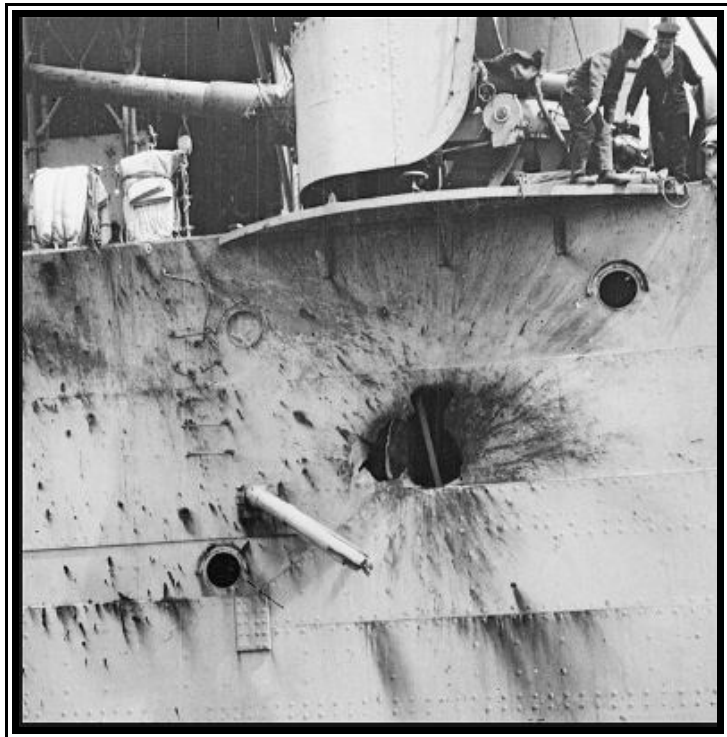


# June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1916

## The Morning After



### The Battle of Jutland (2)

On the morning of 1 June 1916, the German fleet reaches its bases; Admiral Jellicoe (“the only man on either side who could lose the war in an afternoon,” dixit Churchill) did not pursue, electing prudence over risk.

Tomorrow, Jellicoe will report, not quite convinced he had won, that his warships are ready to steam on four hours' notice.

On the German side, a victory is being celebrated but deeper analysis shows that despite British ship losses outnumbering German by three to one, it is the British fleet which has won the strategic victory as the Germans never again could risk such a direct confrontation. Germany will definitively switch its naval strategy to submarines.

Jutland was the greatest battle ever to be fought between battleships.

Perhaps the bluntest and most perceptive comment on the battle was made by a New York journalist who said:

**« THE GERMAN FLEET HAS ASSAULTED ITS JAILER, BUT IT IS STILL IN JAIL.»**

•Michael Howard (1979), 157]

Further information: •John Keegan, *The Price of Admiralty*



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# June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1916

## Mont Sorrel's Memory



### Third Canadian Division Badly Hit — Sanctuary Wood

On 2 June 1916, the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Divisions of the XIII Army Corps of Wurtemberg launch an attack that has been in preparation for six weeks.

They want to roll back 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Divisions which occupy the heights of Mont Sorrel, in the Ypres Salient, so as to gain the observation point.

Large caliber mortars are dedicated to this attack and secret digging of tunnels and communications trenches has brought assaulting troops near the objectives.

On the morning, **Major General Malcolm Mercer** is visiting his 3<sup>rd</sup> Division's front line. He is there when the German attack is launched at 06h00.

Four hours of intensive bombardment cover from Mont Sorrel to Armagh Wood, to Sanctuary Wood, where 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Canadian Brigades are dug in. They are caught in a withering fire that destroys their positions and causes debilitating casualties.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Mounted Rifles, in 8 Brigade, at Armagh Woods, see 89 % of their strength become casualties. Of 702 officers and men, only 76 remain in the line at the end of the day.

Mercer himself is killed (the highest ranking Canadian officer to be killed in the war), and Brigadier V.A.S. Williams (8 Brigade) is wounded and taken prisoner.

The battle will last until 13 June.

- 
- Granatstein, Hell's Corner, p. 81; ●Nicholson, CEC, 160-7; ●Goodspeed, The Road Past Vimy, 59-63.
  - Norm Christie, For King & Empire (CEF Books), Vol 8: The Canadians at Mont Sorrel (2000).



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June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1916

## No more British-born recruits



### CEF short of 7,000 men

Reduction of availability of British-born men of military age made a profound difference on the success of military recruitment. Industry also requires men.

«With enlistment particularly heavy among clerical and manual workers, business and industry began to take the attitude that no more of their men could be spared; and through the Canadian Manufacturers' Association they pressed for a plan of national service. These developments tended to confirm French-Canadian belief in Bourassa's view that Canada had already done too much, and henceforward should concentrate on sending supplies rather than men overseas. Recruiting slumped in Quebec, but it also slumped throughout Canada, and only 127,000 men were enlisted between January 1 and June 1, 1916.

«On a proportional basis, Quebec had raised only one-quarter her share, the Maritimes only one-half and Ontario seven-ninths, while the Western provinces had exceeded their shares. Quebec, of course, had much the lowest proportion of British-born men of military age. The factors that caused the recruiting decline all over Canada were the exhaustion of the supply of British-born volunteers, and the demands of industry and agriculture for manpower to meet the war boom. In Quebec indignation over the Ontario school question was an added major factor, supplemented by the opposition of the rural clergy to enlistment.»<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wade, The French-Canadians, Vol. II (1968), p. 693-4.



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**June 4, 1916**

## **Going After the Austrians**



### **The Brusilov Offensive Begins**

After the defeats of March, **General Aleksei Brusilov** conceived a different kind of offensive.

Rather than huge and tactically useless artillery barrages on a narrow front, Brusilov decided to attack at four places along a thirty kilometer line.

He sapped the trenches closer to the Austrian lines and stationed the reserves close behind, concealed in carefully prepared dugouts.

Aerial reconnaissance was used for the first time by the Russians and the artillery was trained to cooperate closely with infantry.

