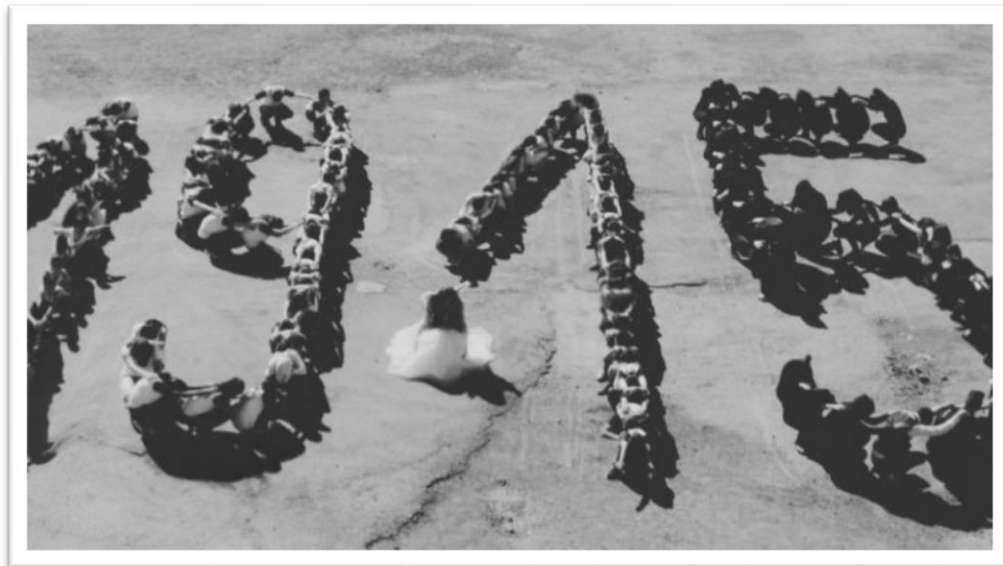


World War I
Day by Day
1915 – 1918

April 1915 / Avril 1915

La première guerre mondiale
De jour en jour
1915 – 1918



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9 April 1915

The Bunsen Committee: The powerbroker for the Middle East



Colonel Sir Tatton Benvenuto Mark Sykes,
6th Baronet (16 March 1879 – 16 February 1919)

The British Government was puzzled by what would follow a victory against the Ottoman Empire. All major powers of Europe had a stake in the Middle East and the division of the spoils would inevitably bring some difficulties. For a full century, the carving of the Sick Man of Europe had been postponed by conferences to avoid European wars.

Prime Minister Asquith therefore created a committee, on 9 April 1915, under a senior Foreign Office diplomat, Maurice de Bunsen, to propose a policy in regard to the division of the Middle East among Allies.

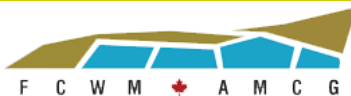
The Bunsen Committee had representatives from the Colonial Office, the Admiralty, the India Office and other relevant departments. The War Office was officially represented by General Sir Charles Calwell, but Kitchener insisted that he should have his own personal representative on the Committee. That

representative was Sir Mark Sykes, a Member of Parliament who was well known as a Kitchener hand with some experience in Constantinople, and who would turn out to influence the committee to the point of singlehanded direction.

This committee will produce a first report in June 1915 but will continue as a think-tank for the British government on Middle Eastern developments.

The influence of Mark Sykes, in the end, will be greater than that of the whole committee as he will become the chief British negotiator for the Sykes-Picot Agreement that will divide the Eastern Mediterranean with the French by a couple of straight pencil lines, creating such new entities as Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan.

David Fromkin, «Defining Britain's Goals in the Middle East», in [A Peace to End All Peace](#), p. 146-9, 168ff.



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10 April 1915

Canadian Manpower in the war to date / Canada - Main d'oeuvres militaire à date



The Red Ensign was commissioned to include a fly bearing the quartered arms of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in 1871. By 1921, it was made up of the coats of arms of the nine provinces then in Confederation. It was unofficially used on land and sea as Canada's flag.

On 10 April 1915, Prime Minister Borden states that 36,500 Canadian soldiers are overseas, 53,000 in Canada, and that overall 101,500 men of all branches of the army are serving under the flag.

Le 10 avril 1915, le premier ministre du Canada confirme que 36,500 soldats canadiens sont outre-mer, que 53,000 sont au Canada, et qu'un grand total de 101,500 hommes de toutes les branches de l'Armée servent sous les Drapeau

Armstrong, Elizabeth M., *The Crisis of Quebec, 1914-1918* (Toronto: Rev. Ed., 1974), p. 133; Tr. *Le Québec et la crise de la conscription, 1917-1918* (Montréal: vlb éditeur, 1998).



