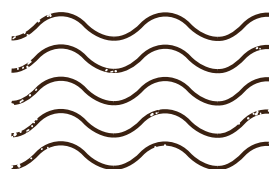


WHERE THE POPPIES BLOW:

The Life and Lessons of John McCrae

WRITTEN BY PAUL KEERY | ILLUSTRATED BY MICHAEL WYATT





WHERE THE POPPIES BLOW:

The Life and Lessons of John McCrae



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Original Script

Paul Keery

Illustrations

Michael Wyatt

Design

Pauline Lopez

Design Assistance

Amos Chin

Editing

Kelsey McCallum

Copyediting

Wili Liberman, Raenu Sarathy, and Lisa Tran

Editorial Assistance

Nupur Bagoria

Translation

Tommy Guignard

Project Consulting

Cheryl DesRoches and Asa McKercher

TEACH Magazine would like to thank those individuals who provided feedback and suggestions in the early stages of this project.

TEACH Magazine
1655 Dupont St, Suite 331
Toronto, ON M6P 3T1

ISBN 978-1-987834-34-5

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada.

Created and Printed in Canada

Funded by the Government of Canada
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada

Canada 





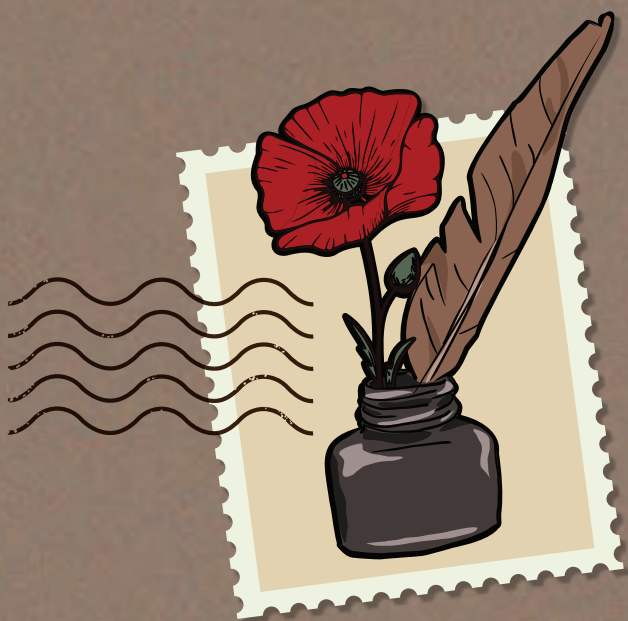
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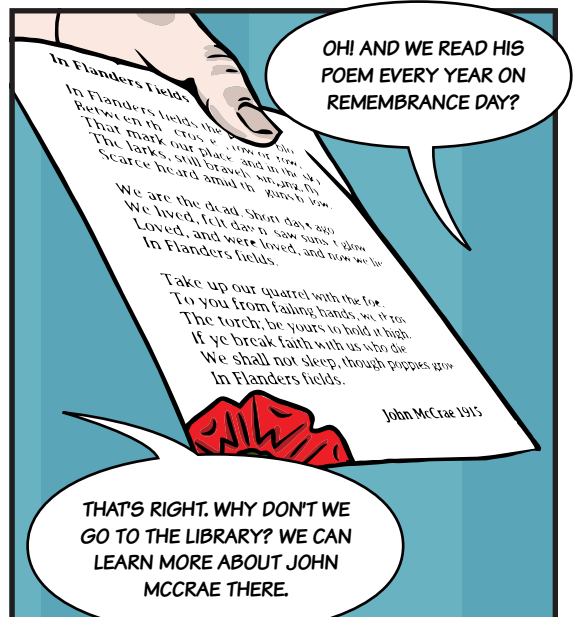
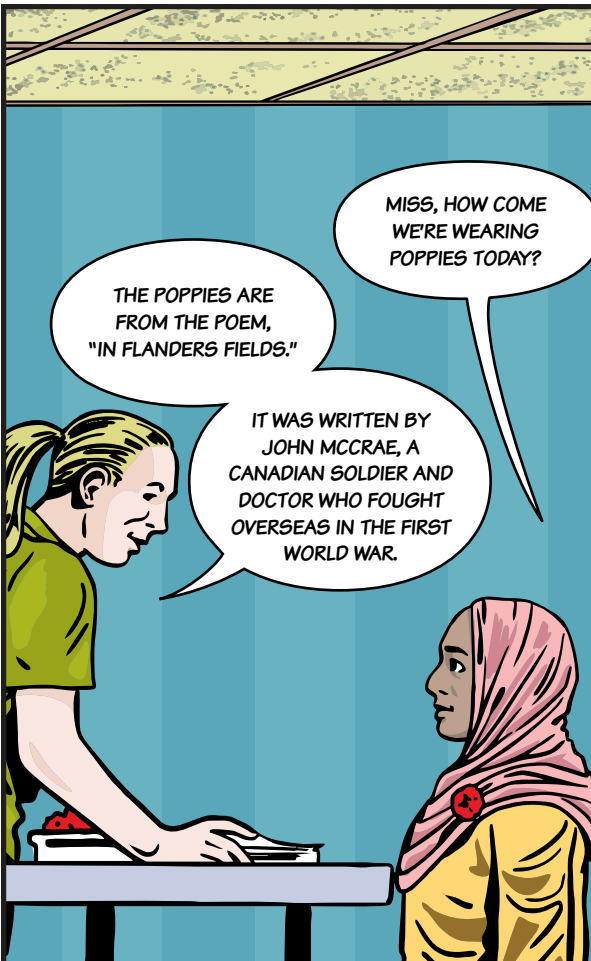
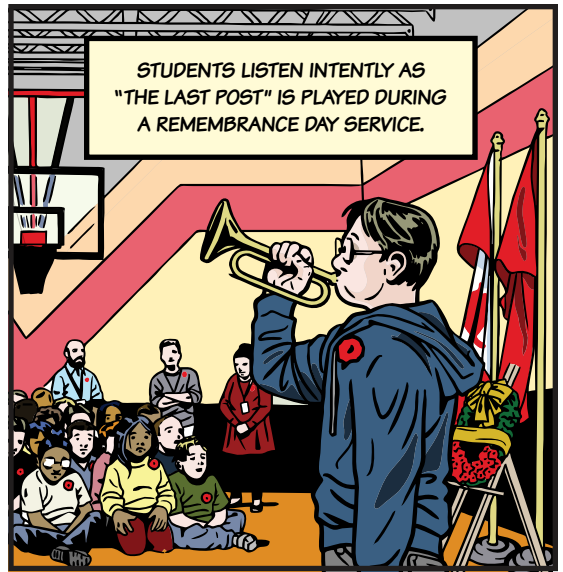


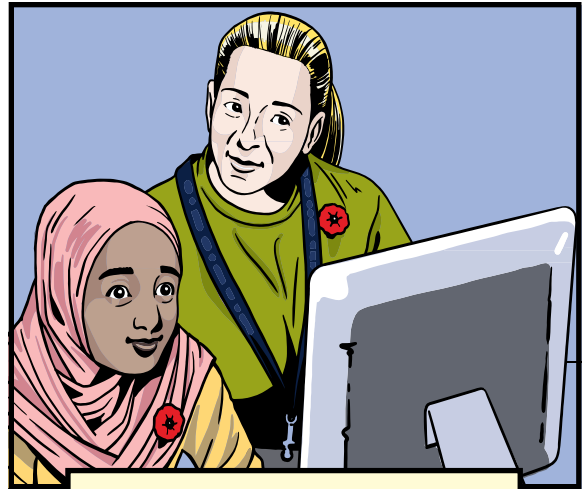
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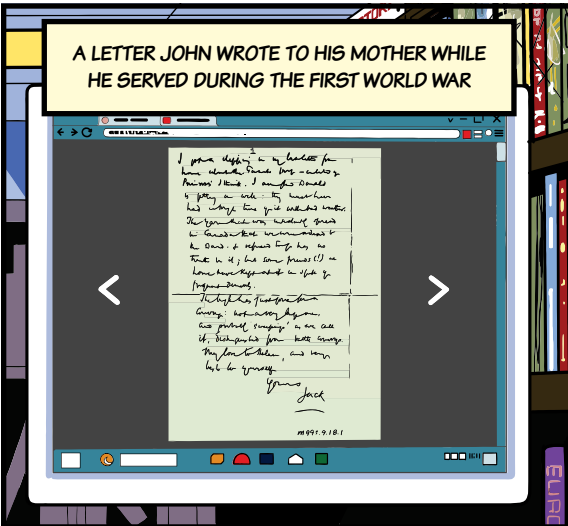
WIMEREUX, FRANCE
JOHN MCCRAE'S
FUNERAL PROCESSION
JANUARY 29, 1918



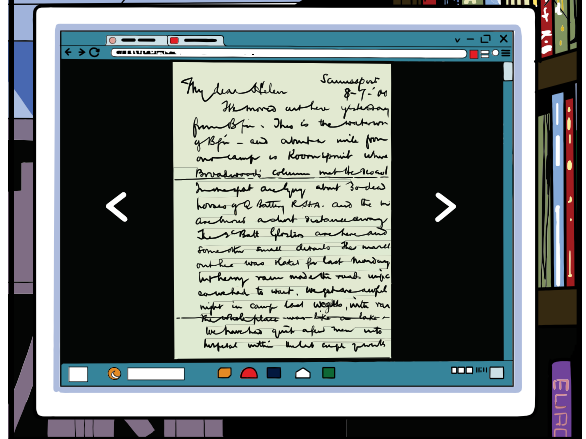




A LETTER WRITTEN BY JOHN WHILE HE WAS OVERSEAS DURING THE BOER WAR IN 1900



A LETTER JOHN WROTE TO HIS MOTHER WHILE HE SERVED DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR



WOW, JOHN MCCRAE WAS A SOLDIER, A DOCTOR, A POET, AND AN ARTIST?! I WONDER WHAT HIS LIFE WAS LIKE.



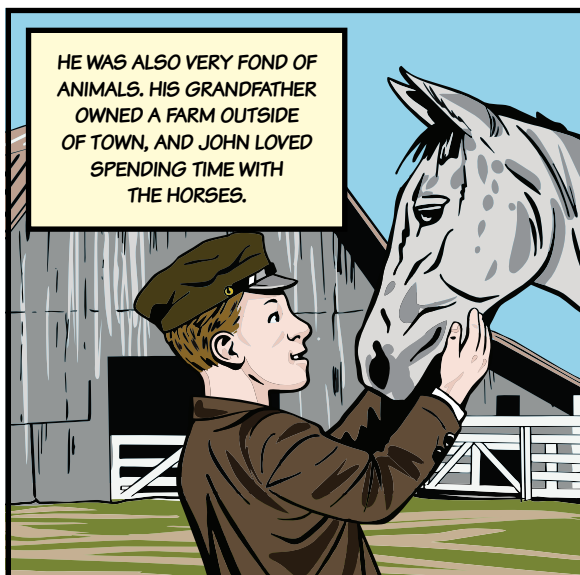
ONE OF JOHN'S MANY HAND-DRAWN SKETCHES



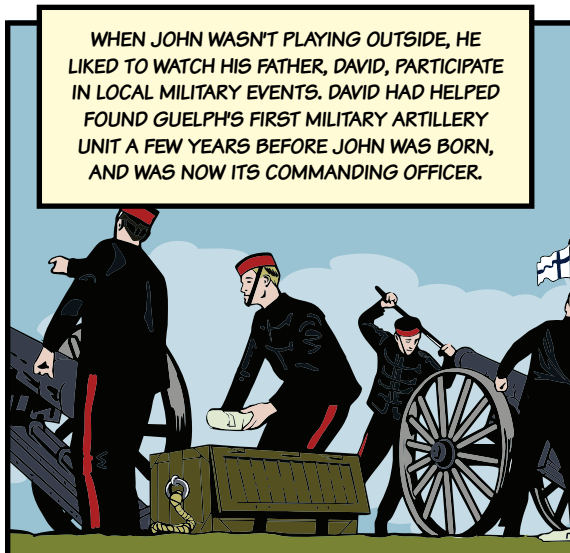
JOHN MCCRAE WAS BORN ON NOVEMBER 30, 1872, IN GUELPH, ONTARIO. HE GREW UP IN A CLOSE-KNIT FAMILY AND WAS THE MIDDLE CHILD OF THREE SIBLINGS. HE HAD AN OLDER BROTHER NAMED TOM AND A YOUNGER SISTER CALLED GEILLS. THE THREE OF THEM KEPT THEIR MOTHER, JANET, VERY BUSY!



THE TOWN OF GUELPH PROVIDED AN IDYLIC PLACE TO GROW UP. JOHN ENJOYED EXPLORING ITS MANY WOODS AND RIVERS.



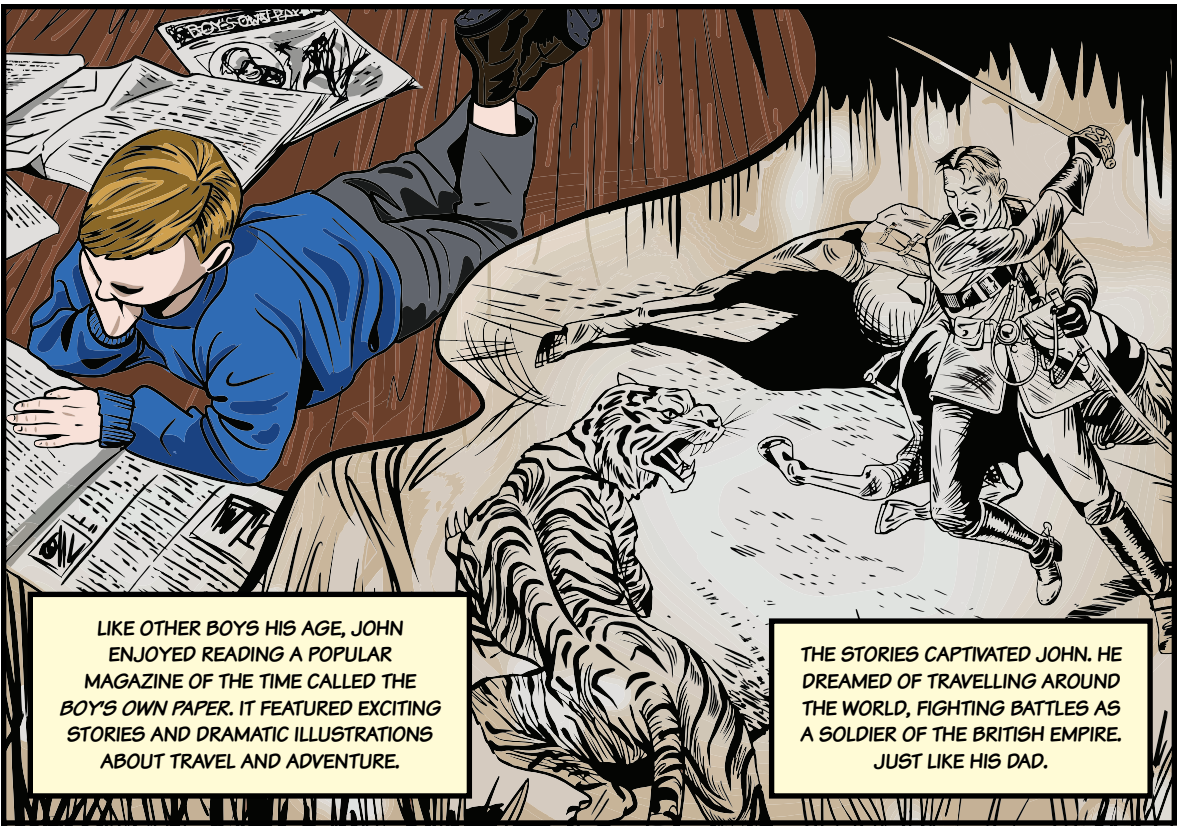
HE WAS ALSO VERY FOND OF ANIMALS. HIS GRANDFATHER OWNED A FARM OUTSIDE OF TOWN, AND JOHN LOVED SPENDING TIME WITH THE HORSES.



WHEN JOHN WASN'T PLAYING OUTSIDE, HE LIKED TO WATCH HIS FATHER, DAVID, PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL MILITARY EVENTS. DAVID HAD HELPED FOUND GUELPH'S FIRST MILITARY ARTILLERY UNIT A FEW YEARS BEFORE JOHN WAS BORN, AND WAS NOW ITS COMMANDING OFFICER.



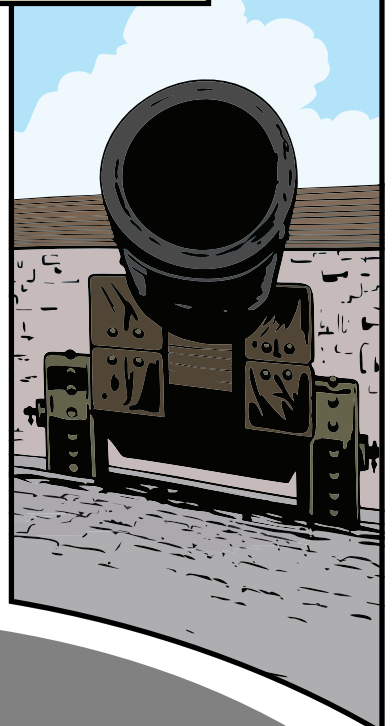
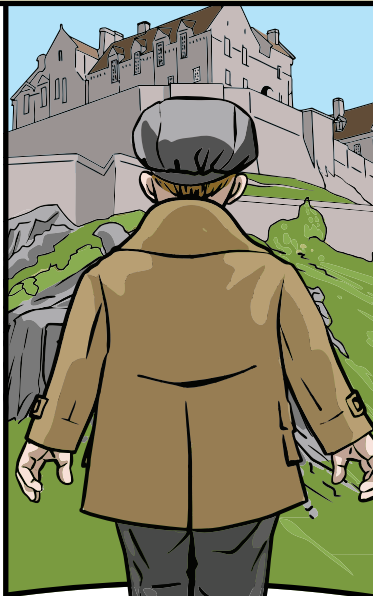
DAVID INSTILLED STRONG MILITARY VALUES IN HIS FAMILY. THEY WERE EXPECTED TO WORK HARD, BE HONEST AND RESPECTFUL, AND CARE FOR OTHERS.



LIKE OTHER BOYS HIS AGE, JOHN ENJOYED READING A POPULAR MAGAZINE OF THE TIME CALLED THE *BOYS OWN PAPER*. IT FEATURED EXCITING STORIES AND DRAMATIC ILLUSTRATIONS ABOUT TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE.

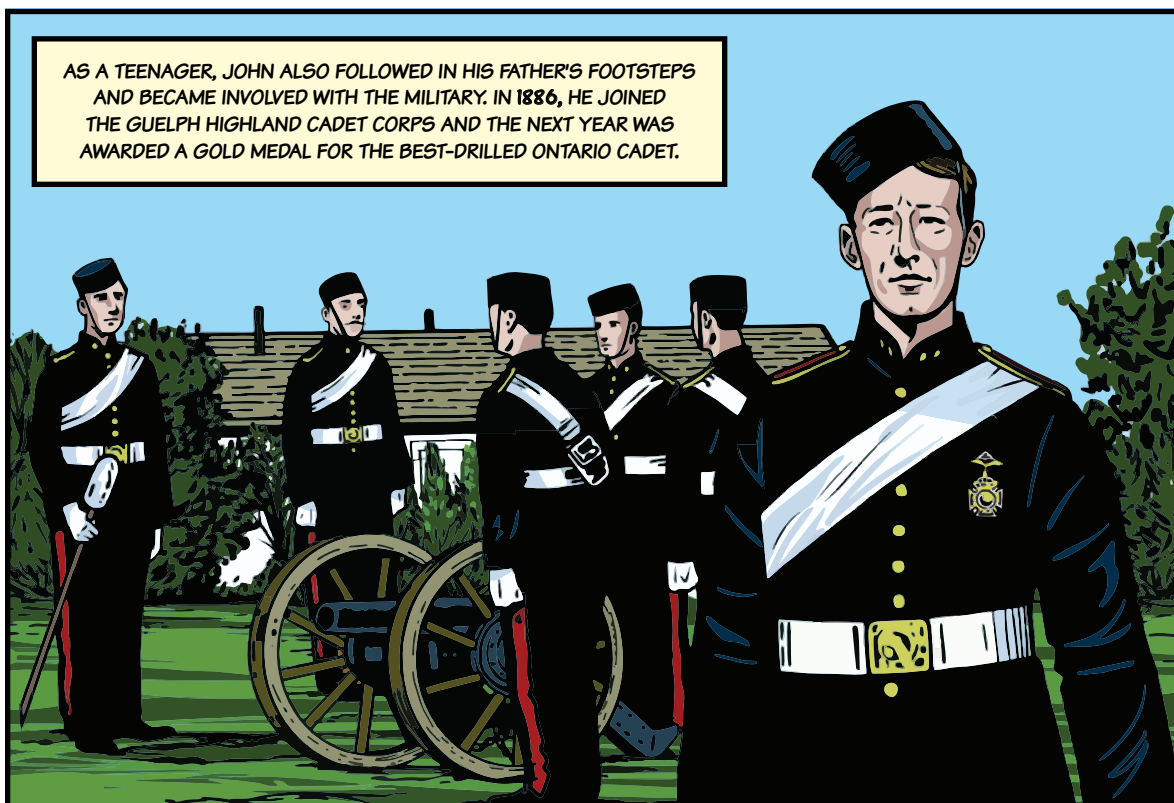
THE STORIES CAPTIVATED JOHN. HE DREAMED OF TRAVELLING AROUND THE WORLD, FIGHTING BATTLES AS A SOLDIER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. JUST LIKE HIS DAD.

