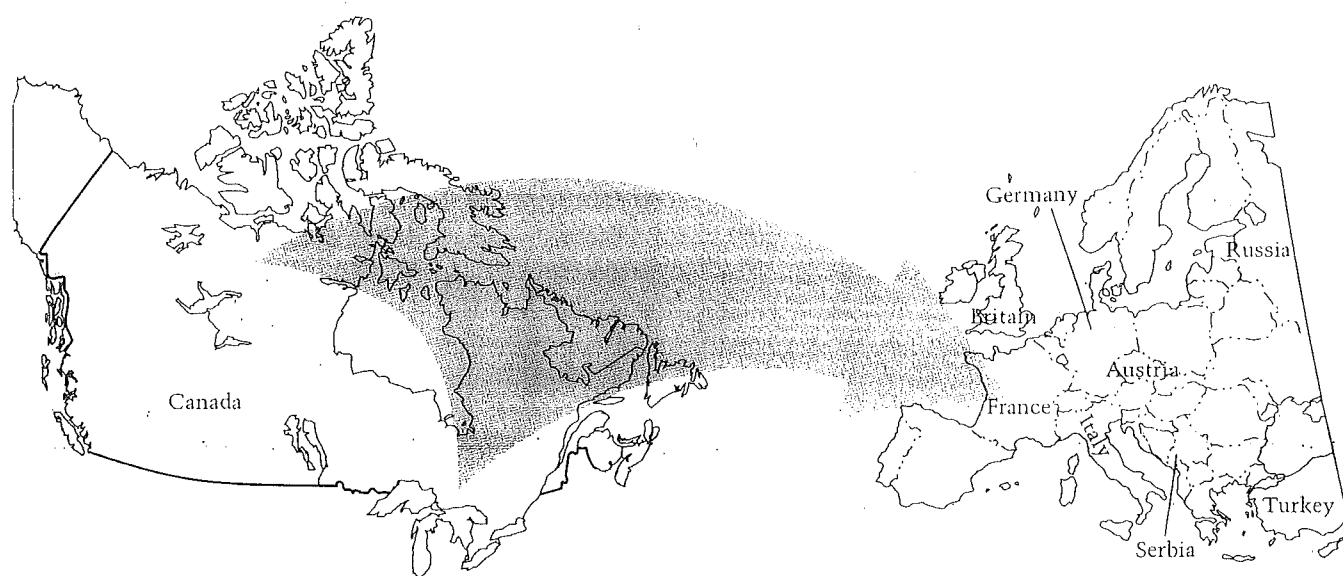


CHAPTER SIX

Canada and World War I: 1914-1921



In this chapter you will find out how World War I started, and how Canada was involved in the war. You will find out what it was like to be a soldier in that war, and what life was like in Canada during the war years. You will also find out how Canadian society changed because of the war.

How did Canada become involved in the war?

Canadians were surprised when World War I began in 1914. Everyone also thought it would be a short war. They were wrong. In those days, it was hard to imagine a war that involved so many countries. When the British government asked Canada to help, the Prime Minister, Robert Borden, wanted to show that Canada could be involved in international matters, such as war. But some Canadians did not want war, and this caused conflicts within Canada.

What caused World War I?

Europe had not had a major war for 100 years. Recent wars had involved only a few countries. They had also been short. Suddenly, in August 1914, all the major countries in Europe were involved in a big war. How did this happen?

In 1914, Europe was ready for war. There were four reasons for this. One was **militarism**. Many countries in Europe, such as Britain, France, and Germany, had strong armies and navies and plenty of weapons. Another cause was **imperialism**. The European countries **competed** for land, or colonies, and trade. A third cause was **nationalism**. People had strong feelings of pride in their countries and cultures. Militarism, imperialism, and nationalism gave rise to many conflicts. Europe was ready for war!

Militarism, imperialism, and nationalism led to the final cause of World War I: the **alliance system**.

What was the alliance system?

The alliance system was a kind of political partnership. European countries became worried that wars might start because of militarism, imperialism, and nationalism. So they each began to look for partners and **allies** who would support and help them. For example, Germany and Austria-Hungary made an alliance; they promised to defend each other in case one of them was attacked by another country. Turkey made an alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary. This group of nations was called the **Central Powers**.

Meanwhile, France and Russia promised to defend each other if one of them was attacked by another country. Britain joined them and became an ally of France and Russia. This alliance was called the **Allied Powers**.

Each member of the Central and Allied powers had colonies. If a war began, the colonies would be involved in the war as well. 7

How did the war begin?

The fighting began between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, a small country. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife, Sophia, were assassinated by Serbian nationalists. The assassination gave Austria-Hungary an excuse to crush Serbian nationalism. Austria-Hungary **declared** war on Serbia on July 26, 1914. 8

Although Serbia was a small country, it had powerful friends. Russia was a friend and felt it was a "big brother" to Serbia, so Russia got ready for war with Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary brought in its allies; Russia brought in its allies. Britain was one of them. The war spread very quickly. 9

As a result of Britain's declaration of war, Canada and the other countries of the British Empire were automatically at war, too. Canada was still a colony of Britain; therefore, Britain controlled Canada's relationships with other countries. The British government had helped Canada since 1867. Now it was Canada's turn to support Britain in fighting this war. 10

When the war broke out — you cannot believe unless you went there. The country went mad! People were singing on the streets and roads. Everybody wanted to be a hero, everybody wanted to go to war.

