

Mr. Geoffrey Riddehough
July 20, 1973

Interview ____, Tape 1, Track 1.

Mr. Riddehough: I was in the C.O.T.C. that year that it was reconstituted at U.B.C. Then I / ^{went} over to Europe on the Scholarship to study at the Sorbonne. Well, I'd hardly got over there before the Great Depression began. When I got back to Canada I had nothing to do with the C.O.T.C. In fact I don't know that it was even running at that particular time. The bottom had fallen out of things.

Mr. Specht: That was due to the Depression, then?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh yes, it was pretty bad. The University world was very hard hit. Not only the university world of course but so many other places; civil engineers who were glad of a job running a transit, qualified Master Mariners were working as deck hands, and school teachers were working for about \$35 a month. Oh, it was absolutely horrible. But I rejoined the C.O.T.C. in 1940 and I stayed with it until the end in 1945.

Mr. Specht: Excuse me, didn't you join the C.O.T.C. briefly in 1933, '34?

Mr. Riddehough: I had intended to and I did rejoin it. Then I found that I couldn't stay with it really. Just earning a living was enough. I didn't know where I'd be going or anything so I asked Col. Letson to release me. I may have gone to a few parades and things but I can't say that that was one of my years of connection with it.

Mr. Specht: I'd like to go right back in your case and get some of your family background. You were born in England, weren't you?

Mr. Riddehough: Yes.

Mr. Specht: In Cheshire?

Mr. Riddehough: In Cheshire. I came out to Canada when I was about 6. From 1906 to 1911 I lived in Manitoba and from then on, until I entered the University I was living in Penticton.

Mr. Specht: I see.

Mr. Riddehough: I got my high school training in Penticton.

Mr. Specht: Why did your parents come to Canada?

Mr. Riddehough: Why? Oh, my father thought he could do better in Canada than he did at home.

Mr. Specht: What occupation was he?

Mr. Riddehough: He was a salesman.

Mr. Specht: So you went to high school in Penticton?

Mr. Riddehough: Yes, that's where I went to high school.

Mr. Specht: You were born in 1900?

Mr. Riddehough: 1900, yes.

Mr. Specht: So, you were too young to enlist in the First World War?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh, I suppose if I'd wanted to go and guard bridges or something.....but I was pretty slight for my age and I don't even know whether I would have passed the physical at that time. There was a certain amount of illness in my family too which would have made it rather difficult.

Mr. Specht: You have quite a scholarly career. Were you a good student even during high school?

Mr. Riddehough: Well, yes. I wanted to get into university work. In fact I did train originally to be an engineer. Then after I'd had one year at the university and had worked on

survey parties, I decided that I didn't feel that engineering appealed to me so much. It struck me that there were so many factors besides engineering, economic... One camp where I worked, the chief engineer seemed to spend most of his time checking off lists of groceries! So I went back to U.B.C. and I had a pretty good university record. Well, I had to because I was dependant on scholarships. Although the scholarships in those days were very, very small they did make a difference. I was first in my year, throughout and I did finally get the Governor General's Medal. I got my B.A. in '24.

Mr. Specht: This was your Bachelor of Arts? Wasn't it an English major?

Mr. Riddéhough: English and Latin, I took the double honours, English Language and Literature, and English and Latin.

Mr. Specht: What aspect of English Literature were you interested in at the time, do you remember?

Mr. Riddéhough: Nineteenth century poetry, I think as much anything.

Mr. Specht: Which poets?

Mr. Riddéhough: Well, I did my graduating essay on Swinburne. Then I went on to Berkeley and did my Masters degree in English down there. Then it was necessary to hold a job so I was an instructor in English at the University of Alberta from 1925-'28. In 1928-'29 there was a vacancy in the Latin Department as an instructor. Lem Robertson offered this to me and I took it. I hardly though I was going to be permanently in Classics but I took this job.

Mr. Specht: So you were a classics instructor then, at U.B.C.?

Mr. Riddehough: I was, yes.

Mr. Specht: In Latin?

Mr. Riddehough: Yes. After the Depression when I came back, I had a year or a year and a half in English then the only thing I could really get much in was Classics. I had taken no Greek so I had to get up most of my Greek after I was 35. But I slowly worked from instructor to Assistant Professor to Associate Professor and finally I was full Professor I think in about 1962. I spent most of my life teaching Latin and Greek here. I hadn't really intended to go into Classics because it didn't seem to me that it was a subject with a great deal of future in it. But if I had known, I think I would have specialized in Classics much earlier but I got into Classics through the force of circumstances. On the whole I enjoyed it. The people in the department on the whole, were a very pleasant lot. We didn't have feuds such as I have known in other departments. We got along. I think still at the university out here the Classics Department is probably one of the happiest ones from the point of personal relations, both between professor and professor and professor and students. We have on the whole, had a good type of student too, out there.

Mr. Specht: I wonder if you can go back to when you first went to U.B.C. This was on the Fairview Campus?

Mr. Riddehough: Yes, 1919 I went there.

