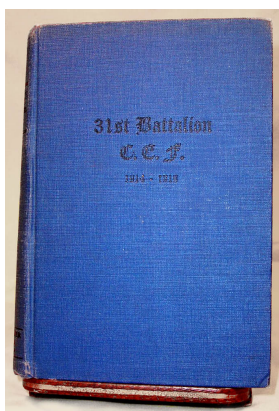


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# History of the 31st Battalion C.E.F., Nov. 1914 to June 1919

by Maj. H. C. Singer & A. A. Peebles - c1938

## CA0207



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*History of*  
Thirty-First Battalion  
C. E. F.

From its organization November, 1914  
to its demobilization June, 1919

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*With Nominal Roll and Information as to all  
Members of the Unit.*

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MATERIAL COMPILED AND ASSEMBLED  
BY  
H. C. SINGER

FINAL REVISION AND WRITING  
BY  
A. A. PEEBLES

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## *Introduction*

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The passing years have stressed the necessity for a history of the 31st Canadian Infantry Battalion. The task of compiling a history of a battalion is not a light one. To fit the actions of so small a unit into the operations of the British Army in the Great War is very exacting. Naturally the vision of a battalion is limited. Those further from the scenes of operations could judge the progress often more accurately than the actors engaged. So much confusion exists in the minds of survivors of an action that it is almost impossible to untangle the knotted threads of circumstances to arrive at the actual facts. As the years pass the accuracy of certain details becomes impaired, the actors die or disperse, and each new investigation but adds to the confusion.

The only reliable authority, therefore, is the regimental War Diary.

I have recorded seemingly most trivial incidents of dates, places, duties and fatigues, because I desired to acquaint the casual reader with an intimate view of the life of a unit in the field. And it may be that the recording of these trivial incidents will recall a memory of some one who took part in this battalion's operations, that it will be to him as something important in the Country where Death was all important. If then to some this reading will awaken memories that have escaped them for a time, memories they desired to cherish of comrade, time and place, the author is most happy and in that measure of success is his reward.

It is something of a revelation to study the growth of a unit composed of citizen soldiers,—men that laid aside the occupations of lawyers, bank clerks, cowboys and miners and assumed the grim task of war. It is commendable that in the many engagements in which the 31st Canadian Infantry Battalion took part that the unit yielded no ground and failed in no task or duty imposed on it.

If there are mistakes I accept the sole responsibility for them and crave pardon if by them I have wounded anyone's feelings.

The kindness of many I cannot pass without recording my appreciation.

Major General A. H. Bell, C.M.G., D.S.O., who kindly loaned me his personal diary, maps, orders and reports. I am indebted to the 31st Can. Bn. Association for its kind permission to write this history, and its untiring efforts in the author's behalf: and to the Historical Section of the Department of National Defence for its assistance in gathering for me the necessary statistics. My thanks are due to the Royal Colonial Institute of London, England, for allowing me access and use of its records, and particularly to make use of the splendid work of Sir Frederick Lucas, "The Empire at War," published by the Oxford Press Limited.

I am indebted to Lieut. Colonel M. E. Patterson, Capt. W. M. Harris, Mr. C. F. Steele, Mr. J. King, Mr. H. L. Seamans and lastly but by no means least, to Miss M. R. Parker and Miss E. Wight for their loyal and efficient assistance.

H. C. SINGER

Lethbridge, Alberta.

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## *Appreciation*

The 31st Battalion Association desires to express its thanks to the following persons who although they were not members of the Unit, did the work necessary for the completion of the History :-

To MAJOR H. C. SINGER who as official historian, compiled and assembled material. This required the expenditure of much time and effort and personal expense on his part, for which he asked nothing in return; also to Mr. A. A. PEEBLES for completion of the material presented to the Association by MAJOR SINGER.

Different members of the Association also gave much of their time during the ten years which have passed since the History was commenced.

Earlier in the war the country in the neighbourhood of Kemmel had witnessed some severe fighting, evidence of which could still be seen in "No Man's Land," where decaying corpses littered the ground. At first the Germans had advanced far into Belgium along this sector, only to be driven back again, pursued by British cavalry. Once more the Germans had advanced upon Kemmel, the line eventually stabilizing itself upon the positions occupied when the 6th Canadian Brigade first entered the trenches.