JOHN'S DREAMS SOON BEGAN TO COME TRUE. HIS FATHER BROUGHT HIM ALONG ON A BUSINESS TRIP TO LONDON, WHERE JOHN SAW FAMOUS BRITISH LANDMARKS HE'D READ ABOUT IN *BOYS OWN*. HE LONGED TO SEE MORE OF THE WORLD.





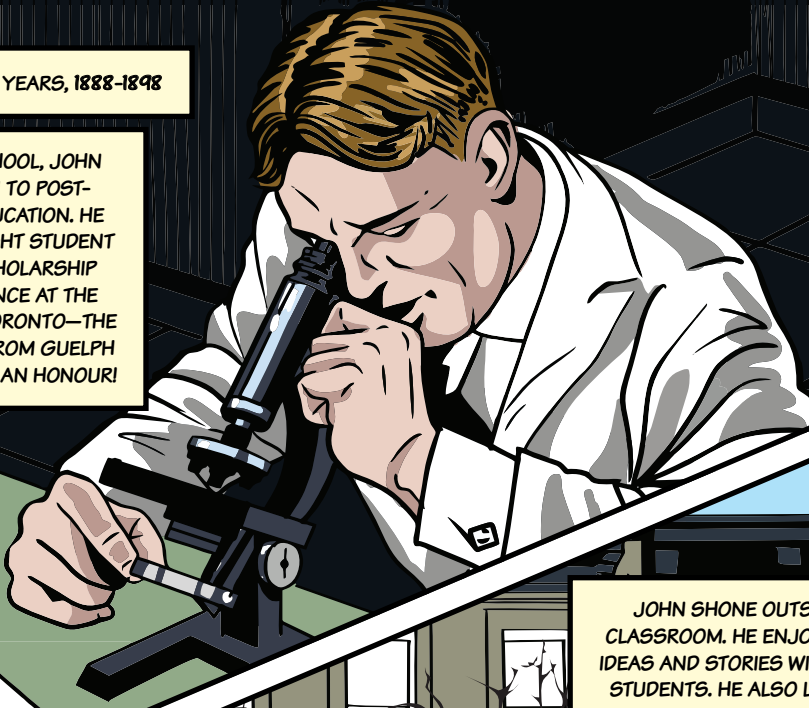
DURING HIS HIGH SCHOOL YEARS, JOHN DEVELOPED A LOVE FOR SCIENCE, ART, AND WRITING. HIS MOTHER AND HIS TEACHERS ENCOURAGED HIM TO EXPLORE THESE NEW PASSIONS.



AS A TEENAGER, JOHN ALSO FOLLOWED IN HIS FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS AND BECAME INVOLVED WITH THE MILITARY. IN 1886, HE JOINED THE GUELPH HIGHLAND CADET CORPS AND THE NEXT YEAR WAS AWARDED A GOLD MEDAL FOR THE BEST-DRILLED ONTARIO CADET.

JOHN'S TORONTO YEARS, 1888-1898

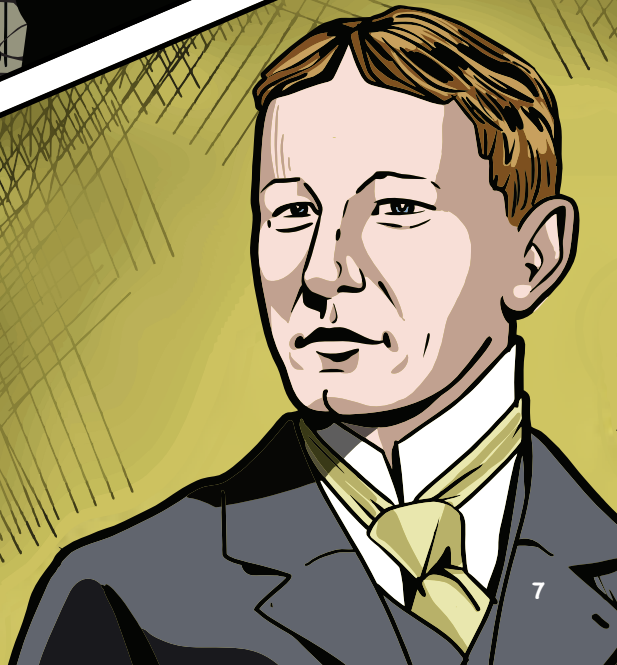
AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, JOHN CONTINUED ON TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION. HE WAS A VERY BRIGHT STUDENT AND WON A SCHOLARSHIP TO STUDY SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO—THE FIRST STUDENT FROM GUELPH TO RECEIVE SUCH AN HONOUR!

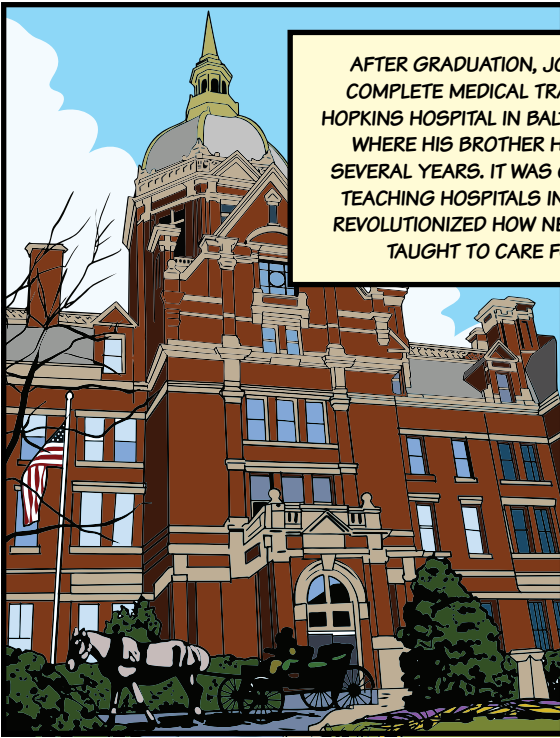


JOHN SHONE OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM. HE ENJOYED SHARING IDEAS AND STORIES WITH HIS FELLOW STUDENTS. HE ALSO LIKED WRITING POETRY. BY THE TIME HE GRADUATED, JOHN HAD PUBLISHED 16 POEMS AND SHORT STORIES IN MAGAZINES ACROSS CANADA AND BRITAIN.



DURING HIS YEARS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, JOHN COMPLETED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE AND A MEDICAL DEGREE. HE WAS THE TOP STUDENT IN HIS CLASS, AND WON THE GOLD MEDAL FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE.

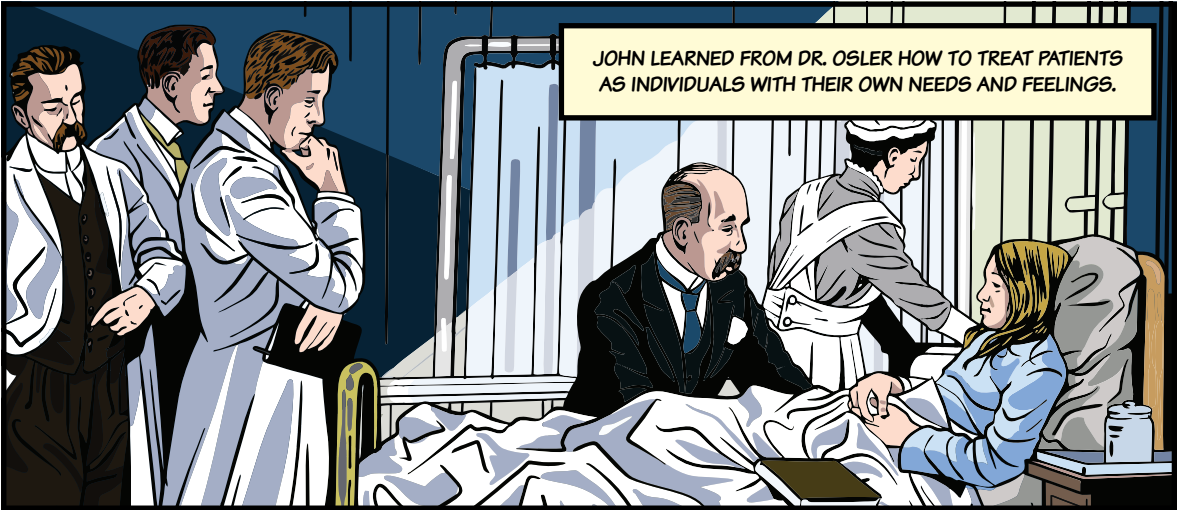




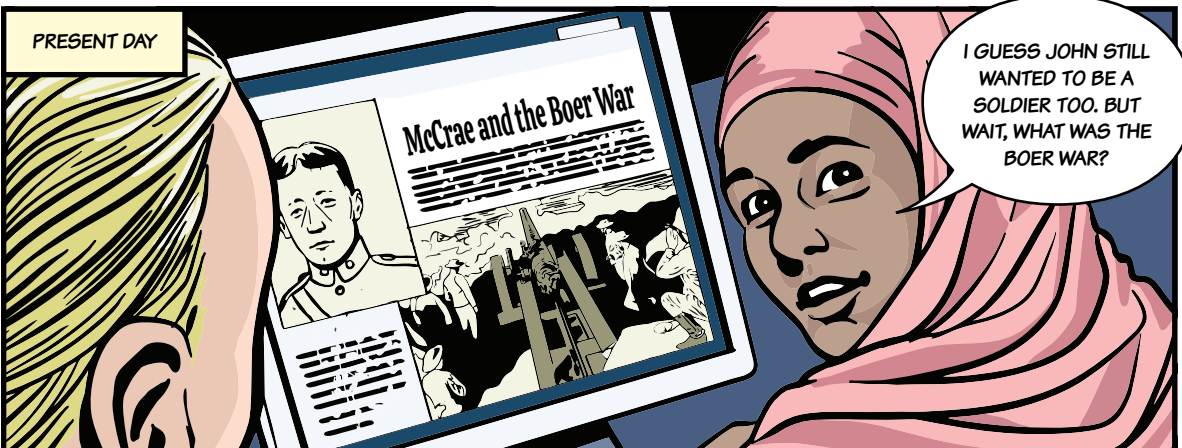
AFTER GRADUATION, JOHN WENT ON TO COMPLETE MEDICAL TRAINING AT JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, WHERE HIS BROTHER HAD WORKED FOR SEVERAL YEARS. IT WAS ONE OF THE FINEST TEACHING HOSPITALS IN THE WORLD, AND REVOLUTIONIZED HOW NEW DOCTORS WERE TAUGHT TO CARE FOR PATIENTS.



JOHN TRAINED UNDER DR. WILLIAM OSLER, AN INCREDIBLE DOCTOR WHO IS KNOWN TODAY AS THE "FATHER OF MODERN MEDICINE." THE TWO QUICKLY BECAME FRIENDS AS DR. OSLER MENTORED JOHN BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE HOSPITAL.



JOHN LEARNED FROM DR. OSLER HOW TO TREAT PATIENTS AS INDIVIDUALS WITH THEIR OWN NEEDS AND FEELINGS.



PRESENT DAY

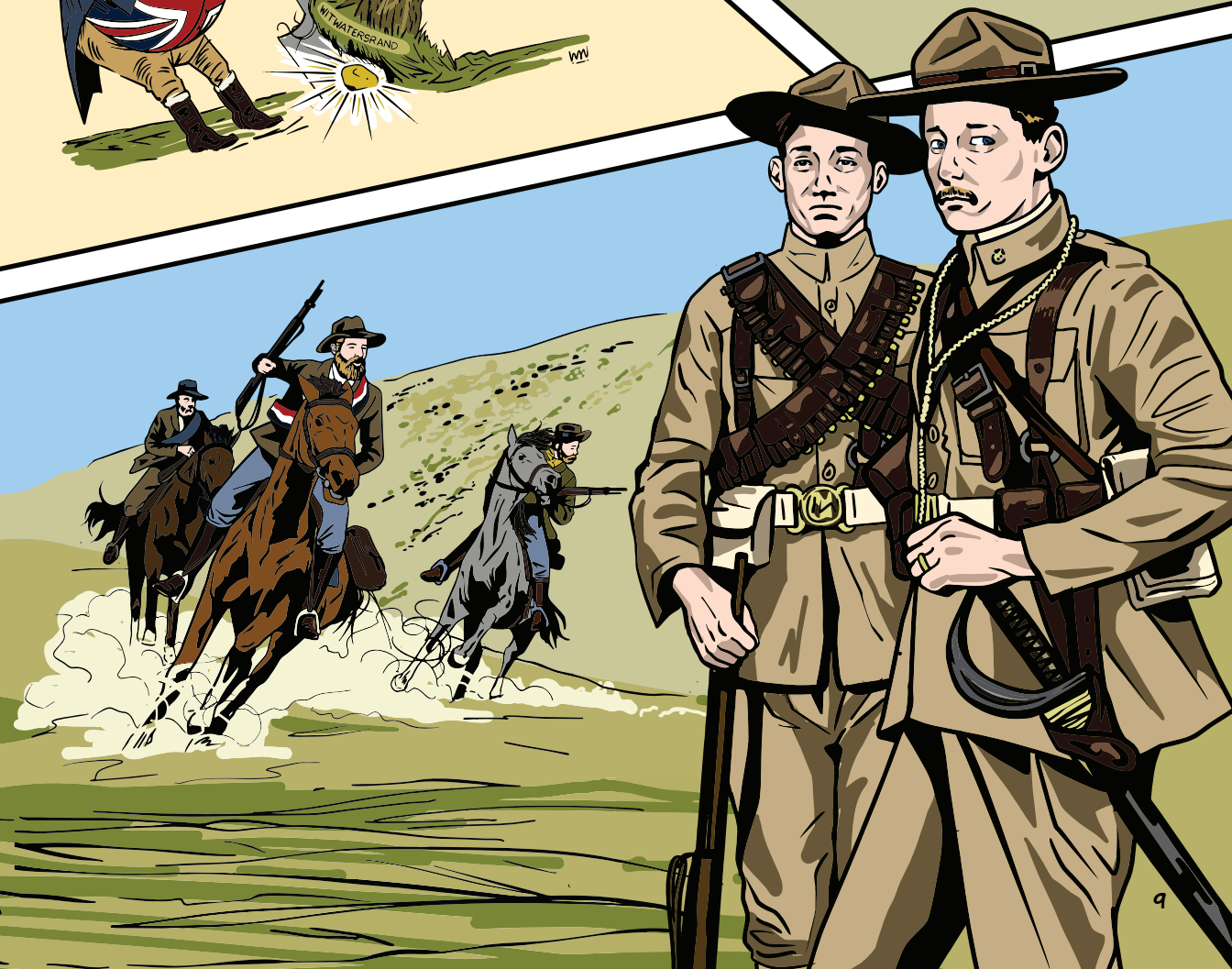
I GUESS JOHN STILL WANTED TO BE A SOLDIER TOO. BUT WAIT, WHAT WAS THE BOER WAR?

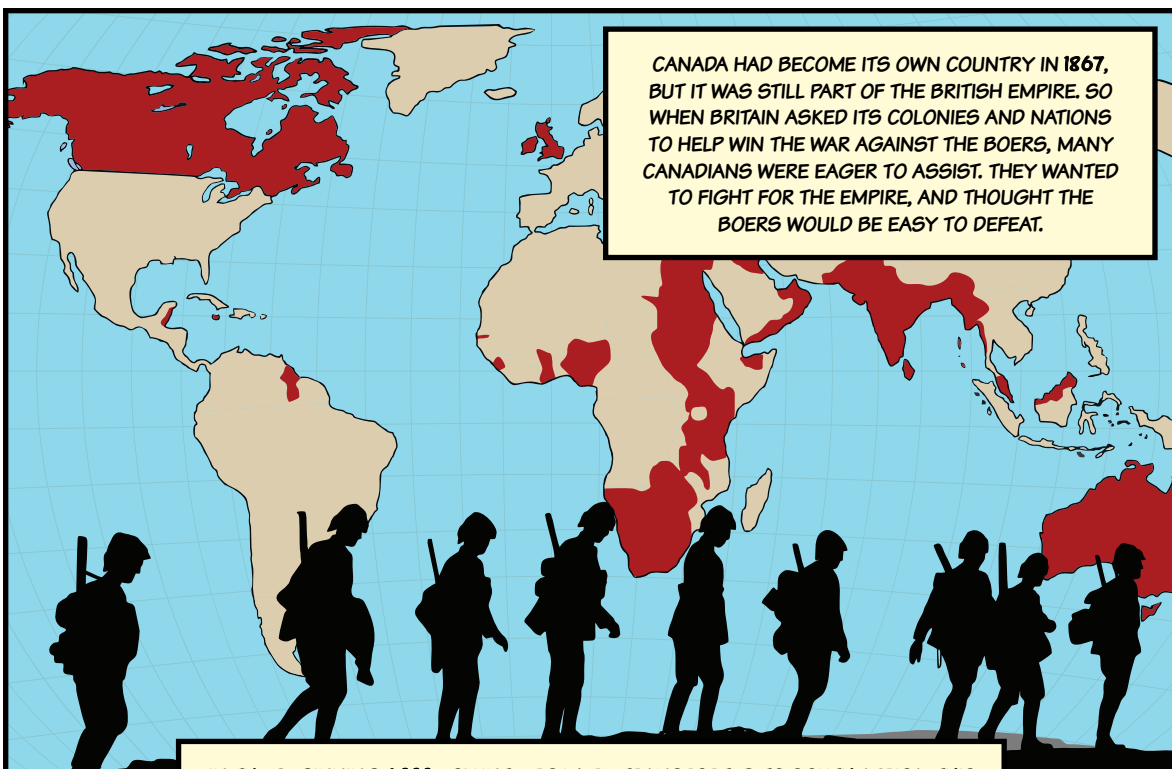
THE BOER WAR, 1899-1902

THE BOER WAR WAS FOUGHT IN SOUTH AFRICA BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND THE BOERS (DUTCH SOUTH AFRICANS). MOST OF SOUTH AFRICA WAS CONTROLLED BY THE BRITISH AT THAT TIME, EXCEPT FOR TWO INDEPENDENT BOER STATES: THE TRANSVAAL AND THE ORANGE FREE STATE.



THE WAR STARTED AFTER GOLD WAS FOUND IN THE TWO STATES. THE BRITISH COVETED THAT WEALTH, AND WERE PREPARED TO FIGHT THE BOERS TO GET IT.





CANADA HAD BECOME ITS OWN COUNTRY IN 1867, BUT IT WAS STILL PART OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. SO WHEN BRITAIN ASKED ITS COLONIES AND NATIONS TO HELP WIN THE WAR AGAINST THE BOERS, MANY CANADIANS WERE EAGER TO ASSIST. THEY WANTED TO FIGHT FOR THE EMPIRE, AND THOUGHT THE BOERS WOULD BE EASY TO DEFEAT.

IN THE BEGINNING, 1,000 VOLUNTEERS WERE TRANSPORTED TO SOUTH AFRICA. THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME CANADIAN TROOPS WERE SENT TO FIGHT A WAR OVERSEAS.



JOHN WANTED TO FULFILL HIS BOYHOOD DREAMS OF JOINING THE MILITARY. UNFORTUNATELY, HE ARRIVED TOO LATE TO ENLIST.



BUT THE BRITISH UNDERESTIMATED THE BOERS AND SUFFERED MANY CASUALTIES IN BATTLE. MORE CANADIAN TROOPS WERE NEEDED TO FILL IN, GIVING JOHN A SECOND CHANCE TO JOIN. HE QUICKLY POSTPONED A MEDICAL FELLOWSHIP HE HAD BEEN AWARDED AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY IN MONTREAL AND SIGNED UP TO FIGHT. LESS THAN A MONTH LATER, JOHN AND THE OTHER VOLUNTEER OFFICERS SET SAIL FOR SOUTH AFRICA ABOARD A SHIP CALLED THE SS LAURENTIAN.



