

GREAT BRITAIN



# MACLEAN'S

"CANADA'S NATIONAL MAGAZINE"

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Presenting  
Canada in the Great War

# CANADA IN THE GREAT WAR

By MAJOR GEORGE A. DREW

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A stirring chronicle of the achievements of 450,000 Canadians who left their native land to play a heroic part in the greatest conflict in the world's history.

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*Reprinted at the request of thousands of Canadians from the October 1st and October 15th issues of*

**MACLEAN'S**  
"CANADA'S NATIONAL MAGAZINE"



## MAJOR GEORGE A. DREW

Ever since "The Truth About the War" appeared in MacLean's, Major George A. Drew has been one of the most discussed men in Canada. Born in Guelph in 1894, Major Drew was educated at Guelph public schools, Upper Canada College, the University of Toronto, and Osgoode Hall. In 1910 he started going to Petawawa with the 16th Battery. In 1914 he enlisted with the 16th Battery C.E.F. He was wounded in 1916 and was in hospital in France, England and Canada for more than a year. From the Fall of 1917 until the Spring of 1918, he commanded the 64th Battery at Guelph, when wounds necessitated his return to hospital until June, 1919. In 1920 he was called to the Bar, and until 1925 practised law at Guelph. For three years, 1922, 1923 and 1924, he was alderman, and the next year mayor of Guelph, being the youngest chief magistrate in Canada at that time. Then he was appointed Assistant Master of the Supreme Court at Osgoode Hall, Toronto. Since its reorganization after the war, he has commanded the 16th Battery at Guelph, a unit of the brigade which won the Shaughnessy Cup in 1927 and 1928 as the best militia artillery brigade in Canada.

# CANADA

## in the Great War

¶ *A stirring chronicle of the achievements of 450,000 Canadians who left their native land to play a heroic part in the greatest conflict in the world's history.*

**A**UGUST 4, 1914, is the most important date in the history of the British Empire. On that eventful day Great Britain and the self-governing Dominions unhesitatingly took the fateful step in the cause of international justice which ultimately resulted in the mobilization of more than eight and a half million British troops, more troops than were raised by any of the Allies, excepting only Russia.

Now, ten years after the war ended, we are inclined to forget that the raising of this vast fighting force by a group of essentially non-military nations is, perhaps, the greatest marvel of all history, and Canadians are prone to take too much for granted Canada's amazing share in the British effort. This is not surprising. During the war everyone was so engulfed in the immensity of the war itself, and since the war has been so concerned with problems of restoring normal life, that only recently has it been possible to regard the war and its lessons in anything

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approaching a reasonable perspective. The national tendency has been to think of the war as a disconnected series of staggering events, the importance of which varied with each individual in proportion to his immediate relation to, or understanding of them, rather than to look upon our part in the war as a composite whole which may be reduced to comparatively simple terms.

So many histories have been written of the Great War that to tell the story again may seem an unnecessary repetition of an oft-told tale, but this brief review of Canada's part is intended to impress certain salient features of our effort which every Canadian should know. It is not within the scope of this article to go into the detail of battles or discuss the strategy of our leaders. That is for the historian, and the military expert. It is simply intended briefly to discuss three phases of Canada's war effort: Why we fought, what we did, and what the result has been.

Why did Canada play the part she did in a European war? Primarily, it was because Britain was at war. But that is only the least important part of the answer. In 1914, the doctrine that "When Britain is at war Canada is at war," was doubtless correct. But although Canada might be technically at war with Germany as soon as a state of war existed between Britain and Germany, let it be remembered—and this cannot be too strongly emphasized—that Canada was not bound to send an expeditionary force and was as free to decide upon the extent of her participation as was her neighbor, the United States, or any other independent nation.

When, at the end of July, 1914, it appeared that peace negotiations were breaking down under Germany's definite attitude of aggression. Canada was the first of the Dominions to offer assistance to Great Britain if war should come. Sir Robert Borden

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cabled on August 1, opening the question of Canadian aid. On the morning of August 4, the British Government replied that there appeared no immediate emergency, but two days later the offer was accepted and it was decided to send a division immediately.

The only precedent for sending an expeditionary force from Canada was the South African war fourteen years before, but during the whole of the South African war Canada sent only a total of some 7,000 men. Why, then did Canada, perfectly free to decide the extent of her participation and the nature of the force she would send, immediately decide to raise a complete division of 22,500 men? Was it because Canadians had anticipated and prepared for a war with Germany?

Most decidedly not!

In Parliament on January 19, 1914, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said: "**The German peril has disappeared**, if, indeed, there ever was such a thing." F. B. Carvell, during the discussion of the militia estimates said: "I say, sir, that it is almost a disgrace that \$14,000,000 a year of the public revenues of this country should be spent in militia matters. **Who in the world are we going to fight with?**" As late as June 1, Hugh Guthrie, who was a few years later to become Minister of Militia, said: "The militia expenditure in Canada to-day is entirely out of proportion to our needs and our wealth. The time will never come when the expenditure he (Sir Sam Hughes) proposes will be justified. There is no reason for it; **there is no emergency in sight** and there will be none in our day and generation."

These were the sincere opinions of prominent public men, who were far more intimate with international affairs than the rank and file of the Canadian people. No, Canada had clearly not been anticipating

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or preparing for war. The explanation of Canada's rush to arms is not to be found in her readiness for war.

