



# BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE TOUR

## Commemorative Centenary tour

04-11 April, 2017

<http://www.vimyfoundation.ca/vimy-100/vimy-2017-trip/>



Operated by



It is with pleasure that we at the Vimy Foundation present our specially designed tour, operated by Spirit of Remembrance Ltd, our official adult tour operator based in Europe. Part of the proceeds of this unique official tour will assist us to raise funds to send a group of young Canadians to Vimy, France in April 2017 for the Centenary commemorations. Staying in a breathtaking 17th century Chateau, your tour, led by General Rick Hillier (Ret'd), follows the trail of events which lead to the famous Battle of Vimy Ridge. Please join our tour and help us to help our youth perpetuate the memory of those who gave us the freedoms we enjoy today. The mission of the Vimy Foundation is to preserve and promote Canada's First World War legacy as symbolized with the victory at Vimy Ridge in April 1917, a milestone where Canada came of age and was then recognised on the world stage.

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# ITINERARY

## **DAY 1: Tue. 04 April 2017**

AM Arrive on flight from Canada to Paris CDG

The Spirit of Remembrance team will meet you at the airport and welcome you to France.

Transfer to your hotel in the heart of Paris

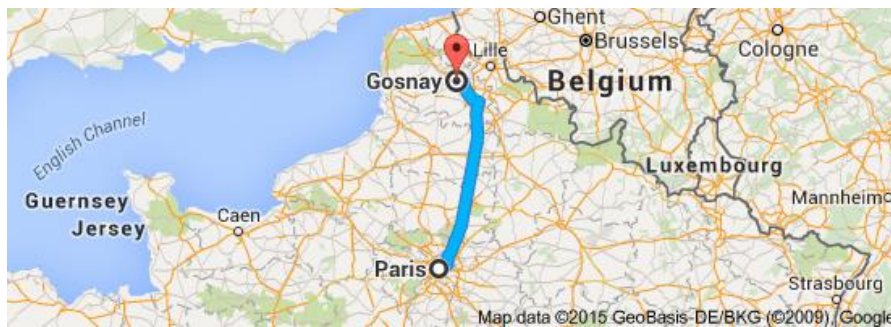
Remainder of the day at leisure (OPTIONAL TOURS AVAILABLE at additional cost)

- Guided tour around Paris cultural highlights
- Personal shopper
- Helicopter tour
- Numerous other options available.

PM Welcome cocktail function followed by dinner in a historic restaurant

## **DAY 2: Wed. 05 April 2017**

9.00am The Spirit of Remembrance team will collect you from your hotel and transfer you up to the Chateau Chartreuse which will be your home for the next 5 nights. (Approx. 2.5 hours)



After checking into your hotel and time to freshen up we will head out to the [Canadian National Vimy Memorial Park](#), (the timing and details of this visit are subject to change due to the official ceremonies taking place on 09 April and the security surrounding the event).

Enroute we will visit the [Cabaret Rouge Cemetery](#) in Souchez. In May 2000 the remains of an unknown Canadian soldier were taken from this cemetery and buried in a special tomb at the foot of the National War Memorial in Ottawa, Canada.

The tour will include the following:

- Preserved trenches at 1.00pm
- Vimy Memorial to Canada's Missing
- The story of how the allegedly impregnable German position was taken in style
- How four Victoria Crosses were won during the battle
- A guided tour of Grange Tunnel with a Canadian student guide.

This afternoon time permitting we will visit the [Wellington Quarries](#) in Arras. The museum is founded to the memory of thousands of men of the British Army and Dominion Forces who lived under the city during the Great War of 1914-1918. In particular work of the tunnelers of the New Zealand Division is commemorated. The New Zealand Tunneling Company was based in this part of the underground tunnel system during the build-up to the Allied offensive, the Battle of Arras 1917, which was launched in the early hours of 9th April 1917.

From the arrival of the British in the Arras sector in March 1916 New Zealand Tunnelling Companies dug a network of tunnels in the ground underneath the Ronville and Saint-Saveur districts of Arras. They dug new tunnels and rooms and joined them up with the existing ancient tunnels and quarries or pits already under the city, quarried out hundreds of years before. The tunnels were fitted with running water and electricity supplies. Accommodation in the underground city was available for the soldiers to live and sleep in, and there was a large hospital for treating the wounded in a labyrinth of rooms with enough space to fit 700 beds and operating theatres.

The evening is at leisure.

