

July 1st, 1918

A Short Period of Rejoicing



Field Day on Dominion Day

For Dominion Day, the Fifty-First Anniversary of the Canadian Confederation, and with the presence of the Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden and members of his Cabinet, who are in Europe to attend the British Imperial Conference, Sir Arthur Currie organizes the largest field day that the Canadian Corps has ever had.

Inter-Divisional sports matches are organized in many sports, and such dignitaries as

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught and General 'Black Jack' Pershing attend the event under a perfect sky at Tinques, some 20 km West of Vimy.

Currie uses the day to re-affirm the unity of the Canadian Corps after a period in Reserve in which the divisions of the corps were sent separately to various tasks with other British army corps.

Currie is adamant that he wants the Corps to remain together, and he has made many changes to the organization so as to make it the largest and strongest corps in the British armies.

The period of Reserve will end on 15 July. God knows what will happen then!

●Nicholson, Corps Expéditionnaire Canadien, p. 416.



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Le 2 juillet, 1918

Le Conseil Supérieur des Prises de Bec



Jamais rien de facile à Versailles

Le Conseil Supérieur de Guerre de Versailles voit à orienter la stratégie générale et la stratégie militaire entre les Alliés. Les chefs d'État s'y réunissent périodiquement, pour y définir les grands principes de la coopération inter-alliée. Les comités civils et militaires des représentants permanents préparent les exposés sur les renseignements, de même que les plans d'état-major. C'est le grand quartier général des armées alliées du généralissime Ferdinand Foch, au château de Bombon, en Seine et Marne, qui émet les ordres aux groupes d'armées alliés pour les opérations en cours.

La réunion du Conseil du **2 au 4 juillet 1918** est marquée encore une fois par des divergences entre les chefs d'État. Le Président français **George Clemenceau** a pris des décisions sans consultation qui écorchent le premier ministre David Lloyd George.

Notamment, Clemenceau a négocié les apports américains à la faveur des Français, et a laissé aux britanniques la responsabilité de transporter trans-Atlantique, d'ici 1919, les deux millions de soldats de la US Army prévus pour le théâtre français.

Clemenceau a aussi décidé de changer le commandant des troupes alliées à Salonique par un

autre général français, contre l'avis de Lloyd George.

— Rien n'est facile au Conseil Supérieur, mais si c'était facile, il n'aurait pas besoin d'exister...

•Hunter, Foch, 179. • Photo: Clemenceau et Weygand, au Trianon, Versailles, voir «Clemenceau, Père de la Victoire» : <http://www.clemenceau2018.fr/f/frise/163/fiche/>



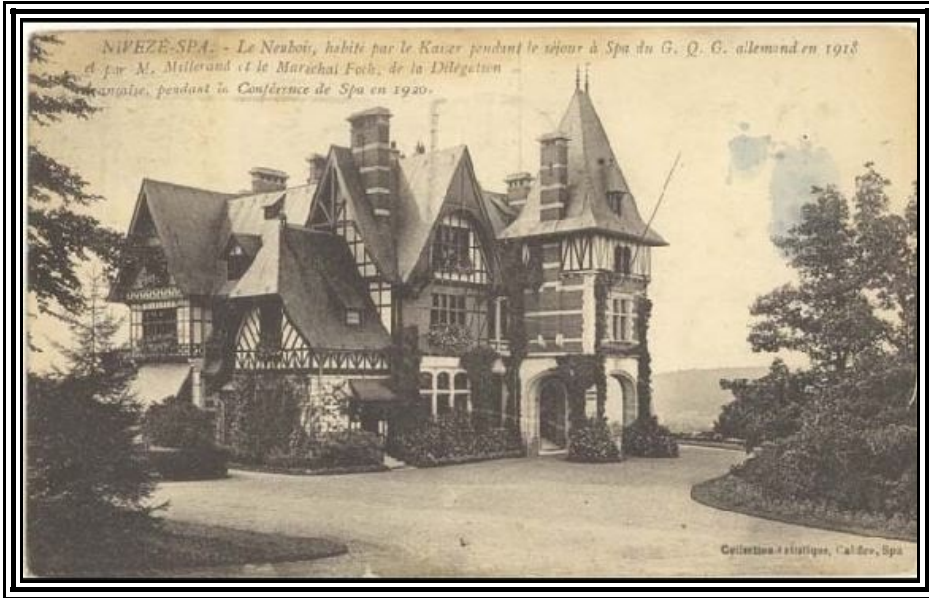
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July 3rd, 1918

A Conference to Deny Reality



The Spa Conference of 2-3 July

At the same time that the Allies are having the Supreme Council of War's Conference at Versailles (2-4 July), the Germans are having a Conference of the Crown Council at the Belgium residence of their Supreme War Lord, Kaiser Wilhelm II, the **villa of «Neubeau», in Spa (2-3 July 1918)**.

The Conference was called for the purpose of re-affirming Germany's determination to insist on all the prerogatives that its victory in the War will make

possible.

Attended by all the highest officials of the realm and by a strong delegation from the Headquarters of OHL, including both Hindenburg and Ludendorff, the reunion is marked by unbounded optimism.

Remarkably, however, the German Foreign Minister, von Kühlmann, is not invited. He is repudiated for words that he has recently spoken in the Reichstag, introducing the idea that Germany might not win the war, and that peace negotiations might be necessary in the end. Von Kühlmann, a realist diplomat and politician, has in fact already had contacts with the United States through the McCormick agricultural concern.

— The last great conference of the Great Crown Council of Germany is basking in unreality. It will be harshly brought to its senses in barely a fortnight.

•Fischer, Germany's War Aims, p. 621-4



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July 4, 1918

A Sermon on the Hill



From Fourteen Points to Four Principles to Four Ends

On 8 January 1918, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States shook the diplomatic establishment by an offer of his «**Fourteen Points**», that should direct the quest for peace and post-war order.

His Points, inspired by his own religious fervor and academic background, caught the Allies by surprise and the Central Powers by stealth: they did not know what hit them.

With its promise of recognition of peoples' right to rule themselves, and its view of a world body to keep nations of the world forever straight and honest, his crusade met with a great reluctance on the part of the less theoretical, but great popularity with the downtrodden.

Facing the evidence that governments, friend or foe, did not rally to his suggestion, Wilson followed up with a boiled down version of his piety with the «**Four Principles**» of 11 February.

Once again, the suggestion that Empires should not exist did not go down well with Empires at war.

On 4 July 1918, Wilson continues with a speech on the «**Four Ends**», reinforcing on his views that peoples of the world should be freed to govern themselves. This time, Wilson rings a bell.

— The Central Powers, feeling the growing threat of their own demise, warm up to the prospect of a generous post-war settling of accounts.

●Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, p. 257-9.



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July 5, 1918

Surprise, Surprise! At Last Surprise!

Pas de danse at Vaux Wood and Hamel

In his search for new techniques for a war of movement, General Rawlinson, the Commander of the Fourth British Army, is interested in two fascinating developments which happened in his army between 1st and **5 July 1918**.

In the vicinity where the American Marines Brigade fought for two weeks with more courage than skill, in Bellow Woods, the 33rd United States National Guard Division undertook the assault of the village of Vaux Wood, on July 1st. This division turned out an astounding victory of superb planning and execution, where twelve hours of artillery preceded an astonishingly successful assault.

Four days later, the new commander of the Australian Corps, **John Monash**, proved no less successful in taking the village of Hamel with a perfectly executed assault combining skilful artillery, the intelligent use of new Mark V tanks, and aerial cover. The Australians were accompanied by four companies of American troops, 'borrowed' despite Pershing.