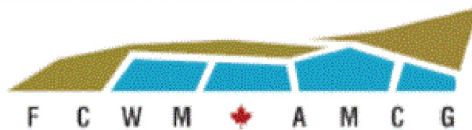
Brusilov's subordinate commanders feared the worst, since the four Russian armies lacked decisive superiority of any kind.

The Austrians had noted the advanced trenches and dugouts for reinforcements but they had lapsed into a mood of "almost grandiose confidence."

**On 4 June 1916**, the Russians achieved surprise. Their bombardments and closely following infantry overwhelmed the Austrian trenches.

Their advance in Galicia toward Czernowitz was a great success, benefitting both to the Allied Italian and French fronts, due to the necessity for the Austrians and Germans to rush troops to the East.

-----  
Further Information: •Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front 1914-1917*



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**June 5, 1916**

## **The Great Marshal is Gone!**



### **Field Marshal Kitchener Dies at Sea**

In 1914, British Prime Minister Robert Asquith appointed Field Marshal **Horatio Herbert Kitchener** his Secretary of State for War.

In this key role, Kitchener managed troop mobilization, war industry and strategy.

Although tensions with other politicians led to reduced responsibilities, he remained a formidable national hero.

**On June 5, 1916**, he died aboard the HMS Hampshire when it struck a mine en route for a diplomatic-military mission to Russia (this last photo of him boarding).

King George V reflected the nation's shock when he wrote:

**“It is indeed a heavy blow to me & a great loss to the Nation & the Allies.”**

In Canada, he was immortalized when Berlin, Ontario, was renamed after him.

-----  
Sources:

- <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Horatio-Herbert-Kitchener-1st-Earl-Kitchener> • <http://www.firstworldwar.com/bio/kitchener.htm>
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/kitchener\\_lord\\_horatio.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/kitchener_lord_horatio.shtml)
- <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/f3760af0-6545-11e4-91b1-00144feabdc0.html>
- Mark Grossman, World Military Leaders: A Biographical Dictionary. (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2007), p. 181-183.



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Le 6 juin, 1916

## Un Empereur chinois tombe



### Mort de Yuan She-k'ai

Celui qui s'était proclamé empereur de Chine en 1915, après la fin de la dynastie impériale Qing de l'Impératrice douairière Cixi, meurt à son tour, **le 6 juin 1916.**

**Yuan She-k'ai** a été un général puissant sous la dernière dynastie impériale de Chine, au tournant du siècle.

Après la mort de l'impératrice, il a proclamé la fin

du régime monarchique de Chine et a créé la République chinoise.

Un homme fort au sein du gouvernement, il a réussi à en prendre le pouvoir au milieu de fortes oppositions et s'est lui-même implanté comme Emperor, à l'image d'un césarisme chinois.

Maintenant qu'il laisse le vide sur la scène politique, ses sourdes ambitions dynastiques s'effondrent dans une confusion politique. Les «Seigneurs de la Guerre» surgissent dans les régions et la Chine se voit divisée dans des conflits compétitifs pour l'hégémonie centrale. Le communisme y prend souche.

Les Japonais, qui ont des ambitions continentales, voient ces fragmentations comme des signes plus clairs encore que la Chine a besoin de direction de haut lieu.

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●Wikipedia, «Yuan Shikai»



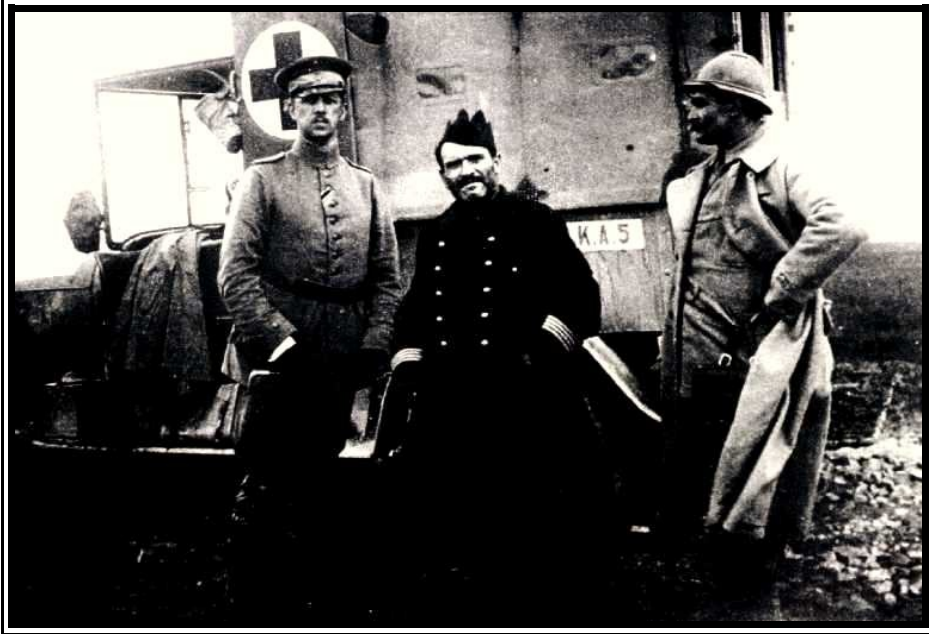
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# June 7, 1916

## The Big Berthas in Verdun



### Fort Vaux Falls – French Garrison surrenders

After repeated assaults lasting for a week, the Germans took Fort Vaux on **7 June 1916** with the assistance of 420 mm mortars, the famous Big Berthas.

The French defenders resisted fiercely in the underground corridors of the fort under continuous pounding.

Soldiers were going mad with thirst. They licked condensed water on the walls of the underground corridors and some drank their own urine. The stench of decay and fouling was

unbearable.

Finally a white flag appeared on top of the fort and a French orderly delivered a letter to Lieutenant Rackow, the German local Commander. It was Major Raynal's requests for an honorable surrender of his garrison.

This was granted and the garrison surrendered with arms presented. The French were treated with respect: souvenirs were exchanged and photographs taken.

The Crown Prince received Major Raynal with full honour, expressed his admiration for the heroic opposition and presented Raynal with his own sword as a mark of honour.

-----  
●David R. Woodward, World War I Almanac (Infobase Publishing, 2009), p. 129.