### "The Rights of Small Nations"

THE only answer is that there was a firm conviction in the minds of nearly all Canadians that Britain had pursued the only honorable course and that upon the outcome of the war rested the future of civilization—that it was a war which would determine whether the smaller nations would live under the shadow of the sword or have a reasonable assurance of freedom within which to pursue their own destiny.

The definition of the British position by the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, during his address to Parliament announcing the war, on August 6, 1914, was echoed in all parts of the Empire. He said: "If I am asked what we are fighting for I reply in two sentences: In the first place, **to fulfill a solemn international obligation, an obligation** which, if it had been entered into between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law but of honor, which no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated. I say, secondly, we are fighting to vindicate the principle which, in these days when force, material force, sometimes seems to be the dominant influence and factor in the development of mankind, we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering Power.

"I do not believe any nation ever entered into a great controversy—and this is one of the greatest history will ever know—with a clearer conscience and a stronger conviction that it is fighting, not for ag-

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gression, not for the maintenance even of its own selfish interest, but that it is fighting in defence of principles, the maintenance of which is vital to the civilization of the world."

Canadian public opinion reflected the British viewpoint, but there appeared to be serious obstacles in the way of immediate action. French-Canadians, although intensely loyal to Canada, had been traditionally opposed to Canada taking part in any foreign war, and they constituted about one third of the population. Then again over half a million of Canada's eight million people were of Teutonic birth or descent. This was quite different to the situation in Australia and New Zealand and was very similar to that in the United States, which was the explanation usually given for their delay in declaring war. Canada's prompt action was, therefore, the more amazing, and when Parliament assembled on August 18, the unanimous support of Sir Robert Borden's decision showed that he had rightly interpreted the will of the people in offering Canadian assistance.

In the rush of events which followed, Canadians largely forgot the part played by their public men in those memorable opening days of the war, and there was much that was worth remembering in seeking the reason for Canada's prompt decision. The party leaders reached the highest plane they have touched in Canada's history in their united effort to bring all races and creeds together in support of the principle for which Canada was at war.

The fine words of Sir Robert Borden at the close of his speech on August 18, 1914, may well be recalled. "As to our duty, we are all agreed; we stand shoulder to shoulder with Britain and the other British Dominions in this quarrel, and that duty we shall not fail to fulfill as the honor of Canada demands. Not for love of battle, not for lust of conquest, not for greed

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of possessions, but for the cause of honor, to maintain solemn pledges, to uphold principles of liberty, to withstand forces that would convert the world into an armed camp; yes, in the very name of the peace that we sought at any cost save that of dishonor, we have entered into this war; and while gravely conscious of the tremendous issues involved and of all the sacrifices that they may entail, we do not shrink from them but with firm hearts we abide the event."

Even more striking, perhaps, were the words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then leader of the opposition, and very appropriately the representative of the great French-Canadian minority. "It is our duty, more pressing than all other duties, at once—to let Great Britain know, and to let the friends and foes of Great Britain know, that there is in Canada but one mind and one heart, and that all Canadians stand behind the mother country, conscious and proud that she is engaged in this war, not from any selfish motive, not for any purpose of aggrandizement, but to maintain untarnished the honor of her name, to fulfill her obligations to her allies, and to save civilization from the unbridled lust of conquest and domination. —That war is for as noble a cause as ever impelled a nation to risk her all upon the arbitrament of the sword."

Here we have, clearly presented, the reasons why Canada was at war, and there is no Canadian who should not feel pride in the knowledge that Canada, perfectly free to choose, took the course she did, not because she was compelled, but "in the very name of the peace that we sought at any cost save that of dishonor."

Organization of the first overseas contingent followed with the same promptness that had characterized Canada's offer of help. The Minister of Militia, Sir Sam Hughes, took charge of the work. Valcartier,

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on the St. Lawrence, was chosen as the site of the training camp and troops began to assemble there on August 8. In four weeks' time a peaceful Quebec valley was converted into a great military camp with four miles of rifle ranges—the longest continuous line of targets in the world—streets, buildings, water, sewerage, lighting, telephones, baths and sanitary conveniences. This complete military city, intended originally to house 24,000 men, from whom a division of 22,500 would be drawn, had a population early in September, due to the rush of recruits, of 35,000. No matter what mistakes may have occurred in the excess of patriotic zeal, Valcartier Camp will always stand as a wonderful tribute to the energy of Sir Sam Hughes and the efficiency of the officers under him, and its name will forever be a landmark in the history of Canada, as the place where the first contingent of her great citizen army received its early training.

After weeks of intensive training, the 33,000 men it was finally decided to send began to embark at Quebec on September 22. There were thirty-two transports, and one by one as embarkation was completed they moved down the river and assembled at Gaspé Bay. The last left Quebec on October 1, and on October 3 they sailed together under escort of ten battleships.

In order to grasp the magnitude of this first contribution, one must remember that at the outbreak of war Canada had a permanent force of only 3,000 officers and men, a considerable proportion of whom were on the various district headquarters' staffs and, therefore, not immediately available for service.

