

First World War Education Plan
The Sifton VC – Elgin’s Role at Vimy Ridge
A project of the Elgin County Museum
Funded in part by the Government of Canada

Summary of Activities

1. St. Thomas at War Timeline
2. The Men of Elgin County; the Soldiers of the Great War
3. Artifact Handling Kit
4. Then and Now Photography
5. Church Memorials
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1. St. Thomas at War Timeline

Summary:

The timeline will be a resource that teachers in Elgin County can incorporate into their daily lessons within the Great War unit. By researching how Elgin County reacted to, and was affected by the larger events of the First World War, students will better understand how all Canadians were affected by total war. This component is all the more appealing to teachers as it will offer an intimate glimpse into the social, political, and cultural implications of war in Elgin County through the use of primary source material (newspaper headlines, letters, postcards, etc.). Not only will digital primary source materials be the core of this component, but they will be presented in a “ready to use” lesson plan format for teachers to download.

Research Component:

Using the timeline below, research must be conducted around key dates that are covered in the Grade 10 Great War unit. By doing so, original Elgin County content and documents will easily be incorporated into the unit. Please note, for announcements of casualties, allow 1.5-2 weeks after the events to appear in newspapers. Researchers will compile digital copies of newspaper headlines, articles, letters, and postcards that were published on, or reacted to, the following events:

1914, June 28

- Assassination of Austrian Crown Prince Archduke Franz Ferdinand by Serbian nationalists in Sarajevo, Bosnia; Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.

1914, August 1

- Germany declares war on Russia.

1914, August 2

- Canada offers Britain troops for overseas service.

1914, August 3

- Germany declares war on France.

1914, August 4

- Germany invades Belgium (a neutral country).
- Britain declares war on Germany; Canada is automatically at war.

1914, August 22

- Canada passes the War Measures Act which allowed censorship, the right to detain Canadians, and take property.

1914, December 24-25

- An unofficial Christmas truce occurs across the Western Front.

1915, April 22-25

- The Canadian Division becomes the first victims of the chlorine gas attack during the Second Battle of Ypres. Over 6,000 Canadians became casualties or prisoners of war.

1915, May 7

- A German U-boat sinks the British ocean liner *Lusitania*.

1915, May 23

- Italy declares war on Austria-Hungary.

1916, January

- Women in Manitoba are given the right to vote in provincial elections.

1916, February 21-December 18

- Battle of Verdun is the longest battle of the war.

1916, July 1

- The great assault on the Somme began in a failed effort to break the stalemate caused by trench warfare. The British army suffered an unprecedented 60,000 casualties in a single day, which remains to this day as the bloodiest day in the British Empire. The Newfoundland Regiment was slaughtered at Beaumont-Hamel (to this day July 1st is a provincial day of mourning until noon).

1916, August 28

- Italy declares war on Germany.

1916, September 15

- The British were the first to introduce tank warfare on the Somme battlefield.

1917, April 6

- United States declares war on Germany.

1917, April 9-12

- The attack and successful capture of Vimy Ridge.

1917, September 20

- The Wartime Elections Act changed the federal elections rules in the hopes of voting in a pro-conscription government. Canadian women who fit specific criteria were given the right to vote, when others lost their right to vote.

1917, October-November

- Canadians capture the muddy lands at Passchendaele, suffering 16,000 casualties over a two month period.

1917, December 6

- Halifax explosion.

1917, December 17

- Some Canadian women on the home front vote for the first time in a federal election.
 - The only women who qualified for this exception were those whose husbands, brothers, and sons were currently serving or had served in the war.

1918, November 7-11

- In General Foch's railway car headquarters at Compiègne, France, representatives from Germany and the Allies negotiate an Armistice.

1918, November 11

- Allowing 5 hours for the news to cross the Western Front, it is agreed that the guns will fall silent at 11:00am.
- Armistice Day/Remembrance Day

1919, January 18

- Peace talks begin in Paris.

