

J.L. GRANATSTEIN

CANADA'S ARMY

WAGING WAR AND KEEPING THE PEACE

SECOND EDITION



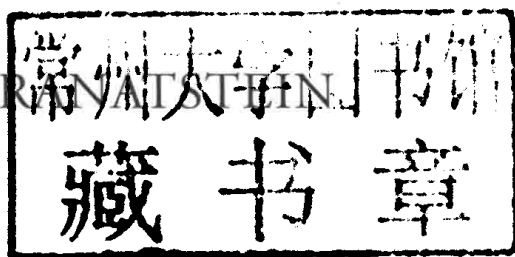
CANADA'S ARMY



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Second Edition

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS
Toronto Buffalo London

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Toronto Buffalo London
www.utppublishing.com
Printed in Canada

First edition published 2002; paperback edition (with new introduction) published 2004
Second edition published 2011

ISBN 978-1-4426-1178-8



Printed on acid-free 100% post-consumer recycled paper with vegetable-based inks

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Granatstein, J.L., 1939–

Canada's army : waging war and keeping the peace / J.L. Granatstein. – 2nd ed.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4426-1178-8

1. Canada. Canadian Armed Forces – History. 2. Canada – History, Military. I. Title.

UA600.G7 2011 355.00971 C2010-907472-6

Cover illustration: Soldiers in training. Reproduced with the permission of the
Minister of Public Works and Government Services, 2010.

University of Toronto Press acknowledges the financial assistance to its publishing program of
the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.



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University of Toronto Press acknowledges the financial support of the Government
of Canada through the Canada Book Fund for its publishing activities.

CANADA'S ARMY

Waging War and Keeping the Peace, Second Edition

The first edition of *Canada's Army* quickly became the definitive history of the Canadian army. The intervening years, however, have seen major changes in the way Canadians think about their military, especially in the context of the Afghan War and increased federal funding for the Canadian Forces. In this second edition of *Canada's Army*, J.L. Granatstein – one of the country's leading historians – brings his work up to date with new material on the evolving role of the military in Canadian society, along with additional sources and illustrations.

Canada's Army traces the full three-hundred-year history of the Canadian military from its origins in New France to the Conquest, the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812; through South Africa and the two world wars to the Korean War, contemporary peacekeeping efforts, and the War in Afghanistan. Granatstein points to the inevitable continuation of armed conflict around the world and makes a compelling case for Canada to maintain properly equipped and professional armed forces.

Canada's Army offers a rich analysis of the political context for the battles and events that shaped our understanding of the nation's military. Masterfully written and passionately argued, this book has been lauded as 'belong[ing] on all concerned citizens' bookshelves.'

J.L. GRANATSTEIN is the former director and CEO of the Canadian War Museum and taught Canadian history for thirty years.

For Tess

PREFACE

I am the product of demographic good luck. I was born in 1939 at the tail end of the Great Depression and the beginning of the Second World War. I grew up in a Canada that was prosperous as never before, and, through good fortune rather than good management on my part, university education in the late 1950s, good jobs in the 1960s, and a reasonably priced house at the end of that decade were my lot.

Because of when I was born, again through the sheer accident of timing, I was too young for the Second World War and for Korea. When I joined the army in 1956, I encountered what now seems part of a half-century of peace, though it was the heart of the Cold War. My ten years of military service were wholly uneventful: a good university education at Le Collège Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean and the Royal Military College in Kingston, desultory training at Camp Borden, and uneventful service in Ottawa, until I left the armed forces in 1966 to go into university teaching. I never heard a shot fired in anger and, except for the one occasion when I accompanied my platoon sergeant to blow up an unexploded hand grenade, I was never near danger.

Virtually everything I know about the army therefore comes from academic study, not hard experience. I am ultimately a dabbler and a dilettante, a scarred campaigner of the university wars, but not the real kind. Yet I do not doubt that my time at RMC was the definitive factor in shaping me. I was a feckless seventeen-year-old when I went to military college and a driven and organized Type A personality when I left. Ever since, I have made my career

out of the organizational skills I learned while trying to balance RMC's demanding academic schedule with military duties.

RMC shaped me in other ways too. The central staircase in the college's main building is a shrine to those hundreds of ex-cadets killed on active service, and the recently restored Memorial Arch at what used to be the college entrance commemorates them as well in resonating wording: 'Blow out ye bugles over these rich dead ...' RMC's auditorium, Currie Hall, honours every unit of the Canadian Corps of the Great War along with its great commander, General Sir Arthur Currie, and there are monuments, plaques, and the artifacts of wars past and present everywhere.