### **DAY 3: Thu. 06 April 2017**

9.00am Following breakfast in the Chateau our coach departs for Ypres, (Approx. 1 hour).



While relaxing on your executive coach General Rick Hillier (Ret'd) and our team will share fascinating stories relating to the First World War and what you can expect when you arrive in Ypres.





You will then have free time to make optional visits to St. George's Memorial Church, 'In Flanders Fields Museum' or have an opportunity to shop.

Lunch will be in a local restaurant

Today we will visit the following:

- [Essex Farm](#). Dressing station where in 1915 a Canadian surgeon, John McCrae, wrote the famous poem "In Flanders Fields" and the story of the Poppy was born.
- PPCLI Memorial – commemorating a gallant stand by the Patricia's in May 1915.
- ["The Brooding Soldier"](#) – St. Julien Canadian Memorial at [Vancouver Corner](#) – where Canadians held the line during the first German poison gas attack in April 1915.
- [Passchendaele Memorial Museum](#) (admission included)
- [Langemark German Cemetery](#) and the nearby location of the first gas attack
- [Tyne Cot Cemetery](#) – the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world. Act of Remembrance. Travel via Passchendaele New Cemetery viewpoint and hear how the Canadian Corps took Passchendaele in Oct/Nov 1917
- [Canadian Memorial Passchendaele](#)
- [Mount Sorrel](#) - The 1916 British Front Line south-east of Ypres was situated on this high ground of the Ypres ridge at Zillebeke and the double summits of Hill 61 and Hill 62. Three divisions of the Canadian Corps were involved in the defence of the line here when the German Army made an attack on 2nd June 1916. (If time permits)

At around 5.00pm we will return to Ypres where we will have dinner at a local restaurant

**7.00pm** We will take our places at the [Menin Gate](#) ready to experience the Last Post Ceremony which takes place at 8.00pm. We will lay a wreath on behalf of the Vimy Foundation.

Return to the Chateau



## DAY 4: Fri. 07 April 2017

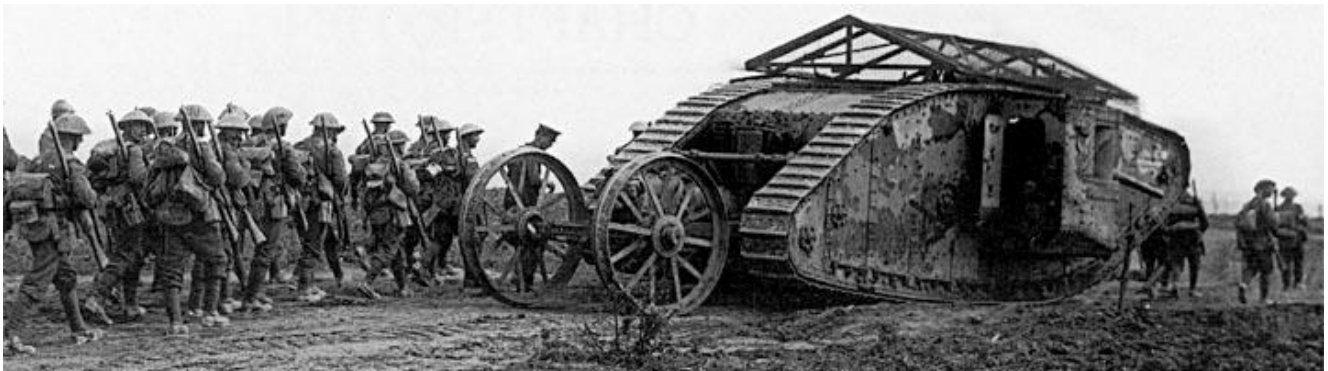
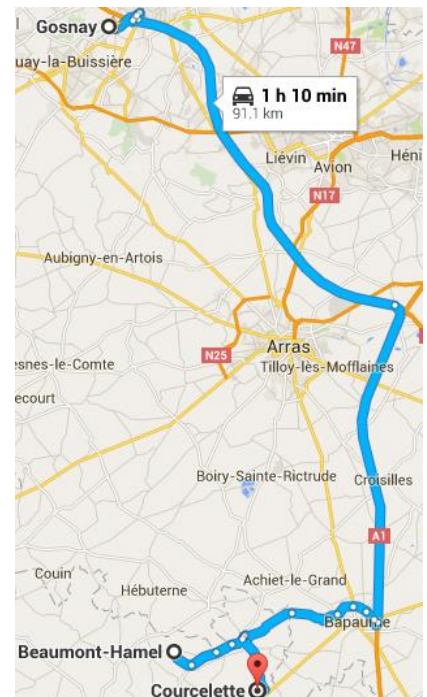
Breakfast in hotel then you leave the hotel – during the coach ride our battlefield guide will talk with us about the Battle of the Somme – 1916