1919, June 28

- Treaty of Versailles is signed; Canada sends her own delegates and signed independently from Britain.

Sources:

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/timeline/1914.htm>

<http://www.canadaatwar.ca/page43.html>

<http://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/introduction/key-canadian-events/>

2. The Men of Elgin County; the Soldiers of the Great War

Summary:

The men of Elgin County who enlisted in the Great War are as rich as they are diverse. These men came from small communities, rural farms, were young and old, had years of militia experience, or were new to the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Incorporating biographical material into the classroom in the form of independent or group assignments allow students to become acquainted with an individual who lived one hundred years ago, while gaining valuable research skills in this inquiry-based activity.

Research Component:

Researchers will have to compile the material available on a selection of soldiers who enlisted from Elgin County. Having been commemorated and remembered at their time of death, soldiers who were killed in action have a wealth of information available on them online and in local archives. Those who survived and returned home will prove to be more of a challenge to research (but not impossible). By ensuring there are digital and archival documents readily available on a list of soldiers, students will be able to research and compose a biography of a soldier. This material will be presented to teachers in a step-by-step format, complete with research guides, template forms, and creative platforms students can display their research in (a Facebook profile, a passport of their travels overseas, Google mapping their wartime service, etc.).

Online Resources (Primary and Secondary sources):

Ancenstry.ca	<p>http://www.ancestry.ca/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An account will offer biographical information, birth dates, and immigration records pertaining to the men of Elgin County.
Attestation Papers & Digital Service Files	<p>http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attestations Papers are a key first step in the research process. They have recorded a soldier's birth place, birth date (on occasion the year has been forged), current address, next-of-kin, occupation, date of enlistment, etc. Service Files (as they are uploaded) are a crucial piece to the puzzle when researching a soldier's wartime service.
Canadian Expeditionary Force War Diaries	<p>http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once you know which battalion a soldier served with (they were struck off strength from the battalion of enlistment once they arrived in England, and taken on strength to a new battalion), reading the correct war diary will offer a detailed story at the battalion level.
Commonwealth War Graves Commission	<p>http://www.cwgc.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By searching a soldier's service number you will easily learn if he survived the war. If he was killed in action, he will be listed among the casualties.
The Canadian Virtual War Memorial	<p>http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a soldier was killed in action he will have a page dedicated to him.
Books of Remembrance	<p>http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/books/search</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find a soldier's name, and date when the page is viewed, in the Memorial Chamber of the Peace Tower in Centre Block.
The War Graves Photographic Project	<p>http://twgpp.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photographs of gravesites can be ordered.
Circumstances of Death	<p>http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/microform-digitization/006003-110.02-e.php?&q2=28&interval=50&sk=0&&PHPSESSID=028f5r8mogpo7mf2v8hjq5qmo2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These cards can offer more details on a soldier's death.
Military Medals, Honours & Awards 1812-1969	<p>http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/military-medals-1812-1969/Pages/search.aspx</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any soldier awarded a medal of valour will be listed in this database.
Canadian Great War Project	<p>http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The soldiers who have pages dedicated to their service can serve as valuable research tools.

3. Artifact Handling Kit

Summary:

An outreach hands-on artifact kit allows students to have a unique learning experience that a teacher cannot duplicate in the classroom. Handling artifacts, both authentic and replications, allow students to become acquainted with tangible objects from the past, and create an inquiry-based learning experience in the classroom. If the kit is to be accompanied to high school classes by a museum professional, the learning objectives will also include care of the artifacts from a preservation perspective. Students will learn about the proper care of artifacts, how a collections registrar is to properly handle, store, and care for textiles, wooden items, and archival documents.

Research Component:

An artifact handling kit is dependent upon, a) available artifacts in the Elgin County Museum; and b) what reproductions can be ordered or purchased. Once we gather all artifacts we can begin to assemble the learning kit. This kit will come equipped with explanation cards, inquiry-based activities, and lesson plans centred entirely on the artifacts and items in the kit for a hands-on learning experience.

