face, magicians, jugglers, contortionists and such attractions added to the other more standard acts to create a facsimile of American vaudeville and British music hall performances.

All military shows had the same basic format, a tried and true order for the presentation of the offered material. The CASs, for example, intended to present "a clean, fast moving wholesome type of show, indicating neither extravagance nor cheapness in settings and costumes."[86] This varied only in those groups that were predominantly musical and therefore fell outside the standard variety type of program. Each show would begin with the group's theme song, the orchestra kicking off the show with what was or would become the troupe's signature song. "Meet the Navy" used "The Boy in the Bell Bottom Trousers" as their theme song, while the CAS "The Tin Hats" often played "Smilin' Along" at the outset of their show. This music often went on for several minutes, indicating to the audience that they should take their seats and cuing up the performers. Just as the song was ending the Master of Ceremonies took to the stage and began to warm up the audience and focus their attention on the stage. The entire chorus generally got on stage at the MC's introduction and did one musical number, often a medley, as an ensemble cast. An individual or duo musical act was next, followed by a comedic number involving two or more characters in a home front situation of some kind or a burlesqued melodrama revolving around a damsel in distress, a hero and a villain who find themselves in some ridiculous situation. The orchestra came on full strength after the comedy sketch to present a novelty song of some sort but that coordinated with the themes presented previously. Orchestras almost always did swing or jazz inspired songs, including a number of covers of the "hit parade" tunes of American big bands. A dance routine was the next number and might include a tap or soft shoe bit by one or more performers, followed by another comedy skit, this time usually to do with military life. Then in rapid succession, a chorus line inspired dance, an acrobatic or novelty act that could include anything from gymnastic tumbling routines to a puppet show, a dramatic and more thoughtful skit that spoke to the seriousness of the war, and a song and dance routine. These acts did at times adhere to a theme, the Gay Nineties time period or a Hawaiian luau, for example. Then the

grand finale began, a production number of music, dancing, singing in a patriotic and nostalgic motif of presentation that sent the audience off on a high energy note.[87] The original Army Show, rumored to have been given a standing ovation at every performance, closed their production with the song "Let's Make a Job of It Now," a tune that was sure to get the audience on their feet.

What was absolutely key to the success of these shows was the fast pace. Generally speaking, any number of faults could be overlooked if the show proceeded at a good clip and they all endeavored to attain a high level of speed both between numbers in the change over and during the numbers themselves. Further, shows were most successful when started with a fast number and finished with a speedy and strong number. To this end, all shows were scripted, right down to the smallest communication and the shortest gags. This prevented the stalls in pace that would ensue when cast members began to ad-lib because they did not have an established line. As sketches involving rather complicated plays on words were popular, scripts were essential to keeping the show rolling as cast members performed lines like "That's it. You nit the hail on the red - rit the hail on the ned - the dail on the bed....blub - blub - blub - Branch 22-9-8 - oblique stroke 27, A subsection 5."[88]

Satirization was the prime ingredient in all comedic sketches. Military life was mocked in the shows of all three services in basically the same way, via a "Joe" character that represented the serviceman who gets the job nobody wants. "You'll Get Used to It," possibly the most famous song done by military entertainers and the one that seems to have survived the most vibrantly within the memories of audiences of the period, described the rigors of life in the Navy but managed to convey the idea that any number of hardships can be tolerated after one gets used to them while that song's follow-up sketch "Mutiny on the Bounty" targeted naval regulations specifically. The RCAF had an equivalent number in each touring group, such as the "Blackouts of 1943" song "Why Am I Always Joe?," which was basically a lament from the airman who was eternally on the business end of a mop or stationed at the sink washing dishes. The one rough rule of thumb in the satire concerning military life was that only the highest ranking officers in the military were

likely to be featured in a mean or malicious manner, most often as buffoons with puffed out chests. Unlike during WW I, naming these officers or incorporating the names of officers in the audience was strongly discouraged as it was seen to undermine the authority of those same officers and because not naming them was a comedic technique that functioned to let the audience assign those characteristics to whomever they wished. Further, bringing officers on stage to be made fun of was never done. Everyone else was fair game and it was recommended that writers "take a few digs at the M.T., equipment, pay accounts, fire department or service police and you have a skit which will undoubtedly appeal to the personnel."[89] While the women's divisions of the Canadian military constantly attempted to reassure the public that the military participation of women would not compromise their femininity, military shows presented a vision of femininity that had a distinct sexual edge to it and actually served to reinforce the commonly held idea that servicewomen had compromised their moral decorum by joining up.[90] The place of women in the war effort was depicted in the shows in a manner consistent with this construction of gender. All-female dancing chorus lines were an extremely popular number in all three services' shows, the successful synchronicity of movement revealing both a great deal of rehearsal and of leg for service personnel audiences. Other sketches managed to both objectify women and point to the common perceptions held about women during the war. The prop inventory for the Navy Show skit "Women at War" is telling of what position women were thought to properly occupy for the duration: 1 table cloth, 1 cook book, 2 white aprons, 4 tins, 1 kettle, 1 cooking pot, 2 spoons, 1 shelf, 1 mixing bowl, 1 mail bag, 1 cup, 4 silk flags, 2 rifles.[91] The rifles, incidently, were used by the two men in the sketch, who return home to find the home fires still burning in this scene of domestic bliss. Some sketches were not very subtle in using women for sexual titillation. "Meet the Navy" opened the second act of their show with a bit called "Beauty on Duty," the last part of which was essentially a fashion show by "the best dressed women of the year." This segment followed the first act's introduction to the Wrens called "Rockettes and Wrens," a visually stunning chorus line act that became one of the show's most memorable scenes.[92] A particular CAS did a beauty show number that was later

changed to a pinup contest in order that the women might be shown to best advantage. The producer of the No. 1 Canadian Army Show, Captain Rai Purdy, ordered the unit to "have new set made for this, including platform for girls to enter on center, steps down from it, cloth pillars for each side of the steps and a cut out of a pin-up girl to be hung behind the steps."[93] Another CAS show had a pin-up contest number that required the female cast to wear bathing suits. These sketches became particularly uncomfortable to do in places like Italy and Holland, where in the winter, units were forced to play in badly damaged venues that had no heating systems.[94] The production for a similar number in the CAS called "Don't Forget the Girls" was overly concerned about securing bathing suits and tennis costumes for the all-female cast.[95] Broadcasts of the CAS both at home and overseas continued in this same vein. Whatever uneasiness servicemen exhibited concerning the presence of women in the military seemed to come out in jokes that called into question the moral character of female personnel. The CWAC were fodder for all sorts of jokes but most were of this variety:

CWAC: The CWAC are here to release men for more active duty. I am here so one man can get into action.
Frank: Here I am, babe![96]

At the same time women were being presented as "up for grabs" in most numbers, the unhappy plight of women who chose to remain single was also satirized for the benefit of Canadian troops. In one Canadian Army Show sketch, Sgt. Vernon (CWAC) played "the part of a somewhat 'on in years' frustrated female - sans homme - (and) is the center of attraction in one act entitled 'Look What Riding Did To Me' - enters stage riding hobby horse."[97] Perhaps most alarming of all female acts were the contortionists, who in skimpy costumes did what basically amounted to a circus act for the pleasure of servicemen audiences. One such performer was labeled "Elastoplast Elsie, the Rubber Jointed Lady - she can twist her body into the most inconceivable shapes you ever did see!"[98]

Not much protest against the way women were portrayed on stage is recorded in Department of National Defence files. Women in positions of authority over the CWACs, Wrens and WDs no doubt made more subtle adjustments to costumes, scripts and choreography that could be completed on their own authority without catching the eye of

military higher-ups. There is no reason to believe that women unanimously approved of how their roles in the home and in the military were portrayed in the shows, as virtually every number characterized women in a manner that was obviously contradictory to the experienced reality of the female entertainers themselves. Perhaps they were able to pass these numbers off as satire, fitting with the overall nature of the shows, and decide, at the end of the day, that whatever made the troops laugh was worth the personal degradation it must have cost. Squadron Officer Willa Walker of the RCAF(WD) stands alone as the only female officer to register disapproval of how servicewomen were portrayed in a show, though it may have been because the act threatened her sense of authority. Walker expressed her wish that a particularly offensive song about a WD officer be eliminated or changed in the line-up of the "Blackouts." As she put it, "everything else about the show gives the WDs such a grand build up that it is too bad to destroy it all by just one song." Fortunately, those in charge of the show at the highest levels concurred.[99]

Related to the perception of women and their place in both civilian and military life, the performers also poked fun at the changes war had brought to the normal progression of things like relationships, work and home life. Wayne and Shuster, while experts in all areas of this kind of comedy, were especially well-versed in pointing out these changes with lines such as:

Frank: There's a good looking CWAC girl over there.
Johnny: Oh, you haven't got a chance, Frank. She's got a fiancé.
Frank: What's the difference? As long as she isn't going steady...

and

Frank: She's much too old to join the CWACs
But she still looks good in a pair of slacks
Johnny: She's even paying income tax
My grandma's working for defence[100]

Bits concerning changes to home front life were tricky. While civilian and domestic audiences could relate fully, some lines were changed for broadcast to or performance for troops overseas. The last thing the army wanted to do was put a negative spin on the themes of romance, love, separation and reunion of couples whose courtship and marriage rituals were upset by the outbreak and continuation of war. To do so would only increase homesickness and ultimately the possibility of desertion, the exact opposite of the actions

of troops with good morale.

The use of female impersonators, popular in the early years of the war, largely fell out of favor after women were recruited into the military. The Canadian Army Show used impersonators most often of the three services, these shows' satirization of military themes carrying over into a satirization of the female gender, conceptualized in the personage of a fancy dress below a large Adam's apple. "The Tin Hats" troupe had perhaps the most famous impersonators amongst its personnel, with Ptes. Johnny Heawood and Bill Dunstan as "Trilby" and "Trixie." These "girls," in drag for the entire show and all publicity shots, did songs like "Heaven Will Protect An Honest Girl," "Yaaka Hula Hickey Dula," and "Ma, He's Makin' Eyes At Me" in over the top numbers that were both musical and comedic. Great effort went into the impersonators' costumes, wigs and make-up in an attempt to strengthen their impact in the show. While few CAS groups continued to rely on impersonators past the time when women began to volunteer for the services,[101] the normal practice after about 1944 was to employ a female impersonator in one sketch for a short period of stage time but in other costumes and characterizations for the remainder of the performance. Key to the role of impersonators and their complex relationship to the audience was the fact that they were, at that time, referred to as "feminine impersonators." Magnifying feminine characteristics to the point of caricature by cultivating huge hair, big eyes, massive breasts and incredibly high falsetto voices, impersonators fooled no one but did insert some feminine presence into the milieu. At the same time, impersonators reinforced the maleness of the military and fostered the comradeship inherent in the all male enterprise of war by substituting for real women

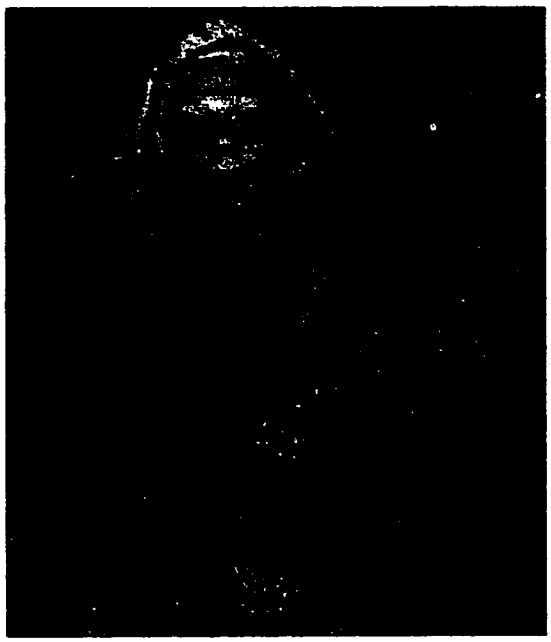

Figure 3 Pte. Johnny Heawood as "Trilby" in Italy.

whose presence would compromise the integrity of this masculine endeavor. Impersonators also reduced any tension that might crop up based on the difference in duties between those in the audience and those on stage. Soldiering represented the high point of masculinity and any man who mocked both genders as an impersonator was certainly not fit for duty off stage, so in this way, any possible strain between soldiers and entertainers was diffused. This was definitely the case in numbers that contained watered-down drag, a satire of impersonation itself, such as all-male ballets, where the preposterous scene of hairy men in tutus had service audiences both laughing and shaking their heads.

Likewise, encores of solo numbers were frowned down upon by entertainment officials as being detrimental to this fostering of comradeship. In addition to compromising the quick pace of the shows, encores encouraged focus on one particular performer and took that person out of the context of his or her performing team when what the shows' needed was "crowd pleasers" and not "stars." It became essential that the strict policy of not allowing encores of any kind was adhered to because it meant the teamwork nature of the group could be retained. While each show had a Master of Ceremonies who introduced the show and maybe told a few jokes in an effort to establish some intimacy with the audience, those cast members were encouraged not to over do it and by no means to attempt to overshadow the show that was to follow.

There are surprisingly few incidences whereby female impersonators expressed some dissatisfaction with their role within the troupe. One such incident occurred in the RCAF "Swing Time" unit in the Spring of 1944. Having been on tour in Canada for an extended period of time, "the unit ha(d) been living in one another's pockets for some time...it (was) getting a bit ragged." The morale of the group hit bottom while in Manitoba when most of the cast asked to be sent to Ottawa and given other duties in a sort of troupe mutiny. LAC Bestall, acting as female impersonator in the unit, was one such person. Plagued by extremely poor dental health, a bad case of trench mouth and repeatedly failing to attend rehearsal, Bestall then "refused to do any more Women impersonation parts." His refusal to carry out his assigned role backfired though. The

officer in charge of the group took over his parts while Bestall had a number of teeth extracted and in the process proved that "nobody is indispensable."[102] For those groups that did not employ either female impersonators or actual women, some "female" characters were invented that continued to satirize the female form. For example, fairly significant changes were made to the script of the "Swing Patrol" group of the CAS so that it might include a promising ventriloquist act. The entertainer made "use of a 'female' dummy" in an act that was expected to be very popular with audiences.[103]

Figure 4 Making-up a member of "The Kit Bags" in London.

Finally, military shows always had bits concerning personalities in the Axis and the battle against them. Hitler, of course, was the primary target but Mussolini and the entire Japanese race came up often during comedic sketches, sometimes all at once:

Vernon:	I suppose you want some flowers?
More:	Yes. We want you to plant some Hitler Stinkweed, some Mussolini Mustardplant and some Hirohito Poison Ivy.
Vernon:	You'll never win any prizes with that combination.
More:	Why not? They'll be the three biggest smellers of 1943.[104]

Not shy about presenting the unhappy conditions of front line soldiers, the CAS broadcast scripts also make constant reference to current events in the war and contain several references to actual combat during WW II. Such common sections of Army Shows had the announcer preface a sketch with something like "Kharkov, February 1943. As the Russians sweep steadily forward against the Germans, Russian artillery and planes start great fires raging in the centre of the city"[105] and give salutes to the important work done by volunteer groups like the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. In addition, the shows also periodically paid homage, in all seriousness, to Canada's British, Russian and

American allies.

There were a few short-lived entertainment units, primarily in the RCAF, that varied from the standard variety material presented in the usual shows. These groups, employed for domestic presentations only, cropped up in the RCAF because it was thought that smaller musical trios and quartets could short-circuit some of the transportation problems that occurred in touring the far-reaches of Canada. One such group, known simply as the RCAF Concert Trio, toured in the Eastern Air Command area for 24 shows from the fall to December of 1943. Comprised of an Assistant Section Officer female soprano, and an Aircraftsman tenor and pianist, this trio was not entirely successful in entertaining troops but did do much to increase self-entertainment at various locations. While audiences may have "attended the concerts only with the gravest doubts as to the enjoyment they were to receive," the experiment of presenting more classically formal music in concert format did inspire several servicemen "to try their voices out and also to show their ability and talent on various musical instruments."[106] This trio fell apart when the male vocalist was called back for Aircrew duty before Christmas of 1943 and officials had to reconsider their claim that good music would gain supremacy over the importance of fast moving slapstick-ish shows with military audiences.

Costumes were key in military entertainment units and the construction of them was often the last job to be done before a show went on tour and the cast was made permanent. For touring in Canada, it was felt that the standard military uniform was not appropriate to the style of presentation. While shows in all three services originally performed in uniform for at least some portion of their shows, this practice was eventually changed for both male and female performers due to popular demand. As one concert party supervisor said in England "the boys over here have been looking at Battle Dress a long long time and it does get kind of tiresome." The RCAF, too, felt that "the artists should be furnished with blazers and flannel trousers, or something other...than the RCAF

uniform...in the same way as provision is made for WD personnel to change into civilian attire for stage performances, it is proposed that airmen be afforded an opportunity to come onto the stage in more attractive dress."[107] Overseas, the desire to see civilian clothes on the stage dictated a need for a type of fancy dress that was difficult to produce. "The average audience, tired of war, (was) anxious to see the cast in civilian clothes as this (was) their one touch with civilian life"[108] and great effort was put into constructing elaborate costumes. This was especially true for the clothes worn by women and female impersonators in the shows. Often with bare shoulders, the female characters were dressed in lace and ruffles, plunging necklines and short skirts that moved in such a way as to accentuate the legs, as did the two to three inch heel shoes they were required to wear. More formal gowns were popular for show finales and the singing of ballads and usually had capped sleeves and were snug in the chest area. The only limits to show fashion were a result of fabric shortages. Costumers had to be creative in obtaining materials for these stage shows, as standard supplies like cotton were subjected to restricted availability. In October of 1944, the artist Molly Lamb was taken on strength of the No. 1 Entertainment Unit CAS. Already garnering quite a wealth of attention as a scenic artist, Lamb was slated to design costumes in Toronto while in her spare time was "to continue to reproduce on canvas the lives of the CWAC for the War Records."[109] Ronald McRae also added his artistic genius to the project of designing costumes for the CAS. Trained in Germany and an illustrator for clothing publications of all kinds, McRae's designs were modern and had a much admired European flare.[110] Because of shortages and the expense involved in acquiring

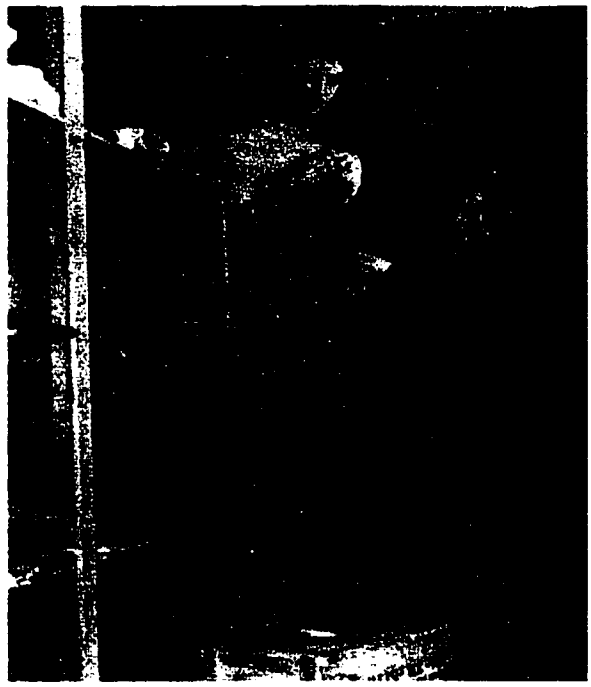

Figure 5 A CAS costume fitting in England.

elaborate textiles, the actors generally started off their presentation in uniform or some rather plain outfit and gradually changed accessories until the final act, where the most extravagant costumes would be worn for the "final punch." Tight control was kept on wardrobe pieces, especially on those in short supply, like anklets and nylons, both of which were issued for each performance and had to be turned into the wardrobe mistress after the end of the show.[111] Costumes, along with cosmetics and stage equipment, were inevitably among property stolen while overseas. Demand for these items in countries that were experiencing severe shortages was high and items were seldom recovered, forcing performers to either quickly change the scripts used or make due with other articles of clothing.

As the war progressed, it became clear that changes would have to be made to the original scripts, not only because many of the troops had already seen the shows but because as seasoned troops they were looking for something different. One Army Show commanding officer stated "Troops who have been overseas for five years and who are now climbing at the walls of Fortress Germany have little interest for recruiting scenes, etc."[112] By the middle of 1944, there were complaints that most personnel overseas had seen the same show repeatedly in one area and that certain lines would have to be changed to at least make them relevant and fresh to people who had already seen the show. The by now famous song "You'll Get Used to It" was modified in Italy by a member "Mixed Fun" to be more specific to the conditions of their audience:

> You'll get used to it, you'll get used to it
> Molto Vino, Quanta Costa, you'll get used to it
> You get a panoramic view, lots of mutton in your stew
> Mepacrine and margarine, dysentery to make you lean
> It's wonderful, it's marvelous, dehydrated spuds and carrots you'll adore
> You gotta get used to it, and when you're used to it
> You will find that you are lining up for more
> You'll be so whacky, you'll be glad when we have won this ruddy war.[113]

In an unprecedented event, in the Spring of 1944, a command came down to Army Show officials to popularize a specific song. Concert Party Unit C on tour in England reported that "according to instructions, the song "We Don't Know Where We're Going 'til We're There" was used on Friday and Sunday. Song is only fairly received but we

shall present it in various ways in an effort to have it popularized." Later the same troupe reported "we are continuing to use "We Don't Know Where We're Going" but to date supervisors have heard nothing about the projected plan to popularize this song with the troops."[114] The chain of command in issuing this order is unclear but pushing units in England to use this song reflected some sort of effort to engineer the emotional climate surrounding the inevitable invasion of France. This occasion presents the only deliberate attempt by officials to direct the material in the shows for a specific military event.

As soon as the military had agreed on the necessity of entertainment groups, recruitment began to fill the establishment figures. By reviewing the skills of those who participated in base or station "self-entertainment" and through letter application, officials were able to conduct auditions amongst their own personnel. While auditioners were concerned primarily with physical ability, racial background and appearance, those being auditioned desired to contribute to the war effort by entertaining the troops and to receive artistic training for themselves. The resulting demographic of personnel mustered to entertainment units reflected a central Canadian and youthful influence, and a wide range of educational, religious and professional backgrounds. The numbers performed by Canadian troop entertainers provided the Allied forces, and by dint their home populations, with the last popular, though tongue-in-cheek, heroic expression of war. By employing elements of vaudeville, cabaret and burlesque styles, the stage material of entertainment troupes mocked military life, played on the presence of women in the military and incorporated current events. This particular combination of material virtually disappeared following the armistice and what performers did delve into the subject of war were critical of military involvement overseas and adopted distinctly anti-war themes that stand in direct contrast to the over-all approval or willingness to be involved found in live shows during WW II. This is not surprising as WW II was the last war in which the common ideology embraced the "right of good to triumph over evil" and some agreement as to who the enemy was could be reached. Although in favor of the project, the scenes performed in Canadian wartime entertainment units reveal public acceptance of certain less than ideal circumstances and prescribed remedies and assurances.

CHAPTER 3

The Show Goes On

Being remustered as an entertainer did not preclude periodic but regimented basic training. In between rehearsals and shows, entertainers were required to achieve some basic level of military knowhow. This training varied depending on gender but was the same within each of the three services, regardless of occupation. Members of the Canadian Army Show, for instance, were compelled to complete essentially the same basic training as any other member of the army. Male recruits were active in seminars on saluting, rifle exercises, map and conventional signage and contours and imaginary journeys. In fact, the first casualty of the CAS was a Private who was slightly injured when accidently struck by a discharged cartridge during rifle training in Montreal. The CWAC had a parallel but feminized set of training classes that included bandaging and first field dressing, military law, ceremonial drills, personal health and hygiene and lectures on morale and esprit de corps.[115] They also had a significant amount of gas training and were routinely put through the gas chamber test, common in elementary training routines.

Rates of pay in entertainment troupes were uniform with those in different units and varied according to rank and gender. In the RCAF for example, Flight Lieutenants, who were basically responsible for everything from discipline to publicity and also performed in the show, received $6.50 per day. The lowest pay was awarded to entry level airwomen who received $1.70 a day for their efforts and all ranks were eligible for a 5% Dependents' Allowance payment.[116] The "Meet the Navy" show was notoriously low paying and delays in promotions, largely due to snarled bureaucratic red tape, meant that even with over 2 years of service some members failed to draw a decent wage. Lt. Edith Dobson, WRCNS Unit Officer, pointed out that several late reinforcements to the show were starting off at a better wage than some women who had been with the show at the outset. A change in status from General Duty to Special Duty included a raise in pay:

> This is strongly recommended because the greater proportion of the Wrens have been with the Navy show since the beginning and have worked hard at the low rate of pay, and also to avoid the obvious injustice of having

> new entries join the show and immediately derive the benefit of the higher rate of pay. It is pointed out that many of these Wrens were earning very good salaries in civilian life and their financial sacrifice has been a very real one.[117]

The most highly paid of all staff were the Americans imported to the key creative positions of the Navy Show. The director and choreographer, for example, were paid on a contract basis and only for the development of the show and its first months of touring. These Americans were paid a lump sum that averaged around $1500 Canadian for their contribution and became, aside from the show's transportation and equipment costs, the largest overhead expense of the Show. The CAS also paid their imported American staff high wages; the dance instructor Felicia Sorel was paid $175 in American dollars per week compared with her replacement Jack Lemon who, as a discharged soldier and thus a Canadian civilian, was paid $50 a week for the same duties. The Army was willing to pay a little extra for American help as they believed Canadian dance teachers would create "nostalgic" routines that would lack the required amount of "freshness."