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11 April 1915

Creation of the Munitions Committee



The recent complaints from Field Marshal French to Kitchener about the shortage of munitions in France were not received with a sympathetic ear. Kitchener cannot admit that the munitions being sent to France are being depleted so quickly. But French's determination does not stop there. Through a network of friends, including politicians and 'special liaison officers,' the Commander-in-chief circumvents the Secretary for War to get the ear of the Prime Minister.

Asquith cannot impose a policy on Kitchener, but he can force the creation of a committee to study the matter. The Munitions Committee is formed on 11 April 1915 with the consent of other ministers, including Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Winston Churchill, at the Admiralty, who both keep their ear to the ground and know John French as a friend.

The committee will not be supported by Kitchener, who will refuse to provide the necessary statistics for review. The committee will die on the vine in May 1915 without being able to present any serious evidence.

This will not serve Kitchener well. Field Marshal French and his friends will simply 'leak' this information to the owner of the TIMES, Lord Northcliffe and to his expert reporter on military affairs, Colonel Repington. Kitchener's attitude with the Munitions Committee will in time severely undermine his reputation among ministers. It will also create a crisis that will shake the Government.



Shrapnel ready for action.

Magnus, Kitchener, 398.



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12 April 1915

The battle of Qurna, Mesopotamia - First Day



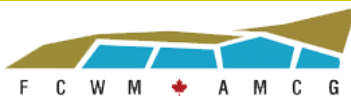
The defense of Basra, at the head of the Persian Gulf, was a strategic imperative for the British Empire. The oil in the fields of Ahwaz was crucial for a Royal Navy that had changed from coal-burning to oil-burning ships a few years before the war.

The defense of Basra had been anticipated by the dispatch of troops to Bahrein, early in the war, so as to secure sole access to the pipeline arriving in the Shat-el-Arab, at the mouth of the Tigris River, at the head of the Persian Gulf.

Turkey's entry into war in October 1914 sent Turkish troops to Mesopotamia intent on blocking access to Basra. The British diplomatic mission in Baghdad had to leave, fearing that expeditions of Turkish units reinforced by Arab and Mahomedan conscripts would succeed in pushing the British out altogether from the region.

Contrary to other Empire fronts, where the Indian troops were attached to local British command, the Government of India was tasked with providing and commanding the necessary protection for Basra. General Sir John E. Nixon, an Indian Army officer, was given command of the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force (MEF) for the protection of Empire assets, to which were added two Indian divisions, an Indian cavalry brigade and some British-manned artillery

(continued 13 April)



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13 April 1915

The Battle of Qurna - Second Day

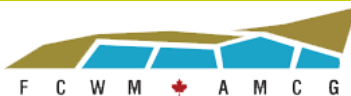


General Nixon

The first attack against defenses around Basra took place on April 12 to 14, 1915. Forces under General Nixon were able to repulse these first attacks. But his operational challenge was to decide how far away from Basra he should establish his defensive lines. With the Tigris River leading directly to Baghdad, it was an inviting prospect to think that the capital of the Mesopotamia could be seized, preventing the Turks from attempting any threatening operation more to the south against the valued oil reserves. He knew that the local Arabs were generally well disposed toward the British who had been there a long time, as partners in commerce. The attraction to kill the bird in the nest was strong.

Dupuys & Dupuys, The Encyclopedia of Military History (1977), p. 957.

BGen F. J. Moberly, The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918, Four Volumes (London: CID, His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1924).



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14 avril 1915 [mercredi]

Les espoirs du général Foch pour la bataille d'Artois



Le Président de France, M. Poincaré, et le premier ministre Millerand visitent le front d'Artois où des opérations du groupe d'armées françaises du nord sont en grande préparation pour une offensive imminente qui doit être coordonnée avec les forces britanniques. Le 13 avril 1915, ils sont entre Arras et Lens où le gros de l'attaque doit se produire. Parmi ceux qu'ils rencontrent se trouve Pétain, commandant de Corps d'armée, grand, élégant, de très belle apparence, expliquant avec des commentaires éclairants les arrangements et dispositions, sans toutefois nourrir d'illusions sur un succès éclatant.

À Cassel, toutefois, ils rencontrent Foch, plein de fougue comme d'habitude, et toujours confiant qu'avec les premiers jours de mai, il peut très bien se produire une vraie décision. Il pense qu'il peut très bien réussir à passer dans le coin d'Arras, pointant du doigt sur une grosse carte Fleurus et Waterloo, à 150 kilomètres, en Belgique, en disant : 'Voici où nous devrions gagner.'

