

**THE FRONTIER OF PATRIOTISM:
Alberta and the First World War**
Edited by Adriana A. Davies and Jeff Keshen

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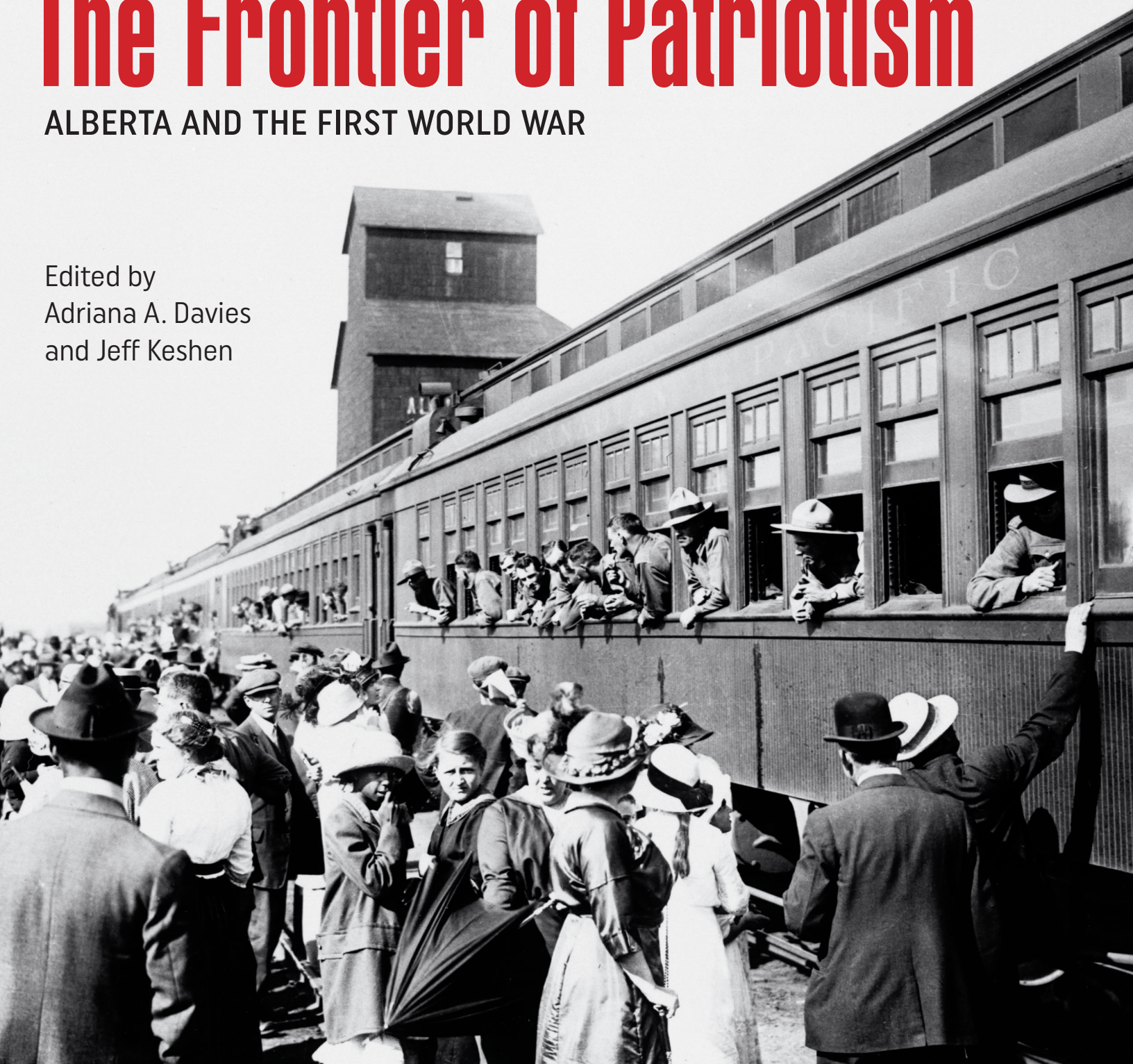
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The Frontier of Patriotism

ALBERTA AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Edited by
Adriana A. Davies
and Jeff Keshen



THE FRONTIER OF PATRIOTISM

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The co-editors are grateful that they found each other and were able to combine expertise in military and twentieth century Canadian history, with Alberta's historical, natural, scientific and technological heritage. This made the commissioning of articles a satisfying and stimulating adventure. While we scoped out thematic areas, new authors came onboard, and they enriched and expanded these themes. All the contributors brought considerable knowledge of primary sources – from local to national – that has made this critical period in Alberta's development come to life. Without Library and Archives Canada, the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Glenbow Archives and local archives, the authors could not have provided the insight into the mobilization of Alberta, and the impact of the war both in the short- and long-term. Resources must be

found to enable archives to preserve their collections and to continue to make more and more of them accessible in a digital format.