Domestic tours of military shows, with the exception of the "Meet the Navy" show, were surprisingly consistent across the services, as they had to travel through similar terrain and face comparable challenges. The transportation needs alone meant that a great deal of effort was expended in just getting around to all Canadian military personnel within this country. The original Canadian Army Show toured Canada via train during 1943 in a series of private sleeping and dining cars leased from Canadian Pacific Railways and given the conditions of some barracks at the time, was definitely the preferred choice for accomodation. For their Canadian tour, the Navy Show also leased a train from the CPR which solved the problems of meals, billets and equipment storage, while RCAF shows employed trucks, station wagons and military planes to transport equipment and personnel into all areas of Canada, including the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. Of all the groups, the Army and Navy were the most regimented in their daily touring schedule, their days consisting of the same basic schedule. They were bugled on and off the train and had a strict regime of reveille, breakfast, parade, dinner, bath parade, supper, parade at theater, curtain, buffet supper on the train and finally the call for lights

out. The day usually began between 0700 and 1000 hours depending on that day's duties and ending anywhere from 11 PM to 2 AM, barring any transportation difficulties. This was a schedule that was surprisingly consistent in the life of a military entertainer and the trains became a refuge for entertainers whose lives were increasingly public. Civilians were not allowed access to the tour trains without the approval of the commanding officer and window covers were to be pulled down when passing through a town or when stopped at a rail yard for any length of time.

Physical training while on tour was more periodic, and was only held when the group had several days off in a row or when they found themselves ahead of schedule, despite the view that exercise of this form was thought to distract the casts and crews from the stress of constant traveling. The Army Show train would often stop and require all crew members to disembark from the train to exercise outside. When the train was stopped during the night, male personnel were welcome to sleep outside on the ground adjacent to the train. This practice was encouraged as a wholesome activity and no doubt was viewed as a form of recreation that eased the stress of sleeping in close contact with cast mates. On a practical level, those members of the CAS who did not smoke cigarettes were probably more comfortable outside the confines of the constant haze inside the locomotive, weather permitting.

Personnel faced several problems in touring, not the least of which was the strain of living in close company with other members of the shows for months on end. While there are several incidences of verbal squabbles and personality conflicts between cast mates, there are only a few tales of actual physical violence. In the RCAF records, LAC Grosney shows up constantly as rebelling in different ways against military life and conflicting with his coworkers. In July of 1944 after months of touring, tensions reached a peak near Peace River, Alberta and due to a blow to the face from the group's magician, Grosney was unable to play for a week while his split lip healed. The Officer Commanding decided that was the last straw and requested a replacement.[118] Aside from conflicts between troupe members, the poor morale of one or two members often quickly worked to lower the mental attitudes of others in the group, living as they did in such

close contact. A great deal of effort went into discouraging grumbling, largely through recreational opportunities, as it would soon infect the rest of the performers in any unit. Small scale mutinies, expressed in rather innocuous ways, were not uncommon. In the relatively rare cases where an entertainer wished to be remustered out of an entertainment unit and the unit was reluctant to release the person from his or her duties, a sure fire way to get sent back to Ottawa was to make everyone else's life miserable while on the road. One member of a RCAF show was so intent on re-entering the regular Air Force that he committed himself to making things bad enough in the unit that they would all be sent back to HQ for refitting. Alas, military officials jumped in, as they regularly did, to prevent this from happening. As they soon found out, if an entertainer wanted out of the show, the best thing to do was let her or him go as soon as a replacement could be found. This obviously was a more complicated process when overseas.

The weather and its effect on transportation was also a continuous problem. Harsh winter conditions meant scheduled show dates were missed and equipment was damaged. Rains in both northern Canada and on the east coast flooded roads and threatened military installations. A common reference in RCAF documents, for example, has entertainment staff flying to avoid washed out roadways and assisting both Canadian and American military personnel with building levees and digging dykes. A lengthy torrential rainstorm in July of 1944 near Whitehorse eventually meant that the "Swing Time" unit had to be hurriedly evacuated by airplane in the middle of the night as the runways were flooding. That same unit's vehicles later had to be towed by tractor through flooded areas and some of their equipment quickly rescued from a truck that had driven into a lake.

Touring in Canada could be tough but it was nothing compared to activities faced by the troupes once they reached overseas. Even though they were not often directly told when they would be posted overseas, the daily schedules of most performers underwent drastic changes that could not be ignored. After the standard two weeks leave prior to going overseas, medical fitness exams, typhus inoculations and in some cases finger printing were the most obvious signs that orders had been received to proceed overseas,

tests that would be completed again when embarking on and disembarking from any other ocean crossings. These physicals included dental exams as well and any evidence of trench mouth meant the entire unit had to be checked. Several personnel failed these exams and depending on the severity of the problem, were either not allowed to leave Canada, kept on strength in the U.K. or shipped back to Canada regardless of their talent or importance to the unit. The next stop was to the Quartermaster's store, where extra kit (including the women's "intimate pieces of strange pink ribbons and buckles") and firearms were picked up to take overseas.[119] Once in England, tours via army vehicle convoys were conducted for up to two months before units were returned to their British base for refitting. The performances given to the 7000+ members of Canadian Forestry Corp in Scotland and the service personnel attached to HMCS *Niobe* in Londonderry alone often took a month each. In preparation for service in the Mediterranean, troops were usually transported by rail to Greenoch, Scotland or Tillbury Docks on England's east coast and arrived in port at Naples, moving both north and east in accordance with the regular army's movements. Entertainment troupes were not sent into the Mediterranean until both Sicily and the more southern areas of Italy had been secured following the collapse of the Hitler Line in May of 1944. Before the invasion of Normandy, units in Italy stayed as long as their equipment would hold out and they could safely follow Canadian troops, usually traveling there for two months before returning to England. Officials began establishing shows for continental tours just after D-Day, disbanding and reforming shows that suddenly lacked the big audiences of 3rd CID, 2nd CID and 4th Canadian Armoured Division servicemen they had enjoyed in England before June 1944. France, via Folkestone, England, became the first priority and port of call for entertainment troupes and their duty rotations there and further east depended entirely on the ground gained by the Allies. Following VE-Day, all of Europe was opened to entertainment units, who landed at Ostend, Belgium or Haarlem, Holland and moved inland and then south and east depending on where Canadian troops were rumored to be. Once on the continent, living conditions were difficult but existence inside a troupe was deemed separate from the actual battle, the group providing some insulation from the war:

> It was cold and we'd travel 200 miles in the mud and the rain and we'd get to a theater and it would be bombed out but the soldiers would come....but when you're young like that, you just forgot about it the next day...At that time (spring 1945), we didn't feel like we were in a war, there was bombs in the distance and that but there was no fear.[120]

Some adjustments were necessary when the groups reached their overseas base, and military officials claimed that female service personnel would no longer enjoy the pampering they had while on tour in Canada. However, there is no question but that members of the CWAC, RCAF(WDs) and WRCNS were pampered compared with their male counterparts, largely due to the perception that servicewomen were fragile and needed special attention in order to avoid psychological breakdown or illness. Maneuvers to this end disadvantaged the male members of entertainment troupes, who if anything experienced as many ailments and problems as the female cast members. This pampering was partly a side effect of the strict policy to keep males and females apart but no doubt the administrative command that separated men and women by employing different immediate supervisors played a role in this as well. Rather special treatment for female members began as soon as a show began touring. Women were seldom called upon to assist fatigue parties in hauling gear off boats or into venues and were given preferential treatment in the assigning of billets. Although co-ed accommodation was sometimes necessary (with the sexes separated by curtains or any makeshift divider), male cast and crew were often billeted with the troops right on base or in local accommodations of dubious cleanliness[121] while their female counterparts were put up in hotels, YWCAs or private homes, allowing them more comfortable surroundings and a break from military life if only for a few hours. Male cast members were also often sent ahead overseas with the CWAC, for example, following at a later date, leaving male members to set up in barracks in England before the women arrived. During the steamship passage overseas, females were quartered on the more comfortable officer decks, both because they would theoretically be out of temptation's way then and because women personnel were a relative rarity on troop carrier ships. These accommodations also entitled them to dine in the Officers' Mess. In later years, female cast members were often flown back to base in England or to Canada while the males were required to travel by boat. There really was a

sense that the women in these units needed special protection against the elements, physical stress and male predators. Worse than the strain placed on the unit in protecting female entertainers was the perception among the officers in charge that they were ungrateful for the unique and preferential treatment they received. Any complaining about billets, food or certain rules by female performers, usually occurring immediately after reaching a new camp, was construed as ingratitude:

> (The girls') settling down process seems to include raising hell for one or two days. In this area they have been their bitchiest best...they still can't get it through their heads that everything that is done is for their own protection - they are the most ungrateful bunch I've ever met - they seem to think that leather jerkins, a late breakfast, extra blankets, etc., materialize out of thin air.[122]

Perhaps because it was perceived that the available supply of entertainers would eventually be outstripped by the demand for shows in Canada, Italy, England and Europe, disciplinary action that took a serviceperson out of a performing unit was relatively rare. The most common punishments for infractions that were a direct result of low morale involved fines, loss of dependents' allowance or kitchen duty.[123] In this area, entertainers were treated far more leniently than those in the rest of the military - there was no easy way out of a unit. The primary reason for a person attached to an entertainment unit to be transferred or boarded out of service was medical. However, at various points entertainers and show soldiers were dealt with according to standard military treatment. There is only reported case of an army show member being removed from service with an entertainment unit and placed in a regular unit while overseas. Private Blythe had the dubious distinction of being the first and only entertainer to be moved into the regular Army after being demoted from corporal to private in rank due to disciplinary problems. "Several times he stayed away from parades" and despite the fact that he was a vocalist of some talent, he was slated to be posted to a reinforcement unit.[124] It is quite possible that in this period, early 1944, when the demand for and number of entertainers was increasing while the infrastructure in place to keep rein on them remained relatively small, administration attempted to make an example of Blythe. Having had a comparatively easy time of service, the threat of being posted to a combat unit was a strong deterrent against poor

behavior among male personnel. Other punishments meted out were somewhat less severe. Marriage without explicit permission usually resulted in a deliberate attempt to keep the couple separate. When Young (WD) and Kostenuk (AM), performers with the "All Clear" group of the RCAF were married during their Christmas leave in 1943, they choose to take a couple of extra days and were actually absent without leave for over 72 hours. To further irritate their senior officer, they telephoned to ask for more time. F/O A.A. Marshall was infuriated and immediately issued orders for Young to be replaced by another airwoman in the show and proclaimed "in order to maintain discipline and my prestige with the unit, it is imperative that the couple be separated insofar as their RCAF duties are concerned."[125]

Pregnancy was a relatively rare issue among the women entertainers, except in that administrators tried desperately to create circumstances wherein the possibilities of it occurring were low. This was despite the fact that some female and male entertainers who had toured for some time together became engaged or married while on leave or before being posted overseas and thus worked together as couples. In the case that pregnancy was detected, immediate medical board and return to domestic life resulted. Throughout the women's services, production (waged and war-related work) and reproduction (the period of gestation and mothering) were radically split. A woman could be a producer or a reproducer but not concurrently in this period. Pregnancy, whether in or out of wedlock, meant an immediate and usually permanent end to active participation in war service. Official Department of Defence regulations, the impossible logistics of doing physically demanding work during gestation and the stringent social restrictions on the visible presence of obviously pregnant women in the forces all created a definitive split between producers and reproducers and pointed to the wide "no-woman's land" in the middle. The response to pregnancy from the military infrastructure was no doubt the swiftest of all bureaucratic adjustments. In the first week of May, 1944, Pte. Dagg (CWAC) was brought before a Medical Officer, who promptly opined that she was pregnant and had been for some months. A wardrobe mistress in England with Unit D, she was a married woman and was pregnant before she left Canada. When officials

discovered that she was between 5 and 6 months pregnant, she was on a ship back to Canada within 2 weeks.[126] Likewise, Pte. (Mrs.) Goddard (CWAC) was evacuated to 2 CCS near Oldenbrooke, Holland during a tour there when local medical authorities found her to be pregnant. She was given papers excusing her from "riding in army vehicles and strenuous duties." In short order, she was returned to the U.K., leaving her troupe without a female soloist.[127] While arrangements were swiftly made to return pregnant servicewomen to Canada, it was sometimes with the regret of the unit that women were compelled to leave the group. At the loss of another airwoman to pregnancy during the "Blackouts" tour of England, the officer in charge commented "it is regrettable that (this airwomen) has been forced to vacate her position with the company. She has proven herself to be an exceptionally valuable member of this unit and ...as an airwoman she has at all times been a credit to herself and to the service."[128] Disciplinary challenges of a wide range grew after VE Day and officials were hard-pressed to keep on top of the mountain of requests for compassionate leave and the growing spirit of freedom among enlisted men and women.

As in the wider military, proper forms of recreation were encouraged among the performers in an effort to curb disciplinary problems. In addition to regular mail service, recreation for the entertainers themselves became increasingly important as the war continued. Most highly stressed were group activities that were wholesome and healthy and that allowed for some supervision. In Canada and the U.K., entertainer-soldiers played softball and volleyball, went on picnics and hikes, watched films, and went on short sightseeing trips on bicycles.[129] Importantly, entertainers were often given tours of the military sites they visited, getting a clear glimpse of occupations within other areas of service. While reminding them that they perhaps had a relatively easy time of it compared to some and connecting them to the seriousness of the war effort, being exposed to a wide variety of military life also gave performers ammunition for adapting their act to suit different audiences. For example, when the RCAF unit "Joe Boys" were given a tour of St. John's dry docks and gun sites in addition to touring a docked corvette and HMCS *Longueil* in early 1945, they acknowledged that this cross-service information was greatly

appreciated.[130] While somewhat limited in Canada, recreational outings and activities were more varied and in some cases, more dangerous while in England, Italy and Northwest Europe. In England, entertainment personnel were allowed to take correspondence or weekend courses in London in a number of different topic areas and apparently great interest was expressed in these opportunities. Pilgrimages to sites of cultural importance such as Shakespeare's birth place were popular, as were the more common pastimes of Bingo and cribbage games. Organized sport became more frequent as entertainment units played soccer and baseball against local teams before their show or the next morning, scores being presented in the war diaries of the CAS. These kinds of activities provided social contact with other Canadians, and thus relieved any tension felt in the unit over spending so much time together. In Italy, cast members often traveled together on days off, enjoying elaborate spaghetti dinners, tours of ancient ruins and more recent ones, and dips in the Adriatic Sea. Because they were following the progress north of Canadian troops, these sight-seeing entertainers often were the first non-combatants to tour the cities of Italy and their war diaries express considerable dismay over the damaged state of famous landmarks. Recreational travel in Northwest Europe became more popular after VE-Day. Members of the Navy Show had their sight-seeing expeditions documented in a short film, which depicts a few different couples frolicking at the Eiffel Tower, shopping in Amsterdam, and enjoying a day at a public pool somewhere in Paris.[131] For entertainment veterans of the Italian campaign, Europe seemed relatively less damaged and this encouraged them to venture off the beaten path to more gruesome sites like the Belsen concentration camp near Unterluss, Germany. Most thrilling for a number of cast members were the several surprise reunions with family members that occurred in the NWET and Italy. This raised the morale not just of the individual entertainer but of the whole unit, as the diarist for the "You've Had It" unit of the CAS commented after that group's blues singer ran into her brother in Ghent, Belgium, "the cheerfulness this brought to Doris was very contagious and the complete cast shared it with her."[132]

Drinking, while strictly frowned upon by the authorities, was recreational but often created special disciplinary challenges. Like those in their audiences, at times liquor was

severely abused among cast and crew. There are several reports of entertainment personnel becoming so intoxicated that they could not complete their duties, most often in the Canadian Army Show and especially in Italy, where the vino was said to taste like a mixture of high octane gas and blanco. Transport drivers were too drunk to get behind the wheel (but sometimes did anyway, usually with disastrous results), performers drank in the afternoon and were too "under the weather" to get on stage in the evening and soldiers picked to act in certain scenes or fatigue parties ordered to unpack the shows' equipment showed up in the same condition. These episodes of drunkenness often coincided with pay days and because of that were at times overlooked. Oddly, but a reflection of the tight rein kept on female personnel, no women performers appear in the records as drunk and disorderly. ASOs were also periodically found to be drunk on duty, sometimes leaving the troupes to their own ingenuity in finding billets and places to play. The "Combined Ops" troupe was only one group that arrived in a new city to find their ASO incapacitated with drink. Drunk and unable to find the house the CWACs were to stay in while in Aurich, Germany, the ASO would not hand over the keys either. By the time the women found a place to stay they had "broke down and went hysterical." The same unit had trouble with their cook, of whom it was said "he is semi-drunk most of the time."[133] Replacement personnel could easily be found while in Canada or the U.K., an action typical for dealing with cases of drunkenness. It was exceedingly difficult to replace staff while on tour on the continent and ratings were usually fined between one to fourteen days' wages for drunken behavior. ASOs were reported to Auxiliary Services but seldom replaced due to lack of reinforcements for this line of work, a shortage felt more acutely in the latter years of the war and following VE Day.

After joining an entertainment unit, personnel were expected to complete basic training if they had not already done so and still received the same basic rate of pay for their rank and sex within their particular service. Domestic tours were the first order of business after the rehearsal process, with the CAS and the Navy Show traveling across Canada by train and the Air Force, with their wider touring area, making use of planes and transport vehicles. While transportation and weather problems were not as severe as they

became overseas, the constant and close contact between performers caused tension and poor morale among casts and crews. Touring overseas presented a new crop of problems, though female personnel were somewhat insulated from these irritants by the military's policy of pampering them as much as possible. Disciplinary action within entertainment units was somewhat less harsh than in the rest of the military and usually was taken in cases of marriage without permission, pregnancy and against those who drank to excess. Recreation, in various forms, was important for performers as it improved morale and reduced the need for discipline.

CHAPTER 4

The Audience

Opinion was split amongst the entertainment administrations when it came to pinpointing the priority placement of different audiences. This was no doubt due to the at times contradictory goals of the entertainment programs, goals that sought both to increase the morale of troops and recruit to the service members of the public that needed encouragement. These are by definition two different audiences and the question of how to balance the demographic of the audiences with some sort of fairness garnered great attention among those in charge. The compromise solution was to give troops the first priority but to make the scripts easily adaptable to civilian crowds. Some commitment to civilian audiences became necessary though, outside of deliberate recruitment goals, when revenues from those audiences were acknowledged to be quite significant and able to offset the costs of performing for the troops.[134] For example, the Navy Show's tours of Canada and Newfoundland netted just under half a million dollars in ticket income from the 300,000 civilians that saw the show. The Army Show, too, expected early on to float their troop shows on the income from civilian audiences:

> ...in setting up the show to play for the public and to troops concurrently, financial returns will accrue practically from the beginning, thus placing the show on an independent financial basis from the outset...public performances in the larger centers will be very lucrative.[135]

Troops of any nationality could see a show for free and usually were given preference in areas where demand for tickets was high while civilians were invariably asked to pay if they were not the guest of a serviceperson. While everyone involved could see the benefits of establishing the importance of civilian audiences, performers sometimes dreaded playing to them. Despite efforts made to modify scripts for non-military groups, obviously the material continued in many respects to revolve around military life from the perspective of those already enlisted. This often meant that certain jokes or numbers did not get the response from civilians that they did from the troops. "Because the army show is based on army vernacular, there is sometimes a bit of a drag during the presentation to

navy, air force or where there is a large proportion of civilian guests."[136] Civilian audiences, it was thought, were "slower on the uptake" and their reactions thus more reserved than the entertainers would have liked.

While local civilians in the NWET and Italy did not come out to the shows in great numbers, especially when performances were conducted outside in field base camps, the sound of a show often brought civilians to the area. Frank Shuster recalled one display of gratitude in France:

> I always remember, we were well off away from the actual war, a good fifteen or twenty miles away, and there was still farmers there and one farmer, at the end of the show, came over and there were twenty of us and he brought twenty eggs. We hadn't seen eggs all the way through and we all cherished them. The following day we all went around trying to find a place that would fry them. I remember walking down the street with this egg in my hand saying "I'll never forget this moment.' And here I am remembering it, all these years later.[137]

The only civilian audience most groups would refuse to play to were German citizens. It was generally accepted that they were an inappropriate audience considering the goals of the entertainment units and it was generally left up to the Auxiliary Services Officer to decide policy on this matter on a show by show basis.[138]

By all reports, military audiences were widely appreciative of army, navy and air force shows and were very glad to see them, especially overseas. Frank Shuster recalled the surprise troops returning to rear areas from the front in France expressed when seeing the show arrive:

> Forty days after D-Day we were in France...the first unit ("Invasion Revue") to play overseas, in Normandy. We'd see guys coming over to us and saying 'What the hell are you doing here? There's a war going on.' 'Well, this is where they told us to play.' And they'd say 'Well you're welcome but keep your head down.'[139]

If this overall welcome and success is placed on a gradative scale though, some shows in some locations were more greatly appreciated than others. Performers, for example, thought that the presence of "brass hats" or a large percentage of officers in the audience inhibited the expression of positive response from, and the enthusiasm of, the rank and file. In fact, some officers were booed when they showed up at shows, although that was

probably in response to the presence of attractive female civilians on their arms. Regardless of the reason, the attendance of officers lent a different tone to the performances. Although the presence of Lieutenant-General E.L.M. Burns, Major General Volkes or General McNaughton gave legitimacy and an official stamp of approval to the shows those military leaders attended, they were perceived to have a dampening effect on the rank and file and much debate raged over whether or not seats should be put aside for officers at all. It was usually agreed that the rank and file had first priority. The Canadians followed the American lead in this and often pointed to the example set in this area by some of the biggest stars in the wartime U.S. Jack Benny, for example, performed in Montreal, Ottawa, Borden, and Toronto in 1943 for naval personnel under the strict stipulation that only 5% of tickets be reserved for officers while the ratings got two tickets each with no seats reserved for civilians. "Benny (was) very emphatic on this point. His great desire and his whole objective in making his tours (was) to entertain the ranks and ratings."[140] There was also a certain animosity toward officers from entertainers in that the former were thought to take advantage of the latter with requests to play for what amounted to private parties in Officers' Messes. Because officers were "using the musical part(s of the units) up to the hilt on every available opportunity and in some cases, the original purpose of the unit(s were) in danger of being forgotten,"[141] these engagements were usually left up to the discretion of the relevant CO.

According to most accounts, the Air force and Army came to some sort of easy equilibrium between playing to civilians, officers and the other ranks. The Navy Show, however, was widely criticized for neglecting service personnel in favor of civilians. While this could be a logical outcome of the organizational nature of the Navy Show (its elaborate set and large cast meant it was less able to play in smaller venues and because of its overhead costs needed civilian admission revenues, for example), there does appear to be some truth to the claim that Naval Special Services was preoccupied with public fame and approval and did "showboat" a great deal. Army officials were among the first to point out that few servicemen had actually seen "Meet the Navy." A leading army officer remarked that "the impression now prevalent is that the RCN show is more concerned

with playing for big business and in capital cities than giving entertainment to personnel of the First Canadian Army. Crerar and I consider steps should be taken to greatly accelerate arrival of this RCN entertainment in First Canadian Army area..."[142] Other commentators compared the RCAF with Army and Navy shows, claiming that "unlike the Navy and Army shows, the RCAF revue is being presented to the personnel of the air schools and stations. It isn't being commercialized and put on a road show basis."[143] In their defense, the nature of the Navy Show meant that touring in forward areas on the continent was impractical. The sheer number of personnel, the size of the cast and crew and the type of venue needed to put on the show necessarily limited the production to troops in base and those in rear areas that could travel some distance to attend the performance. To this end, "Meet the Navy" arranged for extended engagements in certain key European cities such as Paris, Brussels and Antwerp, places where they could "'set down' so that they become acclimatized, get unpacked and get into the swing of things." While the end result may not have been satisfactory to military authorities, "the utmost consideration (was) given to placing the show where the most Canadians (would) have the opportunity to see it."[144]

While they were uncomfortable performing for military higher-ups, the entertainers cherished the presence and acknowledgment of political and cultural celebrities. These contacts did much to affirm both the entertainers' contribution to the war effort and their skills as performers. Much was made of Prime Minister Mackenzie King's appearance backstage after an Army show in Ottawa in early 1943, a visit described as "a thrilling experience for all members of the unit...a grand reward for long days and long hours of exhausting rehearsals and organization in building the army show."[145] In the winter of 1943, the King and Queen of England and their daughters Margaret and Elizabeth congratulated the cast of "Meet the Navy" backstage at the London Hippodrome, three weeks after playwright Noel Coward[146] and actresses Deborah Kerr and Lynn Fontanne had done the same thing. For all they enjoyed meeting political figures, performers were even more enthusiastic about meeting other artists. This increased enthusiasm may speak to a tendency among the performers to identify more personally with the artistic benefits

of their military role than its other aspects.