Liddell Hart, Foch: Man of Orléans (Penguin 1937), Vol. 1, Chap XI, p. 18



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15 April 1915

Kapitan Mathy's Zeppelin Raids over England – The start of the summer campaign



Kapitan Heinrich Mathy, "Knight of the air"

Few Zeppelin raids had been conducted over England since the beginning of the year, barely entering over the landmass at dusk and running short bombing runs before daybreak.

On 14 and 15 April 1915, **Kapitan Heinrich Mathy** became more daring, pushing the dirigibles further inland to the North of England as it was realized that none of the defensive weapons were effective in intercepting the 'lighter than air,' moving at up to 10,000 feet.

The raid was somewhat ineffective, but still created a psychological effect as they appeared ominously over towns where almost random bombing fell from the sky. Pre-war literature had forewarned of the terrible potential of aerial bombing from dirigibles.

German propaganda used the name of Kapitan Mathy to spread terror, calling him daring and skillful. Mathy became known in England as one of the star commanders of Airship L9, against whom nothing could be done. It flew too high for any air defense gun to be effective or any aviator to be able to interfere at night. Kapitan Mathy was able to defeat the blackouts by following rivers by the moonlight and identifying markers.

In the course of 1915 and 1916, the battle of wits prevailed between attackers and defenders over England. The best minds pored over the manner of defeating the Zeppelins. In 1915, they went on undisturbed from success to success, with the only regret that more bombs could not be carried in the giant balloons.

Major-General Edward Bailey Ashmore, «Air Raids», *Encyclopedia Britannica*, (Twelfth Edition, 1922), Vol XXX, p. 95-100.

TIMES History of the War 1914-1919, Vol. X, p. 181-200



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16 April 1915

Ypres: The Canadian Division goes to Front Line



Ypres Salient – Belgium: scene of the greatest battle of WWI

Between 1 and 17 April, British General Herbert C.O. Plumer, Commander of the Second British Army, has been tasked to take over the sector occupied by two French army corps in the Ypres salient. This is proving difficult. The French had much more artillery than the British. In addition, the British are in a severe shortage of ammunition. It is therefore impossible to adopt the tactics used by the French in the sector.

The French do not give as much importance to holding trenches as the British do. They can afford to counter-attack with artillery and destroy the enemy as it occupies the French trenches with large volumes of high explosive shells. The British have too few shells to afford this option. Their shells are also largely of shrapnel-type, which is much less effective against dug in troops.

The British attitude is quite different. Divisions are not to withdraw from their lines as there is no overwhelming artillery to push back the German attacker if he comes. Units are to fight in place and retake immediately any real estate that they might lose. This calls for good trenches. So, the newcomers start digging, through the corpses and the excreta that they find everywhere, cursing the French on their housekeeping.

On 16 April 1915, the Canadian Division occupies 4 kilometers on the left of the British Vth Corps, in the vicinity of Saint-Julien, organizing its new defensive positions along the lines previously occupied by the 11th French Division. It is spring and the likelihood of renewed operations is high. Digging is paramount.

Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, Chap 3: 'The Battle of Ypres, 1915.'

Ralph Allen, *Ordeal by Fire*, Chap 9: 'Life and death in the trenches.: The Gas Attack at Ypres.'



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17 April 1915

Advanced Warning of Chemical Attack



German troops prepare chlorine canisters to send gas in the air

Since April 11 the Germans were ready for their chemical attack. They had 6,000 canisters of chlorine at the ready. However, they have had to move some of the canisters. The canisters in positions now occupied by Canadians had to be moved to the north of the Salient because the wind was never right to direct the gas to a desired target. For six days, the surprise chemical attack has had to be postponed, waiting for the right speed and direction of the wind.

The secrecy of the use of chemicals was not perfect. Many details were leaked to the Allies, to the extent that the intelligence already acquired on these plans could have predicted the gas attack. Details obtained from German prisoners were precise enough to tell the location where poison gas was going to be used, and information secretly obtained from the chemical industry in Belgium, where rudimentary gas masks were being assembled for German soldiers, foretold the exact German army corps where it was going to be used (in Ypres).

The banning of gas products for warfare at the international conferences at The Hague in 1899 and 1906, led the Allied High Command to believe that the Germans would not resort to them. On 17 April 1915, the German High Command issued a false wireless communiqué stating that the Allies had already resorted to chemical weapons:

Yesterday, east of Ypres, the British employed shells and bombs with asphyxiating gas.