The authors come from a range of backgrounds including academic historians and their masters and doctoral students as well as local historians undertaking cultural memory and living tradition research that focuses on individual and community experience and transference from one generation to the next. Enormous thanks go to them for their commitment, in particular in meeting the tight timelines that the project required. A project of such scope – the total number of essays grew to a hefty 40 – normally takes years to plan and execute. The commissioning, research, and writing phases spanned 18 months, a challenge everyone met with grace and understanding.

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INTRODUCTION

Alberta was only nine years old when the First World War started. Its population had reached 375,000 by 1911 and 496,000 five years later.¹ In 1914, the populations of Edmonton and Calgary both exceeded 70,000, though by 1918, they had dropped to just over 50,000. Given the province's youth and small population, it would appear unlikely that it could make a major difference to the war effort. However, this was not the case at all. Alberta made major contributions to Canada's fighting forces. Precise numbers are elusive because many Albertans enlisted outside the province. One comprehensive analysis puts the total at 48,885, or 35.1 percent of the male population aged 18 to 45, placing the province third behind Manitoba at 47.6 and Ontario at 36.8 percent. The figure becomes more impressive given that in 1911, 43.5 percent of Alberta's population was born outside Canada or Britain, more than twice the national average, and 62.1 percent lived in rural settings compared to 54.5 percent nationwide, a segment of the population that tended to provide fewer recruits due to the critical need for farm labour. High recruitment meant significant losses: 6,140 Albertans were killed in action, and some 20,000 were

wounded, 5 percent of the population eligible for military service.²

There is relatively little scholarship on Alberta's First World War experience. The earliest treatment is John Blue's "Alberta in the Great War," a chapter in his *Alberta Past and Present: Historical and Biographical*, published in 1924.³ In 1978, John Herd Thompson wrote a brief regional analysis, *The Harvests of War*, examining the Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta home fronts.⁴ The first contemporary, comprehensive examination of Alberta's First World War experience was volume 4 in Ted Byfield's *Alberta in the 20th Century: A Journalistic History of the Province in Twelve Volumes*. Titled *The Great War and Its Consequences*, it was published in 1994. Byfield, a journalist, publisher, and editor, produced a heavily pictorial popular history that also devoted a surprising amount of space to national issues and trends.⁵ There is also information to be found in profiles of Alberta military leaders, those who trained in the province, regimental and municipal histories, and accounts of institutions such as the University of Alberta and Mount Royal College (as it was then).⁶

Regional analysis of Canada's First World War effort remains an area in need of further scholarship. Most work is considerably dated. That on Quebec still focuses on debates over conscription; the most comprehensive work on Ontario is largely comprised of reprinted documents; there is no general work on the Maritimes; and a recently published book on wartime British Columbia is a popular, rather episodic account by two CBC journalists.⁷

Historiography on Canada in the First World War

While regional wartime history remains sparse, the general historiography on Canada in the First World War has grown increasingly comprehensive and complex. For many years, studies of Canadian forces overseas have centred on how their performance in battle generated pride and a national spirit, accelerating Canada's trajectory from colony to nation.⁸ Unlike Britain or Australia during the interwar years, Canada did not produce a multivolume scholarly "Official History" of its military involvement and performance. Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid, an engineer by training, was put in charge of a small historical section in the Canadian Army.⁹ Determined to get every detail correct, and, as a result, to consult every document, Duguid produced only a single volume by the outset of the Second World War. He also hoarded First World War military records, which as a result were not open to researchers until the 1960s. This gap in scholarship did not begin to be addressed until the appearance of G.W.L. Nicholson's 1964 single-volume *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War*. Although thorough and balanced, it is more descriptive than analytical. Thus, more popular or even propagandistic books, including

those generated during the war, remained widely consulted. Not until 1980 did the first volume of the *Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force* appear, and not until 2010 that of the Royal Canadian Navy.¹⁰

