

Battle of Vimy Ridge

France, April 9th-12th

Why was Vimy Ridge Important?

- Important place because of high ground in a flat landscape.
- Good view over surrounding area.



Impossible?

Germans had fortified the ridge with:

- underground tunnels
- three rows of trenches
- massive rows of barbed wire
- machine gun nests
- massive artillery

Lieutenant-General Sir Julian Byng

- Commanded the Canadian Corps
- Canadian troops called themselves “Byng Boys”



Planning

- The 4 divisions of the Canadian Corps spent months planning an attack.
 - Dug tunnels
 - Practiced on similar terrain
 - Gave soldiers lots of information to prepare them
 - Used observation balloons to see German movements

The week of suffering

- April 2, 1917 – started the largest artillery barrage in Canadian military history.
- For 1 week they fired over 1 000 000 shells.
- Attack was loud enough to be heard in London.



Easter Monday, April 9th, Dawn

- Snowstorm
- An estimated 15,000 Canadians rose from the trenches and advanced towards the ridge in a **creeping barrage** (soldiers kept pace with the artillery, which paved the way in front).
- The Canadians captured most of the ridge on the 9th, and the remaining portions of it by the 12th.



Casualties/Wounded/POWs

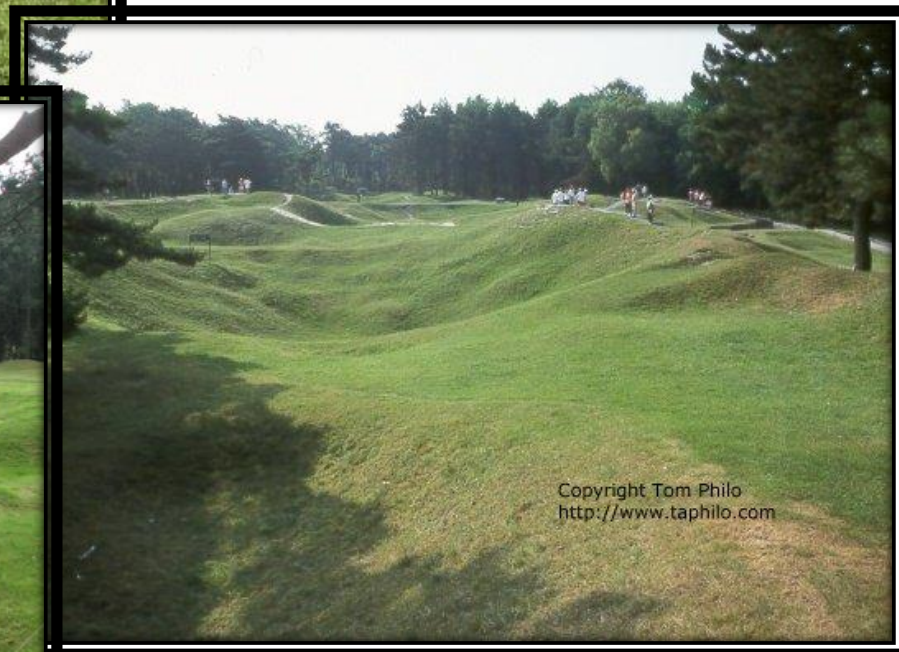
- 10 602 Canadians wounded; 3 598 dead.
- 20 000 Germans dead; 4000 POWs



Vimy Ridge Today



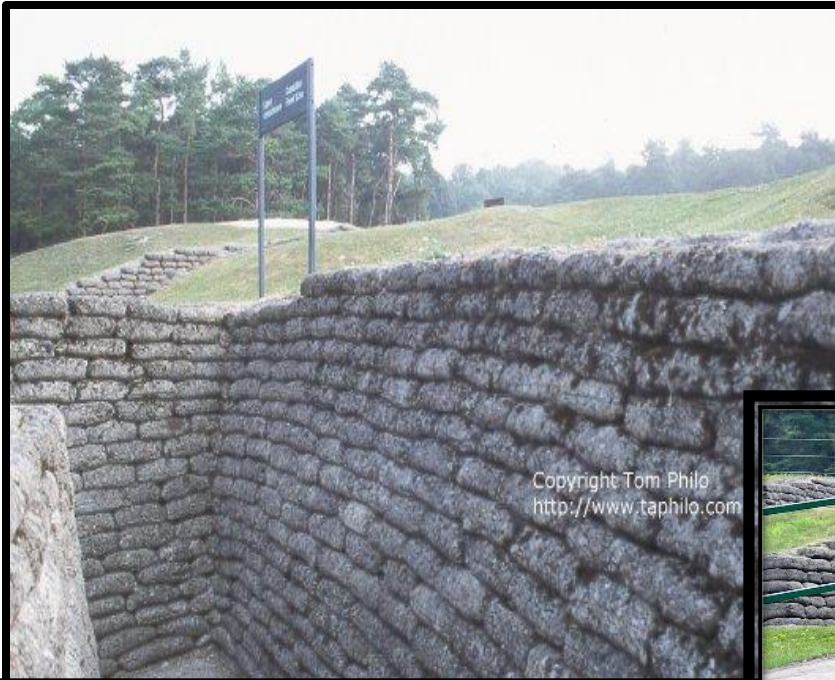
- Vimy Ridge is now a memorial site owned and maintained by Canada.
- The two pillars represent Canada and France



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- This is an artillery shell that pierced the ceiling of a tunnel at Vimy. It is still a 'live' shell.







Vimy Ridge

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlRI94wLH0I&feature=relmfu>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hb4xmcjRQCw&feature=relmfu>