Mr. Specht: What was the campus like?

Mr. Riddehough: You could hardly say there was a real campus. We just had the temporary use of various buildings belonging to the Vancouver General Hospital. Most of them were temporary wooden buildings and we were pretty well right in among the hospital complex. I know that from some of our lecture rooms if you had a window, you could hear consumptives coughing in a nearby building...which was not very cheerful. We had several buildings there. I think there was an old ex-Baptist church in Fairview which was also used for a lecture room. It was all very, very scrappy. We weren't the least bit proud of our buildings. In fact I think some people almost broke windows and did things like that to make the place look as awful as possible so that the government would give us something new. (chuckles) Then of course in 1925 the university moved out to Point Grey.

Mr. Specht: You were away during the Great Trek then, weren't you?

Mr. Riddehough: No, I was here during the Great Trek. Yes, I think that would be either in my second or third year. Yes, I was in the Great Trek. That was before the university was actually moved, of course.

Mr. SPEcht: Then you'd be in Alberta when they actually made the transfer to the new campus?

Mr. Riddehough: Let me see, it would have been in the fall of '25 and by that time I had entered on my duties teaching English in Alberta, Yes....

Mr. Specht: You went to university in the immediate post war

years and the C.O.T.C. was abandoned on the U.B.C. campus, wasn't it?

Mr. Riddehough: Yes.

Mr. Specht: Do you know why it was stopped at that time?

Mr. Riddehough: I think it was more or less a revulsion of feeling against the war. I think too that there was a feeling that the world was likely to be a peace for some time and that it was just unnecessary expense. There were people who wanted to revive it, but as I remember people in the early '20's felt that it would tie you down too much for the summer and things like that. So there wasn't much enthusiasm. Some of the returned men had enough of the first war to last them. On the whole I think there was a certain amount of anti-war feeling.

Mr. Specht: Did the returned men talk to the younger students and tell them the horrors of the First World War?

Mr. Riddehough: No, on the whole I don't think there was a great deal of that. I think most of the people that had had that were rather anxious to get away. But there were a number of returned men when I was at university in 1919. There were quite a lot.

Mr. Specht: You had sort of a recent British Background.

Mr. Riddehough: Yes.

Mr. Specht: How did you feel at that time about international affairs? Did you see yourself as a Canadian or as part of the British Empire?

Mr. Riddehough: I realized that I had my training in Canada but the British connection was always real. In spite of the faults of the British Empire, I felt that it was a good thing to

belong to. On the whole I felt that it had done the world much more good than harm. I still think that.

Mr. Specht: I found an incident on campus reported in the Ubysey in 1923, a British poet Sir Henry Newbolt came to campus.

Mr. Riddehough: Sir Henry Newbolt, yes. Well, that was a very peculiar little incident. Sir Henry was a very conservative person of the old school, very very patriotic in the conventional way. He gave a public address at the university and a good many of us did not like the tone that he took. He struck us as being jingoistic and rather obtuse. For instance he said various rather foolish things in the course of the speech. He said that war was a great game and that nobody had shown themselves capable of playing the game better than the British. In general it was rather a drum and trumpet kind of patriotism, we thought. And there were still men in that audience who were shaking from shell shock of the first world war. Without being radical or pacifist or anything some of us were, quite frankly, disgusted. We felt that it was a kind of patriotism that was obsolete. Geoffrey Bruin a friend of mine, who had quite a distinguished career as a professor of History in the States, he and I took one of Sir Henry's poems and we parodied it. Do you know that poem of Sir Henry Newbolt's Drake's Drum?

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
 (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),
 Slung atween the round shot in Nombe Dios Bay,
 An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.

It's a very patriotic poem where Drake says that if you take my drum to England and hang it by the shore.....

Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;

If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago."

Well, Bruin and I decided to parody this. We brought out a parody that went something like this:

People in the colonies, very far away,
Far away and very far below
So they sent an orator, twenty bob a day,
All the way to Canada, you know.

Pounding on the tom tom, hammering the drum
Telling how we vanquished every foe
But still those poor colonials were looking rather glum
When the dickens will the blighter go?

We ran this in the college paper. Well, I think there was altogether too much reaction. A lot of the ultra patriotic people said that we had insulted a distinguished visitor and I don't know what. Somebody of the old school even read this poem out in the house in Victoria to show how unpatriotic the university students had become. I think there was an official apology sent to Sir Henry who had by that time gone East. But on the whole the thing was blown up all out of proportion, I think. I don't think that Sir Henry got treated any more rudely at Colonial universities that he would have done at Glasgow or Oxford, where after all they've treated some distinguished visiting lecturers pretty roughly. I've no regrets about the thing. I think perhaps it was a little barbarian...(chuckles)...but it was just juvenile high spirits, I think. We said what we thought of a person who we thought was a bit of a jingo. But that was the so called Newbolt Incident.

Mr. Specht: Some of the *Ubysey* staff resigned over it though..