A somewhat vivid commentary on the gruesomeness of war is presented in the description of these relics of bygone battles by Pte. Don Fraser, of the 31st Battalion, who writes as follows:

"When on sentry duty at G3 on the morning of November 2nd, I was surprised to see a couple of fellows in 'No Man's Land' bending over something. It was foggy at the time and extreme vision was about 90 yards. At the moment I thought they were Germans and was just on the point of covering them, when I saw they were our own men. Being curious, and my sentry period just up, I went over the parapet to see what was the matter. It was a dead Gordon Highlander, and they were going through his clothes gingerly. A few yards away were some more dead. We found out later that there was a fairly even line of dead three to four hundred yards long, principally Gordon Highlanders, though there were a few evidently belonging to an English regiment. Most of the bodies were skeletons, or nearly so, and fell to pieces when moved. Some were partly buried. One Highlander was fairly intact. On two of them we found pay books, watches, and some money. Their names were Robb and Anderson and they belonged to Aberdeen, Scotland. Robb was married and had several letters in his possession. One was written by himself to his wife — and of course was never posted. It was dated December, 1914. He was very optimistic regarding the war, and even went so far as to say that it would be finished in a week or two, and that he expected to be home by Christmas. His paybook had one entry, a payment made in October. He was clothed in winter garb and had his equipment over a light coloured goatskin coat. He was lying facing the German line and his rifle with bayonet fixed lay about a foot to his right. One could con-

