

# World War I

Canada's Military Contribution

# Significant Battles

- Canadians fought as part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) (aka Canadian Corps)
- Efforts in battle enhanced Canada's reputation, contributed to increased autonomy



# Second Battle of Ypres

- Fought near Ypres, Belgium (Flanders region)
- April 22-24, 1915
- First major gas attack in history (chlorine)
  - Gas warfare outlawed
- French and Canadian troops blinded, burned, or killed by drifting gas clouds
- Attack stopped, Allies hung on to Ypres
- Approx. 2000 Canadians died in the battle

# Second Battle of Ypres



# Battle of the Somme

- Fought near the Somme River, France
- July – November 1915
- British (including Canadian) and French forces led to slaughter by General Douglas Haig in repeated charges across no man's land
  - Haig – in charge of all British forces 1916-1918
    - Old fashioned strategies led to huge numbers of casualties
- Royal Newfoundland Regiment – 85% casualty rate in first half-hour
- Tank used for the first time in history (British)
- Result: 1.25 million casualties (24,000 Canadians)
  - 11 km won by Allies (Pyrrhic victory)
  - British: 420,000 casualties, < 3 km won (2 soldiers per cm.)

# Battle of the Somme



# Battle of the Somme



# Battle of the Somme





# Battle of the Somme



# Battle of the Somme



# Battle of Vimy Ridge

- Fought over Vimy Ridge, France
- April 9-12, 1917
- British and French had repeatedly failed to capture the ridge from the Germans
- Canadian Corp trained extensively for the attack
  - Led by British General Byng (meticulous planning)
- Captured ridge in four days – greatest British victory so far, although 3500 killed/7000 wounded
- Canada's greatest WWI victory – international recognition, source of national pride

# Battle of Vimy Ridge



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# Battle of Vimy Ridge



# Battle of Vimy Ridge



# Battle of Vimy Ridge



# Battle of Vimy Ridge





# Battle of Vimy Ridge



# Battle of Vimy Ridge



# Passchendaele

- A ridge near Ypres, Belgium
- July – November 1917
- Canadians led by Canadian General Arthur Currie, who took orders from Field Marshall Haig
- Haig ordered Currie to retake Passchendaele ridge
  - Little strategic value; location a treacherous quagmire
  - Currie warned Haig about dangers; Haig stubborn
- Result: Allies regained Passchendaele ridge; 15,000 Canadians dead; 500,000 Allied casualties / 8 km = 2 soldiers for 3 cm

# Passchendaele



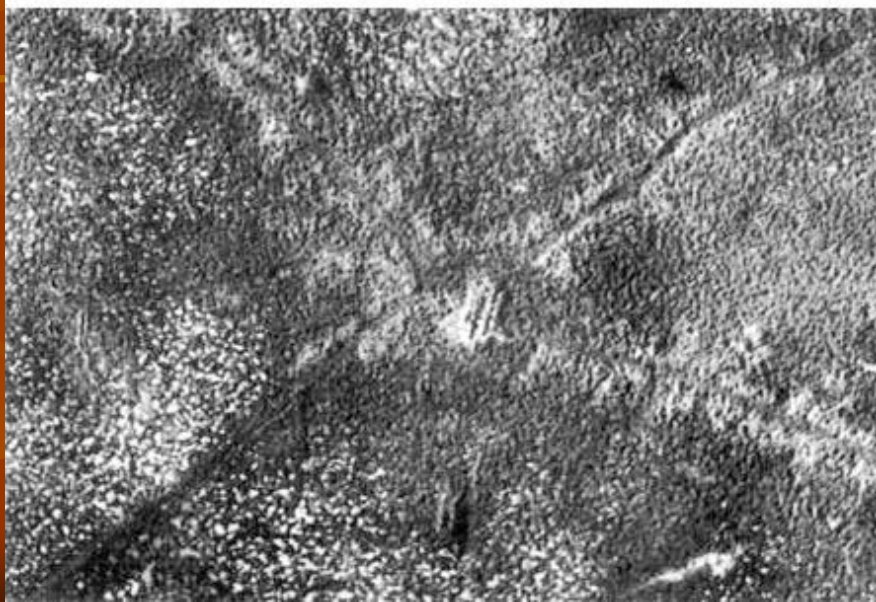
# Passchendaele



# Passchendaele



# Passchendaele



# Women in WWI

- Approx. 2500 Canadian women joined the medical and field ambulance corps
- Many served as nurses in military hospitals
  - At the front near the battles
  - In Britain
- Dangerous – artillery, bombs, gas



# Women in WWI



NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM

(77)  
C.A. WILES  
BRIDGTON

SOME OF OUR WOUNDED HEROES IN (KING'S WARD) 2ND EASTERN MILITARY HOSPITAL DYKE ROAD

# Canadian WWI Legacy

- Although Canada contributed to the Allied success in many battles in WWI, it is hard to call anything a “success” in a war that claimed approximately 16 million lives, including over 60,000 Canadians.