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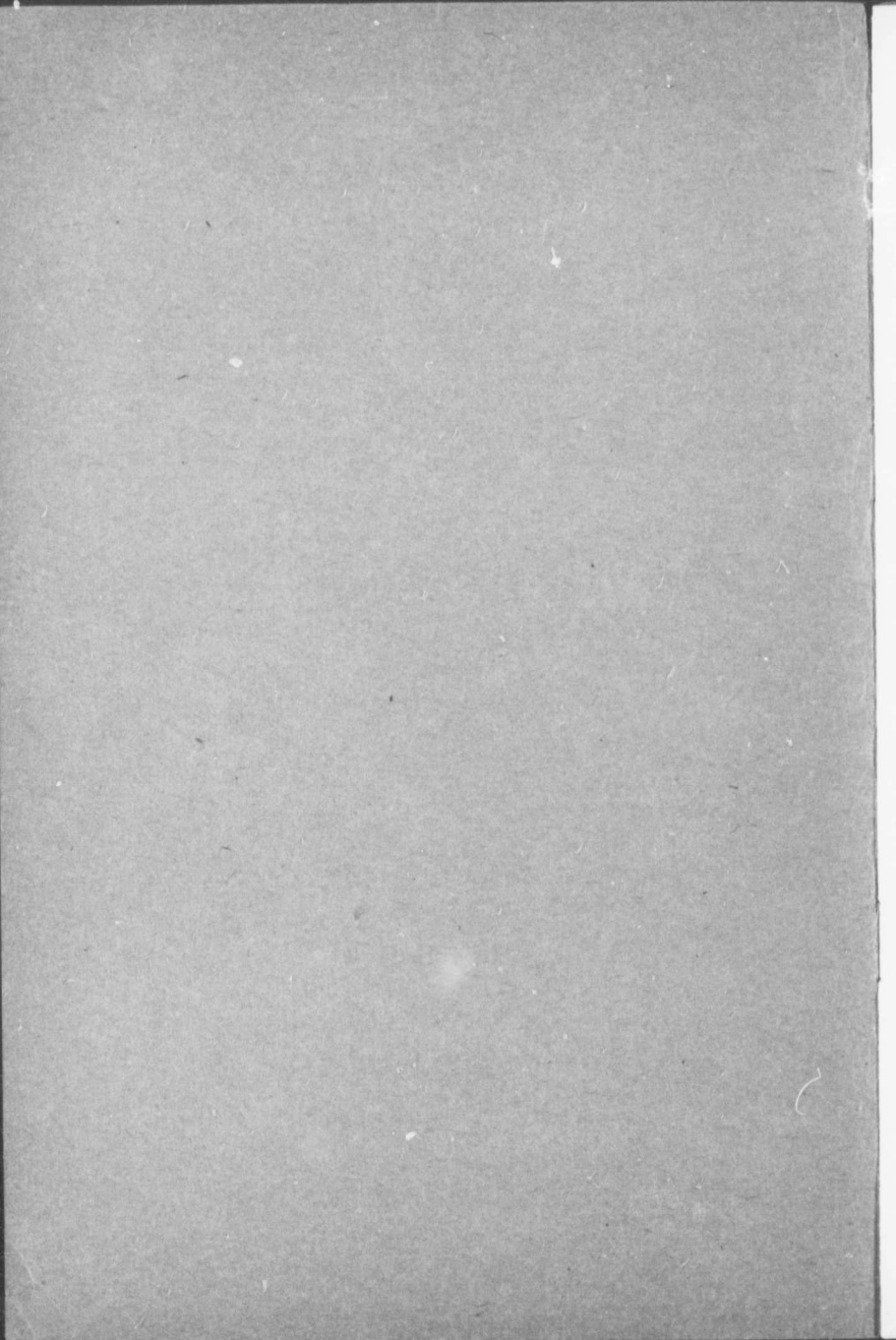
By The Canadians

The Taking of Vimy Ridge



OR

Over The Top



The Taking of Vimy Ridge by the Canadians

AN OFFICIAL REPORT IN RHYME.

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1.