Burt Remington

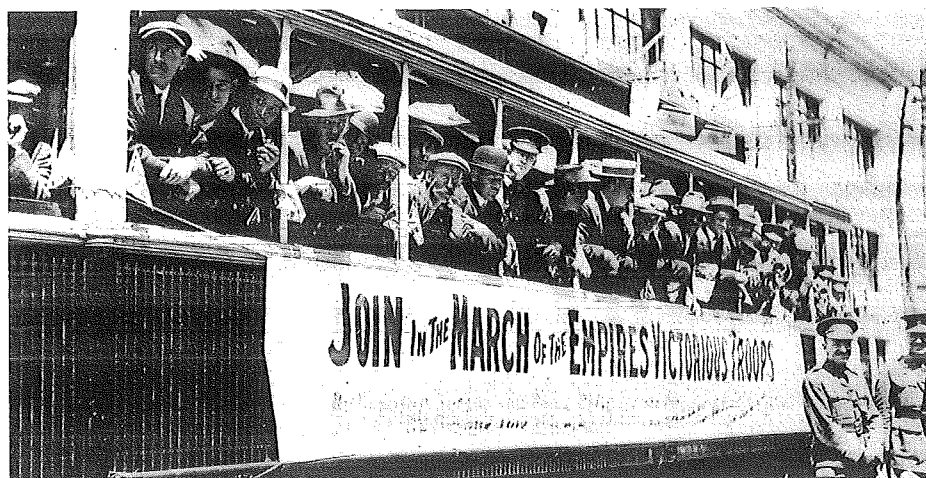
QUESTIONS

- What were the four causes of war in 1914 in Europe?
 - Why was this war called a "world" war?
 - Why were so many countries involved in this war?
 - Why was Canada involved in this war?
-

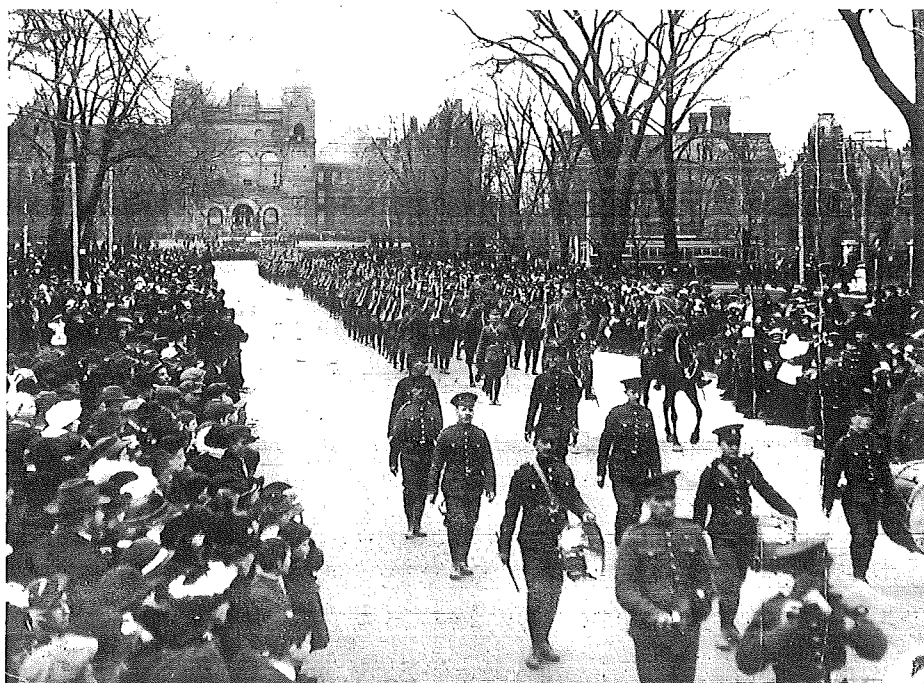
How did Canadians react to news of war?

Some Canadians were **eager** to go to war and **volunteered** to join the army right away. These volunteers felt deep loyalty to Canada, Britain, and King George V. They wanted to join the Allied **war effort**. Other 11

These young Canadians did not know about the horrors of war. They would learn quickly.



Little did these volunteers know that soon mud would dissolve their boots and jam their guns.



"This war is the suicide of our civilization."

Robert Borden's diary, 1915

Canadians joined because they were unemployed. The army offered pay, three meals a day, and **adventure**.

Not everyone was eager to go to war; some people **opposed** the idea. Many of them were French Canadians. They did not feel loyalty to Britain. They did not like the idea of Canada fighting in Britain's wars. French Canadians wanted Canada to be independent and not controlled by Britain. When war was declared fewer French Canadians volunteered. Later in this chapter, you will find out more about the conflict between English and French Canadians about the war. 12

QUESTION

- a. Why were some Canadians eager to go to war? Why did others oppose the idea?
-

How did Canadians respond to the call for volunteers?

Canada's Prime Minister, Robert Borden, promised in August 1914 to send 25 000 soldiers. By October, he was able to send 32 000 because there were so many volunteers. The first Canadian soldiers were poorly trained and equipped. But nothing could prepare the soldiers for the **horrors** of modern war. No one had ever seen a war like this one. 13

What was a soldier's life like?

Soldiers from both sides, the Allied Powers and the Central Powers, dug three rows of deep **trenches**. **Barbed wire** was placed in front of the trenches. The area between the enemy trenches was called **no-** 14



The darkest days of World War I came with the horror of trench warfare in the Somme in 1916.

These Canadian troops are making good use of a shell hole before a night attack in June 1917.



man's land. Heavy artillery was set up behind the trenches to fire shells on the opposing side.

Life in the trenches was horrible. When they were not fighting, the soldiers lived in holes in the ground. These holes were called **dug-outs**. When it rained, and it rained a lot, the water would rush into the trenches and the dug-outs. The soldiers were wet. Often they had to work, eat, and sleep in the water or mud.