The techniques used by these newcomers reflect a fresh view at interarm coordination which gives an element of effective surprise achieved by a new 'slick efficiency'¹ at using fully choreographed movement.

— This is a clear indication that with the volume of the materiel now at hand and the new mobility of the logistics following on the steps of swiftly moving forces, a new type of nimble commander is emerging.

¹●Pitt, 1918, 187-91, quote from 188.



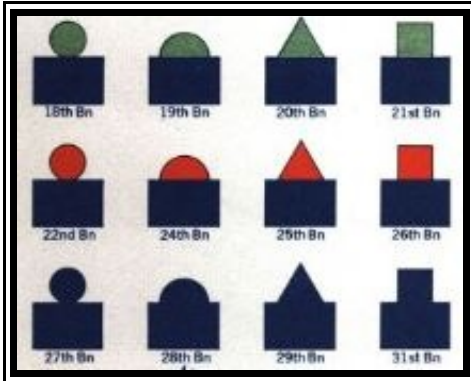
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July 6, 1918

Only the Rich Canadian Cousin Has It All!



In defence of the 9-battalion division

The fighting in the summer of 1918 is quite changed from what happened in the Somme, in Passchendaele, or even in the battle of Cambrai of November 1917. The big change is the 9-battalion division. The Germans as well as the French, have adopted the British decision to cut infantry from twelve to nine battalions in each division, and from there make more divisions.

But the argument is not complete with the simple transfer. The decrease in infantry in the divisions is compensated by the increase in materiel and specialist troops. The lessons of the battlefield have all born the fruit that more engineers, and more signals, and more transport, and more mortar, and more machine guns, and more aircraft, add to the combat potential of a divisions if they are well integrated with interarm skill. Fighting with the wherewithall, including mobile logistics, is the new wave.

Lloyd George speaking of the German Army drew the lesson in this way:

«The enormous increase in the mechanical power at the disposal of her armies had rendered it necessary that she should allocate a considerable proportion of her men to the new units thus created. The net result was that with diminished numbers of infantry her divisions were three times as powerful as they were at the commencement of the War.»¹

— Only the rich Canadians cousins have it all: Big battalions, Big divisions, Big corps, Big materiel, Big teamwork!

¹Lloyd George, Memoirs, V, p. 2635-7.



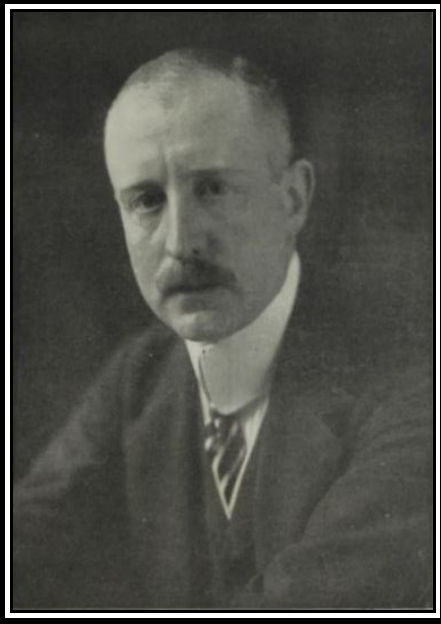
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Le 7 juillet, 1918

Ambassadricide à Moscou



Ambassadeur allemand assassiné à Moscou

Au cours d'une révolte des Socialistes révolutionnaires antibolcheviques à Moscou, l'ambassadeur allemand, **le Comte Wilhelm von Mirbach-Harff** est assassiné dans l'enceinte même de l'ambassade, par deux bolcheviks, Nicolas Andreiev et Jacob Blumkine, agissant pour le Parti Socialiste Révolutionnaire de gauche, qui espérait ainsi déclencher la reprise de la guerre avec l'Allemagne.

Son successeur sera Karl Helfferich.

Sources :

RLINK"https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_von_Mirbach"https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_von_Mirbach

Pour en savoir plus : <http://dictionnaire.sensagent.leparisien.fr/Wilhelm%20von%20Mirbach/fr-fr/>



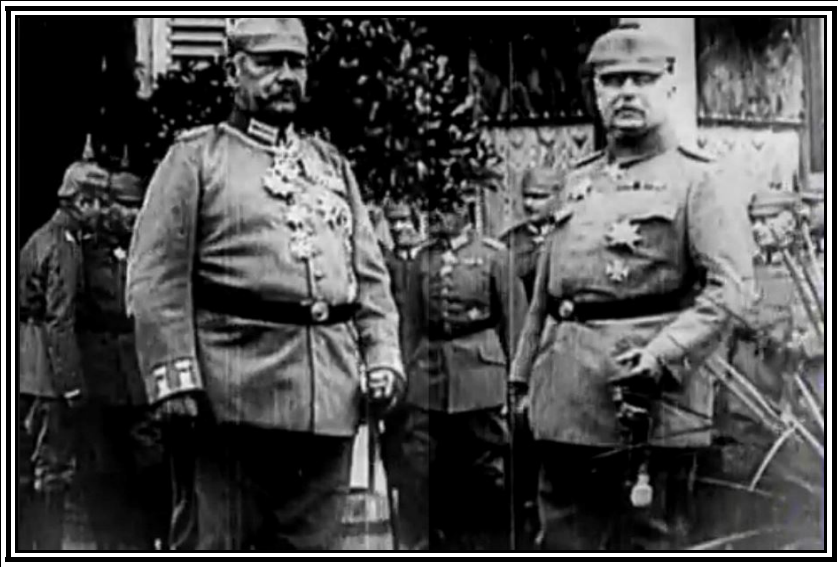
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Le 8 juillet, 1918

Les dernières fatuités



Les six demandes

Au cours de la conférence de Spa sur les buts de la guerre, au début du mois de juillet 1918, les dirigeants du gouvernement ont, encore une fois, confirmé leurs intentions pour les mois qui viennent.

Ils déterminent alors les exigences quant au statut de la Pologne après la guerre, et prononcent six demandes qui devaient être remplies par les efforts de guerre:

- 1- L'association entre Pologne et Autriche sera rejetée.
- 2- Les Polonais auront un chef politique allemand.
- 3- La Pologne sera dominée par l'Allemagne.
- 4- Ses chemins de fer seront contrôlés par l'Allemagne.
- 5- Ses forces armées seront contrôlées par des conventions.
- 6- Les frontières seront délimitées par les nécessités militaires.

Tout ceci relève d'une fatuité inébranlable que même les revers de France, au cours des derniers trois mois et demie, ne peuvent tempérer.

Ludendorff va jusqu'au point de dire que la Pologne sera imputée des dépenses de guerre et que son économie deviendra si dépendante «**qu'elle ne pourra que de chercher à s'attacher à nous.**»

●Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, p. 531



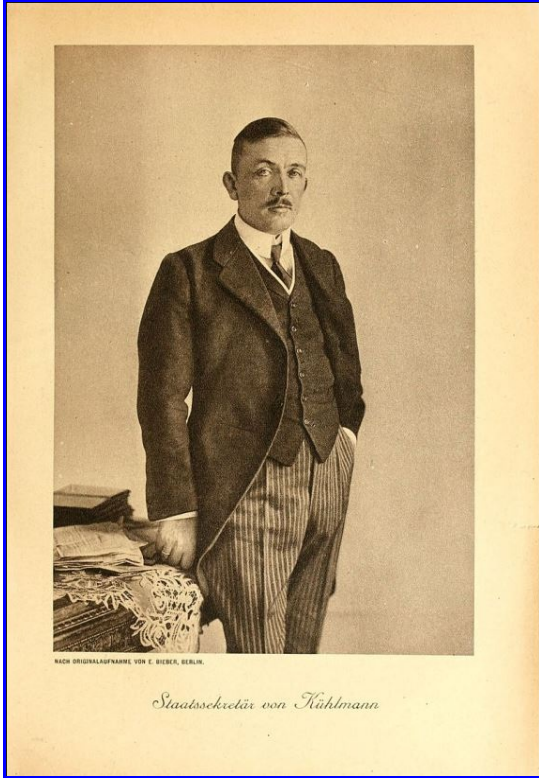
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Le 9 juillet, 1918

Un Prophète de Malheur Écarté



Un ministre trop réaliste du Reichstag est remplacé

Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires étrangères de l'Allemagne, **Richard von Kühlmann**, se voit forcé de déposer sa démission le **9 juillet 1918**.