Below is a summary of three different outreach artifact kits that three different museums offer teachers.

Supply Line Boxes, Canadian War Museum

<http://www.warmuseum.ca/supplyline/about-supply-line/>

Supply Line Boxes are a combination of authentic and replicated First World War artifacts including the following objects. Lesson plans, artifact background information packets, artifact information labels, and contextual photographs are all a part of the box.

- Equipment:
 - Small box respirator
 - Small arms ammunition cartridge case
 - Gas rattle
 - Trench periscope
- Posters
 - English recruiting poster
 - French recruiting poster
 - War art
- Clothing
 - Puttees
 - Canadian shoulder title
 - Service Dress Cap
 - Service Dress Jacket
 - Aviation scarf
 - Cap badge
 - Nursing apron
 - Helmet
- Documents
 - Attestation Papers
 - Photographs
 - One trench map
- Miscellaneous

- Trench art
- Barbed wire
- Shrapnel balls

Traveling EduKits, Royal Ontario Museum

<http://www.rom.on.ca/en/learn/travelling-programs/travelling-edukits>

The Royal Ontario Museum offers two different sizes of EduKits. A School Case is designed for an entire class (25-30 students). These contain lesson plans, student activities, artifacts, and reference material. Many of these cases are themed, or pertain to, life as a child, student, or activities that relate to students in our classrooms.

School Cases (example):

- Dr. Barnardo's Children
 - Teaches about orphan life in London, England and their journey to Canada at the turn of the century.
 - Artifacts: tortoise shell comb, hats, Canadian school books.

The Resource Boxes are designed for smaller groups to interact with. These boxes also come equipped with teacher notes, activity cards, and artifacts.

Edu-Kits and Outreach Programs, Museum of Ontario Archaeology

<http://archaeologymuseum.ca/edu-kits-and-outreach-programs-2/>

The Museum of Ontario Archaeology provides outreach programs if a class cannot travel to visit the museum. These kits are predominately centred around authentic artifacts that students can identify, touch, and interact with.

4. Then and Now Photograph Activity

Summary:

Images serve as our window into the past. Students will be bombarded with iconic images of the Great War in textbooks and documentaries in their classroom. This activity will utilize images and photographs of Elgin County to offer students a glimpse at familiar sites during wartime. Through lessons centred on photography, images, and comparing and contrasting how the streetscapes have changed (or remained the same) students will make meaningful connections to architecture, repurposing buildings, and changes in their community. By utilizing images of locations they are familiar with, students will naturally become more engaged in the material.

Research Component:

Researchers must compile a collection of Great War images from Elgin County showcasing the following themes:

- Recruitment and enlistment photographs
- Training in St. Thomas
- Departure for England
- Miscellaneous images of Elgin County during the Great War

Only once we have a selection of images that can be made are available to us can we move forward developing lesson plans and activities.

Other Resources:

<http://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/ressources/lesson-plans/photographs-as-history/>

http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/history_culture.html

https://www.cah.utexas.edu/photojournalism/lesson_plans/lesson_plan_2.pdf

5. Church Memorials

Summary:

The churches of Elgin County in the post-war years became idyllic locations to commemorate the generation who fought in the Great War. They remain today in place as honour rolls of those who fought, and sacrificed, during the Great War. Some memorials are solely devoted to those killed in action, when others include all members of the congregation who served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. These monuments stand today as reflections of how the parish thought was best to commemorate not only the sacrifice of life, but of the pride they felt they earned by way of the brave souls who enlisted from their community. Many modern day parishioners walk past these monuments weekly, rarely stopping to read the names, or know the sculptor, of these unique tributes. By designing activities and assignments around these monuments students are introduced to traces of the Great War that are hidden in plain sight across Elgin County.

Research Component:

A master list must be compiled of all the churches and memorials across Elgin County. Once we can map their locations, research their sculptor/designers, can we move forward to develop activities and assignments centred on these memorials.

