



**Sapper Robert Donald Bremner, (Number 860003) of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Company, Canadian Engineers, Canadian Expeditionary Force, is buried in Aix-Noulette Communal Cemetery Extension: Grave reference I.Q.23.**

**His occupations prior to military service recorded as both those of a station agent and a telegraph agent, Robert Donald Bremner had undergone at least some of his schooling at Bishop Feild College\* in St. John's, Newfoundland, his place of birth. There appears to be no available record of his migration from the Dominion of Newfoundland to the Dominion of Canada but, by the time of his enlistment, his place of residence was recorded as being Ruddell, in the Province of Saskatchewan.**

***\*His name appears on the school's Roll of Honour.***

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Having enlisted in the city of Winnipeg on April 27 of 1916, Robert Donald Bremner then presented himself for medical examination on April 28, and attested on that same day. He was immediately attached to the 179<sup>th</sup> (*Cameron Highlanders of Canada*) Overseas Battalion\* which had been formed that February, just two months earlier.

*\*Not to be mistaken – as seemingly at times in Sapper Bremner’s records – with the 79<sup>th</sup> (Cameron Highlanders of Canada), a militia regiment – also from Winnipeg – formed in 1910, and which was to serve to re-enforce other units. Militia units had been formed to serve in the defence of the nation and were thus forbidden to operate outside the borders of the country. Nothing prevented them, however, from recruiting personnel who were then passed along to the newly-forming Overseas Battalions.*

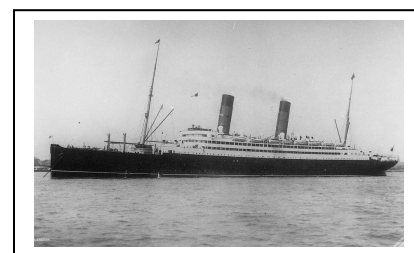
By the time that he was ordered transferred to Valcartier Mobilisation Camp to the north of Québec City on August 6-7, Private Bremner was in fact *Sapper* Bremner, having been attached on July 21-22 to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Troop of the Canadian Engineers to serve as a signaller. He was to remain at Valcartier for a further twelve weeks.

(Right: *Canadian artillery being put through its paces at the Camp at Valcartier. In 1914, the main Army Camp in Canada was at Petawawa. However, its location in Ontario – and away from the Great Lakes – made it impractical for the despatch of troops overseas. Valcartier was apparently built within weeks of the Declaration of War. – photograph, from a later period of the War, from *The War Illustrated*)*



On October 31 of 1916, the 19<sup>th</sup> Draft from the Canadian Engineers Training Depot took ship on board His Majesty’s Transport *Caronia* at Halifax. The vessel sailed for the United Kingdom on the next day, November 1, and docked in the English west-coast port of Liverpool on November 11.

Sapper Bremner and his unit had not traversed the Atlantic alone; also having taken passage had been the 110<sup>th</sup>, the 114<sup>th</sup>, the 131<sup>st</sup>, the 162<sup>nd</sup> and the 209<sup>th</sup> Battalions of Canadian Infantry, close on six-thousand military personnel in total.



(Right: *The image of HMT Caronia is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries Web-site.*)

From Liverpool, Sapper Bremner’s 19<sup>th</sup> Draft was despatched south-east by train to Crowborough in East Sussex, and to the Canadian Engineers Training Depot which had been established there.

It was at Crowborough that he contracted a case of pleurisy and, although it was described as being *mild*, it was apparently serious enough for him to be hospitalized for more than a month. Thus Sapper Bremner was admitted into the Ontario Military Hospital at Orpington on December 21, to remain there until being released back *to duty* on January 26 of the New Year, 1917.

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It is not totally clear as to exactly *where* Sapper Bremner reported *to duty* on that January 26, possibly back to the Canadian Engineers Training Depot at Crowborough.