Those who attended the college came away imbued with a sense of service. Not to have that attitude required almost a conscious effort of will, and my will certainly was not strong enough to resist. But this commitment did not mean that every graduating cadet stayed in the armed forces; most throughout RMC's 125 years of history did not. Nor did it mean that every graduate believed in the military. For long periods I had doubts about the rightness of Canadian Forces' policies and about our alliances, and I sometimes still do.

Yet I am certain that everyone who went to RMC Kingston left with the sense that ordinary Canadians had done extraordinary deeds in the past and would do so again in the future, the classic definition of nationhood laid down decades ago by historian Frank Underhill. The evidence was all about the college that this confidence was justified – from Currie Hall to the bust of Harry Crerar, the commander of First Canadian Army in the Second World War, to the weaponry of the Cold War and peacekeeping on the grounds. The army had been the nation in arms in the two world wars, and the graduates of the college had helped lead the efforts that did so much to make Canada a nation and preserve the freedom of the world. In the Cold War and the peace that followed it had been the same, and it still is in a new millennium that is as dangerous as any other time in the last century.

This history of Canadians and their army is written in this spirit, but with an admixture of what is, I trust, constructive criticism. It is gratefully dedicated to all those Canadians who served their country in war and peace, and especially to those who did not survive their service to return to what is, thanks to their sacrifice, this best of all nations.

I should explain what this book is about and what it is not. It is a history of the Canadian Army, of organized bodies of Canadians fighting, training, and serving their nation in peace and in war. It is not a history of every war fought on Canadian soil, nor is it the story of Canadians who served as individuals in other armies. This organization explains why the text moves quickly through the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries: very simply, the Canadian Army scarcely existed before the dawn of the twentieth century. It also explains why I have omitted the Nile Voyageurs of the 1880s and the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion that fought on the Loyalist side in the Spanish Civil War. I must also add that I have not followed today's practice of converting all measurements into metric: when soldiers fought for yards of ground and their vehicles ran on gallons of gas, the imperial system is employed.

Canada's Army is an extended argument for military professionalism. The military profession, much like any other, is based on expertise, a sense of corporate identity, and responsibility. The soldier has specialized skills learned and mastered through study and practice; he belongs to a self-regulating and exclusive organization distinct from civil society; and, in Canada, the soldier accepts that his profession makes him responsible to the civil authority, a servant of the government. Because the soldier controls deadly force, the sense of responsibility to the state, one firmly based on an ethical foundation, is crucial. But a professional soldier, unlike a doctor or an engineer, has one trait that marks him as different and special. As General Sir John Hackett put it, there is an unwritten clause of unlimited liability in his contract. 'It requires of a man that he be prepared to surrender life itself if the discharge of his duty should demand that. This is not often evoked in peacetime,' Hackett continued, 'but its existence lends a dignity to the military condition which is difficult to deny.' Civilian soldiers in huge numbers did their wartime duty for Canada, and more than a hundred thousand died in the process. But the professional has the obligation to give his life in peacetime too if so required. Many have.

Although I do not believe that history repeats itself, preparing this manuscript persuaded me that Canadians have replicated their military mistakes far too often. In peace we almost always underfunded the professional military and relied on the militia, the ordinary citizenry in arms. When war came, the people expected that great victories would be won at once, demanded that all

officers be strategists of Napoleonic calibre, and insisted that every soldier had a field marshal's baton hidden somewhere in his knapsack. The result of this utter naivety has been needless casualties while the army learned its trade in battle. And then, as soon as victory was won and peace came, the government disbanded the army, and the nation resumed its faith in the militia myth that every Canadian was, by definition, a natural soldier. In Canada no professionals were needed, except, perhaps, for the training of the militiamen.