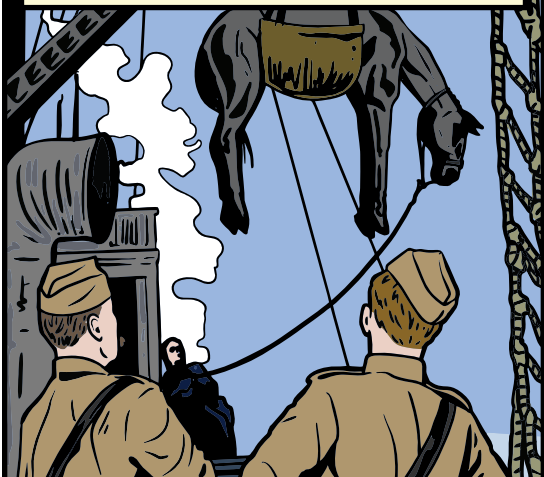
EN ROUTE, JOHN MET EDWARD MORRISON, A FELLOW SOLDIER, AND THE TWO QUICKLY BECAME FRIENDS.



JOHN'S ENTHUSIASTIC, OUTGOING PERSONALITY LIVENED UP THE VOYAGE. HE TOLD PLENTY OF STORIES AND ENCOURAGED OTHERS TO JOIN IN.



EDWARD MORRISON AND JOHN MCCRAE WERE BOTH LIEUTENANTS ASSIGNED TO COMMAND SECTIONS OF "D" BATTERY, A MILITARY UNIT OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN FIELD ARTILLERY. THE TWO LIEUTENANTS WANTED TO MAKE SURE THE BATTERY'S HORSES, WHO WOULD PULL THE ARTILLERY WAGONS, WERE PROPERLY CARED FOR.



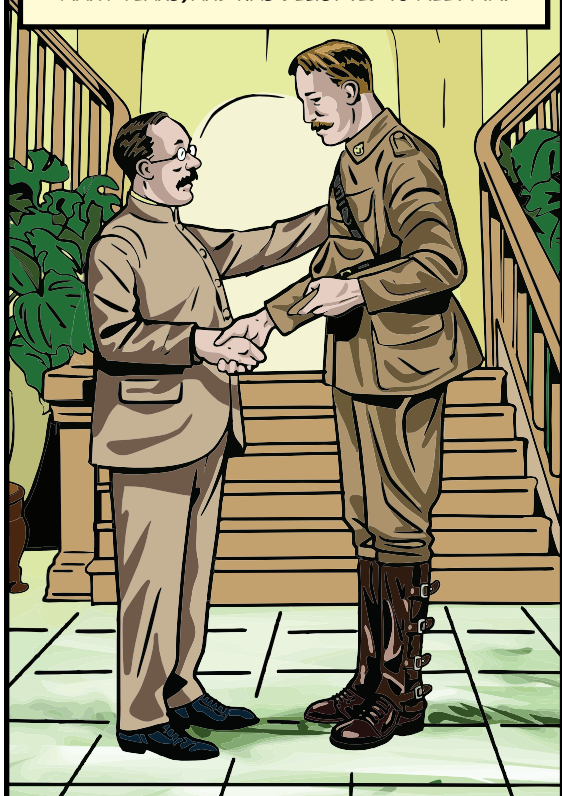
UNFORTUNATELY, THE HORSES HAD A TERRIBLE TIME DURING THE VOYAGE. MORRISON'S FAVOURITE, ABILITY, BECAME INJURED DURING A STRONG GALE AND HAD TO BE BURIED AT SEA.



WHEN THE *SS LAURENTIAN* ARRIVED, "D" BATTERY
DISEMBARKED AND WAITED FOR ORDERS.



WHILE STAYING AT A HOTEL IN CAPE TOWN, JOHN
MET THE FAMOUS AUTHOR RUDYARD KIPLING, WHO
WROTE POPULAR NOVELS LIKE *KIM* AND *THE JUNGLE*
BOOK. JOHN HAD ADMIRED KIPLING'S WORK FOR
MANY YEARS, AND WAS DELIGHTED TO MEET HIM.



KIPLING HAD A REPUTATION FOR WRITING
THAT CELEBRATED THE BRITISH EMPIRE.
HE LOVED TRAVELLING AND VISITED SOUTH
AFRICA REGULARLY. IN HIS BOOKS HE
WROTE ABOUT WAR AS A GREAT BRITISH
ADVENTURE, BUT JOHN WOULD SOON
DISCOVER THAT WAR WASN'T AS GLAMOROUS
AS KIPLING'S STORIES MADE IT SEEM.

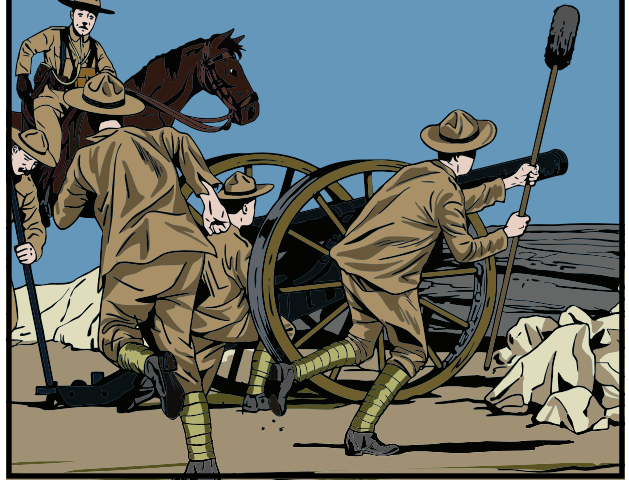


FEBRUARY 1900

"D" BATTERY RECEIVED ITS ORDERS
AND BEGAN MARCHING TO A
SMALL TOWN CALLED KENHARDT.



ONCE THEY ARRIVED, "D" BATTERY PREPARED FOR
BATTLE BUT DIDN'T MEET THE BOERS. THE ENEMY
FLED WHENEVER THEY SAW THE CANADIANS AND
OTHER TROOPS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.



THE BOERS KNEW THEY COULDN'T WIN IF THEY
FACED OFF AGAINST BRITISH FORCES DIRECTLY. SO
INSTEAD, THEY STAGED HIT-AND-RUN ATTACKS,
KILLING BRITISH TROOPS AS THEY MARCHED, WHILE
ALSO DESTROYING BRIDGES AND RAILWAYS.



THESE TACTICS, KNOWN AS "GUERRILLA WARFARE,"
KEPT THE BRITISH OFF-BALANCE AND ALLOWED THE
BOERS TO WIN SEVERAL BATTLES EARLY IN THE WAR.

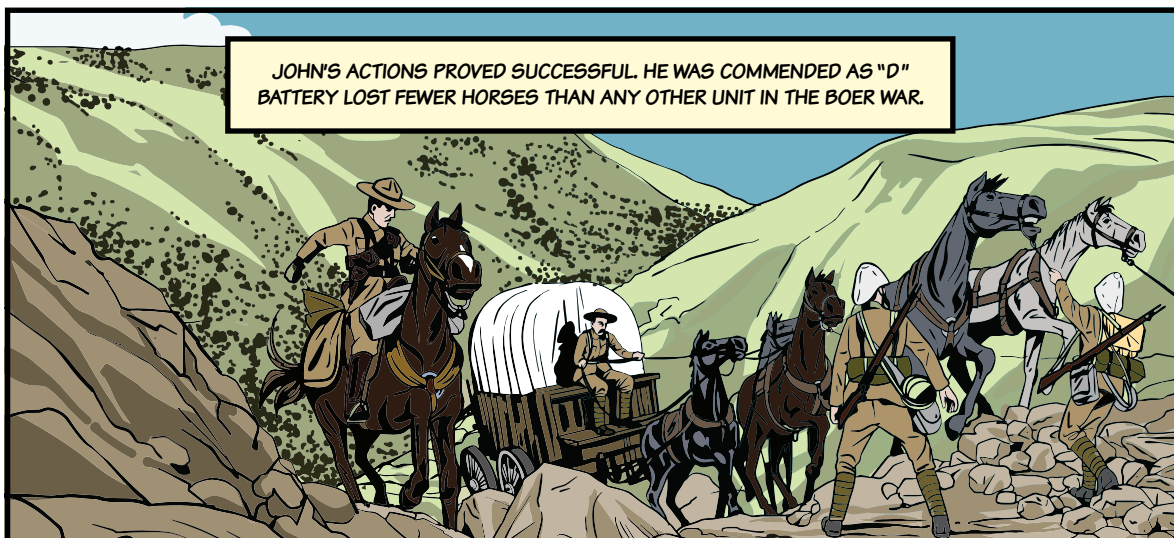
WHEN NOT ON THE BATTLEFIELDS, THE CANADIAN SOLDIERS STRUGGLED IN THEIR MILITARY CAMPS. CONDITIONS WERE TERRIBLE AND MANY LOWER-RANKING SOLDIERS EVEN HAD TO DRINK MUDDY WATER FROM NEARBY RIVERS, WHICH LED TO OUTBREAKS OF ILLNESS. MEANWHILE, HIGHER-RANKING BRITISH OFFICERS DRANK CLEAN WATER FROM TANKS.



THE HORSES SUFFERED TOO. JOHN KNEW IF THEY WERE POORLY FED AND WATERED, THEY COULDN'T PULL WAGONS OR MUNITIONS. HE TRIED TO REMEDY THE SITUATION, EVEN THOUGH SENIOR OFFICERS CHEWED HIM OUT FOR IT.



JOHN'S ACTIONS PROVED SUCCESSFUL. HE WAS COMMENDED AS "D" BATTERY LOST FEWER HORSES THAN ANY OTHER UNIT IN THE BOER WAR.



AS THE WAR DRAGGED ON, MORE CANADIAN SOLDIERS DIED OF DISEASE THAN IN BATTLE. JOHN COULDN'T BELIEVE HOW BADLY THE CANADIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS CARED FOR ITS PATIENTS.



IN RESPONSE, JOHN BEGAN TO TREAT THE SICK SOLDIERS HIMSELF, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS OFFICIALLY AN ARTILLERY OFFICER, NOT A DOCTOR.

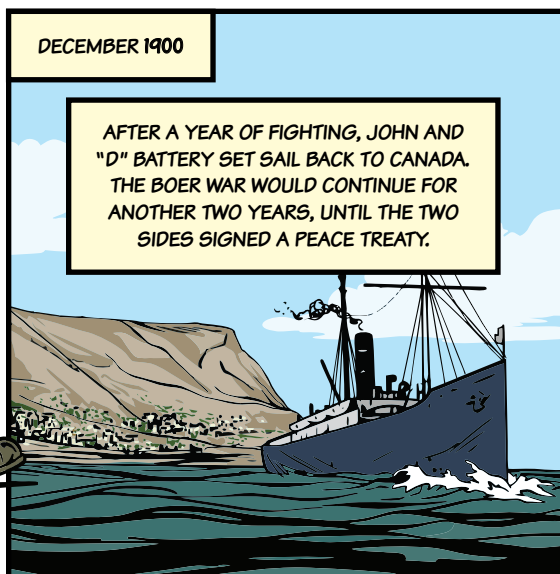


UNFORTUNATELY, JOHN FELL ILL TOO, BUT RECOVERED IN TIME TO SAIL HOME.



DECEMBER 1900

AFTER A YEAR OF FIGHTING, JOHN AND "D" BATTERY SET SAIL BACK TO CANADA. THE BOER WAR WOULD CONTINUE FOR ANOTHER TWO YEARS, UNTIL THE TWO SIDES SIGNED A PEACE TREATY.



ON THE VOYAGE HOME, JOHN MADE SKETCHES OF VESSELS HE SAW ALONG THE WAY.



HE QUICKLY BECAME THE CENTRE OF ATTENTION ABOARD THE SHIP, AND KEPT HIS COMRADES WELL ENTERTAINED.

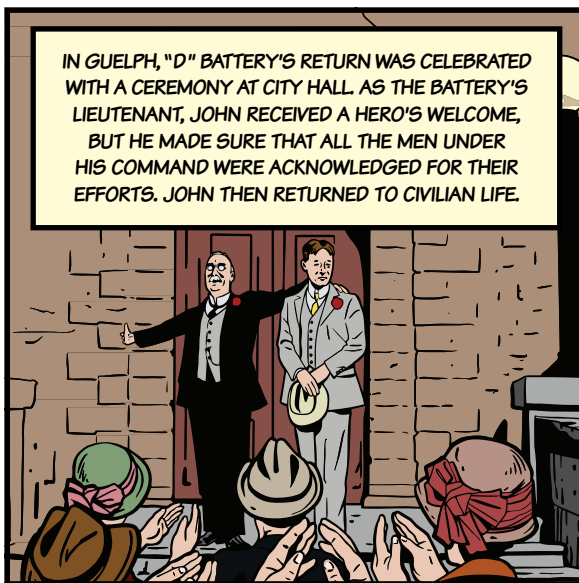


HALIFAX,
NOVA SCOTIA,
JANUARY 1901

"D" BATTERY ARRIVED
BACK ON CANADIAN SOIL
TO A WARM, BOISTEROUS
WELCOME FROM THE LOCALS.
THE MEN WOULD THEN
CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY
TO ONTARIO BY TRAIN.



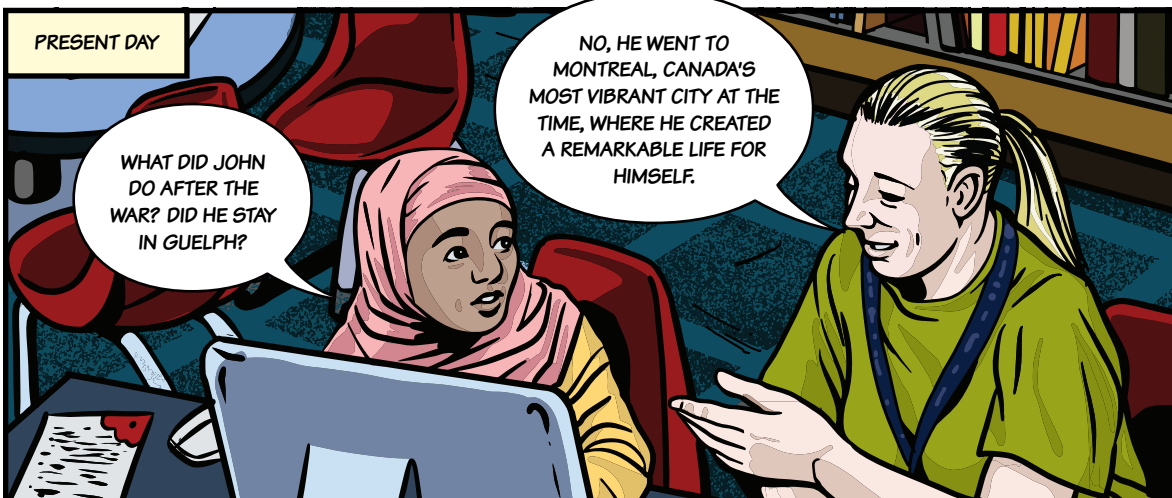
IN GUELPH, "D" BATTERY'S RETURN WAS CELEBRATED
WITH A CEREMONY AT CITY HALL. AS THE BATTERY'S
LIEUTENANT, JOHN RECEIVED A HERO'S WELCOME,
BUT HE MADE SURE THAT ALL THE MEN UNDER
HIS COMMAND WERE ACKNOWLEDGED FOR THEIR
EFFORTS. JOHN THEN RETURNED TO CIVILIAN LIFE.



PRESENT DAY

WHAT DID JOHN
DO AFTER THE
WAR? DID HE STAY
IN GUELPH?

NO, HE WENT TO
MONTREAL, CANADA'S
MOST VIBRANT CITY AT THE
TIME, WHERE HE CREATED
A REMARKABLE LIFE FOR
HIMSELF.

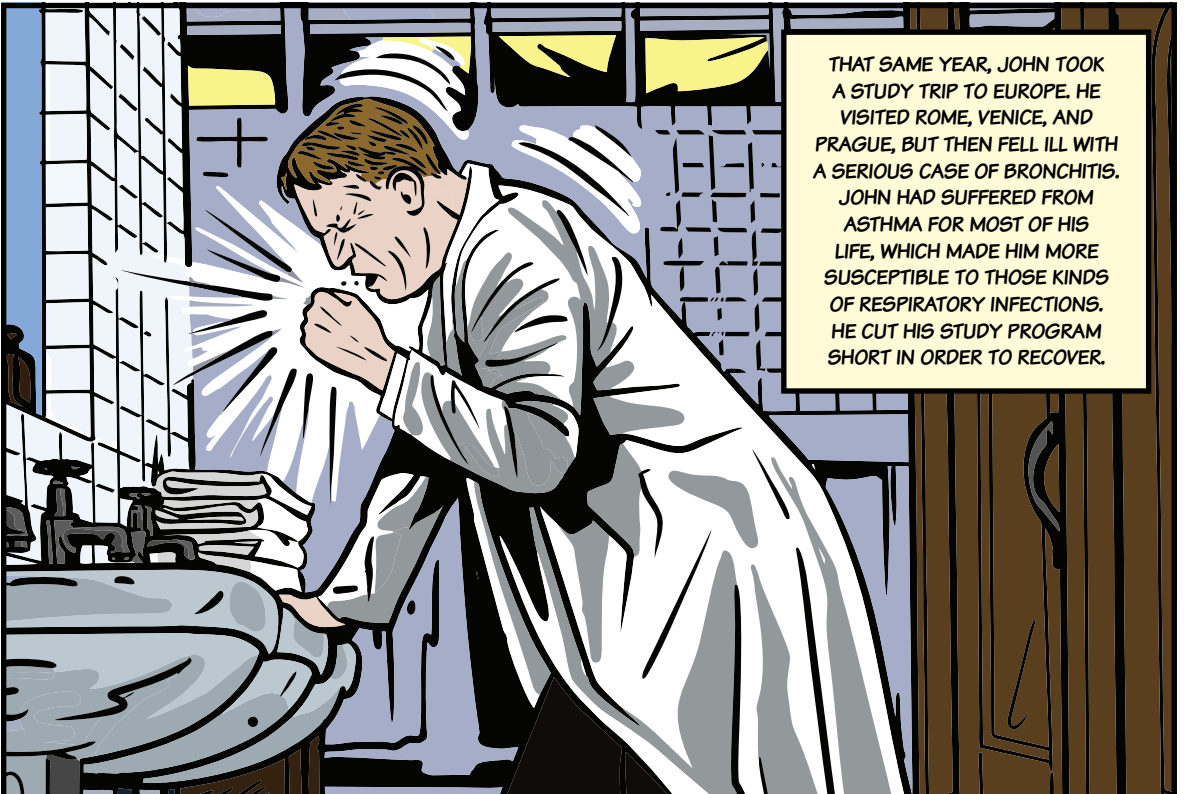
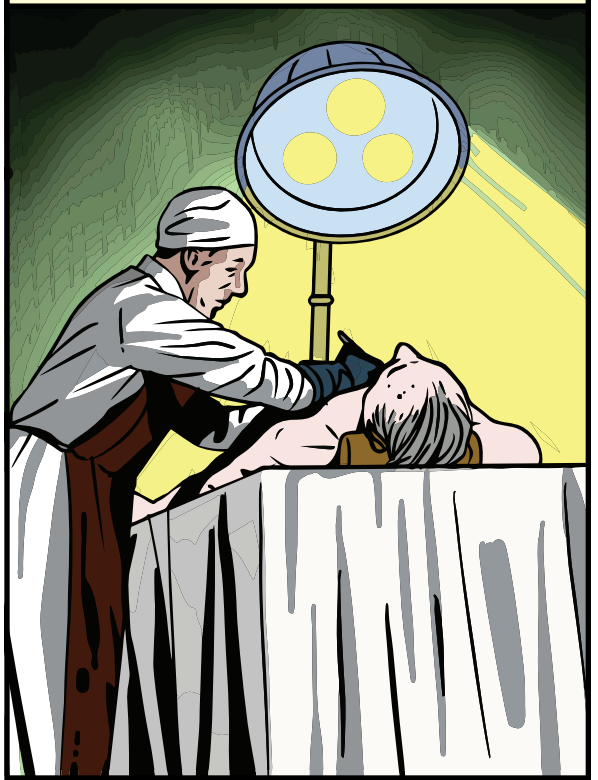


MCGILL UNIVERSITY
MONTREAL, QUEBEC, 1901



AFTER RETURNING FROM SOUTH AFRICA,
JOHN CONTINUED HIS MEDICAL STUDIES,
RESUMING THE FELLOWSHIP AT MCGILL
THAT HE HAD DEFERRED IN ORDER TO ENLIST.

DURING THIS TIME, JOHN CONDUCTED RESEARCH IN
MCGILL'S MEDICAL LABORATORIES AND PERFORMED
AUTOPSIES AT MONTREAL GENERAL HOSPITAL. HE WAS
ALSO HIRED AS THE HOSPITAL'S PATHOLOGIST IN 1902.



