

Conscription Debate
Resources: Recruitment Posters



This is Your Flag

Recruitment poster for the 207th Battalion of Ottawa-Carleton. Recruitment took place at the recruiting office on Sparks Street. The unit went overseas in 1917, but was broken up and its men sent to reinforce other front-line infantry battalions, including the 2nd, the 21st, the 38th Battalions and the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

Wartime Recruiting Poster

CWM 19820376-008

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Shall We Help to Crush Tyranny?

Patriotic symbols such as the maple leaf and the Union Jack were familiar images in recruitment posters. Patriotism was a driving factor in early enlistment, as many Canadian and British-born recruits flocked to serve King and country.

Wartime Recruiting Poster

CWM 19800283-010

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Heroes of St. Julien and Festubert

This is the English version of a Canadian recruitment poster. Produced in both French and English, it was meant to encourage recruitment by highlighting the Canadians' heroic stand at the battles of St. Julien (Ypres) and Festubert.

Wartime Recruiting Poster

CWM 19750046-010

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Les Heros de St-Julien et de Festubert

This is the French version of a Canadian recruitment poster. Produced in both French and English, it was meant to encourage recruitment by highlighting the Canadians' heroic stand at the battles of St. Julien (Ypres) and Festubert.

Wartime Recruiting Poster

CWM 19880207-002

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Canadiens-Français, Enrolez Vous!

This recruitment poster for the 163rd Battalion depicts a Canadian infantry soldier standing shoulder to shoulder with a French soldier. This image, made an appeal to French-Canadians' illustrious military history with specific references to famous soldiers, including the Marquis de Montcalm, who had died in 1759 attempting to defend Quebec against British attack. It also highlights the links that existed between Canada and France, and asks French-speaking Quebecers, in an oblique reference to the Quebec Act passed in 1774, if they would prefer Prussian (German) institutions to their own. The unit is named after Charles-Michel d'Irumberry de Salaberry, who raised and commanded a French militia unit during the War of 1812, and successfully defeated a stronger American force at the Battle of Chateauguay in 1813.

Wartime Recruiting Poster

CWM 19750046-009

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150ieme Carabiniers

A uniformed soldier of the 150th Battalion urges enlistment in this French-Canadian recruitment poster. Because this battalion was unable to meet its authorized strength, it was broken up, its troops sent as reinforcements to the 22nd Battalion, the only French-Canadian infantry battalion that served at the front.

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CWM 19820376-009

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The Happy Man

This poster for the 73rd Battalion, the Royal Highlanders of Canada, promises that the happy man today is the man serving at the front. Montreal, Canada's largest city during the war, sent several infantry battalions overseas. The 73rd Battalion served with the 4th Division from 1916 to its demobilization in 1919.

Wartime Recruiting Poster

CWM 19900348-020

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Help the Boys

Shells explode and German soldiers flee in panic, in this colourful recruitment poster for the 245th Battalion, Canadian Grenadier Guards. Raised in Montreal, the 245th sailed to England in 1917 where the battalion was broken up and absorbed by the 23rd Reserve Battalion. The soldiers were subsequently sent to the front as reinforcements for numerous other front line battalions.

Wartime Recruiting Poster

CWM 19820376-004