If further warning was necessary, there it was...

Liddell Hart, *A History of the First World War*, p. 186.
Crittwell, *A History of the Great War*, p. 153.



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18 avril 1915

Le pilote français Rolland Garros est fait prisonnier.



Rolland Garros, le pilote français

L'aviation s'était développée rapidement en France depuis le succès original des frères Wright aux États-Unis en 1903. Peu d'industries ont tant profité des innovations technologiques suscitées par la Grande guerre que l'aéronautique. Si la majorité des stratèges ne pouvaient pas imaginer l'apport qui pourrait être fait par les avions aux techniques de guerre, quelques esprits éclairés ont entrevu immédiatement l'exploitation d'une troisième dimension du champs de bataille.

C'est la photographie qui a donné à l'aviation l'essor important qui l'a propulsée en première ligne des domaines de recherche.

Lorsque les généraux ont compris l'avantage de pouvoir obtenir des photos aériennes précises des dispositions et mouvements de leurs ennemis sur le terrain, l'avion est devenu un engin de guerre respecté.

Le Français Roland Garros était avant la guerre un pilote bien connu du public pour des records de vol qu'il avait obtenus avec le développement de nouveaux appareils. Son intérêt technique s'est penché vers le tir aérien. Il a participé à la création d'une méthode de tir à travers l'hélice en blindant celle-ci pour éviter les dommages des balles de mitrailleuse de calibre de fusil d'épaule qui la frappaient au passage.

Le 18 avril 1915, Garros a eu une panne et a été capturé par les Allemands. La perte de ce héros national était accompagnée par la saisie de cette méthode secrète qui donnait un avantage aux pilotes français. Les ingénieurs de la firme du fameux inventeur hollandais Anthony Fokker ont immédiatement reconnu l'importance de pousser cette technique et ont dessiné un système à came permettant de régler le tir de la mitrailleuse pour qu'aucune balle ne frappe l'hélice.

L'avantage technologique a ainsi basculé du côté allemand. Il sera revendiqué à tour de rôle pendant toute la guerre.

John W.R. Taylor, «Aircraft, Military», *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (15th Ed., 1978) p. 383-92, en particulier p. 385.



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19 April 1915

Mesopotamia



British troops in Amara

On this day, the British Home Government asked the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force to move against the Turks in the immediate vicinity of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, but not to extend to the point where reinforcements of already held troops be necessary. — « A safe game must be played. »

Gen Nixon will nevertheless send troops under Gen G.F. Gorringe up the Karun River to get to the oil fields at the end of the pipelines, so as to protect the whole length of the pipeline to Abadan. Gen Townshend is also sent up the Tigris River to capture Amara, 90 miles up, with last-minute sanction from London. Amara will be taken on 3 June.

Lloyd George, Memoirs, II, p. 805.



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20 April 1915

The Ypres Salient before the battle

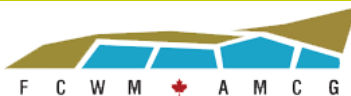


The Ypres Salient before the Second Battle of 22 April.

The Ypres Salient was retained at great cost by the Allies because it represents a part of Belgium that was not invaded by the Germans.

The First Canadian Division has been given the task of defending the section of perimeter in the vicinity of Saint-Julien. Its First Brigade has been assigned to Second Army Reserve and is tasked, starting on 18 April 1915, to be involved in the battle for Hill 60, to the south of the Salient, outside the Canadian area. Second and Third brigades share the task of defending the four kilometers between the 28th British Division and the French Detachment to the Belgium Army, in the northern part. That detachment is formed by the 45th Algerian Division, next to the Canadians, and the 87th French Territorial Division. The Canadian Division belongs to Vth British Corps of Second Army.

The map was created for 10th Battalion History at calgaryhighlanders.com



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21 April 1915

Von Trapp sinks the *Léon Gambetta*



Captain Von Trapp

Georg Johannes von Trapp took command of Austrian submarine SM - U-5 on 17 April. Four days later, on 21 April, he sank the French armored cruiser *Léon Gambetta* in the Adriatic Sea. This marked the beginning of his career as most successful U-Boat commander of the Austrian Navy. Von Trapp commanded three Austrian submarines, including the French Currie, which was salvaged by the Austrian Navy after it was sunk. The string of victories at sea in 1917 and 1918 earned him the Knight's Cross of the Military Order of Maria Theresa and many other honours, and the command of the submarine base as Korvettenkapitän until the end of the war.