- [Beaumont Hamel](#) - Newfoundland Memorial Park. Here, the 1st Newfoundland Regiment, attached to a British division, was cut down on 1 July 1916 by German machine-gun fire as it attacked over open ground. Within 30 minutes the regiment suffered a crippling 324 killed and 386 wounded out of a total of 801 soldiers. The story of Piper James Richardson VC, 16<sup>th</sup> Canadian Scottish. Newfoundland Memorial.

- [Thiepval - Memorial to the Missing of the Somme.](#)

The Battle of the Somme raged for over four months and resulted in over a million casualties to Allied and German troops. The Canadians, originally in the Ypres sector, missed the first months of the fighting, but had moved to the Somme by early September.

On 15 September, in a carefully prepared infantry attack, the Canadians captured the ruined village of [Courcellette](#) – 2nd Canadian Division - the first use of tanks.



*Infantry moves off with armour for the first time in history in what would become known as the Battle of Flers-Courcellette. Notice the awkward steering aid wheels attached to the rear of the Mark I tank. The cage on top was to prevent grenades from being tossed on top of the tank. Notice the open hatch behind the 6-pounder sponson. (Photo: IWM Q5575)*

Further attacks through September and October were just as costly, but less successful. Operations against Desire Trench and [Regina Trench](#), to the north of Courcellette, were grinding affairs where soldiers attacked and counterattacked repeatedly over the same ground, and always under heavy enemy fire.

In late October, the three battered divisions of the Canadian Corps limped off the Somme having suffered 20,000 casualties. The 4th Canadian Division, fighting with British troops, finally captured Regina Trench in November, as the offensive came to a halt in the mud all along the Somme front.

- [Adanac Military Cemetery](#), Miraumont. Act of Remembrance.
- Mouquet Farm area – 3rd Canadian Division. The story of Pte John Kerr VC, 49th Battalion.



You will then have the very unique opportunity to visit the Maison Blanche Souterrain (Date/Time TBC).

- Previously used as a chalk quarry, this underground system was turned into a barrack by the Canadian Corps who continued to expand the tunnels and caves. The underground space saved many lives as Canadian soldiers would sleep and wait as the ground above them shook. Many soldiers carved names, symbols and even detailed pictures into the chalk walls that can be viewed today.

Today you will attend special VIP opening, (time TBC) of 'Witness: Canadian Art of the First World War' exhibit at Musee des Beaux Arts in Arras followed by dinner in a local restaurant.

Return to the Chateau.

## **DAY 5: Sat. 08 April 2017**

Breakfast in hotel before boarding the coach to venture south

The Battle of Amiens (1918) was the beginning of the end of the German armies. A powerful Allied force, spearheaded by Canadian and Australian troops, nearly broke through the enemy lines on 8 August. The Canadians advanced 13 kilometres through the German defences, the most successful day of combat for the Allies on the Western Front.

We will visit:

- Domart Bridge – A Canadian engineer story.
- [Hangard Wood & War Cemetery](#) – the story of three VCs
- Beaucourt Wood – another VC
- The defence of Hallu by the Winnipeg Grenadiers & the Calgary Battalion.
- [Manitoba Cemetery, Caix](#) – burial place of the "[Hallu 8](#)" who were 8 Manitobans buried with full military honours on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015 nearly a century after they were killed.

