

BARRAGE

The RCA Museum News



July 2016

Director's Note

Over the past three months, our museum staff participated in a number of outreach activities. On June 11th, 2016, The RCA Museum and CFB Shilo took part in the Traveler's Day Parade in Brandon. The museum brought a Deuce-and-a-half with C1 105mm Howitzer, two M38 series trucks, and one M37 truck. On the same day, The RCA Museum and CFB Shilo displayed vehicles and artillery at the south entrance of the Brandon Summer Fair from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Thousands of cheerful patrons visited our collaborative display.



Our running M109 made a successful appearance in the 2nd Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery Change of Command Parade in Petawawa, Ontario on June 29th, 2016. Based on the adjacent picture, with the added Browning 50 calibre machine gun, our M109 represented our museum very well. We are confident that 2 RCHA were able to keep the M109 running for the duration of the parade. In the coming weeks, we anticipate the safe return of our cherished M109.



We held the opening of our new temporary exhibit on July 1st, 2016. We had excellent attendance during the day with 320 visitors. Our new temporary exhibit, *The Somme: The Mechanization of War* conveys the story of the Canadian soldier during battle in WW1. The battle lasted five months (June 1st to November 18th, 1916) and resulted in over one million casualties with limited gains on all sides. I would like to thank our Senior Curator, Kathleen Christensen, for putting this excellent display together. I would also like to thank the following contributors: The Daly House Museum, The Manitoba Automobile Museum, The Naval Museum of Canada, The Prairie Mountain Regional Museum, and The Transcona Museum. This temporary exhibit will run until late November 2016.

As part of the Canada Day festivities at CFB Shilo, we displayed twenty-one artillery pieces and vehicles in the parking lot of L25 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. We displayed a Deuce-and-a-half with C1 105mm Howitzer, 25 pounder with limber and FAT, our jeep collection, and an assortment of other vehicles, including the White Scout Car and three tracked vehicles. An estimated three thousand visitors attended the afternoon Canada Day events. I would like to thank our entire team at The RCA Museum for making this huge museum display a positive experience.

We continue to develop our website and had over twenty-five thousand hits over the last three months. In the coming months we will add content, including items from our collection. We have over twelve hundred followers on Twitter and plenty of activity on our Facebook page. Our online presence is certainly expanding. In closing, I hope you enjoyed reading about the Museum's recent activities and will check out our online presence, as well.



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Facebook: The RCA Museum

Musée de l'Artillerie royale canadienne
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The RCA Museum Acquires Rare WW1 Artillery Piece with Help of Private Donor

The QF 13 pounder acquisition is a noteworthy accomplishment for The RCA Museum of a rare artillery piece that accurately represents weaponry used by the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery during the First World War. The RCA Museum exists to preserve the history and heritage of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery. The acquisition of the QF 13 pounder field gun fills a significant gap in the history of the Royal Canadian Artillery and in our WW1 artillery collection. The 13 pounder is uncommon – not many remain in the world.

Circa 1904, the QF 13 pounder field gun was standard equipment for the British Royal Horse



Artillery and the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery during WW1. (Photo credit Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag)

The 13 pounder saw action on all fronts supporting cavalry brigades and was highly praised for its lethal effectiveness and mobility in open warfare, but proved less effective in trench warfare. The British and Canadians converted many of the 13 pounders into anti-aircraft guns during WW1. The 13 pounder was in service throughout the British Empire from 1904 to 1940.

Two major factors led to the development of the QF 13 pounder. First, in 1897 the French introduced the revolutionary 75mm field gun with a hydro-pneumatic recoil system – the first modern gun. Second, British participation in the Boer War (1899-1902) demonstrated a need for technologically advanced artillery. The British and Canadians did not have a field gun that could match the French 75mm and sought new designs. The best solution came from multiple sources, including Vickers, Armstrong and Royal Ordnance Factory.

