



One in Five (18%) Canadians Don't Know What Vimy Ridge Is *Only Half (47%) Correctly Identify Which War in which the Battle Was Fought*

Toronto, ON – April 7 2014 – The Battle of Vimy Ridge marked an important stepping stone in the development of Canada's identity and is known by many as one of the nation's most notable events. While Vimy Ridge has a top place in Canadian history, a new poll conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of the Vimy Foundation reveals that there are some Canadians who are unaware of one of Canada's most important battles and its importance for Canada's identity.

What is Vimy Ridge?

While four in five (82%) know that Vimy Ridge is a famous battle in which Canadian troops fought bravely, one in five (18%) did not know that Vimy Ridge was one of Canada's most notorious battles. One in ten Canadians state that Vimy Ridge is a Canadian mountain range (9%) or a ski slope that was used for practice for the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games (9%). Handfuls (3%) think Vimy Ridge is a famous Canadian racehorse.

- Quebecers (55%) are least likely to know that Vimy Ridge was a famous Canadian battle and are much more likely to think it's a mountain range (16%) or a ski slope for the Sochi Olympic Games (24%). Ontarians (93%) are most likely to know what Vimy Ridge is.
- Men (86%) are more likely than women (77%) to know that Vimy Ridge was a battle where Canadian soldiers fought.
- The older Canadians are, the more likely they are to correctly identify what Vimy Ridge is (55+ years of age – 92%, 35-54 years of age – 81%, and 18-34 years of age – 69%).

Vimy Ridge was a Battle During Which Conflict?

Perhaps another surprise is that only every other Canadian can correctly identify what war Vimy Ridge was fought in. Only half (47%) of Canadians know that the Battle of Vimy Ridge was fought in the First World War. Two in five (37%) erroneously believe that Vimy Ridge was a battle in the Second World War, while handfuls of others believe it was part of either The Northwestern Rebellion (8%), the Korea War (4%), the Boer War (2%), or the Afghanistan War (2%).

- Men (52%) are more likely than women (43%) to know that Vimy Ridge was fought in the First World War.
- Seniors (55+, 52%) are most likely to know this as well, although they are also most likely to believe it was fought during the Second World War (42%).
- Quebecers (37%) are least likely to be able to correctly identify the conflict during which Vimy Ridge took place.

What happened at Vimy Ridge?

Similarly to those who can correctly answer what war the Battle of Vimy Ridge was a part of, only half (52%) of Canadians know that at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, Canadian soldiers won a significant battle against the German Army in France. Three in ten (30%) Canadians think that Vimy Ridge was where Canadian soldiers suffered major losses in the Second World War on the beaches of Normandy, while one in ten think the battle was where soldiers captured a hill in the Korean War that was a turning point for UN Forces (8%) or where Canadian soldiers fought and captured Louis Riel in the Northwest Rebellion (7%).

Only a few (3%) think Vimy Ridge was where Canadian soldiers repelled an attack at a South African town in the Boer War.

- Women (46%) are less likely than men (58%) to know that the Battle of Vimy Ridge was where Canadian soldiers won a significant First World War Battle against the German Army in France.
- Seniors (59%) are most knowledgeable of this, ahead of young (50%) and middle-aged (47%) Canadians.
- Albertans (64%) are most aware of what happened at Vimy Ridge, while Quebecers (36%) are least aware.

What did Vimy Ridge Accomplish?

Most (60%) Canadians can correctly identify that the Canadian military actions at Vimy Ridge helped Allies in the First World War achieve their first significant victory, although four in ten (40%) could not. One in five (18%) believe that Canada's actions at Vimy Ridge helped ensure the liberation of the prisoners in Nazi death camps in the Second World War, while one in ten think Canadian action led to the surrender of Japanese forces in the Pacific in the Second World War (12%) or putting down the Northwest Rebellion and creating a new province.

- Two thirds (66%) of men are aware of the results of the Canadian military 'sactions at Vimy Ridge compared to just over half (55%) of women.
- The older Canadians are the more likely they are to know how Canadian military actions helped at Vimy Ridge (55+ - 68%/18-34 -55%).
- Albertans (69%) trump all other regions when it comes to knowing how Canadian military actions helped at the battle, while Quebecers (49%) trail.

What was the Impact of Vimy Ridge?

When reflecting on the results of Vimy Ridge, two-thirds (66%) of Canadians know that Canada's victory led to Canadians feeling greater confidence in themselves as a united fighting force and as a nation, although one in three (34%) didn't know this. One in five (18%) think that the result of Vimy Ridge led to Canada deciding to join the United Nations, while one in ten believe it led to the penning of Canada's national anthem 'O' Canada' (11%) or the construction of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa (6%).

- Seven in ten (71%) men know that Vimy Ridge resulted in Canadians feeling greater confidence in themselves as a united fighting force and as a nation compared to six in ten (61%) women.
- Eight in ten (81%) seniors know of Vimy's result, ahead of middle-aged (61%) and younger (53%) Canadians.
- Ontarians (76%) are most aware of the result of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, while Quebecers (47%) are least aware.

The Most Important Outcome of Vimy Ridge?

While The Battle of Vimy Ridge led to many important outcomes for Canada, half (49%) of Canadians state that the most important outcomes was that Canadian historians say the country came of age and found its voice. A quarter (25%) believes that it led to Canada becoming world-renowned for international peacekeeping. One in ten incorrectly think that the most important outcome of Vimy Ridge was Canada being able to liberate Paris from Nazi Germany (13%) or Canada being able to liberate Holland from Nazi Germany (10%). A few (4%) believes the most notable outcome of Vimy Ridge was Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau invoking the War Measures Act (4%).

- Men (52%) slightly edge women (46%) when it comes to knowing the most important outcome of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.
- Younger (42%) and middle-aged (44%) Canadians are less likely than seniors (59%) to know the most important outcome.
- British Columbians (60%) most know of this outcome, while Quebecers (29%) are least likely to know.

Who Will attend Vimy Ridge in France in 2017?

In 2017, The Battle of Vimy Ridge will have its centennial celebration observances and an unveiling of a new Vimy Education Centre with a handful (3%) of Canadians stating that they or a member of their family plan to travel to France for these celebrations.

- Men (4%) are more likely than women (1%) to say someone in their family plans on heading to Vimy Ridge.

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For more information

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