Canadian troops of course were the first priority, regardless of what branch of the military they were attached to. There was a distinct overlap in entertaining the different services and rarely any hesitation in one service's shows playing for another service. The RCAF shows, for example, played to air force, army or navy audiences in any given touring area. Under informal guidelines, shows generally attempted to play for their own service first, if at all possible. The "W-Debs" of the RCAF, for example, arranged to go straight to No. 6 Bomber group areas after their arrival in England. In reality, audiences for all shows were equally split between the services. In 1943, it was estimated that three different RCAF shows had together performed for Naval personnel totaling some 10400 and approximately 32073 members of the Army.[147] While the shows all aimed for basically the same ends, this informal reciprocal agreement was thought to foster better relations between the three sections of the military. An RCAF group reported that in Vancouver RCAF "shows are being given for the Army...this is deemed politic in view of the fact that Army entertainment here does a great deal of work for the Air Force and at the present time an Army Show "About Faces of 1944" are giving many shows to RCAF personnel."[148] At times, personnel were shared between the shows as well, each posting the others' audition notices, though successful transferees had to sign up with the service they were to tour with. In this way, the military was able to maximize its talent pool and make use of its most promising performers on a more consistent basis. This practice of sharing talent appears to have occurred quite often and usually involved personnel with some special and rare skill. Louise Burns, formerly a commissioned officer with the Navy Show, joined the Canadian Army Show in Canada in April 1945 in a training position. Similarly, Aircraftsman M.B. Lechow was invited to join the Navy Show because he was a highly qualified Russian dancer. This talent was more suited to the style of "Meet the Navy" than of the Air Force shows and Lechow eventually signed up with the Navy. In addition, representatives from the entertainment departments of all three services attended citizen committee meetings. These meetings, beginning in late 1942, were held in an attempt to liaise with civil organizations, both those within Auxiliary Services and smaller

groups, on the need for and methods of supplying entertainment to the troops. In the course of these multi-service and mixed civilian-military coalition meetings, the three services were able to learn from each other and eventually lay the groundwork for reciprocal entertainment across the army, navy and air force. Finally, when entertainment units from the different services were in the same area, they often sat in on each other shows if possible. As military personnel they were welcome to do so and being part of an audience gave performers clues as to what numbers worked and which did not. This occurred both in Canada and while overseas and provided a much needed recreational activity for companies with a few spare hours.

Especially when overseas, it was thought that specifically Canadian entertainment was the most beneficial for the morale of Canadian servicemen, homesick and starved for reminders of home. It was presumed that subjecting those servicemen to entertainment of a nature they were not accustomed to would in fact hamper morale, so truly Canadian shows became necessary. In one instance, a concert party given by Unit D in a British hospital had its WO i/c J.W. Cameron state "Capacity show, enthusiastic response from audience. Example-one patient on wheelchair wrung my hand after show exclaiming 'it was so good to see that-please come back again,' Captain in charge of patient stated 'First Canadian Show I've seen, Major-Brother, mail from home.'"[149] While the troops appreciated "mail from home" type entertainment, they also apparently approved of the all-Canadian cast, particularly the women. An English tour of the "Blackouts" of the RCAF led that group to conclude that "RCAF personnel most appreciate seeing and hearing Canadian girls,"[150] a common sentiment throughout the services.

Canadian girls, however, often made up significant portions of the audiences of military shows, especially in Canada where female personnel in any service were routinely and formally offered tickets for themselves and a companion of either sex to see the shows. Depending on the location of performance, servicewomen, in conjunction with civilian women, were certainly a presence and acknowledged as such by performers, who consistently made the same concessions to entertain female troops as male ones, even if it meant extra work for them. Because much of women's work in the military was shift

work, they were highly likely to miss out on some shows and this was taken into consideration in the number of performances presented. The "Joe Boys," for example, did three full shows in one day for the WDs at Gorsebrook Barracks in Halifax, starting each show as the different shifts came off duty. The "Joe Boys" decided to do this by a unanimous vote among themselves, aiming to have every servicewoman see the show.[151]

With a shortage of entertainment and a demand for specifically Canadian performers, a serious problem in isolated locations, many officers at bases and air fields requested the entertainers provide music for dances held after the show and thus tended to over-extend the energies of the entertainment units. Dance music was provided with some regularity in Canada but the resulting exhaustion and the follow-up illnesses led to many refusals while overseas. Cast members were often just too tired or had to pack up and move locations rapidly after a performance. One RCAF OC was concerned about late night dances and claimed that some stations required them to play for up to three hours after a full evening show "in some cases even after traveling in the morning and having given, say a hospital show in the afternoon. It is felt that this constitutes rather a hardship on the musical section of the unit..."[152] The Air Force was the first to partially successfully decide, in the winter of 1943, that dances no longer be played at, both because illness invariably resulted and since the shows' equipment was routinely stolen from evening dance locations. Luckily for them, the Navy Show was too big for these sorts of engagements and the CAS left such matters to a vote within each unit.

Without a doubt the most careful planning went into shows for hospital audiences. Performances here were more prone to cancellation due to incoming injured and the resulting environment in which entertainment was thought to be irreverent to the unfolding tragedy in the wards. This was the case in Canada as well. In the winter of 1944, the RCAF "Swing Time" entertainment unit was to have played in a military hospital near Yorkton, Saskatchewan but two plane crashes that left one dead, one dying and three injured on the day of the planned performance meant that a new venue had to be found.[153] Severe injuries sometimes meant that performers were unclear about how the show was going over. Among bone and burn patients "for obvious reasons, it (was) sometimes

difficult to gauge the reaction."[154] Despite that, performers, by most accounts, found shows done in hospitals to be among the most rewarding, even for no other reason than the patients usually had the extra time to write letters full of praise and thanks to the troupes, a tangible follow-up act that in conjunction with the previous laughs and sing-alongs made obvious to the entertainers that their work and efforts had some positive effect on the war effort. Letters like this one from the No. 11 Canadian General Hospital in England no doubt solidified an entertainers' commitment to the project:

> When you were here at the Hospital, you sure made a hit with the boys and me. You are doing a wonderful job and all of us boys hope we see you in lights. You guys deserve more than a handshake-we will not forget the way you made us laugh, and got drunk (ACT). I can appreciate it. I ain't got a chance to walk again, and it don't stop one from laughing so good luck to you from boys of the whole Canadian army who can't see enough of you. Come back again and again. Please keep them laughing. Good luck from the boys at Watford Hospital.[155]

In later years, hospital audiences also began to include Prisoners of War, who after considerable hardship, could use some entertaining. Most performers agreed that "the patients who seemed to get the biggest kick out of the show were POW repatriates."[156] A vocalist with the group "Five Hits and a Miss," a Pte. Marshall (CWAC) "was the first Canadian girl, other than nurses, many of the repatriates had seen since leaving Canada."[157] If true, they no doubt enjoyed the shows.

Designations between military audiences according to nationality seems to have made little difference to enjoyment levels and in fact, especially in the case of the Navy Show, the productions were designed to be appropriate for almost any military group in the Allied Forces. As part of the conditions of sponsorship, ENSA required "Meet the Navy" to play for any Allied troops in the venue's area. Like the conflict that ensued over the balancing of civilian and military audiences, the Navy Show soon was criticized for not evenly presenting their show to American, British and Canadian audiences in their more formalized reciprocal arrangement. While the Army and Air Force apparently had no difficulties in equally covering all types of military audiences, ENSA, the USO, and the Canadian Army and Air Force all complained that the Navy Show was not performing to their groups enough:

> Complaints have been received from the Military Authority in London that they might not receive their fair share of the performances, conferences were called with ENSA, the British and Canadian Military Authorities and on a different occasion with the American Forces. The Canadian Army expressed themselves completely dissatisfied to share and share alike with the others, claiming not the lion's share, but the total output. It must be remembered that by a reciprocal agreement with the USO we are obliged to give the American Forces a reasonable amount of entertainment, and the USO has lived up to its part of the bargain while we are considerably in arrears. The same applies to ENSA.[158]

Unable in the end to satisfy all parties, the Navy Show endeavored to change the conditions of its sponsorship.[159] American troops, though they may not have seen "Meet the Navy" as often as some would have wished, appreciated the shows as much as did their Canadian counterparts and shows they saw together facilitated the sharing of information on how to run successful entertainment for servicemen while fostering some sort of cross-border easy companionship. The RCAF provided most of the shows American troops saw while based in Canada or Newfoundland and after a U.S. performance of "All Clear" in October 1943 a CBC representative reported "when the peoples play together, all the petty ill-feelings engendered by selfish politicians are blown out the window on a gale of laughter. Our sense of humor is alike-we understand one another's jokes which is a good deal more important than understanding one another's funny politics."[160] Americans stationed in Alaska in some of the most isolated outposts of that era were often extremely pleased to see Canadian RCAF shows. A show in Galena, Alaska (said to be the most isolated spot on the RCAF tour map) to a group of American military personnel that had been completely flooded out with a great loss of personal possessions had the audience praising the Canadians to no end. "They were all most grateful to the unit, almost pathetically so and we were very glad to feel that we had been able to do something to make their life a little brighter if only temporarily."[161] There seem to have been few problems that arose while entertaining the Americans, outside of snags in transportation plans which compelled RCAF units to comment that constantly messed up travel arrangements "was the only marring note in our relations with our American allies."[162] The RCAF several times crossed the border, as did the Army Show, to entertain

American troops. This was done to foster understanding and comradeship between the two countries' service personnel and shows received reviews such as "to all members of the RCAF and to all Canadians, we salute you, our gallant Allies, who showed us what a good time really is."[163]

There are few reported incidents where language difficulties harmed the overall impact of the show, at least from the perspective of the entertainers themselves. At times, audiences were quite diverse, as at the #31 E.F.T.S. where RCAF shows routinely played to enthusiastic groups of Poles, Free French, Czech and Norwegian Airmen who were training there. The Maple Leaf Gardens in Avellino, Italy in August 1944 provided a good example of how the novelty of being entertained and the break in routine it signified helped overcome the language barrier. CAS "Mixed Fun" did a bit called "328" that pointed to some of the confusion resulting from having both English and French speakers in the Canadian military. A few "Free French officers were present and enjoyed the show very much, particularly the French-Canadian dialect story of '328.' It seems that they had some French Moroccan troops under their command all with practically the same first name so they called them by their regimental numbers. After seeing the show they tagged one of the troops with the number '328' and he proudly answers smartly to it when called."[164] French Canadians, while at a slight disadvantage because all army, air force and navy shows were conducted in English (a result of the Anglophone bias of the higher ranks in entertainment units),[165] seem to have been satisfied at least partially by these distractions. A typical comment from the performers when on stage before French Canadian troops is found in the Army Show "Kit Bags" war diary. That diarist reported "Tonight (April 9, 1942) we visited the Fusiliers De Montreal and although this is a French regiment, and most of the boys here appear very French, the performance was given a very fine welcome and everyone in show was accorded wonderful applause."[166] The Poles, too, were thought to appreciate the shows despite not being able to understand the dialogue.[167] Depending on the balance of comedy numbers to musical numbers, a non-English speaking audience could gain some enjoyment from these productions.

While language differences perhaps did not create the problems one would expect,

there were at times difficulties from the performers point of view with audiences who were often deemed to be unruly and rowdy. Regiments that were rumored to be especially aggressive in combat, "tough fighters" like the Royal 22e, were expected to be difficult audiences but some Canadian regiments had perhaps deservedly bad reputations, such as the North Shore New Brunswick regiment, about whom the diarist for "The Tin Hats" could only say "from experience with nearly every formation in the Canadian Army, it should be recorded that this regiment provides the most inattentive and unmannerly audience with which we have been in contact."[168] Other areas were known by entertainers to contain rough audiences. Manitoba was famous in the air force for disorderly crowds. RCAF band "Swing Time's" tours of the North West Air Command (NWAC) was routinely marred by the paratroopers stationed at Rivers, Manitoba, a group that was consistently deemed "the smart alec type, noisy and ill mannered...this station is the only example of that that we have struck in this command."[169] Boisterous audience members sometimes stole the performers' vehicles, vandalized gear, stole props (fully operational rifles most commonly) and refused to stay seated during the performance. Rowdy audiences such as these sometimes meant the show would be cut short by removing the numbers that were likely to increase the uproar while performers coped by cutting down hecklers. At a "Forage Caps" presentation in England to the Cape Breton Highlanders "there was one heckler in the audience but due to the performers tact and skill this was soon put to rights. Some numbers were cut due to the audience."[170] Drunk and disorderly conduct amongst the audience (though no more common than among cast members) was by far the most frequent problem, one which occurred to a greater extent on "pay day." The temper of the audiences in the NWET and the Mediterranean were invariably shorter and while they were among the most appreciative audiences, they could be unpleasant to play to. In Italy, a Canadian Army Show that began with an orchestral rendition of "O Canada" caused havoc when those who stood to attention were shouted down by other members of the audience. Two days later, drunken and abusive members of the 3000+ audience of the 5th Canadian Armoured Division, Royal Canadian Artillery, "made a number of rude remarks annoying principally to the CWACs and the Auxiliary Services

Officer had to have them removed." Tensions were so high that the ASOs finally arranged to have the first row of the audience placed at least ten feet from the stage for the shows in the area where the 5th Canadian Armoured Division was located.[171]

Despite the disrespectful and rambunctious behavior of some troops and notwithstanding orders to the contrary, the CWACs and the other women entertainers seem to have been readily able to establish some sort of personal rapport with the troops, most specifically overseas. It is no exaggeration of the expected scenario to say that Canadian military men were pleased to see Canadian women on stage, their very presence dictated by audience demand. One group of servicemen in the No. 1 Advanced Base Workshop, RCEME, stationed in Italy were said to be anticipating a chance for "'giddy gloating' over 'gorgeous gams'...and then their faces fell as it became evident that it was not the unit with the willowy CWAC that had arrived, but...the Forage Caps...without the aid of 'gorgeous gams,' although one of the impersonators had a couple of 'beauts.'"[172] This expectation for women performers was recognized far in advance by most administrations, the head of the RCAF entertainment commenting in 1943 that the "strongest entertainment feature of these groups is the fact that there are a number of WDs in each group. It is felt that if the WDs were eliminated from the performances, much of the entertainment value would be lost."[173] The air force soon established an "all-girl revue" of 11 WDS, the "W-Debs" who toured Canada and Overseas accompanied by two male piano players.[174] In England, troops were said to swoon in the presence of Canadian girls and there was no ignoring that the women were the key players from the audiences' perspective both on and off stage. Reports with the lines "The CWAC are the biggest attraction of the show. The men up here are girl crazy and go for Canadian girls in a big way" were common.[175] It was also common procedure for CWAC personnel to be presented with some gift on behalf of the troops they had

Figure 6 "The Blackouts" in Scotland.

entertained. In Italy, for example, CWAC members of "Mixed Fun" were given flowers and some souvenirs of Italy in appreciation of the shows given to the Loyal Edmontons and the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.[176] It was not just the other ratings that were complimentary toward the CWAC. While the No. 3 Detachment Canadian Army Show was in Italy, Major-General Hoffmeister sent his private collapsible bath up for the CWAC to use.[177] An officer in the 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade showed the typical enthusiasm when commenting on a performance of the "Mixed Fun" Army Show in Italy:

> After seeing your show, how can you expect me to send my men out to make love to a tank, and that includes me. We've been up the line so long now that it's a pleasure to see a curve again. If the fellow with the wolf's head thinks that he's the only wolf around here, he's got another thing coming.[178]

Many female entertainers spent some of their off-hours at Canadian hospitals, talking with injured troops and writing letters for them to loved ones back home. Within the comparatively sheltered war zone existence of these women, hospital visits allowed an up close and personal glimpse at the human physical consequences of war. While the war diaries are quiet on the topic of how the women dealt with this exposure, they are noticeably vocal on their contribution in this area. One can guess the results though situations like that of Private Alfreda Philips (CWAC), who while in Italy stayed up all night long with a dying Canadian serviceman "who breathed his last at 0745 hours." She fainted before show time the next day but it was claimed that "rough roads and the heat are quite hard on the girls."[179]

The Wrens of "Meet the Navy" also had their own "wolf" following. Two men from the HMCS *Saint John* "somewhere at sea" wanted pictures of the female members of the cast for their pin-up collection:

> Here's the Buzz. We want pictures...There is nothing that will do our hearts and morale more good than the pictures of nine lovely Canadian Wrens. So girls how about co-operating with your brothers in arms...We have heard lots about you but so far you have managed to evade us; for it seems that in every port you have played we have sailed on your opening night...we sure are hoping that you have some pictures handy that you can shackle on to and send us. Autographed, naturally.

The sailors, claiming they were lonely, personally signed their letter and added that they

were "two wolves in ship's clothing."[180]

While women were implicitly included in the shows as sexual objects for the benefit of the servicemen, the greatest portion of audiences in all areas, military officials went to great lengths to keep servicemen away from their female counterparts except in situations that could be strictly supervised, with only slightly less stringent rules concerning their co-workers.[181] Officers in charge in essence took over the imposition of parental regulations that female personnel lacked being so far from the purview of their parents and families and became the moral chaperones of those women under their command. Even the much-anticipated tour of the RCAF "W-Debs" all-girl revue in England was not allowed to proceed unfettered by these concerns and an all-male group, the "Tarmacs," were sent along to tour with them as chaperones. In order to avoid any possible trouble, it was decided early on that commanding officers would attempt to limit fraternization between female entertainers and their audiences. Most agreed that "maintaining the seclusion of the Army Show...contributes to a more harmonious and controlled state of well-being in the show itself. Unless this state is maintained, there is always the possibility of the CWAC personnel of the cast becoming involved with Armed Forces personnel returning or going home on furlough."[182] Thus invitations for after show get-togethers were usually rejected by women's service handlers as these occasions were thought to be too risky by those attempting to regulate the morality of servicewomen. Even in camp mess halls, the CWAC were required to sit by themselves at tables declared "out of bounds" to male personnel. The Canadian Army Show was the most blatant in this ruling and routinely forbid any socializing between the CWACs and their audiences. The decision that no invitations be accepted was thought to "give us our best weapon in preventing girls and boys getting into possible trouble at parties at Messes."[183] This rule, less strongly applied while in Canada, was ruthlessly enforced while overseas where conditions were such that around the clock chaperoning was impossible. On the rare occasions when female cast and crew members were allowed to attend a social event in the evening, they did so under strict supervision. A camp dance in England in early 1944 was one such affair where CWACs were permitted "to attend (the) dance by parading to

and from the gymnasium where dance was held...(and the) girls behaved themselves very well."[184] Ultimately, the most glowing remark concerning the behavior of female entertainment personnel was "the girls at all times behaved as one would have expected them to-in other words as perfect ladies."[185]

Strict disciplinary action was in store for women who failed to toe the line in the army's objective to keep men and women separate. Pte. Carey (CWAC) was placed under open arrest after taking a post-show stroll with an officer without requesting permission (which surely would have been denied) and returning to her room at 0040 hours. She later claimed that she did not asked permission as she was just going for a walk and had no plan to leave the grounds, but that did not supercede the fact that she was out at night with a man contrary to orders.[186] Infractions of this cloistering rule were common, no doubt partly because these women were experiencing freedom in a lot of other ways and partly because they saw the lack of logic in being employed to entertain troops while at the same time being required to stay physically distant from them. One officer directly pointed to this contradiction in his analysis of what he deemed poor behavior among the CWAC while revealing a certain high-level condescension to these women:

> They still resent the Order against loitering in the men's lines talking to strangers - feel this is part of their morale raising job to talk to the boys. I've clamped down on this pretty firmly for obvious reasons...they are a pain in the neck and are, almost, not worth the trouble and responsibility they pile on, particularly under these conditions where they are smack in the middle of a men's camp.[187]

As evidenced by the number of their marriages to Canadian and British servicemen both during the war and immediately after, women entertainers appear to have continued, to a great extent, ignoring the army's wish to keep men and women of the military separate.

The presence of women off stage, both civilians and servicewomen, was often used as a rationale for requests to change any questionable material that appeared in the shows. While servicewomen were on stage and acting out these questionable scenes, their counterparts in the audience were seen to need protection from racier jokes and sexual innuendo. The General Officer Commanding the 6th Canadian Division, also the senior

officer of the three services in the Victoria area, used this reasoning in arguing for some changes to the RCAF show "Blackouts of 1943." He claimed that "WD personnel and young girls should not be subjected to the so-called humor and/or entertainment that formed the objectionable parts of the show." He was in particular concerned about one scene that involved a "young lady" who stops by the RCAF recruiting station to inquire about the Navy and the changes were promptly made.[188] In barracks, male members of these units were warned about the harsh language used in front of female personnel. In the case of the Army Show, daily orders were posted concerning the "profane language...in common use in meal parades and various departments in the unit where CWAC personnel are employed. Out of consideration for the CWAC personnel in the unit this practice will cease."[189] Wards in hospitals that catered specifically to troops with venereal disease were also considered off limits to female entertainers, though there was ample debate on this topic. It was decided early on and informally that CWACs for example would be released from duties in these "poor moral climates," but arguments that claimed venereal disease to be a war-related injury sparked heated discussions on the issue. When the concert party "Floor Show" played to VD wards in England, they were without CWAC personnel. "The officers were quite peeved that the full show did not play to the men in these wards in which they stated 'They are patients and can't get out to see entertainment as the other men can.' Incidentally, the OC also agrees they should have women entertain them as there are

Figure 7 Three CWACs apply make-up before a show in France.

women (sisters) working in the wards night and day, so why not others?" This comment points out the difference in the commonly held perception of female entertainers and other women in the service. Nurses on the one hand were not viewed as sexual beings compared with women entertainers and the fact that both were there to do a job had to be pointed out by the person in charge of this troupe.[190] Final word on the issue stated that it was "true enough that patients received their 'wounds' in action and that it is impossible for them to be entertained outside their wards but one hesitates to send female personnel to these wards. The OC authorized EX-clusion of CWAC personnel from performance duties therein."[191]

There are few reported cases of women entertainers themselves vocalizing or taking a stand against something that threatened their own sense of morality and considering some of the costumes women were required to wear, this is surprising indeed. Only one woman in the Army Show put her foot down over something she thought was beyond the pale. Pte. Simpson (CWAC) had originally been helping backstage with Unit 6 on a tour of Canada when she was slated to act as a replacement to any girl in the line who became sick or was injured. She immediately "refused to appear in abbreviated costume. Apparently she (had) succeeded in becoming part of the unit with no one aware of the fact that she (would) not wear abbreviated costumes." Captain R. Farnon, as Administrative Officer for the show in Canada, agreed that "Pte. Simpson had misrepresented herself as an entertainer and...had refused to fulfil the job for which she was being carried," and the servicewoman was quickly dispatched from the "About Faces of 1944" show in Courtenay, B.C. to Toronto.[192]

The entertainment units of the three services were able to reach a far greater audience over the radio than in person. As early as the fall of 1942, the Air Force planned to approach the CBC concerning the possible broadcasting of both their shows and those of the USO.[193] The Army Show conducted the most radio programs of the three services and had a regular time slot on the CBC for broadcasts both from Toronto and London. Captain Robert Farnon organized both programs within the Army Shows Broadcast Detachment under the supervision of Captain Rai Purdy and with talent from all branches

of the Canadian military. The formation of a constantly changing pool of talent was made necessary by the touring schedules of most Army entertainment units, whose work meant they were not regularly available for broadcasts. In England, individuals from the Army were released from touring to venture to London to participate in radio shows on an informal rotational basis beginning in September 1944. These included presentations for the CBC, the BBC, the Allied Expeditionary Forces Network and the Overseas Recorded Broadcasting Service. Right from the beginning though, the call went out to the Commanding Officers of all existing military entertainment units for volunteers for the radio program and thus the actual broadcasts included men and women from the RCN and Air Force as well. The Air Force was inclined to send individuals to do solo numbers for radio shows as most of their groups lacked an orchestra and it was felt that "the comedy would be most inappropriate for radio presentation."[194] The Air Force also conducted a series of 15 minute broadcasts that were relayed to Canadian personnel in war zones from headquarters in London, under the direction of F/Lt. R.C.R. Coote, the officer in charge of the "Blackouts."[195]

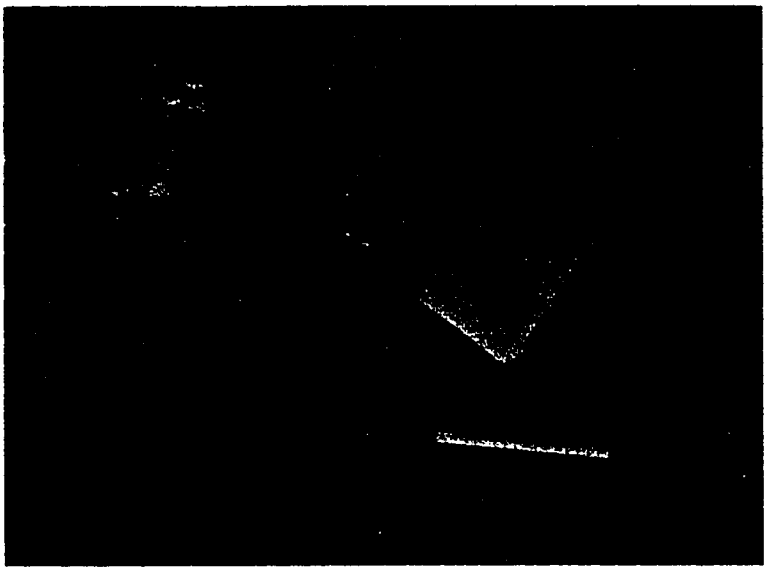

Figure 8 An Army Show Broadcast from Ottawa.