### Canada's Armada

**T**HIS Canadian Armada was, up to that time, the greatest fleet of transports ever gathered together in the history of the world. The thirty-two

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vessels carried 33,000 men, 7,000 horses, and all the lorries, wagons and equipment necessary for a complete division—5,000 more men than Philip of Spain sent in "The Invincible Armada" to conquer England, and more than the number of British troops that Wellington commanded at Waterloo.

They arrived on October 14 at Plymouth without mishap and proceeded immediately to Salisbury Plain. They were enthusiastically received. The **Western Morning News** of Plymouth editorially voiced England's welcome. "To Canada belongs the immortal distinction of sending the first contingent of Dominion troops to war. Canada has always been foremost in great imperial movements, and in advance of the Empire's honor. Her troops will be first in the field — The Canadian contingent will in battle prove themselves worthy of the traditions of their race and the Dominion."

Before this prediction came true there was a weary winter of training in the trying rain and mud of Salisbury Plain. The first Canadians to go to France were the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry raised by Colonel Hamilton Gault in Montreal, and composed almost entirely of men who had already seen service. They left on December 20, 1914, and were in the line on January 4, five months to the day after the declaration of war. The first division left Salisbury Plain on February 5, reached France on the eleventh, and immediately commenced taking their turn in the trenches, a little over a month later than the Princess Patricias.

A completely equipped division in action in six months was more of an achievement than the men themselves realized. The first American division to go into action as a complete fighting unit went into the line on April 25, 1918, over a year after the

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United States declared war, and it must be remembered that British, French and Italian officers with active service experience had been sent to the United States to assist in training, and also that they had an active army of 200,000 men under arms when they entered the war. Canadians, therefore, have every reason to be proud of the speed with which their first division joined the Allies.

### Ypres and Gas

THE Canadians soon had their share of the fighting and proved their mettle. Then at Ypres on April 22 came, perhaps, the greatest ordeal of the war, when troops wholly unprepared to meet it, were subjected for the first time to poisonous gas. This unexpected breach of the Hague Convention was intended to pave the way for an advance on the vital channel ports, and the Germans, relying on the paralyzing effect of the gas, confidently expected to break through for a considerable distance. The heroic stand of the Canadians undoubtedly saved the day. In his report of the battle, Sir John French, the commander-in-chief of the British forces at that time, said: "The left flank of the Canadian division was left dangerously exposed to serious attack in flank, and there appeared to be a prospect of their being overwhelmed and of a successful attempt by the Germans to cut off the British troops occupying the salient to the east. In spite of the danger to which they were exposed, the Canadians held their ground with a magnificent display of tenacity and courage, and it is not too much to say that the bearing and conduct of these splendid troops averted a disaster which might have been attended with the most serious consequences."

In saving the day for the Allies the Canadian division had suffered 6,000 casualties, and then for the first time, the Canadian public fully realized the

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terrible nature of modern warfare, when the papers daily carried the ghastly lists of killed, wounded and missing, and Canadian parents, and wives came to look on the delivery of a telegram with silent dread. But with the sorrow came a feeling of intense national pride. Canadians, with only a few months training, smothered with gas, outflanked and outnumbered, had made good against the most highly trained soldiers in the world who had every advantage of equipment and position.

At this very time the second division, which had been recruited immediately after the departure of the first division and had been training during the winter, was being transported to England. It was not moved at one time as was the first division, but in separate ships which were unescorted until they were a few hundred miles from England when they were met by torpedo boat destroyers. No further evidence was needed of the power of the British Navy and the impotence of the German surface ships.

The second division trained during the summer in Kent in various camps near Folkestone and joined the first division south of Ypres early in September, 1915. The third division was in action early in 1916 and the Fourth division in the middle of August of the same year.

These four divisions formed the Canadian Army Corps which was maintained at full strength until the end of the war. The maintenance of these divisions under Canadian control necessitated the organization of a great training and supply establishment in England working in direct contact with the Canadian Corps in France. Canadian hospitals were opened, staffed by Canadian doctors, nurses and orderlies. Supply depots were established which in addition to supplying Canadians in England worked directly with the army in France. Thus Canada

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rounded out her effort. The Canadian Corps in France was brilliantly commanded by a Canadian, Sir Arthur Currie, and the work in England was no less ably directed by another Canadian, Sir Richard Turner. From the day the recruit started training in Canada, the Canadian soldier was under Canadian control. The Canadian Army was thus a distinctly Canadian enterprise, maintaining its complete identity and assuming its own responsibility.

### Nearly 600,000 Canadians Under Arms

THE growth of the Canadian Army was so steady that Canadians themselves scarcely realized the extent of what they were doing. No one in 1914 for a moment dreamed that Canada would make the contribution she did, certainly least of all our enemies. Canadians voluntarily enlisted as rapidly as they could be equipped and trained, until in 1917, it was necessary to adopt conscription to ensure a sufficient number of new men to maintain the army in France at full strength.

The total number of men enlisted in Canada was 595,411, and of these only about 80,000 came in under the Military Service Act. This represented nearly a sixth of the whole male population of the country—truly a staggering total from a nation whose people had scarcely thought of war and whose greatest military effort in the past had been the enlistment of some 7,000 men.

Of this number 418,052 proceeded overseas with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. In addition, 21,169 Canadians enlisted in the Royal Air Force and other separate branches, and 14,590 Canadians joined the armies of the Allied countries from which they had come to Canada, most of them, of course, going to the British Isles. Thus over four hundred and fifty

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thousand Canadian citizens left Canada as soldiers during the Great War.

