

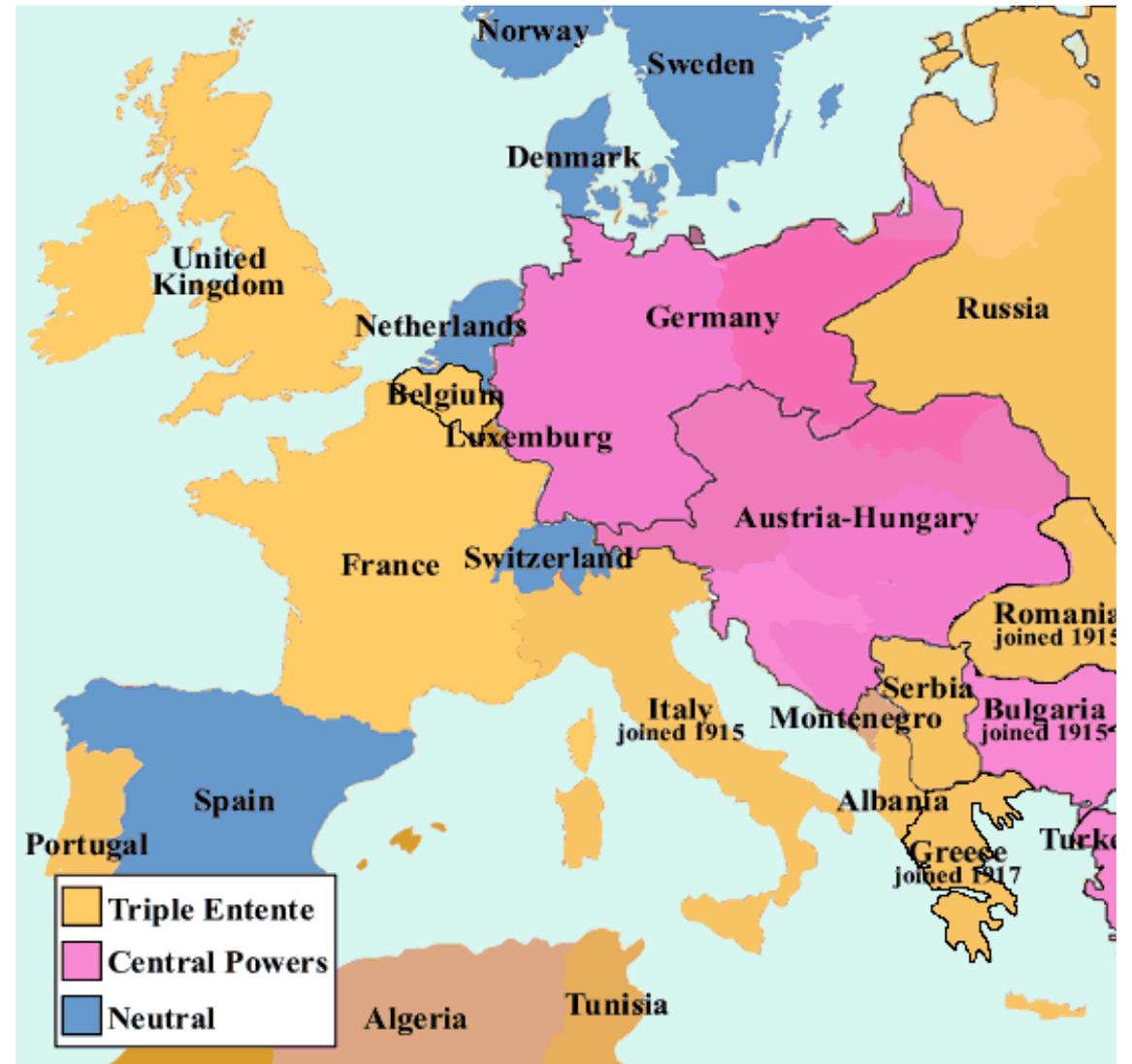
PART 5

1914-1918

First World War

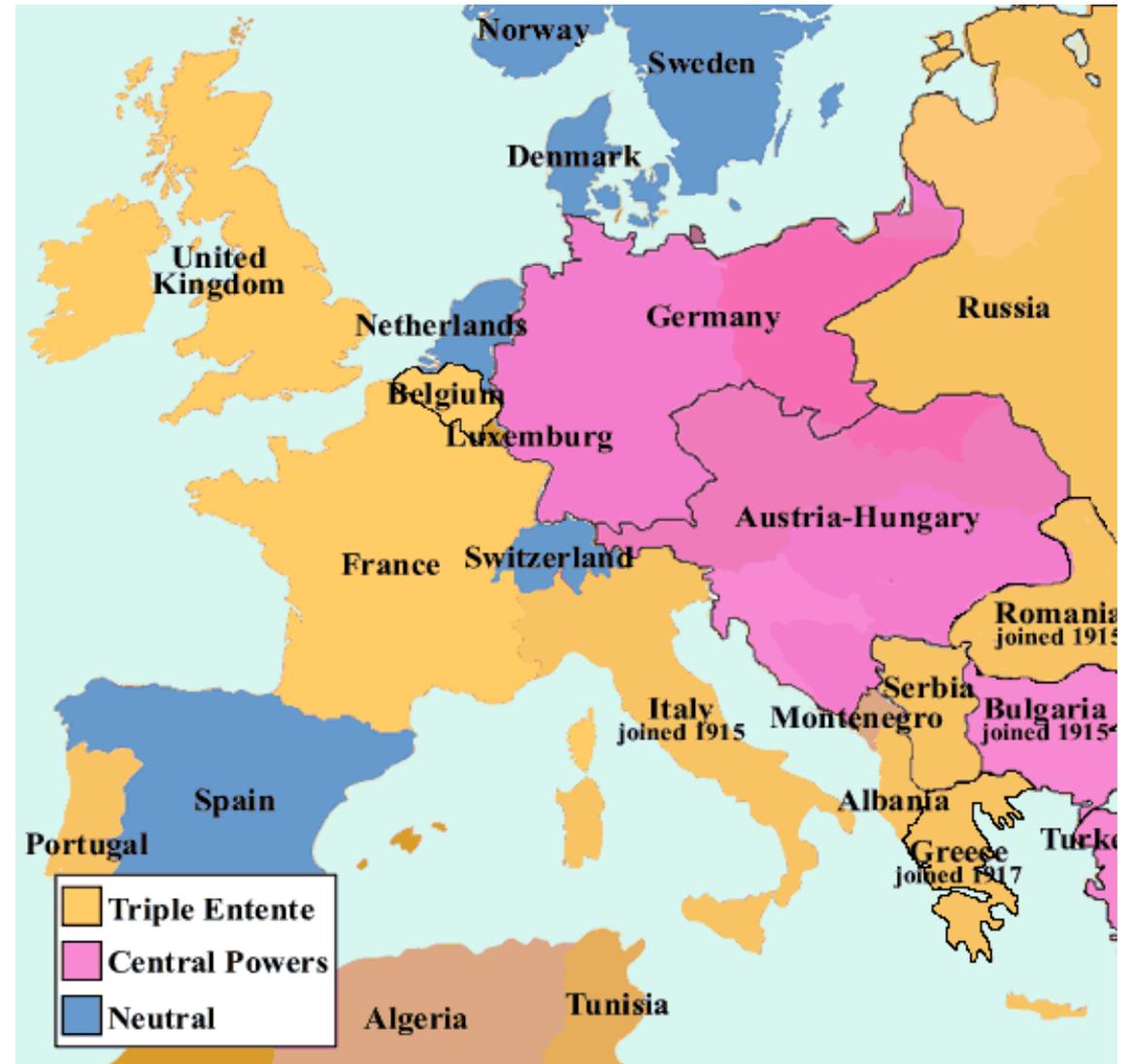
Europe before WW1

- European nations dominated world power.
- However the continent was NOT UNITED.
- Deep-seated issues were heightening tensions among European countries.
- The rise of nationalism fuelled patriotic ambitions...