THAT SAME YEAR, JOHN TOOK
A STUDY TRIP TO EUROPE. HE
VISITED ROME, VENICE, AND
PRAGUE, BUT THEN FELL ILL WITH
A SERIOUS CASE OF BRONCHITIS.
JOHN HAD SUFFERED FROM
ASTHMA FOR MOST OF HIS
LIFE, WHICH MADE HIM MORE
SUSCEPTIBLE TO THOSE KINDS
OF RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS.
HE CUT HIS STUDY PROGRAM
SHORT IN ORDER TO RECOVER.

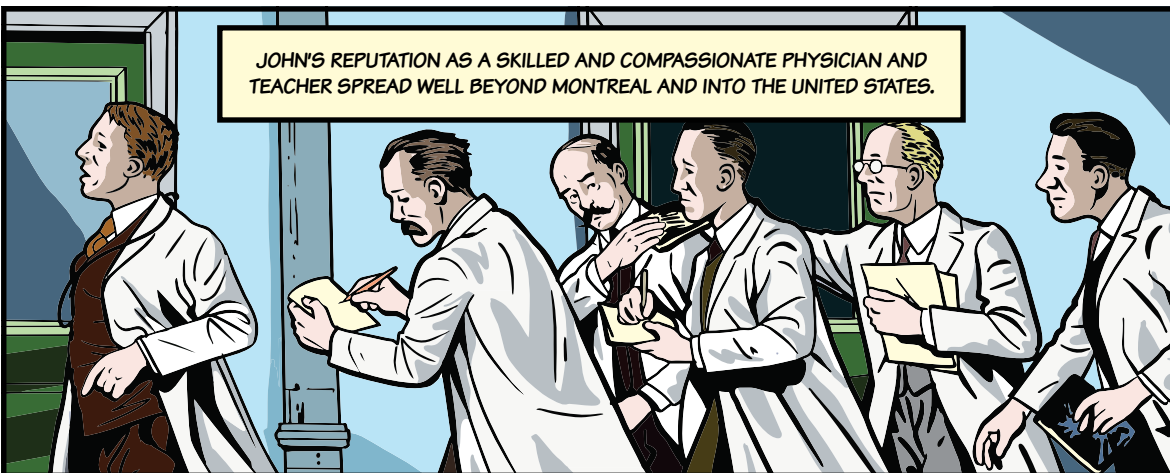
BACK IN MONTREAL, JOHN BEGAN TEACHING CLASSES AT MCGILL. DUE TO HIS CHARISMA AND CHARM, HIS LECTURES QUICKLY GAINED POPULARITY. JOHN WAS A GREAT TEACHER, AND LEFT LASTING IMPRESSIONS ON HIS STUDENTS.



MANY OF JOHN'S COLLEAGUES—SUCH AS DR. GEORGE ADAMI, WHOM JOHN WAS STUDYING UNDER DURING HIS FELLOWSHIP—WERE IMPRESSED WITH HIS TEACHING ABILITIES AND THE WAY HE CONNECTED WITH HIS STUDENTS.



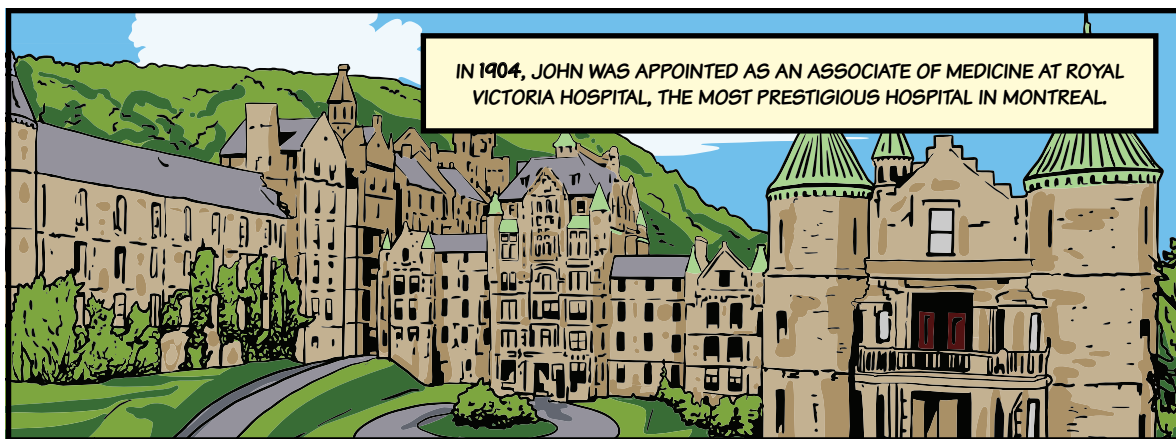
JOHN'S REPUTATION AS A SKILLED AND COMPASSIONATE PHYSICIAN AND TEACHER SPREAD WELL BEYOND MONTREAL AND INTO THE UNITED STATES.



HE BEGAN LECTURING AS A VISITING PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT MEDICAL COLLEGE.

HE MOSTLY TAUGHT BACTERIOLOGY AND PATHOLOGY, BUT WAS SO KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT ALL KINDS OF MEDICAL FIELDS THAT HE COULD SUBSTITUTE AS A TEACHER FOR ALMOST ANY CLASS AT THE COLLEGE, IF NECESSARY.





IN 1904, JOHN WAS APPOINTED AS AN ASSOCIATE OF MEDICINE AT ROYAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL, THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS HOSPITAL IN MONTREAL.



ALTHOUGH JOHN'S WORK KEPT HIM VERY BUSY, HE ALSO ENJOYED A FULFILLING SOCIAL AND LITERARY LIFE. AS A PUBLISHED POET, HE WAS INVITED TO JOIN THE EXCLUSIVE PEN AND PENCIL CLUB, BASED IN ARTIST EDMOND DYONNET'S STUDIO. OTHER NOTABLE MEMBERS OF THE CLUB INCLUDED THE HUMOURIST STEPHEN LEACOCK, WHO WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF JOHN'S, AND WILLIAM VAN HORNE, THE BUSINESSMAN WHO SPEARHEADED THE BUILDING OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

DESPITE HIS CHEERFUL, OUTGOING PERSONALITY, JOHN HID A SAD AND MELANCHOLY SIDE. DEATH BECAME A COMMON THEME IN HIS WRITING AND POETRY, EVEN MORE SO AFTER RETURNING FROM SOUTH AFRICA. DEATH WAS A PART OF JOHN'S WORK AS BOTH A DOCTOR AND A SOLDIER, AND PERHAPS HE USED POETRY TO COMPREHEND ITS MEANING AND INEVITABILITY.

HUDSON BAY EXPEDITION, 1910



YORK
FACTORY

NORWAY
HOUSE

HUDSON
BAY

PEI

IN 1910, THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA, EARL GREY, WAS PLANNING AN EXPEDITION TO HUDSON BAY. HE WANTED TO SEE IF IT WOULD MAKE A GOOD SHIPPING ROUTE TO HELP FARMERS IN THE PRAIRIES SEND THEIR GRAIN OVERSEAS. GREY INVITED JOHN TO COME ALONG AS THE EXPEDITION'S DOCTOR.

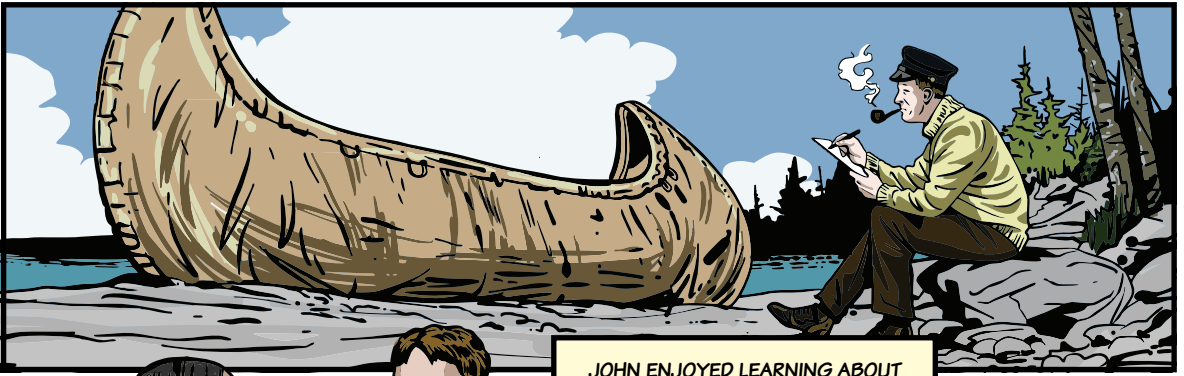


THE EXPEDITION BEGAN AT NORWAY HOUSE IN MANITOBA, WITH THE GROUP PADDLING IN CANOES FOR NEARLY TWO WEEKS UNTIL THEY REACHED YORK FACTORY, AN OLD HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TRADING POST. THEY WERE ACCOMPANIED BY 23 CREE GUIDES FOR THIS STRETCH OF THE JOURNEY. AFTER ARRIVING, THE GROUP BOARDED A SHIP CALLED THE *EARL GREY*, WHICH SAILED THROUGH THE BAY'S ARCTIC WATERS.

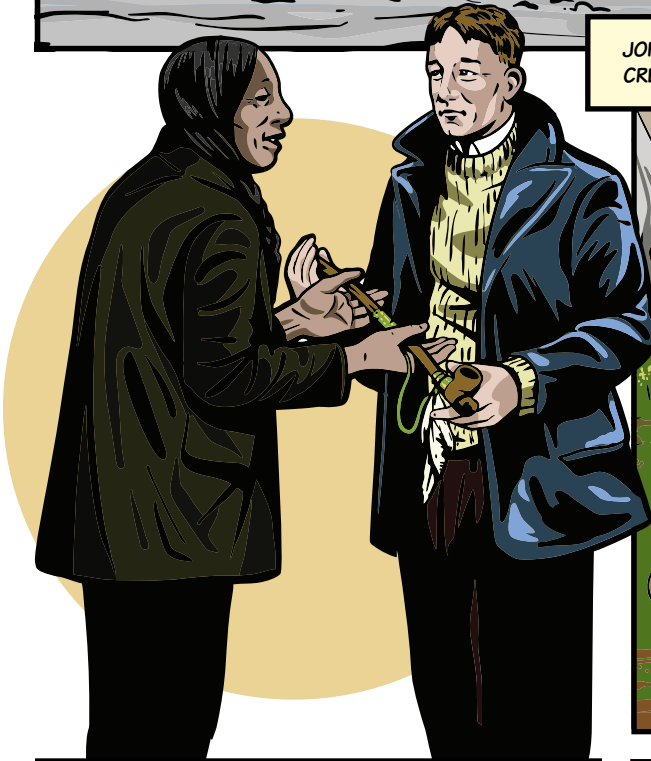


WHILE ON THE TRIP, EARL GREY SHARED MANY EXCITING STORIES WITH JOHN, INCLUDING THAT HE HAD RECENTLY DONATED A TROPHY TO THE NATIONAL CANADIAN FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP—WHICH WAS KNOWN AS THE CANADIAN DOMINION FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP AT THE TIME. THE TROPHY WAS CALLED THE GREY CUP.





JOHN ENJOYED LEARNING ABOUT CREE CULTURE FROM THE GUIDES.



AFTER A FASCINATING VOYAGE, THE EARL GREY DOCKED AT CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.



WHILE VISITING THE ISLAND, EARL GREY ARRANGED TO MEET LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY, WHO FAMOUSLY WROTE ANNE OF GREEN GABLES. SHE HAD TEA WITH GREY, JOHN, AND THE REST OF THE EXPEDITION PARTY, THEN JOINED THEM ABOARD THEIR SHIP THE FOLLOWING EVENING FOR A FORMAL DINNER.



MONTREAL,
1910-1914

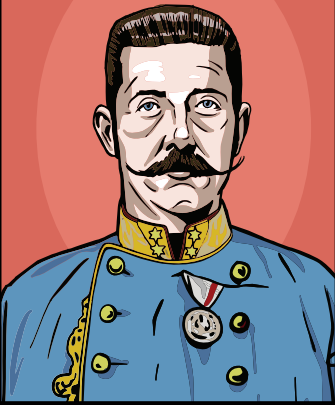
RETURNING TO MONTREAL ONCE MORE, JOHN RESUMED HIS BUSY SCHEDULE OF PRACTICING MEDICINE, TREATING PATIENTS, AND TEACHING.



DURING THIS TIME, HE CO-WROTE A TEXTBOOK OF PATHOLOGY FOR STUDENTS OF MEDICINE ALONGSIDE DR. ADAMI. IT BECAME THE AUTHORITATIVE TEXTBOOK FOR MANY YEARS.



JUNE 28, 1914



UNFORTUNATELY, POLITICAL EVENTS IN EUROPE BROUGHT THESE IDYLIC TIMES TO AN END. IN JUNE 1914, THE ARCHDUKE FERDINAND OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY WAS ASSASSINATED IN SARAJEVO BY AN EXTREMIST FIGHTING FOR INDEPENDENCE.



JOHN AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PEN AND PENCIL CLUB SPENT MUCH TIME DISCUSSING WHAT THIS ASSASSINATION COULD MEAN. TENSIONS BETWEEN THE MAJOR EUROPEAN POWERS (BRITAIN, FRANCE, RUSSIA, GERMANY, AND AUSTRIA-HUNGARY) WERE HIGH. WOULD THE ARCHDUKE'S DEATH PUSH THE COUNTRIES TOWARDS WAR?



AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY, EUROPE WAS SPLIT INTO TWO DIFFERENT MILITARY ALLIANCES. THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE WAS MADE UP OF GERMANY, AUSTRIA-HUNGARY, AND ITALY. THE TRIPLE ENTENTE'S MEMBERS (ALSO KNOWN AS THE ALLIES) WERE FRANCE, GREAT BRITAIN, AND RUSSIA.



PREPARING FOR WAR,
AUGUST 1914

IN 1914, CANADA'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS WERE STILL CONTROLLED BY THE BRITISH EMPIRE. SO WHEN BRITAIN WENT TO WAR AGAINST GERMANY, ALL NATIONS UNDER BRITISH RULE, INCLUDING CANADA, WERE DRAWN INTO THE WAR AS WELL.



CANADIAN MEN WERE URGED TO SIGN UP FOR THE FIGHT. MANY WILLING VOLUNTEERS CAME FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY—FROM FARMS AND CITIES, AND EVEN FROM AS FAR AS YUKON!

Here's
your chance
**It's men
we want**



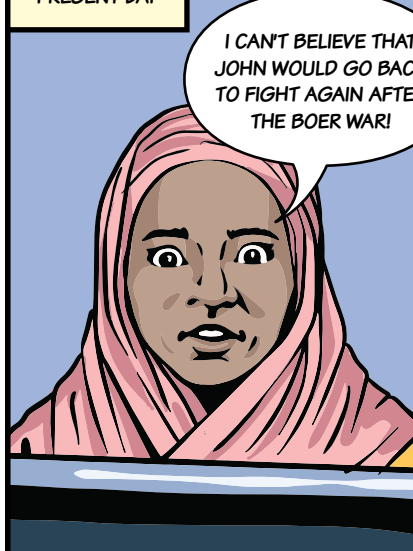
Your chums
are fighting
Why aren't you?

WHILE IN LONDON, JOHN SENT A MESSAGE TO HIS FRIEND EDWARD MORRISON FROM THE BOER WAR, OFFERING HIS SERVICES AS A SOLDIER OR DOCTOR. JOHN HAD BEEN RETIRED FROM THE MILITARY FOR TEN YEARS, SINCE BEING PROMOTED TO THE RANK OF MAJOR AFTER RETURNING FROM SOUTH AFRICA, BUT HE FELT A RENEWED SENSE OF DUTY TO SERVE HIS COUNTRY.



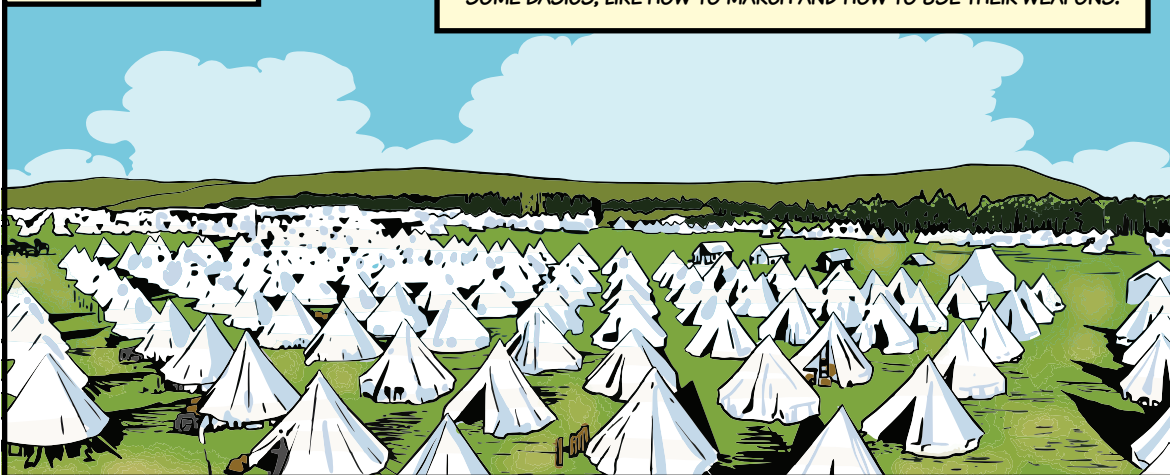
MORRISON, WHO WAS NOW CANADA'S DIRECTOR OF ARTILLERY, REPLIED AND APPOINTED JOHN AS BOTH SURGEON AND SECOND-IN-COMMAND OF THE 1ST BRIGADE, CANADIAN FIELD ARTILLERY, WHICH MORRISON HIMSELF WOULD BE COMMANDING. JOHN ENDED HIS VACATION AND RETURNED TO CANADA IMMEDIATELY.

PRESENT DAY



TRAINING CAMP
SAINT-GABRIEL-DE-
VALCARTIER, QUEBEC,
SEPTEMBER 1914

A TRAINING CAMP WAS QUICKLY SET UP IN QUEBEC. THERE, RECRUITS WERE TESTED FOR THEIR FITNESS TO SERVE, THEN ASSIGNED TO DIFFERENT POSITIONS WITHIN THE ARMY. THEY WERE ALSO TAUGHT SOME BASICS, LIKE HOW TO MARCH AND HOW TO USE THEIR WEAPONS.



JOHN WORKED EVERY DAY FROM DAWN TO DUSK, EXAMINING SOLDIERS TO DETERMINE IF THEY WERE FIT FOR DUTY, AND VACCINATING HUNDREDS OF OTHERS.



BECAUSE OF HIS RANK, JOHN WAS ISSUED A HORSE, BUT IT HAD DIFFICULTY TROTTING. LUCKILY, HIS FRIENDS DR. JOHN TODD AND MRS. MARJORY TODD GENEROUSLY GIFTED JOHN A NEW HORSE NAMED BONFIRE.



BONFIRE QUICKLY BECAME JOHN'S BELOVED COMPANION. ASSURED HE HAD A GOOD HORSE, JOHN WAS READY TO HEAD OVERSEAS.

OCTOBER 3, 1914

THE FIRST GROUP OF CANADIAN TROOPS—AROUND 30,000 MEN, INCLUDING JOHN'S BRIGADE—SET SAIL FOR EUROPE IN EARLY OCTOBER. THEY SAILED WITH A CONVOY OF BRITISH WARSHIPS TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE GERMAN NAVY, PARTICULARLY GERMAN SUBMARINES CALLED "U-BOATS."



THE CANADIANS RECEIVED A GRATEFUL WELCOME FROM THEIR ENGLISH HOSTS WHEN THEY CAME ASHORE. THE SOLDIERS WERE GIVEN FRUIT, CANDY, AND CIGARETTES AS THEY DISEMBARKED.



THE TROOPS THEN TRAVELLED TO SALISBURY PLAIN, WHERE THEIR NEXT TRAINING CAMP WAS LOCATED. THE PLAIN WAS ALSO HOME TO STONEHENGE, ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS LANDMARKS IN BRITAIN.



FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, THE MEN WOULD TRAIN UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE MYSTERIOUS MONUMENT.

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1914

CONDITIONS IN THE CAMP WERE MISERABLE. IT WAS COLD, WINDY, AND RAINED ALMOST EVERY DAY. THE CONSTANT RAIN TURNED THE CAMP INTO A QUAGMIRE.

NOTHING WAS EVER DRY, AND MANY OF THE MEN GOT SICK FROM THE NEVER-ENDING CHILL AND DAMP. JOHN SPENT MUCH OF HIS TIME TREATING THEM.

SOME DAYS THE TEMPERATURE WAS SO FRIGID THAT JOHN COULDN'T PICK UP HIS MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS WITHOUT FEELING EXTREME PAIN.

THE MUD DIDN'T JUST SLOW DOWN THE SOLDIERS, BUT ALSO THE HORSES. THEY STRUGGLED TO CARRY SUPPLIES AND WEAPONS...