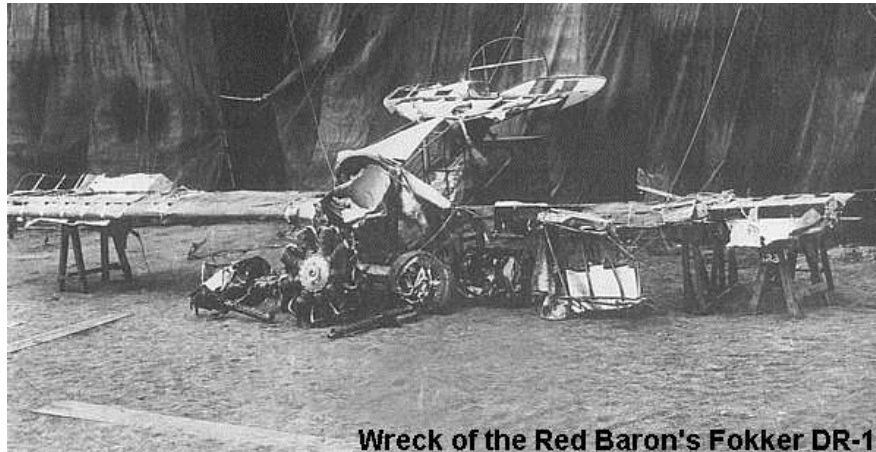


Members of the burial party from the Second Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry prepare to fold the casket flags during the burial of eight Canadian First World War soldiers from the 78th Battalion at the Caix British Cemetery in Caix, France on 13 May 2015 as part of the largest single find of unknown Canadian soldiers since the Canadian Armed Forces Casualty Identification program started in 2006.

*Department of National Defence*

- [Villers Bretonneux](#) – Australian War Memorial – Story of Lt Jean Brillant VC, MC , R22e Regiment
- Corbie was the location of a RAMC casualty clearing station and the nearby location where the Red baron, [Manfred von Richthofen \(5/2/1892- 4/21/1918\) died](#). He was an ace German fighter pilot in World War I credited with 80 air combat victories.

On April 21, 1918 the Red Baron was shot possibly from the ground while pursuing a Canadian pilot near the Somme River in France. The Baron was able to land his plane in this field despite a .303 bullet wound to his chest and lungs. Almost as soon as witnesses arrived the Baron tried to speak and then forever fell silent.



**Wreck of the Red Baron's Fokker DR-1.**

We will then enjoy a long and leisurely lunch at a unique restaurant on the bank of the River Somme in Amiens.

There will then be time to visit the [Amiens Cathedral](#), one of the finest examples of Gothic sacred art and a UNESCO World Heritage site before returning to the Chateau Chartreuse.

We will then attend the Vimy Foundation Vimy Reception at the Chateau Chartreuse. Attendees are expected to include government officials, heads of state and Vimy Foundation supporters. (To be confirmed.)

## **DAY 6: Sun 09 April 2017 – “CENTENARY OF THE BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE”**

After a leisurely breakfast in our hotel we will depart to nearby Vimy Ridge and spend a couple of hours visiting the [Canadian National Vimy Memorial Park](#).

Commemorative events have not yet been confirmed so the day has been left free.





Commemoration service

(Subject to commemorative events) Visit L'Anneau de la Memoire prior returning to the Chateau to freshen up.

We will then travel to Arras for The Vimy Foundation Vimy Reception at Hotel de Ville. Attendees will include government officials, heads of state and Vimy Foundation supporters. Return to Chateau.



## **DAY 7: Mon. 10 April 2016**

After breakfast in our hotel and checking out we depart at 8.00am to the Mons area via the Hindenburg Line 1918 via Drocourt-Quéant Line

After the victory at Amiens, Allied commanders agreed on a multi-army offensive along the Western Front against Germans force that, for the first time in the war, appeared vulnerable. The ensuing campaign, known as the Hundred Days (August - November 1918), ended in the defeat of German forces in the West.

In the first of these attacks, the Canadians spearheaded the British First Army's attack on the Arras front, through the Drocourt-Quéant Line (D-Q Line) and across the Canal du Nord to capture the town of Cambrai. A successful operation would outflank the Germans' vaunted Hindenburg Line of prepared defences, forcing them to retreat. But the enemy positions at the D-Q Line and along the Canal du Nord were strong and deep, bristling with machine-guns, and forcing them would not be easy.

The Canadians opened their attack on 26 August. The initial artillery bombardment blasted the Germans' positions, but an intense, week-long battle followed, resulting in more than 11,000 Canadian casualties. Canadian troops finally crashed through the heavily fortified Drocourt-Quéant Line on 2 September.

After almost a month of planning and preparation, the Canadian Corps attacked across the Canal du Nord in a high-risk operation on 27 September. Behind a complicated fire plan and the work of engineers, the Corps crossed the canal and pushed through the enemy defences, eventually capturing strong points like Bourslon Wood and Cambrai on 9 October. We will visit:

- Canal du Nord
- [Bourslon Wood Canadian Memorial](#)
- [Sancourt British Cemetery](#)

The German Army Retreats - The Arras and Canal du Nord battles cost over 30,000 Canadian casualties but helped break the German army's final defensive positions. After Canadian and other Allied troops crossed the Canal du





Nord, the German forces were in full retreat. The end of the war was near. In the final month of the war, Allied forces pushed ahead on all fronts.

