

PREFACE

THIS BOOK has been written to provide in a single volume an authentic and comprehensive account of the achievements of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the War of 1914-1919 against Germany and the other Central Powers. It is directed primarily to the general reader, but it will, it is felt, be of special value to the military student. The author ventures to express the hope that the book will be read with particular interest by surviving members of the C.E.F.

After the war, work began on the preparation of a definitive eight-volume series bearing the title *Official History of the Canadian Forces in the Great War, 1914-1919*. Volume 1, written by Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid, D.S.O., Director of Historical Section, General Staff, was published in 1938, together with a volume of appendices and maps. It covered the period from August 1914 to September 1915. A volume entitled *The Medical Services*, by Sir Andrew Macphail, appeared in 1924.

After the Second World War work on the official history of the former conflict was discontinued and it was decided to abandon the project. The great mass of documentary material dealing with the war was turned over to the Public Archives of Canada for the use of bona fide students of military history. Following this decision the Canadian Government began to receive from individuals and veterans' organizations requests for the completion of an official history of the First World War; and when work on the history of the 1939-1945 war was well advanced, the Historical Section was directed to produce a one-volume account of the earlier struggle.

This volume deals primarily with operations in France and Belgium. In general it has been possible to describe these events only in broad outline, for the limitations imposed by the covers of a single book have ruled out the inclusion of much detail. The same reason has prevented individual treatment of the contribution made by many arms and services who provided the necessary tactical and administrative support for the units which were fighting in the front line. Two chapters have been devoted, however, to consideration of problems of organization and administration, particularly the controversial question of the introduction of conscription in 1917. A further chapter summarises the activities of Canadian forces who served outside the Canadian Corps, some of them in theatres far removed from the Western Front.

The main sources used in writing this history have been the contemporary records of the campaigns. These include the war diaries, planning papers and operational reports of the participating formations and units, as well as a multiplicity of files and other documents originating with Militia Headquarters in Ottawa, Headquarters Overseas Military Forces of Canada, in London, and the

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headquarters of formations in the field. Particularly valuable were collections of private papers held by the Historical Section or in the custody of the Public Archives of Canada, including those of Sir Robert Borden, Lieut.-General Sir Richard Turner, Sir George Perley, Lieut.-General Sir Arthur Currie and Sir Edward Kemp. Permission was graciously given by Earl Haig of Bemersyde to consult the complete text of his father's diary, and by Mr. Henry Borden for examination of Sir Robert Borden's personal diary. Among the many published sources of which the author has made extensive use are the official histories of the First World War produced by participating countries on both sides, and the regimental histories of Canadian, British and German units. He would particularly acknowledge his indebtedness to Colonel Duguid's first volume of the Canadian Official History, from which he drew extensively for the account of the mobilization of the C.E.F. and its early operations. He has further profited by the research carried out by Colonel Duguid and his staff for subsequent volumes that were projected. For the benefit of students and others who may wish to pursue their research further, it has been considered desirable to document this volume fairly extensively, though such references have been placed unobtrusively at the end of the book. Care has been taken to use the most reliable statistics available. Those in the tables which appear as appendices to the volume are based on data prepared by the Machine Records Section, Adjutant General's Branch, National Defence Headquarters. Permission to include the extract from Laurence Binyon's "For the Fallen" has been granted by the Society of Authors and Mrs. Cicely Binyon.

While the author did not serve in the First World War, he has had the benefit of the advice of a number of senior officers who were participants in the events described. These have been kind enough to read the draft of the text, in whole or in part, and the writer is much indebted to them for their helpful criticism and comments. In this connection he is glad to acknowledge also the assistance of the Historical Branch of the Cabinet Office in London. In the year 1959 he made an extensive tour of the battlefields of France and Belgium in order to study the topography of the areas in which Canadian troops were engaged.

Many members of the Canadian Army's Historical Section, past or present, have contributed in varying degrees to the production of this book. To all of them the author expresses his grateful appreciation. Particularly would he acknowledge the work of three officers, Captain F. R. McGuire, C.D., Captain J. A. Swettenham and Lieut. A. M. J. Hyatt, who performed the major part of the research for this volume and prepared the preliminary drafts of many of the chapters. The present writer must, however, take full responsibility for the chapters as now printed, for all have undergone considerable revision at his hands. Captain L. R. Cameron, C.D., has given valuable assistance with research on the administrative side and in preparing the appendices. The book owes much to the painstaking work of Mr. A. G. Steiger on German sources, and to the maps compiled and drawn by Major C. C. J. Bond and Sergeant E. H.

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