

1 July 1917

A Russian attack without preparations



The Provisional Government of Prince Lvov in Russia is hard-pressed by rebellious oppositions, including from activist Marxist groups who have contributed to the February Revolution and held their All-Russian Congress of Soviets in June.

The Minister of War, Alexander Kerensky, has to show that he can get the Russian Army to gain some ground. He therefore orders General Brusilov to attack against the Austrians at any price, without delay, wherever he can.

The attack is launched with great difficulty in Galicia, on **1 July 1917**, in the area of Stanislaw, against a weakened Austrian Army. The first results are encouraging.

But the German forces in the area are commanded by Prince Leopold of Bavaria, who has as his Chief of Staff the most brilliant staff officer of the war, **General Max Hoffmann**, the artisan of the great

German victory of Tannenberg, where his bosses, Hindenburg and Ludendorff, were so definitely distinguished. Hoffmann is an expert on the Eastern Front.

Hoffmann prepares a plan for counter-attack that will sweep the Russian forces to the extent of devastating completely the attacking forces and pushing back to the frontiers, where he will stop by policy.

— This will be the final call for the Russian Army. Advanced demoralization will now become terminal.

Liddell Hart, The First World War, Chap 7.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

2 July 1917

‘Early July’ Inter-Party Committee of the Reichstag



Early July 1917 marks an episode of consequence in the German political history of the First World War.

Politicians are now becoming quite convinced that the difficulties of the Central Alliance are severe and do not look good for the future. The economic difficulties of Austria, and the lack of progress on all fronts suggest that some more conciliating peace arrangements, without expansion, should be considered.

In the context of the deliberations for the votes on War Credit, **Matthias Erzberger**, a politician of the Centre Party, makes quiet representations, then two speeches increasing in vehemence, urging parties of the Reichstag to put together an Inter-Party Committee to prepare a Resolution «expressing readiness to negotiate for a peace without forced annexations.»

This is a revolution in the Reichstag where the Government is not elected but selected by the Kaiser, and where parliamentarians are limited in the discussion of war policy to taxation and revenue.

The Interparty Committee is set up with the Centre, the National Liberals and the Progressive parties and their resolution is indeed drafted.

— This will not go smoothly with the High Command. Hindenburg will show up in Berlin in five days.

Gordon A. Craig, Germany, p. 384;
Fischer, Germany's Aims, 396-7.



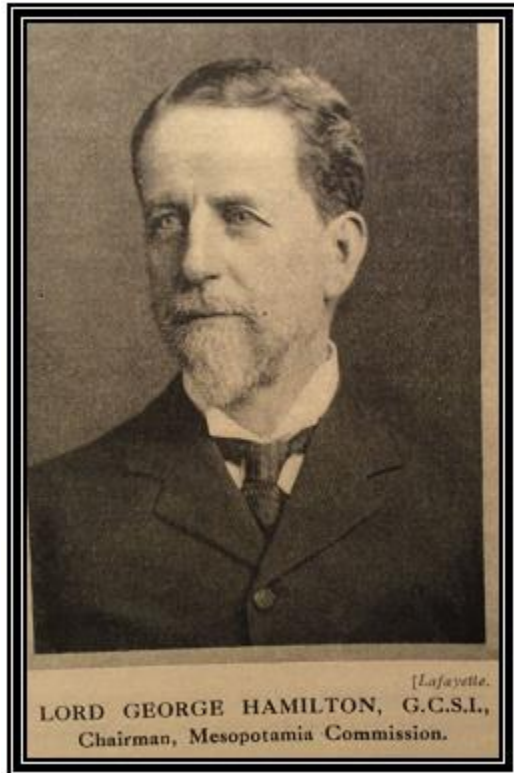
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

3 July 1917

The Royal Commission on Mesopotamia



Following the surrender of the British-Indian garrison of Kut, accounting by itself for close to 35,000 losses, in April 1916, and the rumors that the campaign had been managed with abysmal incompetence, the British Government reluctantly agreed to create a Royal Commission to illuminate the facts surrounding the operation. A similar commission had been created to study the Dardanelles campaign of 1915.

The Royal Commission on Mesopotamia, headed by **Lord George Hamilton**, and constituted of seven other members: jurists, parliamentarians and military officers, published its report on **3 July 1917**.

The Commission begun in November 1916, had convened 60 meetings, taking consideration of over a hundred witnesses, as well as the earlier separate Indian Commission's Report, looking into the India part in the campaign.

The Report turned into a scandal because of its clear depiction of dereliction of duty in all quarters, political, military and civilian. In particular, medical services provided to the combattants were shameful.

The British Press went on a hunting spree, looking for scapegoats wherever they could be found wallowing in the quagmire, in Britain, in India, in Egypt and in the fields of Mesopotamia.

However, since the Royal Commission had royal privileges, none of the testimonies could be used in a court of law, including in Court Martial. — Big name resignations will give only a few hunting trophies.

TIMES History of the War, XII:414-16; XIII: 255-6; XIX: 369-71.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

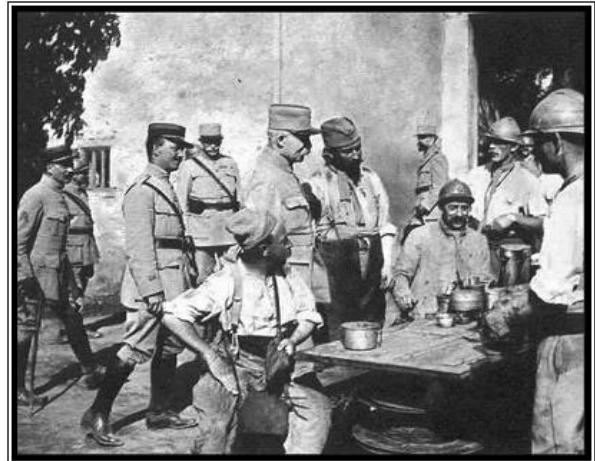
© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

4 juillet 1917

La Directive No 3 du Général Pétain

Le 4 juillet 1917, le **Général Philippe Pétain**, le Commandant-en-Chef des armées françaises émet sa Directive No. 3 qui donne les instructions sur la réorganisation profonde de l'Armée.

Pétain passe beaucoup de temps à visiter les soldats dans leurs divisions pour leur redonner confiance au Haut Commandement français, mais sa réorganisation de structure n'a pas moins d'effet pour rétablir l'optimisme dans les premières lignes.



