

September 1st, 1916

The War Moonshine Law



Ontario Temperance Act, 1916

The Enactment of the War Measures Act of 1914, in Canada, opened the door to many curtailments of citizen's rights for the efficient prosecution of the war.

Among the laws produced as subsidiary to the War Measures Act, the Federal Prohibition Laws reduced the freedom of Canadian citizens to produce, transport and sell intoxicating beverages.

Each province in turn could amplify these laws within its boundaries.

The Ontario Temperance Act was enacted in the summer of 1916 by the Hearst Government and took effect on 1 September 1916.

Various provincial amendments to this law came between 1916 and 1927, when it was finally repealed.

●Less Peate, *Esprit de Corps*, 11:7 (June 2004), p. 21.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 2nd, 1916

The U-Boat Option



U-21 Sinking a British Freighter

U-Boats Return to Raiding British Commerce

During 1916, the German Navy had attempted to use submarines to compensate for the High Seas Fleet's numerical disadvantage compared to the British Grand Fleet.

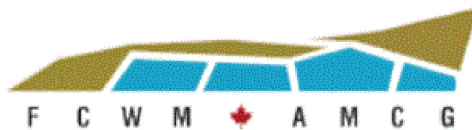
U-boats took part in several operations designed to lure the British battleships into traps, but these efforts produced few engagements.

Accordingly, German naval strategy in the waters around Britain returned to commerce raiding to starve Britain of essential food and military supplies.

Although there was no immediate return to unrestricted submarine warfare because of American threats of entering the war, that debate was renewed among naval and political authorities.

German analysis of the British war economy concludes that sinking 600,000 tons of shipping per month, over a period of five or six months, will force Britain to sue for peace.

Further information: Wikipedia, *U-boat Campaign (World War I)*



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 3rd, 1916

1 Canadian Division at Mouquet Farm



Canadian Corps under Gough

The Canadian Corps has been moved south, at the end of August, so as to put it in position, in the Somme, to relieve the Australian Corps involved at Pozières.

The exhausted Australians are still involved in the difficult task of taking the infamous Mouquet Farm, near Pozières, where strong German defences have resisted their multiple attempts to take it.

On 3 September 1916, General Julian Byng becomes a Corps commander under **General Hubert Gough**, the commander of the Reserve army (Fifth British Army).

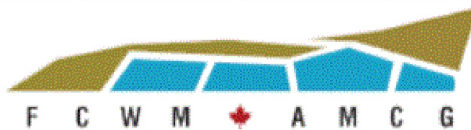
As soon as he receives the 1st Canadian Division, even before 2nd and 3rd Canadian Divisions enter the Corps area of responsibility, Gough orders the division forward to replace the Australians in the sector of the ominous farm.

This is a tough order. Major General Arthur Currie would have needed some time to know the new ground and settle into the Australian trenches before being ordered forward into battle.

Currie will remember Gough's approach when he will become the Canadian Corps Commander. His memory of Gough's decisions in early September 1916 will bring him to ask Haig, in 1917 and 1918, never to assign the Canadian Corps to Fifth Army.

Meanwhile Mouquet Farm will take its toll of Canadian lives even after it becomes irrelevant in the larger picture.

Morin information in •Prior and Wilson, Somme, 249.

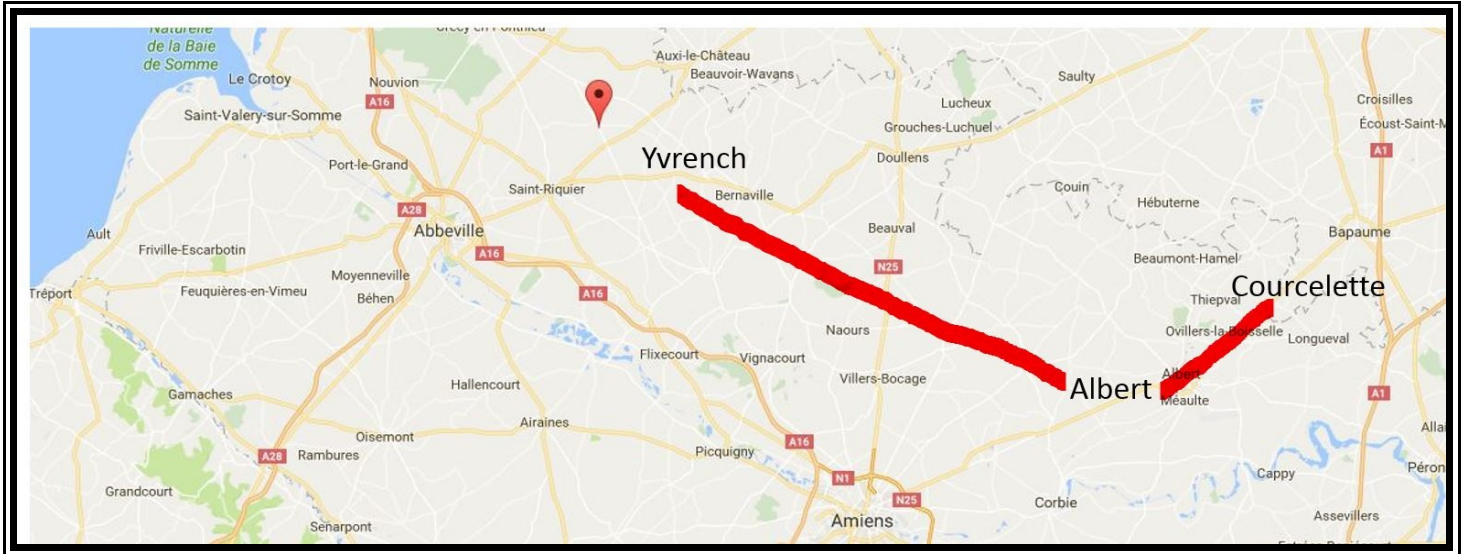


Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

●September 4, 1916 The Beasts are in the Bullpen



Tank Training at Yvrench, France

In the month of August, two companies of tanks were ferried to France and transported to Yvrench, near Abbeville, where a training centre was to be established under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Brough, who proceeded to France on 3 August, to make the necessary arrangements.

On September 4, 1916, Colonel Brough, having organised the training, returned to England, and Lieutenant-Colonel Bradley took over command of the «**Heavy Section of the Machine Gun Corps**», the organization that will hold the tanks until the formation of the proper Tank Corps.

These two companies are slated to be part of the large operation to be called «Fliers-Courcelette», in the battle of the Somme.

The tanks will be transported to Bray-sur-Somme, near Albert, and then brought to Pozières, in time for the 15 September two-army attack.

