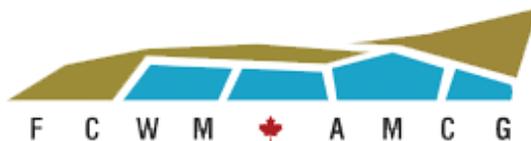


World War I
Day-by-Day
1914 – 1918

June 1917

Juin 1917

La première guerre mondiale
De jour en jour
1914 – 1918

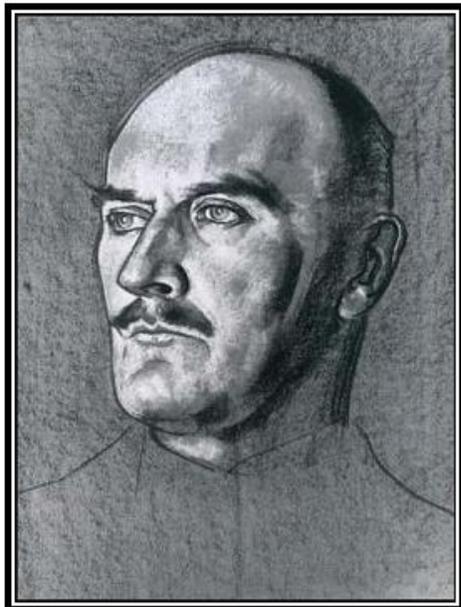


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1 June 1917

Christmas in Jerusalem



Field Marshal Haig has decided that **General Edmund Allenby** would no longer command Third Army on the France front. «The Bull» has upset many generals by being over the edge in his pushing for more ground in front of Arras.

But Allenby is not an incompetent senior officer and Haig himself has known the man for what he is for a long time. He does not really want him sacked.

An opportunity has just come up. The Commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, General Sir Archibald Murray, has just had two unsuccessful attempts in Gaza and has lost credibility there. The idea of presenting that target to Allenby's horns is not objectionable to CIGS Robertson, and delightful to PM Lloyd George. In fact the prime minister is quite happy to see any action shaping up outside of France, where he has felt very little pleasure in two and a half years.

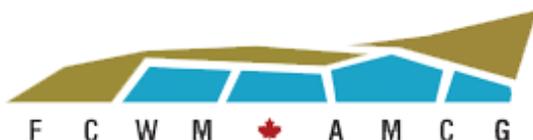
Lloyd George calls in Allenby and gives him the specific mandate «**Jerusalem at Christmas**». The PM also commits to provide much more material and troops than Murray had. Getting Jerusalem is now at the center of the strategy against the Turks.

It is interesting to know that Von Falkenhayn, who has recently been called in to help the Turks regain Baghdad, has specifically stated that Jerusalem was indeed the key to the defence of the Ottoman Empire.

—Great minds will meet in Jerusalem!

Lloyd George, *Memoirs*, VI: 3220;

Jeremy Black, «Edmund Allenby, 1861-1936», in Andrew Roberts and al., (Eds), *The Art of War* (Quercus), 268-75.



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2 June 1917

Billy Bishop's Victoria Cross



Around the end of May, Billy Bishop decided to make a dawn raid on a German aerodrome. On the night of 1 June, he discussed his plan with his fellow pilots and his commanding officer.

At precisely 3:57 a.m. **on 2 June 1917**, Bishop took off in his Neuport 17 from Filescamp Farm and flew first over an airfield near Cambrai where no activity was observed and then over second field where he saw and attacked six Albatross DIII scouts and one two seater on the ground.

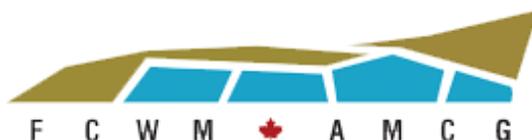
After his initial pass, the Germans took off to engage him. He later claimed to have shot down three airplanes, two very close to the ground, and then headed westward towards the front lines. On the way he successfully evaded a German flying patrol and returned to Filescamp Farm with a lot of battle damage to his aircraft.

He was airborne for 1 hour and 43 minutes. Although there were no witnesses to his victories, his Commanding Officer recommended Bishop for the Victoria Cross which was awarded on 11 August.

Bishop was Canada's first aerial Victoria Cross winner and was the only VC awarded in violation of the warrant requiring eyewitnesses.

Lieutenant-Colonel David Bashow, «The Incomparable Billy Bishop: The Man and the Myths," Canadian Military Journal, Autumn 2012, pages 55-60.

Brereton Greenhous, The Making of Billy Bishop (Dundurn, 2002), p. 108ff.



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3 June 1917

Italy declares a Protectorate over Albania



The articles of the *Pact of London* of 1914, between Great Britain, France and Italy, gave Italy assurances of compensations for her entry into the War on the side of the *Entente*.

Articles 6 and 7 of the *Entente* made provisions for the Italian government to hope that at the end of the War, the other Entente powers would agree that she obtain substantial territory on the east side of the Adriatic so as to be able to prevent Austrian domination of that Sea, and free passage of Italian ships along its length.

Following recent quite unsuccessful military action against Austria in the north, Italy takes upon itself, on **3 June 1917**, to declare a Protectorate over southern Albania, where Italian troops have a defensive perimeter which was held in early 1916, when the Serbs were evacuated from there after their long and arduous retreat.

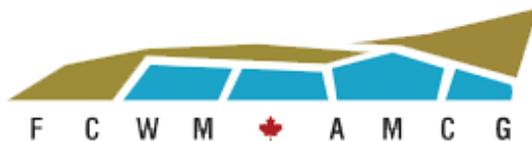
This political gesture comes with no warning to the Entente Powers.

— «It was not a step calculated to simplify the problem of negotiations with Austria.»¹

¹Lloyd George, *Memoirs*, IV: 2031.

James S. Barnes, «Albania»,

Encyclopaedia Britannica, (Twelfth Edition, 1922), XXX: 104-7.