Before the Second World War, Trapp, having lost a family fortune, refused to serve for the German Navy when invited by the Nazi Party, and fled to the United States with his family.

The Von Trapp became figures of legend and propaganda when the family of two marriages became singing performers and were the subject of various films, a Broadway play which lasted three years, and a world-loved 1965 musical film based on the Broadway play, *The Sound of Music*. The film made history with the famous score of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, and no-less lionized British actress-singer Julie Andrews in the role of the second wife, Maria, and Canadian actor Christopher Plummer, in the role of Captain von Trapp.

This film is still widely acclaimed this year in its fiftieth anniversary.

Von Trapp, Georg von Trapp: To the Last Salute: Memories of an Austrian U-Boat Commander, Tr. Elizabeth Campbell, Lincoln University of Nebraska Press, 2007.



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22 avril 2015

La Deuxième Bataille de Ypres

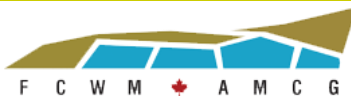


Chlorine gas was used for the first time on April 22, 1915, in the Ypres Salient. This photo taken of a gas cloud being released on the Somme in 1916 illustrates how the poison could drift across the lines and overwhelm anyone in its path. During Ypres, 5,730 cylinders released 168 tons of chlorine gas.¹

À Ypres, le 22 avril 1915, après un hiver relativement calme dans ce secteur, les Allemands ont repris les combats en introduisant une nouvelle arme jusque là inutilisée, sauf pour quelques essais techniques.

En fin d'après-midi, du gaz au chlore a été lâché de 6,000 bombonnes en direction du périmètre de défense de la ville de Ypres. Les troupes alliées, qui ignoraient comment s'en défendre, ont été envahie par un nuage jaune/vert toxique. Les Canadiens ont été au coeur de cette première attaque de la guerre chimique moderne.

George Metcalf Collection, Canadian War Museum - 19700140-077



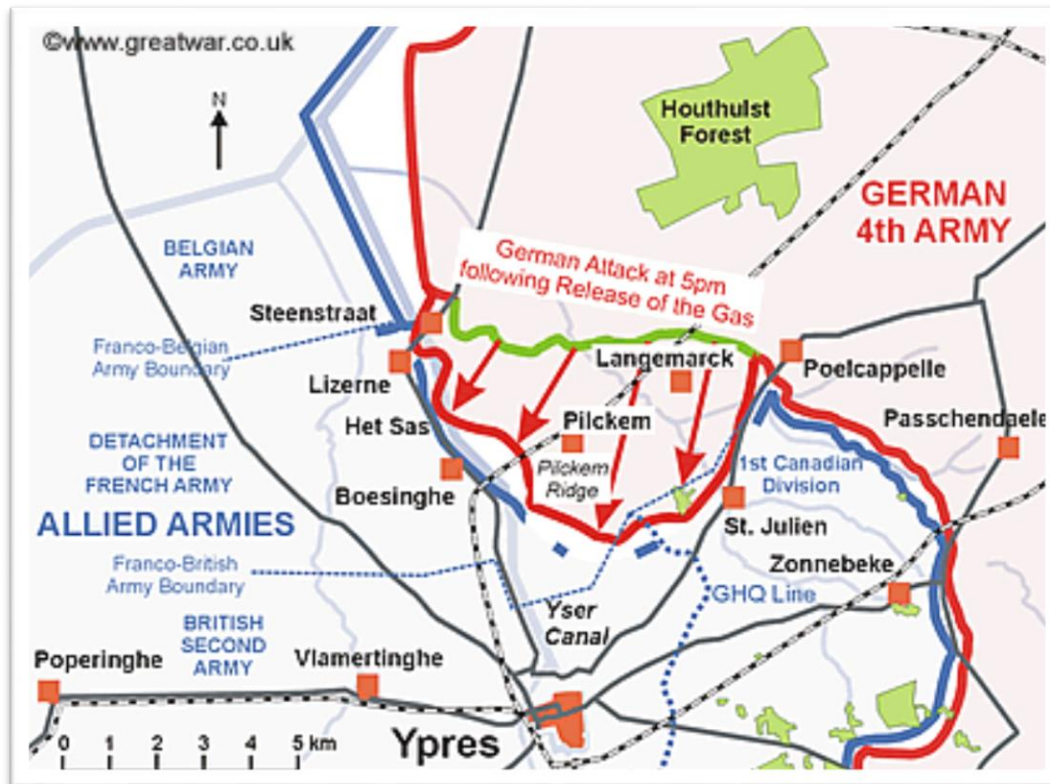
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23 April 1915

2nd Day of 2nd Battle of Ypres / Deuxième Jour de la Deuxième Bataille d'Ypres.