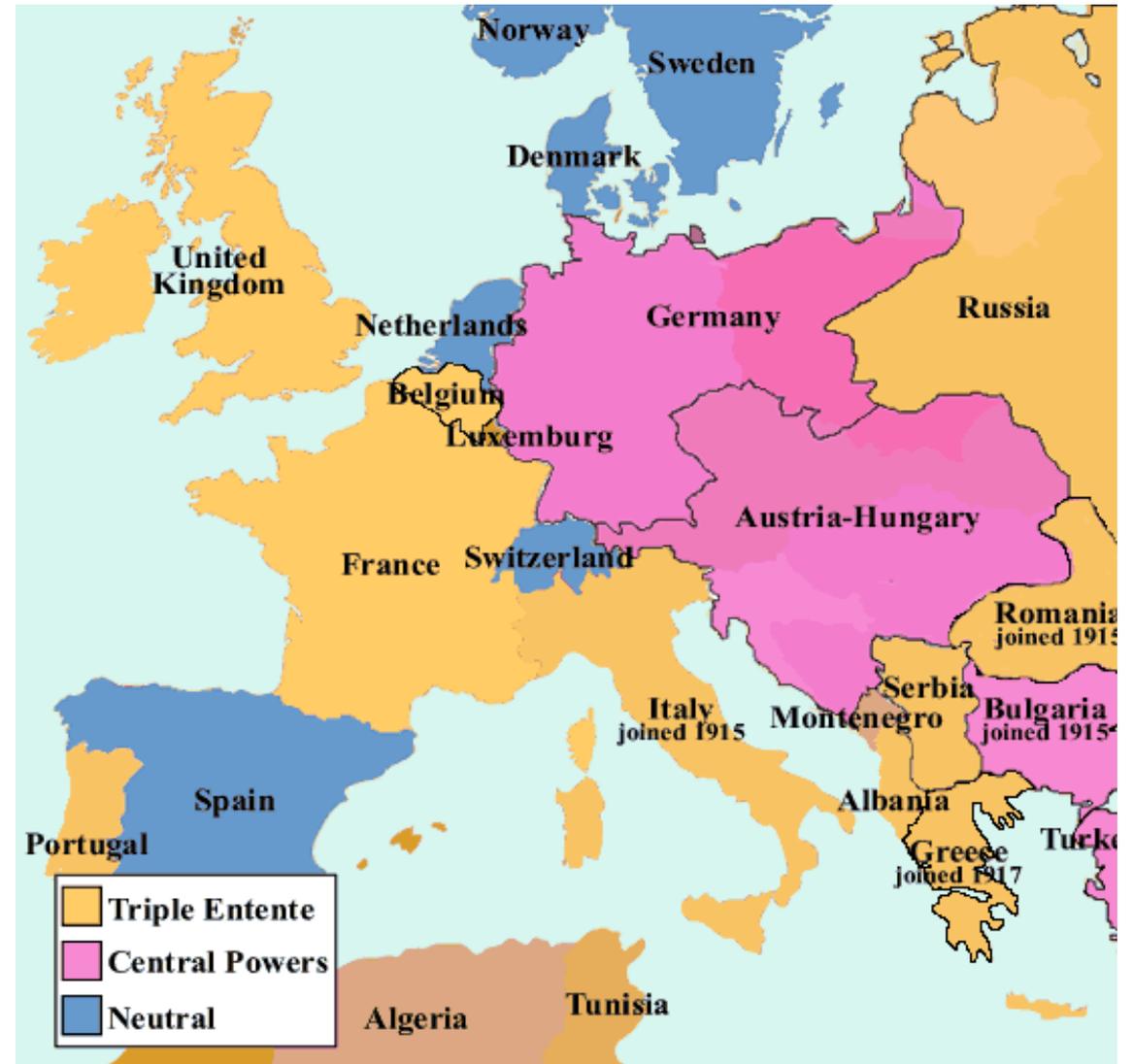
Europe before WW1

- France wanted to take over Alsace-Lorraine, a region ceded to Germany.
- Colonial conquest (for raw materials) pitted France, the UK and Germany against each other, mainly in Africa.
- Germany was undergoing an economic boom that worried France and the UK.



Europe before WW1

- Countries were becoming increasingly militarized in the name of self-defense.
- In 1882, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed the **Triple Alliance (or Central Powers)**.
- In 1907, the United Kingdom, France and Russia formed the **Triple Entente**. They opposed the **Triple Alliance**.



How did the war start?

Tensions in Europe

- The situation was extremely tense between the major powers in Europe.



How did the war start?

Assassination triggers war

- The assassination of **Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria** on June 28, 1914 set off a chain of events that led to war in early **August 1914**.
- [Video](#) (1)
- [Video](#) (2)
- [Video](#) (3)



What about Canada?