Mr. Riddehough: Yes, they did. Phyllis McKay had been in as editor for that week and she had said in the editorial that the full bodied patriotism of Nelson's day was gone forever...or something like that. Of course some people objected very much.

Mr. Specht: Did you enjoy your under graduate years at U.B.C.?

Were they good years?

Mr. Riddehough: To some extent, yes, I met some nice people but I was on a pretty tight budget. I'd put myself through and my family was poor. I hadn't an easy time of it. I was very lucky in my last year at college some person who wouldn't give his name let me have \$360 which made it a great deal easier for me. I got it in 8 installments of \$45 a month. That really made things much easier for my last year. I think without that, I never could have done as well as I did in that year.

Mr. Specht: That was quite a bit of money at that time.

Mr. Riddehough: Oh yes.

Mr. Specht: How did you end up going to the University of California at Berkeley?

Mr. Riddehough: I had tried for scholarships to various places on the strength of my under graduated record. I know I had tried for California and I had tried for Toronto. But before I'd heard from Toronto, I was accepted by the University of California and given a teaching fellowship of \$750. The one in Toronto would only have been \$500 and I think the expense of going to Toronto was more than the travel expense of going to California. So without waiting, I just cancelled my application in Toronto and I went down to California. I felt also that going to California would be a little more of a change than going to another Canadian university.

Mr. Specht: Was it a change?

Mr. Ridd. hough: In many ways yes. It was a big place with of course, much better library facilities. California was quite a good place to work. They didn't interfere with you. They left you on your

own to work, which was nice. and as I say the library facilities were good but I could never take to it as I took to Harvard. I liked Harvard a lot better and I was pretty critical by the time I got there. But I like Harvard very much.

Mr. Specht: When you were in California did you go into San Fransisco very much?

Mr. Riddshough: In those days, I had to count my pennies and even a couple of dollars....I think I went over to San Fransisco maybe 4 or 5 times. I didn't see a great deal of it.

Mr. Specht: Was it quite a gay city in the 1920's?

Mr. Riddshough: I imagine that it was. I think that's one thing in our day...a student did not have a great deal of money for travel. I do think nowadays that a student who goes to a foreign country seems to have more money to look around. But you can get to the point where you have to think twice before you go out on days excursion for train....or something of that kind. But in California the climate was different and on the whole I think that I'm glad that I had that year there.

Mr. Specht: It's quite sunny compared with cloudy B. C. especially during the winter.

Mr. Riddshough: Yes, although I was once in San Fransisco near the end of the year. In the last few days of December and I remember I was out in Golden Gate Park and the wind was blowing off the Pacific above the Seal Rocks, I rarely felt the cold so in my life. From the point of actual temperature it couldn't have been so low, but that wind coming off the wintery sea just cut through like a knife. Whenever people talk about sunny California I always remember San Fransisco on that particular day.

Mr. Specht: After that you went to Alberta?

Mr. Riddéhough: Yes I was an instructor in English there for two years.

Mr. Specht: That's when you joined the C.O.T.C.?

Mr. Riddéhough: That's when I joined C.O.T.C., yes.

Mr. Specht: How do you account for your interest in C.O.T.C.? You didn't really have a military background.

Mr. Riddéhough: I always felt that every young man should know something of the military, the basics of defending one's country and I've always been really interested in firearms as a matter of fact. A military career isn't one that I would find frightfully attractive but it was a good thing, I think to get out and away from the pure academic environment.

Mr. Specht: What was the C.O.T.C. at the University of Alberta like? Was it a big corps?

Mr. Riddéhough: I would say the enrollment was about 200... something like that, I think.

Mr. Specht: That's quite a contingent.

Mr. Riddéhough: We flourished as well as a limited budget would allow us.

Mr. Specht: Were you a cadet?

Mr. Riddéhough: I went as a cadet in my first year and then I wrote the exam to qualify as lieutenant and was lieutenant the next year. Then I got to Captain and was Captain when I left there and came back to the university C.O.T.C. I think it was 1942 or '43 I got by to be a temporary major and held that for the rest of the year.

Mr. Specht: You returned to U.B.C. on the Point Grey campus

then?

Mr. Riddough: Yes.

Mr. Specht: Was that quite a difference from the Fairview set up? Do you remember your reaction?

Mr. Riddough: Oh, yes, at last we had the feeling that we had some real space. The previous campus we had been under tremendous difficulties...no getting away from it. The only thing that was preferable was that it was more central. It was right in the middle of the city and I do think the university here is rather out on a limb. You have to reach it by a bus service and the traffic is all one way in the morning and the other way at night. The only advantage to the Fairview days was that it was pretty well in the heart of the city.

Mr. Specht: Did you join the C.O.T.C. as soon as you began the fall term at university? When you were a classics instructor at U.B.C.?

Mr. Riddough: I think not. No...no. I was a classics instructor oh for years before that. I became a classics instructor about 1935 and I didn't join the C.O.T.C. at all except briefly until 1940. 1940 when I came back from Alberta, yes. Harry Logan was the Officer Commanding and he was one of the senior professors in classics. Oh yes, I did that. In fact having been in the U.B.C. C.O.T.C. I was able to go on a machine gun course at Sarcee just before I went to France. I think it was July or August of 1929. I remember I had a course in the Vickers Machine Gun at Sarcee.