...AND WERE WEAKENING UNDER THE COLD, UNRELENTING RAIN. THE 1ST BRIGADE EVEN LOST HORSES TO HYPOTHERMIA. THIS WAS NO WAY TO PREPARE FOR WAR.

NOVEMBER 1914–JANUARY 1915

BUT THINGS WEREN'T ALL BAD IN THE CAMP. AT ONE POINT, RUDYARD KIPLING, THE FAMOUS AUTHOR JOHN HAD MET DURING THE BOER WAR, VISITED. AS A FELLOW LOVER OF ADVENTURE AND A SUPPORTER OF THE WAR EFFORT, KIPLING WAS KEENLY INTERESTED IN THE MILITARY AND THE CANADIANS' TRAINING.



MEANWHILE, EDWARD MORRISON FINALLY HAD ENOUGH OF THE WET, MUDDY CAMP AND RENTED—AT HIS OWN EXPENSE—A NEARBY FARM TO IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS FOR HIS SOLDIERS AND ANIMALS.



KIPLING EXPLAINED THAT HIS SON, JACK, WAS ALSO SERVING IN THE MILITARY. JACK SUFFERED FROM POOR EYESIGHT, AND HAD BEEN REJECTED FROM THE ARMY AND NAVY. BUT KIPLING, WITH HIS CELEBRITY INFLUENCE, HAD PULLED SOME STRINGS AND GOT HIS SON INTO THE IRISH GUARD, TWO DAYS BEFORE JACK'S 17TH BIRTHDAY.



JOHN WAS HAPPY TO SEE THE SOLDIERS DOING BETTER, NOW THAT THEY WERE WARM AND DRY.

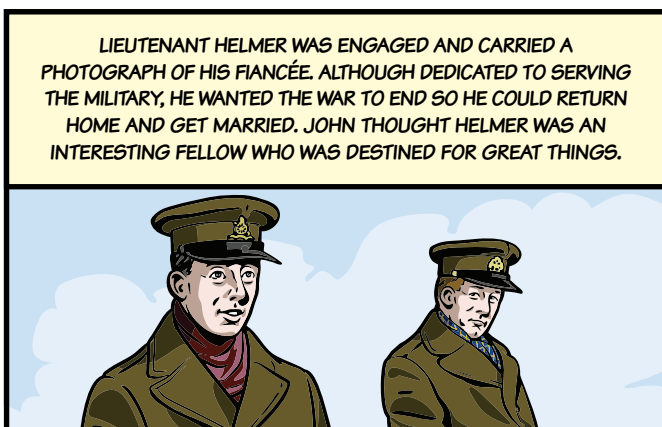




THE HORSES, ONCE THEY WERE PROPERLY HOUSED AND FED, RAPIDLY IMPROVED AS WELL. JOHN VISITED BONFIRE IN THE STABLES EACH DAY, TAKING TIME TO GROOM AND CARE FOR HIS TRUSTY STEED.



WHEN OFF DUTY, JOHN OFTEN RODE HORSES WITH A NEW FRIEND, LIEUTENANT ALEXIS HELMER.



LIEUTENANT HELMER WAS ENGAGED AND CARRIED A PHOTOGRAPH OF HIS FIANCÉE. ALTHOUGH DEDICATED TO SERVING THE MILITARY, HE WANTED THE WAR TO END SO HE COULD RETURN HOME AND GET MARRIED. JOHN THOUGHT HELMER WAS AN INTERESTING FELLOW WHO WAS DESTINED FOR GREAT THINGS.



LORD KITCHENER, THE BRITISH WAR SECRETARY, VISITED THE CAMP TO ASSESS THE TRAINING. HE ANGRILY EXCLAIMED THAT THE CANADIANS WERE NOT TRAINED WELL ENOUGH FOR ANY ALLIED ARMY. MORRISON WANTED TO RETORT THAT THE MISERABLE CONDITIONS AT CAMP HAD PREVENTED THE MEN FROM TRAINING PROPERLY, BUT HELD HIS TONGUE.



DESPITE EVERYTHING, THE CANADIANS STEPPED UP THEIR TRAINING, DETERMINED TO PROVE THEY WERE READY TO FIGHT.

THAT DAY CAME SOONER THAN EXPECTED.

THE CANADIANS ENTER BATTLE
FEBRUARY 8, 1915

AFTER MONTHS OF INTENSE TRAINING,
JOHN'S BRIGADE SET SAIL FOR FRANCE
ABOARD A SHIP CALLED THE AFRICAN PRINCE.

THE JOURNEY TOOK LONGER THAN
EXPECTED, AS THEY GOT CAUGHT IN A BAD
STORM ALONG THE WAY, AND HAD TO KEEP A
CONSTANT LOOK OUT FOR GERMAN U-BOATS.

AFTER SEVERAL DAYS AT SEA, THE AFRICAN PRINCE DOCKED AT SAINT-NAZAIRE, FRANCE.

THE PEOPLE WHO GATHERED AT THE PORT TO GREET THE CANADIANS WERE GLAD
TO SEE THEM, BUT NO MEN WERE VISIBLE IN THE CROWD. THE ASSEMBLY WORE
BLACK TO SHOW THEY MOURNED THE FRENCH TROOPS WHO HAD DIED IN BATTLE.

THE CANADIANS JOURNEYED FIRST BY TRAIN AND THEN BY HORSEBACK TO THEIR NEXT
DESTINATION IN FRANCE—MÉTÉREN. UPON ARRIVING, THE SOLDIERS FELL SILENT AS THEY
SURVEYED THE DESTRUCTION OF WAR ALL AROUND THEM. ALMOST EVERY BUILDING WAS DAMAGED
AND HASTILY ERECTED WOODEN CROSSES, MARKING A LOST SOLDIER, APPEARED EVERYWHERE
THEY LOOKED. IT WAS SOBERING FOR THE MEN, THINKING ABOUT WHAT THEY WERE MARCHING INTO.

THE CANADIANS WERE THEN ORDERED TO SEVERAL SMALL TOWNS NEAR NEUVE-CHAPPELLE, TO RELIEVE BRITISH BRIGADES STATIONED THERE. SOON THE CANADIAN TROOPS WOULD BE RIGHT ON THE FRONT LINE—THE AREA CLOSEST TO THE GERMANS, WHERE MOST OF THE FIGHTING WAS TAKING PLACE.



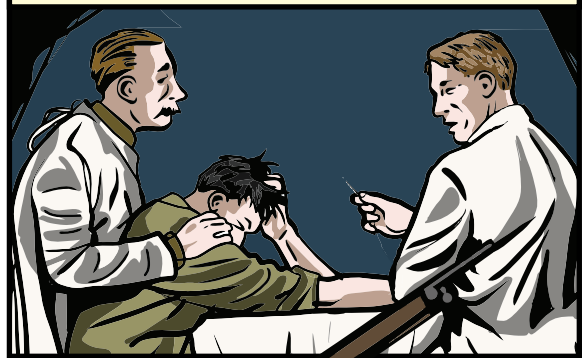
EDWARD MORRISON AND JOHN MCCRAE COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THE HAUNTED LOOKS ON THE FACES OF THE BRITISH SOLDIERS THEY RELIEVED.



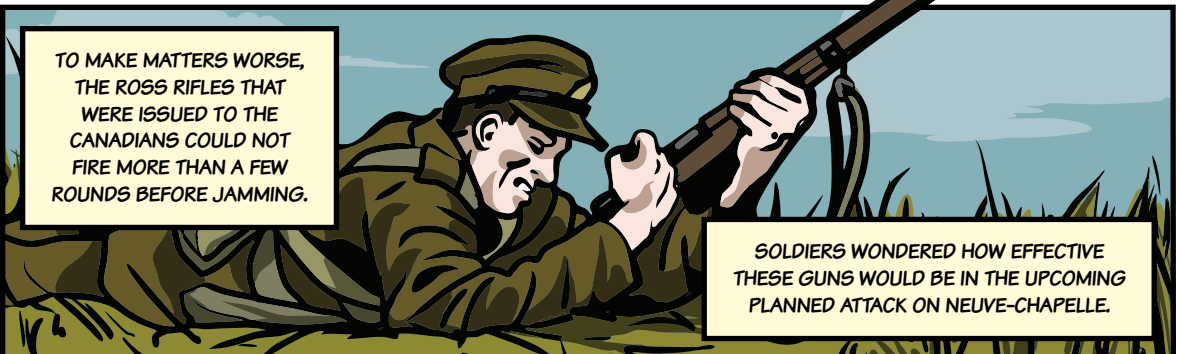
FOR THE NEXT WEEK, THE CANADIANS ACCUSTOMED THEMSELVES TO THE TYPE OF FIGHTING THAT WOULD BE MOST COMMON DURING THE WAR: TRENCH WARFARE. THIS WAS WHERE OPPOSING SIDES FIRED WEAPONS AT EACH OTHER FROM A SERIES OF DITCHES DUG INTO THE GROUND. UNFORTUNATELY, THE CANADIANS WERE SO POORLY EQUIPPED THAT THEY HAD TO IMPROVISE GRENADES OUT OF NAILS, GUNPOWDER, AND EMPTY JAM JARS.



THESE MAKESHIFT WEAPONS SEEMED TO DO THE CANADIANS MORE HARM THAN THEY DID THE ENEMY. JOHN WAS CONSTANTLY TREATING MEN WHO SUFFERED SERIOUS INJURIES FROM THEIR IMPROVISED GRENADES.



TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THE ROSS RIFLES THAT WERE ISSUED TO THE CANADIANS COULD NOT FIRE MORE THAN A FEW ROUNDS BEFORE JAMMING.



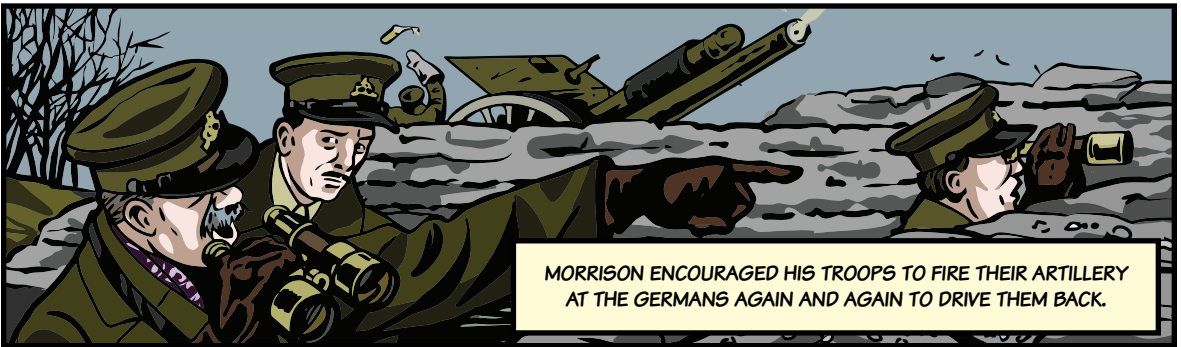
SOLDIERS WONDERED HOW EFFECTIVE THESE GUNS WOULD BE IN THE UPCOMING PLANNED ATTACK ON NEUVE-CHAPPELLE.

NEUVE-CHAPELLE, FRANCE
MARCH 10-13, 1915

THE GERMANS HAD BEEN HOLDING THEIR POSITION AT THE FRENCH VILLAGE OF NEUVE-CHAPELLE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. BRITISH FORCES WERE PLANNING TO LAUNCH A SURPRISE ATTACK ON THE VILLAGE, GIVING THEM A CHANCE TO BREACH THE GERMAN TRENCH SYSTEM AND HOPEFULLY MOVE FURTHER INTO GERMAN TERRITORY. THIS WOULD BE THE FIRST DELIBERATELY-PLANNED OFFENSIVE ACT BY THE BRITISH SO FAR DURING THE WAR.



THE NEARBY CANADIAN TROOPS WERE ORDERED TO OPEN FIRE ON ANY INCOMING GERMAN REINFORCEMENTS AND KEEP THEM AWAY FROM THE BATTLE.



MORRISON ENCOURAGED HIS TROOPS TO FIRE THEIR ARTILLERY AT THE GERMANS AGAIN AND AGAIN TO DRIVE THEM BACK.



THE CANADIANS SUCCEEDED IN THEIR EFFORTS TO KEEP GERMAN FORCES OCCUPIED, BUT ALTHOUGH NEUVE-CHAPELLE WAS CAPTURED BY THE ALLIES, UNFORTUNATELY THEY HAD NO FURTHER SUCCESS IN ADVANCING THEIR POSITION.

MORRISON WAS CRITICIZED FOR USING TOO MUCH AMMUNITION IN THE BATTLE. SUPPLIES WERE SO LIMITED THAT SOLDIERS WERE ORDERED TO FIRE NO MORE THAN 15 ROUNDS FROM EACH GUN PER DAY.



MORRISON DIDN'T EXPLAIN THAT THE ORDER HAD NOT REACHED HIM BEFORE THE BATTLE BEGAN.

LATER, EDWARD MORRISON AND JOHN MCCRAE VISITED THE FRONT LINES OUT OF CURIOSITY AND CONCERN. AFTER THE GERMANS RECOGNIZED THEM AS OFFICERS, THEY LAUNCHED AN ARTILLERY ATTACK IN AN ATTEMPT TO KILL THEM. THE TWO MEN HID IN A FIELD UNTIL THEY WERE ABLE TO MAKE A BREAK FOR IT AND RIDE AWAY ON THEIR HORSES.

APRIL 1915

SOON, JOHN'S BRIGADE WAS ON THE MOVE AGAIN, MAKING THEIR WAY ACROSS FRANCE TO A TOWN CALLED POPERINGE IN BELGIUM.

MEANWHILE, OTHER CANADIAN TROOPS WERE ORDERED TO THE FRONT LINES NEAR THE TOWN OF YPRES, IN THE FLANDERS REGION OF BELGIUM. THE CLOSER THEY GOT TO THE FIGHTING, THE FEWER PEOPLE AND ANIMALS THEY SAW. THEY MARCHED PAST MANY EMPTY FARMS AND BUILDINGS WITH ROOFS TORN OFF BY ARTILLERY SHELLS.

DURING THIS TIME, JOHN'S BRIGADE WAS "IN RESERVE," MEANING THEY WERE KEPT AWAY FROM ANY ACTIVE COMBAT AREAS UNTIL THEY WERE NEEDED. POPERINGE WAS LOCATED ONLY A FEW HOURS AWAY FROM YPRES, SO THE 1ST BRIGADE COULD QUICKLY MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE FRONT LINE TO ASSIST WITH THE FIGHTING IF NECESSARY.

WHILE AWAITING FURTHER ORDERS, JOHN DELIVERED SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICES FROM THE BACK OF AN AMMUNITION WAGON, IN ADDITION TO CONTINUING HIS MEDICAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

PRESENT DAY

THERE WERE SEVERAL MAJOR BATTLES AROUND YPRES. THE FIRST TOOK PLACE IN THE FALL OF 1914, WHEN ALLIED TROOPS FOUGHT AGAINST THE GERMANS FOR CONTROL OF THE TOWN. THAT BATTLE WENT ON FOR A WHOLE MONTH. BY THE END, THE ALLIES HAD HELD ON TO YPRES, BUT THE GERMANS WERE STILL NEARBY, WAITING TO ATTACK AGAIN.

SO JOHN AND THE OTHER CANADIANS FOUGHT IN THE SECOND BATTLE?

THE SECOND BATTLE OF YPRES
APRIL 22-MAY 25, 1915

YPRES, BELGIUM, MID-APRIL 1915

MORRISON STUDIED THE YPRES BATTLE LOCATION IN CASE HIS TROOPS WERE CALLED TO THE FRONT. HE WAS APPALLED BY WHAT HE DISCOVERED.



THE ALLIES HAD PUSHED INTO GERMAN TERRITORY DURING THE FIRST BATTLE OF YPRES AND CREATED A BULGE IN THE FRONT LINES—A POSITION KNOWN IN THE MILITARY AS A "SALIENT." NOW, THE GERMANS WERE LOCATED ON HIGHER GROUND TO THE NORTH, EAST, AND WEST, LOOKING DOWN ON THE ALLIED FORCES FROM THREE SIDES.



WHEN THE OTHER CANADIAN BRIGADES REACHED THE YPRES SALIENT, THEY WERE DISMAYED AT THE CONDITION OF THE TRENCHES THEY WERE TAKING OVER. THE TRENCHES WERE SHALLOW, WITH HARDLY ANY FRONT OR REAR PROTECTIVE WALLS. EVEN WORSE, THEY WERE FILLED WITH HOLES MADE BY ENEMY ARTILLERY, AND THOSE HOLES WERE NOW BEING USED AS MAKESHIFT TOILETS OR BURIAL PLACES. THE CANADIANS HAD TO WORK QUICKLY TO MAKE THESE TRENCHES USABLE.

THERE HAD BEEN RUMOURS THAT THE GERMANS WOULD USE POISON GAS AS PART OF AN ATTACK, BUT SENIOR COMMANDERS DISMISSED THIS BECAUSE GAS ATTACKS WERE PROHIBITED UNDER THE HAGUE CONVENTIONS OF 1864 AND 1907—INTERNATIONAL TREATIES THAT LAID OUT THE LAWS OF WAR.



LITTLE DID THEY KNOW THAT THE GERMANS HAD THOUSANDS OF CYLINDERS OF CHLORINE GAS AND WERE SIMPLY WAITING FOR THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO UNLEASH THEM.

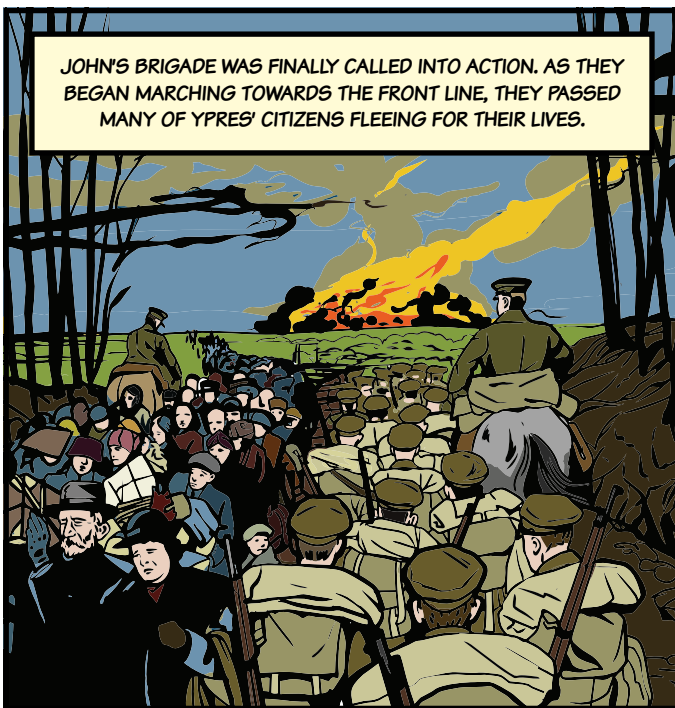


APRIL 22, 1915

THE GERMANS HAD BEEN BOMBING YPRES FOR DAYS, AND ON APRIL 22, THEY INCREASED THE INTENSITY OF THEIR ATTACK.



JOHN'S BRIGADE WAS FINALLY CALLED INTO ACTION. AS THEY BEGAN MARCHING TOWARDS THE FRONT LINE, THEY PASSED MANY OF YPRES' CITIZENS FLEEING FOR THEIR LIVES.



THAT AFTERNOON THE WIND BEGAN TO SHIFT, BLOWING TOWARDS YPRES, AND GERMAN SOLDIERS SAW AN OPPORTUNITY TO USE THEIR NEW WEAPON. THEY OPENED THE VALVES ON THEIR GAS CYLINDERS, SENDING CHLORINE GAS IN THE DIRECTION OF THEIR OPPONENTS.



FRENCH AND ALGERIAN SOLDIERS WERE THE FIRST TO FACE THE CHLORINE GAS ATTACK. AS THEY FLED SOME SHOUTED, "ALL IS LOST! ALL IS LOST!"



MORRISON RODE AHEAD OF THE 1ST BRIGADE TO CHECK OUT THE POSITION HIS MEN WOULD BE TAKING ON THE FRONT LINE. HE PASSED MANY SOLDIERS WHO WERE RUNNING AWAY FROM THE GAS, AND OTHERS WHO HAD FALLEN AND WERE ROLLING AROUND ON THE GROUND IN AGONY.



THE GAS MISSED MOST OF THE CANADIAN TROOPS ALREADY STATIONED ALONG THE FRONT LINE, BUT THEY DID HAVE SOME MEASURE OF PROTECTION IN CASE IT DID BLOW THEIR WAY, THANKS TO A MEDICAL OFFICER NAMED FRANCIS SCRIMGER. SCRIMGER, WHO WAS ONE OF JOHN MCCRAE'S FORMER STUDENTS, TOLD THE SOLDIERS THAT MAKESHIFT GAS MASKS COULD BE MADE BY URINATING ON THEIR HANDKERCHIEFS AND TYING THEM OVER THEIR MOUTHS.