The Canadians, having lost more than 40,000 killed and wounded since August, closed on Mons, a city of huge symbolic value. From here, British troops had staged an epic fighting retreat in the early days of the war, delaying the Germans in their advance towards Paris but suffering heavily in the process. Now, the Canadians had a chance to capture Mons on the last day of the war... which is exactly what they did.

Learn the mystic story of “The Angels of Mons” which many believe and which was reported in newspapers around the world.

We will have a special lunch in Grand Place Mons. This is where the Canadian Corps Commander, [Lt Gen Sir Arthur Currie](#), took the salute on 11th November 1918.

After lunch we will visit:

- [St Symphorien Cemetery](#) – Buried here is the last Canadian soldier to die in combat in the First World War. He was Private George Price of the 28th Battalion, killed by a German sniper northeast of Mons only a few minutes before the Armistice. The war ended at 11 a.m. on 11 November 1918.
- Return via The [Glade of the Armistice in the Compiègne Forest](#) was the site of the signing of two armistices; the 1918 [Armistice with Germany](#) and the 1940 [Armistice with France](#). Hitler specifically chose the location, and had the original signing carriage moved from Paris to Compiègne, as an irony for the defeated French. The site still houses several memorials to the 1918 armistice, including a copy of the original railway carriage. The original, after use in the 1940 armistice was moved to Berlin as a trophy of Nazi triumph. The railway carriage was later taken to Crawinkel in Thuringia in 1945, where it was destroyed by SS troops and the remains buried. A replica now stands at the original site.



We will then relax on a leisurely drive back to Paris, (Approx. 2.5 hours), where you will overnight.

## **DAY 8: Tues. 11 April 2017**

After breakfast in the hotel you have the following options:

- 1) Return to Canada - or – tour module add-ons: -
- 2) Specially designed 5 night/6 day WW2 battlefield tour to Normandy which tells the Canadian story from Dieppe through to D-Day and onwards through to the Falaise Gap, with time in Honfleur and overnight in beautiful Rouen, home to Joan of Arc and captured by the Canadians in WW2.
- 3) Optional 3 night/4 day ww2 extension tour to the Scheldt, captured by the Canadians paving the way to the capture of the vitally important port of Antwerp.
- 4) Luxury 3 night tour of the Champagne district including staying in a private chateau and learning the fascinating background about champagne and the nuances of the various houses.

## **Hôtel La Chartreuse du Val Saint Esprit, Gosnay**



### **Hôtel La Chartreuse du Val Saint Esprit**

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[levalsaintesprit@lachartreuse.com](mailto:levalsaintesprit@lachartreuse.com)

Set 5.6 km from the Beffroi de Béthune, this upscale hotel set in a grand, 14th-century chateau is also a 6.8 km drive from the cultural exhibits of the Musée d'Ethnologie Régionale.

Stately rooms filled with antique furnishings feature mini-bars, flat-screen TVs, and free WiFi. Many have vaulted brick ceilings. Upgraded rooms and suites add plush seating areas and luxe bathrooms; some have claw-foot tubs.

There are 3 restaurants, including an elegant fine-dining option with oak-panelled decor and a terrace, as well as a brasserie with a country-chic ambiance. Other amenities include landscaped gardens and a tennis court.



**PARIS HOTELS: DEPENDENT UPON PACKAGE SELECTED**



<b>Tour name</b>	<b>2017 Battle of Vimy Ridge Centenary Official Tour</b>
<b>Tour ref no.</b>	<b>VF17C8DPAR</b>
<b>Date / duration</b>	<b>04-11 April 2017 (ex-Canada) / Tour duration 8 days / 7 nights (Arr. Paris 05 – Dep. Paris 11 April)</b>