Canadian military broadcasts included everything from a weekly piano programme to full-scale variety shows with some of the best-known Canadian and British performers available sitting in as guests. The variety acts mirrored those in the Canadian Army Shows and a great deal of material was shared back and forth. Three "house" bands operated within the Broadcast Detachment, a full orchestra, a dance band and a dixieland band that, including permanent singers, employed some 52 staff members. Programming choices

were made in conjunction with the opinions and comments found in the mountains of listener mail both the Canadian and British broadcast centers received. Those broadcasts centers were sometimes changed to other locations for special events and done live from locations in London, places that were familiar to Allied troops, the Stage-Door Canteen and the Queensberry All Service Club, for example. Radio interviews with entertainment unit officials also assisted in recruiting in later years. By the beginning of 1945, the demand for talented performers was at an all time high to match the growing demand for entertainment in the NWET. A stream of reinforcements was constantly headed for outfitting in England during this period, primarily to join the Canadian Army Show. Back in Canada, CAS administrators were shocked to hear that military bands and concert parties stationed at Petawawa were being broken up and moved forward as reinforcements for front-line battalions. In fact all Category A Bandsmen were being drafted out of shows to be despatched overseas immediately. Perhaps not fully realizing the need for reinforcements to such fighting units as the Calgary Highlanders and the North Nova Scotia Highlanders, who had begun their push into the Rhineland, CAS officers choose to emphasize the demand for artists and called this practice "a shameful waste of talent in view of overseas need for shows and almost hopeless task of securing musicians." Within two days, Captain Wren's interview on CKEY Toronto had sparked the "largest number of volunteer applicants ever now here, appearing daily - both service personnel and civilians."[196]

Both members of the Armed Forces and the non-military public gave suggestions, approvals and complaints concerning the material, presentation and moral fibre of the shows they saw. Approval often came from strange places. The Catholic Women's League of Canada, for instances, felt moved to compliment the Naval Special Services on the high moral standards of the Navy Show. That League's leader wrote that "not only was this a very fine performance from an acting point of view, but its freedom from any suggestiveness in costumes, gestures or speech made it a most interesting and delightful show, which all were able to enjoy." The Director of Special Services (Navy) replied that he appreciated her acknowledgment of the show's restraint. "You are well aware that the

tendency in this modern age is towards the suggestive and, in the formative period of the show, we received many advices that unless we provided a certain amount of spicy or risque situations the play going public would not be appreciative...it is very gratifying indeed to have the praise of the Catholic Women's League of Canada because we are well aware of their efforts to preserve the decent way of life."[197] Army chaplains, considered some authority on matters of moral fibre, had their say as well:

> I was very happy to notice the complete absence of objectionable or even questionable jokes and scenes. There was no effort to put the show over on the basis of sexy stories or situations. Rather the show was built around popular music and good Canadian humor....The response to a wholesome show as we enjoyed last night is an indication of...such entertainment (as) is beneficial to a man. He gets enough of the smutty and cheap every day. Many men find sex temptations a great problem and the earthy shows do not help them to forget and get away from those temptations. The type of show we had last night does help in this regard.[198]

Members of the general public, propelled into action by seeing or hearing the shows, also volunteered their musical equipment, skills and even songs and skits they had written. Mrs. Winnifred Day of Edmonton wrote to the producer of the Navy Show concerning a song she had sent in for use in "Meet the Navy:"

> ...I sincerely hope you may be able to use it. Mr. Shusta after hearing me hum it at him, poor man, said it certainly was a swingly tune and thought you would be interested. I thought I would like to dedicate it to the Wrens as a sort of theme song of their own...in the meantime, it is yours and I hope your musical arranger can see a place for it. As for the harmony, he is at liberty to improve it anywhere he likes, and am I sticking my neck out when I say that!!! Well, anyway, here's the best of everything to you...[199]

Military officials outside of the entertainment sections also endeavored to interfere with casting and various production details, most out of a wish to make the shows as successful as possible. Requests that certain numbers be dropped or arranged in a different order were usually submitted respectfully. One Navy Lieutenant for example forwarded a number of suggestions concerning the "Meet the Navy" show and stated that he "sincerely hope(d) that (his) remarks (would) not appear too bold and that they will serve to make the Navy Show an unbeatable spectacle."[200] Lieut. R. Pearce of the HMCS *Star* in Hamilton, Ontario, wished to encourage the Director of Special Services (N) to

place a cast member from Hamilton in the spotlight for the presentation in that city. Pearce argued "during my travels and contacts with the public I have found the people more than enthusiastic and looking forward to seeing the only Hamilton boy in your show none other than Victor Carell, and may I suggest sir that you feature him in some way as all the people are looking for his appearance as a headline act...I have my finger on the pulse of the theatrical and sporting public of Hamilton...I feel sure you would want to know anything that would help the success of the show."[201] Even the highest ranking officials were forced to give retroactive orders to change possibly questionable lines in scripts, scripts that would have been okayed before the show ever went to production and then revised. These were most often one line changes that were deleted entirely ("Doesn't know his Hess from a hole in the ground" was one such line from a CAS thought to be so inherently offensive it was removed) or changed significantly. Pressure from outside sources resulting from how the scene actually played out on stage and the audience's reaction to it often resulted in immediate changes. Air Vice-Marshall J.A. Sully demanded one line be taken out of the RCAF show "All Clear" after some number of complaints had reached his office. The complaints were centered on a "Mad House" scene in which a lady sleep walker crosses the stage and sprinkles water on a Sgt. Burgess who is lying in bed. Sully instructed the cast to delete the line "I didn't do it-a girl came along and did it."[202] Presumably this line had a sexual connotation that was objectionable to some people. All Canadian military entertainment units were forbidden to change their scripts once on tour, so instructions to do so had to come from higher ranking officials.

This issue of censorship and maintaining a certain level of quality in terms of moral rightness became especially important when officials compared Canadian military shows to those of the United States and Great Britain. On repeated occasions, Canadian administrators were relieved to report that their shows were consistently given better reviews than either the United Services Organization (USO) or Entertainment National Services Association (ENSA) shows. The comment often quoted is "this beats anything ENSA or USO people have produced."[203] The material presented in those shows was perpetually used as a sort of yardstick for that of Canadian shows and it was decided on

the Canadian side that U.S. and U.K. productions were too racy and usually not at all funny or engaging. While most of these negative references are no doubt self-rationalizing to some extent, there certainly were differences in how the shows operated and how they attempted to achieve the same goals as other countries through different means. The USO shows were viewed as the Canadians' greatest competitor, largely because, especially in the case of air force and navy personnel, their audiences overlapped to a great extent on the North American continent after the USO began entertaining in Canada in June of 1943. USO shows did not charge the Department of National Defence for entertaining Canadian troops though their expenses were picked up by the Canadian government while touring in areas with a high concentration of Canadians, like those on the east coast. The American entertainers came under Canadian jurisdiction either at Fredericton in the east or Seattle in the west and were at these points turned over to Army Auxiliary Services. As soon as the turnover occurred, all costs were assumed by the Auxiliary Service. These arrangements encouraged USO organizers in New York to send shows over the border into areas where both American and Canadians were stationed.

The biggest bone of contention, other than the fact that USO shows attracted big name stars such as Bob Hope, Carole Landis, and Martha Raye that Canadians could not begin to match, was the cookie cutter formula to most USO shows; they basically rehashed the same themes and jokes with different casts and costumes. In addition, USO shows magnified the sexually titillating use of women that the Canadians were also employing, though the more northern nation did so in a less overt and vulgar way. At Gander, Newfoundland, the "Swing Time" unit of the RCAF had a chance to observe a USO show and articulated precisely the hesitations officials in the Canadian army, navy and air force had about these shows:

> This particular unit consisted of an Emcee, a very scantily clad girl dancer, a man and woman operating a puppet show, a very fine accordion player and a girl vocalist. This seems to be roughly the formula for most of the USO shows operating in isolated areas...these shows don't always get the enthusiasm one might expect. A rather surprising point that cropped up was the fact that scantily clad girls (on the stage) are no terrific attraction. After the initial 30 seconds of cat-calls and whistling has died down, the act has very little entertainment value...in effect it shows that girls in a small unit, unless

> they have very definite entertaining ability are not the attraction it is generally imagined they are.[204]

Other Canadian units "were a bit dubious as to how (they) would stand up against US competition...(but) found that (their) shows (were) much superior in every way–better material, more talent and above all a much 'cleaner' show."[205]

ENSA sponsored and organized shows were criticized even more roundly by the Canadians, who viewed them as an irritant to the troops rather than as competition to themselves. There was never any shortage of condemnation when Canadian officials reviewed ENSA shows. After spending a day with ENSA producer T. Fulton and seeing an evening performance of that group, Captain Purdy of the CAS was in a rage. He reported "it was the most deplorable thing he ever saw on a stage (and) maintains it is criminal for Canadian Army money to be spent on the rank amateur and nasty type of entertainment this unit was providing."[206] At the same time that the Canadians condescended to ENSA related projects, ENSA provided a great deal of publicity, food, shelter and production necessities to the Canadian shows of the three services, in addition to sponsoring the "Meet the Navy" show's trip overseas, and were never properly thanked for their contribution. ENSA's problems were largely organizational ones that began to appear shortly after the association was formed. NAAFI was responsible for operating canteens both in England and abroad, the supplies there being offered for low and reasonable prices to servicepeople. At the beginning of WW II, NAAFI began to supply entertainment to troops as well as food stuffs and via that, contributed greatly to the quality of life and comfort of soldiers. The entertainment arm of NAAFI was ENSA, established in 1939 by British theater producer Basil Dean. While the troops also saw shows by Army Welfare and RAF groups and civilian bands, ENSA was the dominant force in the entertainment field, having both home headquarters and overseas departments. There are several possible reasons why this entertainment was viewed as substandard by Canadians. ENSA shows were originally split into the genres of variety, drama, dance bands and classical concerts which may have meant that, depending on audiences' tastes, only some would succeed. They often did not allow sufficient time for rehearsal as the troupes were made up of both professional theater performers who lost their jobs at the

beginning of the war because of blackout regulations and those who had training but had never performed in front of a "critical audience" before. The big stars were thought to be able to carry the shows and thus not a lot of work went into fine-tuning the numbers. Bigger names, too, caused personality conflicts that created disorganization and strife amongst cast members and no doubt damaged show quality. In addition to those problems, when theaters in London were reopened again, talent was drained from the organization and shows further decreased in quality.[207] In the end, it may have been the stand-offish attitude of the creme de la creme of British theater that turned Canadians against these shows, who viewed them either as "highbrow" with all of that term's negative connotations or hopelessly "lowbrow."

The relationship between entertainers and their audiences raises the question of how the very real gap in duties between the two groups was perceived and the possibility that that gap could create a tension that could actually undermine good morale as opposed to increasing it. The Army was very concerned about psychologically closing that gap by encouraging the public to view its entertainers as soldiers first. They were not very subtle, or realistic, as it turned out, in their public relations material. The program of the original Army Show emphasized the "all-khaki" crew in a section entitled "Soldiers Acting, Not Acting Soldiers:"

> A grey steel Bren gun and a black and silver accordion ride side by side in the caravan called 'The Army Show.' The man in khaki whose nimble fingers bring rich, chorded music from the 'Stomach Steinway' can play a tune on the Bren, too - a chattering, bucking tune of death. He is typical of the young men and women - these 1943 soldiers - who are today carrying their weapons and talent wherever Canadian troops may be...they will be overseas, too, with a thousand kit bags filled with laughter and song...and a gun for every man - filled with ammunition.[208]

From the entertainers' perspective, opinion varied from person to person concerning where their first point of self-identification lay, namely whether they were soldiers or performers first. Good-natured members of the CAS took on the nickname "Cold Cream Guards" after a writer for the *Globe and Mail* jokingly inferred that anyone on special duty was not to be considered a soldier, but performers were sensitive to these kinds of comments. On an individual basis, the level of professional career obtained before the

war, the level of patriotism that compelled them to join up and other personal factors affected whether or not an entertainer felt like part of the military or a hired performer. No one could deny the gap in responsibility between soldiers, especially those on the front lines, and entertainers who undoubtedly had an easier time of it than the average combat soldier. One Captain, while complimenting the skills of a certain group of entertainers, pointed to this tension in roles by saying "there is no question but that all in the show conducted themselves like ladies and gentlemen, soldiers and artists, according to the best traditions of the two rather conflicting spheres of the army and of the theatre."[209] Commanding officers were instructed to reinforce a soldierly attitude among the groups through re-instituting basic training while overseas, for example, and often relied on members' official designation when faced with complaints from entertainment unit personnel. These complaints began in earnest after traveling overseas and it was there that the tension between these two jobs reached its peak in the minds of the performers. After arriving in England, the CO of the No. 1 Canadian Army Show blamed poor morale and other related disciplinary problems on the failure of entertainers to realize they were soldiers first:

Figure 9 An evening performance of a CAS in France.

> The real difficulty is the failure of personnel to accustom themselves to living conditions and accept the fact they are living in a wartime country. Most of the complaining is baseless...inspired by a mental condition, nourished and cherished by those who feel that their artistic talents entitled them to considerations beyond the lot of the soldiers. There are others - a great number - who realize all the facts and have accepted conditions as they are and are happy and contented...failure of the officers and NCOs to accept responsibility for discipline and a definite tendency to pamper the

> personnel on the basis of the claim that they are "different" from the ordinary soldier. This has been backed with the claim that they were carrying on two tasks - first as soldiers - secondly as entertainers. That is the claim.[210]

Officers in charge of entertainment troupes themselves had a difficult time balancing these two conflicting roles in keeping rein on their personnel. Captain W. Wren, the Adjutant Commander of the Army Shows overseas, pointed to these difficulties in what he hoped would be his resignation letter. After some 16 months in the Adjutant position and three years in the military entertainment infrastructure where he was assigned after enlisting for combatant duties (for which he was by now too old), Wren claimed the "peculiar type of military duties" he had been assigned, the convoluted task of reconciling the work of soldiers and artists, were wearing him down:

Figure 10 French civilians watching CAS "Invasion Revue."

> I should state that I have paid for the experience I have gained with your unit in the maltreatment my disposition has suffered in attempting, singlehanded, to make soldiers out of artists and at the same time, preserve their qualities as artists, while carrying on administrative duties involving the Army and the theater, a strange and trying mixture of duties.[211]

Other officials that were not in such close contact with performing units pointed out the difference between front-line soldiers and the entertainers, though they were quick to distance the situation of entertainers from other more obvious targets for ridicule, like the zombies. Colonel Northup, OC of Con Depot in Salerno, Italy complimented the entertainers while drawing a parallel between performing and combat in terms of active service by saying "when our friends first came to this country, they arrived white and new

to Italy. They have returned to us tanned and seasoned campaigners. We can safely say that our friends have left the ranks of the zombies."[212] Entertainers were quick to differentiate themselves from those soldiers, as well. One commanding officer claimed to be "putting CANADA badges on stage tunics - could be taken for zombies without 'em."[213]

And it was important to audiences that the people sent to entertain them were actually military personnel. Legend has it that servicemen carried deep grudges against those they thought were shirking their duty in the war effort. The American singer Frank Sinatra, for example, was not popular with troops during WW II as he had been excused from military service, apparently for medical reasons. Members of CAS unit "Mixed Fun" were amused to note, that during a showing of one of this star's films in Rome and despite Sinatra's obvious talents, Canadian troops appeared to "resent Sinatra's popularity so much that many got up and left during the love scenes."[214] Canadian entertainers, unlike those in the USO or ENSA, were more well respected because they operated from inside the military. Within the RCAF it was said that "nothing brings closer contact or liaison between all ranks, and between one station and another, than recreation and entertainment provided officially by the Services. Only here is a true appreciation of the Service Man's life and contribution to his country depicted."[215] Another RCAF member, a flight training school official, articulated the feeling of comradeship evoked during all military social events that included these performances:

> They wore simple costumes; these boys and girls of ours. They might have been civilians; but they weren't. They were one of us, a part of the great Air Force in which we serve together...the wave of feeling washed over the audience and carried it along to that high pitch of human inspiration, that nebulous, quivering throb of idealism, which carries people along and enables them, at last, to be bigger, even, than themselves...all of us together, one team, one spirit.[216]

No doubt due partly to the fact that entertainers took the audiences' minds off their troubles, service personnel seemed to have valued the shows so much they concluded that putting on performances overseas was a different but important contribution to the war effort. When asked if any combat soldiers perhaps felt resentful toward the

entertainers because they were not in the front lines, Frank Shuster replied:

> Let me tell you the truth. They were so overjoyed to see us and hear somebody talk about Toronto or Montreal, you know. Once you were over there, you were in a different world and it was a lousy world. And we came over and our stuff was mostly about reminding them of Toronto or whatever and Canada and we never heard a bad word, they loved the shows. We did a lot of good and we felt good doing them because the guys would come over and say 'Thanks a lot,' that it made them forget the war for a minute because it wasn't much fun doing that, being a part of that...everybody had a job to do. There was no griping 'well, you guys, put on a uniform.' We <u>were</u> in a uniform anyway and we had our rifles with us and I'm please to say I never had to use it once, though we were in spots that could be considered a little dangerous.[217]

This sentiment was observed in the other services as well. One night fireman coming in to build up the heat in a RCAF male entertainers' camp quarters in north-central England commented, after seeing the show, "Christ - you fellows work hard! and you need heat in there for the singers and musicians." Other entertainers were given special treatment as acknowledgment of their contribution, such as meals of steak, eggs and bacon, supplies that were certainly luxuries overseas and much appreciated. Some drew a hard line with entertainers but could usually be brought around after having the entertainment units' schedule explained:

> ...which brings to mind a point I meant to mention before and a very gratifying one. The fellows are being definitely accepted as soldiers and men in the camps, the two we've been in at least, are giving us every "break" possible. For example, the CO of the New Brunswick Rangers laid down that if we wanted breakfast we got up at 0700 hours, being under the impression that ALL we did was put the show on, everything else being prepared for us. I...explained to Adjutant Lt. Robinson that we put our own show up and took it down at night. He caught the show Monday night...and for the remainder of our stay, <u>we eat at 0900 hours</u>.[218]

The presence of a number of women for whom combat duty was out of the question encouraged this lack of resentment between soldiers and entertainers, at least among audience members. When being criticized though, the CWAC especially were condemned for their shortcomings as military personnel:

> ...arriving with new entertainment groups from Canada are CWAC Volunteers who are not matched as to size - who are not attractive - and

> who are unable to dance. In other words, they are virtually useless as entertainers. Even more important, perhaps, the girls are not convinced of the proper soldierly attitude...(they) have low talent content and their keenness on military attitude is NOT very sharp...[219]

The CWAC and other female entertainers in the Canadian military were further separated by their exclusion from the various mess halls. Not only were they denied the refreshments usually available there, they also could not enjoy whatever possible comradery this structured socializing with regular soldiers could create. The men of the troupe of course could go without any restrictions whatsoever and by developing bonds in these social situations, however temporary, reduced the tension between soldiers and entertainer-soldiers. In a sort of irony, some of the choices of material, those of the "sad sack" variety, actual reinforced the idea that certain entertainers were not fit for combat duty. One particular incident reveals the true nature of the relationship between performing soldiers and combat soldiers by pointing to how warmly received this kind of entertainment was and its perceived priority in the war effort. The CAS "Mixed Fun" was scheduled to play a show in Imperunetta, Italy for a small number of Canadian troops and members of the 1st Indian Brigade of the 8th Army. Allied Forces were, at the time, entering Florence and heavy artillery sounds during the day threatened the quality of the presentation that evening. British officials soon sent a messenger to the unit to enquire the start time and duration of the show. Right on time, the barrage on Florence stopped so that the show could begin and resumed again a few minutes after it was over.[220] This rare but telling story is surely proof of the value seen in entertainment and the lack of resentment between parties assigned these two conflicting sets of duties.

CHAPTER 5

Soldiers and Artists

While it is clear that entertainers did not face the same potential to experience life-threatening circumstances as combat personnel, they were sometimes exposed to dangerous or precarious living and working conditions that compromised their health and physical well-being. Despite their relatively small numbers, CWAC, Wrens and WDs were thought to be more at risk than their male counterparts and the managerial correspondence reflects an uneven concern about the higher potential for sickness among the women's services. Like the other services, the Navy rationalized their show's need for a nurse on the presence of the Wrens, claiming that "in view of the fact that 40 WRCNS are carried throughout the itinerary, the necessity for a trained nurse is obvious."[221] While it may have been "obvious" to officials that women were more likely to fall ill than men, the records of course do not bear this out, even taking into consideration that the accidents or illnesses of women entertainers were more likely to be mentioned in the records because it coordinated with the expectation and belief that women were more often physical compromisable and compromised than men.[222] The punishing pace of Canadian tours for the RCAF, Army and to a lesser extent the Navy shows meant personnel got worn down rather equally and became more susceptible to illness and accident. Although there were attempts during the recruiting process to weed out applicants that were of "weak constitutions," it would seem that long hours spent rehearsing, performing and traveling opened the door of opportunity for any number of ailments. All show units during this period were concerned about the amount of sleep their entertainers received. "The need for adequate sleep is the greatest of all needs as far as health is concerned in the various entertainment units and the lack of it is the greatest trouble that the units come up against."[223] After the troupe had rehearsed and toured for two years, the nursing sister of the "Meet the Navy" show requested a week's leave for the cast in an effort to combat illness.[224] It was seldom the case that entertainers did get enough sleep, and sickness and fatigue-related accidents ran rampant. Pneumonia and tonsilitis were quite common,

especially in winter during tours of Newfoundland and incidences of sprained and broken ankles and legs occurred with some regularity.[225] The east coast in general had a less than positive reputation for making entertainers ill, largely due to the lack of appropriate venues for rehearsals and performances. The Halifax Forum, often referred to as "that barn," had perhaps the most vocal detractors among the three services entertainment administrations. The typical reluctance to use this venue was expressed by Captain J.P. Connolly when he wrote:

> ...I have been obliged to defer putting the Navy Show into the Forum at Halifax until I return in the early spring. The reasons which have compelled this decision are these. We have some sickness which may have easily spread if the girls are exposed to cold weather and the Forum is not equipped with the necessary dressing room space along side the stage...[226]

Accidents occurred of course. Members of the shows tripped on railway tracks in the middle of the night attempting to board the Army Show tour train, fell off the back of equipment trucks in Italy, broke ankles while playing volleyball, female impersonators smashed their bridge work, personnel were in motor vehicle smash-ups while on route to a performance and were seriously injured while horseback or motorcycle riding in the U.K. In addition, many cases of severe sea sickness were reported on Canadian marine crossings. For example, when the "Joe-Boys" entertainment unit of the RCAF were forced to cross the Hecate Straits to reach the #26 RCAF base from Vancouver in May of 1944, the rough trip incapacitated virtually the entire cast and greatly compromised their performance on the evening of the passage.[227] At 114 the largest Canadian service entertainment unit to go to sea in a war zone, the "Meet the Navy" show sailed on a 42 year-old Canadian warship from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland for performances in that region in the fall of 1944. Over 100 of the cast members were seasick, "miserably, desperately seasick during all or most of the voyage." It apparently took three days for the cast to recover and rest, despite the presence of the show's full-time nurse and sick-berth attendants, who were as seasick as the others.[228]

Literally as soon as word was received that an entertainment unit was to move to the U.K., the ranks were warned that they would immediately be in danger and should

take all possible precautions to limit the risk to themselves and others. A memo sent to No. 2 Detachment Canadian Army Show, in their last days of rehearsal at the Victoria Theater in Toronto before moving overseas in December of 1943, from Commanding Officer Major W.V. George stated:

> If you want to live - DO NOT arrange a secret code message that will tell your friends or relatives you are about to sail overseas. If you cherish your own life and lives of the men and women of this Unit - keep your mouth shut about your expected movements...YOU ARE PROCEEDING UNDER SECRET ORDERS. Keep your mouth shut. Don't attempt to guess where you are going. Your life is at stake - tell questioners to look after their own business - you are not going to gamble lives for the satisfaction of their curiosity.[229]

Because of the nature of touring, entertainment personnel were well-versed about where camps were located, information that potentially would be useful to the enemy. All Warrant Officers in the Canadian Army Show were reminded of how this information could be misused by the ever diligent Major George:

> ...personnel of No. 1 Canadian Army show units must necessarily become aware of the location of practically all Canadian Army Formations and Units. Such information would be of value to the enemy and in his hands could result in great losses to our forces. WOs will take every step to ensure that personnel of units DO NOT TALK ABOUT LOCATIONS OF UNITS...Careless talk is a High Explosive that can tear the limbs off the men you saw laughing and cheering at your show. If you don't care about your own life - think of the other fellow, and DON'T TALK.[230]

Charges were laid against entertainers for violating these movement and information rules and the penalties were severe. In April of 1944, a Corporal and a Private with the CAS were charged with information crimes, namely 'communication of security information' and 'communication of information contrary to Defence Regulations.' The first charge carried a penalty of reduction in rank and one year's detention while the second meant a one year detention sentence only.[231]

Like their counterparts in the fighting arm of the Canadian forces, the entertainers' chances of injury increased exponentially after leaving Canada for England. After a dangerous ocean crossing during which they were required to perform up to twice daily, the entertainers' list of casualties underwent significant increases from their time in Canada

and continued to increase while in England, making another large jump in numbers following a posting to the European or Mediterranean Theaters. Service on the continent was far more hazardous to the health of entertainers than performing in the U.K. but both locations meant an increase in casualties over Canadian tours. Basically, the further the entertainer-soldiers were from Canada both culturally and geographically, the more likely they were to experience bodily injury and trauma. Transportation difficulties, the weather and the actual violence of combat threatened the mental and physical health of the entertainers while overseas.

The Allies in England, Italy and Northwestern Europe experienced by now infamous transportation problems. Throughout England and Scotland, the CAS units complained "our drivers are not much help as they get lost too often. They move slowly and seem entirely too vague."[232] That was putting it mildly, when all the records are taken together. The most serious incident occurred near Newhaven when a truck carrying some personnel and the equipment of the "Forage Caps" unit struck and killed a Canadian soldier who had been walking along the edge of the road.[233] The Navy Show managed to short circuit some of these problems as, unlike the RCAF or Army shows, the cast and crew of "Meet the Navy" was flown almost everywhere. A huge expense, the trip to Paris from England required four Dakota transport planes. For the RCAF shows in England and the CASs throughout every theater, poorly trained operators, systems overloaded with passengers, shortages of petrol and overall inferior equipment meant that reliable and efficient movement of personnel and equipment was a fantasy. In addition, the RCAF shows often had to rely on RAF transportation which often was insufficient and poorly planned due to a lack of communication between the two groups. While substandard transport certainly had an effect on way the Allies conducted themselves in areas near the front, organized entertainment was also greatly affected by confused and snarled transportation, most specifically noticeable in the health of the performers. Throughout the European and Mediterranean Theaters, periodic traffic jams and faulty equipment caused delays and meant that not only were performers behind schedule but that they were forced to sleep and eat by dusty and loud roadways through a spectrum of seasonal

weather conditions and subject to booby traps placed in areas near transportation routes. These harsh accommodations often created health problems that proper billets would have not[234] and these took their toll on the crews.

