

## Soldiers of the Rideau Canal

The following article appeared in *Anglo-Celtic Roots* Vol. 5 No. 4 (Fall 1999) by Norman Crowder:

Copies of Despatches and Correspondence Relative to Chelsea Pensioners in Upper and Lower Canada in the Archives of Ontario MU 2108 Misc 1839-1844 F225 contains, among other documents, the following from LCol By ...

I... most respectfully beg to state that I am of the opinion *the whole* of the non-commissioned officers and men of the 7th and 15th companies of Sappers and Miners who served on the Rideau Canal are entitled to a grant of 100 acres of land each, when their services in the Royal Corps are dispensed with; as the grant was held out to them to check desertion, which, I am happy to report, it certainly did; but many of the two companies would not take their discharge, fearing they would thereby forfeit their claim to a pension, and returned to England.

I regret it is not in my power to state the number who have actually been put in possession of their grant. His Excellency Sir J. Colborne having kindly offered to give the men, either collectively or separately, any vacant lots they chose, created a delay, as the men took time to choose the lots; and when I left Canada, few, if any, of the men had fixed on their lots. I am therefore most respectfully of the opinion, that the best mode of bringing the business to a close will be to give notice to the non-commissioned officers and men late of the 7th and 15th companies of Royal Sappers and Miners, who served on the Rideau Canal, that unless they claim their lots within a twelvemonth from the time of the date of the notice, they will forfeit their grant.

I have &c.

(Signed) *John By,*

Lieut.-col. Royal Engineers.  
Head Quarters, Royal Sappers and Miners  
Woolwich 28th July 1834.