

Canadian War Museum
Military History Research Centre

Trench Newspapers of the First World War

This bibliography lists the First World War trench and troopship newspapers and periodicals held in the Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre (MHRC). The collection includes publications produced for Canadian, Australian, and British service personnel.

Life in the trenches was difficult and dangerous. The constant threat of an enemy attack was ever present. Soldiers were killed and wounded by shells, snipers, mortar rounds, and poison gas. Along with this terrible attrition, the soldiers were exposed to the elements, isolated from family and friends, and plagued by rats and lice.

Despite this strain, most soldiers learned to cope. While the soldiers stayed busy in the front lines through sentry duty or in one of the many work details that were required to keep the trenches in working order, there was time to write letters, play games, and engage in other leisurely activities. As soldiers were rotated through the trench system, from front to rear to reserve, before going back again into the firing line, they had even more leisure time. This army of civilian-soldiers, which drew upon recruits from all professions, had newspaper editors, writers, poets, and cartoonists in the ranks. Many were soon looking for an outlet for their creative energies.

From the start of the war, troops aboard the ships and later in the training camps of England produced their own newspapers. These were created by the soldiers for the soldiers, and contained their own prose, poetry, cartoons, jokes, and letters of complaint, much of which was related to the war or life in the overseas forces. By the summer of 1915, the first Canadian trench newspapers were being published in Europe. Produced very close to the front line and published in a wide variety of formats, from crude to sophisticated, these news-sheets and magazines provided information, entertainment, and a convenient sounding board for servicemen on active duty.

There was no central authority to publish these papers, and nor was there an organization to archive them. After the papers were read and passed from comrade to comrade, most disintegrated in the hard living conditions of the trenches, were used to keep the water from running into dugouts, or were put to good use as toilet paper. Those papers that have survived were often saved because they were sent back to loved ones in Canada. There are large collections of Canadian trench newspapers at the Canadian War Museum, the Library and Archives Canada, the Imperial War Museum, and Cambridge University (UK), but no complete runs exist anywhere.

Note: Brackets around dates indicate the MHRC's holdings are incomplete.

Canadian Trench Newspapers

Action Front! [s.l.]: 53rd Battalion, CEF, 1917-
Collection: May, 1917
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UF 1 A385

Another Garland from the Front. London: 5th Canadian Battalion (Western Cavalry),
1916-1919
Collection: v. 1 - 4
Location / Localisation: GEN D 547 C2 5th A6

The Beaver. London: Khaki University of Canada, 1918-
Collection: 1918 - 1919
Location / Localisation: PER U 444 B438

The Brazier. At the Front, France: 16th Battalion (Canadian Scottish), 1916-
Collection: 1916
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 602.17 C36 B739

The Briny. [Somewhere in the Atlantic, HMT *Saxonia*]: CEF, 191?-
Collection: April 3, 1917
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 501 B756

The Busy Beaver. [s.l.]: Royal Canadian Engineers, 191?-
Collection: [1915 -1916]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UG 1 B879

Canadian Hospital News. Ramsgate, UK: Granville Canadian Special Hospital, 191?-
Collection: [1916]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 807 C3 C363

The Canadian Machine Gunner. Seaford, UK: Canadian Machine Gun Corps., 191?
Collection: [1917-1919]
Location / Localisation: PER UA 602 C3 C363

The Canadian Sapper. Seaford, UK: Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers, 1918-
Collection: 1918
Location / Localisation: PER UG 515 C2 C3631

The Dead Horse Corner Gazette. France?: 4th Battalion, 1st Canadian Contingent, 1915-
Collection: [1915-1916]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 501 D434

The Fortyniner. UK?: 49th Battalion, CEF 1915-
Collection: [1915-1919]
Location / Localisation: PER UA 602 L6 F678

Frankoniablaetter. On board H.M. Troopship *Franconia*: [s.n.], 1914.
Collection: v.1 no.1, 1914
Location / Localisation: REF PAM D 547 C2 C2 F7 1914

In & Out. France: Canadian Field Ambulance, 1918-
Collection: no. 1, 1918
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 C2 I636

The Iodine Chronicle. France: No. 1 Canadian Field Ambulance, 1915-
Collection: [1915-1918]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 C2 I645
See also: N.Y.D.