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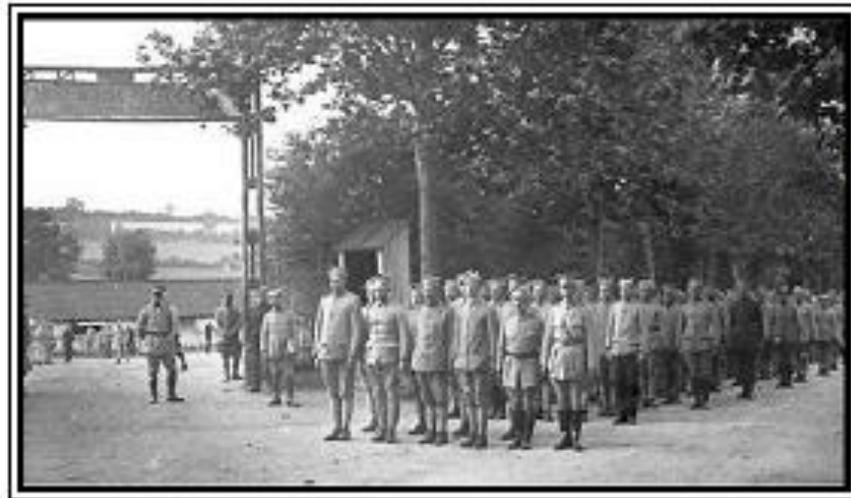
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4 juin 1917

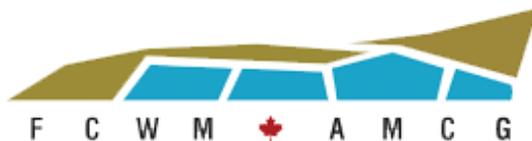
La création de l'armée polonaise en France

est ordonnée par le décret présidentiel du **4 juin 1917**. Entretienue par la France, elle sera autonome, avec ses cadres et ses drapeaux, ses propres insignes, ses uniformes, mais subordonnée au commandement français. L'organisation et le recrutement sont confiés à la Mission militaire franco-polonaise, dirigée par le général Archinard, assisté par un officier polonais le colonel Adam Mokiejewski. Elle ouvre son premier camp militaire, à Sillé-le-Guillaume, dans la Sarthe, le 27 juin 1917, dirigé par un officier polonais, Wladyslaw Jagniatkowski, engagé dans l'armée française depuis 1887. De toutes les parties du monde arrivent des milliers de volontaires polonais : France, Angleterre, Hollande, Italie, Serbie, États-Unis, Canada, Brésil, Japon, Sibérie et de certains pays non-belligérants. Les prisonniers de guerre des armées allemandes et autrichiennes sont autorisés à s'y engager. En février 1918 les effectifs de l'armée polonaise s'élèvent à environ 10.000 soldats. Le 1er Régiment des chasseurs polonais est créé, puis de nouveaux bataillons voient le jour. Ainsi une unité de cavalerie est formée à Alençon, une unité d'artillerie au Mans, une unité technique à Angers. Les cadres sont hétérogènes, des officiers français, des Polonais de la Légion étrangère, des officiers de l'armée russe et de l'armée américaine.



Sources : <http://www.ouest-france.fr/pays-de-la-loire/qui-se-souvient-du-camp-polonais-de-sille-2005414>

Pour en savoir plus : <https://associationkulturapolska.wordpress.com/sille-le-guillaume/>



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5 June 1917

The United States Navy in Convoy Protection

The United States contribution to the War was first felt by its naval assistance.

Immediately after the declaration of war, President Wilson authorized Admiral Sims, the USN representative in London, to commit US destroyers to the task of trans-Atlantic convoy escorts.

On **5 June 1917**, there are now thirty-four ‘Yankee Boats’ playing their part as cross-Atlantic convoys escorts, bringing supplies and troops from the United States, Canada and Latin America.

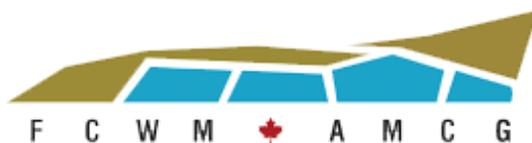


At the same time, large personal yachts are also being converted for anti-submarine work and sent from the United States to help in protecting French ports from German submarines and escorting small convoys along the French coast.

A first group of a half-dozen such transformed yachts leave from New York on this day.

«The mission of the United States Naval Forces in France may thus be crystallized into the following sentence: To safeguard United States troop and store ships and to cooperate with the French naval authorities.»

For more information: Joseph Husband, [On the Coast of France](#), with Preface by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1919. Text at <http://www.naval-history.net/WW1Book-USOnTheCoast.html>)



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6 June 1917

Raymond Collishaw's Black Flight



As a lead up to the Messines offensive No. 10 Squadron (Royal Naval Air Service) was ordered to fly offensive patrols consisting of two flights of aircraft.

Raymond Collishaw led RNAS "B" Flight comprised entirely of Canadians.

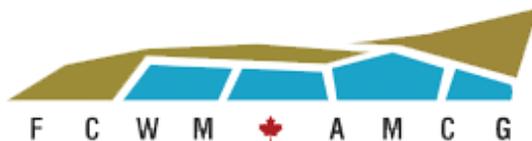
Collishaw's flight painted their Sopwith Triplanes black and called themselves "Black Flight".

The aircraft of "Black Flight" were christened with suitable names: Ellis Reid of Toronto flew Black Roger; J. E. Sharman of Winnipeg flew Black Death; Gerry Nash of Hamilton called his machine Black Sheep; and Marcus Alexander of Toronto christened his plane the Black Prince. The flight commander, Collishaw, flew a machine which he named Black Maria.

On 6 June 1917 Collishaw led his flight on an offensive patrol during which they spotted an Albatros two-seater escorted by about fifteen Albatros and Halbersadt scouts. Ten aircraft were sent down, five having been destroyed and five down out of control. No. 10 Naval Squadron suffered no losses.

— Collishaw had three victories, Nash was responsible for two, and Alexander and Reid had one each.

For more information: Roger Gunn, [Raymond Collishaw and the Black Flight](#), (Dundurn, 2013), p. 106-107.



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7 juin 1917

La seconde bataille de Messines (7 au 14 juin)



Messines-Wytschaete est le site d'une offensive de la 2^e armée britannique du général Plumer contre la Quatrième armée allemande, entre Comines et Ypres, en Belgique.

L'armée anglaise déclenche cette offensive longuement préparée pour forcer l'armée allemande à déplacer ses réserves vers la Flandre, soulageant ainsi la pression sur les troupes françaises.

Lancés dans une guerre de souterrains minés, les alliés creusent des sapes jusque sous les lignes ennemies pour y placer des charges de très fortes puissances.

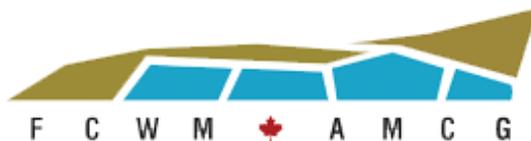
Le **7 juin 1917**, un demi kilotonne d'explosifs dans 19 mines profondes soulève une crête occupée par les Allemands, et fait près de 10 000 victimes. Ces déflagrations sans précédent ne sont que le coup d'envoi d'un assaut marqué par l'emploi de chars et d'artillerie en regroupements massifs, en appui des troupes attaquantes. Une semaine de combat livre trois kilomètres de terrain.

— Messines marque une autre progression de la guerre industrielle et de ses armes infernales.

Leon Wolff, *In Flanders Fields*, Chap. 6.