The soldiers were often cold, wet, and dirty. **Lice** and rats were everywhere in the trenches. Soldiers that died in no-man's land or on the barbed wire could not easily be brought back to be buried; the rats would eat the bodies. Disease and infections were everywhere because of the lice, rats, and flies. Dying soldiers cried, dead and rotting bodies smelled, and guns never stopped firing on the trenches. Sometimes, the artillery would shell their own trenches by mistake. When a trench was hit, the whole trench and the soldiers in it could just disappear into the mud.

One night I was awakened by stiff whiskers on my face. I opened my eyes to see a large rat scanning me gravely. He backed off a trifle as I looked at him and pushed himself into the palm of my hand. The feel of his feet was revolting and I pitched the thing from me...The rat rose in an arc and descended...straight into Thornton's mouth.

The soldiers often had to climb out of the trench and make their way to the enemy trenches to attack. This was called "going over the top." The enemy artillery and machine guns would fire on them as soon as they climbed out. Few soldiers ever reached the enemy trenches, even though they might be only 25-100 metres away! The soldiers knew they were going to die: perhaps it would be in the trench, perhaps it would be in no-man's land, perhaps it would be the next time they went over the top. Many soldiers living in such conditions became mentally ill; this was called shellshock, and many of the men were unable to continue fighting.

Extermination of Lice

The body louse lives on clothes over the skin. It requires a meal of blood twice in 24 hours. It lays eggs in the seams of clothing and retreats into the seams and folds after feeding. The female louse lays 6-7 eggs a day to a total of 295 and the eggs hatch in 3 days.

1. Change clothing as often as possible.
2. Keep verminous clothing away from uninfested kit.
3. Lice die of starvation in a week's time in discarded clothes.
4. Brushing and ironing are the best means of destroying the eggs.
5. Badly infested clothes not needed should be burnt, buried, or sunk in water.
6. The wearing of silk underclothes will act as a barrier to lice.

Many soldiers wanted the war to end. They did not want to fight; at first they did not hate the enemy. On Christmas Day, 1914, British and German soldiers met in no-man's land to play football and talk about their families and peace. Many soldiers from both sides hated the war. 18

QUESTIONS

- What were some of the "horrors of war" that the soldiers experienced in the trenches?
 - What did "going over the top" mean?
 - Describe how you would feel just before "going over the top."
-

How did Canadian soldiers contribute to the war effort?

Canadians contributed to the war effort by sending men overseas to fight for the Allies. Canadian soldiers were very important in the Allied war effort. Canada's first major battle was at Ypres from April 22-25, 1915. The Germans had a surprise for the Allied forces. It was a new deadly weapon: chlorine gas. This was modern warfare. Before the attack, the gas was released and the wind carried it toward the Allied trenches. Although some of the Allied troops ran away, the Canadian soldiers stayed. They suffered dreadful losses — 1850 were killed, 3491 were wounded, and 776 were captured by the Germans. 19



These soldiers equipped with gas masks examine their equipment.

When a grey green mass of chlorine gas
drifts down from the eastern sky,
You choke and spit till your lungs are split
and you see your best friend die

In the stink and stench of a rotten trench
mid the swarms of filthy flies
Some men got caught so their bodies rot
and the maggots eat their eyes.

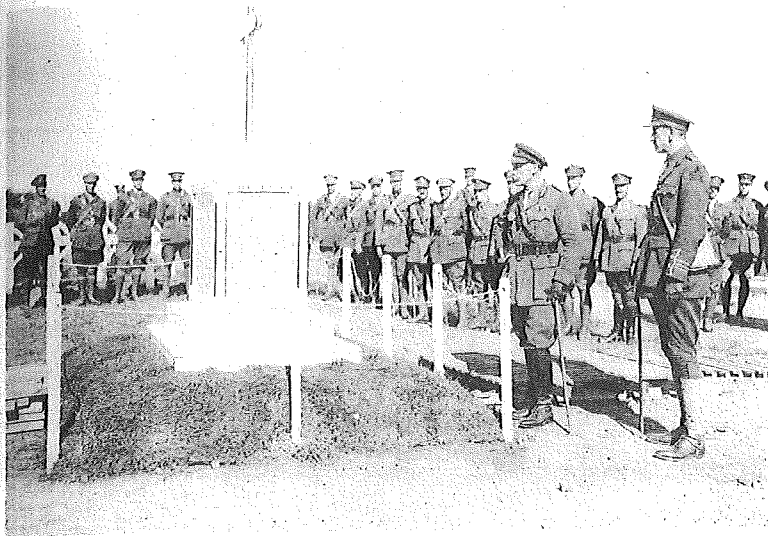
Robert Swan

Losses were heavy in trench warfare. Prime Minister Borden promised to send more and more soldiers. Some people believed that Canada could not support more than 250 000 soldiers. But Borden promised 500 000 in 1916! 20

The Canadian army's biggest **victory** came in April 1917. It was at Vimy Ridge. The Allies had tried to push the German soldiers off this hill many times since 1914. They had always failed. In their attempts, they had lost 200 000 soldiers. The Canadian Corps planned this attack with great care. They **tunnelled** under the hill and placed explosive **mines**. Their artillery bombed the German guns. They were successful in taking Vimy Ridge, and Canadians were proud of their victory. 21

Table 6.1 Enlistment/Casualty Rate for 1917

Month	Enlistments	Casualties
January	9 194	4 396
February	6 809	1 205
March	6 640	6 161
April	5 530	13 477
May	6 407	13 457
June	6 348	7 931
July	3 882	7 906
August	3 117	13 232
September	3 588	10 990
October	4 884	5 929
November	4 019	30 741
December	3 921	7 476

