

# Le 1er juillet 1916

## La Diversion du nord pour Verdun



### La Bataille de la Somme - Premier Jour

Le 1er juillet 1916, la Quatrième armée du Général Rawlinson avance dans le No Man's land vers les positions allemandes qui ont été bombardées par l'artillerie pendant sept jours.

Une surprise terrible attend les soldats anglais puisque le bombardement n'a pas réussi à endommager suffisamment les tranchées et les casernes souterraines de l'ennemi.

Ceci est dû au fait que les munitions comptent une trop grande proportion de «shrapnel», un type d'obus qui sert à frapper des troupes à découvert avec des billes projetées des airs. Ces munitions sont inutiles contre des troupes bien protégées.

Les mitrailleurs allemands, enfouis dans leurs trous depuis une semaine et coupés de leur ravitaillement, surgissent dès que les canons allongent leur tir. Ils frappent avec une ardeur rageuse.

Leur tir précis rase les pentes du nord au sud de la ligne d'avance de sorte que personne des troupes britanniques n'atteint son objectif pour la journée.

Avec 40,000 morts, blessés, portés disparus et prisonniers, il s'agit de la pire journée de l'histoire de l'Armée britannique.



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**Le 1er juillet, 1916 (2)**

**Le Régiment de Terre-Neuve ne Meurt Pas**



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### **Le Régiment de Terre-Neuve ne meurt pas!**

Le matin du **1er juillet 1916**, dans le cadre de la première journée de la Bataille de la Somme, 801 hommes du Régiment de Terre-Neuve avancent pour attaquer dans la direction de la rivière Ancre.

Ils foulent de leurs pieds les soldats britanniques qui sont tombés avant eux dans la mitraille, qui vient en feu croisé des hauteurs de Hawthorne et de Beaumont Hamel.

Ils sont eux-mêmes fauchés par le feu avant d'avoir avancé 100 mètres.

730 vont manquer à l'appel demain matin.

**Mais le Régiment ne meurt pas!**



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Le 2 juillet, 1916  
The Golgotha of the Somme



2 July 2016. « **RAIN. RECOVERING THE WOUNDED. STRETCHER BEARERS OUT IN NO MAN'S LAND. GERMANS ACTING STRAIGHT.** »



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

## Weight on Haig's Shoulders



### Papa Joffre is not happy

General Joffre is definitely not happy with the British effort on the first day of the Somme.

When he meets General Haig, at his headquarters, on **3 July 1916**, there is a very firm exchange of words where Joffre leans with all his weight.

The French side (south) of the Somme offensive has been much more successful than the British side (north).

This is mainly due to the use of more explosive artillery munitions, but also to better tactics.

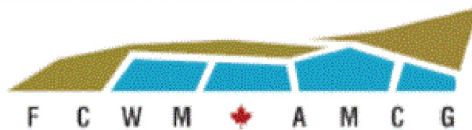
The French have in fact reached the crest that gives them

the higher ground, but their left side is endangered because the British did not progress as far.

Joffre wants Haig, despite the grievous losses incurred the day before yesterday, to recoup immediately and attack the heights of Thiepval.

Haig cannot contemplate renewing at the foot of Thiepval where the reverse was so costly. He negotiates for an advance more to the south, at Ovilier and Barnafay Wood, nearer the French, where the slopes are less steep, and where French heavy artillery can come to bear.

Joffre accepts. — This is a tall order.



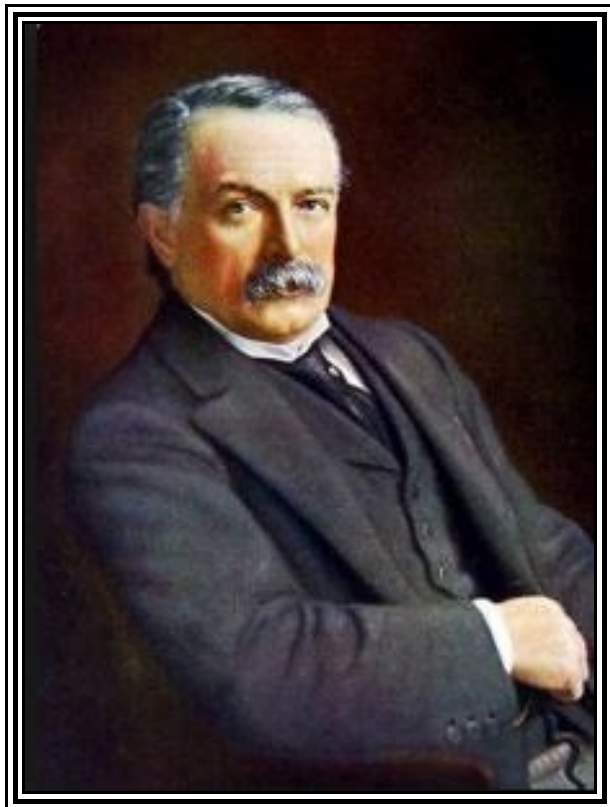
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## July 4, 1916

### Jump Up for LG



#### David Lloyd George becomes Secretary for War

With the death of Lord Kitchener, in early June, the office of the Secretary of War became vacant.

The Prime minister, Henry Asquith wished to appoint Lord Derby, the deputy Secretary, who had been recently in charge of the Derby Plan for recruitment and conscription.

The High Command (in short the CIGS, Robertson, and the Commander-in-Chief of the BEF in France, General Haig) were happy with this appointment, knowing that they could continue to prevail.

But the coalition government comprises the Leader of the Conservative party, Bonar Law, who does not see Derby as the man for the job. Law wants a stronger man. He wants Lloyd George as Secretary of War, no less.

Lloyd George was the very successful Chancellor of the Exchequer at the beginning of the war who sorted out the initial financial chaos. He then became the all-powerful Minister of Munitions who reshaped industry.

Now Asquith, who sees his power dwindling in the Cabinet, has to agree to «LG» becoming the uppermost man in strategic planning.

Four days after the beginning of the Battle of the Somme, a new Liberal minister will try to wrest the strategic direction of the war from the hands of the Generals.

— But that's not exactly what Bonar Law meant to see happen.



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# July 5, 1916

## Not Well Received

### Sir Sam Hughes Loses Popularity

On 5 July 1916, Sir Sam Hughes visits Camp Borden for one of his favourite activities, to meet, inspect and talk with “his” Canadian soldiers.

However at Camp Borden, he is greeted by booing soldiers and forced to retreat to his personal railway coach in the face of a developing riot.

At long last, his bluster has lost its appeal; he is increasingly seen as a meddling politician pretending to be a general. His advocacy of the Ross rifle and his patronage appointments to the officer corps have damaged morale and cost lives.

His coarse language and rough behaviour is also alienating some officers, including one who writes to PM Borden complaining of his foul language and advising him to “get rid of this objectionable cad.”

The PM's patience with his boisterous minister is eroding.

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Further information: Tim Cook, *The Madman and the Butcher*



Sir Sam Hughes



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## Le 6 juillet, 1916

### Séduite par les Russes



#### La Roumanie entre en négociations secrètes avec les Pouvoirs de l'Entente

Depuis le début de la guerre, la Roumanie fait l'objet d'offres d'alliance de la part des deux côtés de l'Europe. La France, en particulier, nourrit des amitiés culturelles avec Bucharest et désirerait que la Roumanie prenne une plus large place au sein des Balkans.

Par contre **le roi de Roumanie, Ferdinand**, est un Hollernzollern. Il fait face à un Parlement qui refuse ses avis et à une opinion publique qui a peur des conséquences de choisir.

C'est pourquoi depuis le début de la Guerre, la Roumanie laisse entendre que son amitié à un prix en territoires, mais que la neutralité la sert mieux aussi longtemps qu'il ne se dégage pas de parti victorieux.

La Roumanie attend donc de pouvoir 'venir en aide au parti victorieux,' comme d'autres l'on fait.