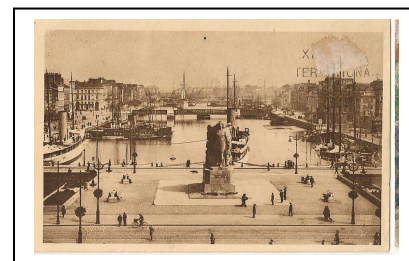
Some six months later, on June 21, 1917, Sapper Bremner – having been temporarily attached to the 19<sup>th</sup> (Reserve) Battalion at the Canadian military establishment at Bramshott – was one of a re-enforcement draft to sail to the Continent, likely from Southampton to the French port-city of Le Havre. At the nearby coastal town of Étapes was the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Base Depot and the draft was *taken on strength* there two days later, on June 23.



(Right above: *Royal Canadian Legion flags amongst others adorn the interior of St. Mary's Church in the English village of Bramshott. – photograph from 2016*)

(Right below: *The French port-city of Le Havre at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

From Le Havre a draft of twenty-five *other ranks*, Sapper Bremner among that number, was ordered to report to the 1<sup>st</sup> Entrenching Battalion\* which was stationed at Villers-au-Bois as a holding and distribution unit for re-enforcements bound for the Canadian units in the area. The draft arrived at Villers-au-Bois on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, to be held there before being at least partially distributed on July 4 to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Companies, Canadian Engineers, both serving with the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division.



*\*In the early days of the conflict, infantry battalions dug their own trenches, ditches and whatever else needed to be dug. It proved not to be a very efficient method of getting things done, thus specialized units were created, drafting men of the right physique and stamina, and also those who had experience in that sort of work. When these battalions were disbanded, many of the personnel were transferred to engineering units.*

*These entrenching battalions were often strategically positioned behind the front lines – where there was always construction work to do – but were also prepared to move up to the forward area as and when needed. Thus they were deemed to be useful as re-enforcement pools where drafts could be sent from Base Depot to work until such time as the combat units were ready to receive the new arrivals.*

\* \* \* \* \*

As its number implies, the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division – in fact, it had been designated as simply the *Canadian Division* until the advent of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Division - had been the earliest force from the Dominion to serve on the *Western Front*, having disembarked in France as of February of 1915.

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The Canadian Division, and the three others subsequently to arrive, comprised among its units three Field Companies of the Canadian Engineers - in the case of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division these being the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Companies - to the last of which was to be attached, in July of 1917, Sapper Bremner.

Some twenty-nine months prior to Sapper Bremner's arrival, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, at the outset of its service on the Continent, had served in the Fleurbaix Sector in northern France; towards the middle of April of 1915 it had moved into the *Ypres Salient* in the Kingdom of Belgium. Many of its units had arrived there only days before – others were still arriving the day of – the German attack of April 22 when chlorine gas had been used as a weapon of war for the first time.

Later to become an everyday event, and with the introduction of protective measures such as advanced gas-masks, the gas was to prove no more dangerous than the rest of the military arsenals of the warring nations. But on this first occasion, to inexperienced troops as yet without the means to combat it, the yellow-green cloud of chlorine proved overwhelming.



(Right above: *The very first protection against gas was to urinate on a handkerchief which was then held over the nose and mouth. However, all the armies were soon producing gas-masks, some of the first of which are seen here being tested by Scottish troops. – from either Illustration or Le Miroir*)

The cloud was noticed at five o'clock in the afternoon of April 22. In the sector subjected to the most concentrated use of the gas, the French Colonial troops to the Canadian left wavered then broke, leaving the left flank of the Canadians uncovered.



(Right: *Entitled: Bombardement d'Ypres, le 5 juillet 1915 – from Illustration*)

By the 23<sup>rd</sup> the situation had become relatively stable – at least temporarily - and the positions in the vicinity of Sint-Juliaan held until the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> when a further retirement became necessary. At times there had been breaches in the defensive lines but, fortunately, either the Germans were unaware of how close they were to a breakthrough, or else they did not have the means to exploit the situation. And then the Canadians closed the gaps.



(Right above: *The Memorial to the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division – the Brooding Soldier – stands just to the south of the village of Langemark (at the time Langemarck) at the Vancouver Crossroads where the Canadians withstood the German attack – abetted by gas – at Ypres (today Ieper) in April of 1915. – photograph from 2010*)

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In the middle of May, not two weeks after the confrontation at Ypres, the Canadian Division had moved down the line to the south, further into France and into the areas of Festubert and Givenchy. The French were about to undertake a major offensive just further south again and had asked for British support.