In 1904, the British combined the best designs resulting in the quintessential QF 13 pounder and the QF 18 pounder. In late 1914, trench warfare took hold. British and Canadian forces converted to the 18 pounder and 4.5-inch howitzer, over the 13 pounder that was not effective against defensive positions. During the First World War, the 13 pounder fired 1.5 million rounds versus the 18 pounder that fired 100 million rounds. We currently have two QF 18 pounders displayed in our National Artillery Gallery; however, we have never had a QF 13 pounder.

The RCA Museum has worked for nearly a year on this acquisition. The newly acquired 13 pounder is almost completely original with a serial number circa 1910 and breech circa 1913. The 13 pounder is visually in very good condition with pitting under the paint. Britain produced the parts for this 13 pounder. The assembled 13 pounder wound up in India and then in South Africa. Many years ago, a South African museum displayed this 13 pounder. Later, a private collector from the UK acquired the gun. We purchased the gun from him and arranged for transportation from the UK to Canada.

The Royal Canadian Artillery Museum would like to recognize and thank Seymour Schulich from Toronto, Ontario for his generous donation. The purchase of this QF 13 pounder was not possible without his support. The display and acquisition of the 13 pounder is a fitting way to commemorate the military service of his father, Julius Schulich, who served overseas as a gunner. Mr. Schulich joined the 7th Brigade Canadian Field Artillery on 26 April 1917. In France, he worked in the ammunition column transporting and loading munitions to the guns. He served in a number of brigades over 26 months of service (discharged 28 June 1919). We have included a WW1 picture of Julius next to the 13 pounder in our new temporary exhibit *The Somme: The Mechanization of War*.

Corporal Parry

The RCA Museum recently received from John Wiznuk of Saturna Island, B.C. a personalized letter and twenty-page story on his grandfather's WWI experiences. His grandfather, John Parry, was a local boy who grew up in Winnipeg and enlisted in Brandon. As a Canadian Gunner, Corporal Parry fought in the Battle of Vimy Ridge. His military service ended after being critically injured in late April 1917. Mr. Wiznuk wrote this booklet to "keep alive the story of earlier generations" and to "remember the millions of small stories that make up our country."

As the Director of The RCA Museum, I would like to express my deepest thanks to Mr. Wiznuk for this donation. Stories such as this help us to commemorate and celebrate our proud military past. The RCA Museum's central theme is to tell the story of the Canadian Gunner, and Corporal Parry's story is spot on. With this in mind, we have included part of his story below.

He [John Parry] was a City of Winnipeg Fireman, a protected worker, he did respond to an undeniable urge to leave that favoured position, join the army, putting himself in dangers way. I have his Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Forces Discharge Certificate which gives his enlistment as July 26th, 1915, in the 79th Overseas Battalion, raised in Brandon, Manitoba, and broken up for re-enforcements on arrival in England in late 1915.

[John] was sent to the 4th Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery, 19th Battery, where, in spite of a fondness for the issued rum and urge to speak his mind freely, he became a Corporal and served until April 25th, 1917.

Two weeks after the Canadian Corps consolidated the victory at Vimy Ridge, his battery, dug in just below the ridge, outside of the town of Petite Vimy, was hit hard by German heavy artillery counter battery fire. Grandfather, critically wounded, was the only surviving member of his gun's crew. The certificate gives his conduct and character in the Service as "Very Good". He was awarded a gold bar, which he never bothered to collect, to be attached to his medal ribbons. He received the silver, British War Metal, marked King George V, 1914-1918 and the bronze Victory Medal, marked The Great War for Civilization, 1914-1919, Mutt and Jeff as the veterans called them, and that was enough for him. They were brought out, polished by Grandma, and he wore them on each Armistice, later Remembrance Day, that he was able to attend...

As with most men who have actually seen the horrors of war, he talked little about it, even though its ravages were plain on his body. An amputated left hand, a metal plate in the left knee that fused the leg straight for the rest of his life, a goiter the size of a grapefruit disfiguring his throat, the result of dietary deficiency in the front lines, were the visible tokens of his part in the Great War...