Fouled transportation both created and was a result of a great number of accidents. These generated great difficulties, especially for specialized acts like magicians and puppeteers whose damaged equipment was impossible to replace. LAC Thyne (RCAF) lost his magician's kit and was himself seriously hurt in a truck collision in England in November of 1944. He was unable to replace such items as a set of giant spring sausages, one and a half inch multiplying billiard balls and a couple of hollow celluloid eggs in the U.K. and eventually was reimbursed for the purchases of the replacement gear through the Compensation in Special Cases clause of the AF financial law. Thyne had used his own equipment during his work with "Swing Time" as the AF did not deem it appropriate "to supply such specialist entertainers with all their required paraphernalia or apparatus at public expense."[235] In another episode, a CAS trumpeter lost his trumpet and broke both arms in a serious collision in Italy. In any case, a rather large amount of equipment went missing and several injuries were noted due to vehicular accidents, causing further problems for the entertainers.

In Italy, as elsewhere, weather conditions caused great difficulties. Extremely hot periods during the summer exaggerated the ill effects of dysentery. It would seem from the war records that dysentery was a rather common ailment for the performers and casts often were compelled to put on their show short-handed while one or more members were suffering or recovering from the affliction. The heat itself at times encouraged ingenuity and fast thinking in modifying programs when staff were unable to perform due to heat exhaustion, with entire numbers being omitted or others standing in for someone out sick. The heat was an important variable for performers. In the first week of July 1944 near Piedemonte d'Alife, Italy, for example, 2 CWAC personnel fainted from 100 plus degree temperatures during an evening performance.[236] This was a somewhat typical physiological response to the high temperatures and rapid adjustments had to be made to casts whose ranks varied almost moment to moment. Because of the heat, where possible

rear rest areas were placed near beaches where military personnel could swim to keep cool. Entertainment units followed them there and were exposed, like other Canadian troops, to malaria, land mines and the possibility of drowning. The rest area at Gaeta Beach, near Formia, for example, had roped off mined areas where two soldiers had recently been killed and malaria warning signs. "Mixed Fun" was stationed there for several days in the summer of 1944 and witnessed a Canadian serviceman drown in the strong undertow and had their tents placed within five feet of an American and French grave.[237] The stage was set up in the middle of all this and one could hazard a guess that this was not exactly a summer vacation for any military personnel camped there.

In England on the other hand, the cold and dampness created a great number of problems. The war diarist of the No. 1 Detachment Canadian Army Show Overseas remarked without sympathy in January 1944 that the "Personnel of this unit have been rudely shocked by the English climate - and war rations. There has been a not too unusual number of colds."[238] Heavy rains soaked equipment and ruined costumes and uniforms. After long drives in army trucks, performers would arrive at their destinations with very cold extremities, resulting in an epidemic of chilblains that took them out of the show for extended periods of time.[239] The English weather was not the most serious threat on the island though when compared to the German bombing of Great Britain. Records report that entertainer Private David R. Maclean of No. 6 Detachment Army Show was severely wounded on March 2, 1944 in an air raid, though it is unclear whether he was performing at the time.[240] That same year, Pte. H. Taylor, attached to "The Bandoliers" concert party of the Canadian Army Show in London, became a temporary casualty when a German 'buzz' bomb exploded near his place of residence. He was taken to hospital with facial injuries due to flying glass and treated for shock.[241] In February 1944, a CAS unit performing in England was awakened in the middle of the night by the explosions of over 1800 incendiary bombs dropped from two German bombers. Fortunately, no reports of injuries within the unit were made. Considering how much Canadian entertainment equipment was damaged or destroyed in air raids, it is remarkable that more of the members were not injured or killed.

By far the worst disaster involving troop entertainers occurred in late July 1944 during a convoy crossing from England to France. Though this group's history is somewhat unclear due to conflicting reports, "The Tin Hats" contained many original members of "The Army Show" and ex-combat soldiers, including female impersonator Johnny Heawood and comedian Wally Brennan. They had arrived in England in October of 1941, had proceeded to Italy by January 1944 and had returned to England in June 1944 for re-equipping before heading to Europe. Having escaped serious injury during this ceaseless two and a half years of touring, "The Tin Hats" of the Canadian Army Show had the grave misfortune of being onboard the SS *Empire Beatrice* that was torpedoed by the Germans on July 26, 1944. All the "Tin Hats" personnel were quartered in the aft hold of the ship and only one member, A/Cpl. J. Rocks, heard the U-Boat alarm over the din of the barrage their Air Force escort was sending down. Fortunately, Rocks got everyone up (this was just after midnight), ready and standing close to the sides of the ship. Soon the ship was hit was by a torpedo at the stern, just aft of the men's quarters. The call went out to go to lifeboat stations but because some of them had been damaged in the explosion, the rafts and lifeboats in the forward areas were quite overcrowded. The explosion had also caused the stairways from the hold to the deck "The Tin Hats" were on to collapse and members had to hold on to the sides of the ship when the floor fell out beneath their feet. Several dropped through but the other members managed to get them out and head for the deck. Pte. H. VanBuskirk was pinned in the hold by debris but was dug out by Pte. A.J. Cormier. The personnel left the ship by raft and lifeboat. One lifeboat which held twelve members of the troupe leaked badly and had to be bailed out using tin hats. A/Cpl. Rocks got the survivors singing and they were picked up some four and a half hours later. Taken to Dover and to the French coast, the troupe was split up in the confusion and were unaware how many of their number were missing. There is in fact still some confusion concerning how many of the 22 members were killed in this disaster. One casualty list from July 24, 1945 lists only Gnr. J.D. Renney and A/Sgt. C. More killed while Pte. N.E. Harper, Pte. F.P. Miskelly and Pte. H. VanBuskirk were injured. Another summary from August 5, 1944 lists Tpr. J. Bendit,

Pte. B.H. MacDonald, More, Renney and Gnr. A. Witherall killed or missing and presumed dead.. Other sources name 4 dead and 6 wounded. While the casualty summary found in the Canadian Army Show war diary naming two killed is perhaps more reliable a source, Bill Dunstan, the female impersonator 'Trixie' in the troupe, claims they lost 5 men from the show.[242] In any event, it was the most serious incident in the history of entertainment troupes in WW II and is mentioned in many other groups' diaries.

Showing true spirit, the remaining members of "The Tin Hats" were assembled in Aldershot, England by August 14th for re-equipping and rebuilding, even giving a partial performance at the base that pointed out the gaps left by the killed and missing. It was eventually decided that "The Tin Hats," with such a successful tour in Europe and the Mediterranean, could be well-used in Canada.[243] By July 1945, they were finally returned to the NWET for the tour they were heading to do when their ship was hit by the Germans almost exactly a year earlier.

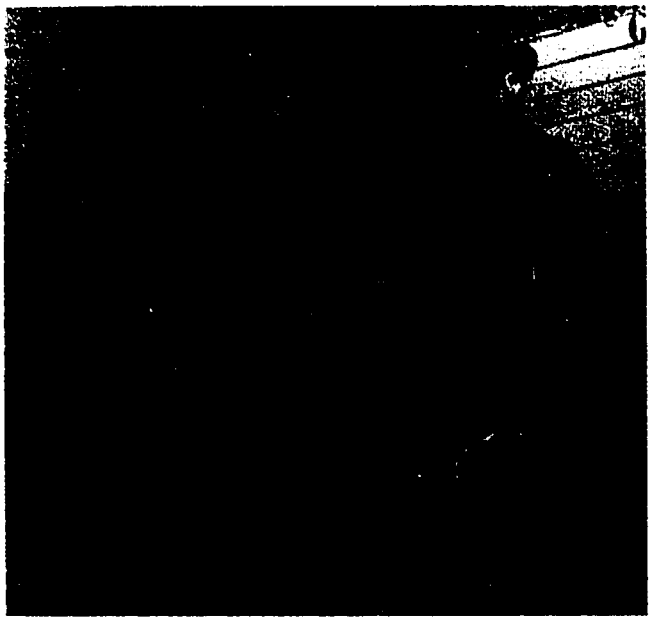

Figure 11 "The Bandoliers" in Germany.

By the fall of 1944, the Northwest European theater became part of the tour rotation and units were able to experience first-hand what sustained combat and its results were in that area. Performing while heavy gunfire and artillery flashed within a few miles of the stage was a frightening spectacle for servicepeople who until that point had been relatively removed from combat. While theatres, community centers, tents and Nissen huts were used as venues, under typical field conditions, the shows had a circus flavor, the portable stage out in the open, with light supplied either by lamps or vehicle headlights. In more rugged areas, units were often worried about nearby artillery action and the passing of planes, as

full ammunition crates would often form the stage floor and gas cans were used for seating. March 8, 1945 was the first time any Canadian Army Show put on a performance in Germany and "The Bandoliers" war diary is full of references to the harshness of performing there, references that would also be made in the diaries of the groups that followed them. The day after their first performance, one member of the unit found the body of a dead German and most of the group showed up for burial duty after the victim's identification had been given to authorities. On several occasions, the group was kept up all night by enemy artillery. On March 12, the group performed two miles from the Rhine River in the Reichswald Forest and was packing up when a German jet came in over camp. The next day the unit was busy digging slit trenches in case the enemy fired on them again. With German troops still thought to be in hiding in the surrounding foliage, an alarm trip wire was set up around the Zeddam camp "The Bandoliers" were stationed in, with warning flares sent up if the wire was tampered with. All members of the unit took turns on guard duty. Three days later, the entertainment convoy took a wrong turn heading to Barcham, Holland and were stopped by a Canadian scout only 1000 yards from the front line. Conditions improved after this troupe went through the area but they were to suffer many close calls foraging a path for the other units.[244]

Even when not within sight of actual battle, the constant troop movements witnessed by the performers led them to understand the seriousness of the struggle. Shows were often canceled by unexpected troop movements and troupes then had to choose whether or not to follow the troops as far as they could or head in a different direction, usually to the rear areas. Making plans at the spur of the moment tied the entertainers to the military consciousness at the front and no doubt made the performers feel like they could be much worse off. The CAS war diaries are full of references to the chaos and confusion near the front:

> word was received early this morning that HQ 5 Canadian Armoured Division Main had been cut off from HQ rear during the night by the Germans and the order to move had been postponed. Rear goes to join main and (this) group goes with them on move...it was (later) decided that the unit had best return to Arnhem and wait for word from the ASO as 5 Canadian Armoured Division was moving too fast for shows.[245]

In the best set of circumstances, shows would be presented ahead of schedule so that the men might be entertained just before they were moved to the front.

In a similar parallel, Canadian entertainers were also subject to the same threat from hostile civilians that their combat duty counterparts were, and being one step removed from the reasons behind these difficulties caused a great deal of fear for both men and women in the touring groups. While Canadian servicemen joked that the only place not out of bounds to Canadian soldiers was the front line, some episodes were of a quite serious nature and certainly required that Canadians be removed from the situation. Although several incidents occurred in England that would lead the historian to conclude local populations were less than enthusiastic about large numbers of Canadians being stationed there, those episodes were of a relatively minor nature and included vandalism on bases, fights within the various town sites and unpleasant circumstances resulting from Canadian servicemen's contact with British women.[246] Acts of more violent aggression by civilians toward military personnel often occurred in areas where those populations had questionable sympathies toward the Allies and had suffered a great deal during occupation and later liberation. The CAS unit "The Kit Bags" had only been in Italy a few days when their pianist was beaten up by Italian civilians to such a degree that he was expected to be in hospital for two months. This was not an isolated incident. In western and central Holland, most areas had been forced to endure serious food shortages that threatened their survival even after it was clear that the Germans had been beaten there by the early Spring of 1945. After Allied food drops and the surrender of Germany, some civilians in Holland had had enough of close contact with the Canadian military. In Utrecht a reign of terror that affected both regular troops and entertainers who had to be out in public was held in September of 1945. The CAS "Repat Rhythm" was stationed in that area for almost a week, a time in which reports of civilian attacks on Canadians increased at a rapid rate. Playing to audiences equally split between civilians and military personnel, members of "Repat Rhythm" were horrified by news of the violent attacks on Canadians in the streets. On September 12 their war diarists wrote "there is evidently a terrific underground movement in Utrecht since reports continue to come out of Canadian troops being killed

daily. There is probably considerable resentment against Canadians taking out Dutch girls, for the latter are the target of abuse too." The next day, two Canadian soldiers were found knifed and their comrades were threatening to take matters into their own hands. Canadian Provosts began checking highways and patrolling the streets at night in addition to escorting the entertainers in this group back and forth from the stage to their billets. That same evening, two more Canadians were shot and killed by civilian police who fired at them at point blank range. The Provosts declared their own form of martial law in the city and rounded up local police, disarmed them and placed them in lockup. The curfews immediately put in place meant the performers had to change their schedule and they were exceedingly happy to move onto Ede and Hilversum.[247]

The stress of all these variables in the touring life of a wartime entertainer invariably took its toll in some way, without regard for rank, sex or place of work. By far the most common non-physical ailment was complete nervous breakdown, a psychological crisis that was viewed by administrators as a sign of weakness certainly and probably was, at times, exhibited as a way to convince the authorities to return the victim to some semblance of a normal life. It is unclear whether the strain of touring and rehearsing, violence or being away from loved ones for extended periods of time was the key component in the nervous breakdowns of performers but they occurred both in Canada and to a greater rate, overseas. Both the male and female members of the three services' entertainment units seemed to have been susceptible to this mental stress but officials rarely detailed non-cowardly factors in accounting these cases, claiming most of them as discipline problems or conditions derived from pre-war activities. When RCAF member Hobson was out of the "Swing Time" line up with an undiagnosed illness, an ears, eyes, and throat specialist could find "no ocular disturbance to account for his complaints of photophobia and headaches. On close enquiry into the mental condition of this patient he admitted a nervous breakdown two years ago and a history of the occasional use of narcotics since that time."[248] Illness seemed to steamroll through a unit that was under considerable stress, mental difficulties being as contagious as physical ailments. Army Show Unit D's activities in England provide a case in point. After touring at a breakneck

pace in England with the Army Show in February 1944, Private Dugan (CWAC) collapsed off stage after vomiting all night. When the local Medical Officer was called, he deemed it to be "caused from a neurogenic origin," which that unit's Commanding Officer tied to "yesterday's ridiculous argument among the girls." The "trouble with the girls," as described by WO Cameron, was that the CWAC in charge was attempting to limit the wearing of nail polish while encouraging the polishing of personal brass. Apparently a "little rumpus" occurred before that night's show, with the end result that the CWAC in charge immediately checked into hospital with "small hemorrhages" and "a suggestion of anemia." She actually had to share a room with Pte. Dugan at the hospital. Two days later, Cameron "called for the girls tonight to find Pte. Hooker (CWAC) looking like the wrath of God and complaining of a heavy headache and upset stomach. Did the show alright...ate afterwards-then vomited twice on the way home. Pte. Barey (CWAC) developed appendix pains before show...got her home safely also...Male personnel still doing a fine job with no friction-this end has worked out very well." In the space of a few days, fully half of the female performers were out of the show. The strain of living and traveling together for a long period was beginning to show in this unit but the ailments were treated as a disciplinary matter.[249] Male personnel seem to have been just as likely to breakdown, though they exhibited the strain in different ways. Considered the heart of the Unit D concert party touring in England in the spring of 1944, comedian Corporal LaBarre had been discharged from hospital, where he was said to be resting, by the end of March. The stay in hospital, though somewhat relaxing, did not resolve his feelings of depression. "He (was) apparently a mental case as nothing was found to support his condition...said to be a very sick, tired boy, apparently with home troubles, probably wife and divorce and with his weakness for drinking, can be tied into this picture. An effort will be made to help him."[250] A similar and representative story often occurred while in Europe. While camped in the Canadian army HQ area near Arnhem, Holland in October of 1945, a Pte. Reilly was showing signs of cracking under the pressure. He apparently had been having violent nightmares throughout the NWET tour and his cast mates, suffering from the lack of sleep these nightmares created in their billets, complained to the

Commanding Officer. Because he was ostensibly lowering morale among the troupe, he was referred to a psychiatrist, entered into hospital in Zutphen, Holland and then shipped back to England for further treatment. The steps taken in this case signify the serious deterioration of his mental state.[251]

Some credence must be given to the antecedent strain. In several cases, a cast member is reported week after week as suffering from a variety of injuries or illnesses, either caused by gradually weakening bodily health or the deliberate infliction of some impairment that would remove them from the show for a much needed rest period. After years of service in some cases, personnel just needed a break. Army Show Lieutenant E. Lineaweaver (CWAC) provides just one example of this cumulative exertion and its usual outcome. Lineaweaver joined the Army Show as a dancer but was soon requested to take on the management of all CWAC personnel overseas. After attempting to navigate the hostile bureaucratic waters of the Canadian military, ENSA, NAAFI and many other organizations to ensure billets, food and security for the show's female cast members and worrying that she was becoming too old to start a family, Lineaweaver finally buckled under her ever-increasing workload after one of her close friends suffered a life-threatening skull fracture. Immediately a storm of vituperative condemnation began:

> It appears that Lieut. Lineaweaver will not be able to stand the strain of duties in this country. She is emotionally unstable, and not exactly suited for duties such as she has been given. This appears obviously to be a decided error in judgment on the part of CWAC officials in National Defence HQ, for a girl opposed to overseas service will be a source of constant irritation. What use is a hysterical woman? It cannot be said that Lieut. Lineaweaver has become hysterical. That is only because she is protected by allocating her duties to others, should she be given the full burden of her duties, she would be hysterical in a day or too...it is just another irritating incident in the futile effort to find work she could do.

Within two weeks, Lineaweaver had been medically boarded and returned to Canada.[252] Back in Canada though, her home-based counterparts suffered from the same nervous tendencies, and had been virtually since the beginning of entertainment duties there. On May 22, 1943, Sgt. Morey (CWAC) was said to be suffering from a nervous breakdown, a condition for which the local MO referred her to a psychiatrist but she carried on in her

duties for at least a while, that evening giving a "miserable performance in opening (but) she gave her other numbers a great deal of punch."[253] A few months later one of her co-workers refused to get out of bed and was labeled to be "in a simulating condition of hysterics." This woman was dealt with more severely and stripped of her Acting Sergeant rank, "told she was no longer specially employed," and was bodily taken off the train in Nova Scotia to be admitted to hospital.[254] These cases were surprisingly common, though it seems that the record takers were more likely to label female performers with psychological disorders, disorders that manifested themselves to some extent differently among the males, who usually turned to drinking when depressed, frustrated or bored.

Although exposed to less threatening circumstances than those on the front lines, touring as a military entertainer did present some hazards to mind and body. While women performers were thought to be more likely to fall victim to these hazards than men, both sexes experienced illness and injury brought on by exhaustion, accidents, transportation problems and extremes in weather after leaving Canada. Enemy action at sea and in England, Italy and on the continent also had to be taken into account. By far the most common ailment among performers was psychological stress, which usually was allowed to build up into a critical mass and resulted in a breakdown of some sort. Generally speaking, the risk of bodily harm increased with proximity to the front while psychological damage was a hardship experienced in all theatres and at home in Canada.

CHAPTER 6

The Closing Act

The immediate pre-demobilization period saw increased demand for entertainment in all services. Reaching the end of their enthusiasm for waging war and with patriotic fever at new lows, "the troops, in the difficult period which they are now entering, with the policy of non-fraternization superimposed, have great need of good and plentiful entertainment and organized recreation. The filling of that need will mean, in great measure, the maintenance of high morale, good behavior and discipline and contentment, after the tension and activity of operations."[255] While Auxiliary Services instituted new and more complex sports programs, radio and cigarette distribution schemes, libraries and recreational tours, entertainment officials recognized that this era would bring new challenges in live events and anticipated that "the pre-demobilization period will bring heavy demands upon the initiative and resourcefulness of all concerned with the morale and welfare of personnel."[256] In response, the entertainment infrastructure started to gear up with an increase in recruitment and in the production of new material. Canadian Army Show officials rightly predicted that after VE-Day, the demand for entertainment overseas would peak in late June 1945 and planned to turn out five shows a month during that summer. In June alone, over 817 other ranks were on strength at the Guildford, Surrey base to handle entertainment demands. Unfortunately, similar to most other Canadian servicepeople, entertainers really seem to have felt that their war had ended in the first week of May, 1945 with the surrender of Germany. Entertainment units had supplied much of the music for VE-Day celebrations overseas and in Canada and marked the day as the end of their formal service in the military, if only psychologically. Though the great majority were required to stay on up to a year and a half longer to ease the stress involved in processing the repatriations of Canadian military personnel, by late 1945, many performers both did not see the point of further service and had given all their available energy to the cause in the preceding years. A morale summary of Canadian Army Show HQ in England for the month of July 1945 is worth quoting at length as it coordinates the

mixed feelings entertainers and others associated with the CAS exhibited in the face of the new demands put on them:

> morale of troops at Base has been like mercury in a thermometer, at bursting point one day and at low ebb the next. The reasons for this are many and varied. A considerable number of personnel have been discouraged through lack of action on their volunteering for participation in the Pacific campaign. Others feel 'browned off' on being posting to this unit, such as former POWs who were in captivity for several months and who feel they are entitled to more consideration from the Army than mere posting as general duty personnel. There are performers with high point scores who feel their time has come to leave 'marrie (sic) England' but who are asked to do one additional tour of duty prior to their being...posted to a repatriation depot. Then there are non-performers who are anxious to return to their civilian occupations and who claim performers should be happy doing their work as the majority of them are obtaining entertainment experience which in later life will benefit them whereas they...gain no advantages. Another group of personnel are unhappy and bewildered by the repatriation scheme and cannot understand why personnel in the lower bracket of point scores point are not being called. However, there are other personnel who have a different slant on the picture, those who have waived their privileges of returning to Canada at an early date...in order that they may continue entertaining the Canadian troops on the continent, the men who did the real job of bringing about an early VE-Day...(who realize) full well their job is just as important now as it was during the period of combat. These have proven themselves to be the real troupers, those who have realized 'the show must go on.'[257]

Likewise, RCAF performers were also displaying a decided lack of enthusiasm for continuing on in their work. A message from AVM H.L. Campbell at RCAFHQ Overseas in November of 1945 reported "that certain personnel in the trade of entertainer overseas particularly WD are becoming worn out physically."[258] Even in North America, the withdrawal of American troops meant American sources of entertainment for Canadians in isolated areas were cut off in a time when demand was increasing. In the winter of 1945/46, morale was particularly low as poor weather conditions further limited available entertainment. As entertainment units began to disband, stations and bases here in Canada were more likely to see a film than a full variety show.

Most detrimental to the longevity of the shows was the growing lack of reinforcements for married female personnel who, according to military orders, could be

discharged from service on the request of their British and Canadian husbands. By and large then, the first repatriations after May 1945 involved compassionate discharges, mainly for the women entertainers. There were a surprisingly large number of women who were released from service so that they might arrive home before their husbands or at the very least, soon after. While this was considered grounds for early repatriation, if the husband in question was a POW, the process was speeded up. Show officials were always made aware of such a situation in advance and usually knew before the wife did that her husband was to be sent home. Then the race to get her home was on. Sgt. A.M. Philip (CWAC), a dancer with "Repat Rhythm,"was flown back to the U.K. from the continent on October 3, 1945 and was "expected to be returning to Canada in very short order to be present at Winnipeg, Manitoba, when her husband, ex-POW in Japan, returns home." There were attempts made to fly her back immediately as her husband, having been awarded the Victoria Cross for his exploits in Hong Kong, was expected back in Canada on October 9th. Unfortunately, Sgt. Philip did not beat her husband home.[259] Men, in some cases, were repatriated on compassionate grounds as well. L/Bandsman Moses of the Navy Show insisted he be sent home with his wife, also a former co-worker, who was in an advance state of pregnancy. Fearing for her safety on the journey home, Moses claimed her mother was ill and her father had been killed overseas and charitable maternity hospitals were not satisfactory, necessitating his accompanying her. Moses was successful in this claim.[260]

The military evidently set marital reunions as a high priority after VE Day and they did so in a surprisingly friendly and accommodating manner. In October of 1946, for example, Captain Connolly of the Navy Show, requested a serviceman's civilian wife be sent over to Europe to join him in performing. This case included special circumstances that Connolly apparently both recognized and sympathized with:

> ...an outstanding performer was our P.O. S.P. Haynes, he has been in great demand. This Petty Officer was entitled to be repatriated but agreed to stay for as long as required in Europe if his wife could join him as a performer - they had an act which they had played with great success in Western Canada. Haynes is a coloured man and he quite properly represented to me that because of this he was very restricted socially and had become lonely.

> Recruiting for WRCNS had ceased so I conferred with the Canadian Legion and ENSA about employing Mrs. Haynes as a civilian to carry on the duties of Wardrobe Mistress and entertainer. The Legion representatives agreed that Mrs. Haynes should be sent for and that her transportation should be paid...