Fuller, Tanks, p. 34.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 5, 1916

The Big Tandem is Here



Hindenburg and Ludendorff in the west

General Paul Hindenburg and **General Erich Ludendorff** have now been placed by the Kaiser in the posts of Chief of the Imperial General Staff and Quarter-Master General.

The two are inseparable since the famous battle of Tannenberg, in the fall of 1914, and have been running operations in the northern part of the Russian front. They are now the tandem that will replace General Falkenhayn at the head of the German Army. They arrive in France for a tour of inspection on **5 September 1916**.

Their first decisions are rapid and important. The organization of the front will be changed. Armies will be rearranged in different army groups so that fresh reserves become more readily available.

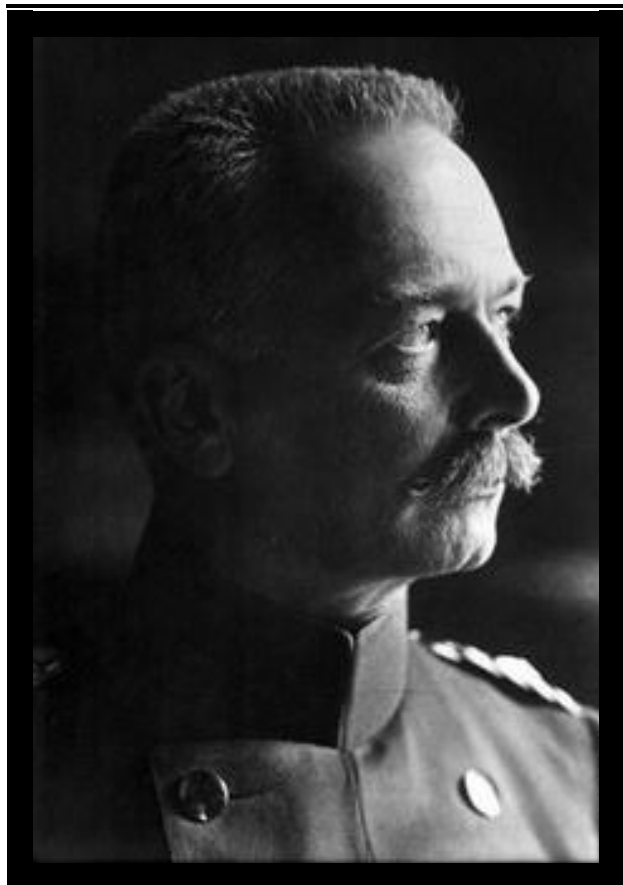
They also decide that Falkenhayn's view, that all ground must be held, is going to be replaced by «defence in depth», by which less density of troops in the first line will prevent losses to artillery, with immediate local counter-attacks to be launched against assaults.

These are strong signature decisions that show East front experience.

-
- John Buchan, History of the Great War, Book II, Chap 63, p. 191.

September 6, 1916

Too Realist by Half



Falkenhayn returns to army command

General Erich von Falkenhayn, who was Chief of the Imperial General Staff of the German Army since September 1914, is now returned to army command. He is placed with Ninth Army, slated to fight against Roumania.

Liddell Hart said this of Falkenhayn:

«**The antithesis of Foch, Falkenhayn was an uncompromising realist, and the very excess of this valuable quality was his own poison. Like Napoleon's opponents, he saw 'too many things at once,' and, above all, saw the enemy's strength too clearly. His realization that England was the soul and will of the hostile alliance was proof of his insight, but it merely depressed him.**

«**Falkenhayn's course might well serve as an object lesson of Napoleon's warning against the 'worst course, which almost always in war is the most pusillanimous—or, if you will, the most prudent.'** He was the ablest and most scientific general, 'penny wise, pound foolish,' who ever ruined his country by a refusal to take calculated risks. Limitation of risks led to liquidation.»

●Liddell Hart, Reputations, p. 69



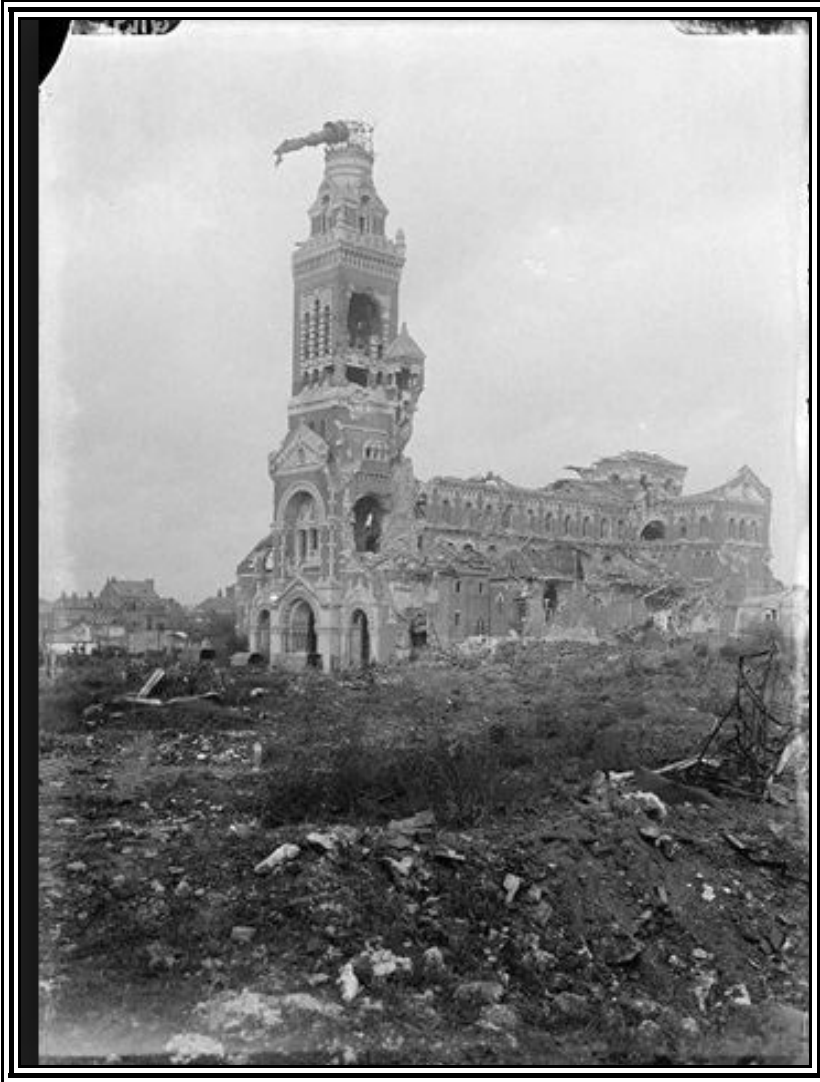
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

Le 7 septembre, 1916

La Vierge Marie et l'Enfant Jésus de Albert



Le premier ministre britannique visite Albert

Le 7 septembre 1916, le premier ministre britannique, Henry Asquith, visite la ville de Albert, point de départ du chemin Albert-Bapaume qui constitue l'axe d'avance principal des forces britanniques dans la Bataille de la Somme.