Sources: <http://www.commemorer14-18.be/index.php?id=11191>

Pour en savoir plus : <http://www.ww1westernfront.gov.au/french/ploegsteert/messines/battle-of-messines-7-june-1917.php>



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8 juin 1917

La Dixième Bataille de l'Isonzo (10 mai - 8 juin 1917)



Le fleuve Isonzo marque la zone de combat «Est» entre les Italiens et Autrichiens depuis le début de la guerre.

Ce fleuve qui descend des Alpes juliennes vers l'Adriatique est entouré de hauts points d'où l'observation permet aux deux côtés de prévoir les coups.

Le but des Italiens est de défendre au centre et à l'ouest, et gagner Trieste dans l'est, qu'ils

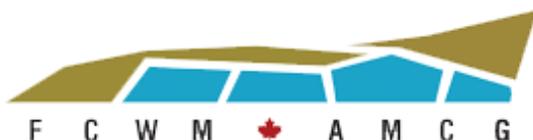
désirent comme point fort à la tête de la mer Adriatique. Ils veulent extraire l'influence autrichienne de cette région.

La compétition alpine dure depuis plusieurs siècles, et a fait l'objet de campagnes napoléoniennes.

Le 8 juin 1917, l'histoire se répète une dixième fois depuis le début de la guerre. Le chef de l'état-major général Italien, le général Luigi Cadorna, a tenté pendant un mois de repousser les défenses autrichiennes vers l'est, alors qu'elles sont accrochées à des sites géographiques tout aussi impressionnants que favorables. Ses attaques répétées ont été préparées avec encore plus de munitions et troupes.

Rien n'y fait. Cinq semaines de combats meurtriers ne mènent à rien.

John Gooch, The Italian Army and the First World War, (Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 209-210.



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9 June 1917

Arthur Currie steps up



The decision by the British High Command to send General Allenby to the Middle East has had a chain reaction.

General Julian Byng, who has commanded the Canadian Corps with great distinction since June 1916, is now appointed to replace Allenby as Commander of the British Third Army (the Canadian Corps is presently in First Army).

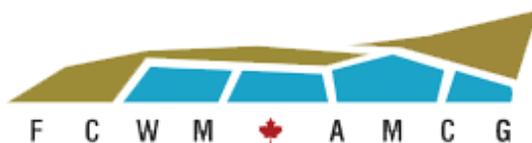
The man to replace Byng on **9 June 1917** is the Canadian who commanded First Canadian Division since mid-1915, Arthur Currie.

Currie has made a name for himself as being a very quick learner. He is not a career officer and has not been qualified for the British General Staff.

However, he has learned on the job at an extremely fast pace, with the help of Byng and many brilliant British staff officers attached to the Canadian Corps. His handling of his division, in the battles of the Somme, Vimy and Fresnoy have marked him as a gifted planner and commander, not hampered by ingrained professional habit.

Currie was promoted to the rank of **Lieutenant General** on June 3rd, and as **Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George (KCMG)** in the Kings' Birthday's Honours' List of June 4th.

— He will be presented with this Honour in the field by King George the Fifth, on July 12th.



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10 June 1917

Air Fighting Now Favours Allies

After the disasters of “Bloody April,” the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) began to contest air superiority against their nemesis, the German Albatros fighters, with two new fighter designs, the **Bristol F.2 fighter** and the **S.E.5**.

Both were robust yet maneuverable; both were flown by leading Canadian aces, the Bristol by Andrew McKeever and the S.E.5 by Billy Bishop.

Additionally, No. 10 Royal Naval Air Service squadron was deployed to the western front to bolster the RFC.

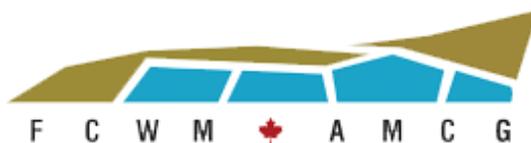


Its famous B (or Black) Flight (all aircraft painted black) led by Canadian ace Raymond Collishaw and composed entirely of Canadians, also took a huge toll of Germans, even though their Sopwith Triplanes were now obsolescent.

Facing this sudden reversal, German ace von Richthofen was recalled from leave to regroup the German fighter squadrons.

— This is a Wing of Change that will have repercussions in the fields.

Further information: Wikipedia, Bristol F.2 Fighter & Royal Aircraft Factory S.E. 5



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11 June 1917

First Reading of the Butcher's Bill

The Military Service Bill, 1917

On 11 June 1917, Prime Minister Robert Borden introduces the Military Service Bill in the House of Commons. The Bill aims at establishing compulsory service overseas for all Canadian fit men of service age (20 to 46), except those involved in necessary industries, including specific war projects.

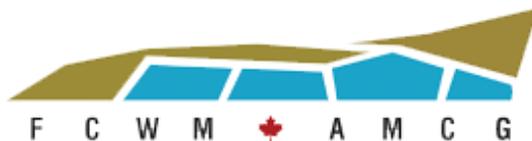
The stated aim is to find 100,000 more men before the end of the year to fill in priority Category A positions, of the most fit and best trained men to serve in five infantry divisions.

The selection of men is not to proceed by ballot as dictated by the existing *Militia Act*, but by successive draft of men from 10 classes, the first three classes comprising men from 20 to 34 not burdened by families, so as to obtain the most fit men first, as was done in Great Britain and New Zealand.

This bill shows the determination of the Conservative Government to go to the bottom of the pool and find and recruit sufficient numbers of fit men to supply the Canadian Corps with all the manpower that it needs to continue fighting without suffering from shortages, which by themselves cause more casualties.

Library of Parliament, Canadian Parliamentary Historical Resources, — Hansard, 12th Parliament, 7th Session, Volume 3, p. 2184-96.

http://cos.wellington.canadiana.ca/oop.debates_HOC1207_03/data/sip/data/files/debates_HOC1207_03.pdf?expires=1497225600&signature=1925510d33c3d7b1d2145bf0e5721af231e505a9&key=1&file=oop.debates_HOC1207_03%2Fdata%2Fsip%2Fdata%2Ffiles%2Fdebates_HOC1207_03.pdf



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12 June 1917

King Alexander I of Greece succeeds his father



King Constantine I of Greece has been a thorn on the side of the Entente allies since the start of the War. His allegiance to the German Imperial Crown has made him plot and scheme against his own government so as to retain Greece in neutrality against public opinion.

Eleftherios Venizelos, the popular pro-Entente Prime Minister, has had to leave Greece and form a provisional government in Salonica with a Greek army of volunteers.

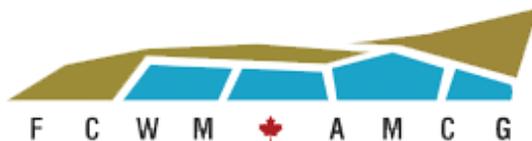
The French have now had enough and have instructed General Sarrail, the commander of the allied Mediterranean Expeditionary Force in Salonica, to stand ready to push into Greece.