●Henry Bordeaux, The Last Days of Fort Vaux, March 9 – June 7, 1916 (Nelson and Sons, 1917), p. 215-219.

●Crittwell, A History of the Great War: 1914-1918, (1991), p. 250-251.

(The photo shows Major Raynal after his capture together with his aide-de-camp. On the left is Lieutenant Rackow, the German local Commander).



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## Le 8 juin, 1916

### Une toile ferroviaire



### Les préparations de chemins de fer pour la Somme

Les préparations intensives pour la campagne de la Somme imminente incluent beaucoup de construction de chemins de fer.

Des bataillons d'ingénieurs ferroviaires posent des rails de largeur normale et étroite pour amener l'équipement lourd jusqu'aux lignes de front.

À partir du **8 juin 1916**, sept gros trains par jour arriveront dans la région, chargés à pleine capacité d'obus de canons.

Les trains sur rails étroits pourront alors acheminer ces munitions vers les positions où elles sont requises sans alerter l'ennemi.

En considération du gigantesque effort industriel qui a été fait pour produire des munitions qui auront une influence sur l'issue des combats, beaucoup d'espoir repose sur l'efficacité du transport à les apporter au bon endroit au bon moment.

Il faut noter que le Corps des Cheminots canadiens a été impliqué dans ces constructions et a apporté une expertise spécialisée du Canada, principalement dans la construction des ponts, acquise de l'expérience transcontinentale.

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●Gilbert, The Somme, p. 35.



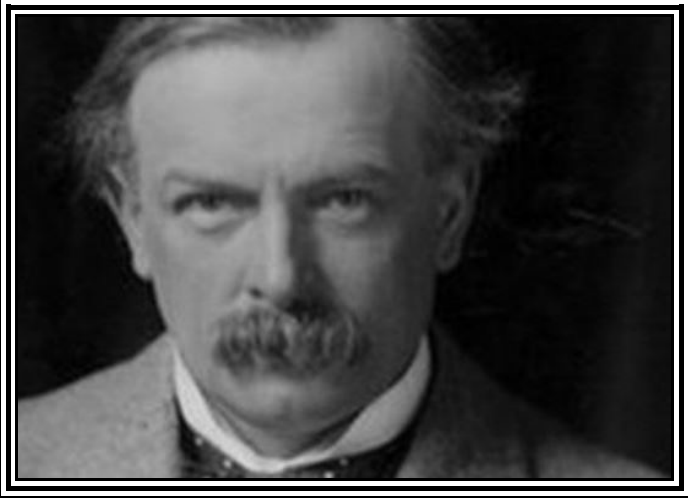
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## Le 9 juin, 1916

### Confronter un Molloch



#### Joffre à Londres – Somme vs Balkans

Le gouvernement français n'accepte aucune suggestion de retrait de Salonique. Il veut y voir de l'action. Mais le Haut Commandement anglais est formé d'«Occidentaux» qui sont de l'avis secret de Joffre que rien d'autre que le front de France ne devrait brouiller les cartes.

Lorsqu'il rencontre le Cabinet anglais, **le 9 juin 1916**, Joffre arrive avec un plan mal fait, dans l'espoir que les Anglais vont le refuser.

**Le ministre Lloyd George** voit le jeu de Joffre, qu'il nomme, dans ses Mémoires, «Le Molloch du Front Ouest» pour son besoin insatiable de soldats et pour son refus de considérer des

stratégies nouvelles ailleurs que chez lui.

La rencontre se solde par une décision du Cabinet britannique de supporter le Gouvernement français, acceptant ainsi le demi-plan de Joffre pour Salonique, et l'emphase prépondérante pour l'opération de la Somme, dont les préparations énormes sont en cours pour tenter de sortir les Français de l'étau de Verdun.

Lloyd George est (selon ses Mémoires), outragé de voir que le Cabinet supporte le plan de Joffre (à la recommandation des généraux Haig et Robertson), et tombe ainsi dans le piège des «Occidentaux», qui cherchent par tous les moyens à mettre tous leurs oeufs dans le même panier.

-----  
●David Lloyd George, Mémoires, Tome II, p. 534ff, citation p. 538.

●Hankey, Supreme Command, Tome II, p. 502ff.



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June 10, 1916

## Sharif Hussayn Makes His Move



Sharif Husayn, Emir of Mecca  
Portrait by Khalil Gibran

### The Arab Revolt Begins

By mid-1916, the British – Hashemite alliance offers less than when the sides entered into negotiations.

Britain had suffered serious reverses from the Ottomans and the Arab nationalist movement is under siege, its activists exiled or executed.

Nevertheless, the two sides need each other. Britain seeks a diversion to weaken the Ottomans and undercut their pretensions to leading a Jihad against the Empire.

**The Emir of Mecca, Sharif Husayn**, had reached the breaking point with the Turks, after giving support to Arab nationalists.

**On 10 June 1916**, Sharif Husayn fires the opening shot from his palace in the holy city of Mecca.

The same day, 4000 Bedouin horsemen attack the Red Sea port of Jeddah.

Royal Navy warships and British airplanes shell, bomb and strafe Turkish positions.

On 16 June, the 1500 Ottoman defenders will surrender.

-----  
Further information, Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*



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## Le 11 juin 1916

### Going Too Far in Fleury



#### Execution of Sous-lieutenants Herduin and Millant

Two sub-Lieutenants of the 17e Compagnie, 5e bataillon, 347e Régiment d'Infanterie, are executed on **11 June 1916** without trial, for having extracted 25 men and two MGs out of a desperate position that they had been ordered to hold, in the night of 8/9 June, near Thiaumont, on the Verdun front.

Their case will become a cause célèbre, « L'affaire des fusillés de Fleury » after the wife of **Herduin** will have sued the government for damage and rehabilitation, immediately after the armistice.

There having been no trial, an appeal could not be held. Nevertheless, the Minister of War, Louis Barthou, will convince his Government to allow a letter to be sent with payment of 100,000 Francs, à titre de réparation civile.