Mr. Specht: Do you remember what conditions were like in 1928, 1929 in your year with the C.O.T.C.?

Mr. Riddehough: Things were a little better than they had been but money was still very tight. I know when I took those 60 cadets or so over to Victoria we were very, very conscious that the Department of Defence was limited in its money.

Mr. Specht: This was at Work Point Barracks?

Mr. Riddehough: Yes.

Mr. Specht: Were you the officer in charge?

Mr. Riddehough: Yes, I was the one who took over. I took over about 43 cadets and about 15 came over later. I had about 60 all together.

Mr. Specht: What did you do at Work Point when you were there?

Mr. Riddehough: We had parades and lots of demonstrations.

They showed us how the coast defence batteries fired. One thrilling thing, we were taken into a sort of doorway that went into the side of a hill and then this lead up to a little hidden room where you could look out over the Victoria Bay and see the ships. Of course there was the plotting table that would enable the coast defence people to sight their guns on the thing. We thought that was really something.

Mr. Specht: What were the barracks like? Were they warm?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh, the barracks there were rather curious buildings. Of ocourse a lot of those barracks in Victoria were pretty Victorian. They had been built about 1860. The bricks had been brought all 'round the Horn and they still had all the old fashioned door keys that were so big. The officers Mess was more recent and fairly comfortable.

Mr. Specht: Did you take part in the exercises?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh yes.



Mr. Specht: Back at U.B.C. the arts building basement was your headquarters, wasn't it? How were those quarters?

Mr. Riddehough: Well, that was for a time. I don't think that lasted very long. I know we had a sort of miniature range... a rifle range underneath the Arts Building where we used to qualify. It was very foul sometimes after you've been firing a lot of shots in this confined space. I suppose we ran the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. But when the new Armouries were built that was quite a step forward. One contribution -that the university did make, we did officially get a certain amount of pay but owing largely to the pressure of Col. Shrum, we turned all our pay in for the building of the Armoury. That Armoury was very largely built by the contribution of the cadets. Toward the end of the war, I think we kept our pay and we kept the pay that we had at the camps.

Mr. Specht: That little bit of money would probably have been pretty handy for the cadets and possibly some of the officers. How did it come about that they waived their pay?

Mr. Riddehough: I think as the war went on there was more money available generally for the department of defence. Then the Armoury had been completed and there was no longer the same need for the money. We did keep it. At Alberta we had always kept our pay. It was \$15 or \$20 at the end and it was very welcome.

Mr. Specht: In 1928 when the corps was revived, there was quite a bit of opposition to it. What did you hear about that?

Mr. Riddehough: I think so, yes. I heard of some opposition but I never thought it was very serious. I don't think people were interested enough one way or the other.

Mr. Specht: What do you remember of Col. Logan as a Commanding Officer?

Mr. Riddehough: He was a pleasant person. Shrum, of course was the person who impressed me. He's not the most amiable person in the world but he had tremendous executive ability. During the war, with all sorts of other work that he was handling, Head of the Physics Department, the research council and a lot of things, I think the fact that he was able to be the Officer Commanding with 1600 youngsters, was really quite something. However anyone may criticise him, he's got tremendous drive and executive ability. The work that he did at the university...just had to be admired. He's a man of tremendous executive ability, there's no getting away from it.

Mr. Specht: How would you compare him with Col. Letson?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh, I didn't really see much of Letson as a Commanding Officer. He had a very brilliant record in the first World War and he's a very intelligent and nice chap but I couldn't say what he was like as a commanding officer.

Mr. Specht: Who were some of the other people in the corps with you, 1928 again? Weren't you second in command?

Mr. Riddehough: No, I don't think I was second in command. I think Maj. Finlay who was a professor of civil engineering... I think he was second in those days.

Mr. Specht: Did you attend the parades in the Beatty Street Armoury?

Mr. Riddehough: Yes, yes.

Mr. Specht: And the annual inspection?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh yes.

Mr. Specht: How about the smokers and annual dances?

Mr. Riddehough: I didn't go in so much for that.

Mr. Specht: You joined the reserves in the 1930's.

Mr. Riddehough: Yes.

Mr. Specht: What units were you attached to?

Mr. Riddehough: Well if you're on the reserve of officers you're not attached to any. You're just there if you're wanted.

Mr. Specht: Oh, I see. You wrote an article in the Canadian Def....

MR. Riddehough: Canadian Defence Quarterly, yes. When I was over in England I happened to visit the summer camp of the University of London O.T.C. and spent a day with them. That was in the Canadian Defence Quarterly.

Mr. Specht: You contrasted that unit with the C.O.T.C. in Canada. C.O.T.C. came out in rather a bad light in comparison to the English O.T.C.

Mr. Riddehough: Oh, I don't know about that but the English one was more firmly established. They had more resources, of course.