Twenty years after the end of the Cold War, ten years after al Qaeda's attack on the United States, and a decade after Canada first sent troops to Afghanistan, Canada's Army is in a better condition than it has been in decades. The Army's junior leadership and many of its senior commanders have proven themselves in battle, and this will shape the Army of the future. Since 2005, both Liberal and Conservative governments have provided new funding and invested in new equipment and in some (but still too few) additional men and women for the Army's battalions and regiments. Just as important, for the first time since the Second World War, the Army stands high in the public mind, and the war in Afghanistan, while unpopular with much of the public, has greatly increased the esteem in which the nation's soldiers are now held in every province. This is a change of historic proportions, and it suggests that the Canadian people may be willing to see those in uniform well provided for in the coming years. They should be because the costs of the nation's professional armed forces are the insurance premiums on which Canada's security ultimately depends. The equation is and always has been very simple: we pay now in dollars for a competent military or we pay later in dollars *and* with our sons and daughters.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As always, in writing this book I have benefited from the advice and admonitions of friends and colleagues, some of which I have actually accepted. I have been struck by the fact that my close friends and former students occupy the high ground in Canadian military history, and their expertise has been of great value to me. My friends and former students Jock Vance and Patrick Brennan offered sage counsel. My closest colleagues at the Canadian War Museum, Roger Sarty and Dean Oliver, read chapters for me, as did Pat Brennan, David Bercuson, Des Morton, LCol's Ike Kennedy and J.P. McManus, Bill McAndrew, and Norman Hillmer. Roger Sarty, Bill Young, Jerry Tulchinsky, and Major Doug Delaney shared documents with me. With great generosity, Terry Copp and Bill McAndrew, distinguished military historians both, let me use interviews they had conducted, and they, Major Delaney, and Patrick Brennan, whose work on the Canadian Expeditionary Force will change many preconceptions, let me read some of their yet unpublished work. So too did Lieutenant-Colonel Jack English, my RMC and Duke classmate who continues to challenge Canadian military historians with his interpretations. The Chief of the Land Staff, Lieutenant-General Mike Jeffrey, gave me copies of some of his papers and speeches and talked with me about the present condition and future of the army. Lieutenant-General Henri Tellier graciously allowed me to use some of his material on the Royal 22e Régiment. The Department of National Defence gave me permission to use the superb maps produced by the Directorate of History and Heritage at National Defence Headquarters, and I am most grateful to Dr Serge Bernier for his help in this matter. My cousin Carol Geller Sures let me use the Major Harry Jolley letters, a fine, sensitive collection from

Acknowledgments

the Second World War, and then graciously donated them to the Canadian War Museum. Jack Saywell allowed me to use his father's Great War letters and memoir, and also presented these materials to the museum.

While I was at the War Museum from July 1998 to June 2000 I had the opportunity and privilege of meeting and coming to know many veterans of the Second World War, Korea, and peacekeeping, as well as many serving members of the Canadian Forces. These encounters have greatly enriched this book. So too did my dealings with the museum's staff and Friends, a very knowledgeable group indeed. In addition to Roger Sarty and Dean Oliver, I must single out Serge Durflinger, Laura Brandon, Harry Martin, Dianne Turpin, Rachel Poirier, Jim Whitham, Leslie Redman, Colonel Jerry Holtzhauer, and General Paul Manson for their patience and perseverance in teaching me so much about military history, military artifacts, and war art. Leslie Redman greatly facilitated the photo research in the War Museum's all but untouched collections, research ably done for me by Gabrielle Nishiguchi. My friend LCdr Jacques Fauteux helped me get photographs of current Canadian Forces operations.

Linda McKnight, my longtime literary agent, continued her work on my behalf with great effect. Len Husband was a pleasure to work with at the University of Toronto Press. Rosemary Shipton edited this book, not the first of mine she has tackled, and any stylistic grace and coherence it may have must be credited to her. Any errors that remain are, of course, entirely my fault.

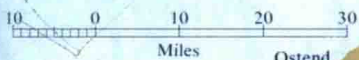
Over the years I have learned much from my good friends Desmond Morton (forty-six years now in his case), Norman Hillmer, Robert Bothwell, William Kaplan, Michael Bliss, Jack Saywell, Jerry Tulchinsky, Peter Neary, and David Bercuson, and I am unfailingly grateful to them all. My immense scholarly debt to Des and David will be apparent from the references to their many works in the notes. Even where I knew these colleagues to be wrong, I have doubted my own judgment, so highly do I esteem theirs! My academic and personal debts to Jack Saywell, in particular, extend over more than four decades and are very great indeed.

My dear wife, Elaine, has borne this book through its gestation as readily as the others. Carole and Eric and, especially, Tess keep me optimistic for the future. As always, Michael makes me wish that the past could have been different.