In order to understand the extent of Canada's effort no better method can be adopted than to place our figures beside those of the United States, whose war achievements are being so liberally presented to the Canadian public through the medium of American magazines. The two countries are so similar in many ways and were so similarly placed geographically in relation to the Great War that the comparison is the natural one which presents itself.

The United States with a population of 100,000,000 people sent 2,000,000 overseas. Canada with 8,000,000 people sent 450,000. Canada, therefore, sent approximately one-seventeenth of her population, the United States, one-fiftieth, or in other words, Canada's effort in this regard in relation to population was more than three times that of the United States.

The Canadian Corps throughout the war maintained the same high name as a fighting force which had been earned by the First Division at Ypres. They fought at different times in all parts of the British front. Ypres was followed by Festubert and Givenchy in 1915. In 1916 they were heavily engaged at St. Eloi in April, and at Sanctuary Wood and Hooge in June. Late in the summer the four divisions moved to the Somme and during September, October and November distinguished themselves in the heavy fighting during the British offensive.

### Vimy

**I**N APRIL, 1917, the Canadian Corps bore the greatest part in the taking of Vimy Ridge. Their brilliant success in capturing this formidable stronghold which had withstood repeated efforts by both the British and French, added lustre to the name the Canadians already bore as a brave and efficient force

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in the attack. During the summer they fought with great success before Lens and in the capture of Hill 70. In October they were back before Ypres again and were heavily engaged in the fighting around Passchendaele in October and November. This was one of the greatest tests of the morale of the Canadian troops. Rain and shell fire had reduced the whole area to a slimy morass such as only those who have seen the effect of rain, on the apparently bottomless Belgian clay, can fully understand. In spite of untold hardships, severe losses, and conditions sufficiently depressing to test men's nerves to the limit of endurance, the Canadians took all their objectives and were mainly responsible for bringing the last great battle of 1917 to a successful conclusion in the capture of Passchendaele Ridge which dominated all the country in front of Ypres. And thousands more of the flower of Canadian youth joined their brothers of the first contingent in the sacrifice which will make the Ypres Salient forever a tragic but glorious name in the annals of Canada.

The Canadian Corps was not involved in the German advance in the spring of 1918, the line they held remaining unchanged, but the Canadian Cavalry Brigade which included the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, Canada's crack artillery brigade, together with the motor machine guns and railway troops, took a great part in resisting the German advance and suffered severe casualties.

Then came the final turn of the tide in August, 1918, and the exhilarating days of continuous victories after four weary years of discouragement. Canada's place among the British troops was recognized when the Canadian and Australian Corps were chosen as the spear head of the great British attack. The Canadian Corps was in the very centre of the British front. On the Eighth of August the Can-

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adians attacked at Amiens and on the first day advanced 14,000 yards, the greatest advance made in one day during the whole war. Ludendorff, the quartermaster-general of the German army, in reporting the British successes, described August 8 as the blackest day of the war for Germany.

### An Outstanding Effort

WHAT a transition in four years! On August 4, 1914, Canada had 3,000 men in uniform. On August 8, 1918, Sir Arthur Currie commanded a fighting force of about 160,000 Canadians, almost exactly the total of the two armies under the command of Wellington and Napoleon at Waterloo. These men, the vast majority of whom had no military training whatever before the war, crushed a much larger opposing force from the greatest military country in the world. Canada need have no false modesty about her part. Cavalry, artillery, infantry, and all the various auxiliary services were in the highest state of efficiency although the Corps had already lost nearly 200,000 men. In the closing days of the war there was no better fighting unit on the Western Front than the Canadian Corps and in proportion to its numbers it bore an outstanding part in the final victory. This is no idle exaggeration but an accepted fact which may be clearly demonstrated.

There is no better evidence of fighting efficiency than in the number of prisoners captured. During the period of the Allied offensive from the Eighteenth of July to the end of the war the prisoners captured by the Allies on the Western Front were as follows:

By the British Armies . . . . .	200,000
By the French Armies . . . . .	135,720
By the American Armies . . . . .	43,300
By the Belgian Armies . . . . .	14,500

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In the first place it is seen that the British took considerably the largest number, and it must not be forgotten that the British troops in Italy captured another 30,000, and those in Turkey, 85,000 more. Sixty-two British divisions were engaged on the Western Front of which four were Canadian. These four Canadian divisions during the period covered by these figures captured 31,537 prisoners. Thus it will be seen that the Canadians, who comprised one-fifteenth of the total of British divisions, captured more than one seventh of the British total in prisoners. To carry the comparison further, in this period twenty - five American divisions captured 43,000 prisoners while four Canadian Divisions captured 31,537. Or in other words, in proportion to the number of divisions engaged the Canadians captured approximately five times as many as the Americans.

The Allied victory was not the work of one nation, but of many. Nor was it the work of days or months but of more than four years continuous fighting. Not only in the more trying years which had gone before but in the successful climax of the Allies' efforts, Canada and the whole of the British Empire have reason to be proud of their part. Nothing indicates more clearly where the burden lay in the last months of the war than these comparisons of prisoners captured during the victorious offensive.

