



H. CHARLES R. BROWN

The American Soldier, 1951

After the army of communist North Korea invaded South Korea on 25 June 1950, the United States and other members of the United Nations dispatched land, sea, and air forces to assist the South Koreans in repelling the invasion. Among the first countries to provide assistance was the Dominion of Canada, initially by sending three destroyers to Korean waters and then, in December 1950, by committing the 2d Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

Following some advanced training, the Patricias, commanded by Lt. Col. J. R. Stone, joined combat operations in mid-February 1951 as part of the 27th British Commonwealth Brigade.

On 22 April 1951, Chinese forces which had entered the war in support of North Korea, launched powerful attacks in the western and west-central sectors of Korea toward the South Korea capital city of Seoul. To prevent the enemy from advancing down the Kap'yong River valley and reaching a main road leading to Seoul, the Patricias, together with 3d Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, and Company A, U.S. 72d Heavy Tank Battalion, occupied defenses blocking the valley. The Patricias dug in on Hill 677 at the western hinge of the defensive position, with the Australians to their right and American tanks in support.

Throughout the day and night of 24 April, two regiments of the Chinese 118th Division attempted to penetrate the Canadian defensive position. Dawn of 25 April found the Patricias still in command on Hill 677, but cut off from the rear by Chinese who had reached the road just behind them. By late afternoon, however, the Chinese force, after having been severely punished by the steadfast Canadians, gave up the battle and withdrew north.

This action prevented an enemy breakthrough and eliminated the threat to Seoul. In recognition of their important victory, the Canadians received the American Distinguished Unit Citation for "gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps in accomplishing their mission," thereby distinguishing "themselves, their homelands, and all freedom-loving nations."

Firing British-made rifles No. 4 Mark 1, and a Bren .303 light machine gun, the Patricias repel the Chinese who threaten their position. The men of the 2d Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, wear the traditional Canadian Army battle dress which includes hooded parkas and caps or "balaklavas."