- Canada was still part of the British Empire in 1914.
- Consequently, **it found itself at war on August 4th, 1914.**
- However, Canadians would decide the scope of their commitment to the war.
- At the onset of WW1 (the Great War), Canada had:
 - no air force
 - a very small naval force
 - an army consisting of 3,100 professional male soldiers.
- **Thus, Canada would need citizens from across the dominion to enlist to become soldiers.**



Canadian enlistment

WHY DID CANADIAN MEN ENLIST?

- Surge of patriotism
- Sense of adventure
- Pressure from friends, authority figures, and recruiters
- Escape from an unrewarding job or an unhappy home life
- Belief that the war would be over by Xmas 1914
- Belief in the justness of war (defending liberal ideas or supporting the British Empire)
- Steady pay of \$1.10/day for privates
- Propaganda urged women to pressure men to enlist.



Canadian enlistment

WHY DID CANADIAN WOMEN ENLIST?

- All were volunteer “bluebirds” (nursing sisters)
- Not permitted to enlist as medical doctors
- More than 2,800 nurses served
- Courageous
- Compassion for soldiers
- Sacrifice
- Brothers and/or fathers serving



Canadian enlistment

SOME REASONS FOR BEING DENIED SERVING IN THE ARMY

The potential male recruit:

- under 5 feet 3 inches tall
- injured
- ill health (like tuberculosis – a pulmonary disease)
- flat feet
- poor eyesight
- rotting teeth
- under 18 years of age or above 45 years of age
- married man during the first year of the war

These requirements ↓ as war went on because of ↑ need for recruits.

Canadian enlistment

ENLISTMENT OF FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

- They were not denied the right to serve.
- Between 4,000 and 6,000 Aboriginal people served, many as snipers and scouts.
- They were denied veteran's benefits on their return, despite many winning military awards, like Francis Pegahmagabow (sniper).



Canadian enlistment

HOW ETHNICALLY DIVERSE WAS ENLISTMENT?

As of 1916:

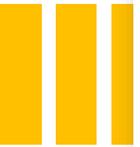
- about 1,400 Black enlisted soldiers
- more than 222 Japanese Canadians
- 4,000 Ukrainian Canadians
- thousands of Polish, Russian, and Romanian soldiers served
- 40,000 Canadian or British-born Americans (USA entered WW1 in 1917)
- several hundred Chinese Canadians
- 4,000-6,000 Aboriginal Canadians



Canadian enlistment

Canadian Expeditionary Forces (CEF)

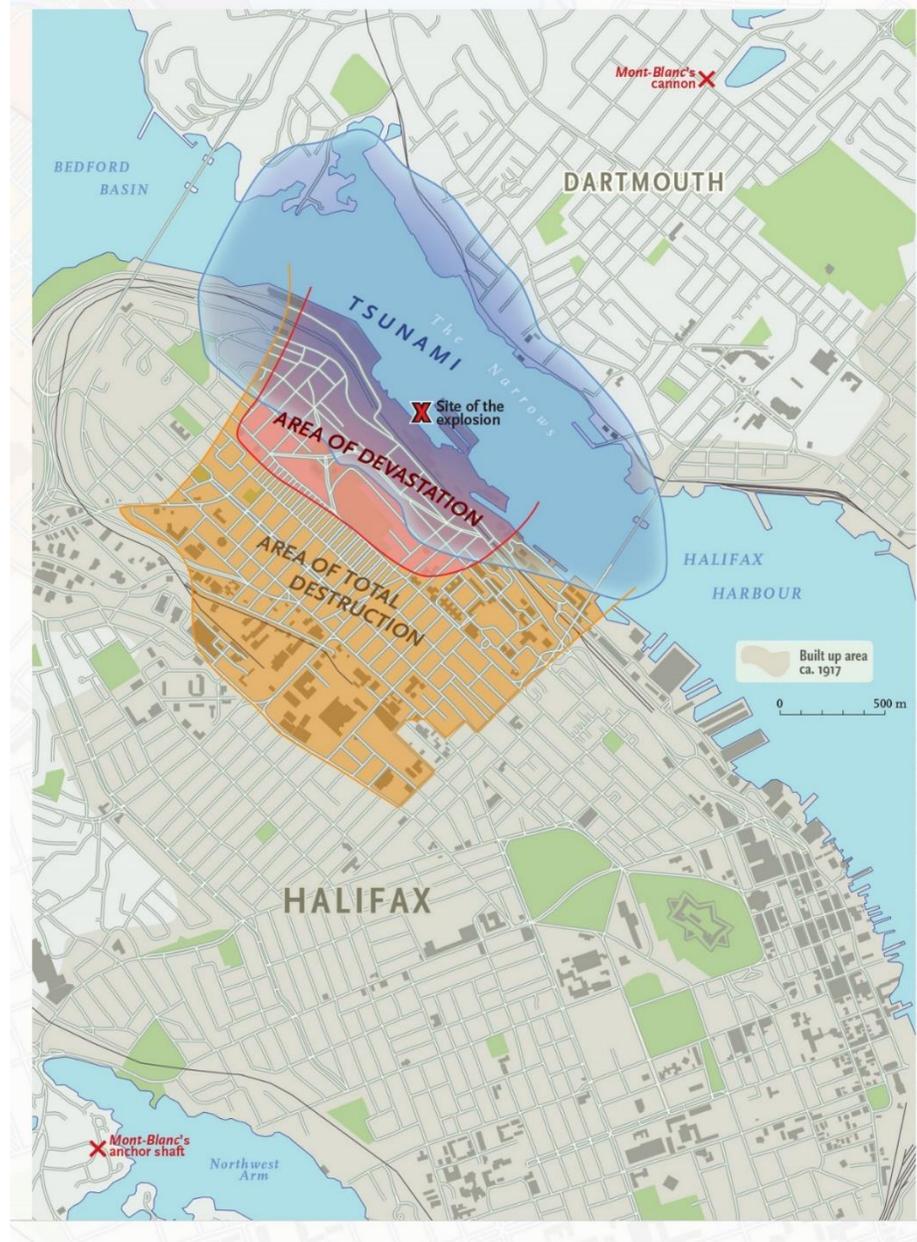
- **Western Canada & Ontario:** 73%
- **Québec:** 14% (15,000 volunteers)
- **Eastern Canada:** about 13%



