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names), the 68th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, and the re-created 15th Light Horse, re-named the South Alberta Light Horse in 1954. It is clear that the author had some difficulty with this period, as Militia regiments tend to do the same sorts of things year in and year out. He has in fact done a stellar job in making sense of the very confusing politics affecting the Militia over these 60 years. And he brings out example after example of the astounding dedication of members of the Militia.

Donald Graves once again has given tangible evidence that he is a master craftsman when dealing with military history. This book is written in the same lively style for which he has become known – it really is a good read – and

here and there we find totally apt insertions of barrack room humour and reminders that peacetime soldiering (at least) is generally great fun. But underlying all this is meticulous research, serious study and a professional historian's insistence on evidence to justify his analyses.

This book doesn't quite come up to the standard achieved in his superb history of the *South Albertas* – not many regimental histories could – but this is an excellent work, and it belongs on the shelf of everyone who has an interest in Canadian military history.

John Martinson, a former editor of *Canadian Military Journal*, teaches military history and defence policy at Royal Military College.

HOMETOWN HORIZONS: LOCAL RESPONSES TO CANADA'S GREAT WAR

by Robert Rutherford

Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004
331 pages, \$85.00 (HB), \$29.95 (PB)

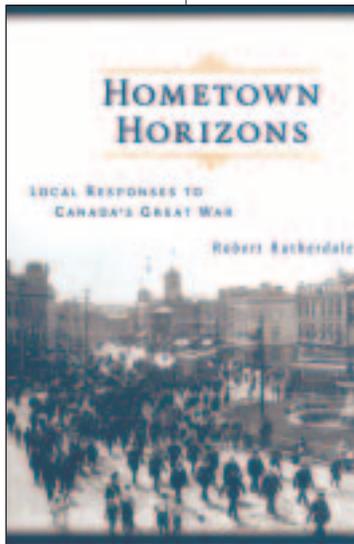
Reviewed by Major Andrew B. Godefroy

The cultural history of warfare often provides us with a passionately detailed aspect of conflict that is often politely dismissed from more traditional politically or operationally focused military analyses. In many respects

this is a shame, as cultural history often completes the traditional examination of the who, what, when, and where, with the equally important how and why. Any military history that makes no attempt to even acknowledge the latter is simply robbing itself of an opportunity to present a comprehensive and engaging picture of the past.

Robert Rutherford joins a growing community of scholars employing both qualitative and quantitative historical methodologies to examine social relations and structural change in Canada during the First World War. His recent work, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to Canada's Great War*, follows other publications that seek to demonstrate how the war was not just the 'nation-building' experience often described by Canadian military historians, but also an event that marked a cultural break from previous western traditions, forever transforming both the veterans and the home communities they returned home to after the war. In *Hometown Horizons*, Rutherford has chosen three specific Canadian communities with which to present his case: Lethbridge, Alberta, Guelph, Ontario, and Trois-Rivières, Quebec.

The author is quick to point out that his goal is not to simply provide a history of three cities but, instead, to chronicle a history of 'what made them tick' between 1914 and 1919. Rutherford noted that it was his intention to emulate the ethos of anthropologist Clifford Geertz, who once remarked: "It is not villages that anthropologists study, but rather what takes place within them." Rutherford seeks to do the same in Lethbridge, Guelph, and Trois-Rivières, within the context of the Great War. Interestingly, the book is not designed as a straight wartime comparison of three distinct communities across Canada. Instead, *Hometown Horizons* explores five main themes – places, recruitment and discharge, hierarchies, domestic confrontations and gender, in which one of the three locations provides the primary sample for investigation and analysis.



Within each of these themes, the author investigates even more specific cultural aspects of wartime life on the home front. For example, the chapter titled 'Demonizations' investigates the nature of local responses to ethnic groups in Canada designated as potential enemy aliens. Although much on this subject has been written in other Canadian social military histories, Rutherford's contribution is interesting for its detail of the daily events of an internment camp in Lethbridge. He explains not only how the camp was administered by the military, but also how, on occasion, escapes were

attempted from this facility. Further, he reveals local reactions to the camp, both sympathetic and, in his analysis, belligerent.