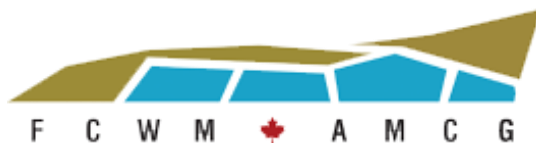
Premièrement, Pétain rend clair qu'il préconise l'utilisation du matériel au lieu du 'cran', qui exigeait des hommes la dernière mesure de sacrifice dans une attitude d' 'offensive à outrance' soutenue depuis le début de la guerre. Pour lui, désormais, la masse de métal doit remplacer la chair humaine.

De là la production effrénée d'artillerie et de chars, de munitions explosives de toutes sortes, et d'engins neufs, pour le transport, pour l'aviation, pour le génie, pour les communications, qui vont faciliter la mobilité routière et ferroviaire, la manœuvre en campagne, et le renseignement.

Il crée aussi de grandes réserves mobiles qui peuvent intervenir rapidement aux points faibles.

Mais encore plus fondamental dans ses réformes, les conditions de vie et les relations entre grades font l'objet d'instructions novatrices et positives.

Corelli Barnett, The Swordbearers, 2797-80.



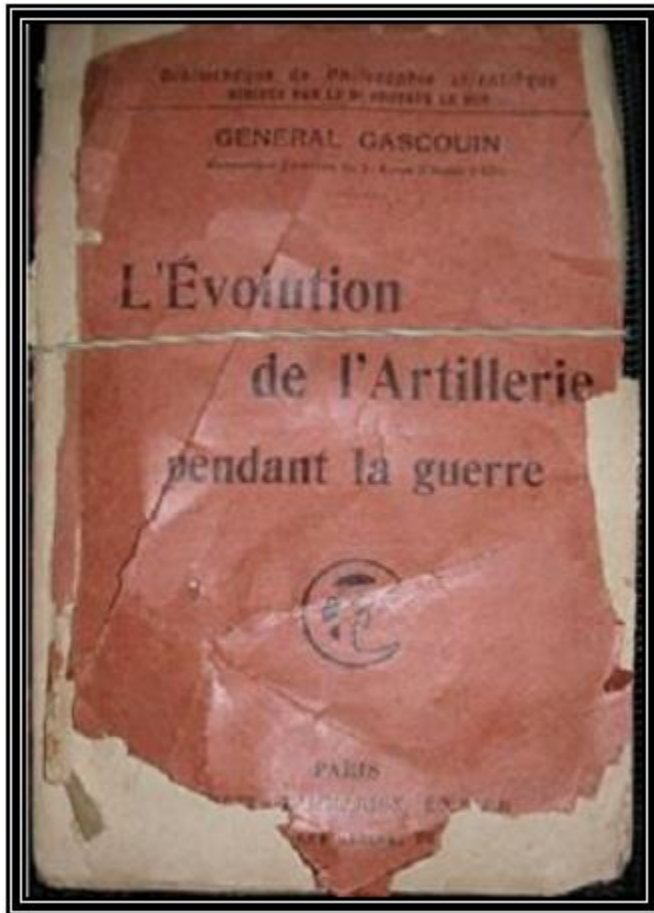
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

5 July 1917

Artillery: Heavy Bang or Medium Bang for the Buck?



In the rush for the production of artillery pieces, the French want to answer the German predominance in heavy artillery, but Général Gascoquin commented on the fact that from the moment that the French became strong in heavy artillery (after two years of development), the Germans had already started to opt for more medium artillery.

«It is curious enough to note that it was at the moment of the war when the German artillery was reverting quite visibly to medium and medium-heavy guns, that we adopted bigger and bigger calibres, an *ALGP*¹ more and more powerful... Admirers and imitators of the German large calibres, we carried out a true tour de force to create for ourselves an imposing large-calibre artillery in two years. And yet, at the moment when heavy artillery reached its height on the French side, it was already to a certain extent old-fashioned in the eyes of the German GHQ.

«This latter seems to have realized early enough that it is the destruction of human material above all that it is important to achieve and that for this kind of effect the very heavy guns do not give the best performance.»²

¹ALGP: Artillerie Lourde à Grande Puissance.

²Général Gascoquin, *L'Évolution de l'artillerie pendant la guerre*, (Flammarion, 1920), p. 178, quoted in Barnett, *The Swordbearers*, p. 278.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

6 July 1917

The Red Baron wounded



Rittmeister **Manfred von Richthofen** (the Red Baron) was shot down on **6 July 1917**. A British F.E.2 observer's bullet struck him on the head. He felt a sudden blow which made him feel paralyzed. He was able, however, to land and exit his plane before losing consciousness.

He underwent exploratory surgery which determined that the bullet had not entered his brain but bone fragments were found, some of which were removed, and it was found that he suffered a severe concussion and probably a cerebral hemorrhage. It was recommended that he not fly until given medical clearance.

On 18 August he will shoot down his 58th plane.

On 27 August another piece of bone will be removed from his skull wound. Several other surgical procedures will be required.

In the spring of 1918 he will write in an autobiography that he suffers from depression and melancholy and feels unwell, which he will attribute to his head injury.

It is thought that due to the brain injury he suffered on 6 July 1917, his judgment may have been impaired, which may ultimately have led to him being shot down on 21 April 1918.

Dik A. Daso, «The Red Baron», *Air Force Magazine*, March 2012, pages 72-73;
Koul, Prateeka, et al., "Famous Head Injuries of the First Aerial War: deaths of the 'Knights of the Air'", *Neuro Focus* 39(1):E5, 2015, pages 4-5.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

7 July 1917

General Currie thinks he can do better



On **7 July 1917**, the new Commander of the Canadian Corps, **Lieutenant-General Arthur Currie**, is informed that the First Army will now focus on the taking of the city of Lens, so that a bigger prize, the City of Lille, become more vulnerable to later attacks.

Currie is informed that his Corps will occupy the right-hand side of First Army and will be directed toward the south of Lens. The plan is for him to proceed through Avion and Sallaumines Hill to attack the city's lower south end.

However, Currie is meticulous and ever searching. His study of the ground convinces him that the army attack is not properly oriented. The key ground, in this attack, is Hill 70, more to the north, which dominates the city, and which should be taken first so as to force the Germans, under constant descending observation and fire, to abandon the lower town.