Later, as a teen-aged Army Cadet, I was privileged to be told some stories, usually humorous ones with himself as the butt of the joke. [John] was tough; mentally, emotionally and physically to a degree that I'm not sure that I could copy.

I never saw him as freakish or mutilated in any way, he was my "gramps" and I loved him dearly, all of him, unconditionally: perhaps the only time in my life that I have been able to love anyone that freely and deeply, ever. If I have done anything worthwhile in my life the credit will go to him for showing me patience, wisdom and strength, the memory of which has sustained me through trials of my own and set the bar for my life.

Beaumont-Hamel Today

Kathleen Christensen (c. photos)

This past spring I visited as many of the WW1 battlefields in Belgium and France that Canadians fought in as I could in a thirteen day period. One of those battlefields was Beaumont-Hamel, and although the Newfoundlanders were representing their own colony at that time, all Canadians acknowledge the contributions and sacrifices that they gave in full measure during this conflict.

More than any other site it was this overwhelming tragedy experienced by the Newfoundlanders at Beaumont-Hamel that made the greatest impression on me. Vimy is an icon; the monument breathtaking in its dominance as well as the devotion of the young Canadians in telling its story, but it is the intimacy and accessibility of Beaumont-Hamel that has an impact as no other.

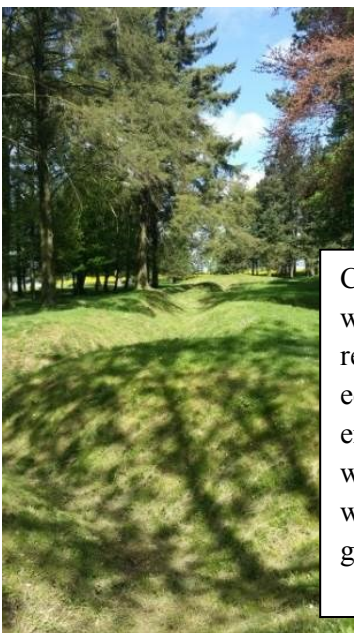
Inside the new Educational Centre the visitor is given an orientation to Newfoundland history and culture as well as an informative overview of the Battle. It also displays numerous artifacts from the site. A Memorial Room displays a copy of the *Newfoundland Book of Remembrance*.

Outside the landscape has since become softened and green since that time, but visitors can access the trenches from the reserve trench, called St. John's Road, to the British front lines to the Y-Ravine that the Germans held with such tenacity. It is, however, up on Hawthorne Ridge nearby that the story of the battle begins.

A mine at Hawthorne Ridge signaled the start of the Beaumont-Hamel battle. The crater is now as deep as the church, the steeple of which is seen to the right.



At St. John's Road Trench where the Newfoundlander's sheltered on 30 June 1916, there is a sense of unease, even today.



Communication trenches were already blocked with returning dead and wounded as the Newfoundlanders moved forward. So it was decided that they would move above ground.



Most Newfoundlanders did not make it out of the gaps in the British barbed wire at the forward trench.



The Danger Tree is only yards from the British front lines. Very few Newfoundlanders made it this far.



The German Trenches curved around no man's land, providing direct firing into the Newfoundlanders' ranks.



The Germans were well dug in with machine gun emplacement that was constantly supplied with ammunition through the Y-Ravine.



Eight hundred Newfoundlanders went into the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel. Nearly 90% were casualties within a half an hour. Three hundred twenty-four lost their lives.

Propaganda, Leaflets & the Korean War

Leaflets fell from the sky! After being dropped by helicopters and planes, leaflets commonly would be picked up by soldiers on both sides during the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. The Psychological Warfare Section (PWS) of the Eighth US Army Korea or “PSYOP” produced hundreds of leaflets aimed at the Chinese and Northern Korean enemy. The Chinese and Northern Korean forces, in turn, produced a large quantity of propaganda leaflets aimed at the United Nations forces, with the US as the principle force. Both sides ruthlessly deployed propaganda leaflets during the Korean War. Canadian soldiers, as part of the United Nations contingent, occasionally collected and retained these keepsakes.

