

“Canada A People’s History: The Great Transformation”

It Will Be A Terrible War

- Late July _____, Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden is on holiday in the Muskoka Lakes area of Ontario when an urgent telegram calls him back to Ottawa.
- War is breaking out in Europe, Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire against Britain, France, and Russia. Canada is also going to war, there is no choice. If Britain is at war, its dominions including Canada are _____ included.
- Across the country the response is immediate, a rush to volunteer mostly by _____-born Canadians.
- October 3rd, 1914, 31,000 Canadians set sail to the battlefields of Europe. It is the largest convoy ever to cross the Atlantic. Onboard is 41 year old doctor John McCrae, a veteran officer and accomplished _____.
- McCrae befriends 22 year old Alexis Helmer. Lex is engaged to be _____ and has just graduated from McGill University.
- By the spring of 1915, the German army has swept through _____ Belgium. In April, the Canadian First Division, including McCrae and Helmer, takes up position at the front alongside French troops near Ypres, the last Belgian city not captured by the Germans.
- The Canadians are about to see their first action. There is constant bombardment, then silence. In minutes a mysterious green cloud rises from the German trenches and moves slowly with the wind over the French lines. It is the German’s secret weapon, chlorine _____. The French soldiers retreat, choking and dying. Suddenly old-fashioned warfare has turned modern.
- Outgunned and outnumbered, Canadians are sent into the sights of the German army. Alexis Helmer mans a gun battery. John McCrae treats the _____.
- The next day, John McCrae looks at Helmer’s grave and writes a few lines of _____.

- John McCrae will be one of 60,000 _____ who never return home.