Partisan d'une paix de compromis, Kühlmann essaie de faire reconnaître que la possibilité existe que l'Allemagne ne gagne pas la guerre et qu'une bonne politique devrait inclure des options de préparations aux compromis.

Après un discours au Reichstag, il y a quelques jours, où Kühlmann exprimait prudemment ses doutes sur une victoire purement militaire, et faisait allusion à un compromis avec le Royaume-Uni par voie de négociation, les conservateurs et le haut état-major lui ont reproché sa position défaitiste.

Kühlmann désire de plus continuer certaines négociations secrètes, notamment avec Sir William Tyrrell, aux Pays-Bas, pour préparer une fin supportable à une guerre qu'il estime ne plus pouvoir être victorieuse. Cette initiative lui fait perdre son poste.

L'empereur Guillaume II, qui possède le pouvoir de révoquer les ministres du Gouvernement, fléchit sous la pression d'Hindenburg, le vrai détenteur du pouvoir politique.

— Le type de réalisme qu'affiche Kühlmann n'est pas acceptable dans l'Allemagne totalitaire.

Sources : <http://dictionnaire.sensagent.leparisien.fr/Richard%20von%20Kühlmann/fr-fr/>

Pour en savoir plus : <http://dictionnaire.sensagent.leparisien.fr/Richard%20von%20Kühlmann/fr-fr/>



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July 10, 1918

«He who does not work, neither shall he eat.»



The Basic Law of the Russian Socialist Federative Republic

On 10 July 1918, the party that assumed power in the October Revolution of 1917 ratifies its Constitution, establishing the world's first constitutionally socialist state.

The **Russian Socialist Federative Republic** is, from this point on, established on the fundamental principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the farmers and the workers, not the élite, forming and directing the Red Army; and with the higher classes of society disarmed.

«The supreme power rested with the All-Russian Congress of the Soviets, made up of deputies from local soviets across Russia. The steering committee of the Congress of Soviets – known as the Central Executive Committee—acted as the supreme organ of power between

sessions of the Congress and as the collective presidency of the state.»¹ The Council of People's Commissars looked after the general administration of the affairs of the state.

This Basic Law was confirmed in the 1924 Constitution of the USSR.

●¹ Wikipedia, «Russian Constitution of 1918»; ●Sir Paul Vinogradoff, «Russia», *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 12th Ed., 1922, Vol. XXII, p. 309-40, esp. 328-34. ●Maurice Baumont, *La Faillite de la Paix (1918-1939)*, Tome 1 : *De Rethondes à Stresa (1918-1935)*; (Paris :Presses universitaires de France, 1945; troisième édition refondue et augmentée, 1951).



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July 11, 1918

A German Understatement



German plans for Belgium

On 11 July 1918, Count George Hertling, the German Chancellor, makes a pronouncement of policy on Belgium in the Reichstag.

The statement hides the real aim pursued by the German High Command in letting it be understood that the intention of the German Government is to allow Belgium a measure of freedom, as long as proper security can be insured against the forming up of enemy forces along the Belgium-German frontier.

This understatement does not reveal that Germany wants to threaten Belgium into a separate peace, and that the plans are in fact to submit Belgium to a complete and utter control of all its means of wealth and independence.

Hertling can thus obtain an approval by most parties in the

Parliament for a policy that is ill-defined enough to allow substantial alterations through the means of accusing Belgium of lack of cooperation.

— As for the case of Poland, Germany wants to make sure that Belgium will be so destitute after a separate peace treaty, where Germany will emerge as the winner, that it will have no other option than to seek to attach itself to Germany.

•Fischer, German Aims in th First World War, p. 597.



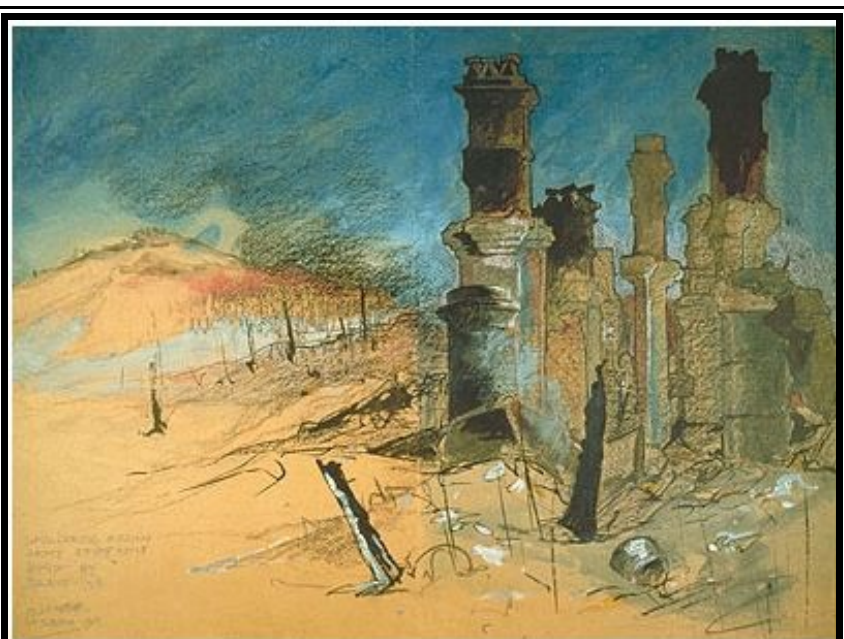
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July 12, 1918

Canada's Free Hand in the Siberian Affair



Burnt-out Russian Army Depot in Vladivostok

Canadian Troops for Siberia: Who Decides?

Bolshevik revolutionaries continue to disturb public order in Vladivostok and Siberia.

With only one British battalion available, the War Cabinet raises the possible despatch of Canadian troops.

On **12 July 1918**, Major-General S.C. Mewburn, Canada's Minister of Militia, writes to PM Borden confirming discussions with the War Office and endorsing the formal request for a Canadian brigade. Nearly simultaneously, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies sends a formal request for troops to the Governor General without consulting Borden or Mewburn (who are in London at the

Imperial War Cabinet meetings).

Borden and his Cabinet are incensed that the British still do not recognise Canada's independence on the employment of its Army. Borden informs his ministers and the military that "no reply shall be sent to the British Government's request, except through me."

— In 1918, Canada's gradual movement to full independence is via Siberia.

Further information: ●Commander Ian Moffat, «Forgotten Battlefields - Canadians in Siberia 1918-1919», Canadian Military Journal, 8:3, Autumn 2007, pp. 55-62, 73-83. www.journal.forces.gc.ca/v08/no3;



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July 13, 1918

India: A Turnpoint in the Raj



Move Towards Responsible Government in India

Hundreds of thousands of Indian troops served as part of British Empire forces in Europe, Gallipoli, Mesopotamia and Palestine. Indian nationalists consider that these efforts demonstrate that India should move towards self-government.

In 1917, the Secretary of State for India, **Edwin Montagu**, announced a reform program to facilitate a "gradual development of self-governing institutions...a programme (for) the realisation of responsible government." Montagu and the Viceroy, Frederic Chelmsford, drew up proposals after consultations with leading Indian political figures.