The RCA Museum has many safe conduct leaflets from both the United Nations forces and the Chinese or North Korean forces. The PWS of the US Army created many versions of the famous safe conduct certificate including some that looked remarkably like the North Korean 100-won note, as pictured below from an example in the museum’s archive.



The text on the certificate pledges good treatment and provides the guarantee of safety signed, in this case, by the Commander in Chief of the United Nations Forces, Mark W. Clark. At face value the certificates were labelled as coming from the United Nations, but they actually originated from the Psychological Warfare Section of the US Army or PSYOP.

Conversely, not to be outdone, the Chinese People’s Volunteer’s Headquarters issued Safe Conduct Pass’ for United Nations soldiers to pick up. One example from our archives with the cover shown below states on its opposite side:

Order the BEARER, regardless of his nationality or rank, will be duly accepted and escorted to a rear People’s Volunteer Garrison or POW Camp; and on arrival will be guaranteed in accordance with our policy of leniency to prisoners of war, the following four great affirmations:

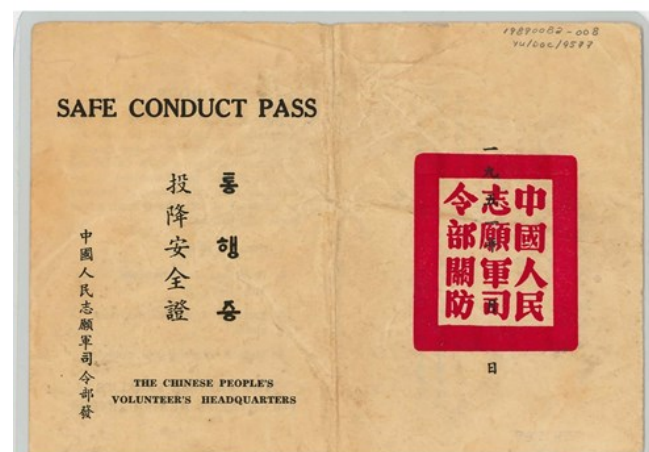
Security of life.

Retention of all personal belongings.

Freedom from maltreatment or abuse.

Medical care for the wounded.

There isn’t much truth in propaganda, especially from leaflets that fall from the sky. Indeed, the four listed affirmations certainly come across as baseless propaganda, and it is unlikely that many of these passes were used by UN soldiers to surrender. This particular example was kept as a keepsake by a Canadian soldier and donated.



Not all of the leaflets saved by Canadian soldiers and donated to The RCA Museum are as outwardly pleasant as the above Safe Conduct examples. The Psychological Warfare Section (PWS) or PSYOP produced hundreds of leaflets directed at North Korean and Chinese soldiers. One example, leaflet 7064, depicts Chinese or North Korean troops surrendering on one side and the overwhelming power of the United Nations and the threat of death on the other side.