There at Festubert a series of attacks and counter-attacks took place in which the British High Command managed to gain three kilometres of ground but also contrived to destroy, by using the unimaginative tactic of the frontal assault, what, after Ypres, was left of the British pre-War professional Army.

Nor did the units of the Canadian Division or the Indian troops - the 7<sup>th</sup> (*Meerut*) Division\* also having been ordered to serve at Festubert – fare any better than the British, each contingent incurring over two-thousand casualties before the offensive drew to a close.



The French effort – also using the same tactics - was likewise a failure but on an even larger scale; it cost them just over one hundred-thousand *killed, wounded and missing*.

*\*The Indian troops also served – and lost heavily – in other battles in this area in 1915 before being transferred to the Middle East.*

(Right above: *A one-time officer who served in the Indian Army during the Second World War, pays his respects to those who fell, at the Indian Memorial at Neuve-Chapelle. – photograph from 2010(?)*)

At the end of May and beginning of June, the Division was ordered further down the line to Givenchy-les-la-Bassée, a small village not far distant from Festubert.

Despatched once more into the forward trenches to support British efforts, incurring perhaps lesser casualty numbers than at Festubert - but repeating the same sort of mistakes - on or about June 23 the Canadian Division was beginning to withdraw from the area of Givenchy\*. Its units moved northwards, in a piece-meal fashion, crossing the Franco-Belgian frontier to congregate in the Ploegsteert Sector, just across the border.

*\*Since the place is oft-times referred to simply as Givenchy it is worthwhile knowing that there are two other Givenchys in the region: Givenchy-le-Noble, to the west of Arras, and Givenchy-en-Gohelle, a village which lies in the shadow of a crest of land which dominates the Douai Plain: Vimy Ridge.*

There the Canadian Division remained until the following spring. In the following months it became well-acquainted with the Franco-Belgian area between Armentières in the east – any further east would have been in German-occupied territory – Bailleul in the west, and Messines in the north; given the route marches enumerated in the War Diary and the itineraries used, it would have been surprising had it been otherwise.



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**(Preceding page: *Some of the farmland in the area of Messines, a mine crater from the time of the 1917 British offensive in the foreground – photograph from 2014*)**

**In April of 1916 the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division – the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division had by then arrived, in September of 1915 – moved northwards into a southern sector of the *Ypres Salient*. On this second posting there, the Canadians would have to wait for some two months before any serious infantry activity came about. When it did, it happened on the front held by the also recently-arrived 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division; but the situation had soon deteriorated such that units from the other Canadian forces were drawn into it.**

**From June 2 to 14 was fought the battle for *Mount Sorrel* and for the area of *Sanctuary Wood*, *Maple Copse* and *Hill 60*, between the German Army and the Canadian Corps. The Canadians had been preparing an attack of their own on the enemy positions which dominated the Canadian trenches when the Germans delivered an offensive, overrunning the forward areas and, in fact, rupturing the Canadian lines, an opportunity which fortunately they never exploited.**



**(Right above: *Remnants of Canadian trenches dating from 1915-1916 at Sanctuary Wood – photograph from 2010*)**

**The Commander of the Canadian Corps, Sir Julian Byng, reacted by organizing a counter-attack on the following day, an assault intended to, at a minimum, recapture the lost ground.**



**(Right above: *The Canadian memorial which stands atop Mount Sorrel just to the south-west of the city of Ypres (today leper) whose spires and towers may be perceived in the distance. – photograph from 1914*)**

**Badly organized, the operation was a dismal failure, many of the intended attacks never went in – those that did went in piecemeal and the assaulting troops were cut to pieces - the enemy remained where he was and the Canadians were left to count an extremely heavy casualty list.**



**(Right above: *Maple Copse, the scene of heavy fighting in June of 1916, and its cemetery wherein lie numerous Canadians – photograph from 2014*)**