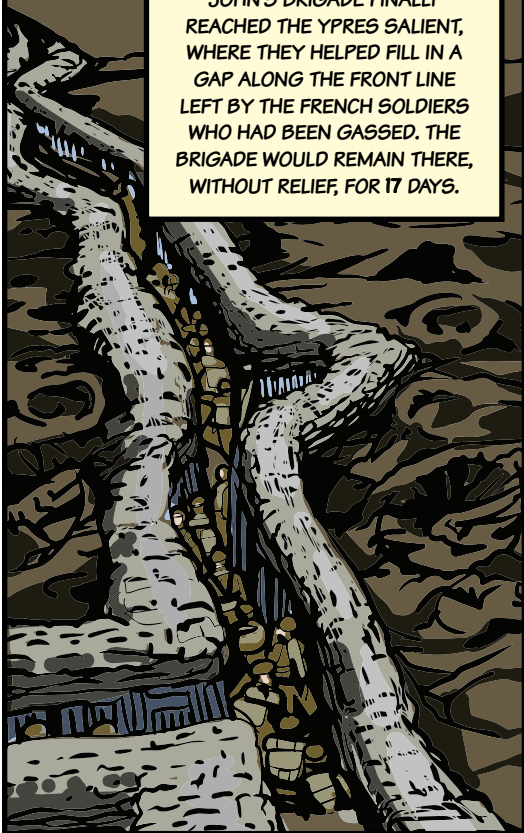


NEARBY, OTHER CANADIAN TROOPS DEFEATED THE GERMANS IN KITCHENER'S WOOD AFTER A NIGHT OF FEROCIOUS HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT.

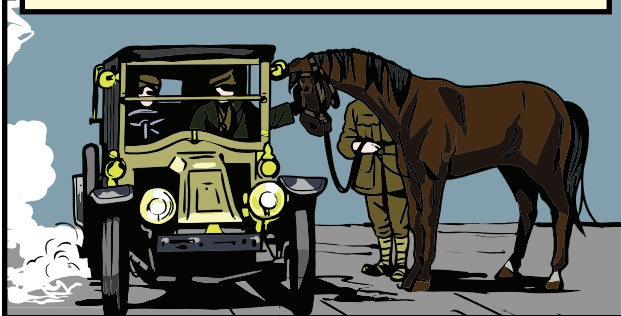


APRIL 23, 1915

JOHN'S BRIGADE FINALLY REACHED THE YPRES SALIENT, WHERE THEY HELPED FILL IN A GAP ALONG THE FRONT LINE LEFT BY THE FRENCH SOLDIERS WHO HAD BEEN GASSED. THE BRIGADE WOULD REMAIN THERE, WITHOUT RELIEF, FOR 17 DAYS.



JOHN MANAGED TO ESCAPE THE GAS ATTACKS RELATIVELY UNSCATHED. HE THEN DECIDED TO TAKE BONFIRE BEHIND THE LINES, WHERE HE HOPED HIS HORSE WOULD BE SAFE FROM THE ALMOST CONTINUOUS ARTILLERY FIRE.



WHILE AT YPRES, JOHN SKETCHED HIS BRIGADE'S VULNERABLE POSITION.



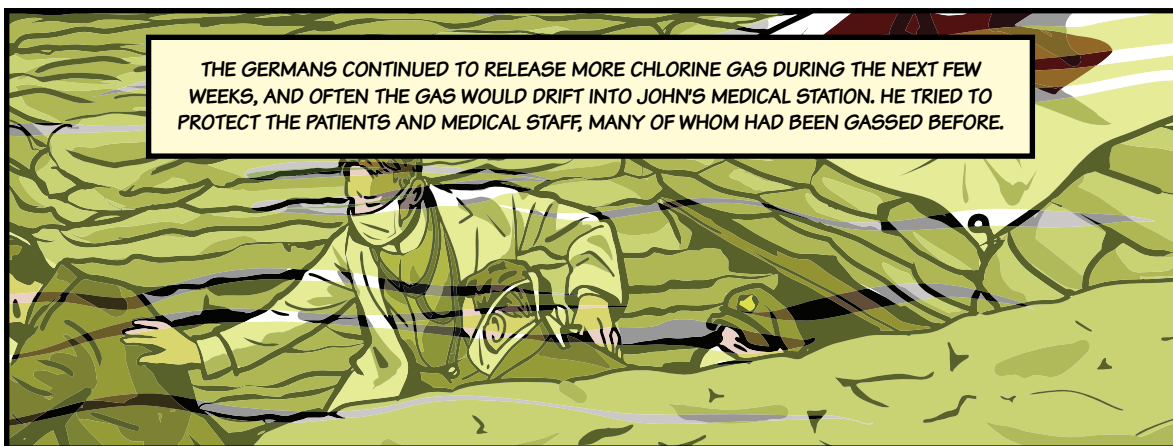
DURING THE GERMAN ASSAULT, THOUSANDS OF INJURED SOLDIERS PASSED THROUGH JOHN'S MEDICAL STATION. MANY SUFFERED FROM VERY SERIOUS INJURIES. JOHN TREATED THEM AS BEST HE COULD.



HE WORRIED THAT HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS WERE BECOMING DESENSITIZED TO THE HORRORS SURROUNDING THEM. HE HAD GRAVE FEELINGS ABOUT HOW THESE SIGHTS WOULD AFFECT THEIR PSYCHES AND SOULS.



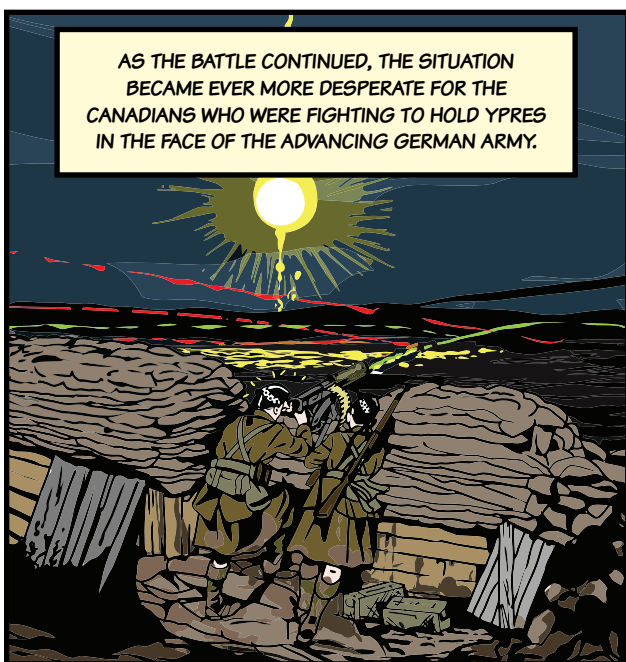
THE GERMANS CONTINUED TO RELEASE MORE CHLORINE GAS DURING THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, AND OFTEN THE GAS WOULD DRIFT INTO JOHN'S MEDICAL STATION. HE TRIED TO PROTECT THE PATIENTS AND MEDICAL STAFF, MANY OF WHOM HAD BEEN GASSED BEFORE.



JOHN AND HIS STAFF WORKED FRANTICALLY TO KEEP UP WITH THE INCREASING NUMBER OF WOUNDED. HE SENT THEM TO NEARBY WAR HOSPITALS AFTER HE PERFORMED EMERGENCY TREATMENT, THEN HASTILY UNLOADED FOOD AND SUPPLIES FOR HIS MEDICAL TEAM AND THEIR PATIENTS.



AS THE BATTLE CONTINUED, THE SITUATION BECAME EVER MORE DESPERATE FOR THE CANADIANS WHO WERE FIGHTING TO HOLD YPRES IN THE FACE OF THE ADVANCING GERMAN ARMY.



THE NOISE WAS NEVER-ENDING, AND SOME MEN WENT MAD FROM THE CONSTANT DIN. HOW MUCH MORE COULD THEY ENDURE?



MAY 2, 1915

ONE SPRING DAY, RIGHT AFTER A PERIOD OF HEAVY BOMBING, AN ARTILLERY SHELL WAS FIRED AT THE 1ST BRIGADE'S GUNS.



LIEUTENANT ALEXIS HELMER, JOHN'S CLOSE FRIEND AND RIDING PARTNER, WAS TALKING TO A FELLOW LIEUTENANT WHEN THE SHELL HIT. TRAGICALLY, HELMER DIED ON IMPACT.



AFTER THE BOMBING STOPPED, SEVERAL OFFICERS BEGAN DIGGING A GRAVE FOR HELMER WHILE JOHN LOOKED ON, HEARTBROKEN.



NO CHAPLAINS WERE NEARBY AT THE TIME OF LIEUTENANT ALEXIS HELMER'S BURIAL, SO JOHN PERFORMED THE SERVICE.



HE RECALLED FONDLY THE INTELLIGENT, TALENTED YOUNG MAN, FULL OF PROMISE AND POTENTIAL. A PHOTO OF HELMER'S FIANCÉE WAS FOUND NEAR HIS BODY. IT HAD A HOLE THROUGH IT. THE PHOTO WAS BURIED WITH HIM.

PRESENT DAY

THAT'S SO SAD.
HOW DID JOHN COPE
WITH HIS CLOSE
FRIEND'S DEATH?

HE WAS
DEVASTATED.

EARLY MAY 1915

FOR COMFORT, JOHN INSTINCTIVELY TURNED TO POETRY AS AN OUTLET TO EXPRESS HIS PROFOUND GRIEF AT THE TRAGIC LOSS OF HIS FRIEND AND THE MANY OTHER MEN WHO HAD DIED DURING THE FIGHTING. INSPIRED BY THE SIGHT OF POPPIES STILL GROWING IN THE FIELDS DESPITE THE DESTRUCTION AROUND THEM, JOHN STARTED SCRIBBLING DOWN THE WORDS TO A POEM THAT WOULD LATER BECOME THE WORLD-RENOWNED "IN FLANDERS FIELDS." HE WOULD CONTINUE TO TINKER WITH THE POEM FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS.



MAY 9, 1915

AFTER 17 LONG DAYS, JOHN'S BRIGADE WITHDREW FROM THE YPRES SALIENT. THE SOLDIERS WERE EXHAUSTED, BUT HAD GIVEN IT THEIR ALL AND HAD STOPPED THE GERMANS FROM GETTING THROUGH YPRES. THEY HAD FACED THE TERRIBLE BATTLE HEAD ON, AND KNEW THEY WOULD BE READY FOR WHATEVER CHALLENGE CAME NEXT.



THE CANADIANS WERE CONGRATULATED FOR THEIR COURAGE AND BRAVERY, BUT JOHN COULDN'T HELP THINKING OF ALL THE MEN WHO HAD BEEN LOST. HE WONDERED IF THEIR LIVES WERE A PRICE WORTH PAYING.



LATER, JOHN WAS SHOCKED TO LEARN THAT THE GERMANS HAD SUNK A PASSENGER SHIP CALLED THE *LUSITANIA*, JUST ONE DAY BEFORE HIS BRIGADE HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM THE FRONT LINE AT YPRES. NEARLY 1,200 CIVILIAN PASSENGERS AND CREW LOST THEIR LIVES.



THE 1ST BRIGADE WENT BACK TO FRANCE FOR A FEW DAYS TO RECUPERATE FROM THEIR FIERCE ORDEAL. WHILE STAYING IN THE TOWN OF STEENWERCK, THE SOLDIERS RECEIVED MESSAGES OF CONGRATULATIONS FROM KING GEORGE V, CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER ROBERT BORDEN, AND THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA. BUT THERE WAS LITTLE TIME TO APPRECIATE THESE MESSAGES, AS THE BRIGADE SOON HAD TO LEAVE FOR THE NEXT BATTLEFIELD.

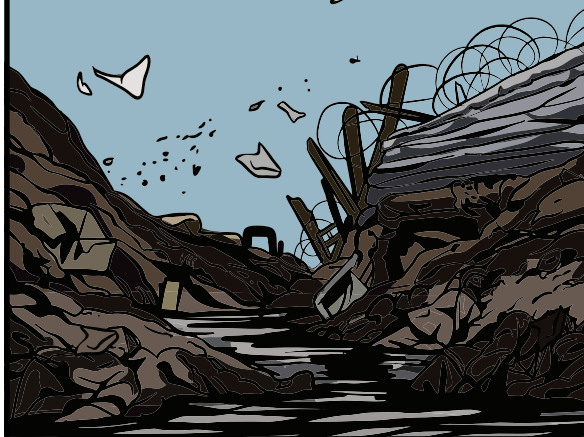


FESTUBERT, FRANCE, MAY 15, 1915

AFTER LESS THAN A WEEK OF REST, THE CANADIANS WERE ORDERED TO MARCH TO FESTUBERT, WHERE BRITISH FORCES WERE STAGING AN ATTACK ON PART OF THE GERMAN FRONT LINE. JOHN WAS CONCERNED. IT SEEMED HIGH COMMAND HAD FORGOTTEN THAT THE TROOPS NEEDED TIME TO RECOVER.



NONE OF THE CANADIANS HAD BEEN GIVEN ENOUGH TIME OR AMMUNITION TO PROPERLY PREPARE FOR THE ASSAULT. MANY SOLDIERS WERE WOUNDED OR KILLED AT THE BATTLE OF FESTUBERT.



AT THE END OF MAY, JOHN WAS ORDERED TO JOIN THE CANADIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS TO HELP SET UP A NEW HOSPITAL IN FRANCE. THE ORDERS DEPRESSED HIM. HE WANTED TO STAY WITH THE 1ST BRIGADE.



JOHN LEFT BEHIND THE FRIENDSHIPS OF HIS COMRADES WITH GREAT REGRET. ESPECIALLY EDWARD MORRISON, WHO HAD BEEN AN OUTSTANDING COMMANDING OFFICER.



JOHN ALSO HAD TO SAY GOODBYE TO BONFIRE, LEAVING THE FAITHFUL HORSE IN THE CARE OF HIS STABLE HAND, HERBERT CRUICKSHANK. WHEN THE NEW HOSPITAL WAS READY, JOHN INTENDED TO HAVE BONFIRE JOIN HIM THERE.



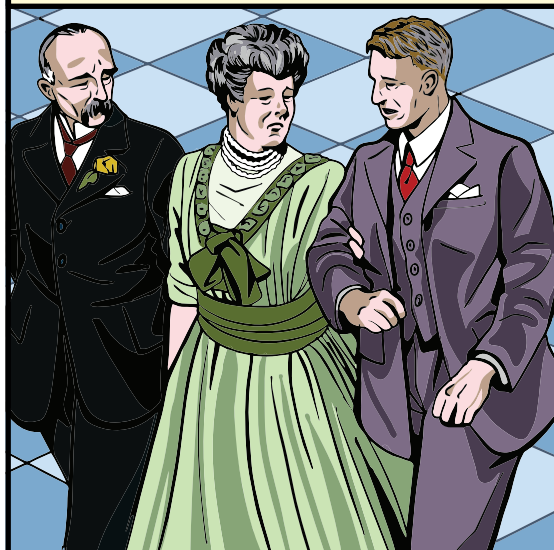
LONDON, JUNE 1915

JOHN FIRST TRAVELLED TO LONDON. UPON ARRIVAL, HE HAPPILY REUNITED WITH DR. ADAMI AND DR. TODD. THEY TOLD HIM THE NEW HOSPITAL WAS TO BE CALLED NO. 3 CANADIAN GENERAL HOSPITAL. IT NEARED COMPLETION.



DURING THAT TIME, JOHN WAS ALSO PROMOTED TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL IN THE CANADIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS.

WHILE IN ENGLAND, JOHN REUNITED WITH HIS OLD FRIEND AND MENTOR DR. OSLER AND HIS WIFE, LADY OSLER. JOHN RECOUNTED THE MANY DAYS HE HAD SPENT IN THE TRENCHES FEVERISHLY HELPING THE WOUNDED MEN. ALTHOUGH HIS STORYTELLING WAS AS LIVELY AS EVER, LADY OSLER THOUGHT HE LOOKED TIRED AND THINNER THAN BEFORE.

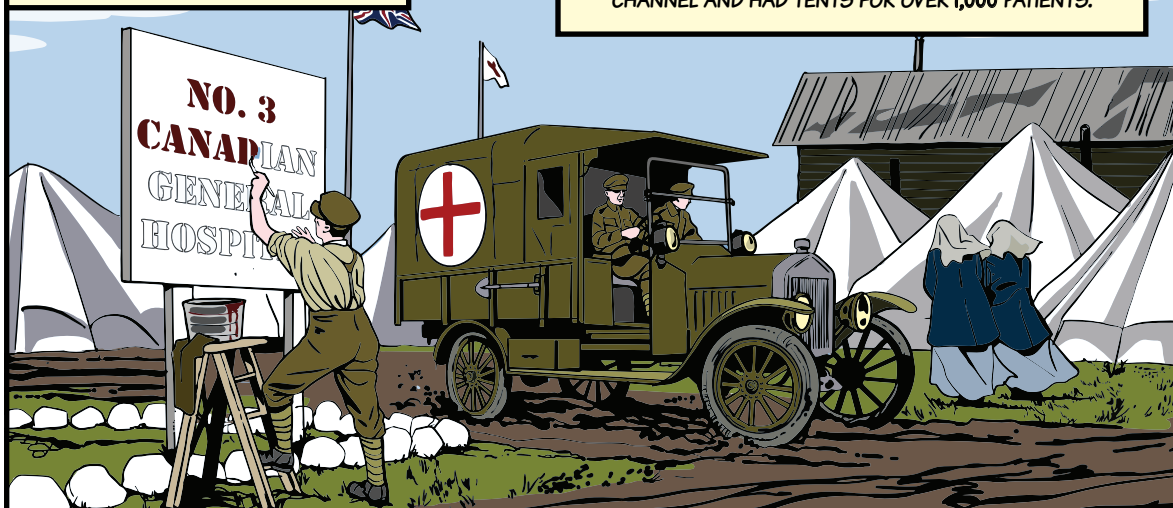


THE OSLERS WERE PLEASED TO SEE JOHN AGAIN, BUT IT WAS CLEAR THE WAR HAD TAKEN ITS TOLL ON HIM.



NO. 3 CANADIAN GENERAL HOSPITAL,
DANNES-CAMIER, FRANCE, JULY 1915

THE NEW HOSPITAL WAS LOCATED CLOSE TO THE ENGLISH
CHANNEL AND HAD TENTS FOR OVER 1,000 PATIENTS.



AS JOHN STARTED WORKING AT THE
HOSPITAL, HE WAS PLEASED TO BE
JOINED BY THE OSLERS' SON, REVERE.
JOHN VOWED TO DO HIS BEST TO
LOOK OUT FOR THE YOUNG MAN.

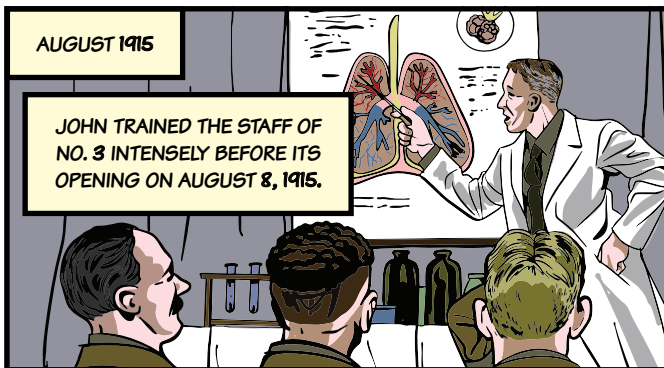


NO. 3 HOSPITAL'S
COMMANDING
OFFICER WAS COLONEL
HERBERT BIRKETT
WITH WHOM JOHN
ALSO DEVELOPED A
CLOSE RELATIONSHIP.



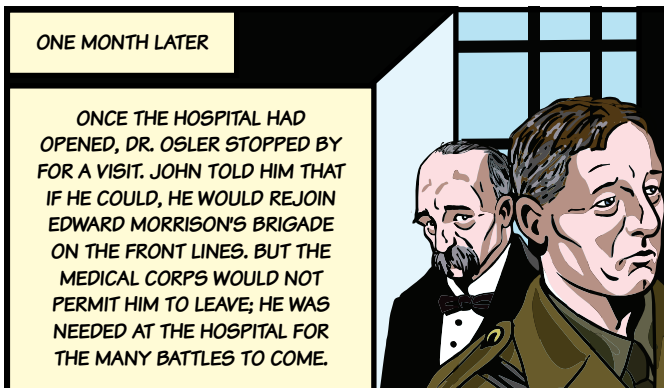
AUGUST 1915

JOHN TRAINED THE STAFF OF
NO. 3 INTENSELY BEFORE ITS
OPENING ON AUGUST 8, 1915.