They have also invited King Constantine to abdicate, not to his first son, the Crown Prince, who showed himself to be in agreement with his father, but to his second son, 23 years old **Alexander**.

On 12 June 1917, Konstantinos leaves Athens for Switzerland with a retinue of pro-Central Powers officials.

— Greece thus becomes part of the allies, with Venizelos returning to the Parthenon-city a few days later.

John Nicholas Mavrogordato, «Greece», *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Twelfth Edition, 1922, Vol. 31, p. 300-10.



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13 June 1917

London bombed by full-sized bombers

On 13 June 1917, twelve German Gotha bombers inflict the worse bombing raid on London of the whole war.

One hundred and twenty-six die and some 400 are injured from this daylight attack.

These bombing raids by large-sized aircraft, carrying each 1100 lb of bombs, incite General Hugh Trenchard to recommend that the coast of Belgium be seized way out to Holland, so as to prevent enemy air bases within range (one more reason for FM Haig to insist on it).



The better protection of London will also urge for better aerial defence (guns and aircraft), and the amalgamation of the Royal Flying Corps (the British Army air arm) and the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) into a common air service.

— This is indeed the first Battle of Britain, in the War to End all Wars.

Nicholson, *Le Corps Expéditionnaire Canadien*, p. 303-4.

Photo of painting and more information at: <http://militaryhistorynow.com/2013/08/30/operation-turkenkreuz-remembering-the-kaisers-1917-blitz-on-great-britain/>



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14 juin 1917

Nieuport reprend la pointe



A la mi-1917, il devint évident que les Nieuport 17 et 24Bis étaient dépassés par les nouveaux chasseurs allemands. Il fallait un renouveau de technologie.

Le prototype du **Nieuport type 28** vola le **14 juin 1917**. Cet appareil se différenciait des modèles précédents par ses ailes aux bouts arrondis et son fuselage de section circulaire.

Il était propulsé par un moteur rotatif de neuf cylindres Gnome de 160 CV (119 kW), qui pouvait le porter sur 350 km à la vitesse de 200 km/h.

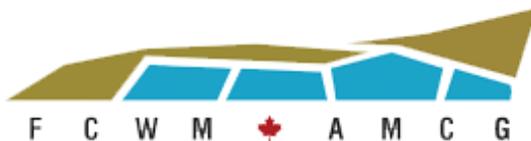
Le Corps expéditionnaire américain ayant un besoin urgent de chasseurs, la firme Nieuport fournit près de trois cents « type 28 » aux Américains.

Eddie Rickenbacker, l'as des as américains de la Grande Guerre, pilota une de ces machines au sein de l'*Aero Squadron 94*.

— C'est cet appareil qui appuiera les troupes américaines au sol jusqu'en 1918.

Sources : <https://www.aviationsmilitaires.net/v2/base/view/Model/1281.html>

Pour en savoir plus : <http://www.avionslegendaires.net/avion-militaire/nieuport-28/>



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15 June 1917

Pershing arrives in France



John J. «Black Jack» Pershing, 56 years old, arrives in France on **15 June 1917**. He is greeted by the War Minister, Paul Painlevé, with the wish that one million American soldiers will follow him.

This is about all what Pershing can bring with him. America is totally unprepared for the war despite the fact that it has already raged on the European continent for 33 months.

The regular United States Army is so small that most experienced officers and NCOs will be required for basic training schools for the large numbers of «Doughboys» who are being drafted by lottery from the States of the Union.

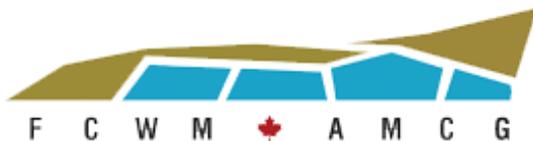
America has provided money loans and food to the British Isles, so far, and its heavy industries have exported raw products in large

volume, including explosives, but its factories have not shifted to the production of armament for its own army. Its Navy is hard at work against German submarines, in the Atlantic.

Pershing is confident that he will soon be able to bring big, fresh divisions to France, but not only will the men for these divisions only be carrying their own personal rifle, but the troopships for their transport have not yet been found.

— Pershing is definitely not ready, but still, he is not particularly impressed by what he sees in France.

Dupuy, Johnson and Bongar, The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography (Harper Collins, 1992).



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16 June 1917

Winston Churchill returns to Cabinet



Winston Churchill has a lot to say about the current War policy. He disagrees profoundly with the turning of Field Marshal Haig toward the Flanders for the forthcoming operations, and the fact that this is so well known in the general public.

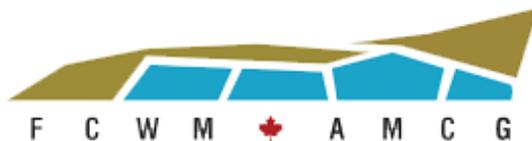
Churchill is again – despite the scolding that he received in the Dardanelles Affair-, convinced that attention should be directed to other fronts than France so as to unbalance the Central Powers' defences. He is still interested by the Middle East and Syria.

Prime Minister David Lloyd George is also of this advice, but he has to face strong political forces and a military High Command that go against that view. The «Westerners» are definitely running the show and the prime minister has to recognize that fact.

But having Winston on board at Munitions is very appealing because this will prevent him from expressing his views too openly against the Government, and it will bring his organizational genius to the leadership of a crucial Department which will now have to address the needs of the United States Army.

WC is very aware that whatever strategic plan that he may have in mind will have to remain under his hat, but he is quite satisfied to be given the job of forging weapons.

Churchill, World Crisis, Vol. III (Part 2), p. 293.



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17 June 1917

Haig's Memo to Robertson



On 17 June 1917, Field Marshal Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force, sends a memorandum to the Chief of the General Imperial Staff (CIGS), General William Robertson, in London.

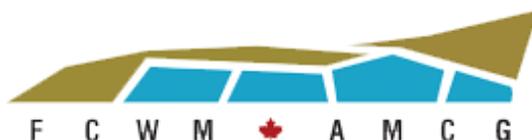
Haig makes the point, once again, that an offensive must be made in the north, along the Belgian coast, to free the Channel ports and push the Germans off toward Germany.

Haig is adamant that he wants a big push in the north as soon as possible, all the way out to Holland.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Lloyd George has problems with civilian industrial manpower and does not want to drain more men to see them lost to the Army for pointless attrition battles.

General Ferdinand Foch, the Chief of the French General Staff, sees these northern operations as useless, — « a duck's march through the inundations to Ostend and Zeebrugge, [...] futile and fantastic, and dangerous...»

Hunter, FOCH, p. 134.