I will tell you in rhyme, how the Vimy Ridge was taken;
By divisions of Canadian Infantry the Cavalry helping too,
They found no bed of clover while the strong hold they were breaking.
Now in detail, I will tell you what our gallant boys went through;
That our casualties were heavy, it goes without saying.
Troops to the right, troops in the centre, troops on the left not far apart
With British pluck-officers and men with their lives bravely paying;
Fought as Canadians can, playing the game right from the start,
While all the world looks on wondering.

2.

Easter Sunday, April the eighth, the Canadians kept well together;
All the day they had been hindered by the stormy weather.
Schedule orders for the ninth were, be the weather fine or wet;
At five thirty sharp be ready to swarm over the parapet.
Our Colonial said, keep cool my boys; for this is the time
Our Commander has set apart for the smashing of Von Hindenburg line;
You'll do your best everyone I know, the boys gave a ringing cheer,
It must have reached our foes, resting in their dugouts near,
Not one of the boys grumbling.

3.

Five twenty nine found the boys all in line, not one had that night slept;
They had rested till dawn, talking of home, and not a few had wept.
But t'was not for fear, but breathing a prayer for loved ones far away;
Asking, (Our Father) above to protect in His love and bless our cause
that day.
Our engineers, had worked for a long time tunneling neath no man's land
Till they were beneath Von Hindenburgs line, they had kept the secret
grand.
Their Officers and Bomb throwers crept through until level with the foe
they got.
The gunners will shell the other side, this side we will make it hot
Now the Artillery will commence Thundering.

4.

To the minute five thirty, the artillery unmasked with true concentration
The field guns with intensity, draw foes machine guns location;
Then our direct fire from machine guns makes an increasing barrage,
Oh God what must have been the result of such an awful carnage.
Our officers had said, to-day we the Vimy Ridge must take;
Great goodness how the cannons make the earth tremble and shake.
As morning dawned we had to face, a gale of rain and sleet;
Go forward boys, for once again the Germans must retreat,
Our Artillery is now furiously Thundering

5.

Rushing through the storm to the words of a song,
Wave after wave of our troops were charging along;
The advanced hidden cannons, together axle to axle stood,
So our chance of taking Vimy Ridge, to us looked pretty good.
The first stage of the advance was over obstacles of every kind;
Mines, craters, shell holes, crumpled trenches, everywhere we find
Huge entanglements of barbed wire, torn coils and broken hedges,
And scores of the dead foeman lay, who fell beneath our wedges,
The result of Our Artillery's Thundering.

6.

Vimy Ridge our objective, it now should be stated;
With powerful defences, all the valley dominated.
The Germans had taken it from the French in nineteen fourteen,
Since when it their strongest point of defence had been;
Our foes long had boasted Vimy Ridge was impregnable;
From it upon our positions had long thrown shot and shell,
Determined our advance to delay, but our troops in a frontal attack;
Came face to face with the Prussian guards & quickly hurled them back
All the time the Artillery kept Thundering.

7.

The guards were charged to hold the ridge at all cost;
For upon them the blame would lay if Vimy Ridge was lost,
As the centre troops press forward, Artillery making the way clear;
They see part of the famous guards rushing to their rear,
When the Canadians advanced against this formidable position;
They found many heavy cannons in workable condition.
Vast stacks of ammunition the foe had to leave behind,
And machine guns in tunnels and caves our gallant boys find
Yes, by the hundred.

8.

The troops in the centre fought, from one line to another;
With serious losses, brisk encounters, causing them lots of bother.
Our casualties were numerous, many by shrapnel fire were hit,
Some of our boys got a mortal wound, fell gallantly doing their bit.
The third line passed, they consolidate their gains and drew their breath
Ever since the dawn they had battled, were oft face to face with death.
Fresh troops followed, were soon deployed, into their several positions
thrown;
Then waited patiently for the barrage to lift for officers to lead on,
The Artillery ceaselessly Thundering.