Il est à même de constater par lui-même la concentration effroyable d'hommes et de matériel qui se trouve à portée de l'artillerie allemande.

Heureusement, l'aviation des Alliés est à un moment temporaire d'avantage technique sur l'aviation allemande et peut empêcher les observateurs aériens de voir et coordonner les bombardements dans cette masse grouillante protégée par des collines.

Des coups éparés font des dommages que la chance récompense tant bien que mal.

Tous les soldats anglais y connaissent la fameuse Madone en Or de Notre-Dame de Brebière, frappée par un obus le 15 janvier 1915, mais qui refusera obstinément de tomber avant 1918, devenant ainsi un symbole de la force d'âme du peuple français.

● Hankey, Supreme Command, II: p. 512.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 8, 1916

Moo Cow Waste



Attrition Farm

The First Canadian Division took its place in the Somme battlefield on 3 September 1916.

Immediately 3rd Canadian Brigade joined battle by relieving the Australians involved in the harsh scrape of what they called «Moo Cow Farm» (Mouquet Farm).

In the space of five days of combat, 3rd Brigade suffers in its turn nearly a thousand casualties trying to approach this terrible farm, a reinforced strong point holding the last of the second line of defence of the German position in the Somme.

When the 2nd Brigade relieves 3rd Brigade, on **8 September, 1916**, the Germans regain the trenches won with so much blood.

Moo Cow Farm will not be taken, in the end, but by-passed. Its evacuation will be forced by the threat of encirclement when the Allied forces will gain footholds further, north-east to north west of the place, in the Flers-Courcelette offensive on 15-20 September. Its position protecting Thiépval's rear will not then be possible to hold any longer.

Mouquet Farm could be called Attrition Farm. The only effects of the terrible killing that took place there were statistics. Those cow pastures did not amount to much.



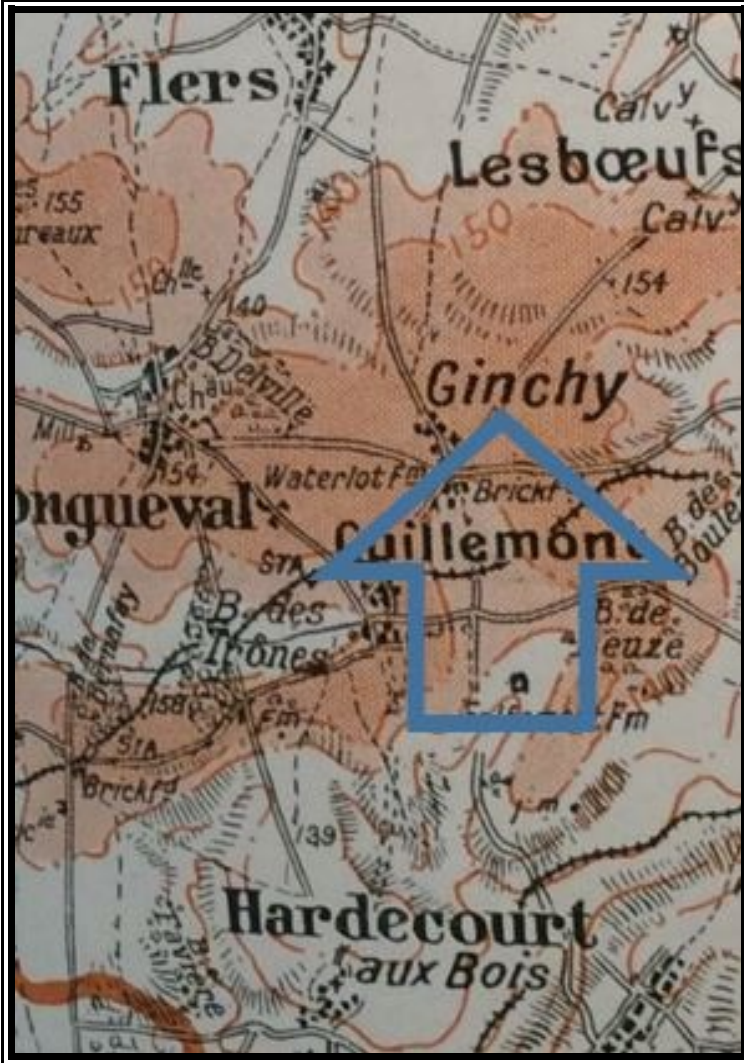
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 9, 1916

Cresting Thiepval



Somme - Ginchy Taken

Ginchy which is at the east end of the crest THIEPVAL-GINCHY has resisted for weeks to successive attacks.

But with the taking of GUILLEMONT, an attack can be staged from a different direction.

16 Irish Division takes Ginchy on **9 September 1916** with thorough artillery planning.

The taking of GINCHY marks a phase. The British have now gone up the crest of the spur.

They can look at the reverse-slope positions ahead. Observation is improved.

Not the weather, however.

●Prior & Wilson, Somme, p. 171.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 10, 1916

Headed for Valour Road

Leo Clarke, VC

On 1 September 1916, **Lionel (Leo) Beaumaurice Clarke's** battalion was charged with capturing a 50-yard-long salient between the Canadian position at Mouquet Farm and Courcellette to the north.

On 9 September 1916, near Pozières, France, the first three companies of Clarke's battalion went over the top, leaving the fourth in reserve.

Clarke, an Acting Corporal at the time, was assigned to take a section to clear the enemy on the left flank to allow his company sergeant to build a fortified dugout that would secure the Canadian position once the salient was overrun.

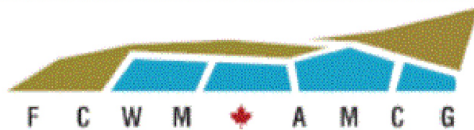
When his section reached the trench, it was so heavily defended that they had to battle their way through with hand grenades, bayonets and their rifles as clubs. Clarke was the only man left standing; the rest had either been killed or wounded.