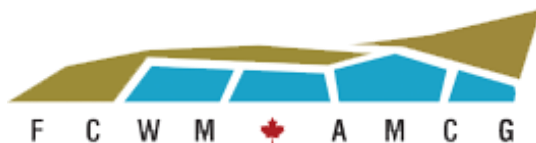
Currie is a junior Corps Commander, and his «Estimate of the Ground» goes against what General Horne, First Army Commander, had envisioned.

But the briefing that Currie prepares for the Army staff is full of good sense.

Horne decides that Haig should hear that one...

Robbins, «Horne», in Beckett & Corvi, Haig's Generals, p. 102;

Matthew Walhert, «Neglected Victory: The Canadian Corps at Hill 70», Canadian Military History, 19:1, pp. 21-36.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

8 July 1917

Addressing the problem of Air Defence



On 7 July, the Germans bombers raided London once again, creating a panic south of the Thames and in the East End, where large fires caused severe damage and loss of life.

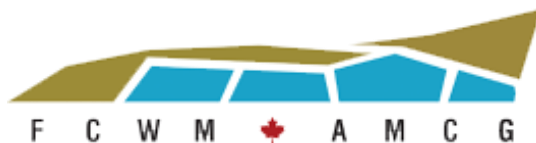
The British Government immediately prepares a briefing for a secret parliamentary session, on **8 July 1917**, outlining the priorities for the air defence of London.

However, the Government makes it clear that the priority for the allocation of newly built aircraft has to remain with the army in France, where Air Observation is «the eyes of the army and allows it to advance.» PM Lloyd George appoints General Smuts to become the Head of a special 'Air' committee mandated :

«To examine (1) the defensive arrangements for Home Defence against Air Raids, and (2) the existing general organisation for the study and higher direction of aerial operations.»

— One more step toward centralization of air assets, which is so obviously lacking.

Lloyd George, Memoirs, Vol. IV, Chap 57 - «Toward Creating the Air Ministry», p. 1844-80.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

9 July 1917

Proclamation of US General Embargo



On 9 July 1917, the President of the United States decreed that an embargo would prevail to ensure that neutral countries that are neighbours to Entente countries do not secretly send supplies to the enemy.

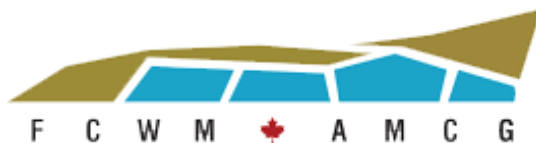
«By which corn, fodder, petrol, cast iron, steel, fertilisers, arms, ammunition and explosives were forbidden to leave ports of the United States without a special licence from the Export Council.»¹

Wilson will prevent that shipping be sent to neutral countries until December 1917, time at which each will be able to justify their import, and that their supplies will come to a low.

«To begin with, and in order to allow the American experts time to examine the situation of each neutral, it was decided that not a single cargo of foodstuffs should be sent to neutral countries adjacent to Germany prior to December 1917; it was calculated that these countries would not suffer from famine till then and that ample time was being given them to prove their requirements.»²

¹Lieutenant L. Guichard, The Naval Blockade, Tr. and Ed. by Christopher R. Turner (New York: Appleton and Coy, 1930), p. 100;

²Ibid., p. 101.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

10 July 1917

Bourassa's article in the New York Evening Post

On 10 July 1917, Henri Bourassa sees his article «Win the War and Loose Canada» published in the *New York Evening Post*.

The article gives five reasons why he opposes Conscription in Canada. His motive for publishing in New York is to gain wider recognition for a point of view that he considers very sound if looked at without the strong emotions of a cultural divide.

His reasoning is that with a voluntary participation of 420,000 Canadians, the equivalent proportion of population in the United States would be 6 million, in France 2.4 million, and in Great Britain of 2.7 million.



For a country which is not threatened with invasion, and which could quite easily shift its trade with the United States instead of Europe, the sacrifice can only be explained by an unbalanced subjugation to British influence. This makes very good sense with an isolationist portion of the American readership and does not go unnoticed in Toronto.

Bourassa is at the heart of the Conscription debate in Canada. His ties with Wilfrid Laurier, indeed a kindred soul, are about to break because Laurier, despite the fact that he has denied his support for the Conscription Bill, has refused to incite French Canadians to avoid voluntary service.

For more information:

Rolando Gomes, «Henri Bourassa et l'impérialisme britannique (1899-1918)», Bulletin d'histoire politique, Vol. 16:3, pp. 161-81.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

11 July 1917

Lawrence: From Aqaba to Cairo



Captain Thomas E. Lawrence has succeeded in leading a legion of Arab camel cavalry up the Hejaz and in taking the city of Aqaba. Aqaba is at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba, north of the Red Sea, and was so far held by the Ottomans.

The attack from the desert was not expected and took the coastal defences from the back.

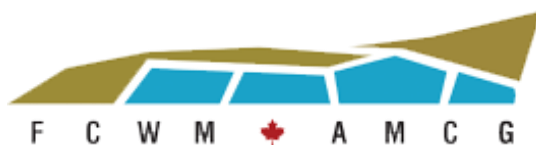
Lawrence immediately took to his camel to cross the Sinai and get to Ismaelia where he could inform the British leadership and take a train to Cairo. Cairo is not informed that this has taken place.

In Ismaelia he meets Admiral Weymiss, who upon hearing the tale of the victory, immediately sends Red Sea monitors and support ships to protect Aqaba from counter-attacks.

Lawrence immediately takes the train to Cairo. He finds there that his uniforms have been eaten by moths during his absence. When he shows up at Egypt Headquarters, emaciated and dressed as an Arab with the honorific dagger of a chieftain, he is first greeted with incredulity by the Intelligence staff.

— The new Commander-in-Chief, «Bull» Allenby, can hardly believe what he is being told about this odd captain.

Recommended: T.E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

12 July 1917

Lawrence in Cairo



Captain T.E. Lawrence makes a big impression in the Cairo Headquarters when he returns there to report on the taking of Aqaba, on 6 July, and especially on the reconnaissance that he made in northern Hejaz and Syria, on June 20-27. Cairo reports are greeted in London with congratulations from CIGS Robertson himself.

This allows Lawrence to propose that the Arab continue to progress from Aqaba on the right flank of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) when it starts against the Palestine front.