The second day of the Battle of Ypres begins after a terrible night of fighting. The troops of the French Detachment to the Belgian Army have been pushed back by the cloud of gas. The Canadians who were on the right shoulder of the gap have managed, during the night, to stop the German advance into the open hole.

Le deuxième jour de la Deuxième Bataille d'Ypres commence après une nuit de terribles combats. Les troupes du Détachement français auprès de l'Armée belge ont été repoussées par le nuage de gaz. Les Canadiens qui se trouvaient sur la droite de la brèche ont réussi, pendant la nuit, à arrêter l'avance allemande dans le trou béant.



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24 April 1915

Holding ground at St. Julien



The Brooding Soldier is a Canadian memorial to the Battle of St. Julien.

The second battle of Ypres had 6 conflicts, one of them was the Battle of St. Julien (22 – 24 April 1915). When the German Army unleashed the first poison chlorine gas attack in WW1, the Canadians bravely held the front line and in just two days, over 2000 died. Marking their efforts is The Brooding Soldier, a 10 metre tall white granite column, at the top of which is a solemn, downward looking bust of a soldier. Found in Sint-Juliaan, the soldier is bowed, standing in the direction from which the chlorine arrived.



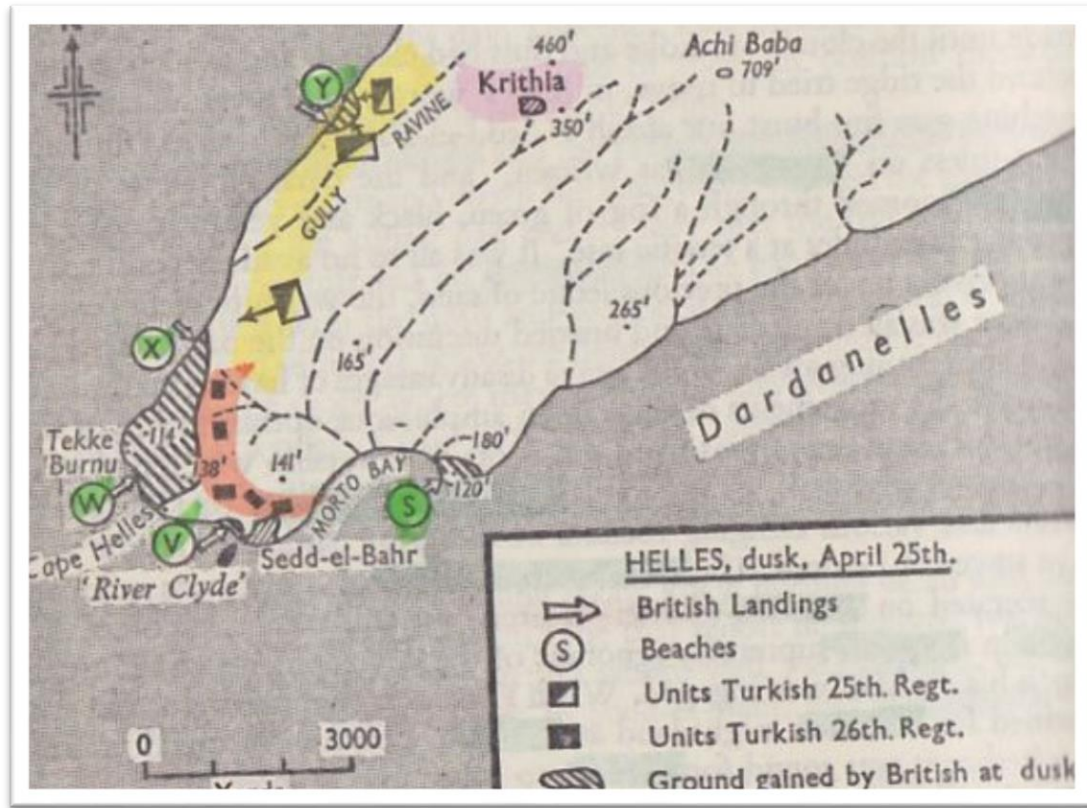
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25 April 1915

Landings in Gallipoli - British Beaches



BRITISH LANDING BEACHES :

- S - ESKI HISSARLIK Point
- V - SEDD EL BAHR (Morto Bay)
- W- CAPE HELLES
- X - TEKKE BURNU
- Y - 'Y' Beach

Five British landing sites have completely different stories.