At that time, about 20 Germans, including two officers, counter-attacked. Clarke advanced, emptying his revolver into their ranks. He then picked up two enemy rifles and fired those too. One of the

officers attacked with a bayonet, wounding Clarke in the leg, but Clarke shot him dead. The Germans retreated, but Clarke pursued, shooting four more and capturing a fifth.

In all, Clarke killed 19 of the enemy, capturing one.

From Wikipedia



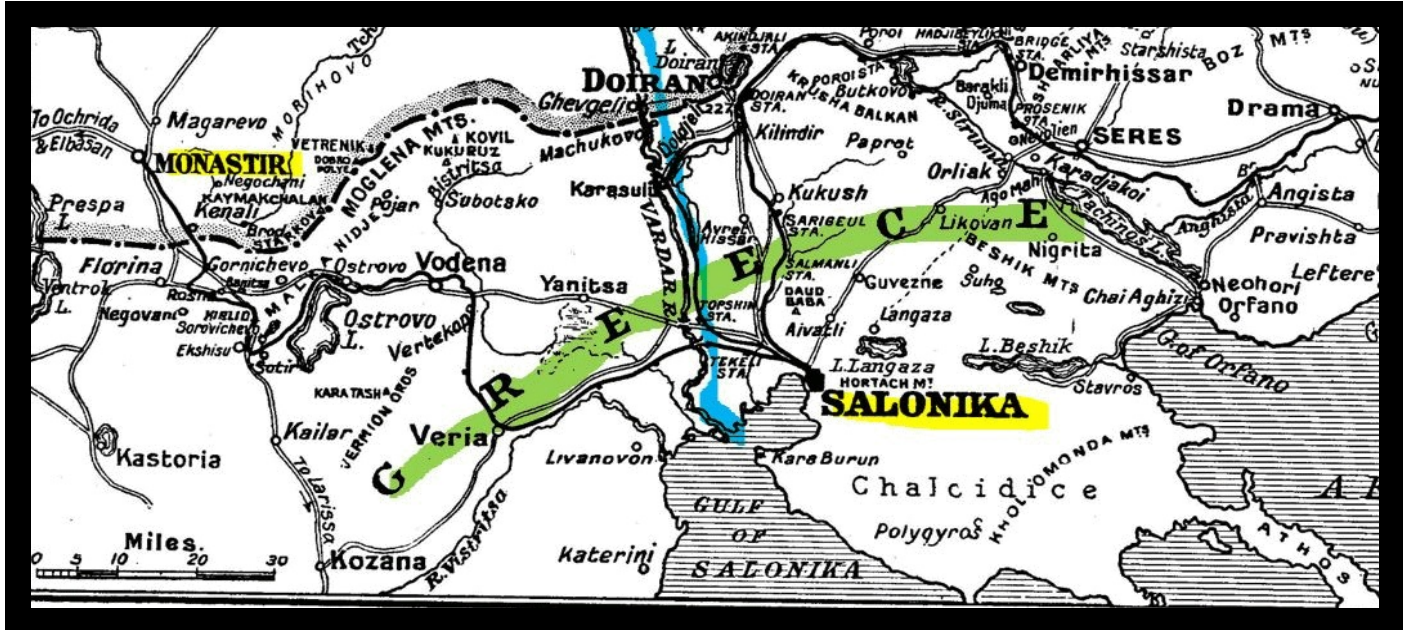
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

Le 11 septembre, 1916

Sarrail bouge en Salonique



La force de Salonique avance

Puisque plusieurs promesses ont été faites par les gouvernements de l'Entente, et en particulier par le gouvernement français, au gouvernement de Roumanie, que des opérations seraient lancées pour lui venir en aide s'il se déclarait de leur côté, la force de Salonique a été mise en branle pour affronter les Bulgares.

On compte ainsi occuper les Bulgares dans leur occupation de la Serbie pour qu'ils ne puissent pas présenter une opposition forte contre les frontières de la Roumanie.

Le général français Sarrail organise donc une expédition difficile qui doit avancer de Salonique vers Monastir, de sorte qu'il puisse y avoir un pont avec l'Adriatique pour y amener les Italiens à retenir les Autrichiens dans ce secteur.

Le problème épineux de Sarrail est le transport. Les montagnes se prêtent mal à l'attaque et le matériel de guerre est lourd. Sa force est aussi très hétérogène et politiquement divisée.

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



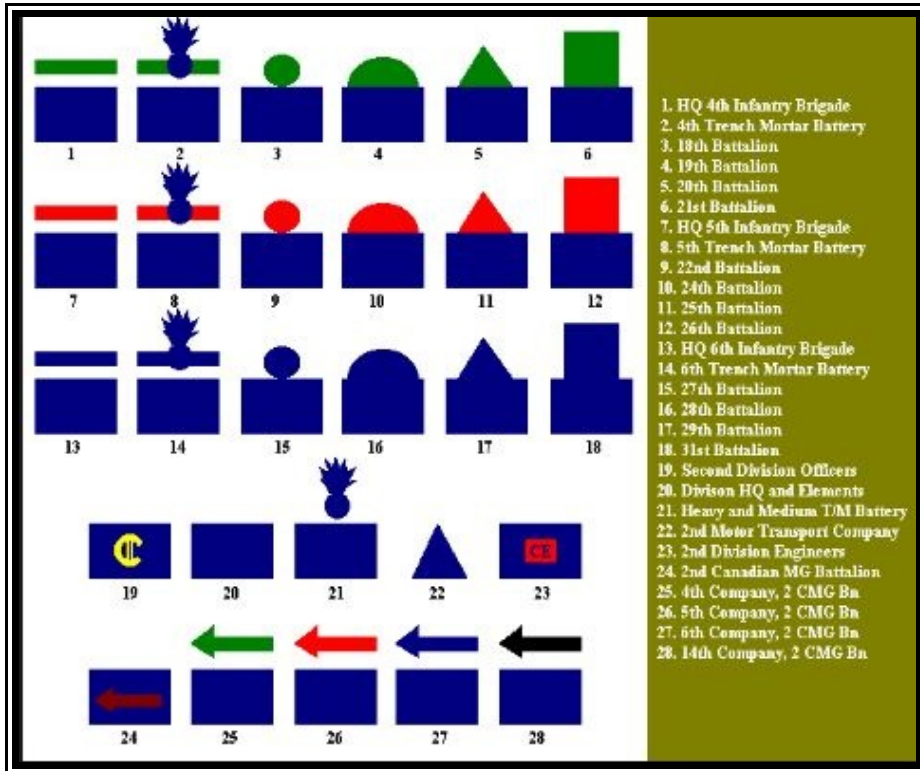
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

●September 12, 1916

2 Cdn Div Steps to the Plate



Second Division prepares for Somme offensive

On the night of 10 September, the 2nd Canadian Division entered the front lines in the Somme battlefield, relieving two tired brigades of the 1st Canadian Division, there since 3 September.