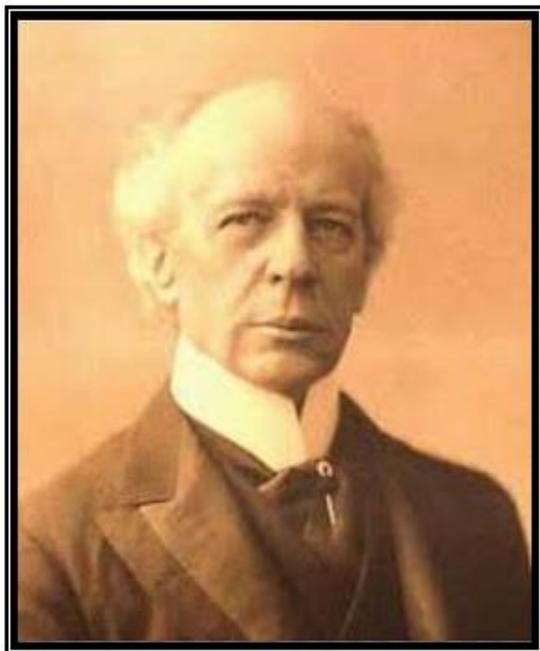
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18 June 1917

Wilfrid Laurier takes his stand on the Military Service Bill?



In the afternoon of **18 June 1917**, Prime Minister Borden introduces Bill 75 for the Second Reading of the House of Commons. He uses the occasion to point out statistics on manpower that show that a pool of at the very least 100,000 fit men could serve before the end of the year if conscripted now.

Laurier stands immediately after and delivers a speech that is eagerly awaited throughout the land. His stand will determine if the Conscription in Canada will go through smoothly or if it will turn out to be a political fight to the finish.

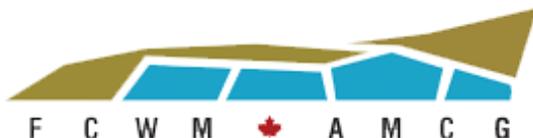
In the last weeks, Prime Minister Borden has made it clear that he would not back down, but that he would like the Liberals to espouse the highly moral position of the government to support the Allies with the type of compulsory service that has already been introduced in Great Britain.

Laurier will not back down either. His important speech makes it clear that he expects that such an important decision, to change the law of the land in the matter of forcing Canadians to undergo military service abroad, will not be taken without the people being consulted.

This marks the official start of the long-expected and already exacerbated Conscription Crisis.

— It will be fought tooth and nail to the bitter wrath of top intellectuals and street thugs.

Library of Parliament, Canadian Parliamentary Historical Resources, — Hansard, 12th Parliament, 7th Session, Volume 3, p. 2390-2404.



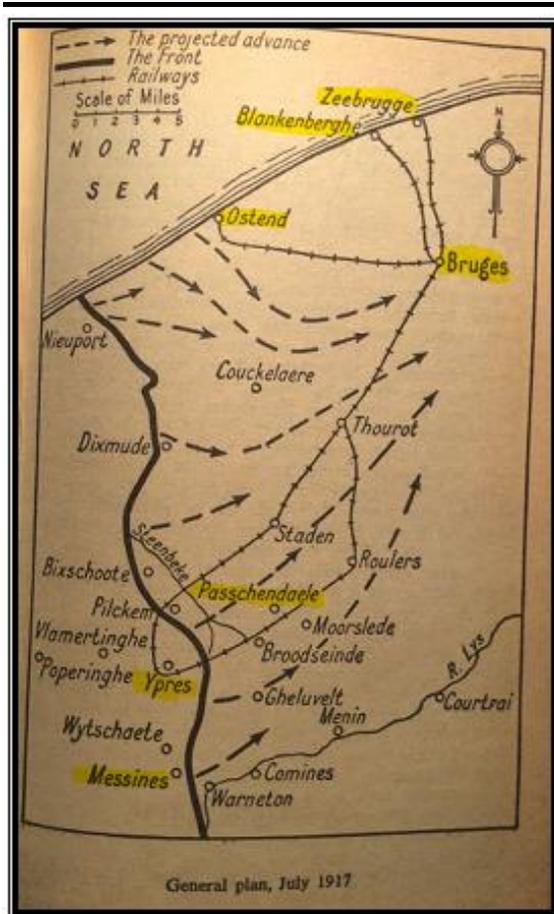
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19 June 1917

Strategy Debates in the War Policy Committee



British Prime Minister David Lloyd George has just created a «War Policy Committee» (himself, Curzon, Milner, Bonar Law and Smuts) because he is dissatisfied with the advice he is receiving from the military.

He considers that right now, major efforts should be made against the Ottomans in Palestine and against the Austrians by Italy.

Douglas Haig and William Robertson want another major offensive in Flanders, in part to clear the coast of German submarine bases. They are backed by Admiral Jellicoe in this, who sees the Belgian ports as deadly nests for German submarines.

On 19 June 1917, the first day of a 3-day strategic conference in London, Haig presents his plan for the Flanders offensive to start in July.

It foresees advances as far as Ostend and Zeebrugge.

— Everything that they know convinces the civilian committee that this cannot be possible.

Lloyd George, Memoirs, Vol. IV, Chap 63 - The Campaign of the Mud, Part 3 - Discussions with the Government on the Policy of the Flanders Offensive, pages 2149-86.

Leon Wolff, Flanders Fields, Chap 7 - The Signed Contract, p. 102-17. Map p. 119.



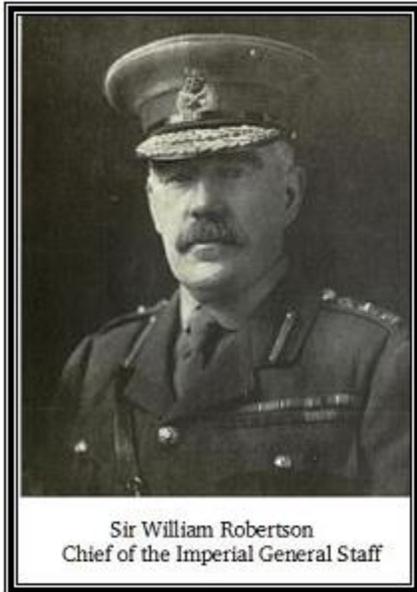
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20 June 1917

Further Debates in the War Policy Committee



On **20 June 1917**, the second day of one of the most important British conferences on high strategy, PM Lloyd George, Andrew Bonar Law and Lord Milner continue to oppose another planned Western Front offensive despite the adamant advice of Field Marshal Haig and **General Robertson**.

The latter argues that a Flanders offensive is the best choice, provided that it not get bogged down in attrition.

Haig states that he has:

“no intention of entering a tremendous offensive involving heavy losses.”

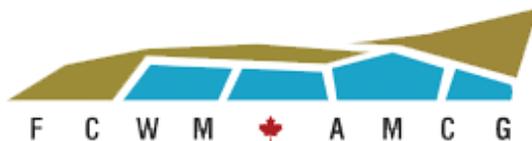
Robertson also opposes the transfer of 300 heavy guns and 12 divisions to the Trieste front, to bolster the Italian offensives against Austria. He says:

“the guns will never go to Italy while I am Chief of the Imperial General Staff,”

... but the Prime Minister boasts that if the offensive fails, the guns will indeed go to Italy.