**Ten days later the Canadians again counter-attacked, on this occasion being better-informed, better-prepared and better-supported. The lost ground for the most part was recovered, both sides were back where they had started – and the cemeteries were a little fuller.**



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**(Preceding page: *Railway Dugouts Burial Ground (Transport Farm) today contains twenty-four hundred fifty-nine burials and commemorations – photograph from 2014*)**

**The *Mount Sorrel* crisis contained, the Canadian Division remained in the Salient until the latter part of August. Its units were then withdrawn to areas in north-western France for intense training. Their places in and about Ypres were taken by units coming from the area of *the Somme*, units in dire need of re-enforcement, re-organization and rest\*.**

***The Somme* was now where the Canadians were to be ordered to serve.**

***\*One of those depleted battalions was that of the Newfoundland Regiment. Having arrived in the Ypres Salient in early August, it was to be posted there until October 8 when it was ordered back to the Somme.***

**(Right: *The entrance – reconstructed after the War - to the quarters of ‘A’ Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, in the ramparts of Ypres where it was posted in 1916 – photograph from 2010*)**



**By that September of 1916, the *First Battle of the Somme* had been ongoing for two months. It had begun with the disastrous attack of July 1, an assault costing the British Army fifty-seven thousand casualties – in the short space of only four hours - of which nineteen thousand dead.**

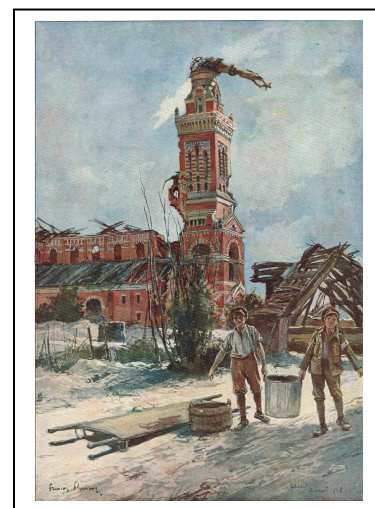
**(Right: *The Canadian Memorial which stands by the side of the Albert-Bapaume Road near the village of Courcellette – photograph from 2015*)**



**(Right below: *Canadian soldiers working in Albert, the already-damaged basilica in the background – from Illustration*)**

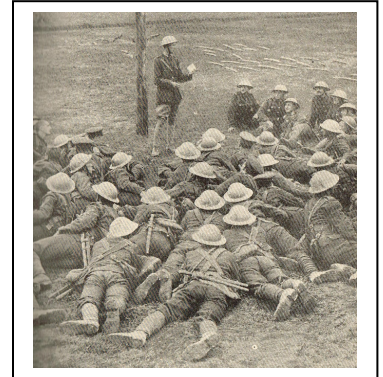
**On that first day of *1<sup>st</sup> Somme*, all but two small units of the attacking divisions had been troops from the British Isles, those exceptions being the two-hundred men of the Bermuda Rifles serving in the Lincolnshire Regiment, and the eight-hundred personnel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment which lost so heavily on that day at Beaumont-Hamel.**

**As the battle had progressed, other troops, from the Empire (*Commonwealth*), were brought in; at first it had been the South African Brigade (July 15), then the Australians and New Zealanders (July 23) before the Canadians entered the fray on August 30 to become part of a third general offensive. Their first major *collective* contribution was to be in the area of the two villages of Flers and Courcellette.**



**(continued)**

(Right: *An image purporting to be that of a Canadian officer giving instructions to those under his command prior to the attack at Flers-Courcelette on September 15, 1916. – from The War Illustrated*)



If the outset of the offensive, for the Canadians, began for many of its units with the grandiose attacks of September 15 and 16, one has the impression that *First Somme*, the battle, gradually petered out from weariness. The last Canadian troops withdrew towards the end of November, almost two months after those of the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division had done so.

The capture of the shattered village of Beaumont\* by the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division on November 12-13 after some four-and-a-half months of fighting appears to have marked the official end to the *First Battle of the Somme*, although there were still to be vicious local conflicts for pieces of mud-filled trenches.