The Halifax Explosion

- On December 6, 1917, the *Mont Blanc* (a French vessel), loaded with 2.9 kilotons of explosives, collided with the *Imo* (a Norwegian relief ship) in Halifax harbour.
 - A fire broke out on the *Mont Blanc* which couldn't be extinguished by the firefighters.
 - The *Mont Blanc* exploded, the intense blast devastating a large part of Halifax
 - Dead: 1,963
 - Injured: 9,000
 - Homeless: 6,000
-







Scene of devastation in Halifax after the explosion of the *Mont Blanc*.

The *Imo*, which collided with the *Mont Blanc*, can be seen in the distance. It survived the explosion relatively intact. Much of the city did not. Halifax became known informally as the "Shattered City."





The Halifax Explosion

- Military and naval personnel worked with civilians in the relief effort.
 - Nearby cities took in the homeless.
 - Eaton stores donated furniture.
 - The Canadian and British governments donated millions for reconstruction.
 - The USA organized a relief train filled with supplies, doctors, and nurses. Since then, the province of Nova Scotia sends each year a Christmas tree to the city of Boston, Massachusetts as a token of friendship for the aid Bostonians rendered in December 1917.
 - Despite the absolute destruction and the magnitude of relief operations, transatlantic naval convoys had resumed within a week.
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Christmas Truce of 1914

A re-enactment of the 1914 Christmas Truce in Ploegsteert, Belgium (AP).



Conscription crisis in Canada

WHAT IS 'CONSCRIPTION'?