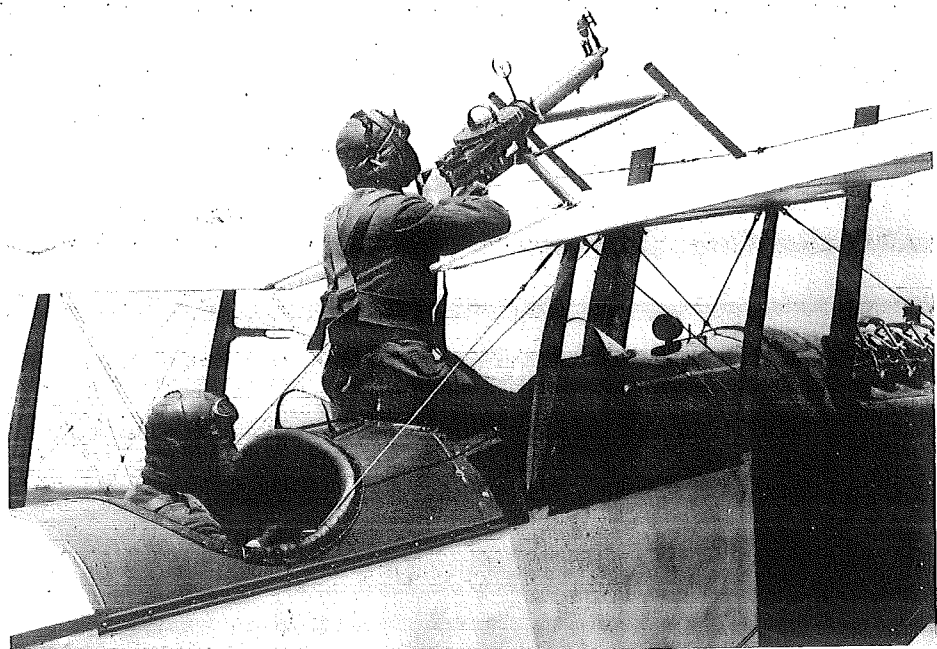


The Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge took the lives of 3598 Canadian soldiers and left 7104 more wounded.

More than 20 000 Canadians also joined the British Royal Flying Corps. This was later known as the Royal Air Force, or RAF. Airplanes were still a new invention. They were not very strong, and they crashed easily. Pilots usually died when their planes crashed. At first, planes were used to spy on the enemy. Later, machine guns were put on the planes so they could fight in the sky. Soldiers watched these “dog-fights” from the trenches. By June 1918, 35 per cent of the RAF’s pilots were Canadians. 22

Canadian soldiers, Canadian pilots, and the Canadian government gained the respect of other countries for their efforts in the war. Canada was now seen as a country, not a colony. But this respect was paid for by the young men who fought and died in Europe. This respect was earned even though there were some Canadians at home who believed that Canadian men should not even be in the war. 23

Canada’s leading pilots, or “aces,” like Billy Bishop, Raymond Collishaw, and Wilfrid May, flew in planes like this one.



"All bakers have been required to stop the manufacture of fancy bread."

Government Regulation
PAC 1918 4707

Advice to the Housewife

1. Use nut-butter or margarine.
2. Remake leftover bread into new bread, cake, or pudding.
3. Instead of one beefless day, why not try for six to make up for people less patriotic?
4. Eat as little cake and pastry as you can.
5. Use oats, corn, barley and rye instead of wheat.
6. Use ham and pork bones in other dishes.
7. Chew your food thoroughly — you will be satisfied with less.
8. All kinds of cold cereal can be saved, and when not enough to roll into balls to fry, they can be used in batter cakes and corn breads.
9. Cut each slice of bread as required.
10. Mix your own cleanser (use white sand, washing soda, soap and chalk).
11. Fifty million dollars is thrown away in garbage cans annually.
12. Do not display the joint of meat on the table. It is an inducement to eat more than you need.
13. Do not eat both butter and jam with bread.

War Meals 1917
OPA C-2-1 Canada Food Bill

Even young boys helped raise money for the cause.

QUESTIONS

- a. What new weapon did the Germans introduce?
- b. What were the effects of this weapon on soldiers?
- c. Canadians are very proud of the way their soldiers behaved at Vimy. Why is that?
- d. How did the image of Canada change because of Canada's war effort?

How did Canadians at home support the War?

While men were fighting overseas, people at home contributed to the war effort in many ways. Men and women worked on farms and in factories to produce food, weapons, clothes, and medical supplies for the soldiers; they lent money for the government to use in support of the war; and they gave up luxuries and lived very simply in order to save money and fuel for the war effort. 24

How did productivity improve during the War?

The government found ways to encourage more food production because much of the farmland in Europe had been destroyed. As a result, Canadian farmers produced twice as much wheat as they had before the war. They produced 300 per cent more cheese, 535 per cent more pork, and 795 per cent more beef! Canadian farmers supplied much of the food Canadian, British, and French soldiers ate. 25

The government organized the production of guns, shells, and other munitions for the Canadian and British armies. The slogan "Feed the Guns" encouraged companies and industries to produce munitions. 26



Canadian workers and industries supplied one-third of the ammunition used by British and Canadian soldiers.