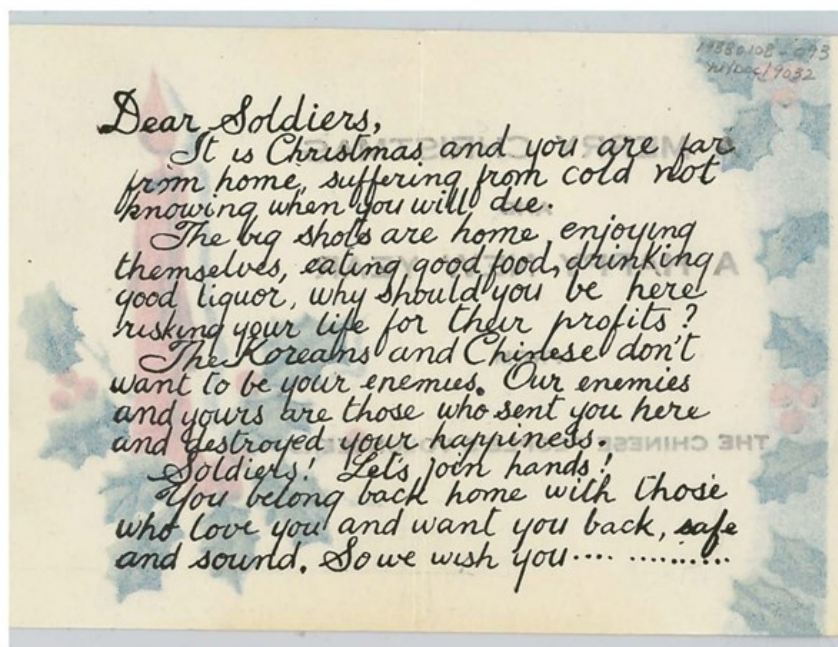
In the image on the left, the UN soldiers are unarmed and welcoming the surrendering enemy soldiers. A first-aid box is displayed front and center, giving the impression that all surrendering soldiers would be allowed safe passage and treated well. The other side of the leaflet illustrates UN military might, including planes, self-propelled artillery, Chinese or North Korean soldiers unable to fight, and the clear expectation that if the enemy did not stop fighting and/or surrender they would perish on the battlefield.

Below is another example of propaganda produced by PSYOP during the Korean War.

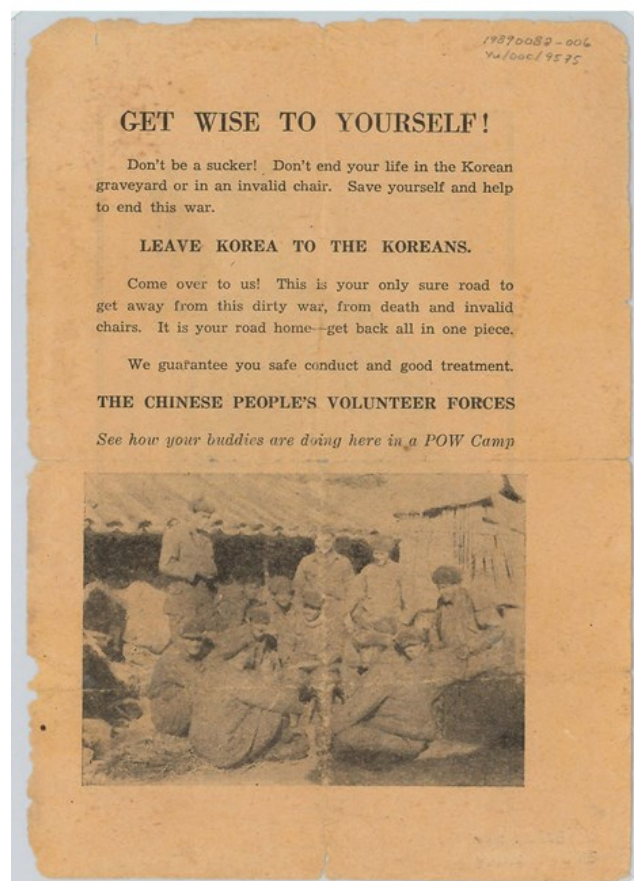


Leaflet 1058 shows a Chinese or North Korean soldier blindfolded, without a helmet, standing next to the grim-reaper. Many Chinese and North Korean soldiers were not issued helmets, making them easy targets for UN forces. This leaflet also depicts another common theme, starvation due to the war. Note the baby on the right looking for food. The likely purpose of this leaflet is to demoralize the enemy, possibly to reduce their fighting spirit and push them to surrender.

The Chinese and North Koreans produced large numbers of leaflets during the Korean War that were directed at United Nations soldiers, including Canadians.