Other Resources:

<http://www.greatwar.co.uk/memorials/ww1-memorials.htm>

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/history/first-world-war/canada/Canada20>

<http://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/history/after-the-war/remembrance/memorials-in-canada/>

Vance, Jonathan F. *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997.

Ontario Curriculum Links

Curriculum Links

CHC2D Canadian History since World War I

A. Historical Inquiry and Skill Development

A1. History Inquiry: use the historical inquiry process and the concepts of historical thinking when investigating aspects of Canadian history since 1914.

A1.1 formulate different types of questions to guide investigations into issues, events, and/or developments in Canadian history since 1914.

A1.2 select and organize relevant evidence and information on aspects of Canadian history since 1914 from a variety of primary and secondary sources.

A1.3 assess the credibility of sources and information relevant to their investigations.

A1.4 interpret and analyse evidence and information relevant to their investigations, using various tools, strategies, and approaches appropriate for historical inquiry.

A1.5 use the concepts of historical thinking when analysing, evaluating evidence about, and formulating conclusions and/or judgements regarding historical issues, events, and/or developments in Canada since 1914

A1.6 evaluate and synthesize their findings to formulate conclusions and/or make informed judgements or predictions about the issues, events, and/or developments they are investigating.

A1.7 communicate their ideas, arguments, and conclusions using various formats and styles, as appropriate for the audience and purpose.

A1.8 use accepted forms of documentation.

A1.9 use appropriate terminology when communicating the results of their investigations.

A2. Developing Transferable Skills: apply in everyday contexts skills developed through historical investigation, and identify some careers in which these skills might be useful.

A2.1 describe several ways in which historical investigation can help them develop skills, including the essential skills in the Ontario Skills Passport that can be transferred to the world of work and to everyday life.

A2.2 apply in everyday contexts skills and work habits developed through historical investigation.

A2.3 apply the knowledge and skills developed in the study of Canadian history when analysing current social, economic, and/or political issues in order to enhance their understanding of these events and their role as informed citizens.

A2.4 identify some careers in which the skills learned in history might be useful.

B. Canada, 1914-1929

B1. Social, Economic, and Political Context: describe some key social, economic, and political events, trends, and developments between 1914 and 1929, and assess their significance for different groups.

B1.1 analyse historical statistics and other primary sources to identify major demographic trends in Canada between 1914 and 1929.

B1.2 identify some major developments in science and/or technology during this period, and assess their significance for different groups in Canada.

B1.3 describe some key economic trends and developments in Canada during this period.

B1.4 explain the impact on Canadian society and politics of some key events and/or developments during World War I.

B2. Communities, Conflict, and Cooperation: analyse some key interactions within and between different communities in Canada, and between Canada and the international community, from 1914-1929, and how they affected Canadian society and politics.

B2.1 explain the main causes of World War I.

B2.2 analyse, with reference to specific events or issues, the significance of Canada's participation in international relations between 1914 and 1929.

B2.3 describe some major instances of social and/or political conflict in Canada during this period, including conflict between French and English Canada.

B2.4 explain the goals and accomplishments of some groups and/or movements that contributed to social and/or political cooperation during this period.

B2.5 describe attitudes towards and significant actions affecting ethnocultural minority groups in Canada during this period.

B3. Identity, Citizenship, and Heritage: explain how various individuals, organizations, and specific social changes between 1914 and 1929 contributed to the development of identity, citizenship, and heritage in Canada.

B3.1 explain how some individuals, groups, and/or organizations contributed to Canadian society and politics during this period and to the development of identity, citizenship, and/or heritage in Canada.

B3.2 describe some significant changes in the arts and popular culture in Canada during this period.

B3.3 describe some significant developments in the rights and lives of women in Canada during this period, and explain the impact of these developments on Canadian citizenship and/or heritage.

B3.4 describe Canadian immigration policy during this period, and analyse immigration to Canada, with a focus on the different groups that came here and how they contributed to identity and heritage in Canada.