Lawrence envisages that the Arab tribes that his camel legion will meet up (the Howeitat, the Beni Sakhr, the Sherarat, the Serahim and many others), will want to join in the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans. This camel cavalry right wing can work at destroying lines of communications, especially railways, that might be useful to the Turks for their defences.

General Allenby is enthusiastic about the plan. Having received the mission by Prime Minister David Lloyd George that he is to be in Jerusalem by Christmas, Allenby is all in favor that Lawrence return as a British agent to guide the Arabs in their conquest of Palestine and Syria.

What Lawrence is not quite sure of is who's conquest it will be in the end...

For more information: Jeremy Wilson, Lawrence of Arabia, Chap 20: «The Consequences of Akaba, July-August 1917», p. 418-35.

Painting by Augustus John.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

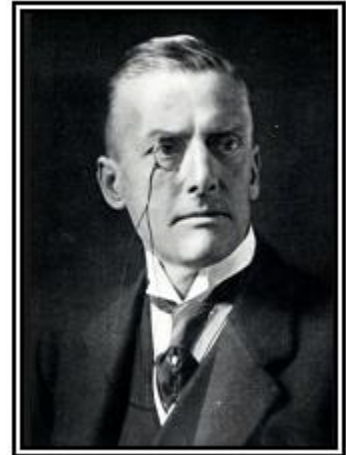
13 July 1917

The Secretary for India Resigns over the Mesopotamia Scandal

Austen Chamberlain, the son of the famous Conservative minister Joseph Chamberland from Birmingham, and half brother to the future Prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, was the Secretary for India under the coalitions of both prime ministers Asquith and Lloyd George.

He was therefore in that seat for both the Dardanelles and the Mesopotamia operations which became the object of two Royal Commissions of Investigation into their management and conduct.

The Mesopotamia venture was especially damaging for the minister as it was led by the Government of India, with which the India Office in London has to coordinate British policy.



Now the uproar in Parliament and in the Press over the scandal exposed by the Mesopotamia Report forces Chamberlain to present his resignation in a «fine speech» as a gesture of ministerial responsibility.

The Government has left Austen to fall on his pen to save Sir Charles Hardinge, the Permanent Secretary at the Foreign Office, that the Government wants to protect for «public interest.»

— The Conservative scion is being chastized for the benefit of the Government, but there will be pay-back days.

Hankey, Supreme Command, Vol. II, Chap 52 - «Dardanelles and Mesopotamia Commissions», p. 517-29, see p. 528-9.



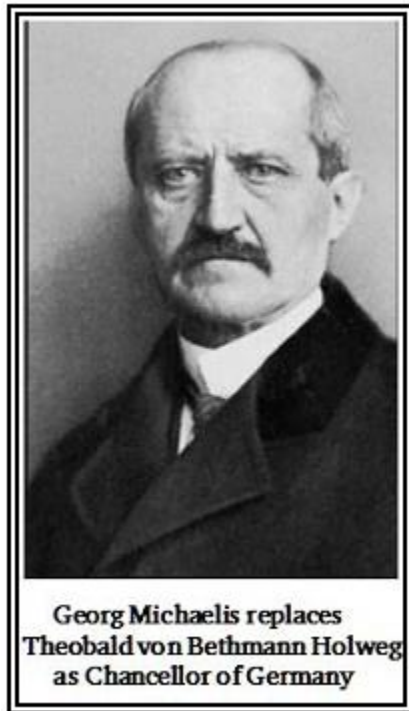
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

14 July 1917

The Fall of Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg



In July 1917, Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg's advocacy of universal franchise in Prussia combined with the ongoing suspicion in the General Staff over the strength of his commitment to expansive war aims, finally led to his dismissal.

He was brought down by the Crown Prince who was strongly opposed to a broader franchise, and by the Conservatives and their allies in the military, as well as by conservative groups of the bureaucracy and the business world.

The new Chancellor, Georg Michaelis, an under secretary of State in the Prussian administration for Finance has no experience in foreign affairs.

In his contacts with the military, he makes a favourable impression, and on **14 July 1917**, says he will act in constant agreement with the General Staff.

— His interpretation of the Peace Resolution in the Reichstag effectively kills it.

Further information: Fritz Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, p. 399-401.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

15 juillet 1917

Un message d'Italie qui offre une opportunité



Le Général Luigi Cadorna, le Chef de l'état-major général d'Italie envoie un télégramme au Général Foch, son homologue français, pour lui faire une offre.

Cadorna entrevoit que le moment serait propice pour entreprendre une attaque massive contre les Autrichiens dans les Alpes Juliennes si seulement il pouvait obtenir dix divisions des Alliés et quatre cent canons lourds supplémentaires avec 1,000 obus chacun pour saisir l'occasion.

La note n'est pas légère et nécessiterait des convois ferroviaires aussi rapides que massifs, qui exigeraient des retraits importants des défenses en place.

Son télégramme reçoit pourtant la sympathie de Pétain et Foch, qui expédient aussitôt six batteries d'artillerie comme premier versement, tout en se tournant vers les Britanniques pour discuter d'un plan concerté.

Le premier ministre David Lloyd George soutient depuis longtemps que le front italien recèle l'opportunité en or de sortir les Autrichiens de la guerre —ils ont déjà montré diplomatiquement leur manque de détermination,— et toucher les Allemands par le flanc mou. Mais les Anglais se sont déjà prononcés sur leur stratégie belge et ni Robertson ni Haig ne veulent donner de leurs divisions ou de leurs canons, déjà alignés pour remuer la boue dans les Flandres.

Lloyd George fulmine, mais une fois encore, Haig place un as de pique qu'il ne peut manger.

Lloyd George, Memoirs, IV: Chap 66, p. 2275-2332, voir 2283-7.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

16 July 1917

A New First Lord to shake up the Admiralty



Prime minister Lloyd George was instrumental in getting the Admiralty to accept the convoy system, and it is proving a real turnaround in the war. Sinking statistics are definitely getting down for the simple reason that the German submarines are not finding the convoys, and when they do, cannot sink them because they are escorted.

But the British Prime minister is not happy with the efficiency with which the Admiralty is moving on this. It is a vital question for the British government, and more could be done if it was better done.

Lloyd George decides to move the minister for the Admiralty, **Edward Carson**, the Unionist Irish leader who was taken on board for the Coalition, and replace him with the best hammer that he can find in his toolbox : **Sir Eric Geddes**.