Mr. Specht: You referred to the C.O.T.C. as the 'black sheep' on campus.

Mr. Riddehough: Well, it tended to be a little bit that way.

Mr. Specht: What did you mean by that?

Mr. Riddehough: Well, it was partly the attitude that some people took that people putting on the uniform were a little behind the times and they were spending time that could have been better employed. I think that was the general attitude that a lot of people had.

Mr. Specht: Do you remember some of the people who were really

in favour of C.O.T.C. in the earlier years?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh, I couldn't remember those. It's quite a long time ago now and it's hard to sort out your recollections of things like that.

Mr. Specht: Did you think the morale of the corps was quite good?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh the whole I think so. Mind you it's always a bit of a jolt....the change from the happy go lucky, do what you please of civilian life. The necessity of having to obey orders and get up at an awful hour of the morning.....

End of Track I

Mr. Geoffrey Ridd@hough
July 20, 1973

Interview ____, Tape 1, Track 2.

Mr. Specht: What was your opinion on the way things were going in the 1930's, on the International scene? Did you see dangers arising?

Mr. Ridd@hough: Yes, very much so. There was that feeling in Europe that there was a storm coming about. Yet on the other hand there was a determination on the part of so many people to ignore it. It was like so many people said about Hitler. "Oh, he's just a noisy demigod." But you had that uneasy feeling that things were working up for a storm. I remember once in France out in the country, in the forest of Fontainbleu, I remember seeing a French battery of heavy artillery at target practise. I don't know how it was but it was possible for the public to get quite close to the rear of the battery and see these people shooting. They were firing off six inch shells with a prodigality that made me feel.....my what a lot of money they must have for defence! But you had the feeling about the French army that it was in no shape to fight a war. The conscripts looked slouchy and dirty. I remember going to Germany for a few days in 1930. This was before Hitler came in and you saw those German soldiers looking so soldierly, so proud, such fine soldierly young men that you just felt that the French conscript would stand no chance at all. France was in a dreadful state, I think, in those years. There had been a great deal of corruption and a lot of Frenchmen had lost all faith in their country. They'd lost faith in the government. They'd certainly lost faith in the press. It was known that in France, the rich weren't paying their share of income tax whereas the poor little store

keeper, the small official, the school teacher, people like that, they had to pay every cent of tax that was due. The rich were able to get out of it by paying some lawyer or accountant or somebody expert to get them out of paying their share. There was tremendous feeling in France. You'd come on French women who'd say, "Well, I don't want my children to be cannon fodder in the next war." I had the feeling long before the war, that France had been undermined. There's a lot I like about the French but I did feel that if they ever got into a war, they would fold up.

Mr. Specht: How about when you heard Chamberlain's Appeasement Policy?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh that. I think it was sickening. No getting away from it. When he said, "I bring peace in our time." We knew enough about Hitler! In fact, I've always been surprised that Hitler caught the world as much by surprise as he did. I was reading quite a bit of German in the winter before the war... German magazines were full of articles of what the next war was going to be like. You'd see pictures of German tanks surprising the enemy headquarters and the blitzkrieg. And yet when the blitzkrieg came it seemed to take people so much aback. We might have know that's what the Germans would do. We might have know the Germans would come through Belgium again as they'd done in 1914. There were so many things where you felt they just had not learned the lessons of the first war. The British in two world wars paid so very dearly for not being ready. They had to part with their capital. Just think what a difference it would have made in the second war if they had half a million

properly trained and properly equipped people. There probably wouldn't have been a Dunkirk. I was in Europe from '29 to '32 and I had that uneasy feeling that there was going to be a very nasty show down.

Mr. Specht: Did you join up with the regular services when war broke out?

Mr. Ridd@hough: Well, I did in a way. I had known the district intelligence officer and he got me appointed as district intelligence officer in Victoria. Well I'd been working awfully hard. I'd been trying to complete my M.A. in Classics before I was called away and I'd been reading a lot from foreign language press for the government, German, Italian and Dutch. I really had been forcing myself. I got over to Victoria and things were in an awful mess. Things were confused and I'd had about three days of it and I felt myself on the edge of a nervous breakdown. Although it looked awfully bad at the beginning of the war, to back out, I just said, "I'm sorry, but I'd like to get out of this for a while." I was about as close to a breakdown as I've ever been in my life. I'd done quite a bit of, I think, quite useful work. I had kept reporting on certain German and Italian newspapers published in Canada and noting how there was a certain amount of fascist or Nazi sentiments expressed. I reported on this and tried to give an idea.

Mr. Specht: Was this when you were part of C.O.T.C.?

Mr. Ridd@hough: No, I hadn't joined the C.O.T.C. then it was before the war that I was doing that.

Mr. Specht: Were there locally published newspapers in German?