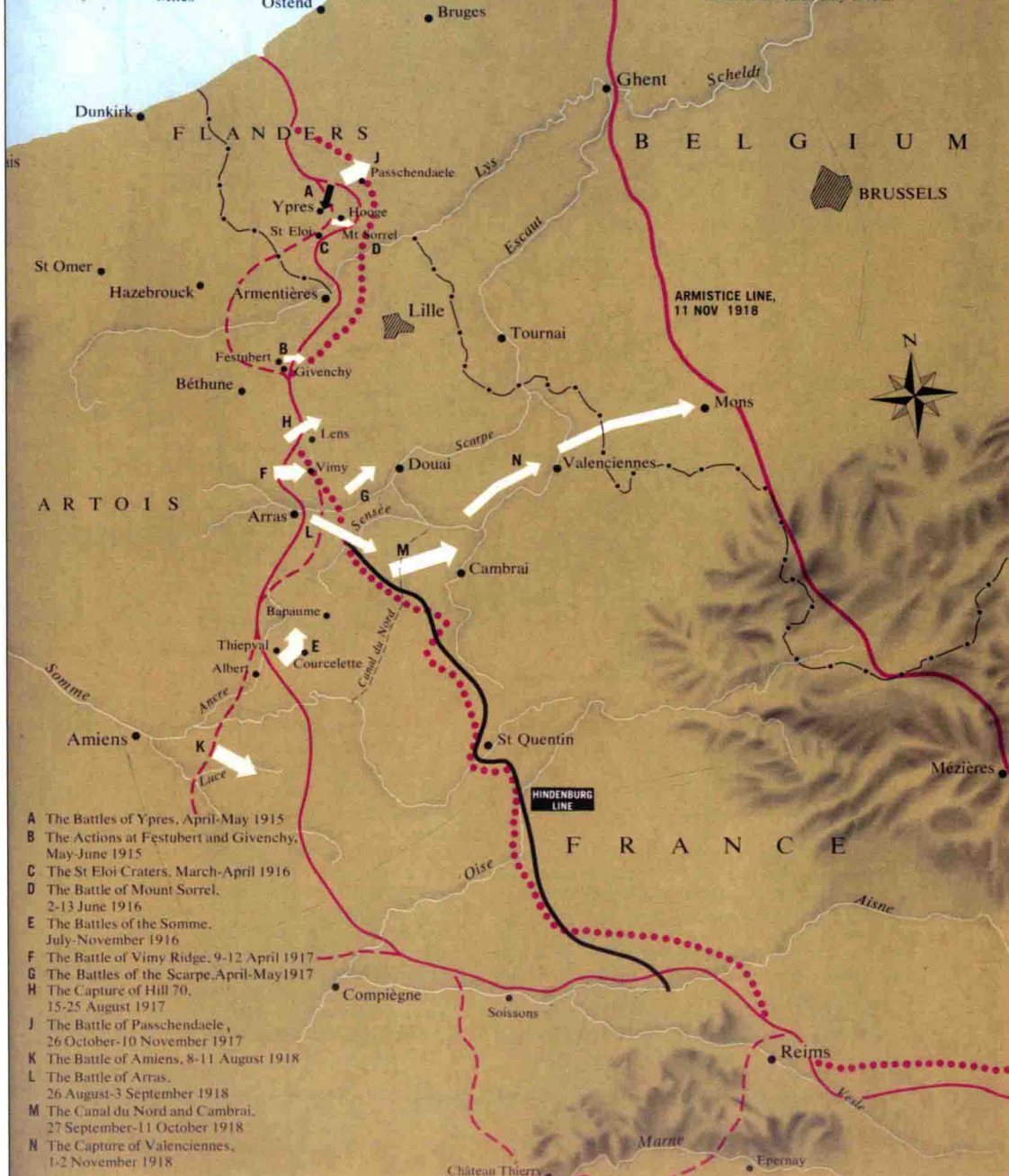
MAPS

THE WESTERN FRONT, 1914-1918

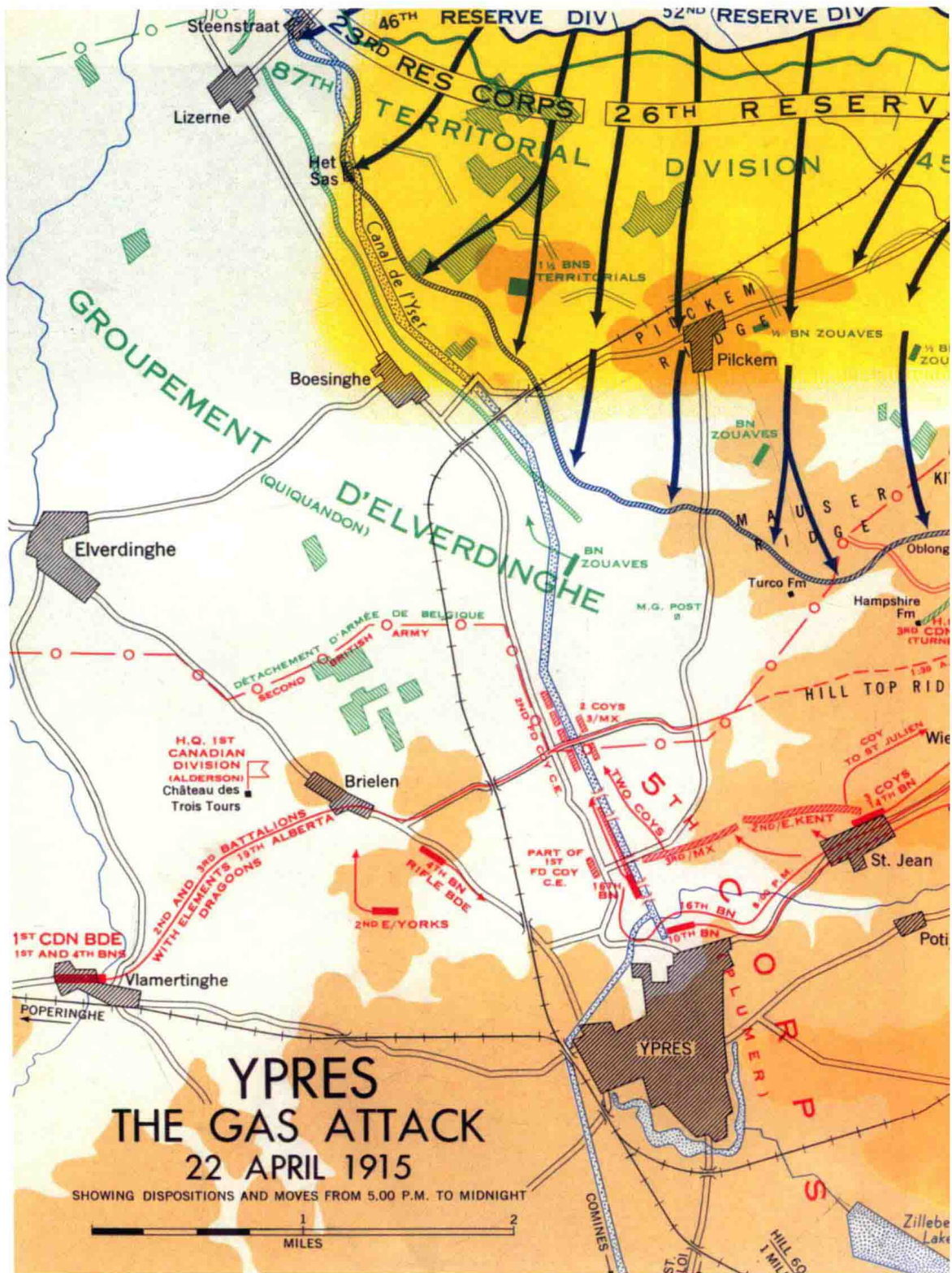
CANADIAN OPERATIONS

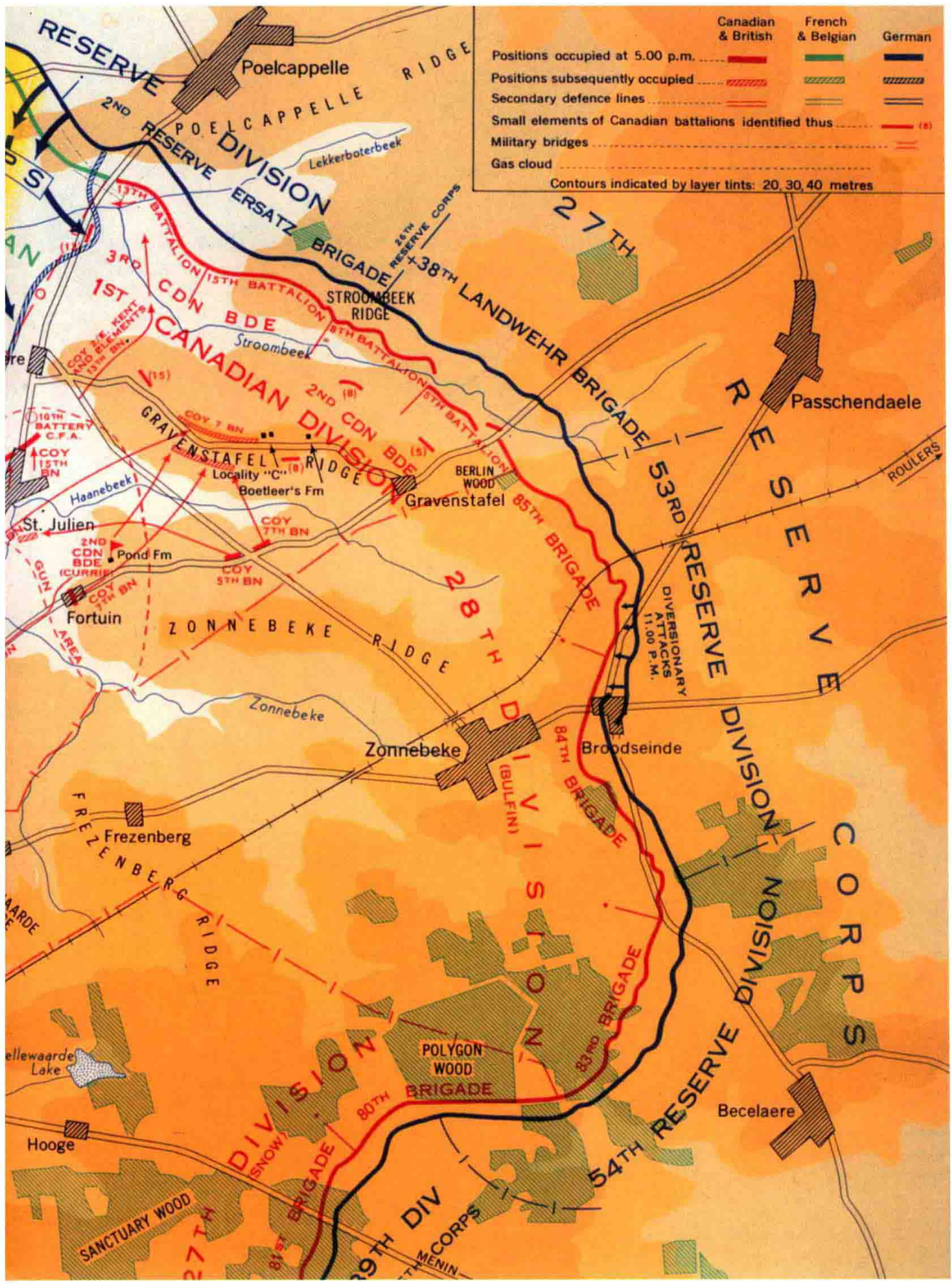


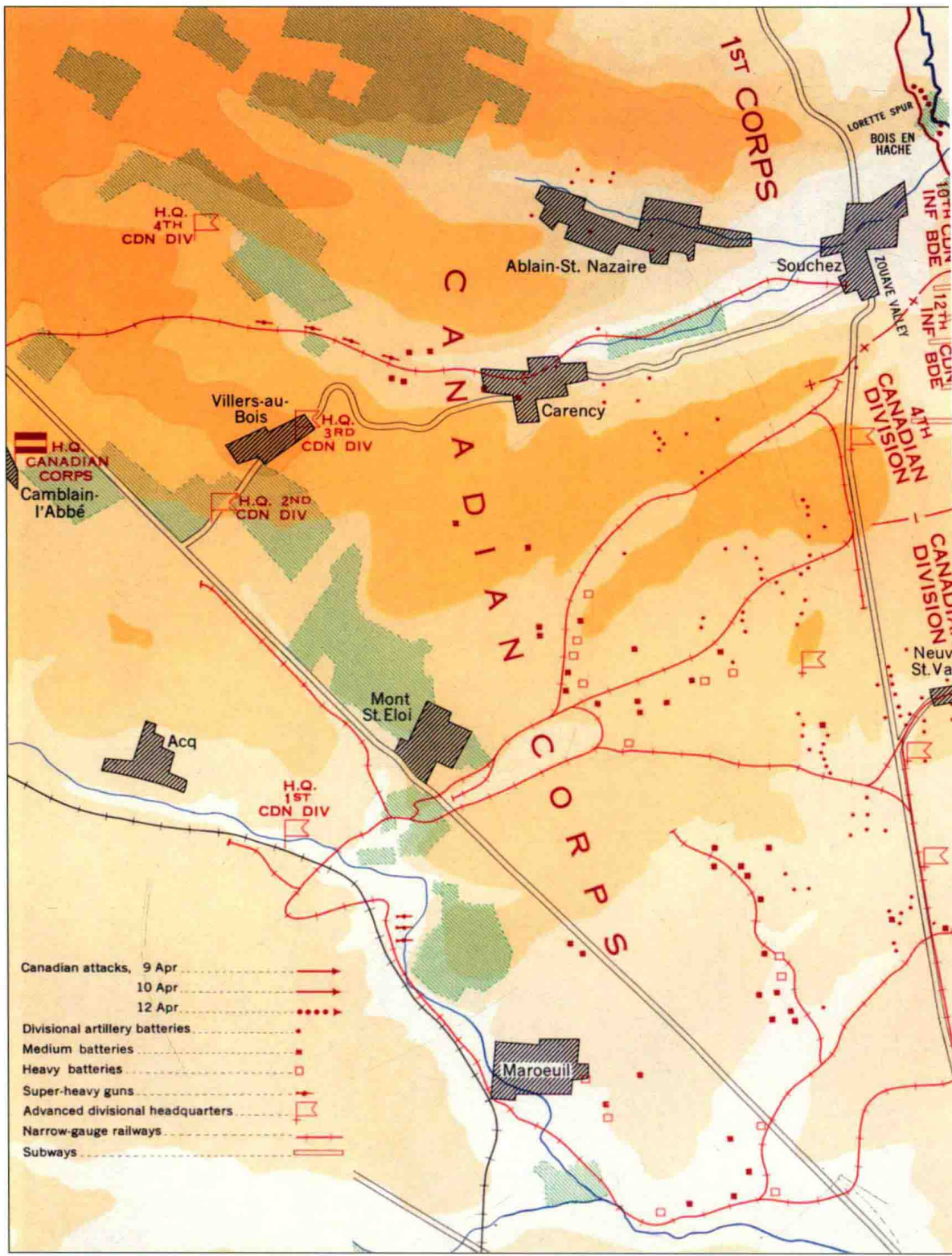
Allied front, 15 Dec 1914 ————
 Allied front, 20 Mar 1918
 Allied front, after the German offensives of March-July 1918 - - - -



- A The Battles of Ypres, April-May 1915