As the barrage lifted, the troops on the right advanced to the foes third line;

Then again the firing was resumed, the boys again rest for a time,
Now they advance twelve hundred yards, the boys they are enraptured;
Covering hill 140 Vimy woods won and many villages captured.
Quite a number of positions and belts of wire, the enemy surrender;
Prisoners scuttle quickly to the rear of our lines, for safety without number.

By ten a. m. snow still falling fast, black clouds o'er the ridge is sweeping;

Reports are sent in that enemy masses, to our north are stealthy creeping,

Although our Artillery is Thundering.

10.

We send Scouts out to locate them, they report to our gunners the matter,

Upon them they bring the artillery into play. and it soon makes them scatter.

By one o'clock noon their objective, to them was only partly secured;
Three counter attacks in just three hours shows the foe we are prepared,
Still meeting with barbed wire and strong opposition.

We routed the last of the guards from their long held position,
And owing to the swiftness of our gallant troops advance

To remove their cannons they had not the slightest chance,

As our Artillery was constantly Thundering.

11.

The elements seemed against us, though assured of our position;

We found scores of unlimbered cannons, and stacks of ammunition.

For them they had no horses, hundreds of their men, time after time

Deserted their Officers and ranks, and came rushing to our line.

Now we receive word of the British successes, far away upon our right,

They too are doing splendid work, winning one of the toughest fights;

Their officers order rest for awhile, as nothing then remains

But to await until the barrage again lifts and consolidate their gains;

The Artillery repeatedly Thundering.

12.

Now the troops on the left started over ground almost impassable,

It had been shelled and churned till it was just one great puddle.

As the gap widens between them, and the other troops position;

They were met with a strong and ever strengthening opposition.

Their advance was halted after first objective, by very heavy fighting,

As onward they press true to the test, thousands of the foemen sighting

They find a change in the ground, quite contrary to their expectation;

While going strong, were compelled to turn toward their flanks location.

The Artillery in the distance Thundering.

The troops on the left had a rougher time than those on the centre and
right;

The ground they crossed was trapped and caved, they had the strongest
fight,

A dip in the path changed their course, breaking their objective, then
As they made for their flanks, they found heavy fighting once again;
Emerging from hidden trenches, the foe in our rear, with machine guns
assail.

Attempting to cut off our storming force, but in their objective fail,
The heavy laden infantry move back, the fight lasting all day long.
T'was ten o'clock that night ere they rested but they'd silenced the en-
emy guns,

For that night the guns ceased thundering.

Don't think the Vimy Ridge Victory a walk over or any part of the line,
But ask the boys if their task was light, who worked bayonet or gun all
the time.

If every gallant were recorded, if the whole world knew at what cost;
And every heroic deed were rewarded, more would wear the Victoria
cross,

Every yard of the ground they contested, officers and men with each
other vied;

Ere the Canadians were sure of their hard won ground or hurl back the
German tide

Shoulder to shoulder the infantry fought, what courage all ranks display-
ed,

Officers and men, Britishers to the core showing of what mettle they're
made;

Supported by our Artillery's Thundering.

Of our aviators I have a word to say, what courage they have shown;

How oft in the face of serious odds for freedoms cause have flown,

Braving attack by land and sea, bringing invaluable news,

That has materialized for our benefit that our cause we may not lose.

On the ninth a brigade of a squadron of a Royal Flying Corps

Overhead on every part of the field was seen, machines by the score;

Their devoted co-operation on every part of the line was seen,

Work British, Australians and Canadians that day achieved, has shatter-
ed the Kaiser's dream.

It has set all the Germans wondering.

On the eastern side of Vimy Ridge, French villages were burning;

The Canadian cavalry are all aglow, they the Germans flanks are turning

Village after Village falls into their hands, the huns vacate every trench,

The rightful owners of that part, were the long suffering French;

But Von Hindenburg was getting a taste of the medicine he prepared,

The crack regiments of his Prussian guards had fled completely scarred

In their calculations they forgot some things that now I will mention;

Was British grit endurance and pluck that beats their comprehension,

While the Artillery increasingly thunders.

The Red Cross party worked faithfully every hour of that day;
The sights they saw wrung their hearts, with the dying soldiers they
pray;

Tending the wounded here, binding a limb there, what gorey sights they
see.