The showdown between the Easterners and Westerners continues, unresolved, fraught with disaster.

David Woodrow, Field Marshall Sir William Robertson;
Lloyd George, Memoirs, Vol. IV, chap 63;
Grigg, Lloyd George: Vol. 4, chap 10 «Haig gets his way», p. 155-73.



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21 June 1917

Lloyd George gives Haig the green light

For the third day of the strategic conference, the British Prime Minister continues his call for efforts to capture Trieste, including transferring 300 heavy guns to Italy. His view, stated in the War Policy Committee on 21 June 1917, is that it would be preferable for Italians to die, rather than more British soldiers.

The military remained unmoved, citing their conviction that the Italian high command, especially Marshal Cadorna, are not competent enough.

In the end, the PM yields under duress and authorises Haig to continue planning the Flanders offensive, subject to final approval.

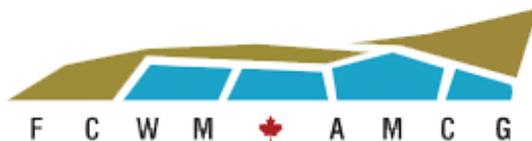
Lloyd George has to recognize that it would be too great a political responsibility for the War Policy Committee to take the strategy of the War out of the hands of the military.

Later, however, he will complain bitterly that the military withheld crucial information during these discussions, such as the fact that the Tank Corps' assessment had foreseen that the terrain and weather would neutralise the tanks; or that the French tacticians were opposed to even the concept of such an operation.

— These three days of confrontation will result in the battle of Passchendaele, of eternal fame, and no less protracted controversy.



Lloyd George, Memoirs, Volume IV.



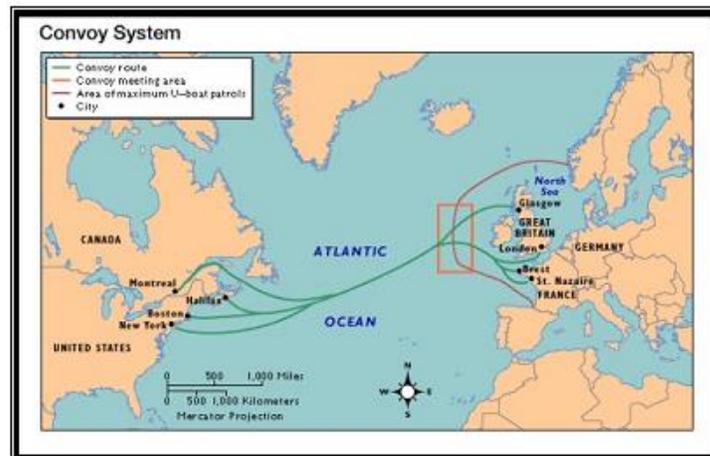
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22 juin 1917

Le système des convois est institué au Canada



Le système de convois est institué au Canada le **22 juin 1917**. Ceci signifie que dorénavant les cargo à destination des Îles britanniques partiront ensemble plutôt qu'individuellement, et seront escortés par des *destroyers* équipés pour la défense anti-sousmarine.

Le principal port pour le départ des convois est Halifax. Les navires en provenance de Saint-John, NB, de Sydney, NÉ, ou d'ailleurs le long de la côte, se rassemblent dans le bassin intérieur de ce port jusqu'à ce que plusieurs dizaines soient prêts à partir.

Les convois prennent alors des routes variées dans l'Atlantique Nord, la plupart du temps selon des azimuts en zigzags imprévisibles, de sorte à empêcher les calculs par l'ennemi. Les résultats prouvent rapidement que la probabilité d'interception par les chasseurs sous-marins est ainsi réduite, malgré la densité des bateaux lorsqu'ils voyagent en formation.

C'est ce système de convois qui va prévenir que la courbe statistique des marchandises livrées, qui montrait une victoire imminente de la Marine allemande, soit tout-à-coup redressée à la faveur des Alliés.

— Il s'agit là d'un grand tournant de la guerre.

Johnson, Rawling, Gimblett, and MacFarlane, The Official History of the Royal Canadian Navy, Volume I: The Seabound Coast, 1867-1939 (Dundurn, 2010). Tr. Histoire officielle de la Marine royale du Canada, Volume 1: Du Littoral à la Mer, 1867-1939. (Dundurn, Défense nationale et Travaux Publics et Services Canada, 2010), p. 505.



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23 June 1917

A well-connected soldier



A veteran of the Second Boer War where he was awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery, **Richard E. W. Turner VC** enjoyed an excellent reputation.

He joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force at the outbreak of the First World War with the rank of Brigadier General, and was given command of the 3rd Brigade in the 1st Canadian Division.

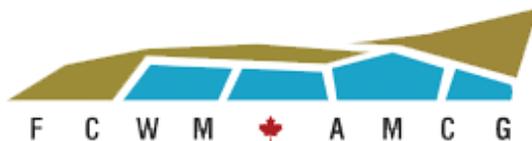
In September 1915, he was promoted a Major General and given command of 2nd Canadian Division.

Turner was however marked by two incidents where he showed weaknesses in tactical judgment. The latest involved an imbroglio that cost his position to the British Commander of the Canadian Corps, General Alderson, for political reasons.

Turner was promoted Lieutenant General on **23 June 1917**, and kept his seniority as top general in the Canadian Expeditionary Corps. But he did not get to command the Corps.

He was appointed the Commander of Canadian Forces Overseas in England, when General Arthur Currie, promoted on the same day but junior to him, was given the command of the Canadian Corps.

While Turner VC, CB, KCMG, was never in question for his courage, it is thought that had he not been a popular Boer War hero and politically well-connected in Canada, he would not have received the promotions and honours bestowed on him.