The immediate period after the Second World War did not see much scholarly attention devoted to the First World War. The 1960s and 1970s brought little academic military history, reflecting an anti-military and anti-authoritarian ethos prevalent on university campuses during the unpopular Vietnam War. Countering this, however, uplifting popular accounts were published, namely about the battle at Vimy Ridge, that promulgated Canada's growing nationalism, autonomy, and international recognition, especially as the 50th anniversary of the clash coincided with Canada's 100th birthday. This carried into the 1980s with the appearance of popular histories that detailed the harsh, gruesome, and deadly nature of other key battles involving Canadians, but also highlighted the grit, fortitude, and accomplishments of Canadian soldiers.¹¹

Recent historiographic trends, namely toward specialization and social history, have resulted in a more complete picture of Canada's overseas military experience. Still, the nationalistic theme persists, notably in discussions of Canada's increasingly improved performance over the course of the conflict, and the emergence of the Canadian Corps as an elite, expertly, Canadian-led formation, arguably the best among the Allies.¹² Demonstrating the influence of social history, Desmond Morton's *When Your Number's Up* and Sandra Gwyn's *Tapestry of War* reconstruct the war experience through the writings of those in the thick of things overseas.¹³ Recent scholarship has also examined the complex and not always copacetic relationship between Canadian soldiers and the British.¹⁴ Analyses have challenged the portrayal of

Canada's 1st Division as less prepared and effective, namely at the Second Battle of Ypres.¹⁵ While commending Canadians for their performance at Vimy, other works argue that the battle's importance and impact have been exaggerated and that Canadian tactics, while effective, were not hugely innovative.¹⁶ Tim Cook's monumental two-volume work, *At the Sharp End* and *Shock Troops*, provides an examination of the Canadian Army's experiences from the perspectives of both ordinary soldiers and their leaders.¹⁷ He details the unique world of soldiers, from the banality of trench routines to the men's various coping techniques, such as seeking the protection of supernatural forces or turning to black humour, drinking, swearing, singing, and womanizing.¹⁸ Other works examine the war through presenting letters between soldiers and those on the home front, or through focusing on the experiences of POWs; the application of military discipline; diet and health; and recreation and sports.¹⁹

Earlier works on the Canadian home front during the First World War typically focused on the national level—principally on how mobilization was managed, with munitions production, recruitment, and conscription being central themes.²⁰ Perpetual regionalism, or what historian J.M.S. Careless called in 1970 Canada's "limited identities," no doubt prompted several regional-based studies on the First World War. The trend toward more intensive analysis also manifested in recent works on specific communities in wartime, namely Winnipeg, Regina, Toronto, Trois Rivières, Guelph, Lethbridge, and Halifax.²¹

Works on mobilization have explored the ways in which Canadians were influenced to back total war, such as through censorship and propaganda and other forms of state surveillance and repression.²²

Scholarship has also detailed how classrooms and popular literature were geared toward cultivating patriotism. Works on universities show the beginnings of officer training programs and coordination between government, industry, and academe that advanced military-related scientific research.²³ That on Canadian churches shows that a wide swath of denominations, particularly Protestant branches, promoted the war as a righteous cause against evil, raised money and other means of support, and provided clerics who ministered to men's spiritual and emotional needs overseas.²⁴

Social friction in wartime Canada has also become a prominent theme. Much of the work draws inspiration from social history, which seeks to tell the story of groups long under-represented or written out of mainstream, often whiggish historical accounts. Such scholarship has explored increasing discord and radicalism among large segments of Canada's working class over wartime hyperinflation, lack of representation, absence of collective bargaining rights, and the conscription of men but not wealth.²⁵ Other work shows that jingoism and nativism, buttressed by wartime hysteria, resulted in extreme prejudice against Canadians of German and Ukrainian background. The latter, typically not naturalized as British subjects, were classified as enemy aliens and, in over 8,500 cases, interned.²⁶ Scholarship also details the wartime experiences of visible minorities, who were initially excluded from volunteering in what was termed a "White Man's War" and, in the case of African-Canadians, eventually restricted to labour battalions to support white troops.²⁷ Recent academic debate has revolved around the extent to which First Peoples responded to the call and whether their patriotism resulted in meaningful improvements.²⁸ Further work has

enriched understanding of the contributions and war-related changes experienced by women, and probed whether they enhanced longer-term trends toward equality.²⁹