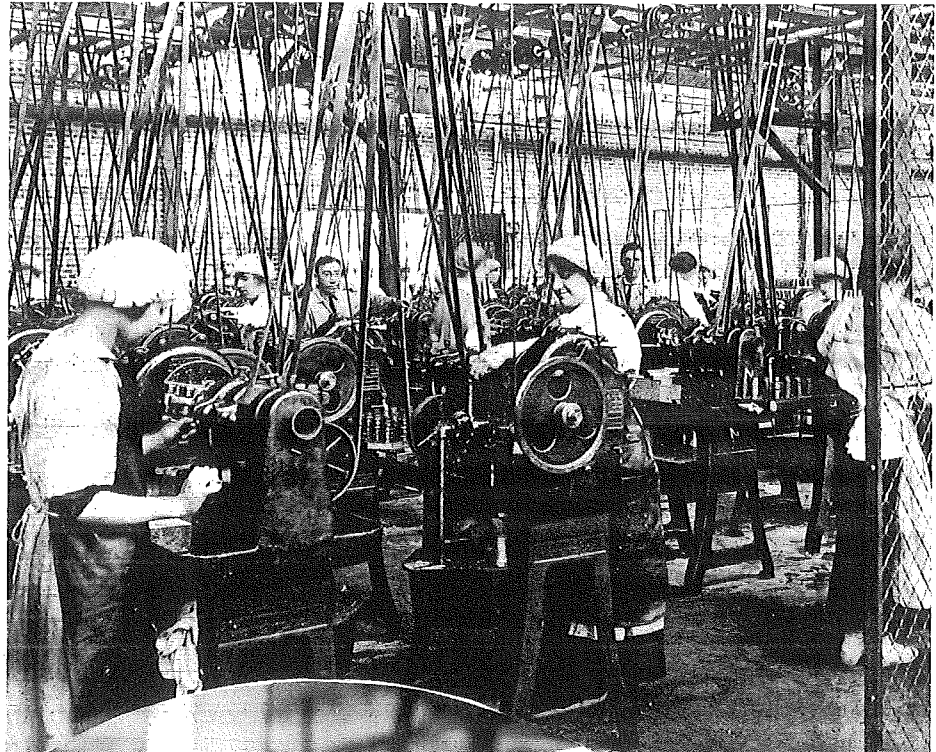
The government encouraged Canadians to raise money for the war effort. The war cost Canada about \$3 billion. To pay for it, the government placed new taxes on businesses, and in 1917 introduced personal income tax as a temporary measure. The government also asked Canadians to lend the government money, called "Victory Loans." In exchange, the government would pay 5 per cent interest on the loan. Canadians paid for three-quarters of the cost of the war just through taxes and Victory loans. 27

Canadians were told to eat less and use less fuel so that the resources of the country could be given to the soldiers. And they did! They gave up eating candies, pastries, and butter; they ate less bread and meat so that wheat, sugar, and meat could be sent to the soldiers. 28

How did women contribute to the war effort?

The war years were an important time for women. Men had gone to war, and industry needed workers. Women began to do jobs that traditionally had been done by men. They also set up organizations to contribute to the war. By the end of the war, 40 000 women were working in munitions factories, 1000 for the Royal Air Force, and 6000 for the Canadian government. Once the war was over, women were expected to give their jobs to the returning soldiers. Many did. However, women had proved that they could do more than had been expected of them. 29

Women routing powder groove in a munitions factory.





Canadian women also went to war.

QUESTIONS

- a. How did Canadians at home contribute to the war effort?
- b. In what three ways did the Canadian government direct Canadians' war efforts at home?

How did the War affect the political situation at home?

The decisions that Canadians had to face because of the war created conflict at home between groups of Canadians. There was conflict between English and French Canadians; women were becoming active in politics and demanding the right to vote; and there was conflict between Canadians and immigrants. 30

What was the cause of the conflict between English and French Canadians?

A major source of conflict between English and French Canadians was Canada's ties to Britain. When Britain declared war on Germany, most English Canadians supported the decision. Most English Canadian volunteers had either been born in Britain or felt strong ties to their parents' homeland. French Canadians did not have these ties to Britain. Their parents' homeland was not Britain or France; it was Canada. They did not feel the need to defend Britain. Fewer of them volunteered. 31

English Canadians thought that French Canadians were not doing their part to support the war. This conflict became very tense in 1917. In April, the number of men who were killed or injured was higher than the number of young men who were joining the army. English Canadians blamed the low rate of **enlistment** on the French Canadians. Actually, fewer people in all parts of Canada were enlisting. To make matters worse, Borden promised the British government that he would increase the size of the Canadian forces. 32

What message are these soldiers giving to other Canadians?



Borden believed conscription was the answer to Canada's contribution to the war effort.

Borden thought that a large Canadian contribution to the war effort would earn the respect of other countries. Canada would gain a stronger voice in international matters after the war. Borden decided to force Canadian men to join the army through **conscription**. 33

Many English Canadians supported conscription. It would force French Canadians to support the war effort. French Canadians opposed conscription. They believed that they were being punished for not volunteering. Some workers also opposed conscription. They felt that they were doing their share for the war at home. Because of the war, their jobs were more secure and better-paying. They did not want to go to war. They wanted to work and earn money. The farmers, too, opposed conscription. They needed their remaining sons to help on the farm. The government had asked them to produce more food, and they had. Many of their sons had already gone to the war and had not returned. The farmers thought that the government was asking too much. 34

QUESTIONS

- Why did Borden want to introduce conscription?
- Who opposed conscription? Why?

How was the conflict over conscription resolved?