The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms are announced in **mid-July 1918**. The essence of the proposal is "dyarchy" or split government: local legislatures will take on "nation building" functions (agriculture, health, education etc.) while defence, finance, foreign affairs will remain with the Viceroy and his appointed council.

— Indian nationalists are disappointed that the reforms do not widen local authority to a greater extent.

Further information: ●Richard Whiting, "The Empire and British politics," in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, companion vol. ●Lawrence James, *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India* (Reprint 1999), p. 456-60.



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July 14, 1918

Mister Gandhi Makes a Statement



M.K. Gandhi in 1918

Gandhi Supports the Empire War Effort

Mohandas K. Gandhi, although dedicated to independence for India, is at the same time an admirer of England and the British Empire.

In the Boer War and in 1914, he organised Indians into ambulance units, thereby combining his sense of duty to the Empire with his strong belief in non-violence.

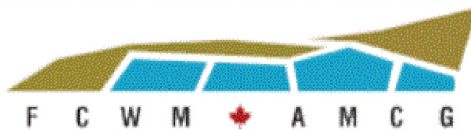
In June 1918, Gandhi was invited to a war conference by the Viceroy of India who convinced him that with the war at a moment of crisis, Gandhi should support enlistment into the Indian Army.

He issued an Appeal for Enlistment, but told the Viceroy that he would not personally shed blood.

In July 1918, when challenged by his associates as to his support for combat, Gandhi says,

— "If the British do not win, to whom shall we go claiming equal partnership? Shall we go to the victorious Germans or Turks?"

Further information: Stanley Wolport, [Gandhi's Passion: the Life and Legacy of Mahatma Gandhi](#)



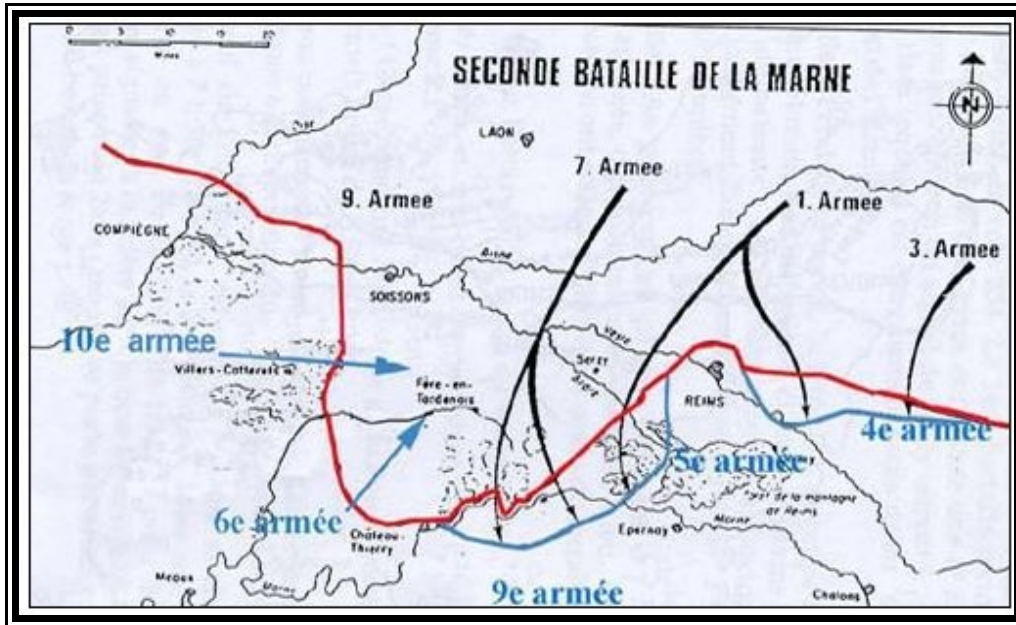
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Le 15 juillet, 1918

La dernière offensive allemande s'écrase



Friedensturm -- Quatrième Bataille de Champagne

Pressés d'en finir et hypnotisés par Paris, qu'ils menacent à la fois par la vallée de l'Oise au nord, et par les vallées de l'Ourcq et de la Marne, à l'est, les Allemands lancent une nouvelle offensive le **15 juillet 1918**, (la 5ème), plus formidable encore.

C'est la *Friedensturm* ou Bataille pour la Paix.

Von Ludendorff projette, par une attaque frontale, de séparer les armées alliées du nord de celles de l'est, en débordant d'une part, Verdun par Sainte-Menehould et la vallée de l'Aisne supérieure, d'autre part, Reims et la Montagne de Reims par la vallée de la Marne. Trois armées allemandes sont engagées dans l'offensive.

Les Français sont informés de l'offensive qu'ils anticipent par un bombardement. Des vents défavorables ramènent les gaz toxiques vers les lignes allemandes.

La Troisième Armée Allemande est arrêtée le jour-même avant midi. Les troupes allemandes portent alors leurs efforts sur l'ouest de Reims. Cependant les attaques de la Neuvième Armée Française, soutenue par les forces britanniques et américaines, empêchent les Allemands d'exploiter leurs têtes de pont.

Les poussées allemandes s'écrasent sur des défenses solides.

Sources : <http://archives.ecpad.fr/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/1918-07.pdf>

Pour en savoir plus : <http://chtimiste.com/batailles1418/1918champagne.htm>



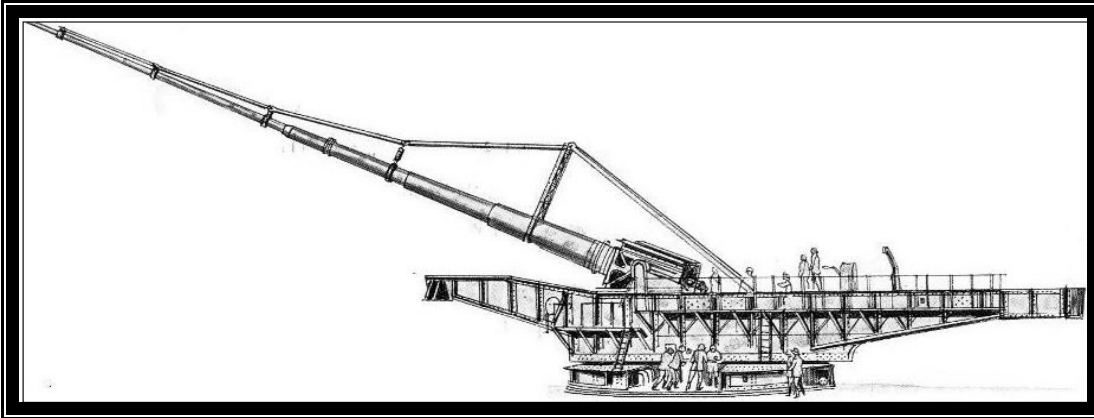
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Le 16 juillet, 1918

Les Grands Canons Visent Paris



Troisième campagne des *Pariser Kanonen*

Les grands canons à longue portée sont démontés à nouveau et transférés à 15 km au nord de Château-Thierry, 200 m au sud de la voie ferrée qui traverse le Bois de Bruyère-sur-Fère à

Fère-en-Tardenois, à seulement à 91 km de la capitale.

Cette position rapprochée entraîne une diminution de la puissance des charges propulsives nécessaires, et, par conséquent, de l'usure des tubes. Toutefois les Allemands sont rapidement délogés de cette position où les canons ne tirent que 14 obus entre le **16 et 17 juillet 1918**.

En effet devant la contre-offensive alliée (2ème bataille de la Marne) les canons sont précipitamment démontés et réexpédiés à Beaumont en Beine où 64 obus seront tirés du 5 au 9 août 1918.