*\*Beaumont was one of the two communities of the Commune of Beaumont-Hamel and lay just behind the German lines. Hamel was in fact on the British side of the line and the Newfoundlanders who died on July 1 of 1916, did so on the ground that united – but that also separated - the one from the other.*

*Today a third community has been added to the Commune, Beaucourt.*



(Right: *Burying Canadian dead on the Somme, likely at a casualty clearing station or a field ambulance – from Illustration or Le Miroir*)



By mid-December the four Canadian Divisions had all withdrawn northwards to sectors running north-south from Béthune down to Arras. And that is the area in which the Canadian Corps was to remain – even during the time of the storming of Vimy Ridge – until October of 1917 when it was to once again to traverse the Franco-Belgian frontier.

(Right below: *A detachment of Canadian troops going forward during the winter of 1916-1917 – from Illustration*)

In the trenches the Canadians had once more settled into the rigours and the routines – and tedium - of trench warfare – perhaps, however, a welcome respite for those who had experienced *the Somme*: infantry action for the most part was on a local scale – patrolling and raids – with occasionally the latter being delivered at battalion strength.





Casualties for the most part were due to enemy artillery with snipers also taking their toll.

During those winter months of 1917 the various War Diaries report an increase in the time spent by the Canadian units in reserve positions, be they Corps, Divisional or Brigade. In reserve there were the usual attractions of lectures, musketry, physical training, church parades, inspections – by politicians and officers of rank - training, courses, working-parties and carrying-parties. But there were also sports to be played and even the occasional concert to enjoy.



(Right above: *A carrying-party loading up – one of the duties of troops when not serving in the front lines: The head-strap was an idea adapted from the aboriginal peoples of North America. – from Le Miroir*)



(Right above: *Road construction, one of the arduous tasks performed by the engineering units – from Illustration*)

On April 9 the British Army launched an offensive in the area to the north of the Somme battlefields; this was the so-called *Battle of Arras* intended to support a French effort elsewhere. In terms of the daily count of casualties, some four thousand per day, it was to be the most expensive operation of the War for the British, one of the few positive episodes being the Canadian assault of Vimy Ridge on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday.



The British effort proved an overall disappointment; French offensive was to be a disaster.

(Right above: *the Canadian National Memorial which, since 1936, stands on Vimy Ridge – photograph from 2010*)

(Right: *Canadian troops of the 4<sup>th</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, equipped with all the paraphernalia of war, on the advance across No-Man's-Land during the attack at Vimy Ridge on either April 9 or 10 of 1917 - from Illustration*)

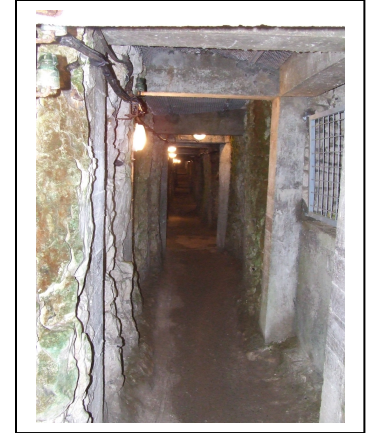


On that April 9, in driving snow, the four Canadian Divisions\*, for the first time acting as a single, autonomous entity, stormed the slope of *Vimy Ridge*, by the end of the next day having cleared it almost entirely of its German occupants.

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***\*This was the first occasion on which the Canadian Divisions were to act in concert as a Canadian Army Corps rather than been individually attached to a British force. In fact, British forces were now placed under its command.***

Several kilometres of tunnel had been hewn out of the chalk under the approaches to the front lines of Vimy Ridge, underground accesses which afforded physical safety and also the element of surprise during the hours – and in some cases, days – leading up to the attack. But whether the troops of the Canadian 1<sup>st</sup> Division – and in particular those of the Engineering Companies – were to avail of their protection is not clear.