This isn't a heartwarming Christmas Card. Instead, the text begins: "*It is Christmas and you are far from home, suffering from cold not knowing when you will die.*" Again, this message was meant to demoralize the enemy during the holidays, maybe in the hopes that it would reduce their fighting spirit and possibly turn the tide of the war.



The leaflet below contains a variety of themes and messages. It tells UN soldiers: "*Don't be a sucker! Don't end your life in the Korean graveyard or in an invalid chair. Save yourself and help end this war.*" Certainly a propaganda-laced message! Then the leaflet changes course and pushes the enemy soldier to join them and includes an apparent picture of UN soldiers in a POW camp. Certainly it would be a hard sell for any soldier to willingly enter a POW camp. Shown on the other side is an injured soldier stating that UN soldiers are suckers to war promoters back home. The leaflet advances the idea that UN soldiers should leave Korea and return home.

At The RCA Museum, we have many examples of propaganda leaflets, noteworthy phenomena of the Korean War. Leaflets that dropped from the sky were thought to reduce the enemies' morale, possibly leading to surrender. Did propaganda such as this actually work against Canadian soldiers? It's hard to say, but keepsakes such as this remain to tell an interesting story.

The Iconic M7 Priest 105mm Howitzer

The RCA Museum has many seminal treasures. Two that certainly receive attention are the M7 Priest and the Sexton. In 1942, the US government designed the M7 Priest self-propelled 105mm howitzer in an effort to modernize their armoured divisions. The carriage was originally based on the American M3 Lee/Grant tank and later on the Sherman tank. It was nicknamed the “Priest” due to the pulpit-shaped machine gun nest placed on top for a Browning M2 .50 cal. The M7 Priest is not a tank but an open-topped, armor protected, self-propelled 105mm howitzer on a tank carriage.

Specifications include a crew complement of seven men, a combat weight of 25.3 tons, length of 19.7 feet, height of 9.6 feet, and width of 8.6 feet. Maximum speed is 24 miles per hour with a range of 125 miles, and fuel capacity of 175 gallons. The engine is a 340 to 400 horse power Continental R975 C1 9-cylinder radial gasoline engine. Armaments include the Browning M2 .50 calibre machine gun and the 105mm M2A1 howitzer. The howitzer has a projectile weight of 33 pounds, range of twelve thousand yards, onboard storage capacity of 69 shells, and optional off-board storage capacity of 45 shells on a towed M10 trailer.



The above M7 Priest 105mm howitzer, produced by Pressed Steel Co., prominently displayed in our National Artillery Gallery, is representative of the prototypical self-propelled gun that served with distinction during the Second World War. WWII resulted in the need for speed from supporting artillery. The US Army led the way in self-propelled artillery with the M7 105mm howitzer and tank carriage. The advent of armoured combat vehicles such as the M7 Priest enabled heavy artillery to be quickly moved over rough terrain. During WWII, the Allies had many advantages against the German forces, including greater mechanization, improved technical quality, and better fire control plans.

The M7 Priest first saw action during the Battle of El Alamein in October 1942. It later took part in all major campaigns in Europe, and was the most widely used and manufactured armored self-propelled gun during WWII. In the Pacific, the US Army used the M7 Priest in the Philippines against Japanese forces in Luzon and Cebu from January to April 1945. The M7 Priest also saw action in Burma by the British in 1944-45. Britain and Canada received 832 M7 Priests from the US during the war through lend-lease agreements.

The Ordnance QF 25 pounder was the standard operational ammunition used by British and Canadian forces during WWII. Shells for the M7 Priest 105mm howitzer were not compatible with the QF 25 pounder which resulted in an operational need for self-propelled artillery that utilized the 25 pounder. In early 1942, General A.G.L. McNaughton, Commander of the Canadian Army Overseas, requested that the Canadian Army Engineering Design Branch, design a self-propelled 25-pounder, codenamed “Project 13”, for Canadian field artillery regiments. By June 1942, a design was approved with the first resulting Sexton to be issued to Canadian regiments in April 1943.