This effort to reunite a lonely man with his wife was thwarted however as after Mrs. Zena Haynes had been brought to New Brunswick from Winnipeg to await transport, the Department of National Defence suddenly decided to abandon any further entertainment schemes and Connolly was ordered to restrict Naval performers to Canada. Mrs. Haynes' travel plans were therefore promptly canceled. The Canadian Legion War Services organization of course wanted the $150 already spent on her passage refunded to their group. Connolly was caught in the middle and reported by telegraph that he personally would take responsibility for the expenses incurred thus far in the round trip between St. John, New Brunswick and Winnipeg. Mrs. Haynes, after initially worrying about not having a passport though she had been born in the British West Indies and returning the money refunded from her steamship ticket, said "Sir I wish to thank you for the kindness you and your staff have shown me. Thanking you kindly I remain yours truly Mrs. Z.A. Haynes."[261]

The strain of long-term separation showed in other marriages whose seams eventually came apart. On tour, personnel often had to rely on information concerning their own marital status from entertainment unit officers. Unable to determine what was happening in the legal proceedings following a split with her husband, L/Wren DeHueck of the "Meet the Navy" show pleaded with Connolly to determine was the situation was:

> My dear Captain Connolly, hope you don't mind my writing you, but I have had no news since you left England. What I would like to know is whether the divorce was stopped, if so did anyone get into trouble over it. My husband doesn't write now. My lawyer doesn't answer and Cleveland has gone to Canada. I am very worried and don't know what to do about the situation. If you can find out anything for me Sir I would be very grateful to you.[262]

To Connolly's credit, as he was in Canada at this point, he took it upon himself to contact the Wren's lawyer to determine was the circumstances were. Women were not the only ones concerned about their marriages. After years on the road with the "Meet the

Navy" show, Bandsman Crawford found reason to request to his commanding officers that a Padre be sent around to his wife's address in Victoria, B.C. in an effort to determine if they were in fact still married. "Investigation (was) made and marital affairs of this rating (were found to be) in serious condition," so bad in fact that officials recommended an immediate compassionate draft to Victoria.[263] It was relatively common among anxious cast members of "Meet the Navy" to request that the Navy send someone around to their homes in Canada to assess possible marital problems stemming from years apart.

On the other hand, this period was one of a great number of co-worker marriages. Marriages between cast mates began almost as soon as entertainment units were established, often in secret and without permission of the military, but certainly increased in number during this period. As military regulations attempted to prevent socializing between regular servicemen and female cast members, the performers turned to each other for romantic companionship and marriages were thus most common between members of the same show. The Army's attempt to keep male and female cast members from fraternizing failed miserably and, contrary to the aspirations of officials, entertainment work during World War II allowed many people the relatively rare conditions in which they could get to know each other over a long period before marrying:

> We had to ask for permission to get married and that was very difficult. They would not give you permission usually and we were very fortunate in getting it. My thing was that, they asked us 'What makes you want to marry this person?,' and I said that we were five and a half months together on the continent so therefore we knew practically everything about each other...from morn till night. In those days you had to be on the up and up otherwise then you were discharged, you were sent away. You couldn't get out of line. They finally gave us permission and that was very nice.[264]

Five and a half months was actually a rather short courtship compared with others, even given that it was twenty-four hours a day. An example of the longer courtships within the CAS, Pte. Ethel Hendry (CWAC) married her co-worker Pte. Leon Roderman in November of 1945. The two had met when both were members of the original Army Show and served in the same entertainment group overseas since 1943. Even Captain Purdy, producer of the CAS and responsible for periodically refusing permission for others

to marry, found a bride in Lieutenant Sweeny, a women with a history in the shows to match his own.

VE-Day also signaled the beginning of the awarding of medals. Many members of the RCAF shows had received the Maple Leaf pin and clasp for overseas service earlier by touring extensively in Newfoundland.[265] The cast and crew of the Navy Show successfully applied to the DND to wear the British Defence Medal in September 1945. This medal was designed by King George VI and was presented as an acknowledgment of service "in defence of areas which, while not scenes of actual operations, were closely threatened or subjected to heavy air attacks; this obviously meant primarily the United Kingdom."[266] Other entertainers received the Italy Star, the France-Germany Star and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal.

The Air Force was the first service to radically contract available entertainers. January 1, 1946 was the absolute end of the RCAF entertainment though there were a few holdovers free-lancing on their own. By the end of 1945, a request for pianists and WD entertainers was met with the news that there were "...no entertainers in the Service in Canada as the establishment has been deleted."[267]

The CAS War Diaries were especially vocal concerning the surrender of Japan in August of 1945. The feeling that their work was over became even stronger then and as there was no talk about entering the Pacific to entertain there, this feeling was encouraged. Despite rumors of the Army Show heading to California to make a movie and meetings between Army Show officials and the American Decca Records label, the Army rapidly downsized their entertainment network following the final performance of "Rhythm Rodeo," their last big show. By January 1946, seamstresses and tailor shops and the music departments had been closed at base in Guildford, Surrey. In late February, it was decided that "all live entertainment provided by army shows...will be dispensed with...by March 31, 1946."[268] Officials were instructed to wind up the shows and hand over all equipment as soon as all units were back to base. On April 1, 1946, the remaining CWAC personnel left base for the CWAC repatriation depot and "it was not with a little sorrow that they turned their backs on the camp which has been their home, for the last time;

happiness was reflected outwards but moist eyes told the real story."[269] According to the section's original plan, there was an attempt made to use CAS officers in other morale-building capacities but they too were slowly returned to civilian life.

The Navy Show began to seriously fall apart in the fall of 1945, though it had begun to do so in some small measure shortly after VE Day. "The minister emphasized that it (was) of the utmost importance that the Navy Show personnel be induced to volunteer their further services in the UK because it is expected that the situation in November and December will prove to be very trying"[270] but after 2 1/4 years rehearsing and performing day after day in close contact with each other, the performers' "one thought is to return to Canada and civilian life, where of course, a large number of them would be in a position to earn considerably larger sums of money than are possible whilst playing in the Navy Show."[271] The last performance of "Meet the Navy" on stage was in Oldenburg, Germany on September 12, 1945 but some of the cast was kept together for work on the film. All personnel of the Navy Show left the UK on January 20, 1946 on board the *Ile de france* destined for Halifax. Five days later, it was stated that the show was back in Canada "for demobilization and it is not anticipated that there will be anything in the nature of an entertainment group in the Navy by May 1946."[272]

For those not demanding immediate discharge from duty following disbandment of the entertainment units, the administration of the last days of the war and after created a large demand for women with secretarial skills. A shortage of clerical workers meant female entertainers not seeking immediate release from service could be put to work, both at home in Canada and overseas while awaiting repatriation. Entertainers in the Women's Division of the RCAF were specifically remustered for this purpose.[273]

Most performers made the transition from military to civilian life as soon as possible. They began or returned to their families, joined the regular work force and made use of the financial and educational assistance offered to veterans. Many employed the artistic skills they had gathered and the industry contacts they made during the war in the entertainment field in either Canada, the United Kingdom or the U.S. While several joined the CBC in a variety of roles both in the radio and television mediums, many became key

figures in local theatre, giving private lessons and organizing community performances. Post-war expansion in the theatrical arts was both created by the presence of these highly trained performers and allowed many to continue on in their chosen careers. Unlike their American and British counterparts though, many did not achieve a great deal of fame. There is no definite explanation of why Canada failed to lionize its war entertainment celebrities in the same way that the U.S. and Great Britain did, except the possibility that Canadian popular culture continued to be overwhelmed by the culture of those two countries in the years following the war and that Canadians were eager to distance themselves from war-related public figures in their transition to an "unmilitary" existence. While most modern Canadians would be unable to identify "Bell Bottom Trousers" as a Royal Canadian Navy song, they most certainly would be able to remember Glenn Miller or the Andrew Sisters. This difference in the way wartime stars have become part of history via their participation in the war effort can be illustrated by the difference between the careers of Bob Hope, for example, and the Canadian comedic team of Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster, who, while enjoying long careers here in Canada and pointed to as the Fathers of Canadian comedy, have largely passed into an obscurity that cannot be explained by differences in length of life expectancy. Vera Lynn, made a Dame in the U.K., Harry James, Bing Crosby and even Johnny Mercer have had a longer shelf life in their respective countries than any Canadian performer of the era. This may be partly due to those celebrities' appearances in successful film productions that promoted their talents while the Canadian film industry lagged significantly behind that of the U.K. and U.S. The Navy Show was the only show of the three services that was the subject of a feature film. Though American film companies had initially been anxious to sign a contract with "Meet the Navy" to secure the rights to such a production, they eventually lost interest by the time the show's touring schedule allowed them to make a film. And while the film was eventually made by British National Films in November of 1945, its public release was met with a decided lack of enthusiasm. Fortunately, the Navy Show had secured a very substantial advance on the prospective profits, money which was added to the Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund well ahead of the film tanking at theatres both in Canada and the

U.K. In any case, it appears that the skills of wartime entertainers were used in a more subtle way at the local and national levels. Instead of being orientated toward individual gains, entertainers formed a pool of technical and artistic talent which provided a solid foundation for the amplification of the performing arts in Canada. It is also clear that wartime performers created an audience for live theatrics. That audience became the parents of the baby boomers and had a huge impact on the forms of entertainment available after the war. There is some evidence too that wartime amusements of the sort described above were a harbinger of the youth-generated popular culture of the future. As the bulk of performers and the audiences they played to were between 18 and 25 years of age, military performances, like the war itself, helped construct a cohesive generation. Performances of "Meet the Navy" and the original Army Show, along with the smaller units that toured in this country, marked the commencement of a national theatre, the subsidies for which were thought to be a reasonable governmental expenditure.

But all these positive cultural after-effects are just coincidental to the reasons entertainment for the troops was established in the first place. There is no question but that the entertainment units formed during WW II were successful in their goals. They increased morale and recruitment, lowered exhaustion casualties and provided Department of National Defence approved diversions for troops in Canada, England, Italy and Northwest Europe. While the true extent of this achievement is unquantifiable, the relatively low cost of developing an entertainment infrastructure within the three services certainly justified its existence. With the benefit of hindsight, it seems rather hard to believe that the political climate during WW II not only allowed the formation of entertainment units within the military, but that the military felt no need to justify its actions in this area to the general public. The relationship between military entertainment units and the conscription issue aside, the seriousness of the conflict, especially after Hong Kong and Dieppe, would make it unlikely that entertainment concerns be any sort of priority, let alone become as important as they did. However, it is and was obvious that the poor state of morale among service personnel by 1942 put in jeopardy the quality of Canada's contribution to the Allied cause and thus its place in the Commonwealth's

political and economic family. In essence, the formation of an Armed Forces - wide entertainment program means military officials acknowledged the connection between poor morale, disciplinary problems, battle exhaustion, recreation and the quality of performance in the field. The existence of these units provides a nice counterpoint to the reputation of the Canadian military in this period as hard-nosed and ruling with an iron fist.

Finally, military entertainers occupied a unique and important liaison position both within the military and outside of it. By being both artists and soldiers, they were of both a military and non-military nature and despite the expectations of some, they managed to find an equilibrium between the two groups through the valuable work they did with service personnel. As ladies and gentlemen, their shows were accessible to non-military audiences as well. By translating the military experience to civilian audiences at home and overseas, they bonded primarily the British and Canadian domestic populations with the military and in the process, galvanized the project of winning the war into something concrete. The shows' inherent patriotism and their emphasis on the importance of military contribution unified civilian audiences with the Armed Forces and made victory possible. In this way, military entertainment units were the active agent in the Canadian war effort.

There is a strange parallel between stage lingo and terms used to describe military conflict. Performers who consider their act to have been well-received are said to have "killed." Poor performances, on the other hand, have "bombed." One is either a "troop" or one of the "troupe," and always part of a company. During World War II, this linguistic parallel was realized in the actual situational reality as Canadian military personnel were organized into entertainment units that became key players in the war effort by active duty in both the military and non-military spheres.

ENDNOTES

1. George F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers: The Military History of An Unmilitary People (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1954). Revised in 1960 and 1974. Stanley, together with C.P. Stacey and Gerald Graham, form the old school holy trinity of military history.

2. Ibid., 1.

3. Ibid., 444. This "unmilitary" point of analysis was further entrenched with the publication of Canada: A Guide to the Peaceable Kingdom, which quickly became a popular if unduly flattering part of the academic lexicon within Canadian literary critic circles. Kilbourn and his contributors concern themselves with social conditions in the post-war years, the era when the Canadian inclination toward peace and tolerance of potentially divisive differences characterized the national social climate. William Kilbourn, ed., Canada: A Guide to the Peaceable Kingdom (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1970).

4. Gunther E. Rothenberg in his foreword to John English, The Canadian Army and the Normandy Campaign: A Study of Failure in High Command (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1991). See also John English, Lament For An Army: The Decline of Canadian Military Professionalism (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1998) and Gerard S. Vano, Canada: The Strategic and Military Pawn (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1981) as further examples of the academic perception that Canadians have no military culture.

5. Anne Foreman in the foreword to David A. Charters, Marc Milner and J. Brent Wilson, eds, Military History and the Military Profession (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1992), xii.

6. J.L. Granatstein, Who Killed Canadian History? (Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 1998). Of special note is his chapter "No Flanders Field? Canadians, War and Remembrance" in which he gives examples of the overall absence of military history in Canadian textbooks.

7. Historically, some women in their roles as wives and mistresses have had great affect on the efficacy of command. The careers of both General E.L.M. Burns and Lieutenant-Colonel Ross Ellis of the Calgary Highlanders, for example, at times hinged upon the women in their lives.

8. J.L. Granatstein, Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975).

9. See for example Ruth McKenzie, Laura Secord: The Legend and the Lady (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971) and Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, "Women During the Great War," in Women at Work: Ontario, 1850-1930, eds., Janice Acton et al. (Toronto: Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1974)

10. See for example Barbara Freeman, "Mother and Son: Gender, Class and War Propaganda in Canada, 1939-1945," *American Journalism* 12, 3 (Summer 1995): 260-275 and Forestell, Diane, "The Necessity of Sacrifice for the Nation at War: Women's Labour Force Participation, 1939-1946," *Social History* XXII, 44 (November 1989): 333-47.

11. See Leila J. Rupp, Mobilizing Women For War: German and American Propaganda, 1939-1945 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978) as a good example of comparative work. This overall lack of comparative work inclusive of Canada is reflected in the wider Canadian military historiography and is due to an emphasis on nation-centric analysis that does not allow historians to compare Canadian styles of warfare with the rest of the Allies. The work of R.A. Preston may be the sole exception here. See for example R.A. Preston and Ian Wards, "Military and Defense Development in Canada, Australia and New Zealand: A Three-Way Comparison," *War and Society* 5 (May 1987): 1-17.

12. Ruth Roach Pierson, "They're Still Women After All:" The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1986) assembled from such articles as "'Jill Canuck': CWAC of All Trades, But No 'Pistol Packing Momma,'" Canadian Historical Association's *Historical Papers* (1978): 106-33, "Canadian Women and Canadian Mobilization During the Second World War," *International Review of Military History* 51 (1982): 181-207 and "The Double Bind of the Double Standard: VD Control and the CWAC in World War II," *Canadian Historical Review* 62, 1 (March 1981): 31-58. To Pierson's credit, her research covered a wide range of issues and was completed in a time when military history itself was unfashionable in academe, let alone feminist military history.

13. In the preface to their incomplete and non-Canadian focused bibliography, the researchers of The Valour and Horror website have commented on the available texts as being "full of interesting stories and photographs documenting the lives of the women who participated, in a variety of capacities, in the war effort. There is, unfortunately, some degree of frivolity surrounding most documentation." http://www.valourandhorror.com October, 1999. Donald Schurman has also expressed this concern, commenting that the "outpouring of military writing of indifferent quality and dubious intent...(has) increased the general public's interest in military affairs on the one hand, and added significantly to the pile of published junk on the other." Donald Schurman, "Writing About War," in Writing About Canada: A Handbook for Modern Canadian History, John Schultz, ed. (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1990): 231-249.

14. C.P. Stacey and Barbara M. Wilson, The Half-Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

15. See W.Ray Stephens, The Canadian Entertainers of World War II (Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press, 1993), The Harps of War (Mississauga, Ontario: Harris Music Company, 1985) and Memories and Melodies of WW II (Erin, Ontario: Boston Mills Press, 1987).

16. The best of these songbooks is Anthony Hopkins, Songs From the Front and Rear: Canadian Servicemen's Songs of the Second World War (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1979).

17. John Grave Hughes, The Greasepaint War: Show Business, 1939-1945 (London: New English Library, 1976), Bill Pertwee, Stars in Battledress: A Light-Hearted Look at Service Entertainment in the Second World War (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1992) and Frank Coffey, Always Home: Fifty Years of the USO (New York: Maxwell Macmillan, Inc., 1991). See also Basil Dean, The Theatre at War (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1956) and Richard Fawkes, Fighting for a Laugh: Entertaining the British and American Armed Forces, 1939-1946 (London: Macdonald and Jane's Publishers Ltd., 1978).

18. War diaries were kept in special folders that included a number of directions for use. Their stated objective was to "supply authentic material for the history of the unit, and of the force; to furnish a historical record of operations; and to provide data upon which to base improvements in training, equipment, organization and administration."

19. War Diary for May 23, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

20. These authors have, for example, named Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster, who honed their craft within the Canadian Army Show, the Fathers of Canadian Comedy and pointed to the unmistakable impact these two artists had on both the Canadian and American entertainment industry. Andrew Clark, Stand and Deliver: Inside Canadian Comedy (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Ltd., 1997) and Geoff Pevere and Greig Dymond, Mondo Canuck: A Canadian Pop Culture Odyssey (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada, Inc., 1996).

21. When combined, the performers of the three services numbered over 700 and with the additional staff of Auxiliary Services and other administrative and support systems, over 2000 people were involved in creating these shows. This is roughly equivalent to the size of a large battalion or a small regiment.

22. Natalie Rewa's contribution on garrison theatre in The Oxford Companion to Canadian Theatre, eds. Eugene Benson and L.W. Conolly (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1989), pgs. 223-224.

23. See Patrick B. O'Neill, "The Canadian Concert Party in France," Theatre Research in Canada 4(2) (Fall 1983), 192-207.

24. All information on the Dumbells comes from the first chapter of Andrew Clark, Stand and Deliver: Inside Canadian Comedy.

25. Desmond Morton, A Military History of Canada: From Champlain to the Gulf War, 3rd edition (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Inc., 1992), pgs. 209-210.

26. George F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers: The Military History of an Unmilitary People, pg. 365.

27. Just how crucial a component battle exhaustion cases were of casualty rates varied in each theatre over time. Generally speaking, exhaustion counted for about 15% of casualty figures over the entire duration of the war. For a full examination of battle exhaustion, see Terry Copp and Bill McAndrew, Battle Exhaustion: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Canadian Army, 1939-1945 (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990).

28. W. Ray Stephens, The Canadian Entertainers of World War II, pgs. 9-28.

29. For a full explanation of both the popularity of this band and its work during the war, see Mart Kenney, Mart Kenney and His Western Gentlemen (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1981).

30. Proposal re: formation of concert party to be known as "The Army Show" and to consist of army personnel, October 27, 1942. RG 24, Volume 16670, volume 1, The Army Show, November 12 to 30, 1942. The founding fathers of "The Army Show" included Victor George, Lt. Col. James Mess, Jack Arthur, Geoffrey Waddington, Rai Purdy, Major W.B. Robinson, Captain J.K. Reid, Edward Harris, and John Pratt, who later gained famed as a cast member of the Navy Show. Hume Cronyn, who would over the next fifty years became a well-known actor in the U.S., also offered his assistance in forming the Army Show but was rejected on the grounds that certain "financial obligations" did not allow Cronyn to volunteer his time.

31. The "Army Show Fund" was governed by a Board of Trustees made up of various members of citizen committees and co-ordinating councils. The Board included 9 members, all men except for the secretarial position, from across Canada, with Saskatoon resident Harry S. Hay as chairman. From "The Army Show: Canada's All Soldier Stage Show" program, unfiled but held by the Glenbow Museum and used in the exhibit "Memories of War, Dreams of Peace" which was shown from November 1995 to March 1996 and curated by Barry Agnew, Senior Curator of Military History, Glenbow Museum, Alberta, Canada.

32. RG 24, Volume 5689, File NSS 450-1-20, volume 1, Auxiliary Services (Navy)-Navy Shows General Data and Correspondence.

33. Letter from the Minister of National Defence to the Governor General in council, August 31, 1945 detailing the history of the Navy Show. RG 24, Volume 3596, File 1210-1, volume 1, Navy Show general, Royal Canadian Navy.

34. Quote from an unidentified newspaper clipping from June 1943. RG 24, Volume 5689, File NSS 450-1-20, volume 1, Auxiliary Services (Navy)-Naval Shows General Data and Correspondence.

35. Ruth Phillips, "The History of the Royal Canadian Navy's World War II Show 'Meet the Navy'," 1973. MG 55/31 No. 22, pg. 20. This monograph is an uncritical and incomplete history of the show, ostensibly done for the 30th Anniversary Reunion of the show held in Toronto in September 1973.

36. RG 24, Volume 3596, File 1210-10, Financial Arrangements, Royal Canadian Navy.

37. Rosamond 'Fiddy' Greer, The Girls of the King's Navy (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1983), pg. 69.

38. As one station medical officer reported, base entertainment "keeps my venereal disease wards empty." Memo from Air Vice-Marshall J.A. Sully to Air Officer Commanding in the No.1 Training Command area on July 31, 1942. RG 24, Volume 3218, File HQ 192-4-8, volume 1, Entertainment Groups Organization and Establishment, Royal Canadian Air Force.

39. Memo from J.A. Sully, AVM, on July 6, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3218, File HQ 192-4-8, volume 1, Entertainment Groups Organization and Establishment, Royal Canadian Air Force.

40. The practice of having entertainment groups administratively attached to their Training Command of origin soon became cumbersome from the perspective of AFHQ in Ottawa, a situation that was further aggravated when RCAF groups began to go overseas. By early 1944, all entertainment group personnel were taken off strength from their training commands and officially posted to RCAF Station Rockcliffe in Ottawa for rations, discipline and quarters and attached to AFHQ for pay and equipment. When posted overseas then, the prior necessities were taken over by RCAF overseas HQ via the Special Duties List.

41. RCAF Press Release No. 2210, September 17, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3289, File 250-14-2, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

42. Memo from S/L N.M. Gilchrist, Director of Music and Entertainment, concerning demands for RCAF entertainment from Eastern Air Command on October 29, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 3, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups.

43. James McGivern Humphrey, The Golden Bridge of Memoirs (Don Mills, Ontario: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, 1979), pg. 102-103. Humphrey, a decorated World War I veteran, was commissioned, with a rank of Major, as District Auxiliary Services Officer for Montreal District No. 4 in November of 1939 and by early 1940 had secured the post of Overseas Director of Auxiliary Services, headquartered in London.

44. Overall expenses for Air Force shows were quite high when wages, rations and other standard costs for supporting military personnel were taken into account. A total of $140,807.56 in annually recurring costs and $12,470 in non-recurring costs was budgeted in 1943 to cover the operations of the entertainment groups within the 4 training command areas. These figures do not take into account equipment costs but do include pay, medical and clothing expenses. Estimated Personnel Costs for Entertainment Groups of the RCAF, October 1943. RG 24, Volume 3218, File HQ 192-4-8, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

45. Memo from J.A. Sully to Mr. Edgar Burton, General Manager of the Robert Simpson Company of Toronto on August 14, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3288, File HQ 250-14-2, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

46. Letter from J.A. Sully to O.D. Vaughan, Vice-President of the T. Eaton Company, on May 18, 1944 and a letter to Sully from Robert Burton of Simpson's on May 19, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-10, All-Girl Revue, Royal Canadian Air Force.

47. The Famous Players donation turned out to be "in kind" as that company supplied the theaters in Toronto, Brantford, Ottawa and London, Ontario that the group needed for shows and rehearsals. Famous Players charged the Navy Show $2400 for 3 days at their space in Ottawa and $1000 for 11 days in Toronto, as well as the much-reduced rent in London and Brantford ($700 for 3 days and $373 for 1 day,

respectively). In essence then the donation from Famous Players was not anywhere near as large as the American film companies (whose donations were listed in American funds and were calculated in Canadian dollars at a 10% premium, so $2500 became $2750 for example) and in fact they made money from the group through high priced rental agreements. RG 24, Volume 3596, Department of National Defence, Royal Canadian Navy, File 1210-6, Navy Show Donations and Grants, File 1210-8, Navy Show Contracts and Agreements and File 1210-9, Financial Statement.

48. Letter from Captain J.P. Connolly, Director of Special Services (Navy) to H. Cheney, Naval Stores, Ottawa on October 14, 1944. Connolly stated on that date that American film concerns had donated upwards of $18,000. RG 24, Volume 3596, File 1210-10, Financial Arrangements, Royal Canadian Navy.

49. In the RCAF for example, some instruments were purchased by the Department of Munitions and Supply but rents on instruments and other equipment paid to personnel totaled $6,700 by November 1945. These rates were established using the higher overseas insurance figures, the increased cost of maintenance and repairs in the U.K. and a recompense for a certain amount of wear and tear. RG 24, Volume 3291, File HQ 250-14-14, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups, Royal Canadian Air Force.

50. Text from the "Swing Time" unit of the RCAF publicity poster, probably from early 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

51. Memo from S/L N.M. Gilchrist to AFHQ on March 13, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3288, File 250-14-1, "Blackouts," Royal Canadian Air Force.

52. A standard report pointed out this inverse relationship. For example, in Saskatchewan "it was found that very little self entertainment was going on at this station (#4 S.F.T.S.) owing to the fact of the proximity to Saskatoon and the many and varied forms of entertainment available in that city for personnel..." Report on Activities of "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit period February 17th to February 24th, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-8, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

53. War Diary for "Mixed Fun" on June 28, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, volume 2, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21 Army Group.

54. Press release "POWs Welcome at 'Meet the Navy'" written by F/O Wren Georgina Murray, no date, but probably the summer of 1945. RG 24, Volume 11716, File CS 22-3-1, Royal Canadian Navy.