Beaches V and W have difficult landings. Lack of communications and coordination prevent mutual reinforcements.

Robert Rhodes James, *Grand Strategy: Gallipoli* (London and Sydney: Pan Books, (1964) Ed. 1984), Chap 5: «April 25th, 1915», pp. 101-31; Illus. 124.



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25 April 1915

Landings in Gallipoli - ANZAC Beach



Anzac Landing Beach (Ari Burnu)

The landing takes place 1 km north of the intended beach.

« The fact that the landing beach was only a few hundred yards long instead of a mile threw out every plan. When the main Anzac force, following hot on the heels of the covering force, began to land, the delays in getting them ashore and re-grouping them were immensely greater than had ever been anticipated. » [p. 108]

By 2 p.m. the Anzacs had landed over 12,000 men, and were opposed by under 4,000 Turks, but the nature of the ground, the confusion caused by landing in the wrong place, and the inter-mixing of units, reduced this advantage considerably. By 5 p.m. the Anzacs were fighting for their lives and were being driven back to the sea. » [p. 111]

Robert Rhodes James, Grand Strategy: Gallipoli (London and Sydney: Pan Books, (1964) Ed. 1984), Chap 5: «April 25th, 1915», pp. 101-31; Illus. 127.



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26 April 2015

Italy joins the Triple Entente



Prime Minister Antonio Salandra

The Government of Italy of Prime Minister Antonio Salandra decides to sign, on 26 April 1915, a treaty with Great Britain and France, thereby joining their original Entente Treaty of London of 4 September 1914. Salandra could not resist a promise of compensation for joining them against the Central Powers, in particular by opposing Austria-Hungary. In return for intervention on the Allies' side, Italy is to receive Trentino, Trieste, Aslo Adige (South Tirol) up to the Brenner Pass, Girizia and Istria up to the Quarnaro, and northern Dalmatia.

The secret treaty meets severe opposition in the Chamber of Deputies, where the neutralists have a majority. Public demonstrations and votes topple the Government.

But the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel III, refuses the resignation of Prime Minister Salandra. He forces the policy despite the strong opposition.

Italy will officially declare war on Austria on May 24, 1915. It will, however, not dare declare war on Germany before another year.

This secret treaty was not recognized by President Woodrow Wilson at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. This provoked the departure of the Italian delegation. But they came back.

Maurice Beaumont, *La Faillite de la Paix (1918-1939)* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1951), p. 75
Giuseppe Martini, William J. Baumol, Ernesto Pontieri, Guido D'Agostino, Franco della Peruta, Marino Berengo, «History of Italy and Sicily», *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Book 9, p. 1114-75, see p. 1167.



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27 April 1915

Field Marshall French is hard-headed



Field Marshall French insist in keeping the Ypres Salient

After the Second Battle of Ypres, Field Marshal John French's blood was up. On 27 April 1915, he fired the Second Army Commander, General Horace Smith-Dorrien, a man to whom he owed previous successes, and persisted for many days (to 1 May, then after partial withdrawal, to the end of May) to hold in place inside the Ypres Salient, at great cost in lives, and not withdraw, so as to support the French offensive to retake Lengemarck at all costs. But the French offensive did not materialize.

Liddell Hart calls this « a comedy behind the front, a tragedy for the troops in the front. » [190]

« And having forfeited 60,000 men for the privilege of acting as midwife, the British were then left to hold the most [191/2] uncomfortably cramped new salient, or target, at continued expense for over two years.

To throw good money after bad is foolish. But to throw away men's lives where there is no reasonable chance of advantage, is criminal. In the heat of battle mistakes in the command are inevitable and amply excusable. But the real indictment of leadership arises when attacks that are inherently vain are ordered merely because if they could succeed, they would be useful. For such 'manslaughter', whether it springs from ignorance, a false conception of war or a want of moral courage, commanders should be held accountable to the nation. »

Liddell Hart, History of the First World War. p. 191/2.



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28 April 1915

The First Battle of Krithia



Since dawn on April 25th, the British and Dominion troops have lost nearly 400 officers and over 8,500 men; of these some 150 officers and 2,500 have been killed. [141] In the single-day battle, the Allies lost 3,000 casualties of the 14,000 engaged. Historian Robert Rhodes James believes it was one of the decisive battles of modern history. [141] To his view, on 28 April, 1915, at Krithia, the decision as to the success of the Gallipoli operations had already been made.