On 11 September Major General Richard Turner, commander of the 2nd Division submitted his division's scheme of operations to Canadian Corps headquarters.

Officers' conferences were hastily convened on **12 September 1916**, to discuss arrangements and prepare battle drills.

The task of planning is not easy, given the Canadians' relative inexperience in conducting large-scale offensive operations and the formidable nature of the German positions.

These consist of a maze of trenches and earthworks integrating existing civilian structures, such as the Courcelette Sugar Factory. This edifice, along with many of the broken buildings in Courcelette village itself, are heavily fortified and bristle with machine guns. In addition, the village is honeycombed with cellars, dugouts and galleries furnishing ample protection for large numbers of German troops from the 45th Division of the Guard Reserve Corps.

●For more, see Unknown author, «Story of the 22nd Battalion, September 15th, 1916 – The Capture of Courcelette», found in George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum, published in Canadian Military History, Vol. 16, No 2,(Spring 2007), p. 49-58.

September 13, 1916

Rumania between Hammer and Hammer



Rumanian advance into Transylvania

The Rumanians' first reason to enter the war was to recuperate Transylvania from the Hungarians. They therefore immediately followed their declaration of war to Austria-Hungary by an advance to seize Transylvania, immediately to the north of Rumanian Wallachia and to the west of Rumanian Moldavia.

But Transylvania is across a mountain barrier that limits their advance to a number of passes and prevents contact between their

few army formations. The railroads are also not conducive to support such northerly military operations. Their rapid progress to seize the rivers Aluta and Maros and «liberate» the Transylvanian soil of the Ruman race must race with the German-Austrian-Hungarian defence-building. The Rumanians are also hampered by another crucial factor.

The Bulgarians, with the German support of divisions under General Mackensen, and some Ottoman units, are attacking the Rumanian Dobrudja to the south-east of Rumania. Rumanian forces are therefore split between two fronts, and the southern front must draw forces from the northern front to defend such cities as Dobritch, Tutrakan, Rashova, and Cernavoda, which buffer the Danube, a last barrier to the capital Bukarest.

This is a fight for conquest that rapidly turns into a fight for survival.

The Rumanians have waited too long to take advantage of the Russian Brusilov summer offensive. They are now becoming isolated between an Hungarian anvil and the Bulgarian hammer. And the Entente Allies in Salonika are too far to be of any real help.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 14, 1916

Seventh Try



Seventh Battle of the Isonzo

The seventh Isonzo battle which began on **14 September 1916** revealed a change of emphasis on the part of Italian Chief of Staff General Cadorna.

Instead of broad-based attacks, he shifts to tightly focused attacks on single targets, to better maximize surprise and minimise casualties.

The seventh Isonzo battle is an attack on an eight kilometre wide front with 100,000 troops, south-east from the recently captured town of Gorizia.

The Austro-Hungarians had received some reinforcements and offer their usual tenacious resistance; the attack is not a success. After three days of heavy fighting which will gain nothing at the cost of very large casualties, Cadorna will call off the attack.

Nevertheless, the Italians continue to impose attrition of both manpower and artillery availability on the Austro-Hungarian forces, which risk collapse without the active support of Germany.

Further information: Mark Thompson, The War White



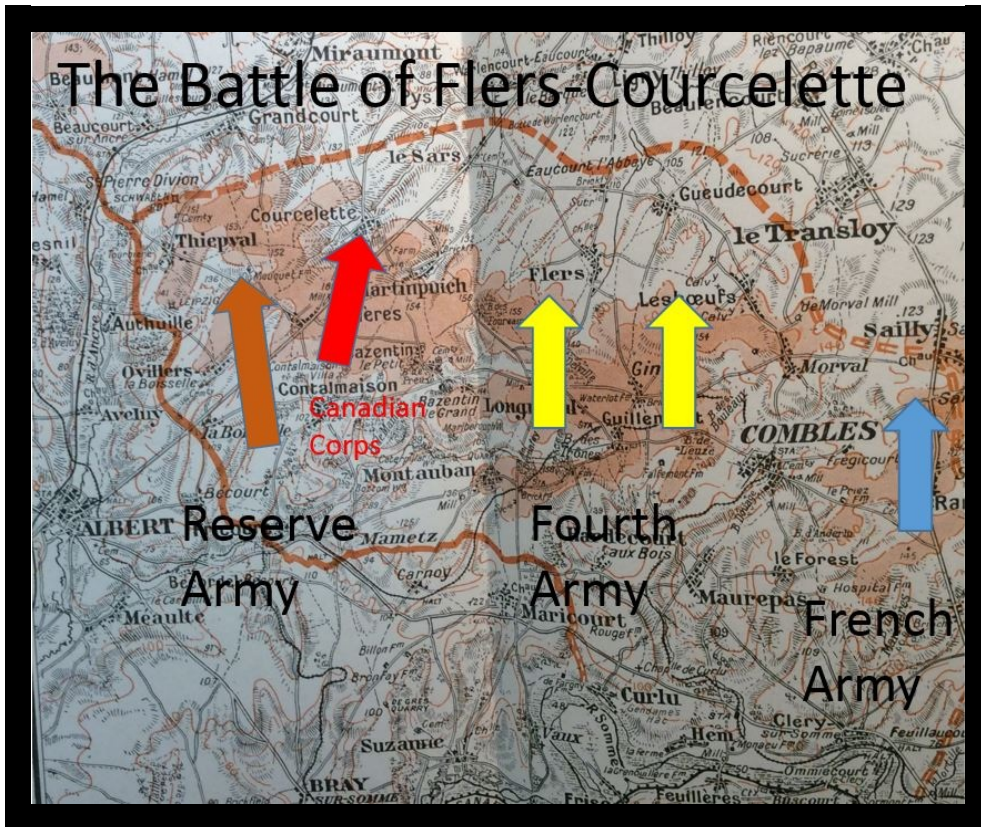
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 15, 1916

A Big Big Day



Flers-Courcelette

15-20 September 1916

The Flers-Courcelette offensive, in the Somme, on **15 September 1916**, is a full-out reprise with both the British and French forces involved.

The Reserve Army (Gough) extends well to the west of Courcelette, and the Fourth Army (Rawlinson) well to the east of Flers; the French are on the right flank near Combles.