The detailing of such events is one of the strongest features of *Hometown Horizons*. A similar approach was taken in the chapter titled 'Conscription Contested,' where Rutherford details a raid in Guelph to collect

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suspected draft dodgers, including the son of Charles Doherty, the Minister of Justice who helped draft the 1917 Military Service Act. Other chapters examine domestic organizations such as the Canadian Patriotic Fund (CPF) or the Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire (IODE). In all, Rutherforddale presents a series of separate subjects to flesh out some of his larger themes. Although generally successful, the chapters tend to favour only one of the three towns at a time. While all three communities are discussed, it seems that not all generated similar cultural experiences. Such a result is normally above comment, but Rutherforddale's aim was to show trends, and this intention does not always come out clearly in his analysis.

The thematic orientation of the chapters certainly ameliorates the presentation of the thesis, but it also complicates the composition of the narrative, and, in some ways, degrades the value of the three communities chosen to provide evidence for the study. The reader never gets a true sense of what took place in these three towns as their collective histories are fleeced to provide an ample sprinkling of facts and chopped up for relevant examples to support each chapter. This not only robs the reader of what might have been a more telling comparative analysis, it also suggests that perhaps any three towns may have sufficed, or worse, that these towns were chosen with a bias towards predetermining the conclusions of the book. The three towns do provide salient points towards the five themes, but, as microcosm examinations, much of the community's cultural history is left undiscovered and not discussed.

The author also offers no explanation as to exactly why his case study includes only three samples, or why these three towns in particular were selected. One must assume an attempt was being made to keep the study manageable in scope while adequately representing the cultural diversity of human geography that has existed in Canada since Confederation. Still, three units represent a sparse sample in any study, and one might easily argue that three different towns might have possibly generated an entirely different result. Although one may be confident that Rutherforddale's analysis indeed reflects larger trends within the Canada's cultural history, the reader is often left unsatisfied, with many questions unanswered.

Rutherforddale proposes that the making of Canada's home front was experienced fundamentally through local means. Given the level of communications technology in existence during this period, it may seem rather obvious to state that local community events, city parades, military send-offs, newspapers and word of mouth formed the foundation of Canadians' exposure to the First World War. Lacking

anything even remotely similar to CNN or cell phone text messaging, there was simply no other way for Canadians at home to view the distant war other than by proxy. Ergo, it seems only natural that two distinct understandings of the war would later emerge – a very real and traumatic memory shared by veterans who served overseas, and a more romantic and patriotically sanitized interpretation envisioned by those who stayed home. This point is reinforced successfully within each of the five main themes of the book, but somehow falls short of impressing the reader that such conclusions are new or different from previous cultural interpretations of Canada and the First World War. Ian Millar's examination of the City of Toronto during the Great War, which I reviewed for CMJ in Volume 4, Number 2, Summer 2003, certainly approaches similar themes in his own study.

In examining how Canadians interpreted various aspects of the war at home, based upon their filtered views, Rutherforddale argues that he addressed many of the important debates in Canadian social and cultural history of this period through his analysis. The five themes previously identified certainly encompass most of the central traditional historical debates, but they are by no means the only important debates worth considering, nor are they new. Rutherforddale did not seize the opportunity to examine cultural issues that have previously eluded investigation, choosing instead to remain within the boundaries of well-established subjects already explored by others. Although the book's back cover contends "no other book looks at Canada's First World War history from this perspective," the author himself contradicts this claim in his initial review of the existing literature on this subject. Rutherforddale has certainly produced new evidence with respect to the three towns chosen for his study, but students and scholars of the First World War will find that his themes have been explored elsewhere and that his conclusions are somewhat predictable. This is perhaps the greatest disappointment with what was otherwise an excellently researched and well thought out essay on Canadian cultural history.

Aimed at the examination of society and civil/military relations in Canada during the First World War, this book may not appeal to operational historians and students of tactics. Nevertheless, overall, the book has merit and Rutherforddale is to be commended for his efforts to uncover how the horrors of the Western Front were perceived back home.

Doctor Godefroy, *an army reserve officer, teaches History at the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston.*