Toutefois la réussite de Brusilov laisse miroiter une opportunité alléchante. Les Russes qui ont toujours été opposés à l'expansion de la Roumanie vers l'Est et qui auraient préféré acquérir leurs victoires sans aide, laissent

entendre que l'intervention de la Roumanie dans les chaînes Carpathes pourrait être récompensée par l'octroi de la Transylvanie, la Bucovine et le Banat, et de la Bessarabie, très convoités, qui pourraient être soustraits à l'Autriche-Hongrie et à la Bulgarie.

L'offre ne tombe pas dans l'oreille d'un sourd et malgré les multiples essais de l'Allemagne pour emporter l'enjeu, la Roumanie ouvre des pourparlers secrets **le 6 juillet 1916** avec l'Entente.

Elle va opter pour joindre la Russie, en août prochain.

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● The TIMES History of the War, Chap 149: «The Intervention of Rumania», Vol IX: 401-440.



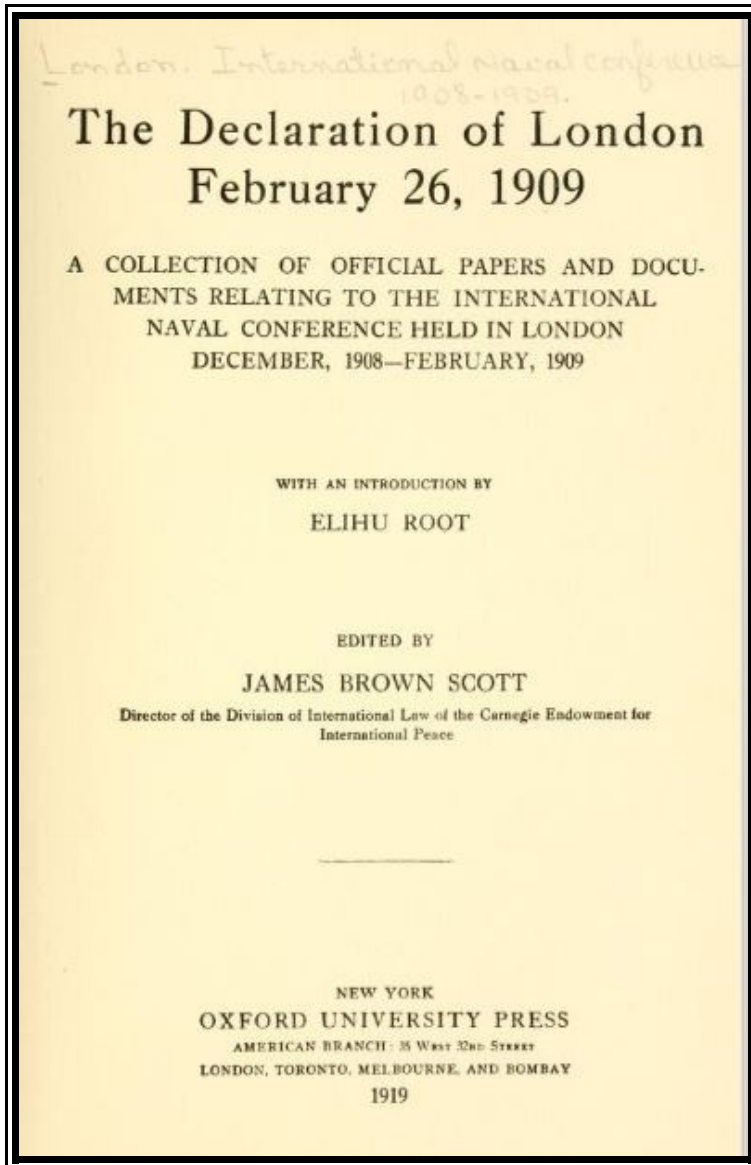
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July 7, 1916

Not quite adequate for war



## The *Declaration of London* Repudiated

In 1909, Great Britain had joined an international conference of all trading nations to agree on 'rules of the road' for international commerce over the high seas.

But the conventions that were accepted before the war turned out to be not applicable in time of war, where submarine warfare and blockade as an act of war had created an altogether new environment.

On 7 July 1916, the British Government gives the **Declaration of London of February 26, 1909** its *coup-de-grâce* by enacting a last of many Orders-in-Council that finally cancelled all its remaining provisions.

A strict application of the *Declaration* would have allowed neutral nations to enter ports of nations at war without interference if not carrying tonnage recognized by international tribunals as 'contraband.'

This is a luxury that nations at war could not see themselves agreeing to.

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●Hankey, Supreme Command, I: 100; II: 548.



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July 7, 1916

## From Omission to Commissions



### The Dardanelles and Mesopotamia Commissions

The British Government is under the gun in Parliament to account for the terrible failures in the Dardanelles and Mesopotamia operations.

Some Members having forcefully asked that reports be produced to account for Government action in these two cases, the parliamentary representative for the Government in the House, — the man who was Leader of the Conservative Opposition before the Liberal Coalition Government, Bonar Law, commits the Government to produce a full accounts before the House of Commons.

This proves a terrible mistake for the Government.

The Asquith Government from this point has to go into damage control in trying to delay and nullify the effects of this political bombshell.

**On 7 July 1916**, Maurice Hankey, the Secretary of the British War Cabinet, is sweating bullets trying to research previous cases where such accounts were made to Parliament in time of war. He finds that it has not hapened since 1810! And that resulted in a parliamentary battle of epic proportion.

The next months of Parliamentary life will be mesmerized by the two operations, which will become the subject of two Commissions of Enquiries that will grill the Government.

But one minister is not unhappy about it. Winston Churchill thinks that this is his chance to clear his name in the Dardanelles affair, and he is already preparing himself to lay it all out...

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•Hankey, Supreme Command, II: 517ff.



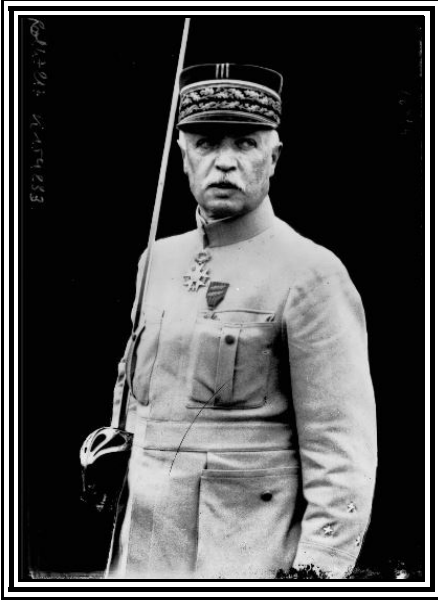
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July 9, 1916

## Fayolle on the Right of the Line



### General Fayolle with Sixth Army in the Somme Operation

The south of the Somme operation is run by French forces that were not involved in the battle of Verdun.

In the end, only one French army was dedicated to the task, when two were initially foreseen.

**General Émile Fayolle** is in charge of *Sixième Armée* which managed to progress better than its counterpart in the north, Fourth Army under General Rawlinson.

**By 10 July 1916**, Fayolle has succeeded in bursting through the first German line of defence and crossing the Somme river.

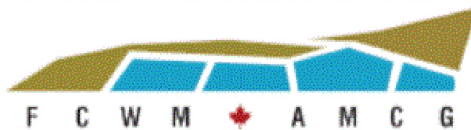
He now stands midway between the German first and second lines of defences. He is preparing for further advance, and the Germans are preparing for further defence.

But Fayolle cannot progress further if his left flank is not secure. And the British advance there is laborious and slow.

Fayolle had the benefit of better heavy artillery, better tactics, and better training of officers and NCOs in the French Army. Great Britain never had compulsory service before the war. It did not build reserves of trained men over the previous decade. Kitchener's new armies are very green, including officers, staff and line, and NCOs.

This made a big difference in the last few days. There is still quite a lot to learn.

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●SHAT, Verdun, 216.