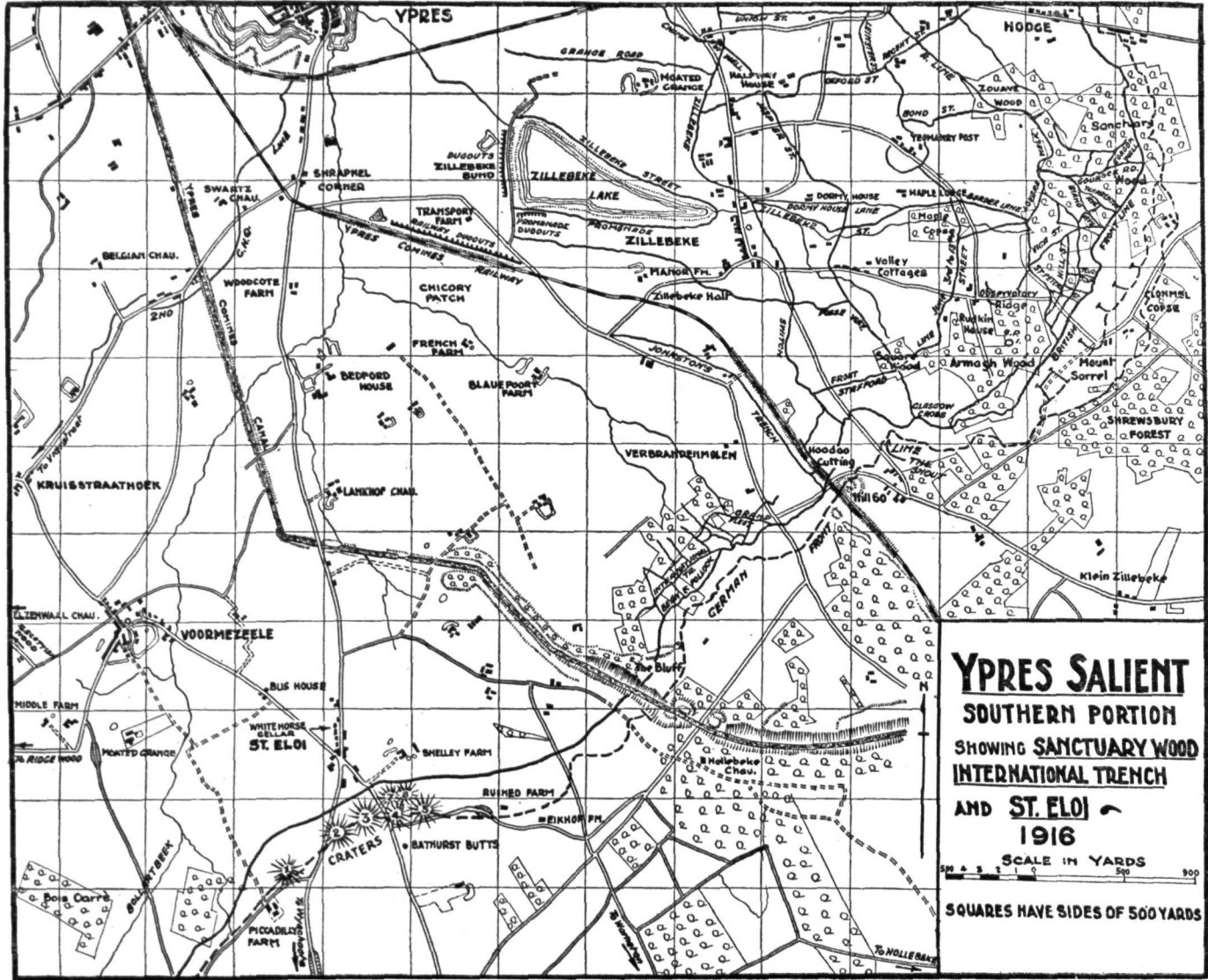


"A" Company, training in Calgary.



Remains of Sugar Factory, Courcelette (Arras-Bapaume Road in foreground).





**YPRES SALIENT**  
**SOUTHERN PORTION**  
**SHOWING SANCTUARY WOOD**  
**INTERNATIONAL TRENCH**  
**AND ST. ELOI**  
**1916**  
SCALE IN YARDS  
900  
SQUARES HAVE SIDES OF 500 YARDS

NOMINAL ROLL OF OFFICERS, WARRANT OFFICERS,  
NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE  
31ST BATTALION, CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

## LEGEND

- + Killed in Action.  
✱ Died of Wounds.  
□ Missing, Presumed Dead.  
÷ Died of Disease.  
O Wounded.  
× Prisoner of War.

## AWARDS

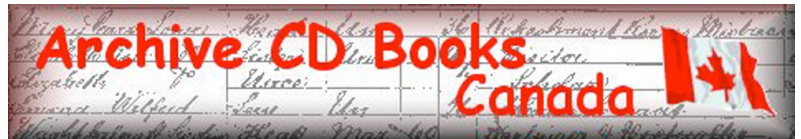
- V.C.—Victoria Cross.  
D.S.O.—Distinguished Service Order.  
M.C.—Military Cross.  
C.M.G.—Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.  
M. in D.—Mentioned in Dispatches.  
O.B.E.—Order of the British Empire.  
M.B.E.—Member of the British Empire.  
D.C.M.—Distinguished Conduct Medal.  
M.M.—Military Medal.  
Belg. C. de G.—Belgian Croix de Guerre.  
Belg. Dec. Mil.—Belgian Decoration Militaire.  
M.S.M.—Meritorious Service Medal.  
Med. Mil.—Medaille Militaire.  
Russ. Cr. St. G.—Russian Cross of St. George.  
Fr. Med. d'hon. avec glaives (en Argent)—French Medaille  
d'honneur avec glaives (en Argent).

## OFFICERS

NUMBER.	RANK IN UNIT.	NAME.	CASUALTIES.	AWARDS.
.....	Lt.	Ahern, E. G. ....	.....	.....
79034	Lt.	Anderson, J. M. ....	.....	.....
79359	Lt.	Appleby, N. ....	+	M.M. and bar
80079	Lt.	Arbuckle, John Farabee .....	+	.....
.....	Lt.	Ashburner, E. ....	O	.....
.....	Capt.	Bailey, Edgar Ernest E. ....	O	.....
79454	Lt.	Bain, G. E. ....	.....	.....
696296	Lt.	Baker, H. A. ....	+	.....
.....	Lt.	Bannan, W. T. ....	O	M.C.
79166	Lt.	Bannard, A. W. ....	O ×	M.M.
.....	Lt.	Barnes, R. H. ....	+	.....
108082	Lt.	Barnes, Wilfred R. ....	+	M.C.
79615	Lt.	Bateman, Chas. Arthur .....	+	.....
.....	Lt.	Beaumont, H. C. C. ....	O	M.C.
.....	Lt.-Col.	Bell, Arthur Henry .....	O	D.S.O., C.M.G., M. in D. (6), Fr. C. de G.
696125	Lt.	Benn, W. A. ....	O	.....
.....	Capt.	Blair, Alfred .....	O	.....
79173	Capt.	Blake, G. ....	.....	M. in D.
.....	Lt.	Booth, Alex. Chas. Taylor .....	.....	.....
.....	Lt.	Boucher, Edgar Allen .....	+	.....
.....	Lt.	Bradburn, W. C. ....	O	.....