**« Pour mettre fin à ce scandale d'innocents impossibles à réhabiliter, une loi du 9 août 1924 est votée à l'intention expresse des fusillés de Fleury, permettant à une cour d'appel d'organiser un procès posthume qui dira si l'exécution était justifiée ou non. Le 20 mai 1926, la cour d'appel de Colmar rend son verdict : Herduin et Millant sont innocents des faits qui leur étaient reprochés. Comme ces deux sous-lieutenants, tombés sous les balles françaises, une cinquantaine de poilus ont été fusillés par erreur et réhabilités de 1915 à 1935. »**

-----  
HISTOIRE, No. 349, 38-9.



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**June 12, 1916**

## **Promising relief to Verdun**



### **Verdun - The Crisis of Fort VAUX is averted**

Nivelle has succeeded in preventing a collapse of the front despite the surrender of the exhausted garrison of Fort Vaux.

The famous letter from General Joffre, on **12 June 1916**, to the soldiers of Verdun, encouragingly lifted them with the news that the allies had finally come to the succour of the Nation.

**«The plan elaborated by the Councils of the Allies is now in process of execution. Soldiers of Verdun. This has been made possible by your courage. That was the fundamental condition of success, and our future victories are dependent on it. For by it was the situation created in the whole theater of the European War which is leading to the triumph of our cause. I appeal to you to summon all your courage, all your spirit of sacrifice, all your zeal and your love for your country, and to hold fast until the end, checking the last attempts of the enemy, who now stands at bay.»**

-----  
Pétain, Verdun, 172-3.



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# June 13, 1916

## Russian Success!



### Stunning Russian Victory

Brusilov's 4 June offensive has succeeded in disrupting Austro-Hungarian reserves and attacking along a wide front to confuse the enemy as to the direction of the attack.

**By 12 June 1916**, two Austro-Hungarian armies have been completely shattered, losing nearly 200,000 men as prisoners and over 200 guns. Including other casualties, the Austro-Hungarians have lost half their strength in a week.

Austro-Hungarian morale has now suffered a massive blow, as their forces have been routed from positions which had been thought impregnable. Confidence in the officers and the fortifications has been destroyed.

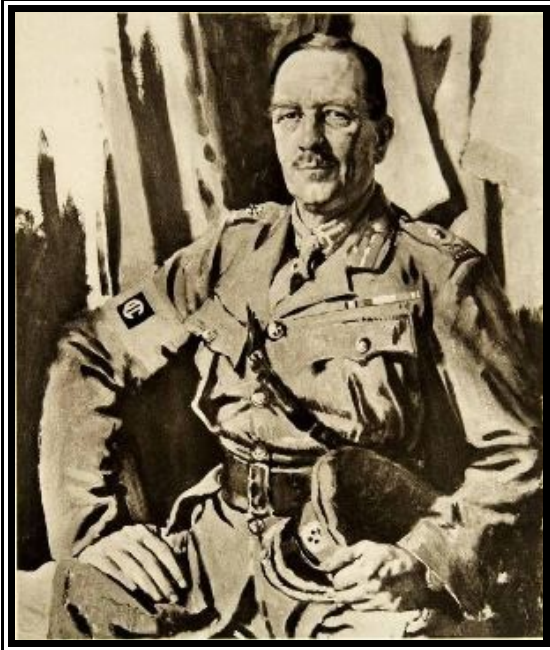
From this point, the Austro-Hungarian army will be effective only when linked with German troops, often joining in composite battalions.

Brusilov's losses and his decision to dismount his cavalry to fight as infantry means that full exploitation of his victory will not be possible at this time.

•Further information: •Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front 1914-1917*

**Le 13 juin, 1916**

**Le général canadien Burstall, artilleur**



### **Victoire des Canadiens**

Depuis le 2 juin, les Canadiens sont au coeur d'une bataille contre les Wurtembourgeois qui depuis cette date ont résolu de reprendre les hauteurs dans le secteur de Ypres pour y regagner l'observation.

Les attaques surprises se sont succédées les unes après les autres, au bout du chemin de Ménin, contre les positions canadiennes de Mont Sorrel, du bois d'Armagh et du bois du Sanctuaire et contre Hooge, entre les 2 et 6 juin.

La surprise de ces attaques a causé des revers et replis des Canadiens, mais la contre-attaque finale, préparée avec adresse et avec des renforts extraordinaires en artillerie du niveau de l'armée, par **le brigadier-général Henry E. Burstall**, l'artilleur-chef du Corps canadien, a permis aux fantassins de regagner les positions perdues et imposer aux Wurtembourgeois qui leur font face une cuite mémorable.

**Le 13 juin 1916**, les Canadiens sont à reconstruire les positions abandonnées au cours des onze jours de combat qui leur ont coûté 8,000 hommes, tués, blessés, disparus ou faits prisonniers.

Cette victoire fut suivie de visites du roi George V et du prince de Galles, ainsi que du ministre Sam Hughes, tous venus pour féliciter les Canadiens de leur succès.

Le général Byng, qui vient tout juste de prendre le commandement du Corps canadien y a remarqué l'habileté croissante des officiers supérieurs canadiens. Burstall et Currie ont particulièrement retenu son attention.

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●Nicholson, Le Corps Expéditionnaire canadien, p. 160-7.



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**June 15, 1916**

## **Brusilov's Effect in Italy**



**Devastation on the Asiago Plateau**

### **Italy: End of the Austro-Hungarian Offensive on the Asiago Plateau**

This day marks the end of the Austro-Hungarian offensive on the Asiago Plateau, named *Strafexpedition* (**Punishment Expedition**) to retaliate for Italy's "betrayal" of its Austro-Hungarian ally.

Launched in May 1916 with the goals of outflanking the Italian armies on the Isonzo River and threatening Venice, the Austro-Hungarians achieved surprise, attacking with 2000 guns along a 50 km front.

They routed the Italian centre and occupied the entire Asiago Plateau.

But the Italians received support from an unexpected source: the 4 June Brusilov

offensive which imposed severe reverses on Austro-Hungarian forces in Galicia.

General Conrad von Hotzendorf, the Austrian commander-in-Chief, had to withdraw half of the divisions in Asiago to strengthen his Russian front.