In doing its share Canada paid a heavy price in men, no heavier, it is true, than the other parts of the British Empire, but nevertheless a very heavy loss which affected directly or indirectly nearly every Canadian home. The battle casualties during the war were 51,674 killed and died of wounds, and 149,732 wounded. A comparison with the American losses shows how great ours were in proportion to our population. The battle casualties of the United States were 50,280 killed and died of wounds, and 205,690

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wounded. Thus from our population of 8,000,000 as compared with their population of 100,000,000 we had more than twelve times as many killed and nine times as many wounded.

The explanation of the response of the men of Canada and the other Dominions to the call of duty can be summed up in a paragraph: **Loyalty** to British principles put nearly half of the male population of Canada of military age in uniform. **Discipline** made it possible to train these men with little or no previous experience to a state of military efficiency second to none. **Endurance** of the highest order saved the day at Ypres, carried weary men through the pitiless mud of Passchendaele to victory and produced that tenacity in attack which resulted in captures by the Canadian Corps out of proportion to their numbers. Add to these, **Initiative** born of life in a country of abundant opportunity and we have the whole story of Canada's great effort.



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## PART TWO

*The stirring record of  
"the men behind the men behind the guns"  
—and of our women, too*

**M**ANY Canadians played a prominent part in the Great War outside of the Canadian Army Corps and were to be found in positions of responsibility in all the numerous elements of the British fighting machine—too numerous to be even briefly mentioned here. However, a few of the more important contributions should be recalled in giving the broad picture of Canada's war effort.

In no branch of war service did Canadians cover themselves with more glory or bring the name of Canada into greater renown than in the war in the air. During the early part of the war there were very few Canadians in this branch of the service as the military authorities, in spite of the energy and initiative otherwise displayed, were extremely slow in appreciating the vital importance of this new fighting force.

At first only the personal enthusiasm of individuals led Canadians into the Air Force. Some hundreds transferred overseas from the Canadian Expeditionary Force, while many young Canadians, at considerable expense to themselves, attended private flying schools and upon completing their training enlisted with either the naval or army branch of the British flying service. Although a Canadian Air Force was authorized it was not organized before the end of the war, and all the Canadian flying men served with

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the Royal Air Force or its predecessors, the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service.

In 1916 the Royal Flying Corps established an active recruiting service in Canada, and from that time onward the number of Canadians in the air service increased rapidly, about 13,500 enlisting before the end of the war. By the spring of 1917 several training camps were in active operation in Canada turning out pilots capable of holding their own with the flying men of any country in the world.

The expansion of the Royal Air Force during the war was phenomenal. At the beginning of the war the combined British air forces had 272 machines of very doubtful efficiency. At the end, after thousands had been destroyed, worn out, or become obsolete, there were 22,171. That Canada kept pace with this amazing growth once her interest was aroused is demonstrated by the fact that at the time of the Armistice, Canadians constituted more than one-third of the fighting strength of the Royal Air Force.

### Heroes of the Air

ONE thing that gave a tremendous impetus to recruiting for the air force in Canada was the news of the astonishing successes of some of Canada's first flying men. There was a glamour and chivalry in the air force born of the sense of personal combat which had disappeared almost entirely from other branches of military service, and this undoubtedly had a strong appeal to Canadians of the best type, but above everything else was the appeal of a service which gave young men the opportunity to win distinction such as had been won by Bishop and others in so short a time.

Canadians were the peers of any of the airmen in the war. The names of Bishop, with seventy-three German machines to his credit; Collishaw with sixty,

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and Barker with fifty, were known throughout the world and their almost incredible exploits gave them a place of honor with such men on both sides as Guynemer, Nungesser, Richthofen, Immelmann, McCudden and Ball. Roy Brown, ended the career of Richthofen, the greatest German ace. McLeod won the Victoria Cross at the age of eighteen for one of the bravest deeds of the war. And so the story goes, but the story of Canada's flying men is a long and thrilling story in itself and cannot be told here. It is a story which should be known by every young Canadian, for the knowledge of the achievements of Canadian war pilots, most of whom were mere boys, should stimulate greater interest in the almost limitless possibilities of Canadian air development in times of peace.

### Our Railway Troops

ANOTHER branch of Canadian effort of which too little is known in Canada, was the work of the Canadian Railway Troops. Shortly after the war began the great Canadian railway companies offered to organize railway units for service at the front, but the importance of this suggestion was not at first understood by the Imperial Authorities who relied on trucks and the fifteen hundred railway troops attached to the Royal Engineers. Early in 1915, however, it was realized that the men available were not capable either in training or numbers to meet the demands of the situation which had resulted from the comparative failure of motor trucks to maintain supplies. The British War Office asked if two Canadian battalions with full equipment and rails could be raised. Canada's answer was to have them in France and at work by August, 1915.

The Canadian Railway Construction Corps, as it was known, was first commanded by Colonel C. W. P.