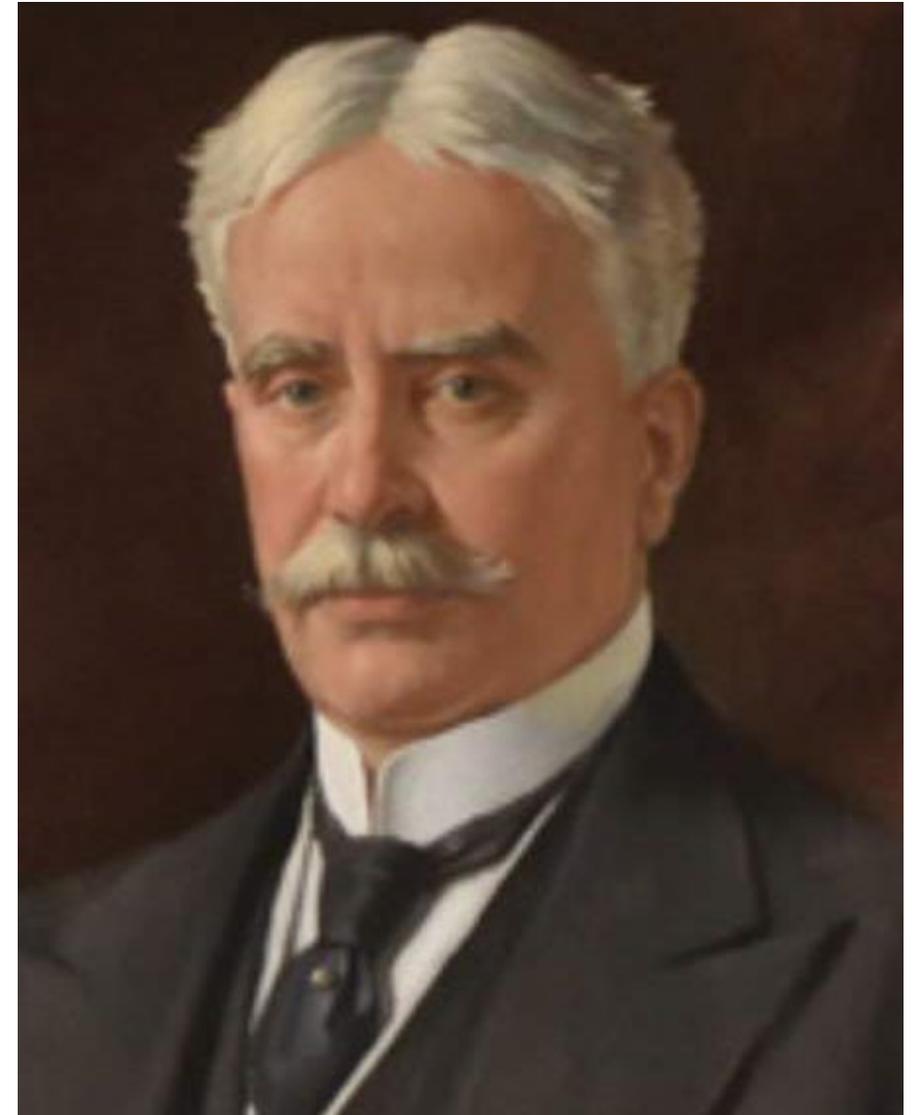
- Compulsory enrollment of persons (men in WW1) for military service.



Conscription crisis in Canada

PRIME MINISTER ROBERT BORDEN

- Determined to sustain the war effort to show the UK that Canada should be considered a partner.
- On July 24, 1917, Borden introduced the ***Military Service Act***, thus forcing all Canadian men aged 20-35 (unmarried or widowers without kids) to enlist in the army.
 - It was **opposed** by almost all francophones and non-anglophone immigrants (betrayal, blood tax, separation, riot).
 - It was **supported** by almost all anglophones.
- Conscription proved **relatively ineffective**. Recruitment numbers pre- and post-conscription remained more or less the same.





An anti-conscription demonstration in Montréal's Victoria Square in May 1917.

Enemy Aliens

Enemy alien

The term “enemy alien” referred to people from countries, or with roots from countries, that were at war with Canada.

Internment

It is the forcible confinement or detention of a person during wartime.



Enemy Aliens

War Measures Act

- **Federal law** quickly enacted by the Canadian government at the outset of war in August 1914.
- It permitted the Canadian government **to suspend or limit civil liberties in the interest of Canada's protection.**
- It included the **right to hold “enemy aliens” in camps** across the country.



Spirit Lake Internment Camp

(courtesy Library and Archives Canada/PA-170620)

Women and children prisoners at the Spirit Lake Internment Camp, Abitibi, Quebec, ca. 1914-1920.

Enemy Aliens

- Around 80,000 people, mostly Ukrainian Canadians, were obliged to register as “enemy aliens” during WW1.
- They were compelled to report regularly to the police and were subjected to other censures, including restrictions on their freedom of speech, movement and association.



Enemy Aliens

Internment camps

- Canada interned 8,579 enemy aliens in 24 receiving stations and internment camps from 1914-1920.
- Often rural and remote.





Enemy Aliens

Internees

- They were arrested and detained if there were “reasonable grounds” to believe they were:
 - “engaged or attempting to engage in espionage or acts of hostile nature
 - giving or attempting to give information to the enemy
 - assisting or attempting to assist the enemy.”