Mr. Ridd@hough: Well, there was a little Italian paper published

downtown, the . It was flourishing for the first year or so of the war because you see, Italy hadn't come in. But it was very pro German. It was expressing great approval of Hitler and more or less exulting every time the democratic^{systems}/seemed to be failing. I was always rather surprised that they were able to publish like that in Canada. It also struck me as rather funny to see that a paper which gave such signs of sympathizing with the enemy, should also carry advertisements from the Department of Defence asking for contracts for fortifications. Anybody, I suppose who wanted the blue print of what the new gun sites would be like would be able to get them. It struck me as being a little odd. There were some papers published in Canada. There was one published on the prairies which was very definitely pro Hitler. It folded up when the war actually broke out but it was very loud in praise of Hitler. There were a few German Nazis quite active in Canada, in Vancouver here. There was for instance a German library you could belong to. You could get recent Nazi books if you wanted to. I have one book here that I've still kept. This is not specifically Nazi but it was typical of that sort of thing, I think. Walter von Plattenburg, this was an historical novel which came out just before the first world war. It was describing the warfare of the Teutonic Knights against the Russians in the 16th century. It represented the Germans as being the guardians of Western civilization against the Slavs. I felt that all that tied in very carefully with the Hitler idea. Not too bad as an historical novel but there was that attempt to build up the German in his own eyes as a defender

of Western civilization.

Mr. Specht: You were an intelligence officer with C.O.T.C.?

Mr. Riddough: Yes and although I didn't feel qualified for it, I even acted as examiner in military German. There were a few people who wanted to be interpreters and while my knowledge of German is not at all perfect, I did take on the job of testing them to see how they would shape up. Well I did the best I could.

Mr. Specht: What other intelligence work did you do on campus?

Mr. Riddough: Oh, reporting anything that looked at all suspicious. Anything that looked as though there might be sabotage. Some of that was confidential.

Mr. Specht: Do you recall any investigations?

Mr. Riddough: There were one or two things, but nothing I could go into detail about. My job as intelligence officer, in the C.O.T.C. quite a bit of it was more of a security nature. I remember I used to give talks from time to time, to the students.....cadets, pointing out how careful they should be about mentioning anything military...how it could give an enemy a good deal of a clue. For instance just before the Canadian battalions were sent to Hong Kong, you remember they were equipped with tropical helmets, well some people were so amused at this. They said, "How silly to give the Canadian tropical kit. Canada of all places!" Well, if that got publicity, it would give any enemy the notion that the Canadian battalions are going to a tropical theatre of war. It was little things like that. One thing that we tried to do was to make the people security conscious....to feel that the little things you blab

out, might be just enough to piece together information that could be dangerous to our own cause if the enemy got a hold of it.

Mr. Specht: Did you hold lectures for the cadets?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh yes, I'd give several lectures on that kind of thing to the C.O.T.C. Often we'd get them all together and give a sort of a talk on that. But a lot of my work was supervising and instruction. Going around and checking, saying, "Here you're no holding that quite right." I think the time when I got the biggest shock was when we were training cadets in the latter years of the war. We were training them in the use of the Sten gun. I remember we were out at the firing point and one young man was holding the thing. I remember I didn't altogether like the way he was holding it so I came up to check his stance. He wheeled right 'round at me, just automatically with this darn gun in his hand. I was looking right into the black hole, with his finger on the trigger. (laughing) I thought, "My gosh, I'm close to the next world now!" Naturally I told him to turn around but I certainly felt very, very nervous with that awkward young man. I wouldn't have been the first officer, I suppose, to have been shot by some ham handed recruit.

Mr. Specht: What was your position in the C.O.T.C.? There was Col. Shrum and.....

Mr. Riddehough: There was Col. Shrum and then Topping was the second in command. We had the various company commanders. I had a camp in the last war when we went to the camp at Chilliwack. It was mostly people who had been training for the Air Force but for some reason or other the Air Force was pretty well full and

so we got them back in the C.O.T.C. At that camp I think we had something like a dozen companies of C.O.T.C.

Mr. Specht: What camps did you attend?

Mr. Riddehough: I was at five. One at Nanaimo, that was in 1941. Two at Vernon in '41 and '42. One at Courtenay in '44 and the last one was the engineers camp at Sardis.

Mr. Specht: What was the usual sort of training at these camps?

Mr. Riddehough: A good deal of it was squad drill, company drill. Also such things as extended order and the use of weapons, rifle-bayonet, and light automatic, things of that kind. And map reading which was showing the students how to read a map and things of that sort. The medical officer would give talks on hygiene and keeping the camp clean and free from pollution as possible. We had Dr. Ranta as one medical officer. He's now one of the heads at the General Hospital. I remember his saying that one of the first examples of military hygiene was in the Old Testament where the children of Israel were told to cover up all their waste and one thing or another and make sure that their place was as clean as possible. (chuckles) We had other aspects. Little talks on military law, the rights of the soldier, the duties in aid of the civil power and all that kind of thing.

Mr. Specht: How about exercises, military exercises?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh, we used to have tactical schemes. The idea that you're a force occupying this and trying to prevent an enemy attack from the other side. In some cases you have a comparison, two sides in a sort of mock battle and you get criticism of who has taken the more sensible precautions or protection

and scouting and that kind of thing. Then we had the occasional route march. A lot of people are not used to walking any degree of distance and that was something new for some people to have to walk two miles.