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Ramsey, the chief engineer of the C.P.R. All the officers and men were experts and certainly no Canadian unit was by previous training so well prepared for the work they were required to do. So successful were their efforts that the force was expanded until by the end of the war there were some 16,000 expert railway construction and operating men on active service building everything from full gauge railway lines to shell proof cement gun pits for the artillery. They brought with them to France steam shovels, scrapers, concrete mixers, air compressors, and all the multitude of things used in railway construction in Canada which was at that time in its period of most rapid expansion. They worked with the British, French and Belgians all along the Western Front. One battalion built gun emplacements on the coast for great fifteen-inch guns from the British Navy. In fact, one officer and five men of the 4th Railway Battalion won naval decorations for their work while attached to the Royal Navy. Another battalion built a complete system of light railways for the Belgian army at a time when they were of vital importance. Still another built lines to carry the great French railway guns and ammunition up to Bailleul. They rushed forward standard gauge lines during the German retreat to the Hindenburg line in March, 1917, and built all the strategic lines which completed the Australian victory at Messines.

By June, 1917, there were ten fully equipped Canadian railway battalions working in France, quite independent of the Canadian Corps and there were also many operating companies running great Canadian-made freight locomotives up and down the network of lines that supplied the British army.

When the German drive before Amiens in the Spring of 1918 so nearly broke completely through after the British Fifth Army had been crushed, it

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was the Canadian railway troops, with assistance from the Indian Cavalry, which built the line that finally stopped the German advance. From the time they reached France, they were to be found anywhere and everywhere that Allied activities required efficient transportation.

For the last victorious advance practically all the Canadian Railway Troops were attached to the Canadian Corps. As a result of their splendid work there was never any interruption in communications, and standard gauge lines were rushed forward almost as fast as the troops could move, while light railways stretched out in a great network to all the forward supply centres. To a considerable extent the amazing success of the Canadian Corps in the last hundred days was undoubtedly due to the courage and efficiency of the Canadian Railway Troops. They were called upon to do an infinite variety of things and they did them all exceedingly well.

**A**NOTHER unit outside of the Canadian Army corps which was a distinctly Canadian enterprise was the Canadian Forestry Corps. The beginning of this interesting organization was an urgent cable early in February, 1916, to the Duke of Connaught, who was then Governor-General of Canada: "His Majesty's Government would be gratified if the Canadian Government would assist in the production of timber for war purposes. Fifteen hundred men are urgently needed to work in British and French forests. Could a battalion of Canadian lumbermen be formed?" They could, and were. By February 25th the 224th Battalion, Canadian Forestry Corps, was completely organized. By April 12th they were at work in England with complete equipment including portable mills. This was only another example of Canada's readiness to meet any unexpected call to service.

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The tremendous demand for timber at the front is difficult to visualize. It was used in hundreds of ways. The fighting men moved up to the line on "duck boards." Roads were made of timbers; the military railways required thousands upon thousands of ties; millions of feet were required for tunnels, dug-outs and gun pits. Field hospitals, huts, ammunition boxes, a thousand different things, all called for timber and boards in quantities that could not by the greatest stretch of imagination have been anticipated. No military organization existed to meet this ever increasing necessity for unprecedented quantities of new timber.

So successful were the efforts of the first battalion of forestry troops to reach England in meeting the situation, and so apparent was it they could produce much faster than the commercial plants in Europe, that within six months five more battalions had followed them. By Christmas of the same year several battalions were loaned to the French and set up their mills in the Vosges and Jura mountains, where they not only cut the heavy timbers required for gun pits, huts and roads, but also before the end of the war turned out some three million feet of finely cut spruce for use by the French in the construction of aeroplanes.

Like the Railway Troops, the Forestry Corps was commanded by a man who in civilian life had been an expert at the job he was called upon to undertake. General McDougall stood high in the lumber business in Canada, and was an owner of large Quebec and Ontario timber limits. He knew where to find the right men and he built up a wonderful organization. From an experimental unit in April, 1916, the Forestry Corps increased until he had under his command at the time of the Armistice, 31,447 officers and men—nearly the number of the First Contingent.

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Of these 23,979 were Canadians, six or seven thousand were German prisoners, and the rest were Portuguese, Finns and Chinese. They were operating mills all over England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and France, which they had built themselves, and by the end of the war they had produced over 8,000,000 feet of timber, over 300,000 tons of heavy timber for gun pits and similar requirements, and 806,000 tons of railway ties. These staggering figures give some impression of the vital importance of their contribution to the cause of the allied nations.

### Canadian Nurses

ANOTHER branch which could not be omitted from even the most casual summary is the nursing service, which, as an integral part of the Medical Service, played such a wonderful part in alleviating suffering and reducing the mortality from wounds and disease. Two thousand five hundred and twenty-nine Canadian nurses served in the Canadian Army Medical Corps, and of these, 2,002 went overseas and served in England, France, Belgium, Egypt, Greece and Russia. Fifty-four gave their lives, of whom seven died by shell fire or bombs and thirteen were drowned in the sinking of hospital ships. Three hundred and forty-two women who were not nurses went overseas with the Voluntary Aid Department to assist in the hospitals. Three hundred and forty-six nursing sisters received Imperial decorations for conspicuous conduct. Eight received the military medal for bravery and the remainder received the Royal Red Cross medal. A Canadian nurse, Miss Tremaine, had the distinction of nursing King George after he was thrown from his horse and injured while visiting the Canadian troops in Belgium.

At home as well, Canadian women played an immense part in Canada's effort. Within the scope

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of their opportunity they worked as hard for victory as the men, and it is impossible to imagine what the condition of the soldiers would have been without the constant stream of small necessities supplied by the Red Cross Society and its numerous associated organizations. Some 30,000 women worked in the munition factories relieving able-bodied men for military service.