«The ramshackle, forgotten, but immensely significant First Battle of Krithia has signified the collapse of Hamilton's strategy. There was no question now of a coup de main. His army was spent, for the moment; Achi Baba, ablaze with brilliant poppies, was as far away as ever; Turk reinforcements were being transported across the Chanak and being marched along the coast road from Kilid Bahr, across behind Achi Baba along the deep Soghanli Dere, and deployed on the slopes of the mountain, with a marvellous view of the Allied lines straggling across the still green countryside. But while the Turks were rushing every available soldier in the area to the Peninsula, Hamilton was still clinging to the hope that he could take Achi Baba without asking Kitchener for reinforcement, and his reports contained no indication of the serious position of the M.E.F.» [143]

R.R. James, Gallipoli, 141-3.



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29 avril 1915

La Première Division canadienne extraite du Saillant de Ypres

**OUR BOYS IN
ACTION.
MAGNIFICENT ACHIEVEMENT IN
DARDANELLES.**

**BRITISH GOVERNMENT CONGRATULATES
DOMINION.**

**AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR EXPEDITIONARY FORCE HAS
TAKEN.**

**German Offensive at Ypres Definitely Stopped,
ALLIED FORCES PURSUING VICOROUS OFFENSIVE,
Furious Struggle Continues in Carpathians**

After many days of anxious waiting definite news has now been received of the destination of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. They have landed at the Dardanelles and have participated gallantly in an important victory the extent of which has not yet been revealed. The enthusiastic terms in which the message of congratulation from the British Government is couched, combined with other cables from the seat of action, seems to indicate that the operations have progressed much farther than the mere landing preliminaries, and it is quite probable that some of the more important forts at the Narrows are by this time in the hands of the Allies. A late message from Sir John French announces that the German offensive in the Ypres region has definitely stopped, and there are other indications that the Allies are masters of the situation. The Carpathian struggle continues with great bitterness, but with no apparent advantage to either side.

(By Electric Telegraph.—Copy right.—Per Press Association.)

Manawatu Evening Standard,
29 April 1915, Page 5.

Depuis le 22 avril, la Première Division canadienne a été en toute première ligne de défense du saillant de Ypres. Lors de l'attaque au gaz, vers 5h00 de l'après-midi, les deuxième et troisième brigades de la Division se sont dévouées à entraver l'avance allemande dans le trou béant laissé par le repli des troupes françaises, directement touchées par le nuage de chlore.

Depuis ce moment, jointes par la première brigade rappelée de sa position en réserve, elles se sont démenées pour repousser les attaques ennemies successives, trois fois appuyées par le renouvellement des gaz.

La défense de la hauteur de Gravenstafel, de Keerselaere et du village de Saint-Julien; l'attaque de nuit du Bois des Cuisiniers, ainsi que les manœuvres dans le secteur de la ferme Turco ont été autant de coups de coeur ultimes qui ont démontré à tous ceux qui étaient à même d'en témoigner, le courage des Canadiens dans l'adversité ultime.

Lorsque les renforts du Ve Corps, de la Deuxième armée, et même de la Première Armée britanniques ont été déployés finalement pour colmater la brèche, à partir du 24, la situation avait déjà été sauvée du pire. L'action des Canadiens les 22 et 23 avril, avait empêché la capture de Ypres. Le 29 avril 1915, la Division sort du champ de bataille avec près de 6,000 hommes de moins sur 30,000; chacune de ses brigades ayant perdu environ 1,500 fantassins.



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30 April 1915

Alderson's long days



Lieutenant-General Edwin Hervey
Alderson, CB

During the battle of Ypres, Lieutenant-General Alderson, the British commander of the Canadian Division had a prominent if unheralded role.

When British reinforcements were sent to the Ypres Salient, to come to support the Canadians in their task of blocking the advance of the Germans, following their gas attack, on the 22nd of April, confusion reigned. Second Army and Vth Corps headquarters had great difficulty in communicating with the divisions involved in the fighting. Reinforcements were marched up to the Salient with vague instructions to regain control of the situation.

General Alderson took charge of the right flank of the battle and established contact with the reinforcing formations, assigning arcs of responsibility and coordinating efforts.

With no radio communications, all telephone lines broken, and messengers crisscrossing instructions in the night, personal contact became vital.

The re-establishment of a defensive line around the salient was a difficult job that involved many trials and errors, costly ill-prepared attacks and bungled improvised use of limited artillery.

But the line held despite all, and Alderson, not one to brag, did a good job of plugging the holes.

TIMES History of the War, Photo, V: Chap 82: «Hill 60 and the Second Battle of Ypres, p. 41-80, Photo, IV: 203.



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