- B The Actions at Festubert and Givenchy, May-June 1915
- C The St Eloi Craters, March-April 1916
- D The Battle of Mount Sorrel, 2-13 June 1916
- E The Battles of the Somme, July-November 1916
- F The Battle of Vimy Ridge, 9-12 April 1917
- G The Battles of the Scarpe, April-May 1917
- H The Capture of Hill 70, 15-25 August 1917
- J The Battle of Passchendaele, 26 October-10 November 1917
- K The Battle of Amiens, 8-11 August 1918
- L The Battle of Arras, 26 August-3 September 1918
- M The Canal du Nord and Cambrai, 27 September-11 October 1918
- N The Capture of Valenciennes, 1-2 November 1918







H.Q.
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CDN DIV

1ST CORPS

Ablain-St. Nazaire

Souchez

CANADIAN CORPS

Carency

Villers-au-Bois

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3RD
CDN DIV

H.Q.
CANADIAN
CORPS
Camblain-
l'Abbé

H.Q.
2ND
CDN DIV

Mont
St. Eloi

Acq

H.Q.
1ST
CDN DIV

Maroeuil

LORETTE SPUR

BOIS EN
HACHE

18TH CAN
INF BDE

12TH CAN
INF BDE

CANADIAN
DIVISION

CANADIAN
DIVISION

Neuv
St. Va

- Canadian attacks, 9 Apr →
- 10 Apr →→
- 12 Apr →→→
- Divisional artillery batteries ●●●●
- Medium batteries ■
- Heavy batteries □
- Super-heavy guns ⊕
- Advanced divisional headquarters ⚑
- Narrow-gauge railways |||
- Subways =