En tout, 367 obus de gros calibre sont tombés sur Paris, causant la mort de 256 personnes dont 91 dans la seule église Saint-Gervais, le 29 mars 1918 (l'obus creva la voûte et détruisit un des piliers de l'édifice, provoquant l'effondrement d'une partie de celui-ci sur le public pendant l'office du Vendredi Saint) et en blessant 620 autres.

Sources : ● https://fr.wikidia.org/wiki/Pariser_Kanonen.

Pour en savoir plus: ● Bull, G.V., and C.H. Murphy, Paris Kanonen – The Paris Guns (Wilhelmgeschütze) and Project HARP: The application of Major Calibre Guns to Atmospheric and Space Research (Herford und Bonn: Verlag E.S. Mittler & Sons GmbH, 1988) ● <http://dictionnaire.sensagent.leparisien.fr/Pariser%20Kanonen/fr-fr/>



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July 17, 1918

Minister Newburn Doesn't Impress



Minister Newburn's interview with Marshal Haig

The Canadian Minister of Militia, **Major-General S.C. Newburn**, is in Europe with Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden. As part of his visit of the battlefields, an interview is arranged for him and Colonel Charles C. Ballantyne, Minister of Marine, with the Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces at GHQ .

When Newburn dares to bring up with Haig that the Canadian government insists that the Canadian Corps should be kept together in the theatre of operations, Haig blows his top.

Haig's diary relates how he told the Minister that the Canadian Corps had not taken part in any of the battles since the start of the German offensives, on 21 March, precisely because its divisions could not be dispatched separately when the Corps was in Reserve. They had to be replaced by British divisions.

Haig, who did not take a liking to «Newbourn», was more amenable to the less provocative Ballantyne.

— The episode gives a glimpse on how the prerogatives that Lieutenant General Currie enjoyed could be grating on the British Commander-in-Chief.

●Sheffield and Bourne, Eds, Haig's Diary, p. 432.

●Photo: <https://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/minister-of-militia-mr-newburn-and-officers>



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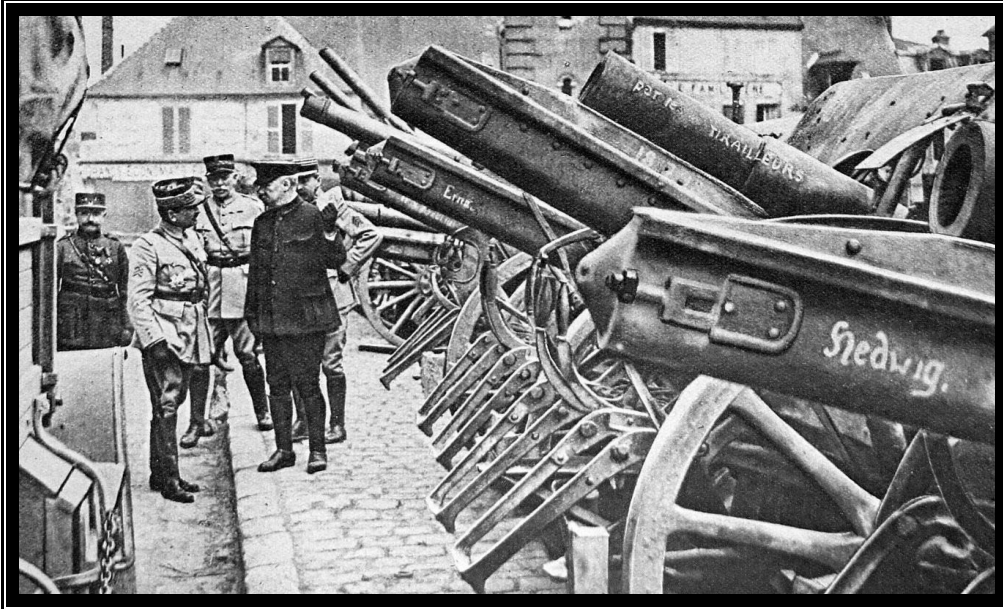


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Le 18 juillet, 1918

Le Coup d'Arrêt du Bois de Cotterêts



La contre-attaque du 18 juillet: moment crucial

Le général Ludendorff a bien préparé une autre offensive en Champagne, qu'il a lancée le 15 juillet, avec encore une fois l'intention d'y attirer les réserves stratégiques alliées pour asséner un coup fatal plus au nord, dès le 20 juillet.

Mais son plan est entravé par le renseignement français. On peut maintenant prévoir ses intentions.

Son offensive du 15 juillet se voit arrêtée dès les premiers mouvements autour de Reims et Château Thierry, où seulement quelques ponts sur la Marne demeurent toujours utilisables.

Mais c'est la contre-attaque française du **18 juillet 1918**, de flanc, en provenance du Bois de Cotterêt, avec 19 divisions dont trois américaines, qui assène le coup terrible qui marque la fin de toute l'ambition offensive des derniers mois.

Elle est guidée par une aviation superbe qui domine le ciel, et par des centaines de chars Renault, beaucoup plus agiles, employés de la bonne façon dans un terrain avantageux.

— Les armées allemandes sont désormais repoussées, forcées d'adopter la défense, et psychologiquement blessées.

●Elizabeth Greenhalgh, *The French Army and the First World War*, p. 317-318; ●Pitt, *1918*, p. 205. ●Photo: Président Poincaré inspecte Villers-Cotterêts.



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July 19, 1918 A Sting to the Brain



Ludendorff thrown off by strategic deadend

The day after the
French-American
counter-attack

punched the German armies in the flank from Villers-Cotterêt, General Ludendorff's horizon is considerably darkened.

The last possible trick that he could bring in is now gone, trumped by an ace that he has not seen coming.

Ludendorff on **19 July 1918** suffers a crisis of nerve that many witnesses say is the first real sign of defeat for the German Army. In the famous words of historian Cornelli Barnett:

«At OHL Ludendorff was like a beetle on its back, waving and wriggling furiously to no effect. At the head of the German army in these critical days was violent rage, indiscriminate blame, fundamental panic, paralysis of command.»¹

Ludendorff is being stung in the brain by the evidence that no further operation in Champagne can possibly allow him to penetrate British defences in the north through his Operation HAGEN, the last hope of success.

—Abandonment of HAGEN means that the Germans cannot win the war.

•Barnett, The Swordbearers, p. 375-7.



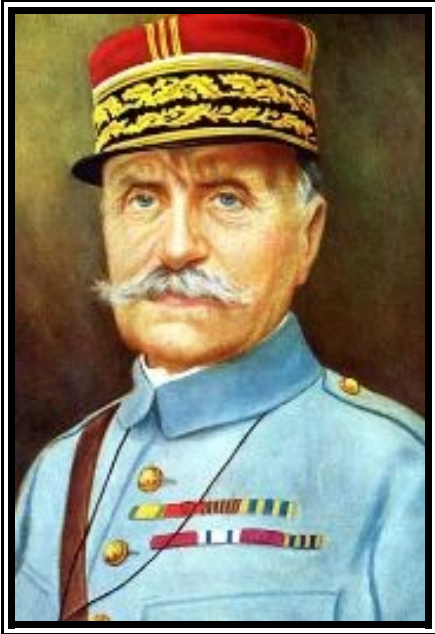
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July 20, 1918

Checked But Not Mated



The initiative slides to Foch's hands

Foch pursues the advantages gained by the counter-attacks driven by the *Sixième Armée* and the *Dixième Armée* to repulse the fifth German offensive of the summer, around Rheims. He now aims at the destruction of the enemy's forces south of the Aisne and the Vesle.