The battle will become legendary for three reasons:

- 1-- ★★ Tanks are used for the first time on the advance all long the British front.
- 2-- ★ Until 20 September, it will also lead to the broadest British advance on the Somme.
- 3-- ★★★ Canadians are involved in a big way.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 16, 1916

Bayonet Man Forward



John Kerr VC

John Kerr of Fox River N.S. earned his VC on **16 September 1916**, while serving with the Edmonton 49th Battalion.

He was acting as chief bayonet man in a 12-man hand grenade assault on a German redoubt.

Charging well ahead of his men, he jumped into the far end of the trench and began inching his way forward. He had advanced about 30 yards when a German sentry hurled a grenade at him. Kerr threw up his right hand to shield himself from the blast. The move saved his sight, but the explosion blew the upper part of his forefinger off and wounded him slightly in the side.

Climbing out of the trench he moved along the man-made embankment until he reached a spot where he could see the enemy below him. He tossed the bombs into the middle of the swarm of Germans then opened fire with his carbine.

Kerr and his squad closed in and cornered the Germans who thought they were surrounded. In fact, 62 Germans raised their hands in surrender to a party of only 12 Canadians.

A mountain in Jasper Park, Alta., has been named after him and in 1975, his widow donated his VC to the Canadian War Museum.

● Arthur Bishop, "Valour On The Somme: Part 5 of 18", [Legion Magazine](#), September 1, 2004.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 17, 1916

Haig's Horse Shit



Cavalry and the Somme

The advance on the Flers-Courcelette front has had a good first day. But General Haig is not satisfied.

His plan of using the cavalry to make a deep penetration that would reach the German Grand Headquarters in Bapaume and disrupt the enemy in his rear did not materialize.

He is therefore seeking to organize another major operation as soon as possible, once again in the aim of launching a long

cavalcade of a whole cavalry corps that will sweep to the north and undermine German defences as far as Arras, where Allenby's Third British Army can take advantage.

The idea is completely incongruous.

On 14 July, an Indian cavalry brigade was mowed down in its attack on High Wood and Delville Wood by a few machine-guns that could see the horses coming from a country-mile.

On 17 September 1916, Haig has apparently forgotten that day and still dreams of dusty rushes as he saw them in South Africa.

Meanwhile, Rawlindon and Gough are attempting to grab well-defended clusters of trenches in the rain and mud.

●Wilson and Prior, Somme, p. 239.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 18, 1916

Canada's Manpower Board



R. B. Bennett, Director General of National Service

The Creation of the Canadian National Service Board

With no end to the war in sight and with the Canadian Expeditionary Force committed for the duration, the apportionment of manpower among the Army, agriculture and industry (both areas in which Canadian production was an ever-increasing component of Imperial supply) was becoming more acute.

On 18 September 1916, PM Borden appointed Sir Thomas Tait as Director General of National Service, the Board itself having been created by Order-in-Council on the 16th.

Tait was soon forced to resign over criticisms of patronage; he was replaced by **R.B. Bennett**, the future prime minister of Canada.

The NSB's mandate was to increase enlistments without interfering with important industries. It will become the authority for the management of manpower, beginning with an inventory of labour so that "all available would be used to greatest advantage."

Further information: J.L. Granatstein and J.M.Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada*.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

Le 19 septembre, 1916 Briand s'avère Brillant



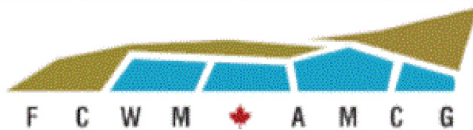
Discours du premier ministre de France, Aristide Briand

En réponse à un socialiste qui se décourage, M. Brizon, le premier ministre de France, Aristide Briand, fait, le **19 septembre 1916**, le discours le plus remarquable d'un premier ministre pour la continuation de la guerre.

Le discours sera placardé de par la France.

Lloyd George dira plus tard que ce discours, qui avait mis beaucoup d'emphase sur un principe qui lui était cher, la coopération inter-armées, a été malheureusement oublié par Briand dès qu'il est descendu du podium.

●David Lloyd George, Memoirs, Vol. II, p. 848; Vol. IV, p. 2334-5.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 20, 1916

Water Tanks on the Move



The British Tank Mark 1

On September 15, the British introduced tanks into combat for the first time at the Battle of Flers-Courcelette, which ended on **20 September 1916**.

These vehicles owe their name 'tank' to the fact that they were concealed from the enemy under tarps as water tanks for the troops and horses.

The British Tank Mk 1 is rhomboidal in shape to provide a long track enabling the vehicle to cross trenches and bring its six machine guns

(the 'female' version) or 6 pdr guns (the 'male' version) to bear on the enemy.

It is powered by a 105 hp petrol engine and steered with a long wheeled tail. Armour protects the crew from small arms fire but the Mark 1 is vulnerable to artillery and mortars. Direct hits on the front of the vehicle can detonate the fuel reservoirs which are mounted high in the body, at the front.

Hundreds of improved versions will follow the 150 Mark 1s and will be used by all the Allies on the Western Front, including Canada.

The first appearance of tanks in the battlefield was blundered. There were not enough of them for the expected shock effect that it might have created in larger numbers.

Further information: Wikipedia: *British Heavy Tanks of World War 1*.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 21st, 1916 Brusilov Out of Steam



Brusilov's summer campaign comes to an end

With 1 million casualties and 1 million deserters, the will of the Russian armies has been eroded by the constant ramming at the Central Powers reinforced defences.

By mid-September 1916, the Brusilov Offensive of the summer of 1916, although conducive to much improvement in the Allies' situation, has undermined the Russians themselves.

«Brusilov, for his part, kept on attacking with terrible persistence until the end of September, although he met with no strategic success. He finally raised his score of prisoners to 450,000, and had made inevitable the break-up of the Austrian Empire. Yet the price paid by Russia, since June, in over a million men had broken the spirit of her army also. When winter came the number of deserters, most of whom lived quietly at home unmolested by the authorities, was estimated at the astonishing total of 1,000,000. This campaign did not cause the Revolution, for that was far more profoundly rooted in political and economic soil, but it ensured that, after the Revolution, the army would no longer fight for the Entente.»

●Cruttwell, The Great War, p. 288.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 22nd, 1916

Technologie cruciale



La production d'obus de l'empire britannique

En septembre 1916, la production d'obus à travers l'empire britannique a décuplé. La création du ministère des Munitions en 1915 a transformé l'industrie civile en une industrie de guerre, et toutes les ressources de l'Empire ont été mises à profit pour rationaliser la productivité.

Il faut maintenant une semaine pour produire le nombre d'obus qui ont été produits dans l'année entre août 1914 et août 1915.