**\* Prices subject to currency fluctuation and confirmation at time of booking.**

**Includes:**

- Transport ex Paris in an executive coach (53 seater) ( incl. DVD, AC, toilet)
- 2 nights' accommodation at a 4 star hotel in Paris
- 5 nights' accommodation at the Hôtel La Chartreuse du Val Saint Esprit
- 7 X Buffet breakfast
- 6 X Lunches
- 3 X Dinners
- 1 X Gala dinner
- Special VIP opening, (time TBC) of 'Witness: Canadian Art of the First World War' exhibit at Musee des Beaux Arts in Arras
- The Vimy Foundation Vimy Reception at Hotel de Ville. Attendees will include government officials, heads of state and Vimy Foundation supporters.
- Experienced historian battlefield tour guide
- Spirit of Remembrance tour manager
- Vimy Foundation "swag bag"
- Vimy Foundation Pilgrimage medal
- Special tour bag including a hat, rain jacket, pen and baggage tags
- Bound souvenir programme including tour documentation with background information
- 3 X Poppy Wreaths with The Vimy Foundation logo (for the group)
- Tour bonding including 100% financial protection (all client funds kept in a trust account)

**Costs do not include:**

- Optional tours (details TBC)
- Admission fees in museums and monuments unless shown in the itinerary **and** listed in inclusions above
- Meals and beverages unless shown in the itinerary **and** listed in inclusions above
- Tips, portorage and all personal extras
- Insurance – you must have travel insurance and an EHIC Card (EU citizens) for minimum medical cover in the EU

**Other packages available staying at [Le Najeti Hôtel de l'Univers](#) or [Hôtel Best Western La Metairie](#) contact us for details**

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## EXAMPES OF OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES (Extra cost)

### OVERVIEW BY PLANE OF THE BATTLEFIELDS (one or two plane seats)

Enjoy a flight that will take you over the battle sites of the Somme from July 1 in November 1916. Fly over La Boisselle and the carter, Pozzières, Thiepval then to the Beaumont Hamel



### FLIGHT IN HOT AIR BALLOON



### DRIVING A JEEP



### DRIVING A VINTAGE CAR

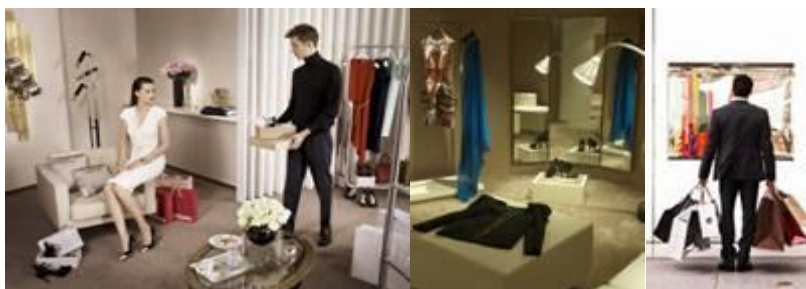


## AN EXCLUSIVE PRESTIGE VISIT OF THE MUSEE DE L'ARMEE – HOTEL NATIONAL DES INVALIDES"



## PERSONAL SHOPPER SERVICE

Our lifestyle and fashion experts will offer you an ultimate shopping experience by providing one-on-one and customized services: tailored wardrobes and exclusive access to luxury and limited editions items.



## OPTIONAL READING LIST

There is a wealth of material available that covers Canada's contribution to the Great War. Here are just a few:

- The [official history of the Canadian Army in the First World War](#), entitled *Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919*, by G.W.L. Nicholson (Queen's Printer, Ottawa, 1962). This book should be available through your local library, it is also available online. Several of the maps in this booklet are taken from the Official History.
- The "For King and Empire" series. Eight inexpensive volumes by Norm Christie, covering all the major actions by the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the First World War (CEF Books)
- "[Shock Army of the British Empire – The Canadian Corps, in the Last 100 Days of the Great War](#)" by Shane B. Schreiber (Vanwell Publishing Limited)
- "[A Military History of Canada](#)" by Desmond Morton (Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton)
- "[Vimy](#)" by Pierre Berton (McClelland & Stewart)
- Brereton Greenhous; Stephen J. Harris (1992) [Canada And The Battle Of Vimy Ridge, 9-12 April 1917](#) Minister Supply and Service (Downloadable PDF)
- Morton, D. and J. L. Granatstein. *Marching to Armageddon - Canadians and the Great War 1914-1919*. Lester & Dennys Ltd.
- The Library & Archives Canada website is a useful source of links for further information on the service records of individuals and unit war diaries.

See <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/canadian-expeditionary-force.aspx>

Original video of the opening of the [Vimy Memorial](#)



“We will remember them”



THE VIMY FOUNDATION  
LA FONDATION VIMY