The Irish Canadian. Toronto: 208th Battalion, CEF, 1916-
Collection: v. 1 no. 6, Feb 15, 1917
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 602 I7 I757

The Listening Post. France: 7th Battalion, BEF, 1915-1919
Collection: [1915-1919]
Location / Localisation: RARE PER D 501 L578

M & D [Medicine & Duty]. Victoria, BC: 11th Canadian Field Ambulance, 191?-
Collection: May, 1919
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 C2 M445

The Maple Leaf. London: Pay and Record Office, CEF, 1915-
Collection: [1914-1918]
Location / Localisation: PER D 501 M3

The Message from Mars. London: 4th Canadian Division, BEF 1918.
Collection: Christmas, 1918
Location / Localisation: GEN D 547 C25 G73

Now & Then see N.Y.D.

N.Y.D. (Incorporating 'The Iodine Chronicle', 'The Splint Record', 'Now & Then').
[s.l.]: 1, 2, & 3 Canadian Field Ambulances, 191?-
Collection: [1915-1918]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 C2 I645

The Ontario S-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-r. Orpington, Kent, UK: Ontario Military Hospital, 1916-
Collection: [1916]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 C2 O683

The Record. Toronto, ON: 81st Battalion, CEF, 191?-
Collection: [1916]

Location / Localisation: PER UA 602 R436

R.M.R. Growler. Folkeston, UK: 14th Battalion, Royal Montreal Regiment, 1916-

Collection: v.1, no. 1, 1916

Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 602 R69 R693

The Rouelles Camp Magazine. Havre: Canadian Base Depot, Canadian Army, 1916-1919.

Collection: No. 1, April, 1916

Location / Localisation: PER BOX U 1 R684

The Silent 60th. [Somewhere in Flanders]: 60th Battalion, CEF, 1915-

Collection: [1915-1916]

Location / Localisation: PER BOX U 1 S555

The Sling. France?: Canadian Field Ambulance, 1917-

Collection: no. 1, 1917

Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 C2 S556

The Splint Record see *N.Y.D.*

The Strathconian. London?: Lord Strathcona's Horses (Royal Canadians), 1914-

Collection: no.1 – no. 2, 1914

Location / Localisation: PER UA 602 L67 S873

Tank Tatler. London: 1st Canadian Tank Battalion,

Collection: [1918-1919]

Location / Localisation: RARE PER UA 602 T36 T365

The Troublesome Transport. [s.l.]: No. 1 Canadian Reserve Park, 1916-

Collection: v. 1 no. 2, July, 1916

Location / Localisation: PER BOX U 1 T768

The Twentieth Gazette. Flanders: 20th Battalion, CEF, 191?-

Collection: [1916]

Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 602 C36 T946

The Vancouver Battalion. Vancouver: 29th Battalion, 1915-

Collection: April 1, 1915

Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 602 V36 V363

La Vie Canadienne. Rouen, France: Canadian Section, General Headquarters, 3rd Echelon, 1915-

Collection: [1917-1918]

Location / Localisation: PER BOX U 1 V543

The Western Scot. Victoria, BC : Western Scots, 67th Battalion, 191?-
Collection: [1916]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 602 W478

The Whizz Bang. Ottawa: 207th Battalion, CEF, 1916
Collection: [1916]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 602 C36 W559

The Whizz-bang. Leamington, ON: Whizz-Bang Publishing, 1917-
Collection: v.1 no. 1, 1917
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 602 C36 W559

Australian Trench Newspapers

The Digger. Essex, UK: Australian Engineers' Training Depot, 1918-
Collection: [1918]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 501 D544

British Trench Newspapers

The B.H.T.D. Summer Annual. Somewhere in France: 1st Base Horse Transport Depot,
1916-
Collection: 1916
Location / Localisation: PER BOX U 1 B374

Behind the Lines. [s.l.]: No. 10 Stationary Hospital, BEF, 191?-
Collection: no. 4, 1916
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 G7 B445

The British Prisoner of War. London, UK: Nisbet & Co. for the Committee of the Red
Cross & Order of St. John, 1918-
Collection: 1918
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 627 A1 B578

The Castironical. Salisbury, UK: 6th City of London Rifles, 1916-
Collection: [1916]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UD 1 C378