Geddes is the man that Lloyd George has plugged in all the high-stake holes so far and the man proved an organizational genius everywhere.

Discovered by Lloyd George when he was seeking civilian corporate help as Munitions minister, Geddes was moved as the great organizer of railroad construction in France, and then Controller Shipbuilding, where he shone.

Geddes is now going to oversee Admiral Jellicoe's handling of his centralisation.

— Centralisation has just been moved one ring up.

Hankey, Supreme Command, II: 654-5.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

17 juillet 1917

Les protestations mènent le moral des soldats



Les manifestations qui se produisent à Petrograd et se propagent un peu partout à la suite des initiatives subversives des Bolchéviques parviennent aux oreilles des soldats sur le Front.

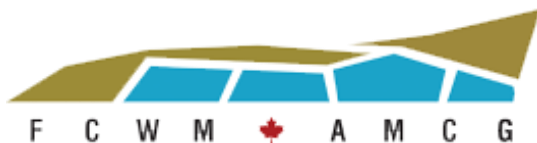
Puisque leur récente offensive improvisée contre les Autrichiens a été repoussée brutalement par les Allemands venus à la rescousse, les soldats commencent maintenant désertir en grands nombres et marchent sans ordres, armés, vers les centres de protestations pour s'y joindre.

Les rapports qui viennent maintenant des ambassades de Saint-Petersbourg deviennent de plus en plus pessimistes quant à la probabilité que la Russie puisse revenir à un régime constitutionnel.

Il y a maintenant confusion complète entre ce qui constitue la Révolution et les forces contre-révolutionnaires, une confusion que le génie de Lénine pour l'improvisation exploite pour raffermir sa poigne sur les institutions d'État.

Si les alliés comptaient sur le retour des Russes sur les lignes de Front après un moment de réorganisation politique, ils réalisent maintenant que la fin de la guerre pour eux est devenue un *leitmotiv* que les Allemands ont habilement insinué à deux niveaux.

Lloyd George, Memoirs, Vol. V, p. 2552-8.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

18 July 1917

Lawrence returns to Jedda

Captain Thomas Edward («T.E.») Lawrence has been able to discuss with the operations staff in Cairo what role the Arab Legion cavalry would play on the right wing of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) when it will start against the Turks in the Palestine.



On 18 July 1917, with the endorsement of London in hand, General Edmund Allenby, the Commander-in-Chief of the EEF, confirms Lawrence as the British agent to accompany the Arab Legion, to be commanded by Prince Faisal, under the authority of King Hussein, the Sherif of Jedda.

Lawrence thereon returns to Jedda to meet King Hussein, and ask that the Arab Headquarters be moved to Akaba. From there, the Legion will prepare to go forward with supplies provided by the EEF, in view of moving the camel cavalry swiftly through Palestine and into Syria.

The aim of the EEF is to take Jerusalem and then Damascus. The mission for Prince Faisal is to provide support to the advancing EEF along the coast by harassing and hampering Turk movement in the desert to the east, and gaining political and military support from Arab tribes still under Ottoman rule.

—This confirms the military alliance between the Allies and the Arab Revolt. The rest is history. Thick History!

Jeremy Wilson, Lawrence of Arabia, p. 426ff.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

19 July 1917

Reichstag underhand business



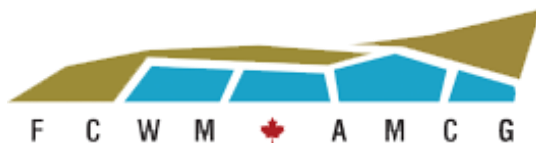
The debates in the German Reichstag (Parliament) in the last weeks have been much more important than apparent to the public at the time.

The Peace Proposition put forward by the moderate parties, to ease in a view that Germany did not have to keep its conquered territories to end the war, was fought tooth and nail by the conservatives.

Chancellor Bethmann Holweg was toppled because of his opening to parliamentary reforms. The new Chancellor, Georg Michaelis, on **19 July 1917**, makes a speech in parliament where it becomes recognized that the moderates have failed to change policy, but still have to support financing the war at the tune of 15 billion Marks, –and get to say no more...

— The appointee of the High Command has earned his keep on this day.

Fischer, Germany's Aims, p. 404.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

20 juillet 1917

La Déclaration de Corfou

Le 20 juillet 1917, le gouvernement de la Serbie en exil dans l'Ile de Corfou convoque des représentants de la Croatie, de la Slovénie, et des Serbes d'Autriche-Hongrie, pour signer une déclaration d'intention d'unification des populations slaves du sud, les «Yougoslaves».

La Déclaration promet qu'immédiatement après la guerre, dans l'esprit du droit des peuples à disposer d'eux-mêmes, qu'une telle unification va reconnaître une monarchie constitutionnelle parlementaire sous la dynastie serbe des Karadordevic; que chacun des états et chacun des groupes ethniques jouira d'égalité, de liberté religieuse et de suffrage universel; et qu'une inter-dépendance nationale des états leur permettra de s'unir pour se protéger contre l'Allemagne.

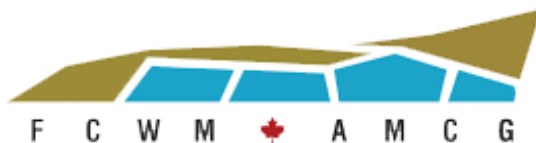


Les deux principaux auteurs de la Déclaration furent le premier ministre serbe **Nikola Pasik** et l'exilé croate **Ante Trumbic**. Ils sont accompagnés ici par **R. Vernich** et **Dr P. Zolger**.

Cette déclaration est à l'origine du Comité Yougoslave qui a obtenu, en décembre 1918, la création du «Royaume des Serbes, des Croates et des Slovènes», qui deviendra la Yougoslavie.