Les terribles défauts de manufacture qui causaient les explosions prématurées telles qu'il a fallu réduire l'utilisation d'obus à explosifs en 1915, et les retards, qui rendaient les obus inoffensifs à leur impact, ont été réglés par une technologie de production plus raffinée.

Le nombre d'inspecteurs industriels qui vérifient la qualité de la production se chiffre maintenant à 30,000, dont 14,000 sont des femmes.

The TIMES History of the War, Vol. X, Chap 162 - Munitions of War, 1916, p. 320.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 23rd, 1916

Bring On the Kids



New German soldiers for the Somme

Brigadier general John Charteris is the Chief of Intelligence of British Expeditionary Force at BEF HQ.

On the **23 September 1916**, he writes down the following comment about the twenty-year old German soldiers that are arriving in the Somme battlefield:

«One of the curious things about the Somme battle has been the very slow rate at which the 1917 class [born in 1897] has appeared. We have now got a very full and thorough examination of *Soldbücher* [paybooks], both of prisoners and of dead, with a view of identifying their classes. [170/171] In most cases where we have found a man of the 1917 class he has turned out to be a volunteer. Still, the 1917 class is now beginning to appear, and if the weather holds we shall have worked through them pretty quickly, though I still do not think we shall get the 1918 class in the front line before December at the earliest, and probably not before the end of the year.»

●Charteris, At GHQ, 170-1.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 24, 1916

Tactical Lessons



A Canadian mistake at SUNKEN ROAD

How a newly arrived lieutenant with perfect credentials (« all that the military college could teach he knew») took his platoon, against the advice of his NCOs, through the sunken road (near Pozières, along Albert Bapaume road) in the direction of his objective, and was mowed down by bombardment, the pavement, being the main killer.

Experienced soldiers knew that stone would fly in all directions when blasted by artillery (mainly mortar and howitzer) and that the edges of

the road would not protect against indirect fire, only direct fire.

Five of thirty who survived had chosen not to enter the sunken part and move on the edges, risking to be hit by machine-guns and whizz-bang (field guns) direct fire rather than entering the trap.

The story was widely used by other units to show officers and men that practical experience was important.

The Sunken Road Cemetery, near Pozières, has that Canadian platoon.

●Herbert W.McBride, A Rifleman Went to War, p. 237-40.



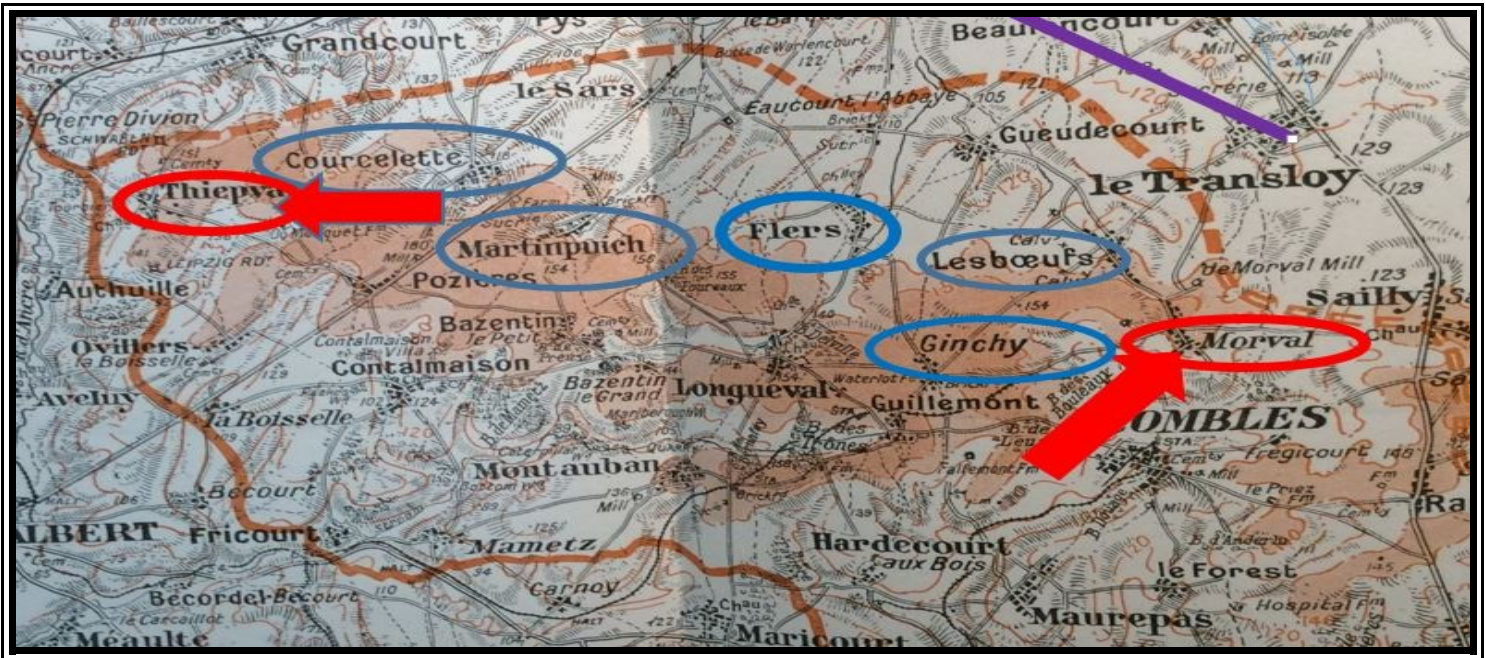
Friends of the Canadian War Museum – Les Amis du Musée canadien de la guerre

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 25, 1916

Battles of the Crest at the Somme



The Battle of Morval

The battles of Flers-Courcelette, 15-20 September, succeeded in advancing the front lines to Martinpuich and Lesbœufs, which secured the heights of the Somme plateau.

The battle for Morval, on 25 September 1916, by the Fourth British Army, and the battle for Thiepval, by the British Reserve army (Fifth army) on **26 September**, seek to enlarge the front at the extreme right and left of the Somme front.

These battles are instrumental in defining an evolving style of fighting for the British. It will be described as «bite and hold», and will involve much better use of the artillery in advancing barrages, and short, sharp advances with limited objectives.

With the autumn, the idea of cavalry advances meet its fierce opponent: General Mud.

For more information, Prior and Wilson, Somme, p. 242-5.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 26, 1916

Top Dog



Lloyd George and CIGS Robertson Clash Over Russia

The Secretary of War, **David Lloyd George** (who replaced Lord Kitchener), is profoundly disturbed by the casualties and minimal gains in the Somme offensive.