The last act was the successful repulse by the Austrians of an Italian counter-attack on **15 June 1916**.

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Further information: *Military History of Italy During World War 1*, Wikipedia



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# June 16, 1916

## Masterly Inactivity



Emir Habibullah of Afghanistan

### German Intrigues in Afghanistan Fail

Germany made strenuous efforts in World War I to subvert British rule in India.

In 1915, the Niedermayer-Hentig expedition travelled to Afghanistan through Persia, avoiding British patrols along the way.

**The Emir, Habibullah Khan**, had declared Afghanistan's neutrality in 1914, but he was well disposed towards the British. The Viceroy of India warned Habibullah that the Germans might try to undermine his rule.

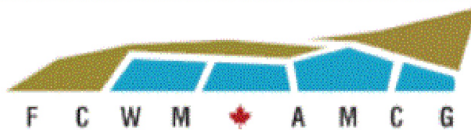
Niedermayer and Hentig tried to persuade the Emir to join the war on Germany's side and raise *jihad* in aid of India's Muslims.

They tabled a draft Friendship Treaty, promising military assistance in the form of modern weapons and German advisors if Afghanistan joined the war.

Habibullah pursued a strategy of "masterly inactivity," fortuitously allowing time for the Central Powers to experience reverses in the Muslim world, to undercut the mission.

It departed Kabul on **16 June 1916**.

Further information: "*Niedermayer-Hentig Expedition*," Wikipedia



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# June 18, 1916

## Blue Max Is No More



### Immelmann killed today

**Max Immelmann** was the first ace pilot of Germany. He was among the first two airmen to win the prestigious decoration *Pour le Mérite* on the same day, a medieval order renamed by Frederick the Great of Prussia in 1740, when French was the court language.

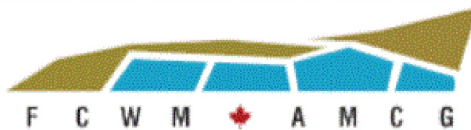
Due to the deep blue colour of its cross, it was popularly called «Blue Max» as a result of Immelmann's prestige as an ace-pilot. He was himself subsequently nicknamed «Blue Max».

He was shot down on **18 June 1916** after having won 15 victories in the sky.

This was not known at the time to those who shot him, 2/Lt G.R. McCubbin and observer Cpl J.H. Waller of No. 25 Sqn of the Royal Flying Corps.

In addition to having left his name for the German airmen's most prestigious decoration (Herman Goering will win one with great pride), Immelmann was remembered for his famous «Himmelmann turn», a flight manoeuvre useful in aerial combat which allowed the pilot to gain height and turn around at the same time.

- John Sweetmann, *Cavalry of the Clouds*, p. 71, 95.
- Wikipaedia, «Immelmann» and «Immelmann turn»



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**June 19, 1916**

## **Quick and Dirty for Imminent Battle**



### **Lloyd George on Munitions for the Somme**

The British Minister of Munitions, David Lloyd George, reports on the munitions situation before the final decision for the 29 June opening of the artillery preparations for the 1 July push.

He states that the industrial production is such that it can cater to a volume of fire of 300,000 shells each week. Britain is also now producing 150 heavy guns while France can produce 30.

However, the problem at this point is fuses. Fuses are intricate devices that count the time of flight of a shrapnell shell so as to blast pellets forward from a precise height over the target. Fuses for high explosive shells trigger the explosion

as the shell hits the ground.

Earlier fuses produced a large proportion of premature explosions that damaged the guns, and late models of delayed-action fuses (shrapnel and HE) produced shells that bury themselves too deep in the ground before exploding.

This is being repaired by experts monitoring the situation.

Prime Minister Asquith agrees to publicly congratulate businessmen involved in the improvements of the munitions situation.

But the problem will be far from being solved during the forthcoming six months of the Battle of the Somme. Rates of failures will be very high.

•Prior & Wilson, Somme, p. 32.

•Gilbert, Somme, p. 36.



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# June 20, 1916

## A Genie with a green cross



### Phosgene is out of the bottle in Verdun

The thunder of artillery constantly reminds soldiers of the brutality of warfare, but death can also come silently – in the form of poison gas.

Such is the case on **20 June 1916**, during the Battle of Verdun, when Germans fire “green cross”-marked shells that release **diphosgene** (trichloromethyl

chloroformate).

Soldiers who inhale the choking agent die as it causes their lungs to fill with liquid. Germans planners introduce this gas because it stays as an oily liquid at room temperature, making it easier to assemble shells with it. Furthermore, it is capable of destroying the filters used in gas masks.

Soldiers who catch a whiff of its newly-mown-hay smell know they are in trouble.

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●Croddy, Eric A. and James J. Wirtz, eds. Weapons of Mass Destruction: An Encyclopedia of Worldwide Policy, Technology, and History (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2005).

●Fitzgerald, Gerard J. “Chemical Warfare and Medical Response During World War I,” American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 98 (4), 2008: 611-625. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2376985/>

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●Tuorinsky, Shirley D., ed. Medical Aspects of Chemical Warfare. (Falls Church, Virginia: Office of the Surgeon General, United States Army, 2008)