Several military organizations whose work was distinct from that of the fighting units have not been mentioned. The Canadian Army Medical Corps cared for the majority of the 150,000 Canadians who were wounded, and maintained a great number of military hospitals in France, England, and Canada. No army in the war possessed a finer medical service, either in personal skill or efficiency of organization. The Canadian Army Dental Corps was decidedly the best unit of its kind with the Allied armies. The Canadian Army Veterinary Corps did magnificent work in caring for the horses and mules without which the guns and transports would have been helpless. The Labor battalions and other special units all contributed their particular share. But all of these units are so much a part of the normal routine of any army overseas that any particular discussion of their work is outside the scope of this article.

And now, having covered very briefly what may be considered Canada's contribution of man-power, we come to another important phase of Canada's war time activity—the production of munitions. When war broke out there was not a single factory in the whole of Canada in a position to turn out artillery ammunition, other than the small shop of the Dominion Arsenal, at Quebec. Therefore, when the Minister of Militia received a cable from London just twenty days after war was declared, "Can you provide or obtain from American trade empty shrap-

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nel, Q.F. Guns, eighteen-pounder, without cases or fuses," it is not difficult to imagine the problem with which Sir Sam Hughes was faced. To that robust Canadian the cable might just as well have omitted the words "or obtain from American trade." He first of all arranged a meeting late in August with the principals of the Bethlehem Steel Company, the greatest steel manufacturers on this continent, and obtained their views on the problems and possibilities of manufacturing shrapnel shells in Canada. One of those present, voicing the sentiment of the others, said, "It is absolutely impossible to carry out such an idea. You have neither the steel nor other facilities." Bringing his fist down on the table, the Minister of Militia, in his characteristic way, said: "I will show you they can be made in Canada." And he did. He requested a number of leading manufacturers to meet him in Ottawa on September 2nd and at this meeting laid the situation before them. Colonel Lafferty, the Superintendent of the Dominion Arsenal, then explained by means of sample shells and drawings, what would be required. Colonel Greville Harston, the Chief Inspector of Arms and Ammunition, described the nature of inspection required by the Imperial Authorities. After hearing what these experts had to say, the manufacturers were asked to decide whether they could make the shells. The minutes of this historic meeting record that: "The delegates adjourned for consultation, and afterwards decided that the shells could be manufactured in Canada."

It was a momentous decision and General Hughes cabled the War Office the same day that he could undertake to begin delivery in four weeks' time of 4,000 shrapnel a week. This seemed a high estimate in so short a time, considering the fact that the only place equipped to make them was the Dominion

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Arsenal, with a maximum output of 340 a week. Orders were immediately given to proceed with the work and the small munition factory at the Arsenal was used as a training school for the first munition manufacturers. On September 7th the Minister appointed the first members of the Shell Committee and the romantic story of Canada's supply of munitions had begun.

The success of this venture surpassed the most optimistic hopes of that first meeting. In 1914, Canadian manufacturers knew nothing whatever of war production and an estimate of 4,000 of the small eighteen-pounder shells a week had seemed high. So astonishing was the development that in 1917 Canadian munition manufacturers produced as high as 800,000 shells in a week, ranging in size from the eighteen-pounder up to the great 9.2 inch howitzer.

In 1915 the work expanded so rapidly that it was necessary to reorganize the system of control, and in November the Imperial Munitions Board was formed under the Chairmanship of Sir Joseph Flavelle. The next step was the establishment of the Canadian wing of the Royal Flying Corps already referred to. This was placed under the control of the Munitions Board and full direction of organization and expenditure was placed in the hands of a Director of Aviation responsible to the Board. The record of Canadian members of the Royal Air Force is the only tribute necessary to the success of this branch of their work.

### Manufacture of Planes

CLOSELY related to the Aviation Department of the Imperial Munitions Board, and a branch of the work of the Board, was another enterprise, full of interest, and one of which Canadians to-day know amazingly little—Canadian Aeroplanes, Limited.

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This company was formed by the Imperial Munitions Board under the management of Sir Frank Baillie, to manufacture aeroplanes in Canada. A factory was erected in Toronto and in a surprisingly short time it was turning out excellent machines constructed entirely from Canadian material. Up to the signing of the Armistice it had produced 2,291 aeroplanes for the Royal Flying Corps. In addition, it produced thirty flying boats for the United States Navy. The latter were large machines with a wing span of 102 feet and a weight of over six tons. Not one of the aeroplanes or flying boats met with an accident from faulty design or workmanship. In these days when Canada seems to be looking abroad for leadership in aviation, there is food for thought in the recollection of what Canadians were able to do in the comparative infancy of aeroplane construction.

To return to the primary function of the Munitions Board, the production of shells, the figures for the whole of the war period give an interesting answer to the question asked in 1914 concerning Canada's ability to produce shells. Up to the end of 1914 Canada had only shipped 3,294 eighteen-pounder shrapnel shells. In 1915 she sent 4,182,532 eighteen-pounders and several hundred thousand of other sizes. In 1917 production had jumped to over 13,000,000 eighteen-pounders, 5,000,000 4.5-inch howitzer and millions of other sizes up to the 9.2-inch. During the last six months of that year Canada supplied fifty-five per cent. of the shrapnel and one-third of all types of shells used by the British artillery in France. By the end of the war Canada had sent overseas a total of 65,343,647 shells.