***(Right: One of the few remaining galleries – Grange Tunnel - still open to the public at Vimy one hundred years later – photograph from 2008(?))***

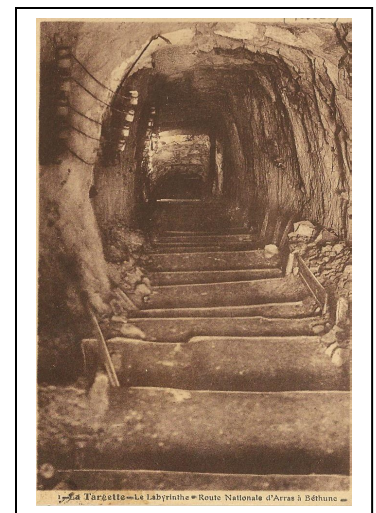
To the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Divisions had been handed the responsibility of capturing the Ridge itself. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Division was to their right, down the slope and in the vicinity of the village of Thélus. The 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division was to the right again, even further down the slope, southward in the direction of the city of Arras.

The Germans, having lost *Vimy Ridge* and the advantages of the high ground, retreated some three kilometres in front of the Canadians whose further offensives were less successful than that of Easter Monday; while some progress at times was made – at Arleux-en-Gohelle, for example - German counter-attacks often re-claimed ground from the British and Canadian troops – as at Fresnoy in early May.

After the official conclusion of the *Battle of Arras*, on or about May 15, some of the Canadians were posted not far to the north, to the mining area of the city of Lens and other communities. By this time, however, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Engineering Company had already been established for some ten days behind the lines to the west of Lens at Maisnil Bouche. It was to remain there until the end of that month.

At the beginning of the month of June the unit was ordered to the area of Aux Rietz – today La Targette – where its forward billets were underground in the Thélus Cave system.

The unit was still at Aux Rietz, training and working, at the beginning of July when Private Bremner reported to *duty*.



***(Right above: Just one of the network of tunnels, this one in the area of Neuville St-Vaast–La Targette, which became known as the Labyrinthe – from a vintage post-card)***

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When Sapper Bremner reported *to duty* with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Company, Canadian Engineers, on July 4, 1917, he was apparently one of only two *other ranks* to do so on that day.



The unit had on the previous day just relieved the 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company in the Ridge Line defences and Ottawa Trench – likely in the reserve or support area near La Targette from where work parties had been sent to the forward positions each day for a week. On the 13<sup>th</sup> the 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Company retired to Mont St-Éloi. On the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> the Company marched from the training camp there to billets in the community of Mazingarbe.



*\*Mont St-Éloi is not to be confused with St. Eloy (St-Éloi) in southern Belgium where Canadian forces had also served in the spring of 1916. The community is to be found to the north-west of the city of Arras in northern France and it was, at the time, well behind the lines.*

(Right top and right above: *The village of St-Éloi at an early period of the Great War and a century later: The ruins of the Abbey St-Éloi – destroyed in 1783 – are visible in both images. – from Le Miroir and (colour) from 2016*)

From that time until and including August 9, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Company War Diary reports working-parties sent out each day to operate in the forward area. On August 10, while remaining billeted in Mazingarbe, the unit's labours were now switched to more local and personal work, including cleaning clothes, equipment and billets.

There was also time for just a little rest – but very little. By August 14<sup>th</sup>, sections of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Company were moving forward and towards the remnants of Loos.

The British High Command had by this time decided to undertake a summer offensive in the *Ypres Salient*, Belgium. Thus, in order to divert German attention – and also his troop reserves - from this area, it had ordered operations to take place in the sectors of the front running north-south from Béthune to Lens – which included Loos.



The Canadians were to be a major contributor to this effort.

(Right above: *The village of Loos (in fact Loos-en-Gohelle) as it was already in September of 1915 when the British took over the sector from the French – The British troops had by soon afterwards nick-named the imposing structure in the centre of the photograph – a mining facility – Tower Bridge. – from Illustration*)



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(Preceding page: *Canadian troops advancing under fire across No-Man's Land in the summer of 1917 – from Le Miroir*)

Those expecting *Hill 70* to be a precipitous and ominous elevation are to be surprised. It is hardly prominent in a countryside that is already flat, the highest points being the summits of slag heaps which date from the mining era of yesteryear.