The RCA Museum has a Sexton 25 pounder in our collection, as pictured above. The Canadian designed Sexton had a suspension derived from a Ram tank with a Sherman engine and incorporates the standard 25 pounder field gun. By the end of WWII, over two thousand Sextons were produced and distributed to Allied forces.

The M7 Priest was the most widely used self-propelled gun in Italy from 1943 to 1945. In other parts of Europe, after the invasion of Normandy in June 1944, British and Canadian forces withdrew the M7 Priest from active service and reverted to a towed QF 25 pounder or self-propelled Sexton. Many of the recycled M7 Priests were converted to armoured Kangaroo personnel carriers (also called “Unfrocked Priests”) and used for the duration of the war. To accomplish this task, the 105mm howitzer and its mount were removed, and additional protective armour plate was added. The Unfrocked Priests had a crew of one and were designed to safely transport ten men. The redesigned armoured personnel carriers proved to be a great success, while helping to penetrate German defences and significantly reducing casualty rates.

A large number of M7 Priests 105mm howitzers survived WWII and were widely used in the Korean War from 1950-1953. By the 1960s, the M7 Priest was obsolete, due in large part, to its open-topped design and the advent of tactical nuclear weapons. The Canadians replaced the Sexton with the turreted M109. By most accounts, the M7 Priest was a tremendously functional, mechanically reliable, armour protected, highly mobile 105mm howitzer. The iconic M7 Priest, equipped with a tracked propulsion system, is proudly on display at The RCA Museum.

Temporary Exhibit 1 July to 25 November 2016

Kathleen Christensen

The Somme: The Mechanization of War

I think it was truly fitting that the celebration at CFB Shilo on Canada Day began with the opening of The RCA Museum's new temporary exhibit, The Somme: The Mechanization of War.

The Somme was a dark chapter in human history, where twentieth century industrial warfare was fought with nineteenth century tactics causing human suffering in such a way that the overwhelming casualty figures cannot be fathomed by citizens in the twenty-first century. This is true even if you have studied the history, seen the scars on the battle-



fields, and the graves in the cemeteries that are the legacy a hundred years later. The legacy, as left behind by Sgt. Henry Stuart Hayes of the Canadian Field Artillery, who is featured in this exhibit and millions of soldiers like him.

However, in this five-month-long battle, there was an emergence of the legacy that was the First World War, contributing to Canada's identity as a young nation. It is a Canadian experience that we often associate with Vimy, but it began at the Somme. All four Canadian Divisions fought at the Somme in the fall of 1916; each saw their own failures and their own tremendous losses. However, the only success on the ground that General Haig of the British Army could claim in September 1916 was the Canadian success at Courcelette. Commanders such as General Arthur Curry were questioning and beginning to emerge from behind the fail-



ures of the British leadership. Maj.-Gen. H.E. Burstall, Maj.-Gen. L.J. Lipsett and Maj-Gen D. Watson also began seeking their own innovative answers to the challenges that faced the Canadians at Courcelette and Regina Trench. It was through these experiences that they were determined to learn by. It was this determination that the men and leaders of the four Canadian divisions brought with them to Vimy.

BL 8 Inch Howitzer

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One of the gems in our artillery collection is a BL 8 inch howitzer produced by Victors with original wheels, circa 1917, located in front of the Officers' Mess.



Donations are important!

All donations are promptly processed and a tax receipts provided.

I would like to support The RCA Museum with a monetary donation of:

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Payment Method:

Please send your donation by cheque payable to *The RCA Museum* – Box 5000 Station Main, Shilo, Manitoba R0K 2A0, Canada.

I consent to be on The RCA Museum mailing list and receive the Quarterly Newsletter (Barrage).

☐ Yes

☐ No, I do not consent.

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