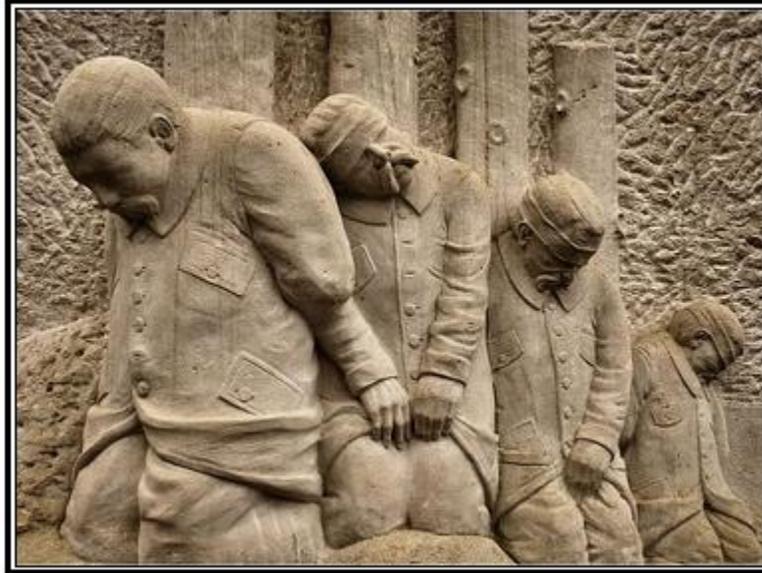
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24 June 1917

Aftermath of the Nivelle Operations – So-called ‘Mutinies’

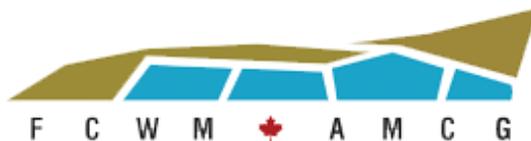


The demoralization of the French troops after the defeat of the Nivelle operation had a profound effect on the effectiveness of the French Army but:

- 1 -The disturbances never amounted to proper mutinies;
- 2 -The French were always able to defend against the German operations throughout the period of difficulties;
- 3 - The French Government did not take drastic action against the troops because it had already decided that it was going to wait for the Americans to arrive before starting offensive operations again;
- 4 -Hence the generous Pétain policy for the troops.

Winter, Haig's Command, p. 86-7.

For more information, picture: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/500826/wwi-centennial-mutinies-rock-french-army-u-boats-wreak-havoc>



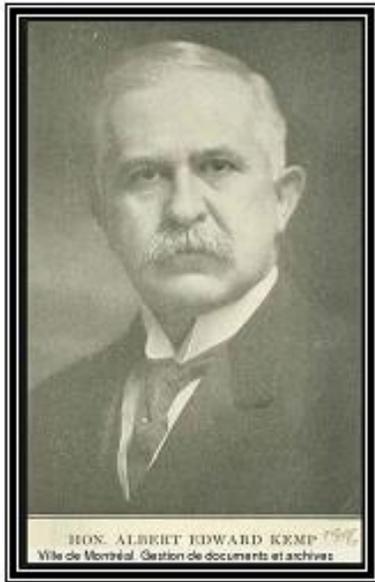
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25 June 1917

The start of the Conscription debate in the House of Commons



In the context of the second Reading for the Military Service Bill, the **Minister of Militia, Edward Kemp**, makes a long speech in the House of Commons on **25 June 1917**, on the question of recruitment. The main points that come out of it are:

→The level of recruitment, between 4 and 7,000 per month does not sustain the needs of the Canadian Forces Overseas.

→Too many recruits have opted for artillery, which has now been closed as an option. But the Government will not force a change of trade for those recruited.

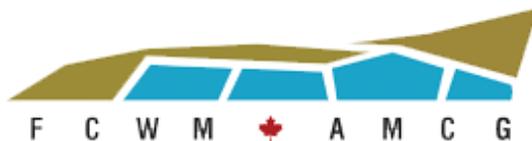
→The Government believes that Canadians are overwhelming in favor of a system of draft by lottery, as was immediately instituted in the United States, where the most patriotic are not necessarily the most heavily recruited.

→Those required in priority are fit men for the infantry, and experienced hands for the railroad and forestry corps, for which the whole imperial forces have their greatest demand.

→So far, 155,000 British subjects not born in Canada have been sent overseas from Canada, as well as 125,000 English-speaking Canadians, and 15,000 French-speaking Canadians, from all provinces.

→The Minister is adamant that with 1,583,000 men of service age left in Canada, the country is definitely able to sustain its contingent for the foreseeable future, as well as its industries.

Hansard, 12th Parliament, 7th Session, 3rd Volume, pages 2695-2729 (Fr.)



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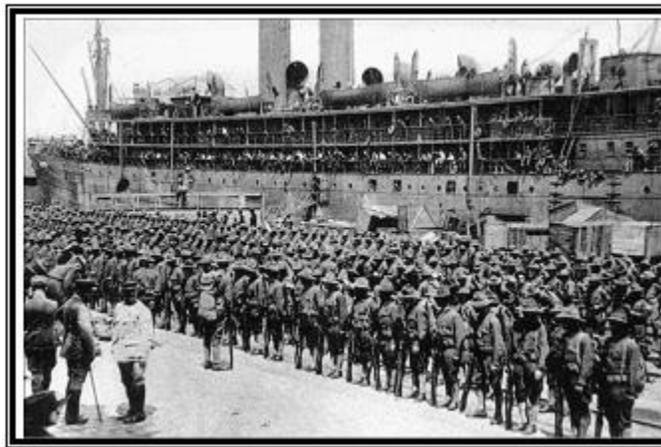
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26 juin 1917

Port de St-Nazaire, les Américains débarquent

Les premiers convois de troupes américaines arrivent le **26 juin 1917**, à la surprise générale de la population qui n'a été avertie que le jour même.

Pendant deux ans, le port va accueillir une noria de navires transporteurs de troupes et de matériel qui joueront un rôle décisif pour la victoire finale. Quelques 198,000 hommes débarqueront ici, ainsi qu'une moyenne de 4,400 tonnes de matériel et de marchandises par jour en provenance d'Outre-Atlantique.



Entre 1917 et 1919, Saint-Nazaire va vivre à l'heure américaine découvrant auprès des 30 000 soldats qui stationnent en permanence dans les neuf grands camps implantés dans et autour de la ville, un mode de vie très différent. Au début, les Nazairiens sont fascinés par tous ces véhicules militaires, par ces «Sammies» décontractés et joviaux avec lesquels ils tissent des liens d'amitié.

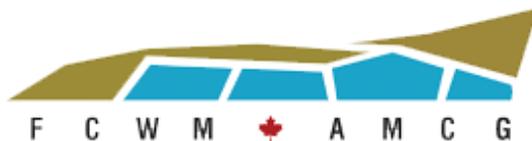
Mais ils découvrent aussi le prix des denrées courantes qui flambent, l'alcoolisme, la prostitution et l'attitude raciste des Américains blancs à l'égard des dockers noirs.

— Cela choque en profondeur une population attachée aux valeurs de solidarité et de fraternité.