Yet it was high enough to be considered - by the Commanding Officer of the Canadian Corps, Lieutenant-General Arthur Currie – to be the key feature in the area, its capture more important than the city of Lens itself. Thus it became the focus of the first major Canadian offensive in the area, its capture being delegated to the troops of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Divisions.



(Right above: *This gentle slope rising to the left is, in fact, Hill 70. A monument to the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Canadian Infantry stands nearby in tribute. – photograph from 1914*)

Objectives were limited and had for the most part been achieved by the end of August 15. Due to the dominance of *Hill 70* over the entire area, it was expected that the Germans would endeavour to retrieve it and so it proved; on the 16<sup>th</sup> several strong counter-attacks were launched against the Canadian positions, positions that by this time had been transformed into defensive strong-points.

These defences held and the Canadian artillery, which was employing newly-developed procedures, inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. *Hill 70* remained in Canadian hands.

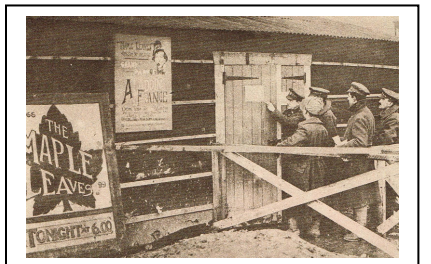


(Right: *Canadians soldiers in the captured rear area of Hill 70 during the days after the battle – from Le Miroir*)

Two sections of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Company, Canadian Engineers, went forward with the attacking troops on August 15. Their task was to construct those strong points designed to resist the anticipated counter-attacks by the Germans if and when the Canadians took the *Hill*. The Engineers remained there until the evening of August 17 when the unit withdrew to billets to the rear at Mazingarbe.

Three days were spent in or near the community on Houchin before the Company then was posted on August 22 to La Pugnoy where it was to remain for the following two weeks in reserve, being inspected, undergoing training, parading, attending lectures, cleaning equipment and – occasionally - resting.

(Right: *Canadian troops in anticipation of an evening's entertainment in an un-named rest camp – from Le Miroir*)



On September 6, the 3<sup>rd</sup> relieved the 1<sup>st</sup> Field Company in the area of the front and took over billets at Bully-Grenay. From there work parties were every day sent forward - except on a single occasion when gas was being released.

The Canadian-led campaign, of which the capture of *Hill 70* was to be but the first act, had apparently been scheduled to continue into September and even longer, but the ongoing British summer offensive in Belgium was proceeding less well than expected and the High Command was looking for reinforcements to make good its by-then exorbitant losses.

There were therefore to be no further major Canadian-inspired actions in the Lens-Béthune sectors and the troops yet again were to settle back into that monotonous but at times precarious existence of life in – and behind – the forward area. On most days, according to the Battalion War Diary, it was the artillery which fought it out – but, of course, the infantry was usually the target.



(Right above: *A Canadian 220 mm siege gun, here under camouflage nets in the Lens Sector, being prepared for action – from Le Miroir*)

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Company War Diary entry for September 15 reads as follows: *Company carried on works in the Forward and Rear Areas as per reports. Casualties:- One OR killed & One OR wounded, night of 14/15<sup>th</sup>. Leave:- One OR proceeded to leave to England and one OR re-joined from leave. Weather:- Fair*

The son of Robert Bremner, accountant, and of Emma Frances Bremner \*(née Gaden) formerly of 51, Kingsbridge Road, later of 99, Military Road, both addresses in St. John's, Newfoundland, he was also brother to Mary-Maxwell-McKenzie-Bremner, to Isabelle-Jessie, Ronald-Dugald (died at age one), Alexander-Warren, Emma-Livingstone and to Maggie-Sutherland.

*\*The couple had been married in Harbour Grace, to which town Robert Bremner was native.*

Robert Donald Bremner had enlisted at the *apparent* age of thirty-three years: date of birth on military records, April 25, 1883. However, copies of St. Thomas' Church of England Records cite April 25, 1881, as his birth-date.

Sapper Robert Donald Bremner was entitled to the British War Medal (left) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to [criceadam@yahoo.ca](mailto:criceadam@yahoo.ca). Last updated – January 27, 2023.

