

Some Attitudes Towards Canada's Entry Into the First World War

"We are part of the British Empire, so of course we are at war. That is the law. We must now decide on the kind of aid that we should send to Britain. I believe that we should send soldiers to fight alongside the British army in France. Canadians, I am sure, will be proud to fight for their King and country."

Robert Borden
Prime Minister of Canada

~ adapted from remarks he made in
the House of Commons on August
18th, 1914

"We are at war. That is the law. It is now our job to decide just what to do about this sad fact. My hope is that the war will soon be over and our help will not be needed. We should offer both money and food to France and Britain."

Wilfred Laurier
Leader of the Opposition

~ adapted from remarks he made in
the House of Commons on August
18th, 1914

"When the war started I wanted to go, but I was too young, only fifteen. By the time I was seventeen, I couldn't wait any longer. I guess I was afraid the war would end before I got a chance to get involved."

Source unknown

"A lot of us were farm boys. Fighting was bound to be more exciting than farming and none of us thought we'd ever get another chance to see overseas places like England and France."

Source Unknown

Costs of the First World War

- **1 in 7** men at the front DIED (9 million)
- **1 in 3** were DISABLED (22 million)
- \$400,000,000,000 (400 billion) in 1919 values – approximately \$4 trillion today

THIS SUM WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT TO:

- Provide every family in England, Ireland, Scotland, Belgium, Russia, the United States, Germany, Canada, and Australia with a \$2,500 house on a \$500 five-acre lot and furnish it with \$1,000 worth of furniture;
- AND provide a \$5,000,000 library and a \$10,000,000 university for every community in those countries possessing a population of 20,000 or more;
- AND create a fund (5% interest) which would pay \$1,000 a year to 125,000 teachers and 125,000 nurses;
- AND leave a surplus enough to purchase every piece of property and all the wealth of both England and France.

These sums don't take into account the disruption of the European economy, the crippling of soldiers and civilians, or the vast sums to be appropriated for generations in the form of pensions. Added to this were the irreconcilable hatreds engendered by the conflicts.

Source: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.