Sources : <http://www.saint-nazaire-tourisme.com/content/les-americains-st-nazaire-et-entrepot-frigorifique-1917>

Pour en savoir plus :

http://enenvor.fr/eo_actu/wwi/un_debarquement_passe_inapercu_l_arrivee_des_americains_a_saint_nazaire_le_26_juin_1917.html



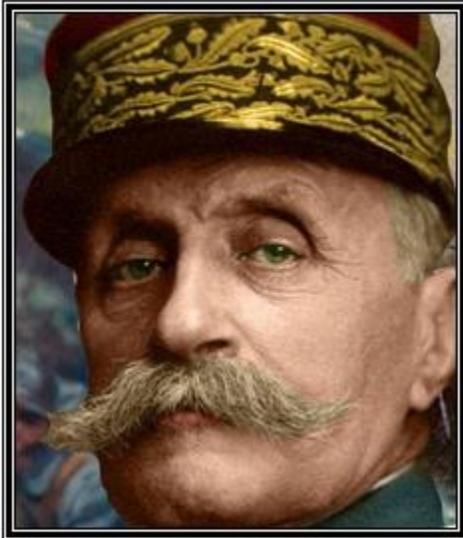
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27 June 1917

Foch's Westerner's outlook for the upcoming operations



As the Chief of Staff of the French Armies, Foch's views on the possible collapse of Russia is that the allies should concentrate on the France Front.

This comes against the views of the British War Cabinet, who want the Allies to do more on the secondary fronts (Salonica, Middle East, Mesopotamia), to harass the Central Powers in all directions.

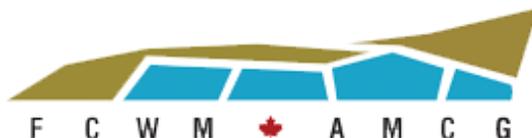
In a Memo circulated to representatives of allied governments in Paris, Foch outlines measures considered essential to meet this threat. He concludes:

«Confine ourselves to the simple defence of secondary fronts, and reduce the effectives on these fronts to a minimum consistent with this defensive attitude.»

Foch also wants to hasten in every possible way the creation of an American Army and its transport to France; prepare the tonnage necessary for moving the forces to be taken from secondary fronts; obtain unity of action on the Western Front by means of a permanent inter-Allied military organ, whose function would be to prepare the rapid movement of troops from one theatre to another.

It will take yet a while before his views carry the day... But they will carry the war...

Hunter, FOCH, p. 135, quotes Foch's Memoirs, 256-7.



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28 juin 1917

Pétain n'aime pas les officiers politiques

Le général Henry Wilson, qui a été depuis longtemps l'officier de liaison britannique auprès du Grand Quartier Général français, se voit remplacé.

Avec la nomination de Pétain comme Commandant-en-Chef, les relations britanniques-françaises ont changé. Pétain n'aime pas les manières politiques de Wilson, qui portent vers l'intrigue. Wilson parle bien français, mais il est un irlandais protestant dont les vues politiques lui ont déjà causé des problèmes au cours des révoltes de l'Ulster.

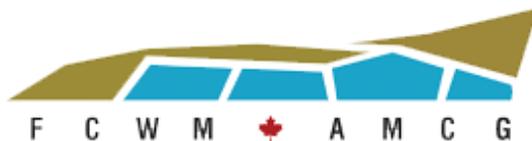
Foch est un ami de Wilson. Ils ont été tous deux commandants des grandes écoles d'état-major avant la guerre et se sont beaucoup consultés. Mais Foch respecte le style de Pétain et demande à son ami de se trouver un remplaçant.



Wilson n'est pas particulièrement aimé par Haig et Robertson, qui le suspectent de représenter plus souvent les vues du gouvernement que celles du Haut Commandement militaire britannique. Ils ne sont pas mécontents de le voir remplacé.

Wilson retourne à Londres, mais ses contacts avec les ministres ne le laisseront pas longtemps dans l'ombre.

Voir revue de Andrew B. Godefroy de Keith Jefferey, Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson: A Political Soldier (Oxford UP, 2006), dans Canadian Army Journal, 12:3.



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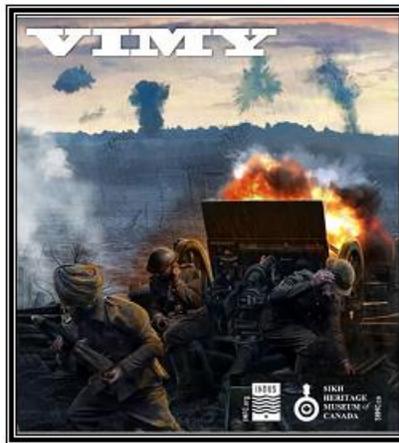
29 juin 1917

La Quatrième Division reçoit sa propre artillerie

Depuis son arrivée en France, lors de la bataille de la Somme, la Quatrième Division canadienne n'a pas eu sa propre artillerie de campagne intégrale pour l'accompagner en tout temps, comme pour les autres divisions.

On lui a substitué un régiment d'artillerie de campagne qui est venu de l'Inde, au début de la guerre, au sein de la 3^{ème} Division de l'Armée de l'Inde, la division de Lahore.

Lorsqu'à la fin de 1915, toutes les troupes d'infanterie indiennes ont été envoyées vers d'autres théâtre de guerre (Égypte, Mésopotamie), l'artillerie divisionnaire est restée en France pour être



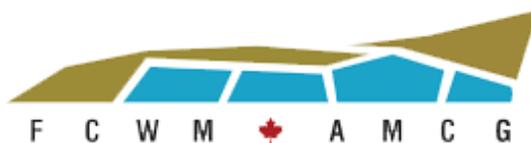
attachée où le besoin se faisait sentir. L'artillerie de l'Armée de l'Inde, par tradition impériale, est formée en large proportion de personnel britannique.

La Troisième Division canadienne a donc été supportée, à son début, par l'artillerie de Lahore, avant que sa propre artillerie canadienne soit prête à la joindre. La Quatrième Division canadienne a à son tour bénéficié des services des artilleurs de Lahore pendant presque un an.

Fin juin 1917, les artilleurs canadiens arrivent pour se joindre à la Quatrième Division.

— Ils ont la même devise que toutes les artilleries de l'Empire britannique: — «*Ubique*»
(Partout)

<http://shmc.ca/battle-of-vimy-ridge/>



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30 June 1917

The Looming Manpower Crisis



The shocking butcher's bills of even the glorious victories, as at Vimy Ridge, place unprecedented strain on Canada's male population.

The statistics – if casualty trends continue and with recruiting in collapse – show that Canada faces a manpower crisis which will eventually either reduce Canada's military contribution to the war or cripple the economy.

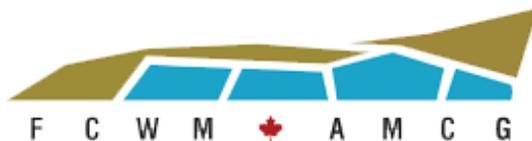
Of a total population of 8 million, 1.5 million men remain after 424,000 enrolled in the armed forces as of May 1917.

Of those, 200,000 produce munitions and 917,000 work on farms, both vital to the Empire's war effort.

Those in training can sustain the Canadian Corps for some time, but the military wants 100,000 men from the remaining 400,000 in non-vital posts.

— How to select them is the business of the Military Service Bill being debated throughout the land.

Further information: Tim Cook, *Warlords: Borden, Mackenzie King and Canada's World Wars*



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