Borden was afraid he would lose the 1917 election. He asked the Liberal Party to join his Conservative Party to form a Union government. He hoped that Liberals from non-French-speaking areas would support his plan of conscription. He also gave the right to vote to women who had relatives fighting in the war. Borden was sure that these women would support conscription because it would mean that their husbands and sons would get help from other soldiers. The government also took 35

away voting rights from immigrants from "enemy countries" who had not become citizens before 1902. Borden planned well; he won the 1917 election. He quickly started conscription. Many French Canadians still opposed the idea and were angry.

Borden had promised the British government he would supply more men. However, conscription did not produce many more fighting men. Many men who were conscripted were given **exemptions** because they were farmers' sons. Only 24 000 conscripts were sent to Europe. Only a few of these soldiers went to the trenches before the war ended. The arrival of 1 million American soldiers on the Western Front reinforced the Allied side in 1918, and helped it to win. 36

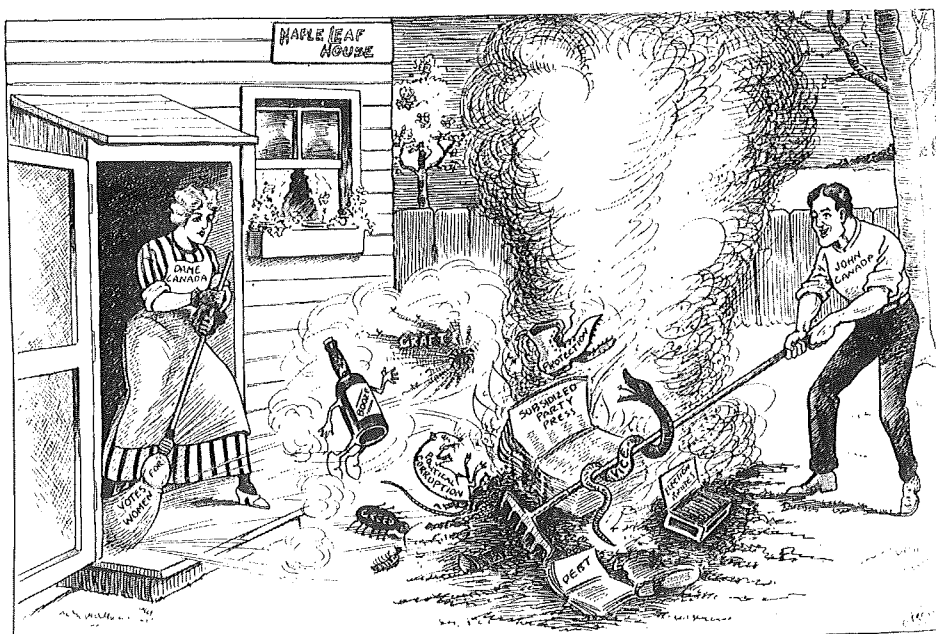
QUESTIONS

- Did Borden successfully resolve the conscription conflict? Why or why not?
- How did Borden ensure that he won the 1917 election?
- Was conscription a successful way to get more soldiers?

How did women become politically active?

During the war years, women found that they could influence opinions on certain issues. One of these was the **prohibition** of alcohol. Many women felt that alcohol was a serious social problem that caused family violence and poverty. They wanted the government to make alcohol illegal. During the war, more Canadians agreed. Most Canadians thought they should not be having a good time when soldiers were dying. Supporters of prohibition also said that the wheat used to make alcohol should be used to feed the soldiers. As a result, by 37

Even those who stayed at home were urged to do their bit for the war effort.



CANADA NEEDS A "CLEAN UP" WEEK



Agnes Macphail was Canada's first woman member of Parliament.

Nellie McClung played an important role in winning women the right to vote in Manitoba.

1918, the government made the sale of alcohol illegal. Women started to have more confidence in asking for and using political power.

During the war, women got the right to vote in elections. The **women's suffrage** movement demanded voting rights for women. Suffragists said that women in public life would improve society. They wanted laws that would improve family life, working conditions for women and children, and education. They argued that, as Canadian citizens, it was unfair that they did not have the right to vote.

Many Canadians agreed with the suffragists. Attitudes about women were changing. People had seen women doing new jobs, helping with the war effort, and trying to improve society. At first, women won the right to vote only in provincial elections. Then, in 1917, the federal government gave all women who had relatives fighting in the war the right to vote in federal elections. By 1918, female citizens had the right to vote. However, Asian women and men were not allowed to vote until 1948, and Native men and women on reserves did not receive the right to vote until 1960.



Table 6.2: Women Get the Provincial Vote

Province	Suffrage
Manitoba	January 28, 1916
Saskatchewan	March 14, 1916
Alberta	April 19, 1916
British Columbia	April 5, 1917
Ontario	April 12, 1917
Nova Scotia	April 26, 1918
New Brunswick	April 17, 1919
Prince Edward Island	May 3, 1922
Newfoundland	April 13, 1925
Quebec	April 25, 1940

QUESTIONS

- Why did prohibitionists want to make alcohol illegal?
- What did the suffragists want?
- How did World War I change the status of women?

Why were Canadians and immigrants in conflict?

Before the war started, many European immigrants were still coming to Canada even though the economy was bad and there were very few new jobs. Many of these immigrants took low-paying jobs that other Canadians did not want. Many Canadians did not like these immigrants who spoke other languages. They were worried about losing jobs and having no money. They often blamed immigrants for low wages and unemployment.

Canadian attitudes toward immigrants worsened throughout the war years. People needed somebody to blame for their troubles.



"Clean the aliens out of this community and ship them back to their happy homes in Europe which vomited them forth a decade ago."

John W. Dafoe, Winnipeg Free Press

"From a police point of view, there has been less trouble amongst them (aliens) since the beginning of the war than before, the fact that several of them were sent to internment camps at the beginning of the war seemed to have a good effect on the rest...In my opinion, if there is any trouble over the employment of enemy aliens, it will be after the war is over and our people have returned."