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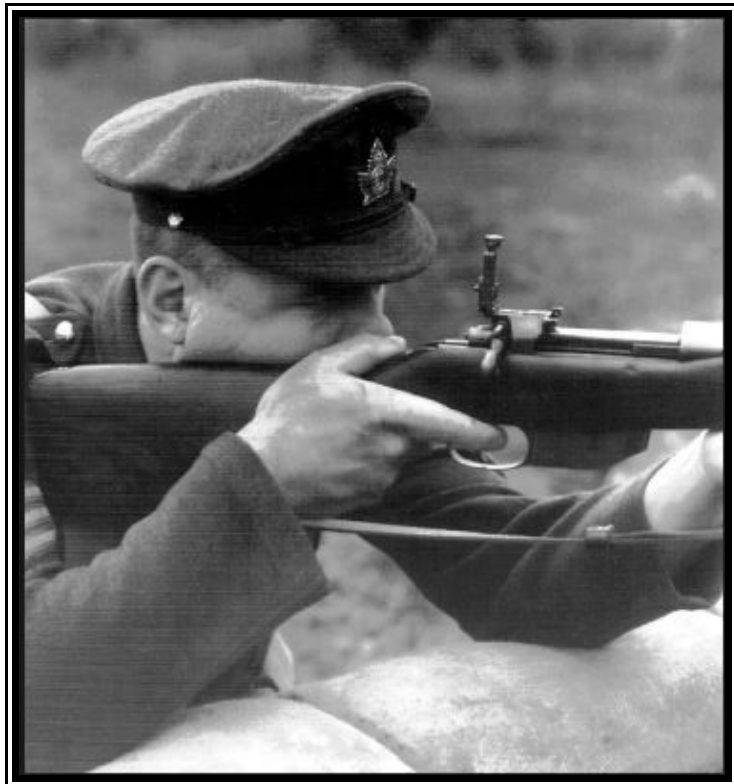
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**June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1916**

**Lee-Enfields for all**



### **The Ross rifle - a thing of the past**

The Ross rifle has made quite a lot of ink flow in the First World War, and this is putting it quite mildly.

The controversy over the inadequacy of this rifle created the Ross Rifle scandal, which led to its eradication in the ranks of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

The main difficulty with this rifle was that it jammed in field conditions and soldiers were caught in the worse of the action not being able to open the breach to eject the empty cartridge and reload. Sometime soldiers had to kick the lever with their boots to get it to open.

There was unhappiness with this rifle from the time of the training of the first contingent in the Salisbury Plains, at the end of 1914, and the adoption of the British Lee Enfield was done first sporadically among the troops, then by divisions, as more Lee Enfields were made available.

**On 21 June 1916**, the agreement is finally reached once and for all with the British War Office that the soldiers of the CEF will all be issued with a Lee Enfield, and that the Ross will be officially taken out of the front line.

Sam Huges has finally been out-argued.

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●Charmion Chaplin-Thomas, «The Re-Taking of Mount Sorrell», in «4<sup>th</sup> Dimension», Maple Leaf, National Defence, June 2004.



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## Le 22 juin, 1916

### Très vite à petits pas?



### SOMME: Les forces en présence

Le Renseignement britannique sait déjà que les forces allemandes qui font face directement à la Quatrième armée possèdent 32 bataillons en défense; mais il se trouve 65 bataillons ennemis en réserve qui peuvent se joindre aux combats en cinq jours.

Avec douze bataillons par division, il s'agit donc de deux divisions et demie en première ligne, et probablement cinq divisions et demie qui peuvent intervenir contre l'attaque.

La Quatrième armée britannique du général Rawlinson possède trois corps, soit l'équivalent des huit divisions ennemies

auxquelles ils font face et qu'ils doivent attaquer.

Il n'y a donc pas, ici, la prépondérance des attaquants nécessaires au succès.

Le général Haig entrevoit une percée rapide pour se rendre à Bapaume et empêcher les réserves ennemies d'agir efficacement. Tout repose donc sur la rapidité.

Or, Rawlinson n'entrevoit pas une avance rapide avec son armée. Il veut avancer méthodiquement et retenir assurément le terrain gagné chaque jour.

— C'est à se demander s'ils se sont parlé?!

•Gilbert, Somme, p. 36.



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**June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1916**  
**No Go!**



### **Verdun: Fleury under attack**

At 0500 on **16 June 1916**, as the phosgene gas shelling ceases and regular artillery shelling commences, the 30,000 men that General Schmidt von Knobelsdorf has concentrated along a 3-mile front before Fleury go over the top.

Units of the Alpine Corps commanded by Lt. Col. Ritter von Epp and 1st Lt. Friedrich Paulus lead the center of the attack with Epp's men entering the village of Fleury.

Fleury falls to the Germans.

In the afternoon the Germans are within two and half miles of the city of Verdun.

Joffre sends four divisions of reinforcements.

During the night Knobelsdorf concedes that without more troops he cannot take Verdun.

Also during the night General Nivelle issues his Order of the Day ending with the words **"Ils ne passeront pas"**.

This is a day in the story of Verdun, where men run at each other amid the fire of artillery, deadly gas and machine-gun fire, day and night, littering the field with their bodies.

Those who do not pass do not return.

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●David Burg, Almanac of World War I, (The University Press of Kentucky, 1988), p. 126.



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# June 24, 1916

## U-Day Starts with a Roar



SOMME 1916: BRITISH HEAVY ARTILLERY

### First Day of «Drumfire»

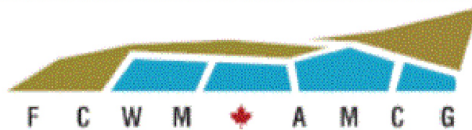
**24 June 1916** is the day that the preliminary bombardment of the Somme offensive starts.

The plan calls for 6 days of intensive artillery pounding on the whole length of the line on the British side before the advance.

«U»Day, V-Day, W-Day, X-Day, Y-Day and Z-Day between 24 and 29 June will become known to the Germans as «Drumfire» days.

«There was a gun, howitzer or mortar for every seventeen yards of the enemy front line to be attacked. Compared with the previous best effort, at Loos, there were twice as many guns and six times as many shells. More shells were destined to be fired in one week than in the first twelve months of the war.»<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Middlebrook, First Day, p. 87.



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# Le 25 juin, 1916

## Le Front Russe Avance



### Brusilov continue sa poussée en Pologne

Les Autrichiens sur le front Est ont été complètement surpris par l'offensive de Brusilov. Il s'est avancé à tâton sur un large front, détectant les points de faiblesse et s'y acharnant.

Le revers dans le coin de Lutsk a été le plus surprenant. Le general Kadelin a percé sur quarante milles sans opposition et a créé une poche croissante. Il progresse vers Kavel qui est à peine à vingt-cinq milles de lui, cherchant à saisir le chemin de fer de Brest-Litovsk, par lequel les renforts que Ludendorff cherche à acheminer doivent passer.