Petawawa Internment Camp
(courtesy Queen's University Archives)

Internees being marched off to dinner at the Petawawa internment camp during the First World War.

Enemy Aliens

Internees

- Canadian from:
 - Austria-Hungary (a majority of Ukrainians) (5,954)
 - Germany (2,009)
 - Turkey (205)
 - Bulgaria (99)
- Homeless people
- Conscientious objectors
- Members of outlawed cultural and political associations
- 81 women and 156 children (dependants of male internees) were voluntarily interned.



Enemy Aliens

Main factors driving the policy of interment

- War-time fervour
- Xenophobic fear + fear of a German invasion
- NOT actual attacks on Canada's domestic war effort by enemy sympathizers (No serious threats!).



Enemy Aliens

Living and working conditions in camps

- Massive labour projects, like the development of Banff National Park, numerous mining and logging operations, building roads, clearing bush, and cutting trails.
- Internees had much of their wealth and property confiscated, much of which was not returned at the end of WW1.
- Most were paid \$0.25/day, far less than any worker of the time.
- Interned Canadians were deprived of voting rights during the war.



Spirit Lake Internment Camp

(courtesy Library and Archives Canada/PA-170424)

Clearing wood at the Spirit Lake Internment Camp, Abitibi, Quebec, ca. 1914-20.

Enemy Aliens

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Ukrainian-Cdns. hail resolution of internment issue

The Canadian Press

Published Saturday, May 10, 2008 7:33AM EDT

WINNIPEG - Ukrainian Canadians closed a painful chapter in their community's history Friday as the federal government announced a \$10 million grant to recognize the internment of Eastern European immigrants in Canadian work camps during the First World War.

The money is going into an endowment fund that will allow the community to better educate Canadians about the forced labour camps.

"After more than two decades of community pressure and a string of broken political promises, the troubling issue of Ukrainian internment during World War One has finally been resolved," said Oleh Gerus, vice president of the Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko, the Winnipeg-based foundation that will administer the funds.

"I guess we can say it's about time."

Shellshock

- Shellshock was the blanket term applied by contemporaries to those soldiers, nurses and others working in the war zone who broke down under the strain of war
- The pace and intensity of industrialized warfare had profound effects on the human mind and body that were not related to wounds or physical injury
- Soldiers exposed to the stress and horror of the trenches experienced crying, fear, nightmare, depression, paralysis, insanity, irrational behavior, etc.



Shellshock

- This psychological condition was poorly understood at the time and for many years later.
- At the time, doctors believed it to be the result of physical damage to the brain by the shock of exploding shells.
- Military authorities often saw its symptoms as expressions of cowardice or lack of moral character.
- Prolonged exposure to the stress of combat was its true cause. It would not be fully understood or effectively treated during the war (PTSD).



Shellshock

- 10,000 Canadians were diagnosed with shellshock during WW1.
- Treatments:
 - Talk and physical therapy.
 - Electric shock therapy to stimulate paralyzed nerves, vocal chords or limbs.
- There were few treatment programs after the conflict for veterans who suffered from the mental trauma caused by war.





In Flanders Fields by John McCrae

- During the early days of the Second Battle of Ypres (Belgium) a young Canadian artillery officer, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, was killed on 2 May, 1915 in the gun positions near Ypres. An exploding German artillery shell landed near him. He was serving in the same Canadian artillery unit as a friend of his, the Canadian military doctor and artillery commander **Major John McCrae**.
 - As the brigade doctor, John McCrae was asked to conduct the burial service for Alexis because the chaplain had been called away somewhere else on duty that evening. It is believed that later that evening, after the burial, John began the draft for his now famous poem “In Flanders Fields”.
-

In Flanders Fields by John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from falling hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



End of WW1 & the League of Nations

- The return to civilian life was often difficult for Canadian soldiers. Many had lost their jobs since many industries reduced their workforce toward the end of the war.
- In 1918, the federal government helped soldiers find jobs and provided medical treatment to amputees, rarely for those suffering from shellshock (PTSD).
- **WW1 ended at 11 am on November 11, 1918.** It was made official with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919.
- **Canada's signing of the treaty was an important symbol of its autonomy in external affairs and diplomatic relationships.**
- Canada was also a founding member of the **League of Nations**, a forum to resolve international conflicts through negotiation and arbitration.