Important new work has also focused on the aftermath of the war. Many soldiers carried home the Spanish flu, which took the lives of 50,000 Canadians. As Mark Humphries writes, the pandemic exposed major gaps in Canada's fledgling health-care system and played a key role in generating the creation of a federal Department of Health.³⁰ Recent scholarship shows that programs to support Canada's First World War veterans had profound shortcomings, but still constituted pioneering social welfare initiatives.³¹ Finally, newer cultural history research, exploring memory and commemoration, explains how Canada's First World War has been represented, constructed, and distorted—through, for example, memorials, art, and literature—often to serve particular agendas.³²

Alberta at War

In the war's early stages, Alberta's young men overwhelmed enlistment centres. Most were motivated by a sense of loyalty and duty to Britain and the conviction that it was essential to halt German aggression and militarism. Many craved travel and adventure and wanted to partake in events that were cast as shaping the destiny of civilization. Some joined for a job, as the West, like the rest of Canada, was mired in a deep recession that lasted until mid-1915. At the outset of the war, Edmonton had an estimated 4,000 unemployed, and rural areas suffered with droughts in 1912 and 1913. Many thought time was of the essence if they wanted to participate

since experts predicted a short conflict, reasoning that the Great Powers could sustain a massive war for only months.

Those who successfully enlisted into what must have initially seemed like an exclusive club found themselves without enough weapons or uniforms. In Edmonton, early recruits paraded through city streets in civilian clothes. In January 1915, the 49th Battalion, known as the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, raised a full complement of 35 officers and 975 other ranks in a matter of days. At Calgary's Sarcee training camp, which became the second largest in Canada, 40,000 men over the course of the war were prepared to go overseas.

Albertans participated in every major battle involving Canadians. Some sent home chilling accounts. In June 1916, from Hooze in Belgium—where the Germans used flamethrowers, machine guns, mortars, and grenades to recapture lost ground—Bruce Davies, a Lethbridge corporal, wrote that the “dead were lying all around. I got out and crawled back into the trench. I found out that I had been hit in the right leg pretty hard, also in the left knee. Previously none of these wounds had been dressed, the reason being that the stretcher bearers kept being blown to pieces . . . My God, it was awful agony.”³³ Most, however, in order to appear manly and to avoid upsetting loved ones or running afoul of military censors, emphasized triumphs and heroism, or maintained a lighthearted attitude. An example of the last is Calgary's Harry Jennings, who said of a serious head wound sustained at the Second Battle of Ypres: “I shall have to part my hair in the middle.”³⁴

Alberta newspapers highlighted heroism by local lads such as Private Cecil Kinross, a 22-year-old from Lougheed, in central Alberta, who won the Victoria Cross at Passchendaele for singlehandedly

moving across open ground to capture a German machine gun, killing six. Also venerated were Canada's military leaders such as Brigadier General Archibald MacDonnell, commander of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment and three other battalions as part of the 7th Brigade, who, following the triumph at Vimy Ridge, was given command of Canada's 1st Division. Albertans also figured prominently in Canada's contributions to aerial combat. Major Donald MacLaren, the province's top ace with 54 kills, rose to the rank of squadron commander and was honoured with the DSO, Military Cross and Bar, Distinguished Flying Cross, Croix de Guerre, and Legion d'Honneur ribbon.

Albertans at home rallied to support all major war charities and drives. Women's groups organized bazaars and teas, sponsored entertainment, and ran second-hand shops to raise money for the war effort. Children collected scrap, and, when not learning patriotic lessons in school, put on plays and other events as fundraisers. Redcliff and Monitor, Alberta, received captured German artillery pieces for topping other communities in Canada when it came to purchasing Victory Bonds on a per capita basis.

For other Albertans, it was a much different war. The province was home to some 37,000 people of German and enemy alien background. Germans were fired from government jobs and positions such as teaching. Many Germans tried to pass themselves off as Scandinavians or Dutch. The Alberta *Herold*, the province's only German newspaper, did not survive the war, as the federal government compelled all newspapers written in enemy languages to print in English.

The war also dramatically affected Alberta's First Peoples. Estimates place the First Nations' enlistment rate as high as 35 percent. Some First Peoples

felt loyalty to the British Crown who they believed had respected treaty rights. Young Aboriginal people sought to escape the boredom of reserve life and emulate the warrior tradition of their forebears. Some Alberta Natives became renowned for their battlefield performance. Corporal Henry Norwest, a Cree from Fort Saskatchewan, had 115 observed hits as a sniper. Yet, for Aboriginal people, applications for veterans' benefits had to proceed through Indian agents who, typically, recommended against extending credit, even when it was state subsidized, because it was assumed First Peoples were like children and could not cope with debt.

As casualties mounted and Canada's war economy heated up, it became more difficult to obtain adequate numbers of volunteers. Albertans were attracted to well-paid jobs in munitions factories in Central Canada. The province's ranchers faced record demand for beef; its lumber mills operated at peak capacity; and its coal mines struggled to provide adequate supplies to cities and war industries. Fuelled by overseas demand, wheat prices reached \$2.21 a bushel in 1917, three times the prewar level. Alberta wheat farms expanded from a total cultivation of 1.8 million hectares in 1911 to 3.03 million hectares in 1916. However, much of this was on lower-quality farmland. Moreover, to obtain quick and maximum output and profits, proper fallowing was ignored, eventually resulting in declining yields.³⁵ Still, with the war accelerating rural depopulation, farm labour was desperately needed, and wages increased by 25 percent to reach a record average of \$50 per month.³⁶ Shortages in farm labour reached the point where many in rural Alberta opposed conscription. In the riding of Edmonton West, Frank Oliver, federal minister of the Interior from 1905 to 1911 and founder of the Edmonton *Bulletin*,

ran for the Liberals, opposing conscription after his eldest son, Allen, was killed in action the previous November. Oliver led against the pro-conscription Union candidate, Brigadier General William Griesbach, a former, popular mayor and first commander of the 49th Battalion, until the overseas soldier vote tipped the balance to Griesbach.

News of the Armistice on 11 November 1918 prompted massive celebrations and outpourings of national pride. But the war also left deep divisions and daunting problems. Prices had increased an estimated 75 percent during the conflict, and the war-charged economy did not easily transition back to peace. Rapid deflation and a deep recession followed, lasting until the mid-1920s. Plunging postwar wheat prices, ultimately to less than one dollar a bushel, produced a collapse in rural Alberta. Coal mines were beset by labour problems, and the oil industry, which seemed promising in 1914 with discoveries in Turner Valley, was in free fall, as the expense of drilling and production proved prohibitive. The federal government's refusal to establish a wheat board to prop up prices (as the Board of Grain Supervisors had controlled rising wheat prices in wartime), and postwar federal budgets that maintained high tariffs in order to protect central Canadian industry despite promises to move to freer trade, sparked a wave of prairie populism. In July 1921, the United Farmers of Alberta, running candidates in just 45 of 61 ridings and with no leader or official platform, won office with 39 seats.

The end of the conflict saw Canada's federal government saddled with massive debt and facing the challenge of funding veteran programs. Although veterans griped about stingy state support, the assistance provided to Canadian veterans was unprecedented for governments that had never before

established significant social welfare programs. Indeed, Ottawa launched a fifth national Victory Bond drive for November 1919 that raised \$660 million (worth \$8.4 billion in 2015)³⁷ to help pay for veteran programs.

Many who came out for victory celebrations on 11 November 1918 wore a mask because Canada was then in the midst of the Spanish flu pandemic that, by late 1919, had claimed the lives of 3,259 Albertans. Numerous communities were forced into makeshift responses; Claresholm used its School of Agriculture as a hospital. Isolated communities and First Nations reserves, where there was little or no medical assistance, suffered disproportionately. Calgary's Dr. O.D. Weeks, who volunteered to treat those on reserves along the Alberta & Great Western Railway line, found as many as half the population dead in some places. The entire community of Lethbridge was quarantined for two days, as were the people of Taber, Pincher Creek, Legal, and Drumheller.

The Frontier of Patriotism

The Frontier of Patriotism presents, at the provincial level, the complexity of the war experience as reflected in recent historiography. To do this, the editors turned to 40 contributors, both academic and local historians, whose work, collectively, showcases a rich tapestry of activities and experiences in Alberta during the First World War.

Because of the wide range of topics included, most entries were kept brief so that the volume remained at a manageable length, though latitude was provided in cases where the editors agreed greater coverage was warranted. The essays are grouped thematically to cover Albertans in uniform, in battle, on

the home front, and to show the aftermath and legacy of the First World War.

Readers will encounter both academic and popular, and broad and highly focused papers. They will learn about military leaders and ordinary soldiers; the wartime experiences of Alberta chaplains, churches, labour, women, First Peoples, conscientious objectors, and those labelled as enemy aliens; what Albertans read about the war; the construction of war-related infrastructure; the varied and profound impact of the struggle on communities; what one can learn from material evidence; the impact of the Spanish flu pandemic; the postwar Soldier Settlement program; and provincial commemoration of the conflict.

For many Albertans, these four tumultuous years represented a time of individual valour and of communities pulling together and sacrificing for what was viewed as a noble cause. For others, such as Albertans of German and enemy alien background, conscientious objectors, First Peoples, labourers, farmers, and significant numbers of veterans, the war left disillusionment and anger. Many, but not all, of these trends were evident elsewhere in Canada, something that speaks to the importance of exploring the regional and local story as well as the national narrative to understand the commonalities and distinctiveness of what it means to be Canadian.

Notes

1 Howard Palmer and Tamara Palmer, eds., *Peoples of Alberta: Portraits of Cultural Diversity* (Saskatoon, SK: Western Producer Prairie Book, 1985), 6–7, 217.

- 2 C.A. Sharpe, “Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914–1918: A Regional Analysis,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 18, no. 4 (1983–84): 15–26.
- 3 John Blue, “Alberta in the Great War,” in *Alberta Past and Present: Historical and Biographical*, vol. 3 (Chicago: Pioneer Historical Publishing, 1924).
- 4 John Herd Thompson, *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914–1918* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978).
- 5 Ted Byfield, ed., *Alberta in the 20th Century: A Journalistic History of the Province in Twelve Volumes*, vol. 4, *The Great War and Its Consequences* (Edmonton: United Western Communications, 1994).
- 6 See Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizons: Local Responses to the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004); Whitney Lackenbauer, “The Politics of Contested Space: Controversy and the Construction of Currie Barracks,” *Prairie Forum* 28, no. 1 (2003): 45–66; Whitney Lackenbauer, “Under Siege: The CEF Attack on the RNWMP Barracks in Calgary, October 1916,” *Alberta History* 49, no. 3 (2001): 2–12; Max Foran, “W.A. ‘Billy’ Griesbach and World War One,” *Alberta History* 32, no. 3 (1984): 1–8; R. Stevens, *A City Goes to War: History of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment* (3 PPCLI) (Edmonton: Charters, 1965); Major Roy Farran, *The History of the Calgary Highlanders 1921–1954* (Calgary: Bryant Press, 1954); Daniel Dancocks, *Gallant Canadians: The Story of the Tenth Canadian Infantry Battalion, 1914–1919* (Calgary: Calgary Highlanders Regimental Funds Foundation, 1990); David Bercuson, *The Patricia’s: A Proud History of a Fighting Regiment* (Toronto: Stoddart, 2001); Donald Baker, *Catch the Gleam: Mount Royal, from College to University* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2011); and Rod Macleod, *All True Things: A History of the University of Alberta, 1908–2008* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2008).
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- (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977); Elizabeth Armstrong, *The Crisis of Quebec, 1914–18* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937); M.S. Hunt, *Nova Scotia's Part in the Great War* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Veteran, 1920).
- 8 See Mark Osborne Humphries, "Between Commemoration and History: The Historiography of the Canadian Corps and Military Overseas," *Canadian Historical Review* 95, no. 3 (2014): 384–97.
 - 9 Duguid served in France from 1915 to 1918, and was director of the historical section of the Canadian Army from 1921 to 1945. The Fortescue fonds are located at the National Defence Headquarters Directorate of History and Heritage.
 - 10 Tim Cook, *Clio's Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the Two World Wars* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007); G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914–1919* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1964); S.F. Wise, *Canadian Airmen and the First World War: The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980); William Johnson, William G.P. Rawling, Richard H. Gimblett, and John MacFarlane, *The Seabound Coast: The Official History of the Royal Canadian Navy, 1867–1939*, vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).
 - 11 Daniel Dancocks, *Legacy of Valour: The Canadians at Passchendaele* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1988), and Dancocks, *Welcome to Flanders Field* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988). This theme is also evident in the co-authored, and more scholarly, account by J.L. Granatstein and Desmond Morton, *Marching to Armageddon: Canadians and the Great War, 1914–1919* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1989).
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 - 13 Desmond Morton, *When Your Number's Up: The Canadian Soldier in the First World War* (Toronto: Random House, 1993); Sandra Gwyn, *Tapestry of War: A Private View of Canadians in the Great War* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1994).
 - 14 See Jonathan Vance, *Maple Leaf Empire: Canada, Britain and the Two World Wars* (Toronto: Oxford, 2012); Douglas Delaney, "Mentoring the Canadian Corps: Imperial Officers and the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914–1918," *Journal of Military History* 77, no. 3 (2013): 931–53; Luke Flanagan, "Canadians in Bexhill-on-Sea during the First World War: A Reflection of Canadian Nationhood?" *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 27, no. 2 (2014): 131–48.
 - 15 Nathan Greenfield, *Baptism of Fire: The Second Battle of Ypres and the Forging of Canada, April 1915* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2007); Andrew Iarocci, *Shoestring Soldiers: 1st Canadian Division at War, 1914–1915* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).
 - 16 Geoffrey Hayes, Andrew Iarocci, and Michael Bechtold, eds., *Vimy Ridge: A Reassessment* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2007); J.L. Granatstein, *The Greatest Victory: Canada's One Hundred Days, 1918* (Toronto: Oxford, 2014).
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- 19 See, for example, Mark Humphries, "War's Long Shadow: Masculinity, Medicine, and the Gendered Politics of Trauma, 1914–1939," *Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 3 (2010): 503–31; Kim Pelis, "Taking Credit: The Canadian Army Medical Corps and the British Conversion to Blood Transfusion in WWI," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 56, no. 3 (2001): 238–77; Dan Black and John Boileau, *Old Enough to Fight: Canada's Boy Soldiers in the First World War* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 2013); Jonathan Vance, *Objects of Concern: Canadian Prisoners through the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); Desmond Morton, *Silent Battle: Canadian Prisoners of War in Germany, 1914–1919* (Toronto: Key Porter, 1992); Teresa Iacobella, *Death or Deliverance: Canadian Court Martials in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014); Y.A. Bennett, ed., *Kiss the Kids for Dad, Don't Forget to Write: The Wartime Letters of George Timmins, 1916–18* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009); Jay Cassell, *The Secret Plague: Venereal Disease in Canada, 1838–1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); Craig Greenham, "Canadian Soldiers, an Imperial War, and America's National Pastime," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 42, no. 1 (2012): 34–50; J.J. Wilson, "Skating to Armageddon: Canada, Hockey, and the First World War," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 22, no. 3 (2005): 315–42; Andrew Horrall, "Keep-a-Fighting! Play the Game! Baseball and the Canadian Forces during the First World War," *Canadian Military History* 10, no. 2 (2001): 27–40. The strong relationship between sport and war was also evident in recruiting material that advertised chums' and sportsmen's battalions. See Paul Maroney, "The Great Adventure: The Context and Ideology of Recruiting in Ontario, 1914–1917," *Canadian Historical Review* 77, no. 1 (1996): 62–98. Nic Clarke explores the relationship between sport and war through the military career of the Ottawa hockey star, Frank McGee, who was held up as an example of how Canada's soldiers were the cream of the country's manhood. See "'The Greater and Grimmer Game': Sport as an Arbiter of Military Fitness in the British Empire—The Case of 'One-Eyed' Frank McGee," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no. 3/4 (2011): 604–22. On recreational services for soldiers, see Sarah Cozzi, "When You're A Long, Long Way From Home," *Canadian Military History* 20, no. 1 (2011): 45–60, and Jason Wilson, *Soldiers of Song: The Dumbells and Other Canadian Concert Parties of the First World War* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012).
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- 36 Joan Champ, “The Impact of the First World War on Saskatchewan Families,” prepared for Saskatchewan Western Development Museum’s “Winning the Prairie Gamble” 2005 Exhibit, 16 December 2002, www.wdm.ca/skteacherguide/WDMResearch/ImpactofWWI.pdf.
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TIMELINE

4 August 1914 | First World War begins

6 August 1914 | 19th Alberta Dragoons authorized by Department of Militia and Defence and recruited in Edmonton; absorbed as “A” Squadron Canadian Corps Cavalry Regiment

7 August 1914 | 9th Battalion authorized and recruited in Edmonton; reorganized to reinforce the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th battalions.