Au sud, la Septième armée russe fonce à travers la Bukovine, s'avançant vers les Carpates, qu'elle va occuper avant la fin du mois, entrant ainsi en Roumanie.

Seul le centre allemand demeure ferme, où le Comte Bothmer, un Bavarois solide, maintient sa position près de Tarnopol, avec une seule division allemande pour raidir ses neuf divisions autrichiennes.

Les Russes ont capturé 200,000 prisonniers dans les trois premières semaines de cette ruée. Il s'agit de nouvelles splendides pour ceux qui ont besoin d'encouragements à Verdun et à Albert.

•Cruttwell, *A History of the Great War*, 286-7. •Keegan, *The First World War*, Map p. 305

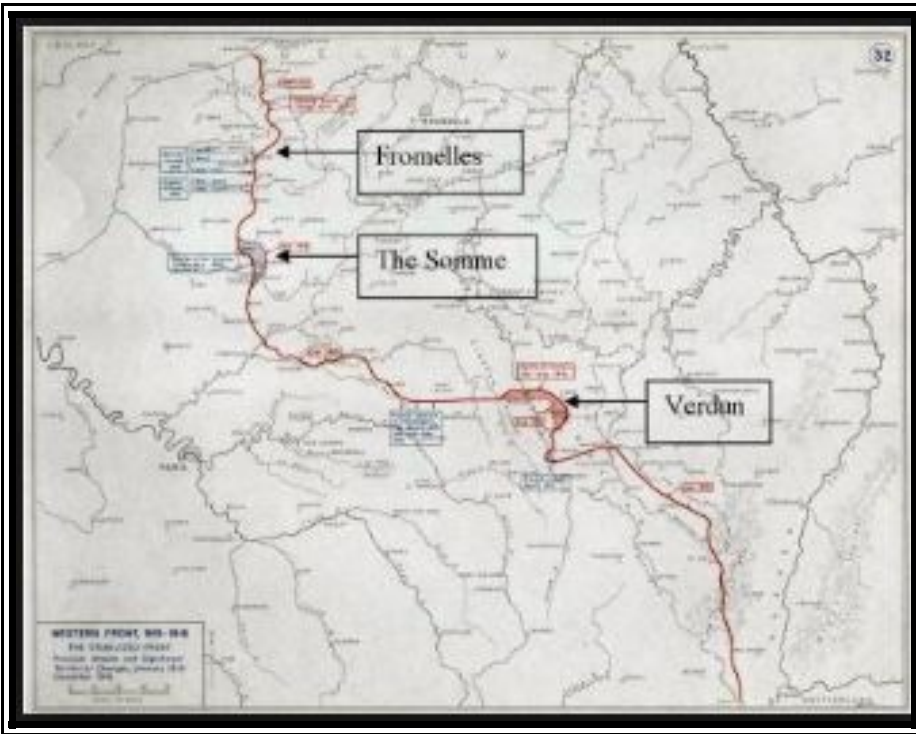


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**June 26, 1916**  
**R E L I E F ! ! !**



### **Effect of the Somme felt immediately in Verdun**

The foremost aim of the Offensive of the Somme is to release the German grip on Verdun and prevent a breakthrough that might threaten Paris.

This has an evident result after the first three days of bombardment.

Falkenhayn immediately stops the flow of ammunitions to Verdun.

**«From that day on the Germans at Verdun received no fresh divisions, and their advance died out from pure inanition. The way was thus paved for the brilliant French counter-offensives of the autumn, which retook by bites what had been lost by nibbles. It is no disparagement of the sterling defence to recognize, as we must, that the Somme saved Verdun, and, second, that the Germans after throwing away their best chance by too narrow an attack frontage, came desperately close to their goal four months later.»<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Liddell Hart, First World War, p. 226.



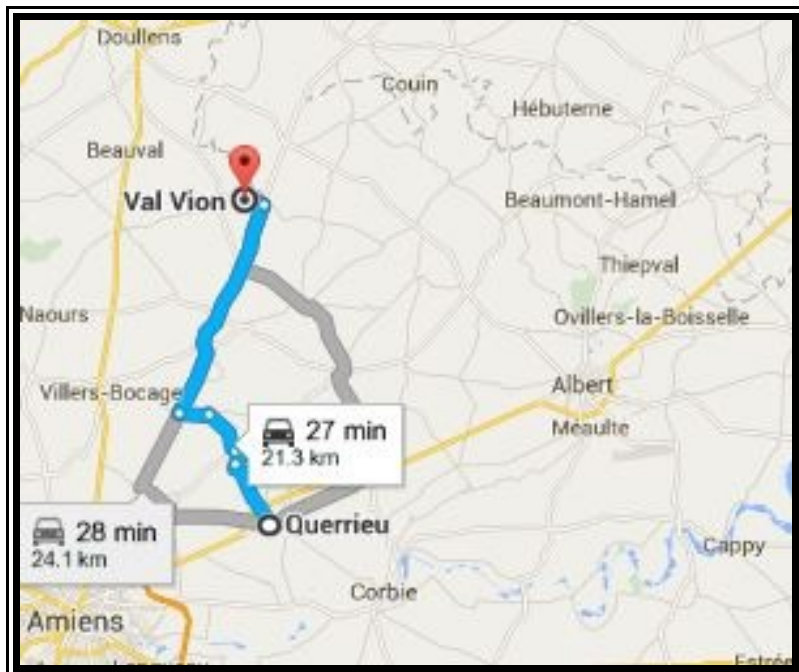
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# Le 27 juin. 1916

## Une Longue Vue



### Observation de Querrieu

**Le 27 juin 1916** —le jour «X» des bombardements préliminaires pour l'offensive de la Somme, les généraux Haig et Rawlinson se rencontrent au quartier-général de la Quatrième armée, à Querrieu, pour y observer le champ de bataille d'un promontoire.

Le QG de Rawlinson n'est pas loin de celui du Corps expéditionnaire de Haig, à Val Vion.

Leurs espoirs reposent sur le succès de l'artillerie massive, dont ils peuvent entendre le bruit, à détruire les défenses allemandes avant l'assaut toujours prévu pour le 30 juin entre Hébuterne et Albert (sur cette carte).