Mr. Specht: That's not very far compared with war time though, is it?

Mr. Riddghough: Oh, no, no. I think perhaps the most interesting camp of the war was the one we had at Courtenay. We were at the Combined Operations School right down beside the sea. We had training in getting into and out of boats. There was an old hulk of a semi-wrecked ship there and we had a rope net down its side. The cadets were given practise in climbing down from the ship into waiting assault craft. I'll always remember one thing that was rather peculiar. There was one rather awkward student who was taking part in one of these landing exercises. We had these landing craft, you know with the sort of door that comes down where they walk off the thing and onto the beach. Well, one lad must have been unlucky or ham handed because he dropped his rifle into the sea and we lost it for some time. By the time the rifle was recovered it was too rusted to be of any use. Well, to lose a weapon in the army is a very serious thing. So that was one court of inquiry that I was on... to try and fix responsibility and generally investigate the thing. I was on several courts of inquiry which were things of that kind and it all has to be done in a very definite and formal way. I used to think to myself that when the war was over there would be a wonderful court of inquiry as to how we lost Singapore.

It used to console me when I was on some other rather dull courts of inquiry. I used to think, "Oh boy, wait until they investigate Singapore." But they never had to have the one on Singapore.

Mr. Specht: I wonder why.

Mr. Riddéhough: I don't know. I think they felt it would be senseless. But as far as I'm aware there never was an official investigation into the fall of Singapore. I think it would have fallen anyway. The odds against Singapore were too great but it might, I think have been defended a little more efficiently than it was.

Mr. Specht: Are you a student of military history at all?

Mr. Riddéhough: I have studied it a little bit...not formally but.

Mr. Specht: Were you aware of some of the campaigns that were going on in Europe?

Mr. Riddéhough: In a general way. I think a lot of us were. But of course one of the worst things about that is that you're dependant very largely on what the newspapers say and that is often not very accurate. A great deal of the really interesting things are concealed from the public. You don't really know how close you are to the disaster or how stupid somebody is being....(chuckles).

Mr. Specht: Being a student of the classics too, did you ever apply parallels from the ancient world to the modern situation?

Mr. Riddéhough: I suppose one is bound to from time to time... but I can't think of any specific instance that ties it in very closely.

Mr. Specht: I just wondered if you had these kind of discussions

in the Officer's Mess.

Mr. Riddehough: No, I don't think we had much of that. The average person wasn't very much in touch with the ancient world.

Mr. Specht: I guess conditions improved a lot when the ^{armoury} / was completed?

Mr. Riddehough: Oh yes, yes. The army has undoubtedly become a great deal more democratic. The ordinary enlisted man isn't treated as the stupid ploughboy that he used to be. Now I think they're expecting a great deal more of the soldier as an individual.

Mr. Specht: Do you remember what it was like on campus during the war? Were the students who were enlisted in the C.O.T.C. generally co-operative? Was their morale pretty good?

Mr. Riddehough: I think a lot of young men weren't very enthusiastic about being called off to serve, which is very natural. But I think most of them accepted it as one of the realities that just had to be taken. That's about all you could say. Of course it was pretty depressing when the news would come of some big defeat or reverse, the fall of Crete, the fall of Singapore. I'll always remember one thing that amused me. It was rather grim but it struck me as rather funny. When we were at one of the summer camps and some news came through of a big reverse. I've forgotten what it was quite, whether it was when we lost Crete or when we lost Singapore...something anyway had gone very, very badly for our side. I remember hearing one of the permanent force instructors. He was showing the cadets how to present arms. "An' when ya comes ta the third position, ya 'olds yer thumb

like this. See?" (laughing) I couldn't help thinking, "Keep on like that when things are in such a crisis.....'ow you 'old yer thumb!" Mind you I think one of the interesting things in military training was the contact with the permanent force instructors a great many of whom were from Britain. They were the old type of regular army instructors and they were wonderful men. Some of them were foul mouthed, some of them weren't. The best one I ever knew I never hear^d use an obscene or profane work at all. He was one of the best instructors I ever knew. They were wonderful men. I think that is one of the great things of the British Army tradition.....the wonderful N.C.O.s that they had. They were really the basis of the British Army. They had their limitations but oh boy, they were thorough. They could handle men. I think a really good sergeant and often sergeant major has often prevented the British from getting into disasters far worse than they could have been. They are really wonderful people. I think another thing too that we've had which is very fine in the British Army tradition...it's still there and I think it's one thing that makes us better than the Americans. A British officer has been taught to consider the welfare, safety and comfort of his men. If they'd been out on a road march, it would be his duty to see that their feet are not blistered and if they have been blistered that medicine was taken. He is supposed to look after their comfort before he thinks of his own. I think that's a wonderful thing in the British military tradition. I don't think there's the hatred existing between officers and enlisted men that there can be in the United States. If you read so many books on American

army life, there well, seems to be such a violent resentment on the part of the American soldier toward the man who commands him. With all the faults of the British military system, I do think that personal responsibility of the officer for his men has been a wonderful thing.