Wikipedia, «Corfu Declaration»;

Image <https://networks.h-net.org/system/files/contributed-files/corfulpoliticians.jpg>



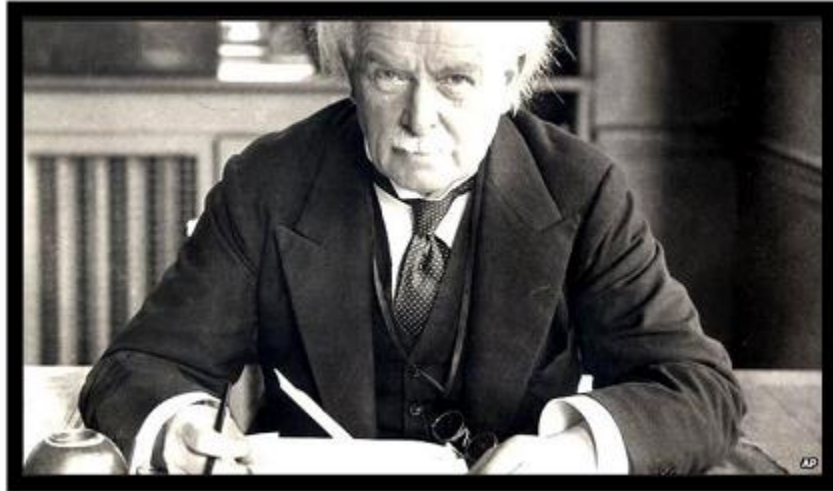
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

21 July 1917

Lloyd George's response to Michaelis

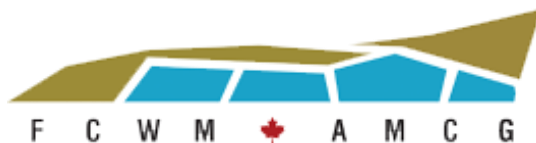


On 21 July 1917, British Prime minister David Lloyd George denounces the speech made by Chancellor Michaelis in the Reichstag two days before.

He accuses him to speak in veiled terms, and denying German aggression and militarism.

«What manner of Government they choose to rule over them is entirely the business of the German people themselves; but what manner of Government we can trust to make peace is our business. Democracy is in itself a guarantee of peace, and if you cannot get it in Germany then we must secure other guarantees as a substitute. The German Chancellor's speech shows, in my judgment, that those who are in charge of affairs in Germany, have, for the moment, elected for war.»¹

¹ Lloyd George, Memoirs, IV: 2049.



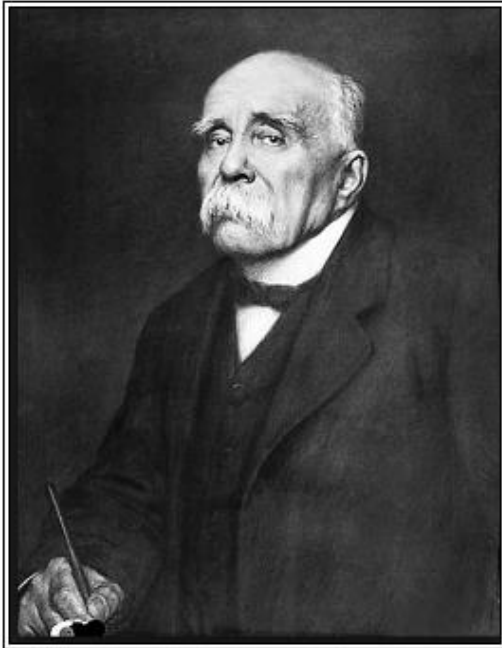
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

22 July 1917

France - Senator Clemenceau Roars



On 22 July 1917, Georges Clemenceau, « **The Tiger** », 77 years old, makes a speech in the Senate attacking Minister of Interior Jean Malvy as a pacifist.

Published in his newspaper L'Homme Enchaîné as « L'Antipatriotisme au Sénat » it condemns the lack of energy in tapping all resources of the State to proceed with the war.

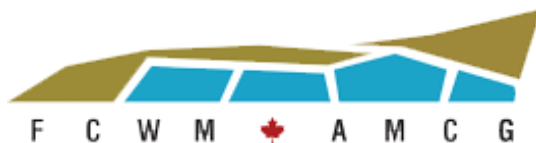
For Clemenceau inaction is antipatriotism.

From this point «Le Tigre» is seen, despite his age, as the obvious politician to gain high office.

Malvy, a Radical socialist, had been protecting labour's interests to the detriment of the Army. He resigns three days later.

The Ribot cabinet will be defeated on 7 Sep.

Michel Winock, Clemenceau (Paris: Perrin, 2007), p. 420.
Brogan, The Development of Modern France, 1870-1939, p. 536.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

23 July 1917

Sir Douglas likes Young Currie's Plan

Canadian General Arthur Currie has submitted some days ago to General Sir Henry Horne, the First British Army Commander, that the plans considered for the attack of Lens by First Army might be re-oriented for better results.

Horne, an amenable and very competent artilleryman, has decided that he would bring Currie's view to General Sir Douglas Haig, the Commander of the whole British Expeditionary Force, and see if this change might be possible.

Sir Douglas is pleased, on **23 July 1917**, by the approach suggested by Currie. He does agree that taking the height of Hill 70 that dominate the north of the city as a first phase will be more profitable than approaching it from the south.

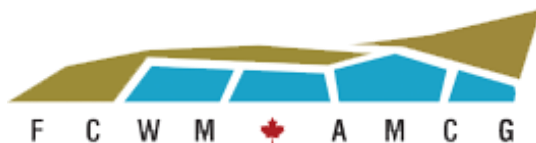


Haig goes to the extent of granting Currie some extra field artillery that his own staff were recommending to keep in reserve.

This is quite the accolade for the new Canadian Corps Commander.

Hill 70 has become his own show and both Horne and Haig are squarely behind him and his clever plan of operations.

More information in Gardner [38-9], Delaney [65, 69], in Delaney and Durflinger (Eds), Hill 70 (CWM, UBC Press, 2017).



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

24 July 1917

“The apple of discord has been thrown into this Assembly”



On 24 July, 1917, Sir Robert Borden moved the third reading of the Military Service Bill.

The Bill, introduced by Borden on June 11, is accompanied by controversy both within the House and outside of Parliament.

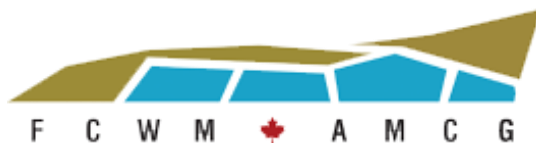
The fight against the Bill is led by **Sir Wilfrid Laurier**, reminding Canadians that Borden had promised no conscription, only voluntary service.

He advocates for a national referendum to settle the matter but to no avail. If conscription is forced on the people, he argues, “division, irritation, friction, and disunion will follow.” He laments the division in his own party when close associates who he considers friends take exception to his stand on Conscription.