55. While the army and air force relied primarily on talented personnel already enlisted, the navy show actually recruited some performers and then enlisted them into service. This was fitting, given their more elaborate production and the further reaching professional goals of its cast. Many amateur or semi-professional artists wrote into Naval Headquarters, and unlike similar applications in the air force or army, were usually seriously considered depending on the references included.

56. Within the National Defence files covering this topic, only one mention of a man's physical appearance emerges. Canadian Army Show bandsman Grosney was said to be "an odd size and uniforms issued will have to be tailored...specially made for him." Memo concerning overseas clothing allotment from F/L Lister to Special Services on September 1, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

57. Report of Talent Discovered at No. 13, S.F.T.S. North Battleford. July 1944, descriptions by F/O C.E.T. Ashdown, O.C. "Swing Time" Unit. RG 24, Volume3290, File 250-14-8, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

58. Letter from O/C Locksley, Royal Canadian Navy Show, to the Director of Special Services on September 23, 1943. RG 24, Volume 5689, File NSS 450-1-22, Special Services (N) General Navy Show,

Royal Canadian Navy.

59. This comment refers to LAC Braithwaite, assigned to General Duties at Three Rivers, Manitoba, who auditioned for the RCAF "Swing Time" unit. Ashdown's RCAF journal of late February 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

60. Letter from S.A. Wexler of Toronto on January 6, 1944 to Department of National Defence. Wexler was near-sighted and therefore was convinced he would be found unfit for the regular Air Force. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 1, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups and Correspondence, Royal Canadian Air Force.

61. Letter from AC2 J.R.W. Fenton at No. 1 Manning Depot in Toronto to F/L Coote on April 12, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3291, File HQ 250-14-14, volume 1, Policy governing Entertainment Groups and Correspondence, Royal Canadian Air Force.

62. Letters to AFHQ from Cpl. R. Hamstead on July 26, 1943 and from AC1 C.M.R. Bray on November 27, 1942. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 1, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups and Correspondence, Royal Canadian Air Force.

63. Letter from Airwoman E.J. Gillies to Section Officer E.H. Leggett on November 23, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 1, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups and Correspondence, Royal Canadian Air Force.

64. Memo from W/C J.L. Jackson, No. 4 Training Command Calgary on May 12, 1943 to Department of National Defence for Air. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 1, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups and Correspondence, Royal Canadian Air Force.

65. Memo from G/C G.A.D. Will, D.A.P.S., to S/L Gilchrist on February 23, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3291, File HQ 25-14-14, volume 3, Royal Canadian Air Force.

66. War Diary summary for January 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

67. Memo regarding No. 2 Entertainment Group Administrative Officer position by G/C D.E. MacKell, D.of P., on August 28, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3289, File 250-14-2, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

68. Memo from G/C H. de M. Molson, D.of P., on September 18, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

69. Report on "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit from E.S. Hammett S/L to Department of National Defence for Air on May 20, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

70. Movement Nominal Roll on September 29, 1945 for the Canadian Army Shows Overseas. RG 24, Volume 16671, Canadian Army Shows, volume 19. These provincial origins are based on next of kin addresses.

71. These numbers are based on the last address given by the cast and crew of the "Meet the Navy" show in early 1946. The addresses were requested for a press release concerning the "Meet the Navy" film's first showing in Canada and allowed the Navy to advertise in the relevant hometown papers. Of those from Ontario, the greatest percentage were from Toronto, Hamilton and Ottawa while the Manitobans where mainly from Winnipeg. All of those in Nova Scotia were from Halifax specifically. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-17, RCN Shows Advertising, Royal Canadian Navy.

72. Letter to Lt.-Commander Robertson, CO of the Navy Show, from Lt. Edith Dobson, Unit Officer, WRCNS on April 18, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-16, volume 1, Navy Show, Royal Canadian Navy.

73. Nicol was later transferred from Rockcliffe to the Public Relations department of No. 4 Training Command in Calgary to write for the ½ hour air force radio show "Command Performance." He went on to "Wings" magazine for the duration and to become one of Canada's most prolific print humourists. Eric Nicol, Anything For A Laugh: Memoirs (Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, 1998), pg. 118-120.

74. Herbert Whittaker, Setting the Stage: Montreal Theatre, 1920-1949, ed. Jonathan Rittenhouse (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), pgs. 131-132.

75. Press release "Another Hit for the Canadian Navy," no date. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-11, Navy Show Promotion and Advertisement, Royal Canadian Navy.

76. War Diary for August 3 through August 8, 1943. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, The Army Show War Diaries, folder 2, August 1 to August 31, 1943.

77. The woman in question was a general clerk in the Air Force. Letter from F/O M.M. Weeks to CO of No. 3 Calgary Depot on January 27, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-14, volume 2, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups, Royal Canadian Air Force.

78. Letter from A.G. Dolman to F/L H.S. Dodgson (Chaplain), No. 3 AOS Regina on April 24, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3291, File HQ 250-14-14, volume 1, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups and Correspondence, Royal Canadian Air Force.

79. Letter from LAC R. Bodnaruk applying to "Swing Time" unit to OC of RCAF in Edmonton on September 11, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-14, volume 2, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups, Royal Canadian Air Force.

80. War Diary for September 7, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ CRU. Lois Hooker was sixteen years old. There are conflicting reports of troops seeing her in France with the group "Invasion Review" shortly after the D-Day landings, but the official documents report she was kept in the U.K.. Hooker later became Lois Maxwell, famous as the character Moneypenny in the James Bond movie series.

81. Nominal roll of "Meet the Navy" for Paris shows in June 1945. RG 24, Volume 11716, File CS 22-3-1, Royal Canadian Navy.

82. Daily Orders for August 28, 1943. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 2, The Army Show War Diaries, volume 10, August 1 to August 31, 1943.

83. Cohen was a 38 year-old father of two who worked as a manager in the shoe department of a Winnipeg store prior to joining up. Letter from Morris Cohen, Winnipeg, to F/L Coote in August 1943. RG 24, Volume 3291, File HQ 250-14-14, volume 1, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups and Correspondence, Royal Canadian Air Force.

84. These entertainers were part of a public audience with the Pope. War Diary of "Mixed Fun" for July 2, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, volume 1, Canadian Army Show.

85. War Diary of "Mixed Fun" for June 21, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21 Army Group.

86. Minutes of CAS meeting on December 13, 1942. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 1, volume 1, The Army Show, November 1942 to April 1943.

87. This basic format is formed from a synthesis of all available information within the three services, including inter-departmental correspondence, scripts, film clips and radio sound recordings from the period. See for example the memo from Warrant Officer F.N. Hamon concerning RCAF concert parties on October 14, 1942. RG 24, Volume 3291, File HQ 250-14-14, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

88. From an unidentified Air Force show script titled "Double Pocket Knapsacks," undated. The word play results when an air force man approaches an equipment official about securing some supplies and no doubt was extremely popular with audiences not necessarily because it was uproariously hilarious but because the dialogue was so incredibly complicated, demanding complete concentration from the performers and a very detailed script. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-12, Royal Canadian Air Force.

89. Hints on the production of station shows, undated. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-12, Royal Canadian Air Force.

90. Ruth Roach Pierson goes to some length to explain both the "moral panic" and "whispering campaign" that servicewomen suffered from during the war in "They're Still Women After All."

91. From the Navy Show's stage manager's inventory list prior to a performance in Amsterdam on August 10, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-14, Navy Show Equipment and Wardrobe, Royal Canadian Navy.

92. Information on the Navy Show's material comes from a variety of sources, including newspaper clippings, press releases, the program the show used for their Canadian tour, and inventory lists of props and scenery. Most helpful in this area are the film and sound recordings held by the National Archives, including "Meet the Navy," CBC radio (reel-to-reel, ACC:1984-0164, R9819) from July 1, 1945. This recording unfortunately has a morse code transmission running through it that seriously damages its quality but includes "You'll Get Used To It" and "The Boy in the Bell Bottom Trousers." The silent "Meet the Navy on Stage" film (NFTSA 8205-180) includes the chorus line, a mime act, Joe Pratt's song and a novelty tumbling act. Lastly, "Meet the Navy-A London Hit" conveys some of the glamour of the show by showing just a few numbers included in the show when it traveled to the U.K. (NFTSA 8090-231).

93. Memo from Captain Purdy to Harding, Sherratt, and Sweeny (wardrobe, props and set design in England) on May 10, 1944. RG 24, volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ CRU.

94. The diarist for this unit commented of the show in s' Hertogenbosch, Holland "This is one of the coldest places we have played...with many of the girls and some of the men being very scantily dressed during some parts of the show, there is the possibility they will not be able to endure it." War Diary for January 29, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16673, 2636H, No. 4 Canadian Concert Party the "Forage Caps," Canadian Army Show. The "Forage Caps" began to include members of the CWAC in late 1944.

95. War Diary for May 23, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

96. Canadian Army Show Broadcast No. 1 on December 13, 1942 from Montreal, written by Sgts. Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster. RG 24, Volume 16670, volume 2, appendix one, Canadian Army Show. The Canadian Army Show alternatively claimed at the end of each broadcast that they were "Canada's Active Army on the Air" or "the living message of the will and spirit of Canada's Active Army." For home broadcasts, the Show attempted to give a glimpse of the soldiers' lives in a number of different places and jobs in an effort to put domestic audiences at ease with the situation.

97. War Diary for May 23, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

98. Memo to Captain Rai Purdy from CSM J. Cameron, June 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ CRU.

99. Memo to A.M.P. from W. Walker, CO of WD, on March 16, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3288, File 250-14-1, "The Blackouts," Royal Canadian Air Force.

100. From the first (December 13, 1942) and the fourth (January 3, 1943) broadcasts of the Canadian Army Show on the CBC National Network, written by Sgts. Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster. RG 24, Volume 16670, volumes 2 and 3, Canadian Army Show.

101. In July 1941, the RCAF admitted women into the RCAF Women's Division (RCAFWD) followed by the developement of the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC) in August of the same year. The Royal Canadian Navy was relatively late in accepting volunteers to the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS or Wrens) in July of 1942. Nearly 50,000 women enlisted in the Canadian military and over 4000 served overseas. Canadian War Museum publication, Catalogue No. NM 92-103/1987, National Museums of Canada, 1987, pg. 17. Indeed not many changes to scripts were needed as the majority were written for both sexes.

102. F/O C.E.T. Ashdown, OC "Swing Time" unit, had earlier recommended a promotion for Bestall, which was revoked following this incident. Letter from Ashdown to S/L Gilchrist, RCAF Director of Music and Entertainment, at AFHQ on May 23, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

103. "Swing Patrol" was the new name for the refitted show "Musical Maneuvers." War Diary for May 4, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

104. The Canadian Army Show Broadcast No. 15 on March 21, 1943 from Toronto. RG 24, Volume 16670, volume 5, appendix 2, Canadian Army Show.

105. Canadian Army Show Broadcast No. 9 on February 7, 1943 from Toronto. Written by Sgts. Wayne and Shuster. RG 24, Volume 16670, volume 4, appendix 4, Canadian Army Show.

106. Letter to Eastern Air Command from F/O L.R. Glenn of No. 5 Detachment in Queensport, Nova Scotia on August 14, 1943 and letter to Auxiliary Services RCAF in Halifax from N/S Mary MacPherson of No. 1 OTU in Bagotville, Quebec on August 30, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-9, Concert Tours by ASO Mutch, Royal Canadian Air Force.

107. Letter from S/L J.Fergus Grant to Eastern Air Officer Commanding on August 28, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3289, File HQ 250-14-7, Concert Trio, Royal Canadian Air Force.

108. War Diary of "Rapid Fire" for July 18, 1944, near Caiazzo, Italy. RG 24, Volume 16671, Serial 3880, No. 2 Detachment Canadian Army Show, Canadian Mediterranean Force.

109. Lamb entered this new profession at the rank of L/Cpl. and was both a member of the CWAC and an employee of the Department of War Records. War Diary for October 10, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, folder 1, No. 1 Entertainment Unit, volume 7, October 1-October 31, 1944.

110. McRae's designs, including sketches for a "Boogie Beat Chorus Girl" and "Boogie Man Zoot Suit," have been gathered into a collection and are held in the National Archives.

111. Stockings were a hot property during the war years, leading those who demanded them to draw lines down the backs of their bare legs to simulate the effect of nylons. A picture caption from the November 12, 1944 issue of the British newspaper *Sunday Pictorial* (pg. 9) reads "...Wrens in the Canadian Navy Show "Meet the Navy," on an ENSA tour of Europe, wear real silk stockings. But no sneaking out in them after the show! They're collected nightly, as you see here, and locked up in the theater safe." Clipping in RG 24, Volume 11716, CS 22-3-1, Royal Canadian Navy.

112. Month of February 1945 summary of War Diary. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit(Army Shows).

113. Pte. Weinzweig wrote these new verses for the song. The original, copyrighted in Canada in 1942, featured words by Victor Gordon with music by Freddy Grant. June 28, 1944. No. 1 Detachment Canadian Army Show "Mixed Fun" war diary, volume 2. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army show, 21 Army Group.

114. Concert Party report on Unit C for weeks May 15-21 and May 22-26, 1944 by CSM J.K. Shields. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ CRU.

115. There is some evidence that Colonel J. Kennedy, Commanding Officer of the CWAC in Canada, did not favor basic training for CWAC in entertainment units but it is unclear whether National Defence Headquarters concurred on this sentiment. Daily Activities of Army Show Recruits stationed in Canada. RG 24. Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 1, The Army Show November 1942 to April 1943, volume 3, January 1 to 31, 1943 and volume 4, February 1 to February 28, 1943.

116. Projected personnel costs according to establishment figures on October 7, 1943 for Royal Canadian Air Force entertainment groups. RG 24, Volume 3218, File HQ 192-4-8, volume 1, Entertainment Groups Organization and Establishment, Royal Canadian Air Force.

117. Administrative changes whereby anyone joining the show after its first year of existence was classified as being on Special Duty meant that some members still operated under General Duty status and received its lower category rate of pay. Memo to A/Commanding Officer of the Navy Show from Lt. Edith Dobson, WRCNS Unit Officer, the Navy Show on September 18, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-16, volume 1, The Navy Show, Royal Canadian Navy.

118. Report on Activities of "Swing Time" Unit, July 11 to August 31, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-8, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

119. This was an oddly unnecessary practice, especially when the units were heading into the Mediterranean theatre. As soon as the unit landed, most often proceeding directly to Avellino, Italy, the same extra kit and firearms were stored again at HQ stores. The idea then was to pick them back up before the return voyage to England. Often though, the equipment had been issued to someone else in the interim.

120. Odette Park Winterton interview, July 14, 2000.

121. Male members suffered several ailments created by filthy billets that female personnel did not, including infestations of lice, ever-constant flea bites, fungi of all different kinds and increased incidents of dysentery.

122. Report of CAS Overseas by Captain W. Wren, A/Commanding Officer on May 19, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Canadian Army Show.

123. The rather light punishments meted out to performers often just served to make a point and not to actually cause hardship for the person in question. One singer with the Canadian Army Shows in England, for example, was assigned to kitchen duties for a short time after claiming he no longer wanted to sing. The officer in charge claimed that a stint washing dishes "may convince him that he is fortunate in having the privilege to sing while others are fighting." RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show November 1943 to January 1945, No. 1 Canadian Army Show Overseas - Canadian Reinforcement Unit Headquarters.

124. War Diary, March 1 to March 30, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ C.R.U.

125. By April of the following year, Airwoman Kostenuk had been medically boarded and recommended for discharge. It is unclear what her ailment was but by October of 1944, her husband had applied for compassionate leave to aid his critically ill wife in Ottawa. RG 24, Volume 3289, File 250-14-2, volume 1 (Letter to Secretary of National Defence for Air from F/O Marshall on January 5, 1944) and RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-12 (Letter from F/Sgt. H.W. Cluff NCO i/c "Joe Boys" Entertainment to Secretary of National Defence for Air on October 31, 1944) Royal Canadian Air Force .

126. Unlike many other CWACs in this time frame, Dagg had not taken any sick leave at all and by all appearances was performing her duties in a competent and consistent manner. War Diary for Mar 8th and March 30, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ CRU.

127. War Diary for "Repat Rhythm" on July 9 and July 19, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16674, Serial 2636U, No. 19 Detachment.

128. English tour summary of the "Blackouts" for February and March of 1944. RG 24, Volume 3288, File 250-14-1, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

129. While in Field, B.C., civilian response to the Canadian Army Show was so positive that the town loaned practically all the one hundred show members bicycles for two days so that they might head out in the surrounding area for picnics and exercise. The local school principal even let all the children out of school for a short time so they could go get their bicycles and give them to cast members who had not already borrowed transportation from the adult citizens of Field. War Diary for June 14 and 15, 1943. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, The Army Show War Diaries, volume 8.

130. Letter from F/Sgt. H.W. Cluff, NCO i/c "Joe Boys" Entertainment unit to Gilchrist, Director of Music and Entertainment, AFHQ, on April 5, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-12, "Joe Boys" Entertainment, Royal Canadian Air Force.

131. This film was used for publicity purposes and attempts to integrate sections of the stage show with clips of the cast cavorting around some of Europe's most recognizable landscapes in a glamourous example of an early music video. It is unclear who produced this film or what year it was made. "Meet the Navy on Tour," NFTSA 8207-862/863, V1 8505-0071, black and white, copied from the original 35 mm film, 19 minutes in duration, held by the National Archives of Canada.

132. Pte. Doris Omand was especially lucky to have her brother Bill present when news of their father's sudden death was received. She soon was called upon to perform the song "Blueskies" and did so like "a good trouper and a good soldier." Considering the odds, these siblings reunions took place often and mostly among the CWAC members, who ran into their brothers during traffic jams, heard them yelling in the audiences they were performing for and sat down next to them in NAAFI canteens. On a couple of occasions, CWAC personnel were reunited with their fathers as well, one after a four year separation. War Diary of "You've Had It" for June 19, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16674, Serial 2636R, Canadian Army Show.

133. War Diary for April 10 and May 20, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16674, Serial 2636L, No. 11 Detachment, "Combined Ops," Canadian Army Show.

134. In Canada, the Canadian Army Show in its original incarnation charged an average of approximately $1.50 for a civilian ticket. In Halifax for example a huge audience of 5000 civilians meant a gate take of over $7000. The Air Force shows only periodically charged civilians to see their performances, who made up a very small percentage of their audiences in any event. War Diary of August 31, 1943. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, The Army Show, volume 10, August 1 to August 31, 1943.

135. Minutes of a December 13, 1942 Canadian Army Show meeting, comments made by Col. Mess (Deputy Adjutant General) RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 1, Canadian Army Show, November 1942 to April 1943.

136. Weekly report to Major Robinson of Unit 1 in Toronto from the Red Triangle Club in Courtenay, B.C. from OC of Unit 6 on June 26, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21 Army Group.

137. Frank Shuster interview, July 4, 2000. Both Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster were part of the original Army Show, writing both the music and dialogue for its Canadian tour, and were then posted overseas in CAS Unit C, which later became "Invasion Revue" for its tour of Europe. "Invasion Revue" was the first military entertainment unit to reach Europe after the Normandy invasion and among its ranks were the first CWAC personnel to set foot in France.

138. The WO i/c of the "Pass in Revue" unit of the Army Show was outraged that German civilians would be admitted to the shows that unit was conducting in Germany. The war diary of September 17, 1945 from Leer, Germany stated that "in the audience were a number of German civilians and WO i/c did not think this right as the shows are not over in this country to entertain our former enemies. After a talk with Supervisor Morgan (ASO) it was announced that there would be no more civilians admitted." RG 24, Volume 16674, Serial 2636T, No. 18 Detachment "Pass in Revue" War Diary. German civilians were apparently interested in the entertainers after VE-Day as journalists sometimes arrived at shows to take pictures of the cast for German newspapers.

139. Frank Shuster interview, July 4, 2000.

140. Letter from Sub-Lt. G.A. Burwash, Naval Information Board-Radio RCNVR to Sub-Lt. Carten, Naval Special Services, no date. Benny supported Allied servicemen in every aspect and had intended to perform with Canadian service musicians while in Canada but he was thwarted in this by the American Federation of Musicians union who refused to let the servicemen perform because they were not part of the union. Benny was obliged then to pick up Allan McIver's orchestra in Montreal as a backing band. RG 24, Volume 5689, File 450-1-20, volume 1, Auxiliary Services (Navy)-Naval Shows: General Data and Correspondence.

141. Memo to Gilchrist from Ashdown, CO of "Swing Time" on April 26, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

142. Letter from Montague to General A.E. Walford on May 12, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3596, volume 1, File 1210-1, Royal Canadian Navy.

143. From the 'Hank's Corner' Column in *The Times-Journal*, December 11, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3289, File 250-14-2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

144. Memo from Major N.S. Thomson, ADAS, Canadian Section 1 Ech-HQ 21 Army Group on May 2, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-17, Royal Canadian Navy.

145. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, The Army Show War Diaries Volume 7-12, folder 2, May 1 to May 31, 1943 (May 10).

146. Noel Coward latter wrote, when asked for an endorsement the Navy Show could use in their publicity, "I really do most sincerely salute not only the admirable work that this company is doing for the British Charities but the very genuine talent and charm which distinguishes the whole production." On a personal note, he added "Please remember me to the whole Company and my best wishes to all of you." Letter from Noel Coward of London on March 3, 1945 to A/Lt. Cmdr. Stuart Robertson, SB RCNVR, CO Navy Show. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-11, Navy Show Promotion and Advertisement, Royal Canadian Navy.

147. List of Canadian Naval Units played by RCAF Entertainment Groups and List of Canadian Army Units played by RCAF Entertainment Groups. These figures were calculated from the audience information gathered by the "Blackouts," "Swing Time" and the "All Clears." The same three groups

estimated that from May 1943 to February 1944, 62685 people of the Canadian and American military had seen their shows. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

148. Letter from Lister F/L "Joe Boys" Entertainment Unit to Gilchrist on June 19, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-12, " Joe Boys" Entertainment, Royal Canadian Air Force.

149. Concert Party Report of February 3, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, Canadian Army Show November 1943 to January 1945.

150. This was part of the rationale for developing an RCAF all-girl revue for overseas posting. Memo from J.A. Sully, AVM, on March 29, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3218, File 192-4-8, Royal Canadian Air Force.

151. Report of "Joe Boys" Entertainment Unit on December 2, 1944 from Halifax. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-12, "Joe Boys" Entertainment, Royal Canadian Air Force.

152. Report on RCAF show "Swing Time" from F/O C.E.T. Ashdown, CO, on February 24, 1944 from Manitoba. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

153. The unit ended up booking the local mess hall in Dafoe, Saskatchewan (#5 B&G School) and planned to play there the next night as well. Unfortunately, the mess hall burned down that evening with the loss of some of the unit's equipment. "The unit's stay in Dafoe was (thus) marred by the unfortunate combination of crashes, deaths and fires..." Report of the activities of "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit period February 9th to February 16th, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-8, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

154. War Diary report of "The Bandoliers" from Perugia, Italy and a half-hour show in the No. 14 Canadian General Hospital. The patients here were claimed to deliver a "reception..the best yet received in hospitals..." RG 24, Volume 16673, Serial 2636J, No.3 Canadian Concert Party "The Bandoliers," Canadian Army Shows (Overseas).

155. Letter to Douglas Romaine, real name of Sgt. E.L. LaBarre, actor in "Floor Show," from "A good friend and all here" on February 1, 1945. This letter was later described as being "shaky, labored and (having) mis-spelled handwriting, (but) speaks for itself-a sincere expression from an anonymous casualty of battle." RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

156. Members of the Canadian Army Show unit "Five Hits and a Miss" toured many hospitals in England and "had a good visit after the show with these fellows (the POWs)...Pte. D. Marshall (CWAC) is a definite hit with the fellows. She visited them on every available chance." Concert Party Manager's Report for week May 21-May 25, 1945 from London. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

157. War Diary for May 26, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

158. Letter from Captain J.P. Connolly, RCNVR, to Deputy Minister (Naval) on May 18, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3596, File 1210-1, volume 1, Navy Show General, Royal Canadian Navy.

159. The original arrangements for the dispersal of profits from shows in England included a 50-50 split whereby the King George Fund would receive half of the revenue in the name of the "Meet the Navy" show while ENSA would take the other half to offset expenses for other troop entertainments. In April of 1945, this arrangement was changed by request of the Canadians who, looking for a way to release themselves of the obligation to do so many shows for British troops, demanded and won a one-time $50,000 payout to the charity and in the process, gave up any revenues stemming from the initial profit

sharing program. By this new agreement, Navy officials felt the show had completed its goals overseas, namely "it has played to Allied forces stationed in various sections of the UK, has provided good entertainment, at a price, to the civilian populace, it has created much good will for and interest in Canada and the Canadian Naval Service and it has earned a substantial sum for King George's Fund for Sailors." Memo circulated to the Chiefs of Naval personnel, the Minister (Naval) and the Financial Committee of the Navy Show on April 11, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3596, File 1210-1, volume 1, Navy Show General, Royal Canadian Navy.

160. CBC Toronto report from Chester A.Bloom, CBC representative in Washington, D.C. Press Club on October 24, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3289, File 250-14-2, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

161. Report of the Activities of "Swing Time" unit for August 7, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

162. Report on the Activities of "Swing Time" unit for August 4, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

163. From *The Beachmaster*, newsletter from the No. 23 U.S. Amphibious Training Base, Solomons, Md., Volume 1, Number 23, October 30, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3289, File HQ 250-14-2, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

164. August 31, 1944 War Diary, No. 1 Detachment Canadian Army Show "Mixed Fun" Volume 4 August 1-August 31, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21 Army Group.