When the war began, many Canadians wanted European immigrants fired or arrested. Sometimes they claimed that German and Austro-Hungarian immigrants were spies who would destroy property in Canada. But they had no proof. Many of the European immigrants had very low-paying jobs in mines or on farms. Their working conditions were often bad. They wanted employers to give them fairer pay and safer working conditions. They supported union activity. Many Canadians were suspicious of unions.

There were 528 000 people in Canada whose families came from the enemy countries of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria. Many Canadians didn't see any difference between immigrants from enemy countries and those from the Allied countries. Soon, Canadians were calling all immigrants enemy aliens. Some Canadians wanted all immigrant workers arrested and put in prison camps.

Some towns and cities supported this idea. They asked the federal government to put all immigrant families in camps. The federal government refused. It would be too expensive and unfair to the immigrants. The government knew that many of the immigrants had bad feelings about their homeland. They had come to Canada to find a new home. They had worked hard and now had a home in Canada. But, the government did not take action to resolve the conflicts between the immigrant workers and other Canadians.

The conflicts continued. By 1915, workers were asking companies to fire enemy aliens. Some companies did; others refused. The federal government became worried that enemy aliens might be spies. They were also worried that the poor and unemployed immigrants would cause trouble. More than 8500 enemy aliens who were not citizens were put into camps and registered with the police. They were not allowed to own guns.

By 1916, the economy was improving and more workers were needed. Enemy aliens were hired to work on farms and in factories. Companies even hired some from the prison camps for \$1.10 a day. If they complained about the working conditions, they were returned to the camps. The war had changed Canadian attitudes toward immigrants, and these attitudes continued even after the war ended. 45

QUESTIONS

- a. Give two reasons some Canadians did not welcome immigrants before the war.
 - b. Do you think there is a relationship between employment and racial/religious discrimination?
 - c. Is discrimination still a problem in Canada?
-

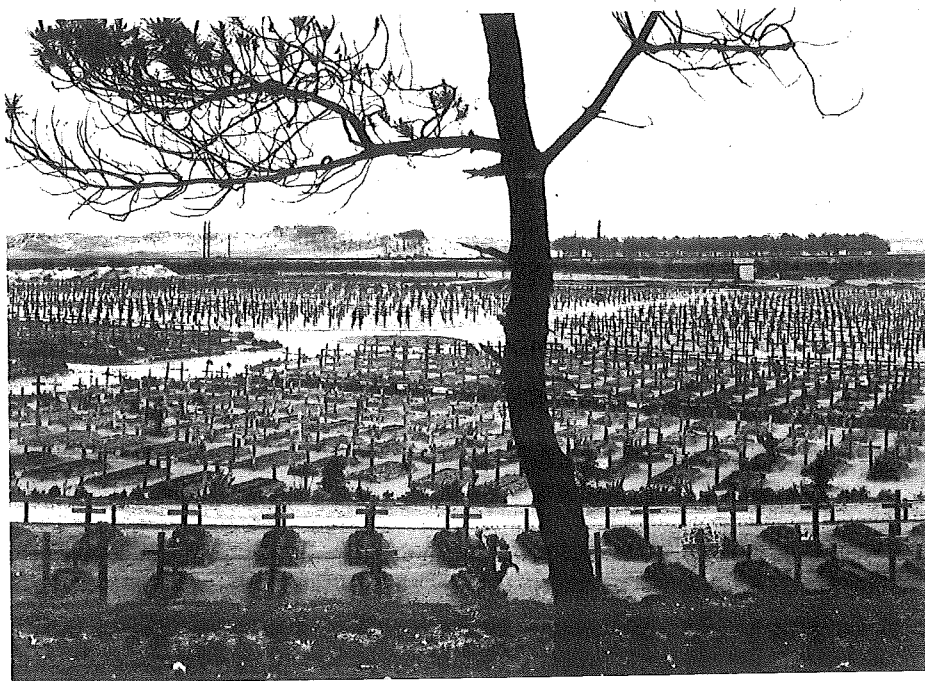
When did the War end?

The First World War was called "the war to end all wars" because no one could imagine that any country would ever want to get involved in war again. When it ended, the world was a different place, and Canada had changed in many ways. 46

Canadians welcomed the returning soldiers with victory parades.



Every year at 11 a.m. on November 11, Canadians honour the memory of the Canadians who gave their lives in war. This is Remembrance Day.



The war ended "at the eleventh hour, on the eleventh day, in the eleventh month": November 11, 1918. In World War I, 650 000 Canadians served; 60 661 Canadians died, and 173 000 were wounded. Nearly all were volunteers. 47

QUESTIONS

- a. What happens in Canada on Remembrance Day?
 - b. How do you observe Remembrance Day?
-

What did Canada's war efforts achieve?

Borden was happy. The Allied Powers recognized Canada's contribution and asked Canada to sign the Treaty of Versailles that ended the war. Now the world community recognized Canada as a young but responsible country. In 1919, Canada became a member of the **League of Nations**. This was an organization of many countries that wanted to keep peace and prevent future wars. 48

Canadians proved themselves in World War I. They were proud of their achievements. The country had entered the war as a colony of Britain. It came out as an independent country. Canada's industries were much stronger than before the war. Women were recognized as voters; more women were in the workforce. These were important changes to Canadian life. 49

QUESTIONS

- a. What did Canada's war efforts achieve?

- b. Were these achievements worth the number of lives, the amount of money spent, and the bad feelings between groups of Canadians? Why or why not?
-

What happened after the War?