He recognizes that men are needed at the front but they are also needed at home to provide public services and grow food, not only for domestic consumption but also to feed the troops overseas.

The Military Service Bill is put to the vote and is passed with 102 supporting it, among which 22 Liberals, and 44 opposing it. It will become Law on 29 August 1917.

Source: House of Commons Debates, 12th Parliament, 7th Session, Vol 4, p. 3718-3737.
<https://archive.org/stream/MilitaryServiceAct1917canada/TheMilitaryServiceActFinal#page/n0/mode/2up>



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

25 juillet 1917

Impasse sur l'échiquier diplomatique



Les Alliés se réunissent encore une fois à Paris, **le 25 juillet 1917**, pour discuter des politiques de guerre et de leur diplomatie interne et externe.

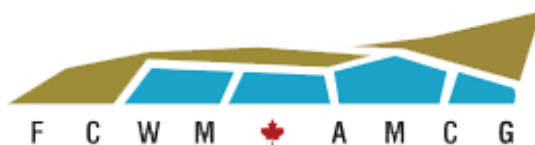
Le premier ministre britannique réitère encore une fois son intérêt pour travailler plus assidûment à convaincre les Autrichiens-Hongrois qu'ils auraient tout intérêt à abandonner leur allié allemand et cesser les hostilités.

David Lloyd George découvre toutefois, tel qu'il l'a remarqué dans les conférence précédentes, qu'il existe des tensions entre les Français et Italiens.

Les représentants du gouvernement français s'opposent secrètement à ce que des avances soient faites à l'Autriche-Hongrie parce qu'il croient que si les Italiens avaient la satisfaction de voir leur ennemi juré demander une armistice, il ne faudrait plus attendre quoi que ce soit d'eux avant la fin de la guerre.

—Évidemment rien de ceci n'est dit officiellement, mais les joueurs comprennent le jeu.

Lloyd George, Memoirs, IV: 2033-4.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

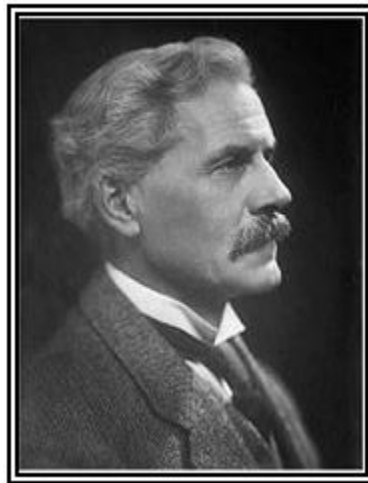
© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

26 July 1917

The Ramsay MacDonald Amendment to the Consolidated Fund Bill

Dissent against the war was strengthened with President Wilson's peace initiatives.

Ramsay MacDonald resigned the leadership of the Labour Party in 1914 when it supported the war. He is now a leading figure in dissent in the British Parliament, especially in the Union of Democratic Control, an NGO advocating democratization of foreign policy.

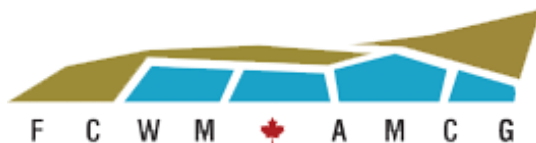


On 26 July 1917, MacDonald moves for an amendment to the Consolidated Fund Bill, seeking a statement of British war aims as a positive response to the recent Reichstag resolution which appeared to offer peace without conquests.

Only 19 MPs support the amendment, with Liberal leader H.H. Asquith particularly eloquent in cautioning against a “patched-up peace” that would leave the German army intact, as well as the regime which had started the war.

—Members are all for Peace, but not at any price.

Further information: Andrew Gregory, “British Foreign Policy Dissent & the Quest for a Negotiated Peace,” McMaster University, Ph.D. Thesis, February 1997.



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

27 July 1917

Creation of the Tank Corps

Combat had demonstrated that the machine gun and barbed wire gave the definite advantage to the defence in trench warfare.

Lieutenant Colonel E. Swinton, of the Royal Engineers, knew of an American agricultural machine, the Holt Caterpillar Tractor. He determined that a protected, armed vehicle that could crush wire and approach machine gun nests could be based on the Holt tracked concept. Swinton became the key figure in the early development and organisation of the armoured fighting vehicle.



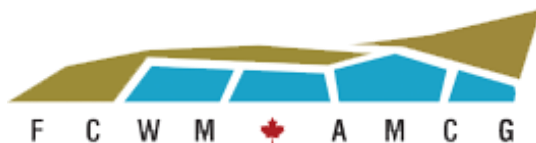
When the first armoured units were established, in 1916, secrecy was essential. Moving them on railroads as covered water “Tanks” was a clever disguise. The name stuck. They were joined as the Heavy Branch of the Machine Gun Corps.

By the summer of 1917, tanks had achieved successes and were no longer a secret weapon. By Royal Warrant of **27 July 1917**, the new arm was christened **The Tank Corps**.

By the beginning of 1918 there will be fifteen British tank battalions, and by the end of the War there will be twenty-six, in addition to a steady French production. Some were used in mass, and some used in packets to accompany the infantry on the advance.

–Tanks are the technological response to machine gun fire and barbed wire that the Germans never mastered.

B.H. Liddell Hart, The Tanks: The History of the Royal Tank Regiment, Vol. 1



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

28 July 1917

Prince Feisal becomes Supreme Commander of Arab Forces



On 28 July 1917, Captain T.E. Lawrence meets King Hussein, the Sherif of Mecca, for the first time. In the presence of the British General Officer Commanding the Hejaz region, they discuss the move of his son, **Emir Feisal bin Husain al**'s headquarters to Akaba, and obtain a letter from Hussein appointing Feisal as Supreme Commander of all Arab Forces operating northward of Akaba. The letter gives Feisal a free hand,

«... to deal direct with the British General Commander-in-Chief in all military matters, which will facilitate the co-operation between my army and that of Great Britain.»

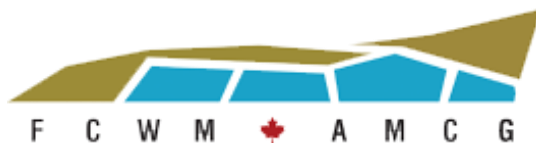
According to historian Jeremy Wilson:

«This diplomatic formula maintained the fiction that the Arab forces were operating as an independent command, while ensuring that in future the British would be able to direct Feisal's operations without needing to secure Hussein's approval.»