They know the price in blood, we have paid for the Vimy Ridge victory;
For many a brave boy in his delirium, still thought he was charging the
foe,

Another would whisper, nurse, don't let mother know I suffered so;
My testament and her photo, please send home said a young American,
Just say I fell in the charge with many a Canadian,

In the distance the guns are rumbling

A messenger has just brought in the news right from the firing line;
Saying the huns are on the run, our boys are doing fine.

First and second line our troops have passed, the third will be ours yet;
Then the wounded cheer as best they can, that cheer I'll never forget.

The troops on the left had many a loss, the foe had treacherous been,
We closed the eyes of many brave boys, they were sinking 'twas plainly
seen;

Ere they died had caught the message that our troops upon Vimy Ridge
trod,

And the last word that came from their dying lips was an audible
thank God,

Never more will they hear the guns thundering.

Closely following in the rear, from the dawn to seeing the first man fall
The stretcher bearers are active and alert awaiting the call,

Every grade of the medical faculty every facility brought into play;
How faithful to duty behind the lines were their achievements that day.

Thus the greatest day of Canadian advances came to a victorious close,
Our every objective for the day overcome, we chase the retreating foes;
Thousands of prisoners, vast stores of munitions and miles of land,
With Vimy Ridge as a reward, secure in Canadian hands,

Since the dawn the Artillery have been thundering.

Every man engaged in the conflicts knew the responsibility of his part
Other battlefields, some of them had crossed ever since the start;
They had gained our Allies approbation of England confidence was as-
sured,

Which paid the troops of every class for the hardships they endured.
The last attack by the troops on the right on the Vimy Ridge was made,
As upon the eastern slope with a ringing cheer stepped a Canadian
brigade,

Making their gain secure, they now rest the night in peace to spend
Writing a message from their pocket book to mother, wife, or dearest
friend,

As the Artillery has now ceased thundering.

21.

Now after a hard time for our gunners, the heavy guns cease;
 And our gallant troops are resting, the moon shines down in peace.
 After the howling storm and tempest which since the dawn had lasted,
 High above the low shell torn ground our barrage had devastated.
 The working and carrying parties were busy all through the night;
 The Chaplains and padres are officiating out in the moonlight,
 Ministering and praying with our boys who upon the field are lying,
 Taking and writing their last message home for many of them were dy-
 ing,

Not a sound of the Artillery's thunder.

22.

Long may the story of the Vimy Ridge capture be told,
 To our children's children in the long years to come;
 How Canadian volunteers who shall never grow old,
 Gave their lives that humanity full meaning be known.
 The shattered bodies and scarred faces of our heroes returned,
 Claims, attention, love and respect for all time to come;
 Rest assured that the Germans by civilized nations be spurned,
 Hitherto known as the (cultured) but now brutal hunns.
 Prussian Militarism this time blundered.

23.

The inhumanity of the German policy now has long
 Caused countless thousands untold anguish and sorrow,
 But be sure that an aftermath is now growing strong,
 As she has sown she reap from each furrow.
 The frightfulness Germany is sowing broadcast,
 Will be remembered till the nations grow old,
 Retribution is sure to overtake her at last;
 Each atrocity repaid an hundred fold,
 Then will she know how it feels to be humbled.

24.

Throughout our empire, honest hearts swell with pride,
 For every objective Britain and her Colonials have won;
 Canada now honors every one of her sons who have died,
 In hurling back the vicious invading hun.
 As we gaze on each flagstaff, from which flies the flag;
 Of our Great Empire, the Union Jack.
 We are resolved not to rest, this is no idle brag;
 Till the foe is completely hurled back,
 Then only, will our guns cease thundering.



Mrs. Sutton, the writer of these verses, is terribly afflicted with rheumatoid arthritis, a bad form of rheumatism; she has not been able to walk for twenty years.

Mrs. Sutton has four eligible sons with the colors to-day, also her eldest son served nine years in India. Another son was rejected for a small deformity. The grandfather Sutton fought in the Crimean with distinction. Three sons are wounded and one reported missing.