As the enemy withdraws from his bridgehead South of the Marne, the Allied attacks shift to the north of the Ourcq River.

The *Cinquième Armée* and the *Neuvième Armée* join in the offensive, supporting the main thrust of the *Sixième* and *Dixième*.

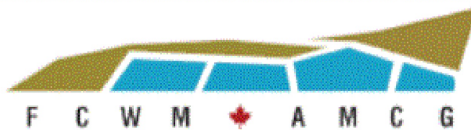
Meanwhile Foch remains alert to the possibility that Ludendorff might still resume his efforts in the northern sector, where Haig expects an attack.

Accordingly, the allied Commander-in-Chief regroups French formations temporarily withdrawn from the conflict in the rear of Pétain's left flank; he also restores to Haig's command two British divisions previously moved south of the Somme to counter the

German offensive in Champagne.

— This is a long chess game. But the Blacks have now been checked. It remains to checkmate.

●Hunter, Foch, 185.



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Le 21 juillet, 1918

Un Épuisement Évident



Un renversement de marée

Après la bataille de Reims, l'Armée allemande ne combatta pratiquement plus jamais de la façon connue de ses adversaires pendant quatre années.

Même les hommes les plus braves ne se battent pas aussi bien lorsqu'ils savent intimement qu'aucun effort ou sacrifice de leur part ne peut prévenir qu'ils ne soient battus en toute fin. Si, en plus d'en être conscients, ils sont fatigués et usés par les combats, même les plus vaillants ralentissent.

La contre-attaque française du **18 juillet 1918** a mis une fin définitive à tout espoir de quelque autre grande offensive allemande.

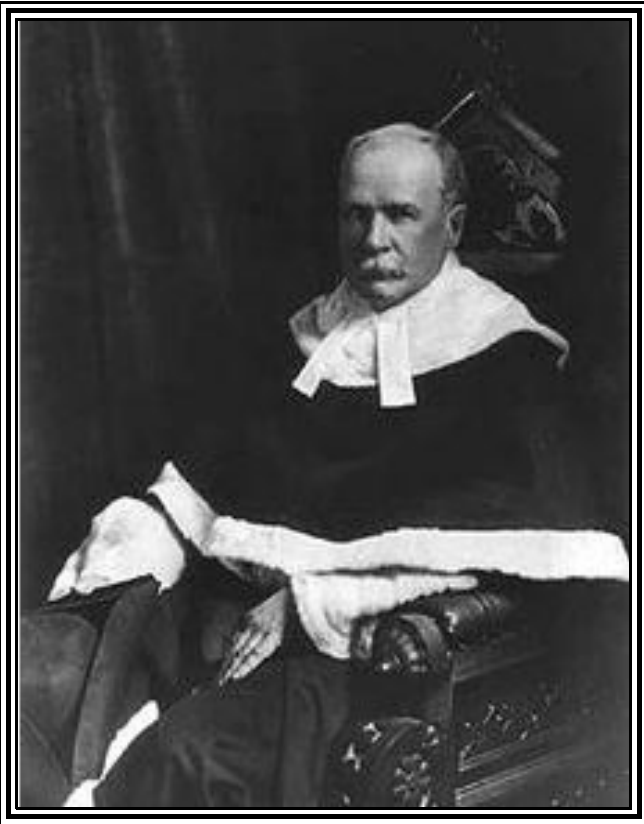
Le groupe d'armées du Prince Rupprecht de Bavière, en face du front britannique, reçoit l'instruction d'adopter la défensive et de fournir ses divisions de réserve mises en place pour l'assaut de l'opération HAGEN, désormais abandonnée, partiellement pour renforcer le groupe d'armées du Prince royal, et partiellement pour remplacer les division épuisées en première ligne.

— Il s'agit d'un renversement de marée.

•Lloyd George, Memoirs, VI, 3102, tr. •<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/firstworldwar/ger-fr-pris.htm>

July 22nd, 1918

To Be Or Not To Be [exempted]



Justices of the War

The *Military Service Act* became law in Canada on 29 August 1917. It made all male citizens aged 20 to 45 subject to call-up for military service while granting exclusion to men working in exempted categories, such as farming.

Those wishing to be exempted had to appear before a local tribunal to state their case. Over 90% of conscripts sought to be so excluded.

However, this privilege came to a sudden end with the passing of a resolution by the Senate and the House of Commons, on 19 April 1918, which cancelled all exemptions previously granted.

The constitutionality of this Order-in-Council is challenged before the Supreme Court by one George Gray, a young farmer in northern Ontario, who has lost his exemption and is held in custody for refusing to report for duty. Should the Justices rule in favour of Gray, much of the military conscription could be brought to a halt.

Recognizing the urgency of this matter, all six Justices, in an extraordinary session, consider the

case immediately, and four rule that the Order-in-Council is in fact constitutional and thus can be implemented.

— The fateful decision is rendered by **Chief Justice Sir Charles Fitzpatrick** on **22 July, 1918**.

For more information: •Judgements of the Supreme Court of Canada (<https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/9496/index.do>); •The Supreme Court of Canada, History of the Institution (http://www.yorku.ca/fodden/snell_and_vaughan/complete_book.pdf) •Photo: Sir Charles Fitzpatrick, Chief Justice (Jun 4, 1906-Oct 21, 1918).



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July 23rd, 1918

The End of a Delusion



The Year of Illusions

July 1917 to July 1918 was a year of delusions for the German Kaiser.

On 22 July 1917, after Ludendorff took over the direction of the war, Kaiser Wilhelm II escaped into a world of fantasy, play-acting the Supreme War Lord « in a whirl of intoxicating pretensions», to the disgust of most of those who met him.

He became the allegory of Grandiloquence and Surfeit Optimism, without any serious responsibilities of State.

On 22 July 1918, he was informed, at Avenes, by Field Marshall Hindenburg, that the summer offensives had been a total failure.

Even Foch had recognized that if the Germans were successful at Rheims, they would win the war.

On 23 July 1918, Wilhelm acknowledges the withdrawal from the

Marne Salient to the Vesle, to defend a line along FÈRE-EN-TARDENOIS to VILLE-EN-TARDENOIS, to take place on 25-26 July.

— This is the end of a delusion for a Thespian demigod.

●Virginia Cowles, The Kaiser, p. 391. ●Barnett, The Swordbearers, 377.