The Dump. [s.l.]: 23rd Division, British Army, 1915-
Collection: v. 1, no. 1, 1915
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 659 D866

Echo du camp de Rennbahn. Münster, Allemagne : [s.n.], 191?-
Collection: [1916-1917]
Location / Localisation: RARE PER FOLIO D 627 A1 E356

First Eastern General Hospital Gazette. Cambridge, UK: 1st Eastern General Hospital, 1915-

Collection: [1915-1916]

Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 G7 F577

The Gasper. Salisbury, UK: Royal Fusiliers, 1916-

Collection: [1916]

Location / Localisation: PER BOX UF 1 G377

The Gnome. Egypt: No. 3 School of Military Aeronautics, Royal Flying Corps, 1916-

Collection: no. 2, Jan., 1917

Location / Localisation: PER BOX UG 622 G666

The Jab. [s.l.]: London Regiment, 12th Battalion, 1916-

Collection: no. 1, April 1916

Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 652 R36 J333

The Mag. Vladivostok, Siberia: Middlesex Regiment, 25th Battalion, 1918?-

Collection: v. 2, no. 1, 1919

Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 652 M54 M343

The Mixture. Tunbridge Wells, UK: 2/1st East Lancashire Field Ambulance, 191?-

Collection: 1915-1916

Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 G7 M598

The Munster Church Times. Munster, Germany: 1st East Lancashire Regiment, 191?-

Collection: v.3, 1917

Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 639 P37 M867

On Service. France?: Army Service Corps, 1916-

Collection: [1916]

Location / Localisation: PER BOX UA 652 A76 O674

The Outpost. [s.l.]: 17th Service Battalion, Highland Light Infantry, 1915-

Collection: [1915-1917]

Location / Localisation: PER UD 1 O887

Rennbahn Review. Münster, Germany, British Prisoners of War, 1917-

Collection: [1917 -1918]

Location / Localisation: RARE PER D 627 A1 R466

Salut Poilu. Beverley, UK: British Army, 1916-

Collection: v. 1, no. 1, Jan., 1916

Location / Localisation: PER BOX U1 S358

The Switchboard. [In the field]: BEF, 1916-
Collection: no. 3, Sept., 1916
Location / Localisation: PER BOX U1 S958

The Wipers Times [facsimile reprint of British Trench papers]. London: H. Jenkins, 1916-
Collection: [1914-1918]
Location / Localisation: GEN D 526.2 B4 1974

With the Wounded. London, UK: Brondesbury Park Military Hospital, 1915-
Collection: [1915-1916]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 629 G7 W584

Canadian Home Front and Semi-Official Newspapers

Canadian Daily Record. London: Canadian War Records Office, 1917-1919
Collection: [1917-1919]
Location / Localisation: PER D 501 C32

Canadian Manhood. Toronto: National Council of Young Men's Christian Association of Canada, 191?-
Collection: [1917-1918]
Location / Localisation: PER BV 1060 C2 C363

Khaki Life. Camp Borden, ON: Camp Borden Athletic Association, 1916-
Collection: Aug 3, 1916
Location / Localisation: PER BOX D 501 K435

Knots and Lashings. St. Johns, QC: Engineering Training Dept, RCE, 1917-
Collection: [1918]
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UG 1 K668

The Western Veteran. Edmonton, AB: Great War Veterans' Association, 191?-
Collection: v. 1 no. 13
Location / Localisation: PER BOX UB C2 W478

WUB [Western Universities Battalion]. Camp Hughes, MN: Western Universities Battalion, 196th, 1916-
Collection: v. 1 no. 1, 1916
Location / Localisation: RARE FOLIO D 547 C2 196th W82 1916

For Additional Reading:

Buitenhuis, Peter. *The Great War of Words: British, American and Canadian propaganda and fiction, 1914-1933*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1987.

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Fuller, J.G. *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies 1914-1918*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

Hynes, Samuel Lynn. *The Soldier's Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War*. New York: A. Lane, 1997.

Keshen, Jeff. *Propaganda and Censorship During Canada's Great War*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1996.

Seal, Graham, "Written in the Trenches: Trench Newspapers of the First World War," *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, April 16, 1990, p. 30-8.