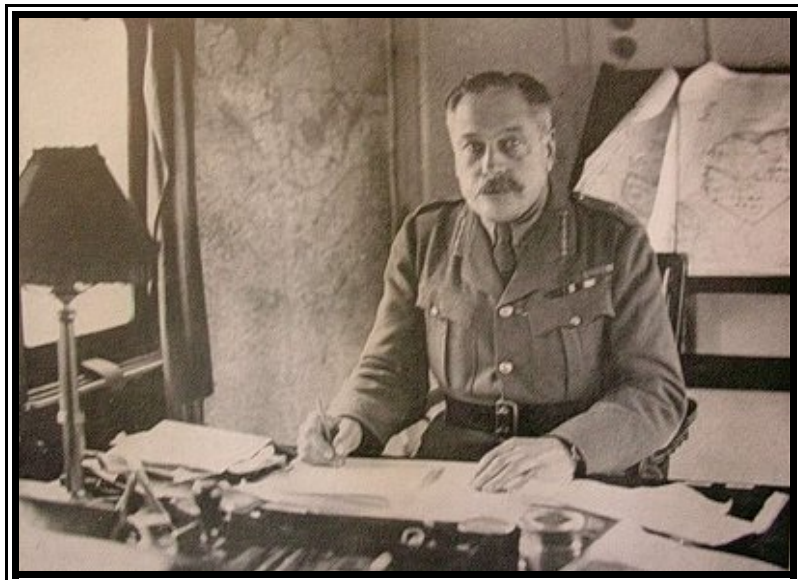
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July 10, 1916

## Quatre-vingt mille en dix jours



### Le général Haig demeure optimiste

Le Comité de Guerre reçoit l'information, le **10 juillet 1916**, que le nombre des pertes encourues dans l'offensive de la Somme dans les premiers dix jours de combat a été de l'ordre de 80,000.

Les 40,000 hommes sortis des combats le premier jour ont été doublés dans les neuf jours qui ont suivi, soit à une moyenne de pertes de 4,500 hommes par jour, à toute fin pratique, une brigade par jour. Le Corps expéditionnaire britannique a donc perdu, à date, l'équivalent de six divisions depuis le début.

Le Comité des ministres civils est consterné et ne peut considérer sous quelque explication fournie par le Haut Commandement militaire que de telles pertes puissent se justifier. Pourtant le **général Sir Douglas Haig** demande aux ministres de ne pas porter jugement trop rapidement sur le succès éventuel de la manœuvre.

Il croit toujours, contre toute évidence, qu'une opportunité va se présenter s'il maintient une pression constante contre l'ennemi et se tient prêt à exploiter une brèche qui pourrait se former.

Le général Haig a une qualité qui est considérée précieuse chez ses supporteurs et que son prédécesseur, comme Commandant-en-chef du Corps expéditionnaire britannique, le Général French, ne possédait pas: il ne le sait jamais lorsqu'il a été battu.

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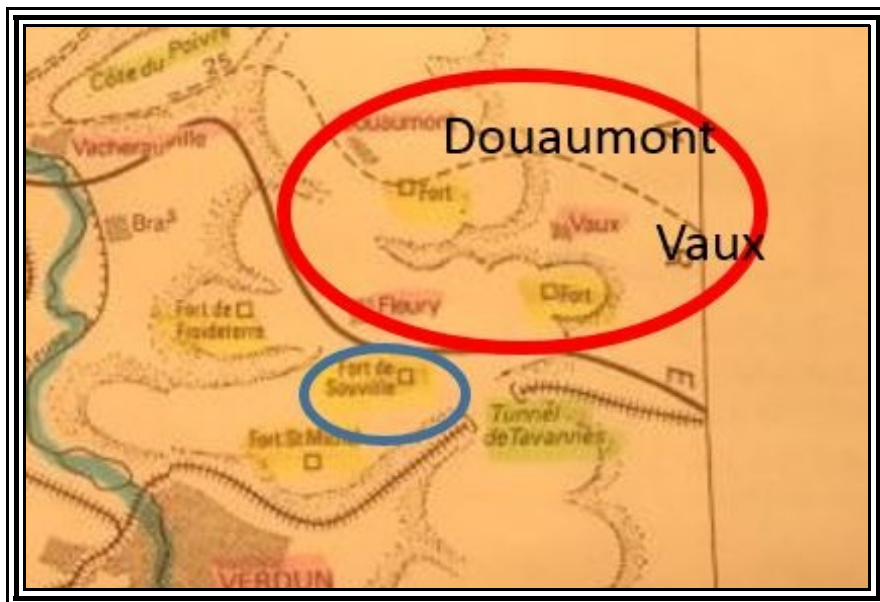
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# Le 11 juillet, 1916

## Verdun souffle



### Une attaque contre Souville

Les Allemands lancent une attaque contre Souville, ce qui constitue leur dernier coup de dé à Verdun.

L'artillerie française qui se voit maintenant protégée par un nouveau masque à gaz, résiste aux bombardements et repousse l'ennemi.

Falkenhayn doit définitivement tourner son attention, de même que ses réserves de munitions, vers la Somme.

Il est aussi inquiet des développements sur le front Russe où l'avance de Brusilov dans le dernier mois a renversé plusieurs points tenus

pour solides.

Le général Nivelle, qui est maintenant en charge de la Deuxième Armée française, l'Armée de Verdun, est encouragé par le général Mangin, son principal chef de Corps d'Armée, qui voit devant lui la réduction des énergies allemandes.

Les effets de l'opération de la Somme lui paraissent évidents et il a bien l'intention d'exploiter l'opportunité.

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● Ian Sumner, [The French Army on the Western Front 1914-1918](#) (Pen & Sword, 2012), p. 109.



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Jul 12, 1916

## The Serbs are Ready Again



### The First Serbian Army in Salonica

The Serbian Army was involved in defending Serbia in 1914-1915. It had to withdraw under pressure of the Central Powers (Germany, Austro-Hungary and Bulgaria) through the mountains of Albania and Montenegro to the shores of the Adriatic, where it was evacuated to Italy then to the island of Corfu under the harassment of the Austrian navy.

After having been reconstituted in Corfu with the help of the Entente allies, it was once again moved, this time to Salonica, near Greece, to be used in the reconquest of Serbia.

The 118,000 men of the First Serbian Army under **General Mishitch**, now boost the allied forces under French General Maurice Sarrail to a total of 250,000 soldiers, stranded in a small area of occupied Greek territory that some call 'the Bird Cage'.

The Germans also like to call the place the largest prisoner of war camp in the world, because these allied forces are not moving.

But Général Sarrail is now nurturing plans to go forward into Serbia, despite the little space of manoeuvre he has, with Greece insisting that it remains neutral.

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•Dupuy & Dupuy, Encyclopedia of Military History (1977), p. 963.



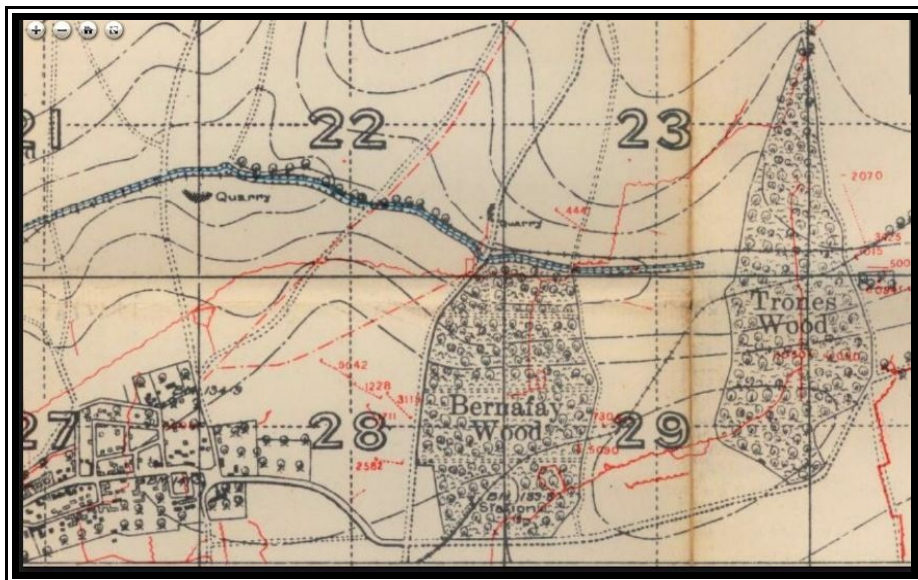
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# July 13, 1916

## Pushing in the south



### Somme – Trônes Wood

The first day of the Somme was a fiasco for the British, who had high casualties with little to show for it.

In the following week, Generals Haig and Rawlinson decided to focus efforts in the more attainable south, from Ovillers to Bernafay Wood.

The plan included capturing La Boisselle, Mametz Wood, Contalmaison, and Trônes Wood,

By **July 13** the British had taken 20 square miles of German territory. However, shortcomings in planning, communication, and coordination

led to 85,000 casualties over those 13 days.

This operation included clearing the triangular Trônes Wood, a task that fell to 30 Div and 18 Div of XIII Corps.

On **13 July 1916** they launched yet another attack – the seventh – and the next day they finally captured it, as they were able to overcome heavy fire from a railway line running through the wood.

•Prior and Wilson. *The Somme*. (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2005.



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# July 14, 1916

## Too Classic by Half



### Longueval - A melting cavalry charge

The battle of Longueval of **14 July 1916** has been prepared with care by Fourth Army.

It consists of two phases by which, in Phase I, three infantry divisions, all of XV Corps, advanced secretly into No Man's Land in the night and launched a classic dawn attack toward **Bazentin-le-Petit** and **Bazentin-le-Grand**, on the left, and **Delville Wood** and **Longueval** on the

right, with a short artillery bombardment where the roots of the concept of a classic 'rolling barrage' can be seen.

Later in the day, for Phase II, an Indian Cavalry Brigade joined battle and attacked between **High Wood** and **Delville Wood** in a no less classic cavalry charge uphill: their horses were mowed down by machine-gun fire across the fields and by a sharp defensive artillery barrage.

This costly half-success set the scene for the reinforcements of the German second line of defence and the long and blood-soaked standoff of **High Wood**.

•Prior and Wilson, *Somme*, 138-9. •Marix Evans, *Somme 1914-1918: Lessons in War* (2010), p. 210.



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Jul 15, 1916

## A Forlorn Brigade in Devil Wood



### The South Africans in Delville Wood

As part of the attack on Longueval, on 14 July, the South African Brigade was held in reserve for the first day.

But when the first wave did not succeed in taking part of Longueval and the Delville and High Woods, the reserve was committed.

The South African Brigade entered the field in the early morning of **15 July 1916** with the mission of securing Delville Wood, to the back of partly taken Longueval.

Much confusion attended their arrival as there remained uncertainty, in the night, as to who was where on the edges of the wood.

The brigade was involved until July 20<sup>th</sup> in nearing, entering and fighting inside the Delville Wood, where much hand-to-hand combat took place and inaccurate artillery bombardment from both sides.

The wood was partially taken, with losses of 75% in officers and men.

There were four times as many dead as wounded.



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July 16, 1916

## Briand: Doing in Paris what they do in London



### The French Government and War Policy

For the first time in its history, the French Assemblée conducts a secret session on war policy.

Contrary to the British usage, the French parliament does not have a tradition of informing parliamentarians of the secrets that the Cabinet holds through special sessions that are meant to inform them so as to be more atuned to War policy. These sessions do not comprise votes, although stormy debates are part of it.

Such recent sessions in London convince French parliametarians that they should be held in Paris as well.

**Prime Minister Aristide Briand**, who is also minister of Foreign Affairs, has been forced to comply, but he insists that the discussion must be surrounded by

the large context of government policy, and not sink into details.

The session of **16 July 1916**, which lasts many days is seen as a manner for the Government of 'taking the whole country into its confidence'.

It results in complete support (444-8) for the Briand Ministry.

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•George Jeffreys Adam, «France», Encyclopaedia Britannica, (Twelfth Ed., 1922), Vol. XXXI, p. 138.



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**July 17, 1916**

## **History at the Pointy End**



### **Basil's night of disappearance at Mametz Wood**

The night of **17-18 July 1916**, **Captain Basil Liddell Hart**, after having been gassed by phosgene, and not knowing what happened to him, disappeared in the forest of Mametz, in the Somme operations.

It was probably a panic attack. He was evacuated the next day with the symptoms of bronchitis and 'dilated heart'.

This was the third and last of three short stints on the battlefield that Liddell Hart made as an officer of King's Own Yorkshire Regiment (KOYR), lately as company commander.

All these experiences were marked by evacuations on a stretcher for various physical and mental indispositions .

Basil Liddell Hart then became the foremost writer on the history of the First World War, and one of the best European thinkers on strategy and techniques of war.

It is well accepted that his views on the future use of mechanized forces influenced the German Panzer revolution of World War II.

Largely acclaimed as «the teacher to Generals», Captain Liddell Hart was not liked by all of them.

He could have scathing comments on generalship in World War One, which he had experienced at the pointy end.

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●Alex Danchev, [Basil Liddell Hart: Alchemist of War](#), 61.



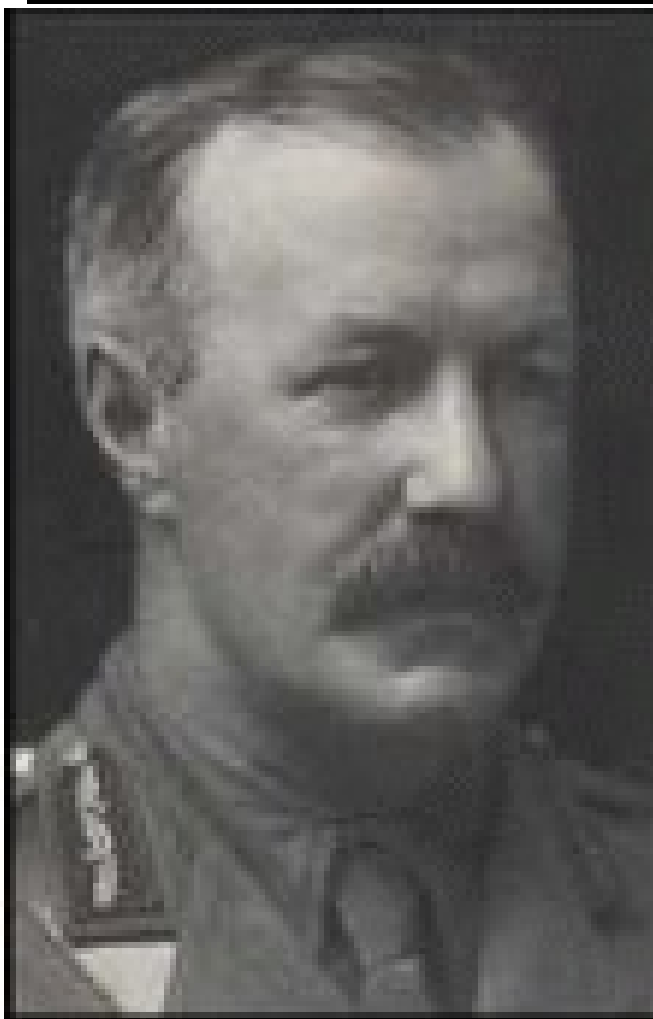
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## July 18, 1916

### Hindsight from Upfront



**John Charteris, the BEF Chief of Staff, looks at the long view**

*« Another stage of the battle is over; we hold 4 miles of the crest of the ridge. One cannot help comparing this battle with the Aisne, when for nearly a month we strove to gain the Chemin des Dames ridge and made no progress. In this battle, in three weeks we are on the ridge. How different it all is from 1914. Then we had no heavy artillery, little ammunition for our light guns, no hopes of reinforcements. This time, ample artillery, and reinforcements coming out regularly. Even more remarkable is the progress on the scientific side of war. Observation balloons, aeroplanes, air photographs, sound ranging, listening-in apparatus, Secret Service . On the Aisne each corps only had one officer for « I » work. Now there is one with each brigade and division, and altogether seventeen at Army Head-quarters, and every Corps is asking for a larger staff. It is the same in every other branch. War is a science. GHQ are now controlling a far bigger and more intricate business than any industrial concern in peace-time. As time goes on it will get bigger still. Not only will the army expand, but we shall inevitably have to take over the railways from the French.»*

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Brigadier-General John Charteris, At GHQ (London:Cassell, 1931), p. 155.



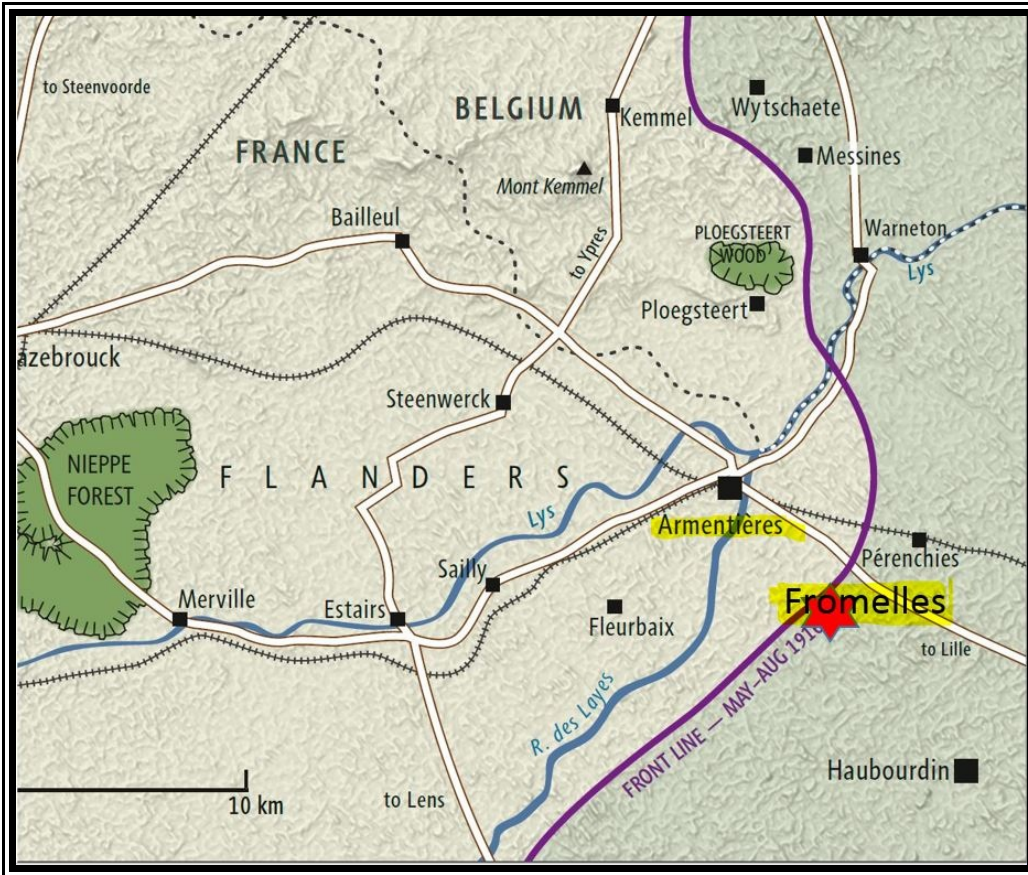
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# Le 19 juillet, 1916

## Pendant Pozières, Fromelles



### La 5<sup>ème</sup> Division australienne à Fromelles

La 5<sup>ème</sup> Division australienne est arrivée la dernière des quatre divisions australiennes déménagées de l'Égypte vers la France en 1916.

Elle fait partie du Deuxième Corps ANZAC, alors que les trois premières font partie du Premier Corps ANZAC.

Après le début de la campagne de la Somme, le I ANZAC est envoyé de Armentières, en Flandre, à la région de la Somme pour y devenir un Corps de réserve. Dans les derniers jours ces Anzacs

ont été fauchés à Pozières. Le II ANZAC a maintenant pris la place laissée à Armentières.

Le Commandant de la Première Armée britannique en Flandre décide alors de faire une opération de diversion pour empêcher les Allemands d'envoyer eux-mêmes des troupes en renfort dans la Somme.

La 5<sup>ème</sup> Division australienne est alors choisie pour participer à une attaque à Fromelles, le **19 juillet 1916**. L'attaque se solde par un échec cuisant où la division perd 5,533 hommes.

La 5<sup>ème</sup> Division australienne prendra un an à être reconstruite.

•Wikipedia, «5<sup>th</sup> Australian Division»

July 20, 1916

## The Shell Game in Canada



### Report of the Royal Commission on the Shell Committee

Despite the energy of Sir Sam Hughes and the commitment of Canadian industrialists, Canadian production of artillery munitions struggled.

Shortages of skilled labour, precision machinery and suitable steel hindered efforts to establish new plants.

In response to allegations of corruption, PM Borden asked for a Royal Commission to examine the dealings of the Shell Committee.

**On 20 July 1916**, the Commission submitted its report, clearing Hughes and most

industrialists of malfeasance, although one of Hughes' associates, J. Wesley Allison was identified as profiteering from dubious contracts.

The Liberals cried "whitewash" but in fact the Report identified industrial shortcomings more than corruption for the shortfalls.

Borden moved to reorganize the munitions industry placing it under the Imperial Munitions Board with one of Canada's leading industrialists, Sir Joseph Flavelle, in charge.

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•Further information: Tim Cook, *The Madman and the Butcher*



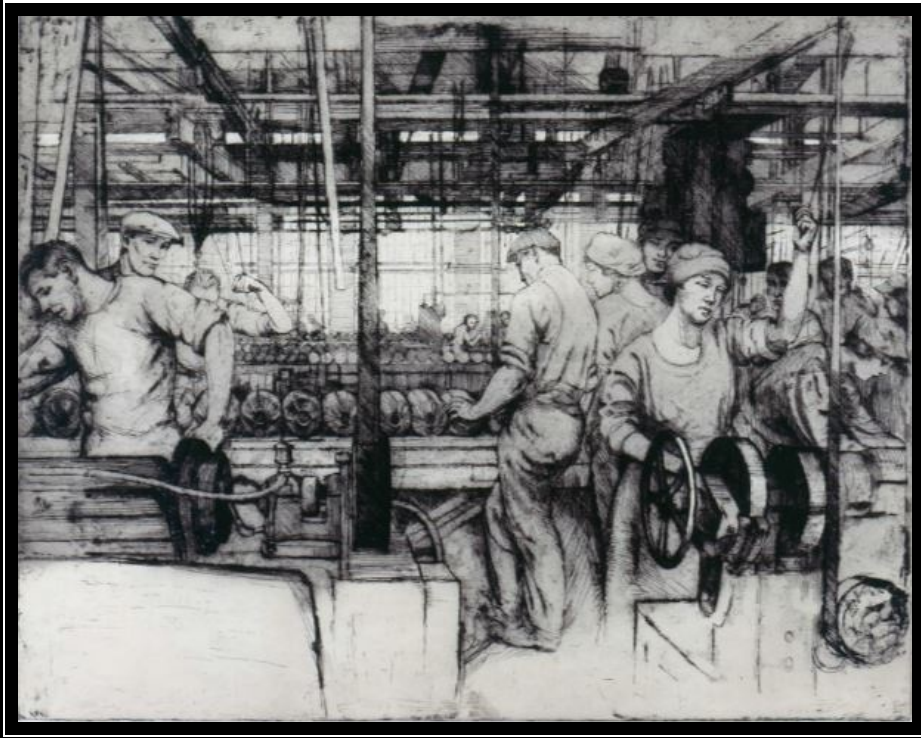
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Le 20 juillet 1916

## L'Industrie de Guerre au Canada



### La commission sur la production de guerre

Au début de la guerre, le premier ministre Borden a créé le comité des munitions.

Ses membres avaient la responsabilité de distribuer les contrats pour l'industrie de guerre - une opportunité dont certains ont bénéficié en octroyant des contrats à des personnes qui leur étaient bien connues.

Le manque de supervision du comité a résulté en la production de matériels de mauvaise qualité en volume inadéquat.

Des plaintes émanant de l'Angleterre ont amené Borden à dissoudre ce comité en novembre

1915. Des accusations de corruptions ont aussi forcé la création d'une Commission d'enquête.

Toutefois, **le 20 juillet 1916**, tant le gouvernement que le comité ont été exonérés. Un seul membre, J. Wesley Allison, a été critiqué pour ses actions «inexcusables».

L'affaire a néanmoins laissé un goût amer envers le ministre de la Défense et de la Milice, Sam Hughes.

•Iarocci, and Keshen. A Nation in Conflict: (2016); Cook, Warlords, (2012); Wade, The French Canadians. 1955.



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# July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1916

## Terrible Pozières



### All out effort on Pozières

On 21 July 2016, Fourth Army issues army-wide Operational Orders for the advance on Pozières.

Pozières is half-way on the heretofore famous road from Albert to Bapaume, the long road of the summer of 1916.

It is also the point where the ground is the highest along the way, standing as a key feature for artillery observation.

Taking counsel of his earlier success, on 14 July, Rawlinson plans a night attack which will involved six divisions on the first line: 1 Div, 19 Div, 51 Div, 5 Div, 3 Div, 30 Div.

The attack is planned for 23 July at 0130 hrs.

British casualties so far in the Somme operation are in the order of 120,000, **'exceeding [in three weeks!] the total casualties of the eight months of the Gallipoli campaign.'**

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Hankey, Supreme Command, II: 514



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# July 22, 1916

## Hankey to the Rescue



### The troubling Commissions

The very able secretary to the War Cabinet in London becomes the political attorney for the British Government when the question of the reports to the House of Commons on both the operations in the Dardanelles and in Mesopotamia become a big 'affair' in Great Britain.

**Maurice Hankey**, a man with the golden pen, is asked by the government to represent its interests before the royal commissions that are tasked with unravelling the political and military decision-making in these two failed campaigns.

Hankey's task is very unusual. He is not a politician. He is in fact a staff officer from the Marine Corps who was selected to take Minutes in the old Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) many years before the war. But Hankey's skills at political organization has blurred his role, making him at once a public servant, a military staff officer, and a political counsel to the Cabinet. As the Secretary to the War Cabinet, he is now the key man to put the secrets together and build a defence credible to all parties of the House.

The task that he is about to enter is vital for the survival of the Government. His briefs to the Commissions must show that the Asquith administration, the High Command and the Generals Commanding in these operations, were acting in good faith, with the necessary competence, to the satisfaction of the House.

It is an enormous task, knowing that there were failures at all levels.

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● Hankey, Supreme Command, II: 522-3.



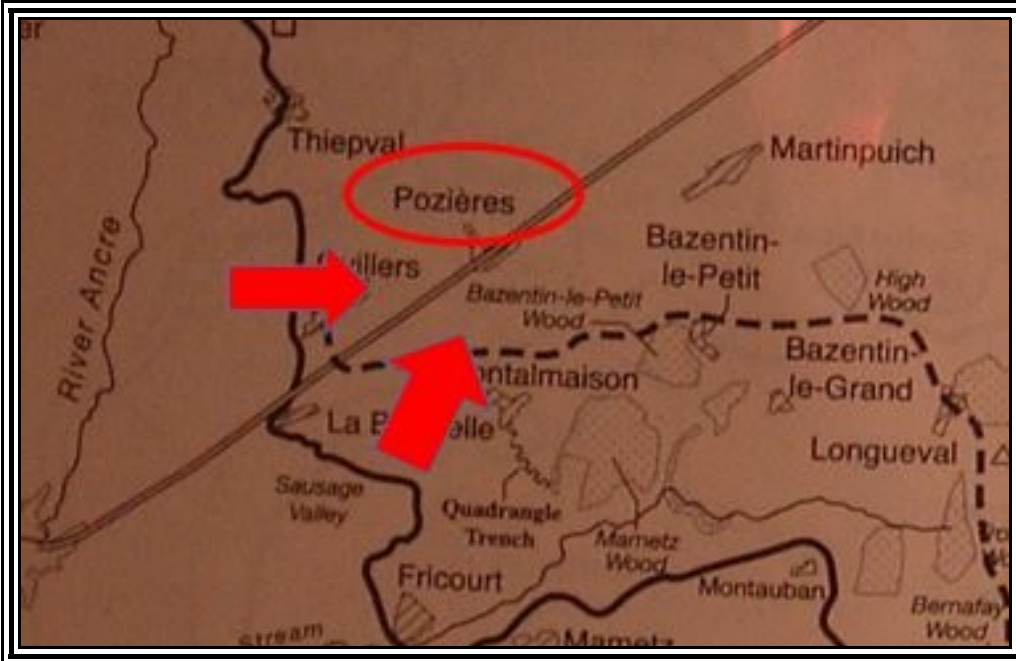
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July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1916

## Pozière: Just Up the Road



### Bad start against Pozières

The piecemeal night attack prepared by Rawlinson is a dismal, at times pitiful failure.

Division advance in killing grounds in the night, some through devastated woods and fresh wire.

HIGH WOOD, WOOD LANE, INTERMEDIATE TRENCH AND GUILLEMONT do not fall.

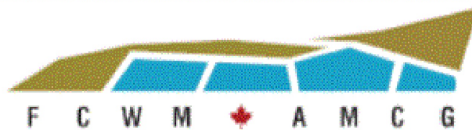
No ground is gained in the end. The assault does not get anywhere near SWITCH LINE, the

objective, well defended by new lines of defence.

The Germans also adopt a new style of defence. They use shell holes for machine-gun pits, criss-crossing the fields with fixed lines of fire. Artillery is very inefficient in countering them. GUILLEMONT is surrounded by such networks.

Troops that enter de village are attacked from all angles. They can only withdraw piecemeal.

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•For more information, see Martin Marix Evans, Somme 1914-1918: Lessons in War (The History Press, 2010), p. 124.



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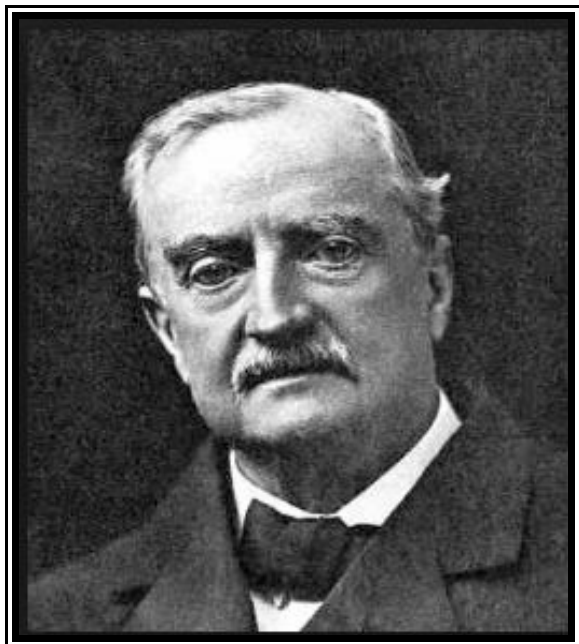
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## July 24, 1916

### Redmond's surgery

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#### The split of the Irish Party in the British House of Commons

Ireland is acrimonious toward participation in the war. The British Government has postponed the debates on Irish Home Rule for the duration and excluded it from Conscription.

However, the terrorists' actions in the Easter Rising have achieved their aim of reviving the national question as an issue. Prime Minister Henry Asquith has now agreed that some demands should be addressed.

But Ireland cannot speak with one voice. The pro-British Unionist counties of northern Ireland do not see eye-to-eye with the other nationalist counties.

The Irish Party in the House of Commons led by **John Redmond** cannot come to a clear policy, wishing to represent all Irishmen.

David Lloyd George has been appointed by Asquith to handle the Irish question. This is the reason that prevented him from going with Kitchener to Russia, on the fatal journey of 5 June.

Lloyd George has now presented to Redmond a mortal choice of decision that has forced him to opt in an offer to exclude six unionist counties from Home Rule discussions.

The choice ruins Redmond's parliamentary position:

The Nationalists cannot forgive him for opting for a separation of the country in principle.

But the northern Unionists will not agree to be involved in the change of status inherent in Home Rule.

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●Alvin Jackson, Ireland: 1798-1998: Politics and War (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 208.



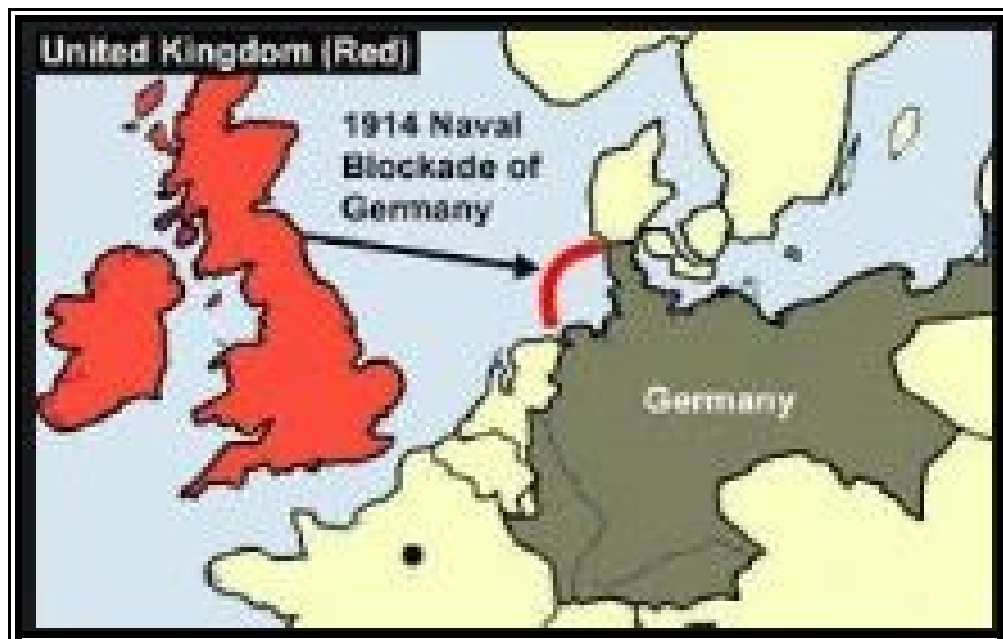
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July 25, 1916

## The Right of Blocade of Neutrals



### United States Protest against British 'Black List'.

The USA is opposed to Great Britain acting outside international law in regard to the right of blockade.

Recently, the British Government has decided to withdraw from all previous commitments, embodied in the London Agreement of 1909, in regard to international rules of trade over the high seas.

The British view is that circumstances of war have

made those agreements impossible to maintain for belligerents.

The British Government is thus maintaining a «**Black List**» of all neutral merchant ships, shipping companies, promoters and financiers known to be involved in trading with enemy nations at war.

All neutral shipping excluded from the blockade area by the Black List is intercepted by the Royal Navy and prevented from trading within the blockade. And this list is not submitted to the consideration of International Prize Courts who should rule on the nature and admissibility of alleged «contraband».

The United States Government is infuriated that such a list is maintained against all international agreements and calls on the British Government, **on 25 July 1916**, to abide by international rules.

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●Link & Leary, The Diplomacy of World Power, p. 118-21.



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# July 26, 1916

## Footage from the Front



### Max Aitken and the Canadian Cinematography Committee

Max Aitken is the official «Canadian Eye Witness» to the Canadian Forces, and as such he has orchestrated a network of reporting, book-writing, story-telling to feed Canadian newspapers from his office in London.

**In July 1916**, Aitken now branches into cinema. He creates the **Canadian Cinematography Committee** which, with the support of the Government of Canada, can do more with Canadian troops than the War Office allows its own film agency with the British or other Dominion troops.

Aitken finds a first cinematographer in Lieutenant F.O, Boville, who will open a wide new field of publicity and propaganda for the Canadian Corps by shooting scenes from the Battle of the Somme.

The Canadian Committee will succeed in producing weekly footage that will be so popular that Aitken will be sought to become the Head of the British-Canadian Cinematographic Committee, doing for the whole Empire what was so successful for the Canadians.

The future Lord Beaverbrook is a man full of energy and creativity. He has political, social and newspaper connections in London that make him a very influential man for the Canadian presence in Europe.

The footage that he collects during the war will be used for the film Lest We Forget in 1935, which will break new levels of authenticity in war reporting.

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●Tim Cook, «Canada's Great War on Film, *Lest We Forget* (1935)», CMH, 14:3 (Summer 2005), pp. 5-20.



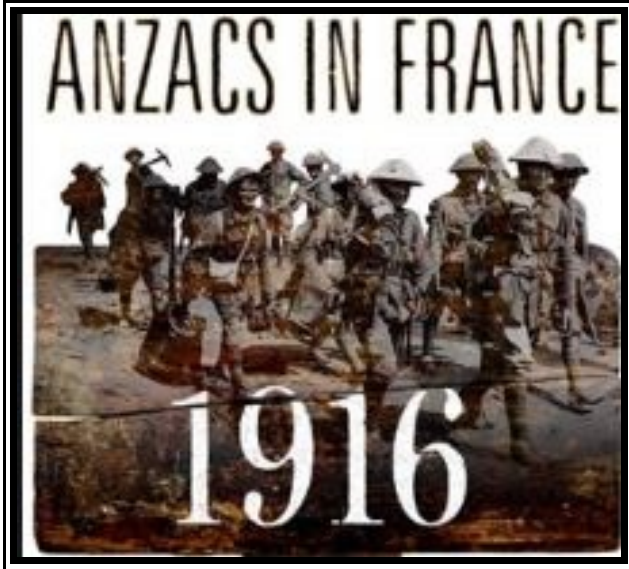
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July 27, 1916

## The ANZAC's Self-Relief at Pozières



### Reserve army gets involved in the Somme

Fourth Army under Rawlinson is nearing 100,000 casualties since the beginning of July. On this day, a massive attack on Delville Wood and Longueval advance the work begun so unsuccessfully on 23 July. This brings new casualties.

In the area of Pozières, the First Australian Division had to be withdrawn after two days of fighting on account of casualties.

Rawlinson has to get some reinforcements from the Reserve army that had been put together by Haig to exploit success on the first day. General Hubert Gough pushes forward the Second Australian Division to relieve the First Australian division at Pozières. In the course of the next two weeks, that division will be nibbling at Pozières some more with enormous

casualties.

The ANZACS who thought at first sight that the France theatre was a lot more gentle than the Gallipoli isthmus are now changing their minds.

From this point on, their own leadership is starting to insist that attacks will be much better prepared. At the rate that they are losing men, the Auzies and Kiwies will be wiped out entirely and never ever be back home.

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●Prior & Wilson, Somme, 178.



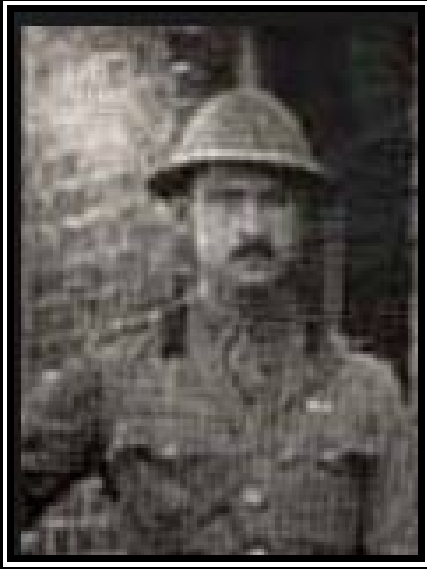
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**July 28, 1916**

## **From a Papineau in the Trenches**



### **Captain Talbot Papineau's first letter published**

Andrew Ross McMaster of Montreal received a letter dated March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1916, from **Talbot Papineau**, overseas with the PPCLI.

McMaster was Papineau's law partner before the war. But the letter was strangely addressed to Henri Bourassa, Papineau's cousin and editor of *Le Devoir*.

Although not avowedly so, the letter was quite evidently meant to be published as an open letter. It appeared in all the major papers of Montreal, Quebec, Ottawa and Toronto on **28 July 1916**.

In this letter Papineau sought to convince Bourassa, and through him, the Canadian public, and in particular the French-speaking public, that the cause was just, and that defeating German militarism in Europe was sufficient cause for Canadians to be involved.

**«By the time you are within fifteen yards of a German army and know yourself to be holding about one yard out of a line of five hundred miles or more, you are liable to be enquiring very anxiously about the presence and power of British and French forces.**

**«There, even more than in Canada herself, her citizens are being knit together into a new existence because when men stand side by side and endure a soldier's life and face together a soldier's death, they are united in bonds almost as strong as the closest of blood-ties.»**

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●Wade, *The French-Canadians*, 711-3.



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**Le 29 juillet, 1916**

**Les Français sont impatients des Anglais**

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### **Le Général Foch attend beaucoup du général Haig**

Pendant que le général Haig s'évertue à foncer vers Pozières et y dépenser toutes ses énergies à contourner les hauteurs de Thiepval par l'est, le commandant du groupe d'armées français au sud reste sur ses positions

Le général Foch, le commandant du groupe d'armées du Centre (qui comprend maintenant deux armées impliquées dans la campagne de la Somme, la Sixième armée du général Fayolle, qui y est depuis le début, et la Dixième armée du général Micheler qui s'y est jointe récemment) attend du général Haig sur sa gauche qu'il avance beaucoup plus vite.

Foch semble oublier que Haig possède beaucoup moins d'artillerie que peuvent en utiliser les Français et que son secteur d'avance est beaucoup plus large.

Foch exerce aussi moins de pressions sur ses propres commandants d'armées qu'il n'en exerce sur Haig, ce qui fait que leurs relations deviennent moins cordiales.

Foch sait que des forces importantes et du matériel précieux sont en train de se dégager de Verdun. Il attend donc que ce changement fasse une différence dans son groupe d'armées.

Et Joffre est de son avis, que l'effort doit être fait du côté anglais pour l'instant, et que Haig fait preuve de peu d'imagination dans ses manœuvres.

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●Liddell Hart, Foch, p. 233-4.



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# July 30, 1916

## A Downhill Battle



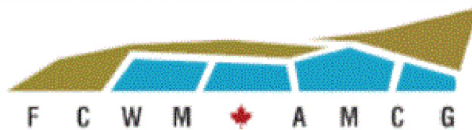
### Somme - Searching for tactics against German reverse slope

The tactics of the second half of July are searching: small or wide attacks?

Both are used simultaneously with desperate inefficiency. The Germans take full advantage of their reverse slope position. Very successful in defending the heights of the THIEPVAL-HIGH WOOD-DELVILLE WOOD crest.

« What the command never grasped was that it was facing a different situation both from that prevailing between 2 and 13 July and from that on 14 July. The small, high-cost, bludgeoning attacks of the first period would no longer gain ground, because the German defence had recovered from the shock inflicted upon it in the south on 1 July. The Germans were now well organised into their divisional units and able to offer a coherent and stubborn defence. Moreover, many of the localities they were defending, such as the SWITCH LINE and WOOD LANE, were – unlike the objectives attacked in the first two weeks of July – out of direct British artillery observation. And on account of generally poor weather, the British could not use their aerial superiority. Nor, because of the wear on the guns, could creeping barrages be fired across a wide front, nor the heavy artillery maintain the accuracy needed to hit the German defences with any reliability.»

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●Quote from Prior & Wilson, Somme, 156. See their excellent chapter 14: «We Are a Bit Stuck’: 15-31 July , p. 119-57.



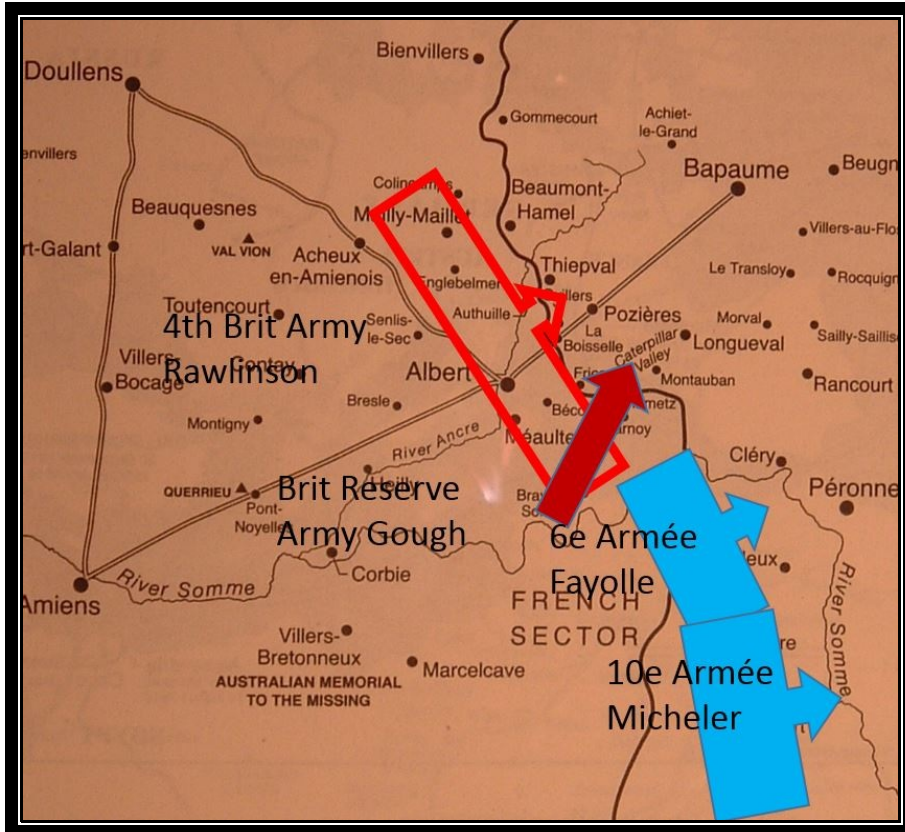
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# Le 29 juillet, 1916

## Quatre armées poussent ensemble



### Somme: Fin Juillet 1916

#### Au nord (côté britannique)

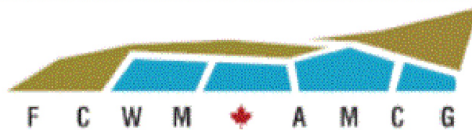
Haig continue de contourner les hauteurs de Thiepval par l'est en essayant de prendre Pozières avec la Quatrième Armée de Rawlinson aidée par l'Armée de Réserve de Gough.

#### Au sud (côté français)

Joffre donne direction que la Sixième Armée de Fayolle devra appuyer les Britanniques en vue d'une grande action d'ensemble.

La Dixième Armée de Micheler continuera, elle, son action dans le sud.

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SHAT, Verdun, 216.



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