How important this contribution was may be realized from the fact that during 1918 the British artillery fired 56,800,000 shells in France and the

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Americans 8,500,000. In other words, the Canadian shipments during the whole war were almost exactly equal to the total British and American expenditure of artillery ammunition on the Western Front during 1918.

The value of the shipments of war material by the Munitions Board, whose work had covered a wide range, from the manufacture of the metal cases, explosives and fuses which go into the making of shells, to the construction of aeroplanes, had reached the incredible total by the end of the war of over one billion dollars. This vast industrial production, along wholly unexpected lines, furnished lasting proof, if proof were needed, of Canada's established position as one of the great industrial nations of the world.

### The Silver Bullet

THERE was another sinew of war which Canada contributed freely—what Lloyd George termed “the Silver Bullet.” Without the silver bullet the divisions could not have been equipped, food could not have been bought, the men could not have been paid—in short, Canada could not have played her part. The war cost Canada a great deal of money; not much, it is true, in proportion to the colossal financial burden assumed by Great Britain, but nevertheless an immense amount of money for a country with its comparatively small population spread over so vast an area.

Canada's total outlay for the war was nearly \$1,700,000,000, or something more than \$200 for every man, woman, and child in the Dominion, all of which was raised by direct War Loans from the people of Canada. Add to this the fact that it will cost Canada millions of dollars every year for years to come, to pay the pensions of those who were permanently

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disabled in active service, and we find that Canada's contribution in money was indeed a heavy one.

In addition to the war expenditures by the Dominion Government, there were other large financial contributions by Canadians, chiefly through voluntary war organizations such as the Canadian Patriotic Fund, the Red Cross Society, and the Military Branch of the Y.M.C.A. The total of the gifts to these organizations amounted to more than one hundred million dollars.

These figures tell only a small part of the story, but they serve to show what a tremendous task the financing of the war was to a country which had never faced anything of a similar nature before. Canada began the war with a net debt of about \$363,000,000. By March of 1920 this had increased to \$2,248,868,628, and nearly all of this increase was directly attributable to war expenditures. In the handling of these vast sums, both by Government officials and private citizens, there was never the slightest suggestion of dishonesty. In this they showed the same high standard of ideals toward Canada's duty in the war, as was shown by the men at the front. This is worthy of comment as it is in marked contrast to what occurred amongst some of our Allies.

What has been the result of Canada's great contribution of men, money and munitions?—more than 600,000 men under arms; nearly \$1,700,000,000 spent on the war; 65,343,647 shells; thousands upon thousands of tons of explosives and shell parts; more than 2,900 aeroplanes—a truly staggering contribution from a nation that less than fifty years before the war had been a disconnected group of sparsely populated British colonies.

The first visible result was formal recognition of

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the national status of Canada, and the other self-governing Dominions, when the nations of the world freely and unreservedly accepted Canada's right to sign the Versailles Treaty as a separate treaty-making power. This right has never since been questioned, and has had its latest manifestation in Canada's signature to the Kellogg Treaty. In this respect it is well for Canadians to remember that the recognition of Canada's national status was not the answer to the arguments of political dialecticians, but the free and ready recognition of the part which Canada had played in the greatest war in the world's history.

It has resulted in an intense pride in Canada and things Canadian. Nearly everyone in Canada had in some way a part in Canada's war effort and has a feeling of personal pride in the splendid result.

It has produced a wholly new spirit of confidence in the country. The knowledge of what Canada as a whole was able to accomplish with practically no preparation whatever, makes the problems of peace seem much less formidable.

It has given a new sense of national unity. Men from British Columbia and Nova Scotia fought shoulder to shoulder. Battalions would sometimes have men from all the provinces of the Dominion. These contacts were invaluable. The money and supplies which the country as a whole was able to raise, still further impressed the possibilities and necessity of united effort.

Canada's strong national consciousness and pride in her national status has not, however, weakened Canadian sentiment toward the Empire. On the contrary, the sacrifice which Canada has made, makes her appreciate all the more the still greater sacrifice made by the British Isles and out of that common

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sacrifice and mutual effort has come such understanding, affection and respect as never existed before the war.

Having reviewed the greatness of Canada's effort in this general way, it is well to recall, perhaps, the most important lesson of the war for Canadians. What they undertook was invariably well done, but with that statement there should be a word of warning lest the wrong conclusion should be drawn by those who were not old enough to take an active part in the war. Canadians were able to do what they did because they were part of the British Empire. Without British assistance their contribution would have been negligible. In the first place, without British warships Canada could not have sent a man to France. Canada could not have equipped its artillery with guns, nor its infantry with machine guns. Nearly all of the equipment used by Canadians was made in the British Isles. To-day the situation is the same. Canada is not prepared to make a gun, a machine gun or a rifle. Canada's share in the Allied victory, and the share of the other British Dominions, was a triumph of Imperial co-operation. Every part of the Empire gave that which it could.

It is a wonderful picture of united effort. Hopelessly unprepared for war in 1914, the British nations by a complete pooling of their resources, had by the end of the war become the most formidable military power in the world. The power of a united Empire is the greatest lesson of the war. It is a lesson which should never be forgotten, teaching as it does, the even greater possibilities for the future in the power of a united Empire in times of peace.

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