Although he has little influence on military strategy, he believes that allies need to be urged on to maximum cooperation and considers that increased Russian efforts could further relieve the pressure in the West.

He therefore requests the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, **General William Robertson**, to personally go convey this message to Russia at the highest military levels, as was the intent when Kitchener sailed to his death in June 1916.

Robertson is, however, adamant that he will not go to Russia, and because he has direct access to the Cabinet, is able to sustain this refusal.

Robertson then relates to Haig that Lloyd George is obviously out to make himself “top dog.”

After what they see as the civilian-sponsored failures at Gallipoli and Kut, the military are more than ever determined to reject civilian “meddling” in strategy.

Further information: Wikipedia: *David Lloyd George*



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 27, 1916

Railway Hands from Canada



Canadian Railway Troops

In July 1916, Sir Douglas Haig sought help with the logistics of moving massive amounts of shells and supplies; Eric Geddes, a respected British railway executive, was sent by Lloyd George.

He recommended standard gauge railways linked at railheads to an extensive system of narrow gauge light railways which would take supplies to the front where even smaller tramways would distribute the necessities.

Geddes knew that Canada had seen a railway boom prior to the War so he asked for experienced Canadians.

In September 1916, the First Canadian Overseas Construction Battalion of Canadian Railway Troops was sent to France. Nine more would come in the next year. Canada also supplied large quantities of rail (duplicate lines in Canada) and rolling stock.

All light railway construction on the British Western Front was done by the Canadians and much of the operations were conducted by Canadian railroaders.

Further information: *Canadian Rail No. 437 (November – December 1993)* accessed at exporail.org



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

Le 28 septembre, 1916

Erreur stratégique



La Roumanie défaite en Transylvanie

Dès le moment où la Roumanie s'est déclarée contre l'Autriche-Hongrie, les forces Roumaines se sont ruées à travers les Alpes carpatiennes pour pénétrer le plus rapidement possible en Transylvanie dans l'espoir d'y saisir cette province retenue par la Hongrie.

Les premiers succès ont caché le manque de ressources et de compétence des Roumains, puisque les Hongrois n'avaient pas préparé le terrain pour la défense.

Mais Falkenhayn lui-même a pris le commandement des armées autrichiennes-hongroises et allemandes du nord de la Roumanie, et Mackensen, le conquérant de la Serbie, expert des Balkans, a pris celles bulgares et turques au sud de la Roumanie.

Cette pince mortelle va dorénavant dicter la strangulation de la Roumanie, repoussée au nord en Transylvanie, et au sud, sur le plateau danubien, où Mackensen peut avancer de la Bulgarie vers la Valachie roumaine, jusqu'au Dobroudja, à la Mer Noire.

Le 28 septembre 1916, pratiquement toutes les forces roumaines ont maintenant été repoussées de Transylvanie, et un groupe central d'invasisseurs roumains y est encerclé à Hermannstadt.

•Cruttwell, History of the Great War, 292-8.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

Le 29 septembre, 1916

Un objectif longtemps convoité



La Bataille de la crête de Thiepval

À partir du 26 septembre jusqu'au 30 septembre 1916, l'Armée de Réserve britannique (Cinquième Armée) reçoit la tâche de s'emparer de la crête de Thiepval, qui a fait échec à l'offensive du 1er juillet.

Plutôt que d'attaquer vers l'est, les armées britanniques ont maintenant contourné le promontoire de sorte à pouvoir l'attaquer dans la direction ouest, qui constituait l'arrière des défenses

allemandes originales.

Toutefois, les points d'appui de ces défenses ont été retournés vers l'est et défendent énergiquement contre ces nouvelles attaques vers le dernier haut point du secteur britannique de la Somme.

L'Armée de Réserve du Général Gough utilise le Corps canadien au nord et le 2e Corps britannique au sud pour attaquer sur quatre kilomètres de front. Des obstacles gigantesques s'y dressent encore, dont trois redoutes terribles, SCHWABEN, STUFF et ZOLLERN, rattachées par des tranchées renforcées aux noms devenus historiques pour les Canadiens: HESSIAN, SUDBURY, KENORA et REGINA.

Les batailles sanglantes des cinq jours de la fin de septembre 1916 réduiront considérablement les trois divisions canadiennes, qui ne réussiront pas à saisir les derniers objectifs avant la première semaine d'octobre.

●Nicholson, Chapitre 6.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 29, 1916 (2)

No American Negotiations Allowed

Lloyd George Pre-empts US Mediation

On 29 September 1916, the *New York Times* published an interview by Roy Howard, President of United Press, with David Lloyd George.

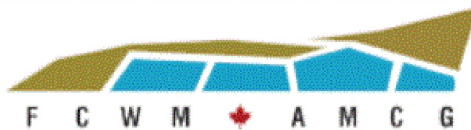
Without consulting the Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary, Lloyd George attempts to scupper any possible intervention by President Wilson, who has, in fact, discussed mediation with **Count Johann von Bernstorff**, German Ambassador to the USA.

Lloyd George states that he is “determined to meet head-on any pressure for a negotiated peace” and that it is necessary to “throw out a sharp challenge to the defeatist spirit [...] working from foreign quarters to bring about an inconclusive peace.”

“The world must know,” he said, “that there can be no outside interference at this stage and that the fight must be to the finish...to a knock-out.”



Further information: “Lloyd George, David...” in *The Oxford Companion to British History*, 1st Revised Edition.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG

September 30, 1916

Serbs Climb Back



The Battle of the Monastir Gap

On 17 August, the Bulgarians launched an attack against the allied forces in the «Entrenched Camp» at Salonica, where some fifteen French, British and Serbian divisions were ready to advance against them.

This pre-emptive strike delayed General Sarrail, but he launched his own advance on 12 September in the aim of repulsing the Bulgars and working his way through the famous Monastir Gap, a narrow way through the mountains leading to the city of Monastir in Serbia.

The aim of Sarrail's move is to occupy and weaken the Bulgars so as to prevent them from attacking Romania, which just joined the Entente.

On 30 September 1916, the Serbian divisions claw their way up the high peaks surrounding the Monastir Gap and Lakes Ostrovo and Prespa. After many attempts, they take from the Bulgars, on this day, the highest peak of the Kaimakčalan, 8,284 feet high.

«On their own soil, the Serbians were animated to a tremendous effort.» They fight their way through mountains and rivers, supported by allied troops in the valleys.

●Cyril Falls, The Great War, p. 239-40.



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

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

© 2020 FCWM - AMCG