Tomorrow, Hussein will arrange to be alone with Lawrence to discuss confidentially what might happen of the Arab claims to Palestine and Syria after the war.

Lawrence will have to decide if he will be Lawrence of Arabia or Lawrence of Britain...

Jeremy Wilson, Lawrence of Arabia, 430-2



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

29 July 1917

United States - French Cooperation in Aviation

Congress signs a \$640m Bill for aeronautical construction for cooperation with France in the war against Germany.

American industry is launched, helped by French technology. But American technology soon takes over.



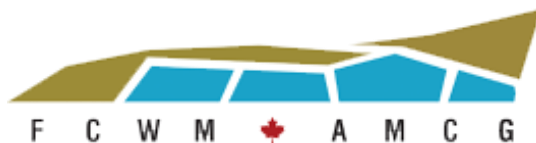
« In May 1917, a month after the United States had declared war on Germany, a federal task force known as the Aircraft Production Board summoned two top engine designers, Jesse G. Vincent (of the Packard Motor Car Company of Detroit) and Elbert J. Hall (of the Hall-Scott Motor Co. in Berkeley, California), to Washington.

« The two left their positions at the Fageol Motors Co., putting an end to the short production of the most luxurious automobile of the period. They were given the task of designing as rapidly as possible an aircraft engine that would rival if not surpass those of Great Britain, France, and Germany. The Board specified that the engine would have a high power-to-weight ratio and be adaptable to mass production.

« The Board brought Vincent and Hall together on 29 May 1917 at the Willard Hotel in Washington, where the two were asked to stay until they produced a set of basic drawings. After just five days, Vincent and Hall left the Willard with a completed design for the new engine, which had adopted, almost unchanged, the single overhead camshaft and rocker arm valvetrain design of the later Mercedes D.IIIa engines of 1917-18.

« In July 1917, an eight-cylinder prototype assembled by Packard's Detroit plant arrived in Washington for testing, and in August, the 12-cylinder version [27,000cc, water-cooled 45° V-12 of 400 hp] was tested and approved.»¹

¹Wikipedia, «The Liberty L-12 Engine»;
Revue Historique des Armées, No. 246, p. 40.



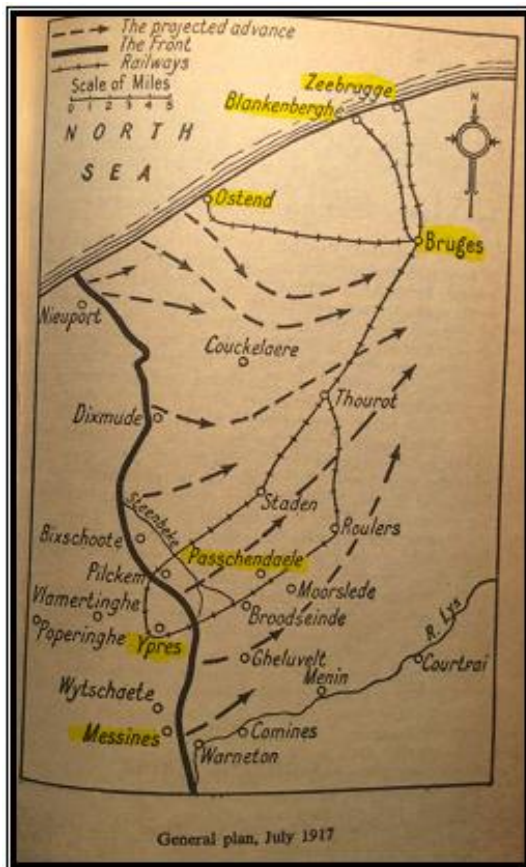
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

30 July 1917

On the Eve of Mud Battle



Since the end of the Nivelle offensive, in May, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig has been re-orienting for a new offensive in Flanders.

This is the **Third Battle of Ypres**, the First being that of 1914, when the Germans first invaded France, and the Second being that of 1915, when gas were first used against the Canadians.

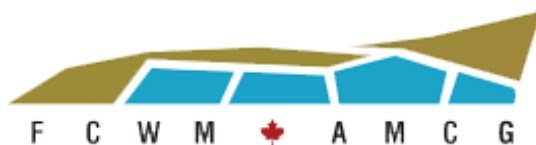
Sir Douglas, this time, wants to bust through the German defences and carry his army to Bruges, with a flanking beach landing inside Belgium.

To achieve this *percée à l'emporte-pièce*, Haig has pushed to the south the older and meticulous Plumer, Second Army, to put in a younger cavalry commander, Hubert Gough, and his Fifth Army, dashing and optimistic.

Since 18 July, the artillery has been battering the German positions along the whole line of the two armies. The operation was first planned for 25 July, but has now been postponed to tomorrow. Not a problem, the artillery ammunition is now plentiful.

On the Eve of Battle, the first signs of mud are becoming obvious for the infantry divisions being sent up to the front line.

—And the artillery is mixing it all up nicely just for them...



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

31 July 1917

Première journée de la Bataille de Pilckem (Flandres)

Le 31 juillet 1917 marque le premier jour d'une bataille des Flandres qui durera toute l'automne, généralement connue comme la Troisième Bataille d'Ypres, qui se terminera, en octobre-novembre, par la Bataille de Passchendaele, de si triste mémoire.

L'attaque initiale, par deux armées britanniques et une armée française, se produit dans les alentours de Ypres, où le village Pilckem donnera son nom aux cinq premiers jours.



Un adage populaire dans cette région dit que les Allemands ont le contrôle sur la pluie. Ceci est particulièrement odieux dans la Flandre occidentale de Belgique, que les terres cultivées ont toutes été réclamées à la mer par des digues, et sont très vulnérables à l'inondation par un drainage instable.

Dès le premier jour de l'attaque, le sol déjà détrempé est saturé par des pluies abondantes. Le mois d'août sera un mois de pluies épuisantes.

—Les chars s'enlisent, les hommes se perdent dans une mer de boue, et les obus ajoutent au malheur.

Leon Wolff, «In Flanders Fields – The 1917 Campaign: The True Story of the Ghastly Butchery that Cost 500,000 Allied Casualties» (Macmillan, 1960), Chap 8. Carte page 119)



Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

<https://www.friends-amis.org/>

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG