



# Supporting the Front



## The Battle of Vimy Ridge April 1917

Prepared by: Wayne Dauphinee



Signals



Service



Engineers



Ordnance



Forestry



Medical



Pioneers



Postal



Construction



Pay



Veterinary



Staff Clerks

Acknowledging the  
too often forgotten  
corps and units that  
were the backbone of  
the Canadian Corps'  
preparations for and  
support during the  
Battle of Vimy Ridge

**BUSHMEN & SAWMILL HANDS**



**WANTED**

**FOR THE**

**CANADIAN  
FORESTRY  
UNITS  
OVERSEAS**



**RECRUITING OFFICES**

The Canadian Forestry Corps provided lumber for the Allied war effort by cutting and preparing timber in the United Kingdom and on the continent of Europe in WW I. Forestry units also cleared terrain for the construction of installations such as airfields and runway, prepared railway ties, as well as lumber for the creation of barracks, road surfaces, ammunition crates, trench construction



Wood was required for huts, plank roads, boardwalks, revetting, and many other uses. #2 Forestry Detachment was set up in the Bois des Alleux and, with the help of infantry work parties, turned out 100,00 board feet of lumber weekly.





The Canadian Railway Corps had responsibility for the repair and construct of railways near the fighting front in France and Belgium. By war's end, the corps was more than 16,000 strong. The light railway hauled some 800 tons of ammunition, rations and other supplies forward every day over more than 20 miles of track and the wounded were evacuated to Field Dressing and Clearing Stations.



**The Corps constructed and maintained over 1500 miles of broad and narrow gauge rail lines.**



# TO BUILD ANYTHING TO FIGHT ANYTHING

A GOLDEN CHANCE FOR THE ARTISAN & MECHANIC



## 5<sup>TH</sup> OVERSEAS PIONEER BATTALION C.E.F.

ENGINEERS' ARMOURY  
578 WELLINGTON ST  
OFFICER COMMANDING  
LT COL. H. R. LORDLY, C.E. · 1916 · MONTREAL

Pioneer battalions maintained channels of communication and transport, dealt with the movement and handling of munitions, built and repaired various structures and fortifications. In doing so, they provided essentially the same services as engineering units, although they remained under infantry command. This anomaly was corrected in mid-1917, when pioneer units were reorganized and placed under direct control of the Engineers branch of the Canadian Corps.



The Corps required 600,000 gallons of water a day for troops, horses, and overheated guns. This required laying 72 km of pipeline and the construction of 24 pumping stations and 16 reservoirs (two of which held 50,000 gallons of water each).



# **Nº. 1 OVERSEAS CONSTRUCTION BATTALION**

**O. C. LIEUT.-COL. B. RIPLEY C.E.**

(Late Construction Engineer with C.P.R.)

Commanded entirely by Engineers and Construction  
Superintendents.

## **WANTED**

Bridge and Building Men

Railway Construction Men

General Construction Men

Skilled and unskilled workmen

To rebuild and repair works being destroyed by the enemy.

WE  
NEED

# **YOU**

Your place in this battalion is  
vacant. Better come and fill it

## **NOW**

**HEADQUARTERS: 149 PEEL St.  
MONTREAL**

The Canadian Military engineers were responsible for construction of defences, sanitation systems, water supplies, bridging, and assisting with trench raids. One of their principal functions was to dig tunnels for mines underneath enemy trenches, with which to plant explosives to destroy them.



Engineers repaired 40 km of road, reconditioned or repaired 32 km of tramway, and built 4.8 km of plank road. One 1.5 km section of plank road took 3,000 men, working in shifts, three days to build.



Engineers used existing tunnels and caves to build an underground network plus digging 12-13 subways totalling 5 Kilometres. Considering that a good miner could dig about 7 metres a day that is a remarkable achievement.



**Signallers, along with Pioneer and Infantry work parties of up to 500 men, buried 21 miles of signal cable and 66 miles of telephone wire. In one of the Divisions this work took 5,000 man-days.**

# **MEN WANTED**

## **CANADIAN ARMY SERVICE CORPS**

**FOR OVERSEAS SERVICE**

### **Horse and Mechanical Transport**

Carpenters, Saddlers, Blacksmiths,  
Chauffeurs, Turners, Fitters,  
Cleaners and Loaders.

### **SUPPLY SECTION**

Butchers, Bakers, Office and  
Store Clerks.

APPLY IN PERSON OR WRITING TO  
C.A.S.C. HEADQUARTERS, ARMORIES, TORONTO.

The Canadian Army Service Corps (CASC) provide all transportation and supply services to the Army. Initially utilizing horse drawn transport with the introduction of motorized vehicles, the CASC carried commodities of a greater range and of greater weights. Motorized transportation also resulted in expanded responsibilities such as driving ambulances and engineer pontoon vehicles, carrying all natures of ammunition, and mobile repair and recovery



**40,300 tons of ammunition (1.6 million rounds), 828,000 full day rations, and 100,000 day rations of forage were stockpiled in the Corps area.**

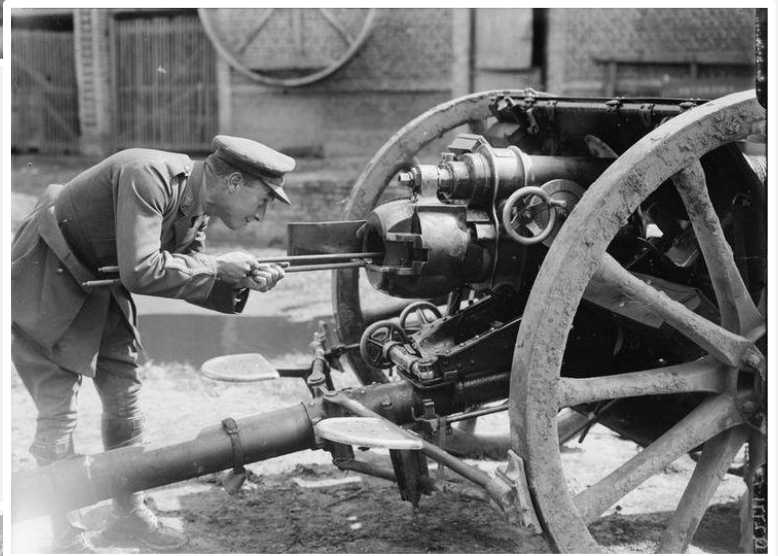




During the war, nearly 2,000 officers and men served in the Canadian Ordnance Corps. There were three Ordnance Mobile Workshops in France and Belgium and five depots, including a Base Depot, in England. The units repaired field, heavy and siege guns, their carriages and mountings. They also repaired personal weapons and horse transport vehicles of all kinds.



During the Somme campaign, there was 100 rounds of ammunition per gun on-site or in the pipeline. For Vimy, 1,000 rounds per gun were in situ.





The Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) played an essential role in keeping soldiers alive. Founded in 1904, the Corps underwent massive expansion from 1914 to 1918. Casualties among Canadian troops in France and Belgium were so heavy that more than half of all Canadian physicians served overseas to treat them. In total, 21,453 men and women wore the CAMC badge. Many of these doctors and stretcher-bearers served close to the front, and the medical service suffered 1,325 casualties during the war.