ONE MONTH LATER

ONCE THE HOSPITAL HAD
OPENED, DR. OSLER STOPPED BY
FOR A VISIT. JOHN TOLD HIM THAT
IF HE COULD, HE WOULD REJOIN
EDWARD MORRISON'S BRIGADE
ON THE FRONT LINES. BUT THE
MEDICAL CORPS WOULD NOT
PERMIT HIM TO LEAVE; HE WAS
NEEDED AT THE HOSPITAL FOR
THE MANY BATTLES TO COME.

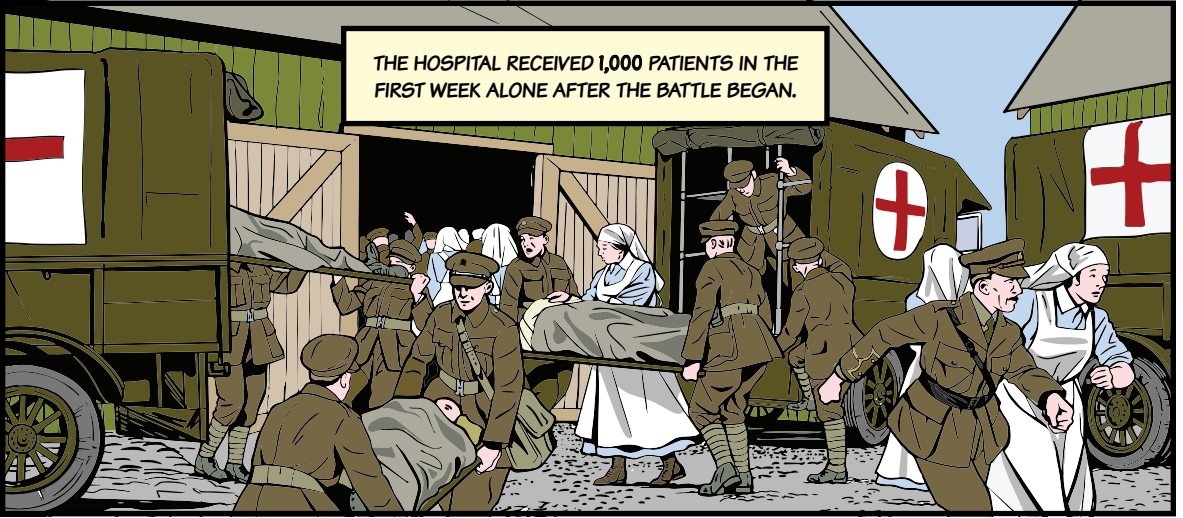


LOOS, FRANCE, SEPTEMBER 1915



MEANWHILE THE WAR RAGED ON, WITH MANY CASUALTIES. THE BATTLE OF LOOS, WHICH WOULD BE THE BIGGEST BRITISH OFFENSIVE ATTACK OF 1915, PUT THE NEWLY COMMISSIONED PERSONNEL OF NO. 3 HOSPITAL TO THE TEST.

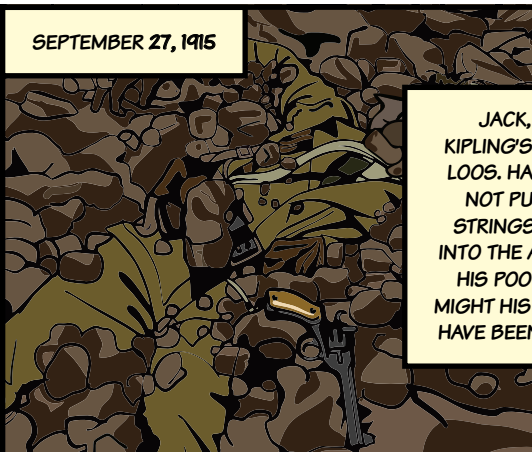
THE HOSPITAL RECEIVED 1,000 PATIENTS IN THE FIRST WEEK ALONE AFTER THE BATTLE BEGAN.



THE SURGEONS OPERATED NON-STOP, PERFORMING 30 OR MORE SURGERIES EACH DAY. CLEARLY, THE ATTACK HAD NOT BEEN A SUCCESS.



SEPTEMBER 27, 1915



JACK, RUDYARD KIPLING'S SON, DIED AT LOOS. HAD HIS FATHER NOT PULLED SOME STRINGS TO GET HIM INTO THE ARMY DESPITE HIS POOR EYESIGHT, MIGHT HIS TRAGIC DEATH HAVE BEEN PREVENTED?



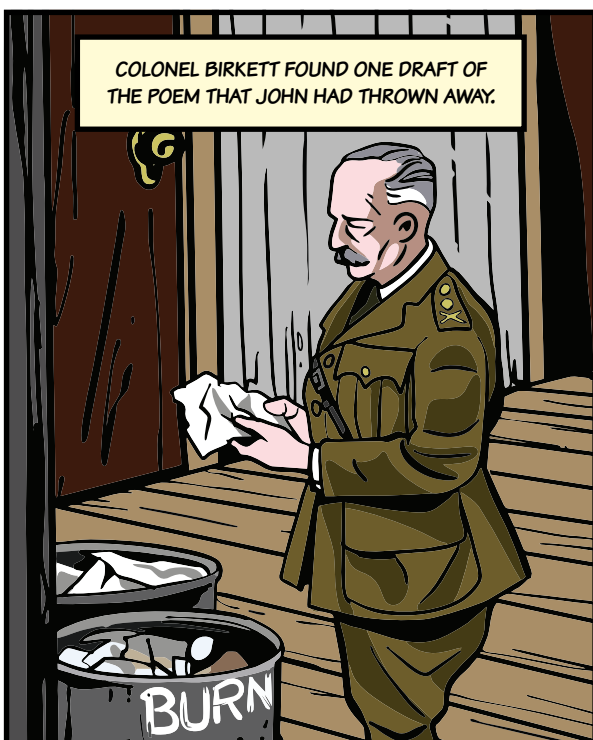
JOHN TOOK JACK KIPLING'S DEATH VERY HARD.

FALL 1915

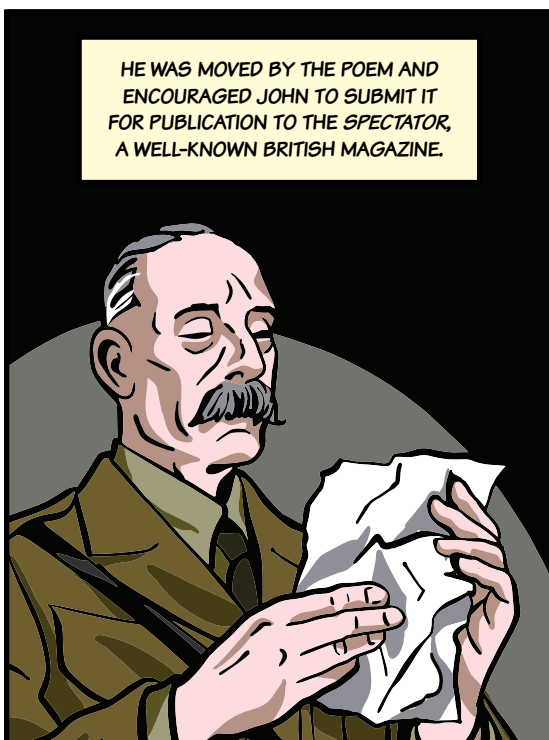
THE BITTER STORMS BLOWING OFF THE ENGLISH CHANNEL WREAKED HAVOC ON NO. 3 HOSPITAL'S TENTS AND PATIENTS.



COLONEL BIRKETT FOUND ONE DRAFT OF THE POEM THAT JOHN HAD THROWN AWAY.



HE WAS MOVED BY THE POEM AND ENCOURAGED JOHN TO SUBMIT IT FOR PUBLICATION TO THE SPECTATOR, A WELL-KNOWN BRITISH MAGAZINE.



UNFORTUNATELY, THE EDITORS AT THE SPECTATOR DIDN'T SHARE COLONEL BIRKETT'S ENTHUSIASM FOR THE POEM AND REJECTED IT.



JOHN HAD ALSO SHOWN HIS POEM TO NURSING SISTER CLARE GASS, WHO LOVED IT SO MUCH THAT SHE COPIED IT INTO HER DIARY, SO SHE COULD KEEP IT FOREVER. HER SUPPORT MOTIVATED JOHN TO TRY SUBMITTING THE POEM AGAIN.



THIS TIME, JOHN SENT HIS POEM TO PUNCH, A BRITISH HUMOUR MAGAZINE. IT WAS ACCEPTED!



"IN FLANDERS FIELDS" WAS PUBLISHED IN THE DECEMBER 8, 1915 ISSUE.



JOHN WAS PLEASED WITH THE PUBLICATION OF HIS POEM. IT REPRESENTED A RARE MOMENT OF HAPPINESS FOR HIM IN THE MIDST OF SO MUCH DEATH AND DESTRUCTION.

AS THE WAR CONTINUED, JOHN ENCOUNTERED MANY NEW AND HORRIFYING CASES IN THE OPERATING ROOM, INCLUDING GAS GANGRENE: A SERIOUS INFECTION THAT WAS CAUSED BY BACTERIA ENTERING AN OPEN WOUND.



THE BACTERIA TYPICALLY CAME FROM HEAVILY FERTILIZED SOIL, WHICH FRENCH AND BELGIAN FARMERS HAD BEEN ADDING LARGE QUANTITIES OF MANURE TO FOR MANY YEARS. AS MEN WERE INJURED IN THE TRENCHES, THEIR WOUNDS OFTEN CAME INTO CONTACT WITH THIS BACTERIA-RICH SOIL.



NOT ONLY WAS JOHN SEEING MEN DISFIGURED BEYOND IMAGINATION, HE ALSO SAW MANY PATIENTS ARRIVING FROM THE FRONT WITH SHELL SHOCK. TODAY, WE CALL THIS CONDITION POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD).



JOHN WAS KNOCKED SIDWAYS BY THE NEW WOUNDS AND ILLNESSES HE FACED DAILY. GRADUALLY, HE BECAME A GAUNT SHADOW OF HIS FORMER OUTGOING SELF.



FORTUNATELY, JOHN FOUND PEACE CARING FOR BONFIRE. HIS HORSE REMAINED THE ONE POSITIVE CONSTANT IN THE EVER-CHANGING AND VIOLENT WORLD OF WAR.



MOUNT SORREL, YPRES,
JUNE 2-13, 1916

THE BATTLE OF MOUNT SORREL WAS THE FIRST MAJOR ATTACK PLANNED BY CANADIAN FORCES. ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 2, 1916, GERMAN FORCES BOMBED CANADIAN TROOPS WHO WERE DEFENDING MOUNT SORREL, A TALL HILL WITH AN ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION LOOKING OVER YPRES. THE GERMANS TOOK TEMPORARY CONTROL OVER MOUNT SORREL, BUT A WEEK LATER CANADIANS BEGAN EXECUTING A COUNTER-ATTACK AND, ON JUNE 13, THEY SUCCEEDED IN RECAPTURING THE HILL.



SOMME RIVER VALLEY, FRANCE,
JULY 1-NOVEMBER 18, 1916



ON JULY 1, 1916, THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME BEGAN. THIS BRITISH OFFENSIVE ATTACK LASTED FOR NEARLY 150 DAYS AND WOULD BECOME KNOWN AS ONE OF THE DEADLIEST BATTLES IN HUMAN HISTORY.

NO. 3 HOSPITAL RECEIVED OVER 4,500 PATIENTS IN THE FIRST 15 DAYS AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME BEGAN. JOHN AND THE OTHER DOCTORS DID THEIR BEST TO COPE WITH THE ONSLAUGHT.



DURING THIS TIME, JOHN, LIKE MANY OTHER SOLDIERS, SHOWED OBVIOUS SIGNS OF PTSD. AT ONE POINT HE REPRIMANDED A SOLDIER WHO CALLED HIM "DOCTOR" INSTEAD OF "COLONEL," WHEREAS IN THE PAST HE WOULDN'T HAVE REACTED SO HARSHLY. THE PRESSURES OF THE WAR WERE CLEARLY TAKING THEIR TOLL ON HIM.

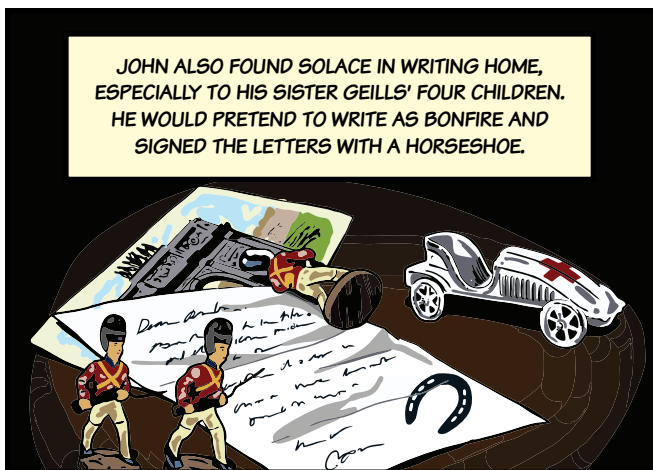




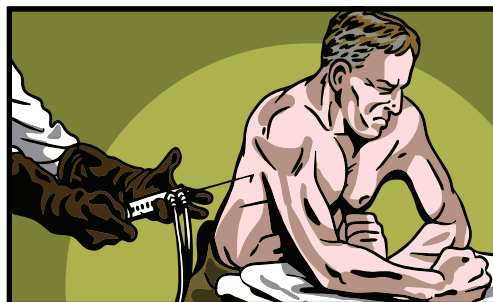
JOHN CONTINUED TO WITHDRAW FROM THE WORLD AROUND HIM, PREFERRING TO BE ALONE WHEN NOT ON DUTY. HE NOW HAD A MELANCHOLY AIR ABOUT HIM, AS IF IMAGINING ALL THE DEAD AND WOUNDED SOLDIERS THAT HAD PASSED THROUGH HIS HANDS.



JOHN TRIED TO FIND WAYS TO COPE WITH THE STRESS. HE ENJOYED SPENDING TIME WITH A DOG NAMED BONNEAU WHO BELONGED TO THE CARETAKERS OF NO. 3 HOSPITAL. BONNEAU TOOK A LIKING TO JOHN AND OFTEN ACCOMPANIED HIM ON HIS ROUNDS.



JOHN ALSO FOUND SOLACE IN WRITING HOME, ESPECIALLY TO HIS SISTER GEILLS' FOUR CHILDREN. HE WOULD PRETEND TO WRITE AS BONFIRE AND SIGNED THE LETTERS WITH A HORSESHOE.



THE ASTHMA THAT JOHN HAD SUFFERED FOR MOST OF HIS LIFE WAS MADE WORSE AFTER HE HAD BEEN GASSED DURING THE BATTLE OF YPRES. HIS WEAKENED LUNGS, COUPLED WITH THE COLD, DAMP CLIMATE, MEANT HE WAS CONSTANTLY GETTING SICK. AT ONE POINT HE DEVELOPED A RESPIRATORY INFECTION. IT WASN'T SERIOUS ENOUGH TO SEND HIM HOME, BUT IT TOOK A LONG TIME FOR HIM TO RECOVER.



NOVEMBER 1916

COLONEL BIRKETT AND OTHERS EXPRESSED CONCERNS ABOUT JOHN'S MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH, BUT HE DISMISSED THEM.

VIMY RIDGE, FRANCE, APRIL 1917



IN APRIL OF 1917, CANADIAN TROOPS WERE ORDERED TO SEIZE VIMY RIDGE FROM THE GERMANS. THE RIDGE WAS HIGH ENOUGH TO BE A STRATEGIC VANTAGE POINT, GIVING CLEAR VIEWS OF THE SURROUNDING FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE IN ALL DIRECTIONS. ALLIED FORCES HAD BEEN ATTEMPTING TO TAKE CONTROL OF IT SINCE 1915. NOW IT WAS THE CANADIANS' TURN TO TRY.



GERMAN SOLDIERS WERE MANNING MACHINE GUNS FROM THE NETWORK OF TRENCHES THEY HAD DUG INTO THE RIDGE. THEY WERE ANXIOUSLY AWAITING THE CANADIAN ATTACK.



VIMY RIDGE, APRIL 9, 1917, 5:25 A.M.

CANADIAN TROOPS HAD BEEN REHEARSING THE ATTACK FOR WEEKS. NOW THEY LINED UP IN TRENCHES, WAITING TO STORM VIMY RIDGE. THEY WOULD BE SENT IN WAVES ONCE THE ARTILLERY BARRAGE BEGAN.



VIMY RIDGE, APRIL 9, 1917, 5:30 A.M.

EVERY PIECE OF ARTILLERY THE CANADIANS HAD AT THEIR DISPOSAL OPENED FIRE ON THE GERMANS.





VIMY RIDGE, APRIL 9, 1917, 5:30:30 A.M.



THIRTY SECONDS LATER, CANADIAN ENGINEERS
DETONATED UNDERGROUND MINES THAT HAD
BEEN PLACED NEAR THE GERMAN TRENCH LINE.



VIMY RIDGE, APRIL 9, 1917, 5:33 A.M.



THE FIRST WAVE OF CANADIAN TROOPS BEGAN ADVANCING. THEY MOVED STEADILY FORWARD WHILE
THE ARTILLERY CONTINUED TO FIRE, AIMING CLOSE IN FRONT OF THEM AS A WAY TO CONCEAL
THEIR MOVEMENTS FROM THE GERMANS. THIS TACTIC WAS CALLED THE "CREEPING BARRAGE."

VIMY RIDGE, APRIL 9, 1917, 6:00 A.M.

MORE THAN 15,000 CANADIAN SOLDIERS MADE THEIR WAY UP VIMY RIDGE, STORMING GERMAN DEFENSES.



VIMY RIDGE, APRIL 9, 1917, 6:30 A.M.

AN HOUR AFTER THE ATTACK BEGAN, THE CANADIANS HAD SUCCESSFULLY BREACHED THE GERMAN LINES AND TAKEN MANY MEN PRISONER.

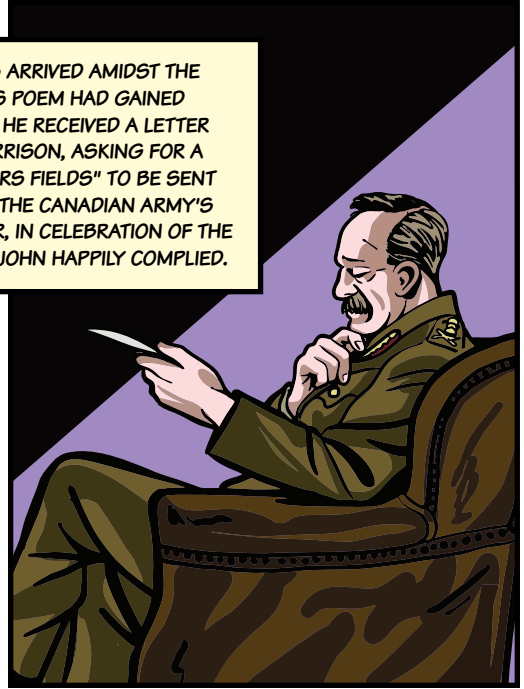


VIMY RIDGE, APRIL 10, 1917
FIELD HOSPITAL

ALTHOUGH THE BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE WAS CONSIDERED AN EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS, AND WOULD COME TO BE KNOWN AS CANADA'S MOST CELEBRATED MILITARY VICTORY, OVER 10,000 CANADIANS WERE INJURED OR KILLED IN THE FIGHTING. AS WOUNDED SOLDIERS BEGAN TO ARRIVE AT NO 3. HOSPITAL THE DAY AFTER THE BATTLE, JOHN AND THE OTHER MEDICAL STAFF WORKED AROUND THE CLOCK TO CARE FOR THEM.



SOME GOOD NEWS ARRIVED AMIDST THE FIGHTING. JOHN'S POEM HAD GAINED NOTORIETY. IN FACT, HE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM EDWARD MORRISON, ASKING FOR A COPY OF "IN FLANDERS FIELDS" TO BE SENT TO GENERAL BYNG, THE CANADIAN ARMY'S COMMANDING OFFICER, IN CELEBRATION OF THE VIMY RIDGE VICTORY. JOHN HAPPILY COMPLIED.



A FEW MONTHS EARLIER, REVERE OSLER HAD DECIDED TO LEAVE NO. 3 HOSPITAL TO JOIN THE ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY.