10 August 1914 | Canadian government announces an expeditionary force of 25,000

22 August 1914 | Passage of the War Measures Act

24 August 1914 | First troops arrive at the Valcartier training camp

30 September 1914 | Internment centre opens at the Lethbridge exhibition grounds

5 November 1914 | 3rd Regiment Canadian Mounted Rifles (CMR) authorized and recruited in Medicine Hat; absorbed by 1st and 2nd Battalion CMR

11 November 1914 | 31st Battalion authorized and recruited throughout Alberta

1 December 1914 | 12th Regiment CMR authorized and recruited in Calgary and Red Deer; absorbed into Canadian Cavalry Depot

1 December 1914 | 13th Regiment CMR authorized and recruited at Pincher Creek, Cardston, and Macleod; absorbed into various units

5 December 1914 | 50th Battalion authorized and recruited in Calgary

4 January 1915 | 49th Battalion authorized and recruited in Edmonton

24 January 1915 | 56th Battalion authorized and recruited in Calgary; absorbed into 9th Reserve Battalion

February 1915 | First Canadian troops arrive in France

12–15 March 1915 | Battle of Neuve Chappelle (Canada's baptism of fire)

21 April–25 May 1915 | Second Battle of Ypres

21 June 1915 | 66th Battalion authorized and recruited in Edmonton; absorbed into the 9th Reserve Battalion

28 June 1915 | 63rd Battalion authorized and recruited in Edmonton, Calgary, and Medicine Hat; absorbed into the 9th Reserve Battalion

4 July 1915 | Internment camps open in Banff National Park

1 September 1915 | 82nd Battalion authorized and recruited in Calgary; absorbed into the 9th Reserve Battalion

1 November 1915 | 89th Battalion authorized and recruited in Calgary; absorbed into the 9th Reserve Battalion and 97th Battalion

11 November 1915 | 137th Battalion authorized and recruited in Calgary; absorbed into the 21st Reserve Battalion

17 November 1915 | 113th Battalion authorized and recruited in Lethbridge

22 November 1915 | 138th Battalion authorized and recruited in Edmonton; absorbed into the 128th Battalion

26 November 1915 | 151st Battalion authorized and recruited in the federal ridings of Battle River, Victoria, Strathcona, and Red Deer; absorbed into the 7th and 9th Reserve Battalions

1 January 1916 | Prime Minister Borden commits Canada to a 500,000-man military

20 January 1916 | 187th Battalion authorized and recruited in the Red Deer district; absorbed into the 9th Reserve Battalion

21 January 1916 | 191st Battalion authorized and recruited in Macleod and district; re-organized in Canada as a draft giving depot battalion

25 January 1916 | 192nd Battalion authorized and recruited in Blairmore and district; absorbed into the 9th Reserve Battalion

28 January 1916 | 194th Battalion authorized and recruited in Edmonton; absorbed into the 9th Reserve Battalion

4 February 1916 | 202nd Battalion authorized and recruited in Edmonton; absorbed into the 9th Reserve Battalion

8 February 1916 | Internment centre opens at the Dominion Park Building in Jasper

23 February 1916 | 218th Battalion authorized and recruited in Edmonton; amalgamated with 211th Battalion and organized as the 8th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops

27 March–16 April 1916 | Battle of St. Eloi

28 April 1916 | Following Manitoba (28 January 1916) and Saskatchewan (14 March 1916), Alberta women gain the right to vote provincially with passage of the Equal Suffrage Statutory Law Amendment Act

- 2–13 June 1916 | Battle of Mount Sorrel
- 1 July 1916 | Beginning of the Somme campaign
- 12 July 1916 | Prohibition imposed in Alberta
- 1 October–11 November 1916 | Battle of Ancre Heights
- 9–14 April 1917 | Battle of Vimy Ridge
- 7 July 1917 | Liberal Arthur Sifton re-elected Alberta premier; resigns in August to join the Union government led by Robert Borden; Charles Stewart succeeds Sifton as premier
- 15–25 August 1917 | Battle for Hill 70
- 29 August 1917 | Passage of the Military Service Act
- 20 September 1917 | Passage of the Wartime Elections Act
- 27 October–10 November 1917 | Battle of Passchendaele
- 17 December 1917 | Unionists led by Robert Borden win the federal election; win 11 of 12 seats and 61 percent of the popular vote in Alberta
- 1 April 1918 | Federal prohibition order
- 8–11 August 1918 | Battle of Amiens
- 27 September–1 October 1918 | Battle for Canal du Nord
- 8–9 October 1918 | Battle of Cambrai
- 1–2 November 1918 | Battle of Valenciennes
- 11 November 1918 | Armistice ends the war

The Canadian Expeditionary Force on the Western Front, 1915-1918