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## June 27, 1916

### Opinion in India



Indian Viceroy's Lodge in Simla

### Muslims League of India opposed to Arab Revolt

The Ottoman entry into the war has stressed loyalties among Indian Muslims.

King George V gave assurances that Britain would protect the holy cities of Mecca and Medina; these assurances have solidified Indian Muslim support for the British war effort.

However, Sharif Husayn's revolt against the Ottoman empire is seen to break that promise.

On the **27 June 1916** the All-India Muslim League condemns the Hashemite revolt in strong terms, suggesting that Sharif Husayn's act has given cause for Jihad against

the British in India, a concern that has smouldered since German attempts to undermine the British Empire in India has come to light.

British officials in India have always opposed the alliance with Sharif Husayn.

Their assessment is that Indian Muslims are now disaffected and inclined to support the Ottomans.

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Further information: Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*

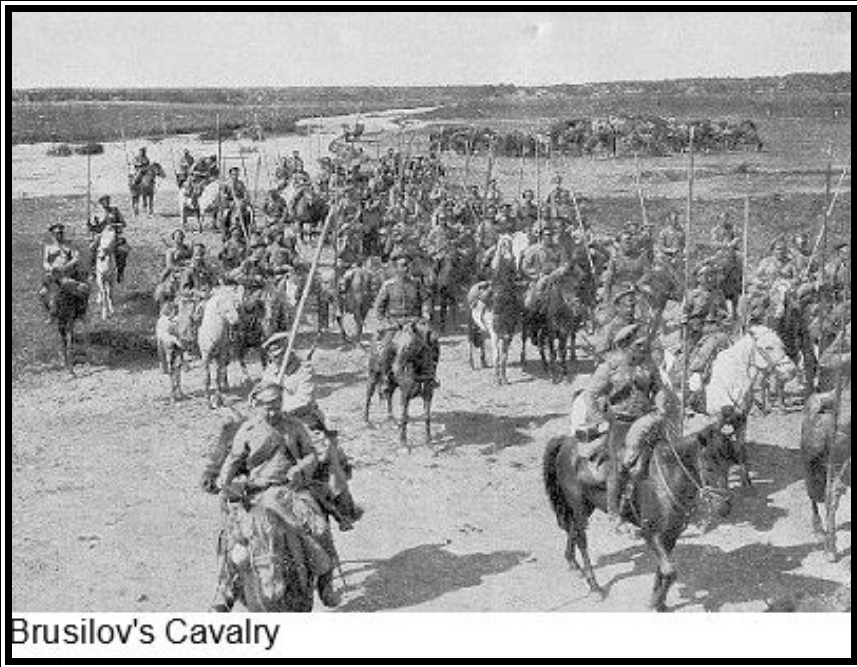


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## June 28, 1916 Out of Steam



### Brusilov Offensive Stalls

After achieving stunning victories over the Austro-Hungarians on the South-West Front, General Brusilov's offensive continues but begins to encounter stiffer resistance.

In the Lutsk salient, heavy fighting is reported.

Nonetheless, Brusilov's forces defeat the Austrians on a 35 km front east of Kolomea, capturing ten thousand prisoners.

By **28 June 1916**, however, Brusilov's offensive suffers from being planned as only one part of a wide summer campaign.

On the Northern Front, Russian General Evert persists in the futile

tactics of the spring, opening only a weak offensive which runs out of energy by the end of June.

The failure of Evert's offensive put limits on Brusilov's success since it will allow the Germans to reinforce the Austrians in the South-West in the coming weeks.

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Further information: Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front 1914-1917*



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June 29, 1916

## Newfoundland's beloved correspondent

### Mayo Lind's last letter home

Private Francis Thomas «Mayo» Lind of Bett's Cove, Newfoundland writes a letter home on **29 June 1916**.

Frank Lind was thirty-five years of age in 1914 when the Great War broke out. Like many Newfoundlanders of his generation, he quickly volunteered and joined the Newfoundland Regiment.

He soon became Newfoundland's unofficial war correspondent, revealing as much of the war activities as censorship allowed through his letters home, published in the St. John's *Daily News*.

His views of the war, from initial sign-up, training, in battle in Gallipoli, ending just two days before his final battle, is that of a foot soldier.

He acquired the nickname "Mayo" after noting in one of his letters, on 20 May 1915, that good tobacco was "almost impossible to get" and that "a stick of Mayo" was a "luxury".

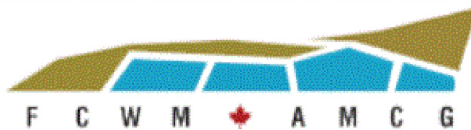
This tobacco was made by the Imperial Tobacco Company of St. John's and it was shortly after this letter that a supply of "Mayo-Linds" were sent to the men overseas and

thereafter Frank was given the nickname of "Mayo".

In his last letter he writes **"Tell everybody that they may feel proud of the Newfoundland Regiment, for we get nothing but praise from the Divisional General down."**

Frank died on 1 July 1916 during the Battle of the Somme at Beaumont Hamel.

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●Mark Bourrie, Fighting Words: Canada's Best War Reporting (Dundrun, 2012), p. 158.



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## June 30, 1916

### The Isonzo Casualties



#### A Bulgarian Division on the Isonzo Front

The Austro-Hungarians have withdrawn two experienced divisions from the Isonzo in order to reinforce their Galician front where the Russian offensive earlier in the month rolled up hundreds of thousands of prisoners and shattered entire formations.

After joining the Central Powers, the Bulgarian Army had campaigned extensively in Serbia, with the goal of the

conquest of Macedonia.

Its appearance on the Italian front two weeks ago was in large part a move of desperation, resulting from the success of the Brusilov offensive.

On their arrival, Austro-Hungarian-Bulgarian forces launched a series of localized counter-attacks on the Isonzo front, which were repelled by the Italians without much difficulty.

**At the end of June 1916**, even between General Cadorna's major offensives on the Isonzo, the daily friction of a stalemated front imposes significant casualties on all the armies involved.

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Further information: Mark Thompson, *The White War: life and Death on the Italian Front 1915-1919*



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