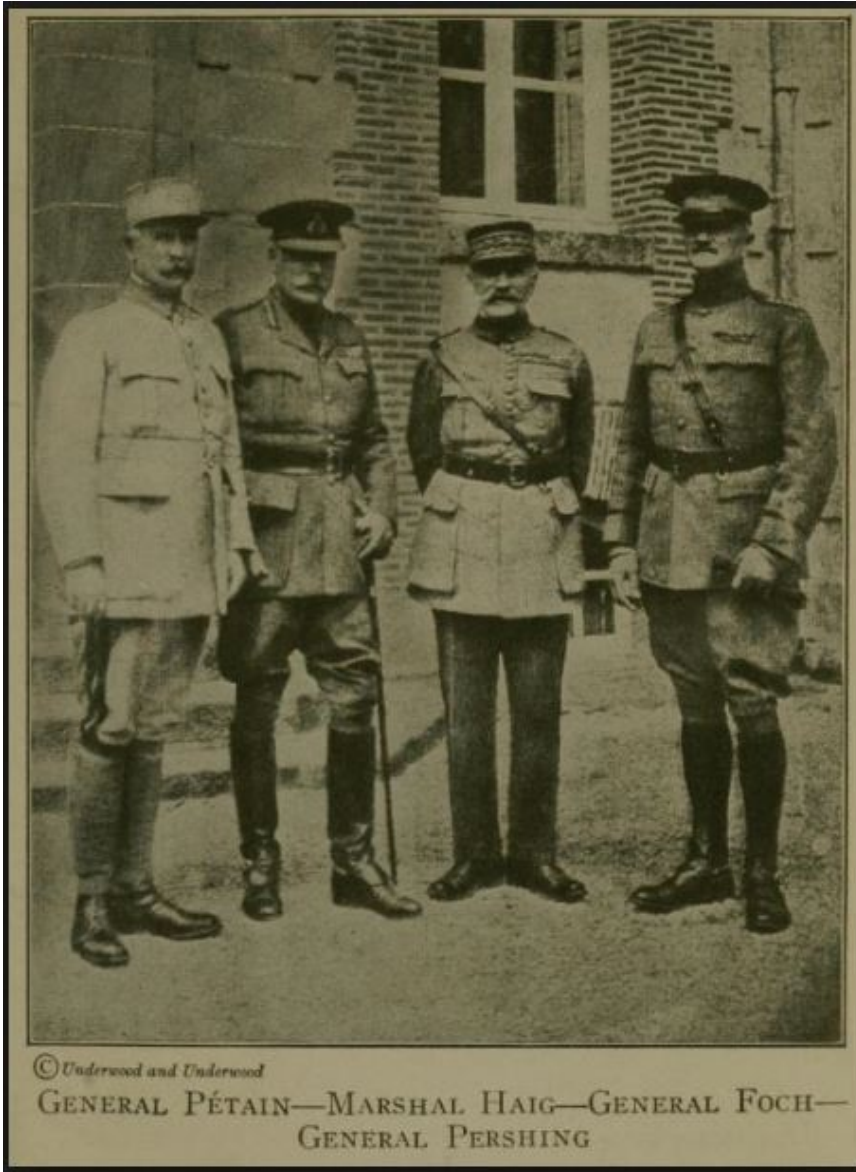
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Le 24 juillet, 1918

Une Idée du Tonnerre Surgit à Bombon



La conférence de Bombon

Le 24 juillet 1918, le Commandant-en-chef des armées alliées, le général **Ferdinand Foch** convoque une conférence des commandants-en-chef nationaux du théâtre de France pour coordonner les opérations de septembre.

Foch saisit **Haig, Pétain et Pershing** d'une idée qu'il a mûrie de son quartier général du château de Bombon, à Melun, (40 km SE de Paris) et qui lui dicte une stratégie de victoire.

Il entrevoit maintenant les forces allemandes en France comme divisées en deux éléments: un élément de défense statique et une réserve mobile qui réagit aux urgences. Les dernières expériences lui montrent que la réserve mobile est maintenant essoufflée.

Son plan est donc de frapper rapidement à plusieurs endroits en succession de sorte que cette réserve devienne incapable de suffire à la tâche.

Crucial dans ce plan est l'acquisition des chemins de fer latéraux, qui vont permettre le déplacement des troupes alliées plutôt que celles de l'ennemi. Les chars et camions vont y jouer un rôle important.

•Lloyd George, Memoirs, VI: 3104-6; •Hunter, Foch, 186-7; •Schreiber, Shock Army of the British Empire, 35-6.



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July 25, 1918

Sucked In by the Russian Front



Borden agrees to supporting Kerensky

On 25 July 1918, Borden at the Imperial War Cabinet, agrees with Lloyd George that help should be sent to the anti-Bolshevik Russians, represented by the deposed President of the Russian Provisional Government, **Alexander Kerensky**, so as to re-open an Eastern Front against the Bolsheviks and against the Germans.

Canada will eventually be involved in two separate expeditions to Russia, one to the north, for the protection of the ports of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk on the White Sea, and one to Vladivostok, on the North-West Pacific, to support the

Czechoslovakian force of former Russians and defected Austrian-Hungarian Army soldiers who kept on fighting the Central powers while withdrawing from Russia to the East by the trans-Siberian railroad.

British, Japanese, French, American and Canadian troops will be involved in the Allied expeditions.

Field Marshal Haig, however, does not agree to divert forces from the Western front for this purpose at this stage.

●Commander Ian Moffat, «Forgotten Battlefields - Canadians in Siberia 1918-1919», Canadian Military Journal, 8:3, Autumn 2007, pp. 55-62, 73-83.

●Nicholson, Canadian Expeditionary Force, Chap 16.



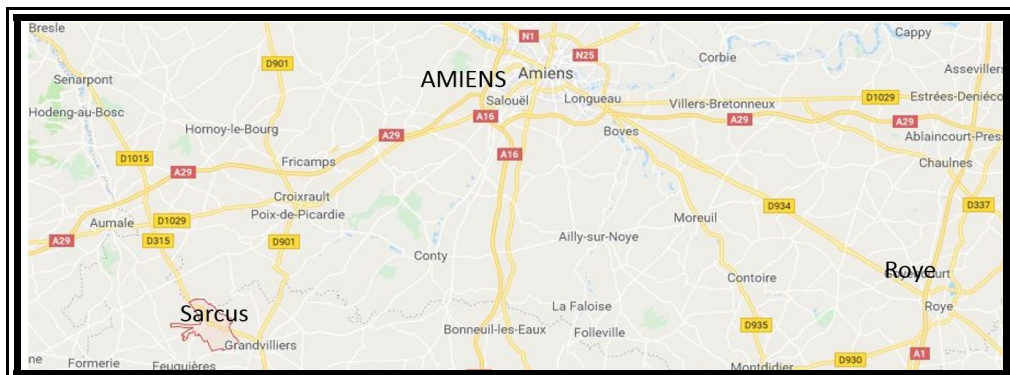
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July 26, 1918

Preparing a Big Surprise



The conference of Sarcus

Following on the conference held by General Foch two days ago at Melun, where the overall strategy for the coming weeks was laid out, Foch now joins Field Marshal Haig's staff at Sarcus, on **26 July 1918**, to oversee the planning of the upcoming joint

French-British operations

Haig will command a major operation to be conducted at Amiens in early August. His own Fourth Army (Rawlinson) and the French *Première Armée* (Debeney) will take part. This operation is to push to the east toward Roye, 40 km South-East of Amiens, with the following mission:

«To clear Amiens and the Amiens-Paris railway as well as to defeat and throw back the enemy between the Somme and the Avre.»¹

Haig decides very early that he wants the Canadian Corps, which has been rebuilding all summer under Lieutenant-General Currie, to take part and be transferred in great secrecy from First Army.

— The Fourth Army's Australian Corps will also be involved, and the plans for a surge in artillery and tanks, as well as air support, are hammered through British-French cooperation.

—This is not going to be an ordinary surprise.

¹ Hunter, FOCH, 188.