NUMBER.	NAME.	CASUALTIES.	AWARDS.
808595	Tiltman, E. W.	.....	.....
3205483	Timm, A. F.	.....	.....
80064	Timmis, F.	O	.....
808518	Tindall, J. F.	+	.....
438918	Toal, T.	.....	.....
174762	Todd, A. T.	O	.....
696009	Todd, P. F.	□	.....
101238	Tole, F. E.	+	.....
3205675	Tomlinson, V. L.	O	.....
183412	Tompkins, D. L.	O	.....
79637	Tomkins, S. T.	.....	.....
696734	Tooke, H. A.	O	M.M.
696057	Toole, A. R.	O	.....
79713	Toole, E.	+	.....
79478	Toomey, W. G.	.....	.....
3207312	Torgerson, J. S.	O	.....
80094	Torrens, E.	✱	.....
435418	Towers, R.	.....	.....
79475	Towler, A.	.....	.....
79479	Townend, W.	O	.....
447228	Townsend, C. A.	O	.....
79477	Townsend, C. W.	O	M.M.
447322	Townsend, D. M.	O	.....
447375	Townsend, W. G.	O	.....
425426	Townson, H.	O	.....
79724	Toyne, F.	O	.....
100049	Tracey, A.	O	.....
811643	Tran, F.	O	.....
79886	Treavor, C.	+	.....
79787	Tregellas, W.	.....	M.M.
696850	Treford, A. R.	.....	M.M.
79982	Trenholme, T. W.	.....	.....
3207368	Tretvold, T.	.....	.....
3206284	Trindle, D.	O	.....
252218	Trotter, A. V.	.....	.....
446768	Trotter, J.	O	.....
425428	Troyer, J. J.	.....	.....
425676	Trumbley, E. R.	O	.....
1013449	Tucker, J. M.	.....	.....

NUMBER.	NAME.	CASUALTIES.	AWARDS.
425431	Tull, H.	+	.....
160995	Tulloch, W. R. A.	.....	.....
2115234	Tumber, G.	O	.....
3206330	Turgeon, P.	.....	.....
80062	Turnbull, J. H.	O	.....
160380	Turnbull, P. M.	O	.....
446014	Turner, A.	O	.....
80087	Turner, A. H.	.....	.....
183783	Turner, A. H.	✱	.....
2448501	Turner, D.	.....	.....
79638	Turner, F. B.	.....	.....
115785	Turner, G.	.....	.....
79985	Turner, H.	O	Fr. Med. d'hon. avec glaives (en Argent)
434964	Turner, H. H.	O	.....
79476	Turner, H. M.	O	.....
79681	Turner, J.	O	.....
79264	Turner, J. M.	.....	.....
79480	Turner, R. M.	.....	.....
79682	Turner, W.	.....	.....
447803	Turner, W.	O	.....
100106	Turner, W. H.	✱	.....
79502	Turney, H. M.	.....	.....
79986	Tutt, J.	.....	.....
79784	Twissell, H. B.	.....	.....
79884	Tydd, E. F. P.	.....	.....
446027	Tyler, F. G.	O	.....
696509	Tyson, J.	+	.....
696153	Tyson, J.	+	.....
3205531	Umbel, J. G.	O	.....
79785	Underwood, G.	O	.....
2288432	Undheim, T.	.....	.....
427484	Unwin, E. W.	O	.....
100686	Upham, A. H.	O	.....
184073	Upton, H. W.	O	M.M.
79987	Ure, A.	.....	.....
446735	Urquhart, R.	O	.....
434172	Usher, H.	.....	.....



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