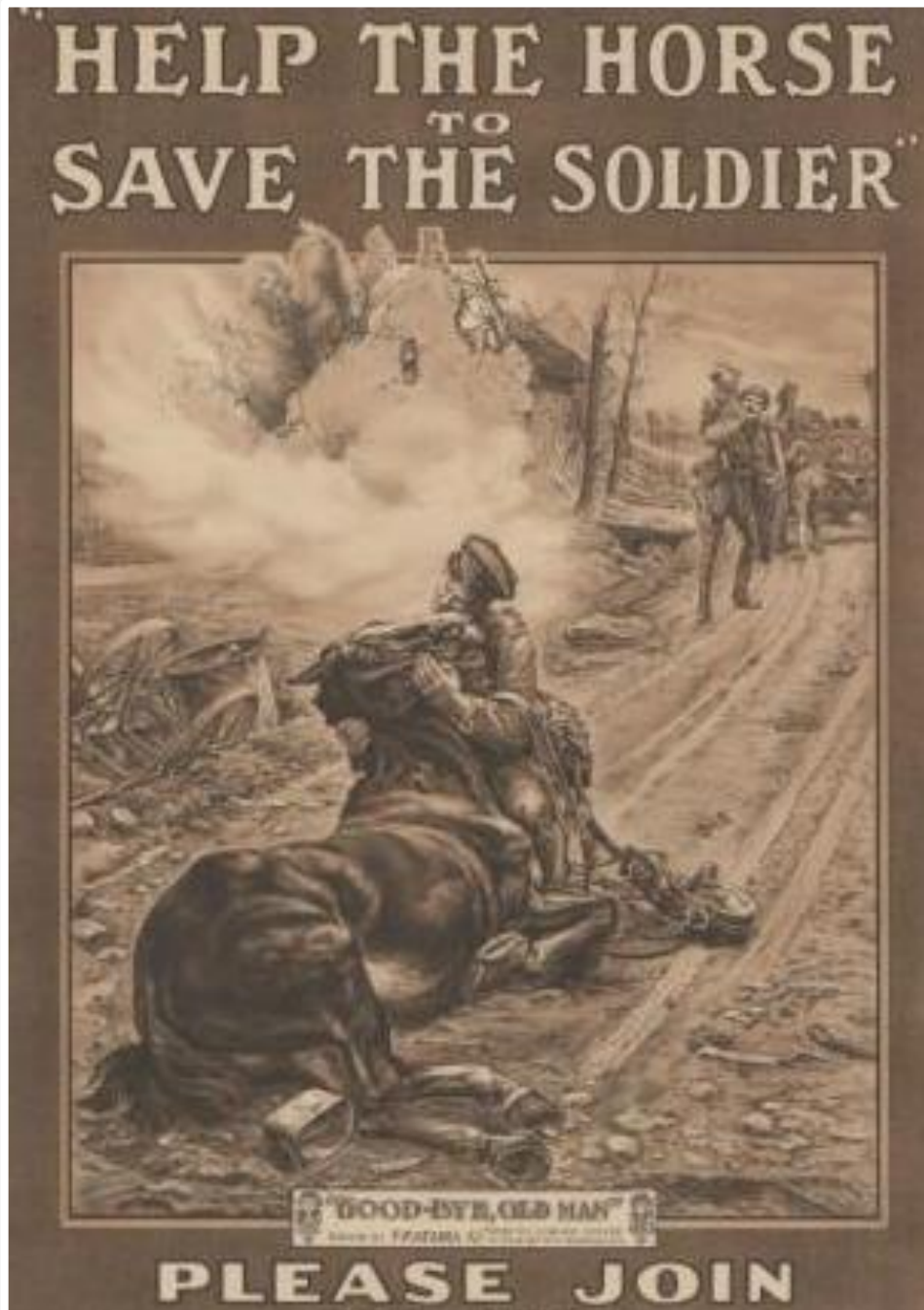


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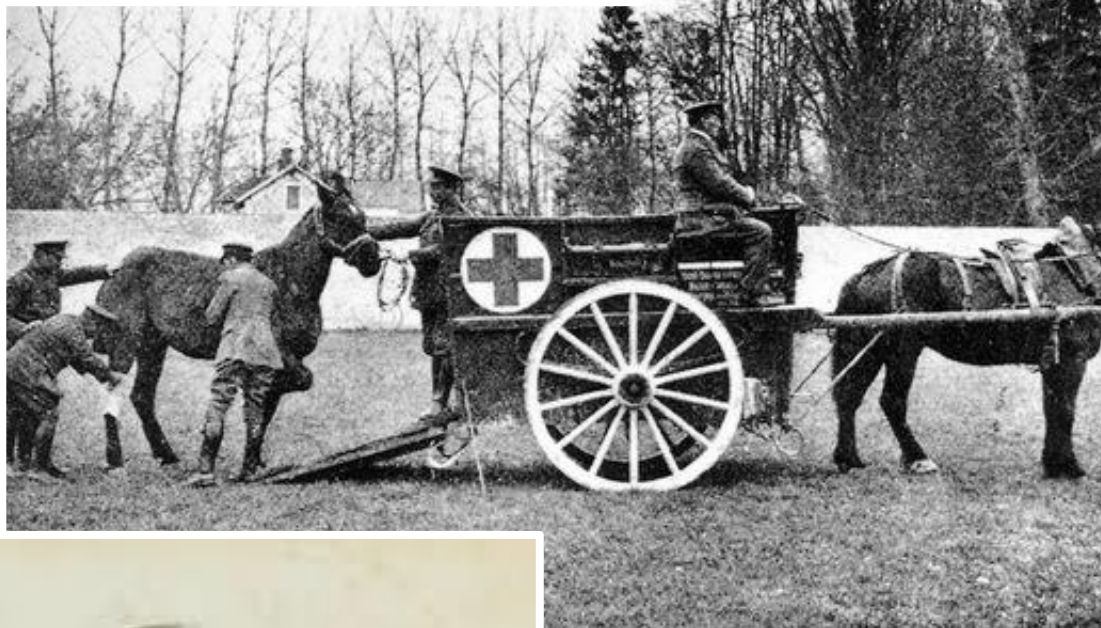


Extraordinary coordination resulted in the rapid rescue and evacuation Canadian medical services of 8000 casualties over four days.





The Canadian Army Veterinary Corps included 72 officers and 756 other ranks, who managed to treat some 24,000 horses. Horse casualties were moved by mobile sections to evacuation stations, and surgical and other treatment was done at base hospitals. The Corps also included a remount service to provide reinforcement horses. After the war, some veterinarians remained in Europe to oversee the disposal of animals, with the last officer returning in 1920.



The Corps veterinarians treated over 24,000 horses and mules



**Lest We Forget**