165. Pte. Roger Doucet of Montreal, Quebec was perhaps the only performer in Canadian military entertainment who became famous for the songs he sang in his native French. Doucet was a Baritone who toured with the original Army Show in Canada and traveled with the show overseas. On one reported occasion, Doucet MCed the show in French at the request of a French regiment stationed in England. So while the great majority of shows were conducted in English, those that included Doucet always had at least some French language content. He was also at the helm of the CAS "Apres La Guerre," which in late 1945 was conducted almost entirely in French during its limited run.

166. RG 24, Volume 16673, Serial 2636K, #2 Canadian Concert Party, "The Kit Bags" War Diary, April 9, 1942 in Wisborough Park, Sussex. Canadian Army Show.

167. "Audience 80% Polish and of course it was difficult for them to grasp our humour...there has only been four Canadians in all our audiences all week." War Diary of "Haversacks," September 2, 1944 in Belgium. RG 24, Volume 16673, Serial 2636G, Canadian Army Show, 15 Canadian Auxiliary Service Section, No. 4 Detachment.

168. "Tin Hats" War Diary of December 29, 1942, Rottingdean, Sussex. RG 24, Volume 16674, Serial 2636S, No. 1 Canadian Concert Party, "The Tin Hats."

169. Letter from Ashdown to Department of National Defence for Air, May 23, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

170. Hecklers, due to their singular nature, were reported relatively rarely. "Forage Caps" War Diary of October 2, 1942, Sheffield Park, England. RG 24, Volume16673, Serial 2636H, No. 4 Canadian Concert Party, "Forage Caps."

171. The audience that shouted down those standing for the national anthem was comprised mainly of the British Columbia Dragoons and the roughly 600 members of the audience were deemed to be "a trifle unruly." It was the ASO for the Irish Regiment of Canada who finally decided to push the audience away from the stage. "That was a wise move and the CWACs were particularly grateful for it." No. 2

Detachment Canadian Army Show War Diary for July 19, 21, and 28, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, Serial 3880, Canadian Army Show.

172. According to the diarist, the sheer quality of the show won the audience over despite the fact that it was put on by an all-male cast. War Diary for the "Forage Caps" on January 22, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16673, Serial 2636H, No. 4 Canadian Concert Party the "Forage Caps, Canadian Army Shows.

173. Memo from A.V.M J.A. Sully on March 15, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3218, File 192-4-8, Royal Canadian Air Force.

174. The Army was extremely interested in the idea of an all-girl show, knowing full well the appeal of women on the stage. An Army Captain expressed that "the idea of an all-girl show is, in my opinion, a splendid one and I am extremely anxious to see how your experiment works out." Though the "experiment" of an all-female revue worked out extremely well, the Army never developed such a show, preferring instead to favor mixed casts. Letter from Captain William Fields, DND (Army) to S/L N. Gilchrist, RCAF HQ, on May 11, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-10, All Girl Revue, Royal Canadian Air Force.

175. Concert Party report from Unit B for week March 6-March 10, 1944. The next week Unit E reported "the girls in the show are a big attraction, and the sound of a Canadian girl's voice seems to thrill the audience. Most of the corps prefer a show with girls..." RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ C.R.U.

176. Other gifts included silks, perfumes, chocolate and cigarettes. War Diary for June 14, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army, 21 Army Group.

177. Portable showers were often sent up for the women as well. CWAC members usually carried a water supply in gasoline cans and washed out of portable canvas sink affairs. Latrines were the same for both sexes while in the Mediterranean or NWE Theaters and consisted of a box surrounded by burlap screening. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21 Army Group Volume 2 "Mixed Fun" War Diary for June 8, 1944.

178. Letter to the unit from Brigadier Murphy, No. 1 Canadian Armoured Brigade near Ponti-Corvo, Italy on June 1, 1944. No. 1 Detachment "Mixed Fun" Volume 2, War Diaries. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21st Army Group.

179. War Diary of "Mixed Fun" on June 1, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21st Army Group.

180. This letter received mailing approval from two different officers on board ship. Letter to the girls of the Navy Show from L/Sea Jerry Woodlock and L/Sea Bill Royds on February 18, 1945. L/Wren Janet Thompson, with the show in London, England, wrote back on March 8, 1945 thanking them for their "interesting letter" and enclosed "a pin-up picture autographed by the girls." RG 24, Volume 11716, File CS 22-3-1, Royal Canadian Navy.

181. CWAC billets, for example, were out of bounds to all male personnel of the Army Show but the nature of touring in certain areas meant this rule was at times broken by necessity.

182. Report to Administrative Officer Captain R. Farnon, Canadian Army Show, Toronto, from Pacific Command HQ in Vancouver, Unit 6, on June 5, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, folder 1, No. 1 Entertainment Unit.

183. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show November 1943 to January 1945, No. 1 Canadian Army Show Overseas War Diary, January 12, 1944.

184. Memo to Captain Wren, A/CO from CSM J. Cameron for week ending May 13, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas, HQ CRU.

185. Letter concerning the good behaviour of members of Unit 16 on the Halifax to U.K. voyage from Colonel/Commandant W. Lyall Grant H.M.T. "Aquitania" to OC Canadian Army Shows overseas on March 26, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

186. The OC of her unit stated "had she asked me I would most definitely have said NO...incidentally (she) can be most stupid in her understanding of any instructions." Memo to Captain Purdy from CSM J. Cameron, June 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ CRU.

187. Report of the CAS overseas by CSM J. Cameron on May 19, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Canadian Army Show.

188. The correspondence on this matter unfortunately states that "no attempt is made to list the points in question...as it would be embarrassing to do so, but it is felt that the points must be evident to anyone seeing the show." The script was apparently offensive in a sexual way, but the fact that the RCAF was slandered in favor of the Navy probably did not help matters any. Letter to head of Western Air Command from A.O.C. E.L. MacLeod, No. 2 Group HQ, Victoria, B.C. on August 2, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3288, File 250-14-1, volume 1.

189. Daily orders for October 22, 1945, posted by Lt.Col. R.J. Purdy, OC, from base in Aldershot, England. RG 24, Volume 16672, Series 2636, folder 2, Canadian Auxiliary Service Section Unit, July to December of 1945.

190. Concert party report for "Floor Show" for the week of May 28 to June 1, 1945, completed by Sgt. E.L. LaBarre, NCO i/c Hospital Unit no. 150. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Show).

191. War Diary Summary for month of May, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

192. Weekly reports from Unit 6 to Captain R. Farnon in Toronto on June 12, 1944 and to Major Robinson, Unit 1 on June 26, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, folder 1, No. 1 Entertainment Unit, Volume 4.

193. Letter from J.T. Thorson, Minister of the Department of National War Services to the Honourable C.G. Power, Minister of National Defence for Air, on September 5, 1942. RG 24, Volume 17859, File 851-1, part 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

194. This statement was made in reference to CBC broadcasts from Toronto. Memo from Group Captain D. E. MacKell, D. of P., RCAF in the Spring of 1944. RG 24, Volume 3288, File HQ 250-14-2, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

195. English tour summary of "The Blackouts" for June 1944. RG 24, Volume 3288, File HQ 250-14-1, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

196. War Diary for February 12 and 14, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16671, folder 1, No.1 Entertainment Unit, volume 11, February 1-February 28, 1945. The summer war diary for the No. 1 Canadian Concert Party Petawawa is empty, which can only mean that that group was successfully and rather permanently broken up for overseas duty with combat regiments.

197. Correspondence between Captain J.P. Connolly, Directory of Special Services (Navy) and the Catholic Women's League of Canada, November 8, 1943 and November 22, 1943. RG 24, Volume 5689,

File NSS 450-1-22, volume 4, Special Services (N) General Navy Show.

198. Letter to Supervisor W.A.H. Vincent, Auxiliary Service 1 Canadian NETD concerning Concert Party B's performance in England, on December 1, 1944, from Captain H.M.Morrow, Chaplain (Protestant). RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ C.R.U.

199. Unfortunately, an actual copy of the song is nowhere to be found. Letter from Mrs. Winnifred Day of Edmonton on October 7, 1943 to Locksely of the Navy Show. RG 24, Volume 5689, File NSS 450-1-22, volume 3, Special Services (N) General Navy Show, Royal Canadian Navy.

200. Letter to Captain Connolly, RCNVR, from Lt. Paul Simard, RCNVR, on October 24, 1943. RG 24, Volume 5689, File NSS 450-1-22, volume 3, Special Services (Naval) General Navy Show, Royal Canadian Navy.

201. Letter to Captain Connolly from Lt. R. Pearce HMCS *Star* on October 25, 1943. RG 24, Volume 5689, File NSS 450-1-22, volume 3, Special Services (N) General Navy Show.

202. Memo to Officer Commanding, No. 2 Entertainment Group "All Clear" from J.A. Sully, no date but early 1944. RG 24, Volume 3289, File 250-14-2, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

203. This particular comment, representative of several noted in Department of National Defence files, came from several audience members following a show at the London Comedy Theater. Memo from A.A. McDermott F/L Radio Liaison Officer for D.of.R. on January 10, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3288, File 250-14-1, volume 2, "The Blackouts," Royal Canadian Air Force.

204. Gander and Goose Bay, Newfoundland, among other towns in that soon-to-be province, were split into Canadian and much larger American sides and both countries' entertainers would play both sides. The author of this statement was one of eight performers in an all-male unit, one that had to follow this show the next evening. Report of "Swing Time" Unit in the Eastern Air Command, early 1944, concerning USO Unit #90. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

205. Report from "Joe Boys" Entertainment unit from RCAF Station, Penfield Ridge, St. John, New Brunswick on December 15, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-12, "Joe Boys" Entertainment, Royal Canadian Air Force.

206. War Diary for February 1, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, November 1943 to January 1945, No. 1 Canadian Army Show Overseas - Canadian Reinforcement Unit Headquarters.

207. John Graven Hughs, The Greasepaint War: Show Business, 1939-45.

208. From "The Army Show: Canada's All Soldier Stage Show" program.

209. Captain R. Day, 1 Canadian Auxiliary Services Section, First Canadian Army Tps. to A/CO Canadian Army Shows on February 5, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show November 1943-January 1945.

210. Morale summary for January 1944, War Diary of No. 1 Canadian Army Show Overseas. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show November 1943-January 1944.

211. Letter from Captain W. Wren to Army Show CO Major W.V. George on February 28, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show November 1943-January 1945, No. 1 Canadian Army Show Overseas - Canadian Reinforcement Unit Headquarters.

212. Colonel Northup, Officer Commanding of 1st Canadian Con Depot in Salerno, referring to members of CAS "Mixed Fun." War Diary for August 16, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, No. 1 Detachment Canadian Army Show "Mixed Fun" Volume 4, August 1-August 31, 1944.

213. Memo to Captain Wren from CSM J. Cameron on February 25, 1944. War Diary for February 1 to February 29, 1944 of the No. 1 Canadian Army Show. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show November 1943 to January 1945. No. 1 Canadian Army show Overseas-Canadian Reinforcement Unit Headquarters.

214. War Diary of "Mixed Fun" for July 3, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, volume 1, Canadian Army Show.

215. Official Report of No. 1 Entertainment Unit on August 18, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3288, File 250-14-1, volume 1, Royal Canadian Air Force.

216. Memo concerning the "Blackouts of 1943" to AFHQ from S/O F.E. Pratt, #23 E.F.T.S. (Saskatchewan), September 1943. RG 24, Volume 3288, HQ 250-14-1, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

217. Frank Shuster interview, July 4, 2000.

218. Memo to Captain Wren from CSM J. Cameron on February 18, 1944. War Diary for February 1 to February 29, 1944 of the No. 1 Canadian Army Show. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show November 1943 to January 1945. No. 1 Canadian Army show Overseas-Canadian Reinforcement Unit Headquarters.

219. Summary for February 1945, War Diary. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Services Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

220. War Diary for "Mixed Fun" on August 12, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21 Army Group.

221. Letter from Captain Connolly, RCNVR, to the Department of National Defence (Navy) on September 9, 1943. RG 24, Volume 5689, File NSS 450-1-22, volume 3, Special Services (Navy) General Navy Show, Royal Canadian Navy.

222. More directly what I mean here is that the runny nose, for example, of a CWAC is more likely to appear in the National Defence records than the runny nose of a male Private. This is a factor of the subtle expectation, on all parts, that that runny nose will mean a member of the women's services will be released from the obligation of her duties whereas a male serviceman would be expected to rally and continue to work.

223. Department of Defence for Air memo of August 25, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 25-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

224. "The boys and girls are weary after this long and exciting nine week engagement and the V1s and 2s that have until recently been peppering London, haven't helped." Press release of April 10, 1945. RG 24, Volume 11716, File CS 22-3-1, Correspondence and Clippings, Royal Canadian Navy.

225. The war diarist of an early Army Show tour of Canada remarked that as of September 2, 1943, the four month long tour had experienced over 15 sprained ankles among a cast of just less than 100. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, The Canadian Army Show War Diary Volume 11 (September 1 to September 30, 1943).

226. Letter to The Navy League of Toronto on September 23, 1943. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-11, Navy Show Promotion and Advertisement.

227. Report to S/L Gilchrist, Director of Music and Entertainment, Air Force Headquarters Ottawa, May 19, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File 250-14-12, "Joe Boys" Entertainment Unit. Royal Canadian Air Force.

228. Royal Canadian Navy Press Release, August 19, 1944. RG 24, Volume 11716, CS 22-3-1, Royal Canadian Navy.

229. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, Canadian Army Show (Canadian Reinforcement Unit Headquarters) War Diary, December 1 to December 31, 1943.

230. Memo from Major W.V. George, CO of the Army Show, to Purdy, Lineaweaver and Shields (i/c of CAS Units) on February 22, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show November 1943-January 1945, No. 1 Canadian Army show Overseas - Canadian Reinforcement Unit Headquarters.

231. Daily Orders for April 15, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No.1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ CRU.

232. Unit E Report for February 14 to February 18, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, The Army Show, November 1943 to January 1945, No. 1 Canadian Army Show Overseas - Canadian Reinforcement Unit Headquarters.

233. This was quite a horrible accident, as the driver did not realize that he had hit anything at all. The transport vehicle driving in convoy behind him stopped to investigate something they saw in the ditch and discovered the dead serviceman, who apparently had been killed instantly. The driver denied having collided with anything until bits of flesh were found on the bumper of the truck. War Diary for November 30, 1942. RG 24, Volume 16673, Serial 2636H, No. 4 Canadian Concert Party "Forage Caps," Canadian Army Shows.

234. Roadside encampments, while thought to compromise everyone's health and safety, were avoided in all possible cases on account of the presence of CWAC personnel. It was impossible to protect them out in the open and extra guards were consistently posted to watch over their particular area. However, these measures only served to insulate the women from enemy troops and not from friendly fire, so to speak. In Italy, for example, the CWACs often reported prowlers in and around their lines during the nights spent near major roadways, which could have only been fellow Canadian service personnel.

235. Letter from Air Commodore J. Murray to RCAF HQ Overseas on August 13, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

236. RG 24, Volume 16671, Serial 3880, No. 2 Detachment Canadian Army Show War Diary, July 1 to July 31, 1944.

237. War Diary of "Mixed Fun" for late June 1944, RG 24, Volume 16671, 3rd Detachment, 1 Canadian Army Show, 21 Army Group.

238. War Diary for January 1 to January 31, 1944 (morale summary). RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Detachment, Canadian Army Show.

239. The Canadian army was moved to circulate a memo concerning chilblains among its entertainers concerning the reasons this disabling conditions occurred following a February 25, 1944 memo from the Commanding Officer J. Cameron of the No. 1 Detachment to Captain Wren that claimed "apparently the girls when they have arrived at place of performance, especially after a long trip, take their shoes off and put their feet within two or three inches of a very hot fire. The feet are so cold they don't feel the heat for some time so can stand a lot of it with the results of swollen, itching, burning sensation mostly in the toes which become inflamed and very tender and hot-can't stand pressure." RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial

2353, folder 3, No. 1 Detachment Canadian Army Show Overseas.

240. Casualty lists for the army entertainment units, issued in the summer of 1945, are thankfully quite short. They are however in code with a very vague legend with which to determine the exact cause of death or injury. In Maclean's case, all that can be ascertained is the date he was wounded on, and that it was probably at the Royal Air Force HQ during an air raid. Records of the Canadian Military Headquarters (Overseas), Casualty List, July 24, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Serial 2636, Auxiliary Service Entertainment Unit (Army Shows).

241. June 26, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16673, Serial 2636J, No. 3 Canadian Concert Party (Overseas), War Diary, June 1 to June 30, 1944.

242. This information comes from a letter from Bill Dunstan to W.Ray Stephens, the author of The Canadian Entertainers of World War II, pg. 29. All except the first list mentioned comes from this same book, naming 3 different sets of casualty figures, as do the sequence of events during the attack. Stephens names his source for this story, found on pg. 102-103, as "No. 3 Detachment (Tin Hats) August 5, 1944, Incident Involving No. 3 Det (Tin Hats) Serial 22547 C/1." I was unable to trace this source but its format as presented in Stephens' book is that of a war diary entry.

243. War Diary for August 14 and September 18, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No.1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ CRU.

244. "The Bandoliers" were an all-male troupe. RG 24, Volume 16673, Serial 2636J, No. 3 Canadian Concert Party (Overseas), "The Bandoliers," War Diary, March 1 to March 31, 1945.

245. "The Bandoliers" near Arnhem, Holland. RG 24, Volume 16673, Serial 2636J, No. 3 Canadian Concert Party (Overseas), "The Bandoliers," War Diary, April 17, 1945.

246. For an in-depth study of the relationship between Canadian military personnel and the British population, see C.P. Stacey and Barbara M. Wilson, The Half-Million.

247. War Diary of "Repat Rhythm" for September 12 to 19, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16674, Serial 2636U, No. 19 Detachment, Canadian Army Shows (Overseas).

248. Hobson probably would have been retained in the group if not for the fact that his bass fiddle was badly damaged as well. He was promptly replaced and ordered to undergo a psychiatric consultation. Letter from M.K. MacGougan, F/L and Ears, Eyes and Throat Specialist in Brandon, Manitoba (No. 2 Manning Depot) to Ashdown on March 15, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-8, volume 1, "Swing Time" Entertainment Unit, Royal Canadian Air Force.

249. Memos from CSM J.W. Cameron to Captain Wren on February 14 and 18, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, Canadian Army Show November 1943-January 1945.

250. Notice, too, that LaBarre, who in the records stands out as one of the key performers in the entire Canadian army show infrastructure, becomes a "boy" when mentally ill. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, No. 1 Canadian Army Shows Overseas HQ, C.R.U. War Diary, March 1 to March 30, 1944.

251. RG 24, Volume 16674, Serial 2636U, No. 19 Detachment "Repat Rhythm" War Diary, October 1 to October 20, 1945.

252. War Diary February 7 to 29, 1944. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, folder 3, Canadian Army Show November 1943-January 1945.

253. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, The Army Show Volume 7-12, folder 2, May 1 to 31, 1943.

254. RG 24, Volume 16670, Serial 2353, The Army Show Volume 7-12, folder 2, August 1 to August 31, 1943.

255. Letter from Deputy Minister (Army) to Deputy Minister (Naval) on May 17, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3596, File 1210-1, volume 1, Navy Show General, Royal Canadian Navy.

256. Letter from J.A. Sully, AVM for Chief of Air Staff, to all Auxiliary Organizations on October 19, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3290, File HQ 250-14-14, volume 2, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups, Royal Canadian Air Force.

257. War Diary summary for July 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, Series 2636, folder 3, Canadian Auxiliary Service Section Unit, July to December 1945.

258. Campbell later said "it is stressed that these are unofficial reports only and are being passed for your information." Suffice it to say that reports of physical exhaustion among entertainment personnel in this time period were probably not exaggerated rumors. Signal from H.L. Campbell, AVM, RCAF HQ Overseas to AFHQ on November 7, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 3, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups, Royal Canadian Air Force.

259. War Diary for October 3 and October 8, 1945. RG 24, Volume 16672, folder 2, Series 2636, Canadian Auxiliary Service Section Unit July to December 1945, Canadian Army Show.

260. A delay in discovering L/Wren Moses was pregnant lent a definite desperation to Moses' plea for release from service. Letter from L/Bandsman G.A. Moses to Captain J.P. Connolly, RCNVR, Director of Special Services on July 9, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-16, volume 1, Navy Show, Royal Canadian Navy.

261. This reunification issue presents the only documented evidence of the unique challenges faced by non-white performers in military entertainment units. The Haynes couple apparently had had a successful blues act in Winnipeg and his wife was thought to be extremely skilled as a singer. Connolly, who in other correspondence refers to Percy Haynes as "this coloured boy," was partly interested in pursuing this matter as the Navy show needed "a blues singer in the worst possible way as we have found that troops very much enjoy this form of entertainment." Letter from Captain J.P. Connolly to Department of National Defence (Navy) on October 16, 1946 and Letter to Commodore Rollit from Zena Haynes on March 3, 1947. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-16, volume 2 Personnel, Royal Canadian Navy.

262. Letter from L/Wren J. Dehueck to Captain Connolly, fall of 1945. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-16, volume 1, Navy Show Personnel, Royal Canadian Navy.

263. Crawford first requested assistance in this matter in July 1945. A naval message sent in August 1945 recommended the above stated action. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-16, volume 1, Navy Show Personnel, Royal Canadian Navy.

264. Odette Park Winterton interview, July 14, 2000.

265. As early as April 1944, the members of the RCAF show "All Clear" were awarded the Maple Leaf for touring over 60 days "beyond the territorial boundaries of Canada" in Newfoundland. Memo to Department of National Defence for Air from Sgd. P.J. Coffey, G/C on April 14, 1944. RG 24, Volume 3288, HQ 250-14-1, volume 2, Royal Canadian Air Force.

266. Stacey and Wilson, The Half-Million, pg. 36.

267. Letter from Gilchrist to Air Officer Commanding RCAFHQ on November 27, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3291, File HQ 250-14-14, volume 3, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups, Royal Canadian Air Force.

268. Letter to OC CASEU in CRU HQ in England to Lt. Col. H.M. Travers, Assistant Director of Auxiliary Services CMHQ on February 27, 1946. RG 24, Volume 16672, Series 2636, folder 2, Canadian Auxiliary Services Section Unit, July to December 1945.

269. War Diary for April 1, 1946. RG 24, Volume 16672, Series 2636, folder 2, Canadian Auxiliary Services Section Unit, July to December 1945.

270. Memo to Deputy Minister (Naval) from Captain J.P. Connolly, Director of Special Services, RCNVR on August 22, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3596, File 1210-1, volume 1, Navy Show General, Royal Canadian Navy.

271. Memo from Lieutenant-Commander Stuart Robertson, RCNVR, CO of the Royal Canadian Navy Show on August 14, 1945. RG 24, Volume 3597, File 1210-18, Royal Canadian Navy. Robertson identified marriage, compassionate leaves and ill health as the main reasons for discharge among the Wrens.

272. Letter from Naval Secretary to the general manager of the Canadian Legion War Services on January 25, 1946. RG 24, Volume 3596, File 1210-2, volume 2, Navy Show General, Royal Canadian Navy.

273. RG 24, Volume 3291, File 250-14-14, volume 3, Policy Governing Entertainment Groups, Royal Canadian Air Force.

REFERENCES

All of the primary source material used in this thesis, excepting the interviews and some information from the Glenbow Museum, was found in the National Archives of Canada, more specifically in the Department of National Defence files of the Army, Air Force and Navy (RG 24). All pictures used are held by the Archives as well. Other National archival sources used were:

Film Recordings

"'Meet the Navy' On Tour"	NFTSA 8207-862/863, V1 8505-0071
"'Meet the Navy' On Stage"	NFTSA 8205-180
"'Meet the Navy'-A London Hit"	NFTSA 8090-231

Sound Recordings

"The Army Show" on CBC Radio	ACC: 1984-0164
"The Army Show" on CBC Radio	ACC: 1987-0270/05

Interviews

Frank Shuster	July 4, 2000
Odette Park Winterton	July 14, 2000
Johnnie Sandison	July 14, 2000

Glenbow Museum

"The Army Show: Canada's All Soldier Stage Show" program, unfiled but used in the "Memories of War: Dreams of Peace" exhibit, November 1995 to March 1996, curated by Barry Agnew, Senior Curator of Military History, Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta.

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APPENDIX A

Unit Names of Army, Navy and Air Force Entertainment Groups

What follows are the names of the different entertainment units that toured during the war and in the year following VE Day. In the case of the Canadian Army Shows, names were changed after each tour of Northwest Europe and Italy and although these renamed groups had been reequipped and had some new personnel and entirely new material added, there were some overlaps in the casts. More directly, most personnel were affiliated with more than one unit. Groups of the CAS that toured in England were given letters instead of names. These lists also include hospital groups and are listed in general order of their appearance.

Navy

HMCS *Bytown*
Meet the Navy

Air Force

Blackouts of 1943
Blackouts
All Clears
Swing Time
Joe Boys
W-Debs
Tarmacs
Air Screws

Army

Tin Hats
Kit Bags
Bandoliers
Forage Caps
The Army Show
Swing Patrol
Haversacks
Invasion Revue
About Faces of 1944
Pass in Revue
Combined Ops
Play Parade
About Turns
Fun Fatigues
Hillbilly Blues
5 Hits and a Miss
Commando Performance
What's Cooking
Mixed Fun
Comedy Convoy
Apres La Guerre
Ward Healers
Rapid Fire
Stag Party
In the Mood
Musical Maneuvers
Gloom Busters
Repat Rhythm
You've Had It
Melody Round-Up
In the Mood
Funborne Follies
Showboat
Downbeat
Free and Easy
Khaki Kollegians
One Meat Ball
Pardon My Glove
Varieties of '46
Black/White Bombers
Rhythm Rodeo