The effects of the war lasted for many years. Canada was proud of its victory, but it was deeply divided. Returning soldiers, or **veterans**, were in conflict with **civilians** who never went to war; immigrants were unpopular with many Canadians; workers were in conflict with employers; farmers were dissatisfied with the government's economic policies; and French Canadians were still angry about conscription. Many people were angry with the government and disappointed with how little peace brought them. 50

Why were veterans and civilians in conflict?

Soldiers who returned from the war needed jobs. At the same time, factories were laying off workers. Uniforms, weapons, and munitions were no longer needed. Factories had to change to peacetime production. This did not happen quickly. How were veterans to marry or support families without jobs? They demanded **cash bonuses** for their years of service in the army. The government refused. To pay for the war, it had borrowed \$164 million! It did not want to borrow more. Instead, the government offered the veterans small **pensions**, free land in the west, and hospitals to care for the wounded. They also promised to hire the veterans first for the few government jobs available. 51

The veterans were **dissatisfied**. They felt **rejected**. They had been willing to die for their country; now their country would not even give them jobs! They felt **unappreciated**. At the beginning of the war they were needed. Now that the war was over, Canadians seemed to be saying that they were no longer needed. Many of the veterans were **bored** and **frustrated**. They had nothing to do. Because the price of farm products was falling rapidly, free land would not help them. Most veterans had been proud of their victory. Unemployment took away that pride; they felt **humiliated**. 52

Some veterans demanded the jobs held by women and "enemy aliens." They attacked stores and companies that employed immigrants instead of veterans. Most women in industry lost their jobs. In towns and cities, some veterans became so frustrated that they assaulted new immigrants in the streets. 53

QUESTION

- a. Why did the veterans feel rejected, frustrated, and humiliated?
-

Why were immigrants and other Canadians in conflict?

The unfair treatment of "enemy alien" immigrants showed that some people were still very worried about their own economic and cultural security. These Canadians continued to demand that the government stop accepting immigrants from non-English-speaking countries because they thought too many immigrants would change Canada's English culture. They also demanded that the government accept only rich immigrants because they were worried that immigrants would take Canadian jobs. They wanted the government to discriminate against groups of people because of their race or religion. In later years, the Canadian government did exactly that. It wasn't until the 1960s that discrimination against different racial groups became illegal. 54

QUESTION

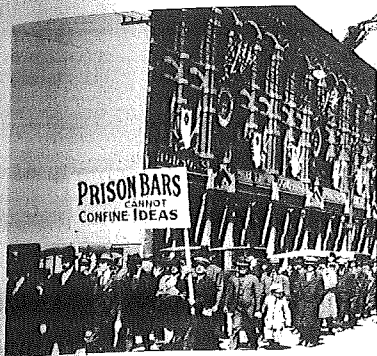
- a. What did some Canadians ask the government to do about its immigration policy?
-

Why were workers and employers in conflict?

During 1919, many veterans began to support unions. Union leaders said that many companies had made large profits from the war. They claimed that the rich were taking advantage of workers by paying them 55

Winnipeg General Strike, 1919.





Workers protest the trials of the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike.

low wages. According to the union leaders, the rich **capitalists** were the real enemy. Workers were asked to join one big union to fight the enemy. Unions called for **general strikes** in several cities. Workers demanded the right to have unions and to negotiate for higher pay.

The biggest strike was in Winnipeg from May 15 to June 26, 1919. 56 About 35 000 workers went on strike. These included construction workers, city police, and postal workers. The Strike Committee asked the police to return to work. Employers, the city council, and the federal government opposed the strike. Some non-union people organized to keep law and order. They accused the strikers of being **communists**. On June 19, 10 strike leaders were arrested.

On June 21, veterans and others marched in support of the strike. 57 The North-West Mounted Police were called to stop the march. One man was shot dead. Many were injured. Thirty-one more strikers were arrested. The workers called off the strike.

The strike was broken. Some strike leaders were put in jail. Others 58 were deported under the Immigration Act. However, some of the leaders were later elected to government positions, giving Manitoba workers a voice in government.

QUESTIONS

- a. Why did unions become more active after the war?
 - b. How did the government try to resolve the conflict between workers and employers in the Winnipeg General Strike? Is this a good way to resolve conflict?
-

Why were farmers dissatisfied?

Farmers were upset because wheat prices fell quickly after the war 59 ended. There were fewer markets and lower prices for all farm products. During the war, farmers had borrowed money to buy more land and machines to increase production for the war effort. Now they could not repay their loans. They wanted the federal government to reduce taxes and lower their costs. When the government refused, the farmers organized their own political party. As members of the National Progressive Party, they hoped to have some control over government decisions about important farm issues.

QUESTIONS

- a. Why were farmers angry at the government?
 - b. How did they resolve their conflict with the government?
 - c. Do you think this was a successful method of resolving the problem? Why? Why not?
-

Why were English Canadians and French Canadians in conflict?

French Canadians were still bitter over the conscription issue. They felt betrayed by Borden and his Conservative government. When Borden retired, the Conservatives chose Arthur Meighen as their new leader. Meighen was the man who had first started the plan for conscription in 1917. French Canadians hated him for that. They expressed their feelings in the next election. 60

What happened to the government?

In the 1921 federal election, the workers, farmers, and French Canadians voted against Meighen and the Conservatives. Mackenzie King and the Liberal Party won most of the seats in the House of Commons. The political parties started by the farmers won the second highest number and the Conservatives won the third highest number of seats. 61

The economy was weak, and Canadians were divided. The conflicts that surfaced in World War I would continue for many years. 62