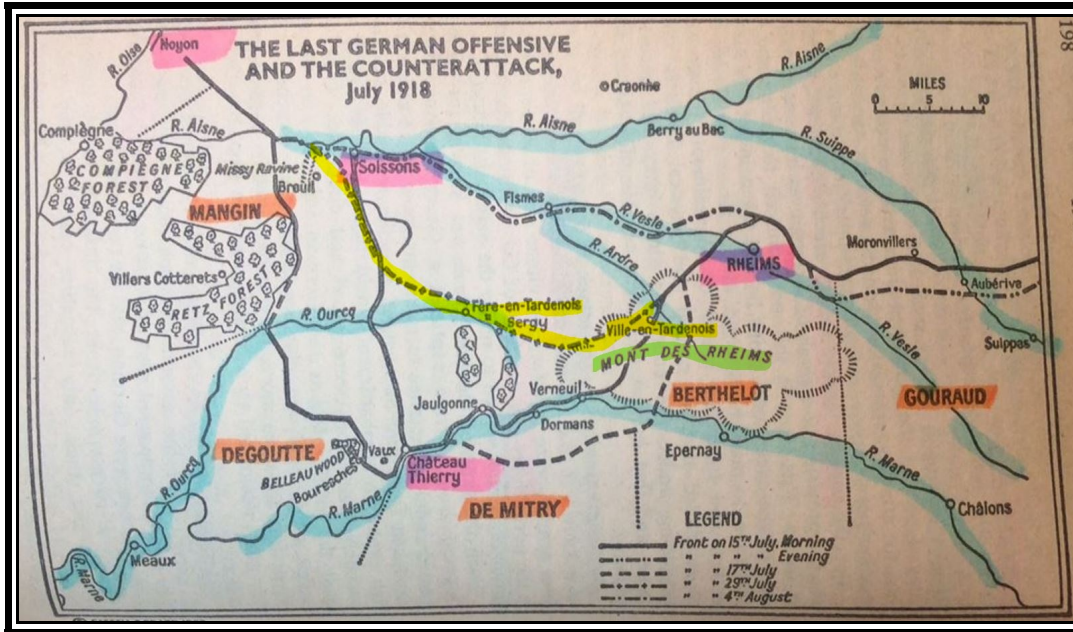
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July 27, 1918

Pushing Back on the Rheims Offensive



Gaining ground north of the Marne

The assault to progress beyond the Marne toward Paris that was launched by the Germans on July 15th did not meet with any success.

The counter-attack by the French armies with support from the Americans on 18 July has now pushed back all

bridgeheads on the Marne and forced the Germans to dig on the line SOISSONS—FÈRE-EN-TARDENOIS—VILLE-EN-TARDENOIS—RHEIMS (yellow line).

The aim of the French is now to push back some more toward the Vesle River, which will regain the whole of the Salient acquired in the German offensive of the Chemin des Dames, end-May.

The armies of French generals Mangin, Degoutte, De Mittry, Berthelot and Gouraud, and the American 1st Division, which is doggedly driving toward Soissons, are on the move with successful use of tanks and aircraft.

The Second Battle of the Marne is being won. What Foch now wants is a sudden and unexpected British attack elsewhere that will throw the Germans off balance.

— That will be Amiens, on 8 August.

•Map, Barry Pitt, 1918, p. 198.



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July 28, 1918

Dominions Preparation for Amiens

The Midas Touch of John Monash

John Monash was promoted Corps Commander of the Australian Corps in May, but his success at Hamel, in early July, not very far from Amiens, has made him immediately well recognized.

The success at Hamel was attributed to a particularly skilful use of tanks in combination with infantry, and the use of aircraft as integral part of the plan.

"The operation is a striking example of the success which invariably results from careful preparation and coordinated action: and will serve as a model and the standard of the fighting efficiency of the Australian corps".

The Fourth Army Commander, Rawlinson, believes that a great deal was learnt at Hamel, and he wants to bring the skill to a wider scale with a two-army offensive east of Amiens.

Monash is going to be on the left flank of Fourth Army, but Currie, the man who has been building a super-Canadian Corps throughout the summer, has also been invited.

The Dominions are going to give it their all in a few days, and the Monash-Currie tandem in Fourth Army is turning into somewhat of a race. The two Corps commanders are rising stars of different style.

● J.F.C. Fuller, *A Military History of the Western World*, Vol. III, Chap 7: «The Battle of Amiens».

● Photo: Australian War Memorial: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P11013307>



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Le 29 juillet, 1918

Fin Tragique de la Dynastie Romanov



Un secret d'État bien gardé

Lorsque, le 25 juillet 1918, les troupes anti-Bolshéviques de l'amiral Kolchak, constituées largement de la Légion Tchékoslavaque, arrivent à la localité de Yaketarinburg, à l'est des montagnes de l'Oural, pour y défendre le chemin de fer trans-Sybérien, ils y expulsent les communistes.

Aussitôt, ils y découvrent que la famille royale des Romanov y a été détenue pour deux mois et demi dans l'ancienne maison du gouverneur. Les évidences portent à croire que le Tsar Nicholas II, la Tsarine Alexandra, les enfants Olga, Maria, Anastasia, Alexei et Tatiana, y ont été assassinés il y a 8 jours.

Kolchack commande à Nicholai Solokov de faire enquête pour déterminer les circonstances des exécutions. Le rapport Solokov, qui ne peut retrouver les corps, sera publié avant la fin de l'année 1918, et constituera le seul document de recherche méthodique sur la question pour presque 80 ans. Lenine et Staline verront tous les deux à ce que la question ne soit pas soulevée pendant tout le régime communiste d'URSS.

— Il a fallu attendre la fin du XXe siècle pour que les évidences soient ré-étudiées à la lumière de recherches poussées, qui ont révélé l'horreur des derniers moments des monarques déchus de la Russie impériale.

●Simon Sebag Montefiore, Les Romanovs: 1619-1918, p. 815-8. ●Wikipedia: «Execution of the Romanov Family».



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July 30, 1918

Just Minding Their Own Business



The sinking of *Dornfontein*

On **31 July 1918**, the new four-masted New Brunswick-built schooner *Dornfontein* cleared Saint John harbour bound for South Africa with a load of lumber.

Three days later, 10 kilometres south of Grand Manan Island, N.B., U-Boat-156 suddenly rose from the sea and brought the *Dornfontein* to a halt with two shots across her bow.

While the schooner's crew was hustled aboard the submarine, the Germans looted the vessel of food, clothing and gasoline and then set it ablaze.

As the ship burned to the waterline, her crew were fed a dinner of bully beef

and rice and put into dories and sent off amid waves and wishes of «Good luck!» The sailors brought their story ashore at Gannet Rock, Grand Manan, the next day.

During the summer, U-156 sunk 35 ships, the majority being commercial fishing vessels. What was left of the *Dornfontein* was later salvaged and resurrected as the *Netherton* in 1919.

— The sinking of the schooner in Canadian waters brought home to the Government the need to strengthen the fledging Royal Canadian Navy to protect and defend our coastline.

● Marc Milner, «The U-boat Summer of 1918», Navy, Part 8”, Legion Magazine, 1 March 2005. ● Du Littoral à la Mer, 697ff.



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July 31st, 1918

The Siberian Commitment



Canada's Siberian Intervention Takes Shape

After the ill-advised request for Canadian troops sent by the Colonial Secretary in London to the Governor General of Canada, done without consulting the Prime Minister or the Minister for Militia who were in London for the Imperial War Cabinet meetings, the process is back in proper channels: Lloyd-George, within Imperial War Cabinet consultations, suggests that Borden, i.e., Canada, take charge of the movement of a Canadian-British contingent to Siberia to fight alongside anti-Bolsheviks. The force to be sent to Vladivostok, will be under the Allied command of Japanese General Otani.

The Canadian Cabinet will officially approve this **Canadian Expeditionary Force to Siberia**.

The Canadian Chief of Staff, Major-General Gwatkin, has already begun to identify the

components of the force: two infantry battalions (plus one British battalion to be attached later), an artillery battery, engineers, a company of the Royal North West Mounted Police (RNWMP) and a Headquarters with supporting troops, approximately 4,600 Canadians in all.

The Commander selected for this Canadian Siberian Force is former commander of CEF's 8 Brigade, **Major General James H. Emsley**. War Office jurisdiction over policy and operations will be subject to Canadian control.

— This, in hindsight, is an early step in the struggle for an independent Canadian foreign policy.

• Commander Ian Moffat, «Forgotten Battlefields - Canadians in Siberia 1918-1919», Canadian Military Journal, 8:3, Autumn 2007, pp. 55-62, 73-83. • Nicholson, Le Corps expéditionnaire canadien, pp. 560-7.



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