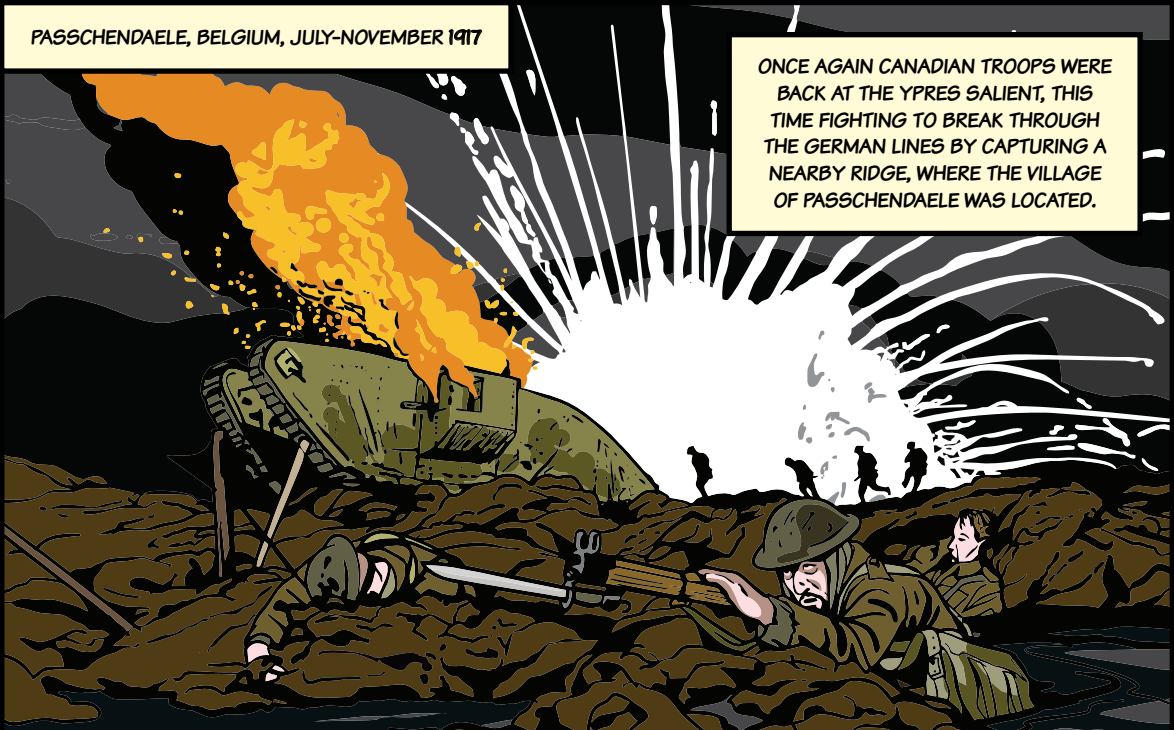


VICTORY AT VIMY RIDGE BROUGHT JOHN A SENSE OF PRIDE THAT CANADIANS AT HOME SHARED, BUT THE PERSISTENCE OF WAR CONTINUED TO DAMPEN HIS SPIRITS. HE WORRIED CONSTANTLY ABOUT REVERE, WHO WAS BY NOW FIGHTING ON THE FRONT LINES.

JOHN WONDERED IF HIS OWN COMMENTS ABOUT THE NEED TO DEFEAT THE GERMANS AT ANY COST HAD INFLUENCED HIS YOUNG FRIEND'S DECISION TO JOIN THE FIGHTING.

PASSCHENDAELE, BELGIUM, JULY-NOVEMBER 1917

ONCE AGAIN CANADIAN TROOPS WERE BACK AT THE YPRES SALIENT, THIS TIME FIGHTING TO BREAK THROUGH THE GERMAN LINES BY CAPTURING A NEARBY RIDGE, WHERE THE VILLAGE OF PASSCHENDAELE WAS LOCATED.



HEAVY AUTUMN RAINFALL TURNED THE BATTLEFIELD OF PASSCHENDAELE INTO A MUDDY QUAGMIRE. THE CONDITIONS FOR BOTH SIDES WERE HORRENDOUS. THE FIELDS WERE COVERED IN HOLES THAT QUICKLY FILLED WITH DEBRIS AND WATER, WHILE GUNS AND TROOPS SANK INTO THE WET EARTH.



AFTER FOUR MONTHS OF FIGHTING, THE CANADIANS WERE ABLE TO CAPTURE PASSCHENDAELE IN NOVEMBER 1917. THEY HAD OVERCOME IMMENSE HARDSHIP, BUT AT A TERRIBLE PRICE. NEARLY 16,000 CANADIANS WERE KILLED OR WOUNDED DURING THE LENGTHY BATTLE AND, UNFORTUNATELY, THEIR EFFORTS WERE IN VAIN. WITHIN MONTHS, ALLIED FORCES HAD VACATED THE AREA IN THE FACE OF A LOOMING GERMAN ASSAULT.

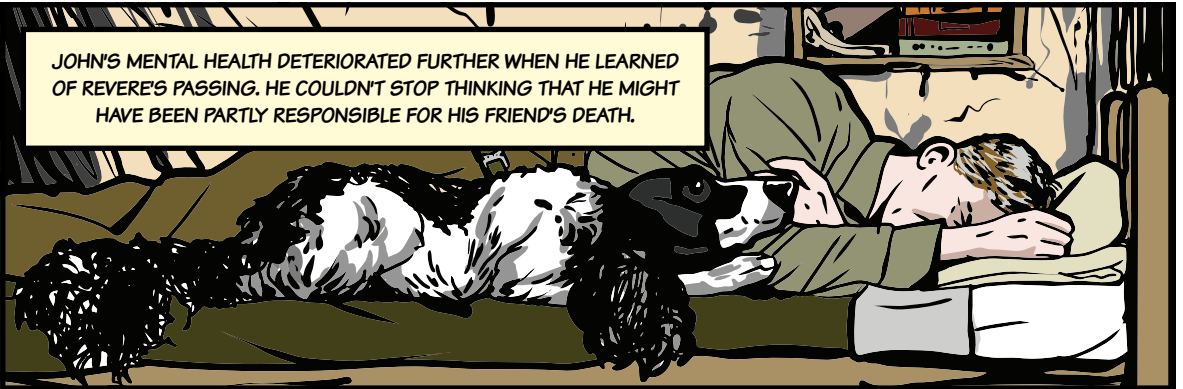
AUGUST 30, 1917

REVERE OSLER RECEIVED TERRIBLE WOUNDS AT PASSCHENDAELE. HE SUSTAINED SERIOUS INJURIES WHEN A GERMAN SHELL EXPLODED BESIDE HIM.



DESPITE WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK, SURGEONS WERE UNABLE TO SAVE REVERE AND HE DIED SHORTLY AFTER.

JOHN'S MENTAL HEALTH DETERIORATED FURTHER WHEN HE LEARNED OF REVERE'S PASSING. HE COULDN'T STOP THINKING THAT HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS FRIEND'S DEATH.



BUT THE WAR CONTINUED, AND CASUALTIES KEPT COMING TO NO. 3 HOSPITAL IN SEEMINGLY UNENDING NUMBERS. JOHN COPEd AS BEST HE COULD.



PRESENT DAY

WHY WASN'T JOHN SENT HOME WITH PTSD?

THEY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND PTSD THEN. FEW ACCEPTED THAT MENTAL ILLNESS WAS A REAL DISEASE. NOT KNOWING ANY BETTER, SOME PEOPLE EVEN THOUGHT OF IT AS COWARDICE, A WAY OF GETTING OUT OF THE WAR.



JANUARY 1918

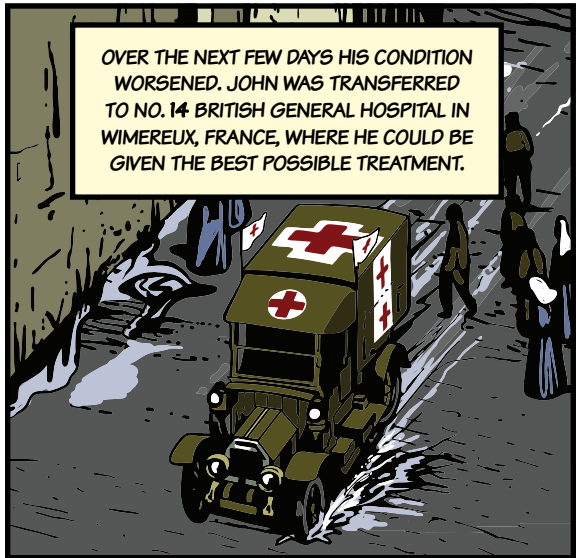
AS A NEW YEAR BEGAN, JOHN WAS RECOGNIZED FOR ALL HIS HARD WORK AND SACRIFICE. HE RECEIVED NOTICE OF HIS APPOINTMENT AS CONSULTING PHYSICIAN TO THE BRITISH ARMY. THIS WAS A RARE HONOUR INDEED. JOHN WAS THE FIRST CANADIAN EVER TO BE OFFERED THE POSITION.



TRAGICALLY, JOHN DIDN'T HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE UP HIS NEW POST. HE HAD FALLEN ILL AGAIN SHORTLY AFTER RECEIVING THE NEWS, AND DIAGNOSED HIMSELF WITH PNEUMONIA.



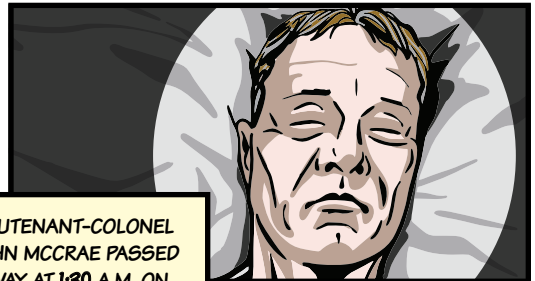
OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS HIS CONDITION WORSENERD. JOHN WAS TRANSFERRED TO NO. 14 BRITISH GENERAL HOSPITAL IN WIMEREUX, FRANCE, WHERE HE COULD BE GIVEN THE BEST POSSIBLE TREATMENT.



UNFORTUNATELY, HIS ILLNESS HAD PROGRESSED TOO FAR. IT BECAME CLEAR HE DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT.



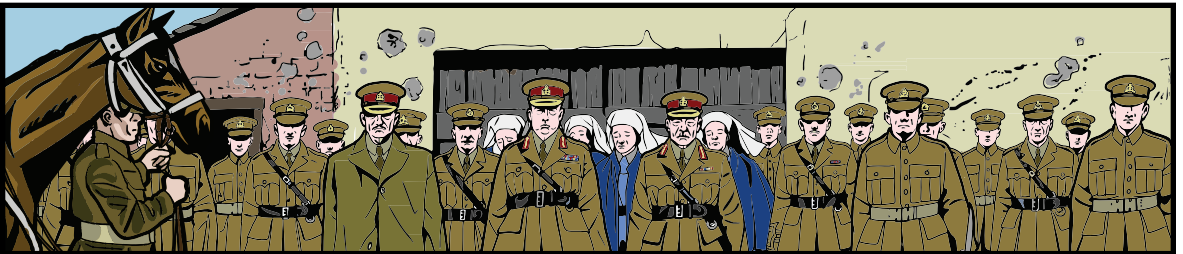
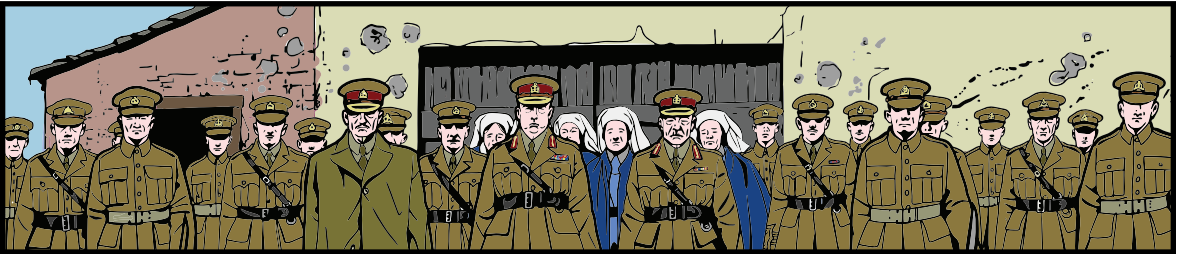
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN MCCRAE PASSED AWAY AT 1:30 A.M. ON JANUARY 28, 1918. HE WAS 45 YEARS OLD.



JANUARY 29, 1918



DURING JOHN'S FUNERAL PROCESSION, HIS COFFIN WAS DRAPED WITH A BRITISH FLAG BECAUSE HE HAD DIED IN A BRITISH HOSPITAL.



FOLLOWING THE COFFIN WAS BONFIRE, LED BY JOHN'S STABLE HAND, WILLIAM DODGE. JOHN'S BOOTS WERE REVERSED IN THE STIRRUPS, SYMBOLIZING THE PASSING OF THE HORSE'S RIDER.



JOHN'S FUNERAL WAS ONE OF THE LARGEST IN THE WAR. OVER 500 PEOPLE ATTENDED, INCLUDING EDWARD MORRISON AND GENERAL ARTHUR CURRIE, WHO HAD REPLACED GENERAL BYNG AS THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE ENTIRE CANADIAN ARMY.

THERE WERE MANY REMEMBRANCES OF JOHN MCCRAE IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS AFTER HIS FUNERAL.

SOME OF THE OLDER MEMBERS OF THE MCGILL UNIT WHO STILL REMAIN HERE WERE SCOURING THE FIELDS THIS AFTERNOON TO TRY AND FIND SOME CHANCE WINTER POPPIES TO PUT ON HIS GRAVE—TO REMIND HIM OF FLANDERS, WHERE HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO LIE. WAS ANYONE MORE RESPECTED AND LOVED THAN HE?

DR. HARVEY CUSHING, A FRIEND FROM JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL IN BALTIMORE

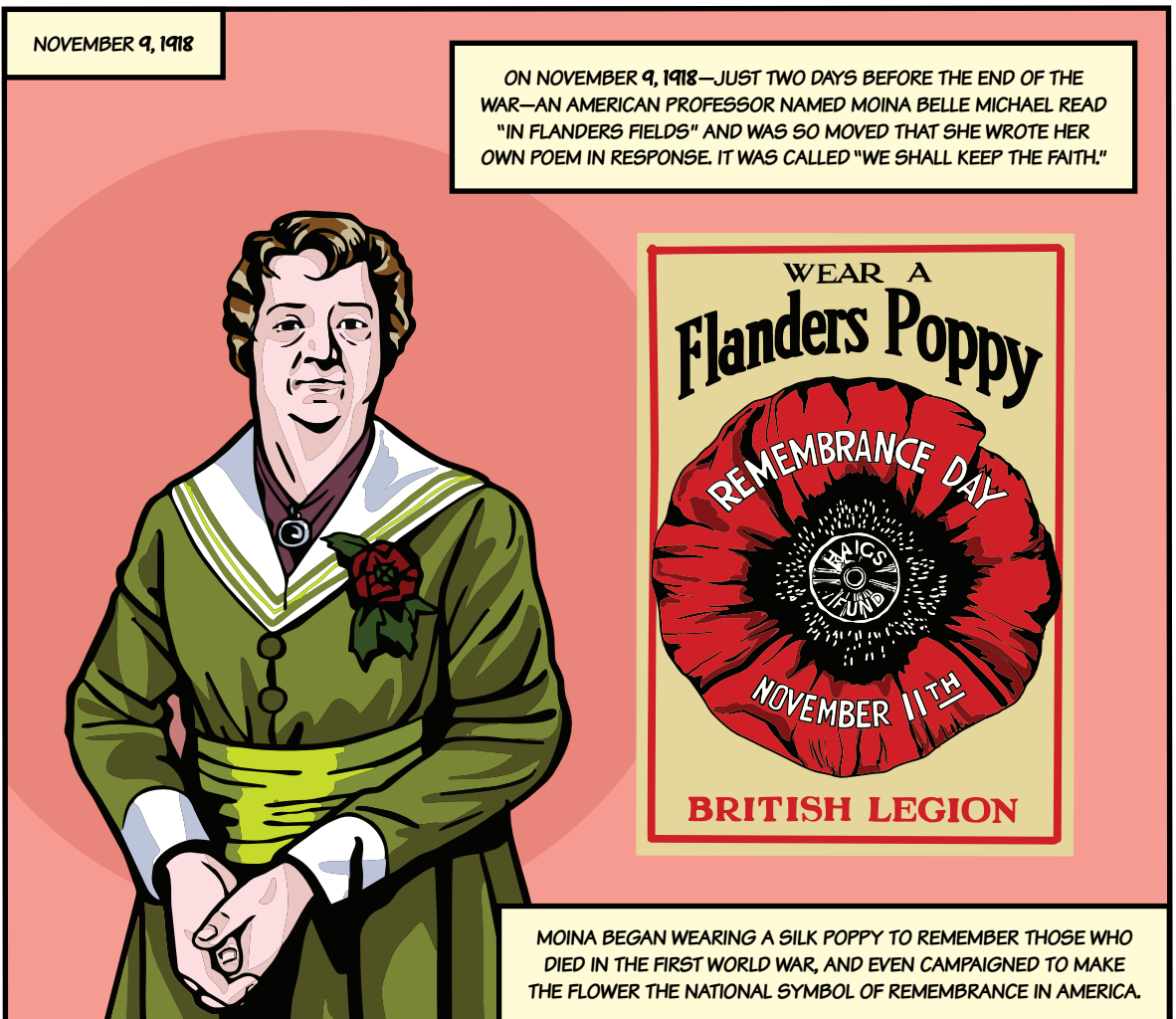
DR. ADAMI, JOHN'S FRIEND AND MENTOR, SAID THE FOLLOWING: "THERE HAVE BEEN FEWER FINER CHARACTERS, OR MEN OF RICHER AND MORE VARIED ENDOWMENT IN THE IMPERIAL MEDICAL SERVICE THAN JOHN MCCRAE."

WE MISS HIS FAMILIAR FACE AND HIS CHEERY STORIES, ALWAYS SOMETHING TO MAKE US LAUGH.

ALL CAME [TO HIS FUNERAL] AS WE DID BECAUSE WE LOVED HIM AND WANTED TO SHOW HIM THIS LAST MARK OF RESPECT.

NURSING SISTER MARGARET WOODS, WHO WORKED AT NO. 3 HOSPITAL, WROTE THIS IN A LETTER ABOUT HOW JOHN'S DEATH AFFECTED HER AND HER FELLOW NURSES.

AFTER JOHN'S PASSING, THERE WAS CONCERN THAT BONFIRE WOULD BE ISSUED TO ANOTHER SOLDIER OR SENT TO PULL SUPPLY WAGONS FOR THE WAR EFFORT. LUCKILY, JOHN'S FRIENDS SECRETLY DEVISED A PLAN TO GET THE HORSE TO A FARM, WHERE HE COULD RETIRE SAFELY.



FRENCH HUMANITARIAN ANNA GUÉRIN, WHO FOUNDED A CHARITY TO REBUILD PARTS OF FRANCE DESTROYED IN THE WAR, WAS INSPIRED BY MOINA'S EFFORTS. GUÉRIN BEGAN TO RUN "POPPY DAYS," WHERE FABRIC POPPIES WERE EXCHANGED FOR DONATIONS. SHORTLY AFTER, THE MONEY RAISED FROM HER POPPY DAYS ALSO BEGAN GOING TOWARDS VETERANS' CARE.

IN CANADA, HER IDEA WAS TAKEN UP BY THE GREAT WAR VETERANS' ASSOCIATION IN 1921, WHEN IT ADOPTED THE POPPY AS ITS REMEMBRANCE SYMBOL. THE CANADIAN LEGION CONTINUED THIS PRACTICE WHEN IT WAS FORMED IN 1925, WITH THE POPPIES ORIGINALLY BEING MADE BY VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES.



TODAY THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT POPPIES. DOZENS OF COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD HAVE CREATED THEIR OWN TO SELL FOR REMEMBRANCE DAY.

In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McCrae

"IN FLANDERS FIELDS" CAPTURED THE COURAGE OF THOSE WHO TOOK PART IN THE WAR, THE POIGNANCY OF THEIR LOSS, AND THEIR DETERMINATION TO FIGHT FOR THE BEST IN HUMANITY. JOHN MCCRAE'S POEM IMMORTALIZES THOSE FEELINGS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER.





**"In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row ..."**

— excerpt from "In Flanders Fields" by Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae

On a spring day in 1915, amid the battle-scarred fields of Flanders, Belgium, a Canadian soldier named John McCrae was struck by the sight of poppies blooming over the fresh graves of his fallen comrades. It moved him so deeply that he penned "In Flanders Fields," one of history's most famous wartime poems that continues to resonate around the world over 100 years later.

More than just a military man, John was also a respected doctor, teacher, and poet, whose infectious personality made him beloved by all. Fiercely patriotic, John dedicated his life to his country, witnessing the horrors of war firsthand as he worked tirelessly to treat the sheer number of wounded that poured in from the front lines.

Where the Poppies Blow follows John on his remarkable journey, from humble beginnings in small-town Ontario to some of the toughest battle zones of the First World War. Although he never made it back home, John McCrae's poem and the red poppy became an enduring symbol of remembrance, honouring the countless soldiers who sacrificed their lives in conflict.