Mr. Specht: Can you remember some of the instructors who came to C.O.T.C.?

Mr. Biddehough: Oh, we had one man named Moon Mullins, I know who was quite a character. I believe he was killed in the war. He was quite a humourist. If it was a matter of showing you how to open a tin or something, he'd come along with a huge carving knife, greater than life....or something like that. We had some people like that. I haven't a very close individual memory. I do remember some of those people from the regular army and the funny little ways in which they would initiate you into the official way of doing things. I remember at Alberta once I took some of the cadets out for practise on the range. It was the time when we were told to be very careful about getting all the empty cartridges ...the brass cases, returned. We were held to strict accountability. So I was very careful. I watched those people with an eagle eye. I saw that everyone of them put his empties in the box. At the end I signed out this sheet to say that 500 empty brass cases had been put in. This old permanent N.C.O. said to me, "Look sir, you've got 500, 500 even. Don't do that. Put down 498 or 501 then it looks as though you've counted them." (laughing) Those are rather pleasant memories.

Mr. Specht: Do you have ememories of some of your fellow officers in the C.O.T.C. in the Second World War?

Mr. RiddEhough: Oh yes, yes and some of the permanent force officers too that were with us....all their little quirks. I remember when I was at the University of Alberta, the regular army staff officer who used to have contact with the C.O.T.C. he didn't get on with the Colonel very well. He would criticise something in a letter to the Colonel and the Colonel would write back and say, "We'll draw your attention to the fact that in your letter such-and-such a word is misspelt!" (laughing) I think that old Canadian army, the one before the Second World War, the permanent force was very interesting. There were only a few thousand in them and the officers seemed to know each other all over Canada. I mean somebody who was in coast artillery in Vancouver would probably know the person who was the engineer officer at Halifax. It was such a small corps that everybody knew practicall^yeverybody else. They had their little friendships and their little hates but it was a very interesting little group. I was rather interested when I was over at that camp in the Christmas holidays of 1928, there was a dance there. Of course they all put on special dress uniforms. Well, I'd just come over in my khaki and all the people in the permanent force were very decent and said, "Oh, you can't turn up in Khaki at a thing like that!" So I think I got loaned a pair of blue pants from the engineer or something like that and I had a blue tunic which I think belonged to~~the~~^{the} coast artillery. This was hastily adapted for me by a military tailor and I appeared as something as befitting the occasion. It was very jolly.

Mr. Riddehough: These are just very haphazard impressions, as you can see.

Mr. Specht: Yes. Most of the people in the corps were university people...

Mr. Riddehough: Well, they were all university graduates, I think. Some of them were high school teachers, of course.

Mr. Specht: I wonder how the regular officers who weren't of university background, how they and the students got along.

Mr. Riddehough: I think a lot of regular officers always felt a little impatient that the ordinary university student hadn't that quick response to demands and discipline that the ordinary soldier had. I think they thought some of our people were just a little too....well, that they'd been kept on too slack a rope. I think that was the feeling that some people had. But it was rather interesting to see the difference between the C.O.T.C. type and the type that had gone to the Royal Military College.. Those that had gone to the Royal Military College at Kingston, they were better up in little military traditions and things like that but I don't think in actual practise they did any better....if it was a matter of shooting or anything like that. I think our people did just as well as the people from R.M.C. Now of course the R.M.C. is going to be the formative influence. But there has been something, I think in not being too professional. I think perhaps the professional type does get to be rather narrow minded and the civilian with all his limitations has a more flexible mind. That is, I think, why a regular army has so often been defeated as for instance in the American War of

Independence, or when the Boers fought the British. Sometimes the regular officer has tended, I think to be just a little too rigid in his thinking.

Mr. Specht: What other officers in the contingent stand out in your mind? Topping, for example.

Mr. Riddehough: Major Topping? Well, I don't know. That would involve a certain amount of criticism. I wouldn't like to go on record as trying to evaluate any of the people. We all have our limitations and I think some of us had our strong points. I know we'd sometimes find ourselves doing some rather amateurish things. I remember on one occasion when the order to march was given I stepped out and forgot to tell my company to come along too. (chuckles) The little things one forgets... I know on one occasion when a battalion had been formed up for the days training and the Sergeant Major handed the parade over to me. I just told him to carry on and of course what I should have done was to hand the parade over to the regular officer in charge. I got quite a bawling out for that. I never did that again.

Mr. Specht: How about the men coming back from the war, who would have joined the corps?

Mr. Riddehough: Well, I don't think we had that many men come back from the war and join the corps. We had some instructors toward the end of the war who had actually seen service. Some of the people from the regular army who were giving the boys some of the lessons they had learned in the war. But there wasn't a great deal of that. It was hardly possible but we did have a bit of it. I think that's most noticeable about the

combined operations....what had been learned and that sort of thing.

End of track II