

Indigenous Contributions | WWI | Research & Planning

Indigenous Contributions During the First World War | Government Of Canada

www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1414152378639/1607908713791

- Estimated 4,000 Indigenous Peoples served in the Canadian forces during WWI
- One third of First Nations people in Canada between 18-45 enlisted during WWI
- Only status Indigenous people were officially recorded by the CEF (Canadian Expeditionary Force)
- Participated in most of major battles
- At least 50 awarded medals for bravery and heroism
- Indigenous women active at Homefront → fundraising and other means
- Indigenous veterans experienced same unequal treatment prior to war
- Indigenous not awarded same benefits as their non-Indigenous counterparts
- Indigenous People originally discouraged from enlisting
- At start of war, some Indigenous people permitted to enlist whereas others were not
- In August 1917, the Military Service Act instituted conscription, made no exception for Treaty First Nations
 - They had expected to be exempt because they didn't have the rights of citizenship that obligated Canadian citizens to serve
 - Some First Nations argued that promises made during treaty negotiation excused them from conscription in foreign wars
- Conscription was an extremely contentious issue and the Department of Indian Affairs received letters from First Nations demanding an exemption for status Indians
- Many non-Indigenous peoples publicly supported the exemption of status Indians from conscription.
- 17 January 1918 Status First Peoples exempt from conscriptions. Still called to perform non-combat roles
- Tensions due to divide over encouraging enlistment in Indigenous communities
- Indigenous communities suffered financial hardships despite increase in jobs
- Indigenous people forced out of jobs for returning veterans
- Wartime industry negatively affected traditional means of livelihood
 - Low demand for hunting and fishing
- Money from government often didn't reach the people in need or was insufficient

Francis Pegahmagabow | The Canadian Encyclopedia

www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/francis-pegahmagabow

- Francis "Peggy" Pegahmagabow, Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) chief, Indigenous rights advocate, war hero (born on 9 March 1891 on the Parry Island reserve, ON; died 5 August 1952 at Parry Island, ON)
- One of the most highly decorated Indigenous People in Canada during WWI



- One of the first to sign on with the 23rd regiment (northern pioneers) overseas contingent in August 1914
- One of original member of the 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion
- Sent to France in February 1915 after trading on Salisbury Plain
- Known as "Peggy" to fellow soldiers
- In second battle of Ypres in April 1915
 - Where Germans used chlorine gas for first time
 - Francis survived
- After service at Ypres, Francis promoted to lance corporal in 1915
- Reputation as deadly sniper
 - Credited with about 378 kills
- Francis made his way into No Man's Land at night where he waited for German soldiers to arrive
 - He was an effective marksman and scout
- strong spiritual beliefs which fellow soldiers believed gave him courage in dangerous operations
- June 1916: Battle of Mount Sorrel
 - Captured many German prisoners
 - Credited with capture of approx. 300 prisoners over course of WWI
 - Suffered gunshot wound to leg
 - Despite injuries, returned to battlefield

- Received his first Military Medal for facing enemy fire to dispatch critical messages in 1916
- Battle of Passchendaele in November 1917
 - Trudged through mud and heavy fire to help Canadians capture Passchendaele Ridge.
 - Won first bar to his Military Medal during this battle
- Developed pneumonia in December 1917, hospitalized in England
 - Suffered from chest pain for rest of life
- Despite serious injuries he returned to action
- Received second bar to his Military Medal following Battle of the Scarpe in August 1918
- Awarded a 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal
- He carried a medicine bag with him given to him before war by an elderly Indigenous person recognized him near an Ojibwa camp and gave it to him to protect him
- Bag seemed to sometimes be hard as rock, at other times, appeared to contain nothing
- He doesn't know what was really inside it
- Wore it in trenches
- Some indigenous soldiers including Francis chewed a dead twin in time of danger believing that it offered protection
- Returned to Parry island in 1919
- Continued to serve with Algonquin Militia Regiment
- Despite being a war hero he returned to Canada just to face the same persecution and poverty prior to WWI
- Found his life regulated by powerful Indian agents who controlled even his pension
- Frustrated by the government's treatment of Indigenous peoples and veterans, Francis became involved in local and federal politics
- 1921-1925 Francis chief of Parry Island Band (Wasauksing First Nations)
 - 1933-1936 Band Councillor
 - During this time he sent letters to prime minister and policy makers demanding better treatment of Indigenous People
 - Ultimate (unachieved) goal was to have band council have authority to overrule that of the Indian Agents
 - He was early activist in the national Indigenous rights movement
 - Died 5 August 1952 age 64 from heart attack after suffering for years from badly damaged lungs

Battle of Mount Sorrel

www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/mont-sorrel

- 2 June 1916 Assault
 - German troops blew up Canadians with artillery barrage
 - Nearly wiped out
 - Two leaders lost
 - Germans captured Mount Sorrel
- 30m hill commanding position of city of Ypres

- Wooded elevation overlooked important road
- Heavy rain and shelling = ground soggy with lots of holes
- 9 June 1916 counterattack
 - Allies fought in dark under cover of smoke screen with occasional flares of light from heavy attack
 - Refortifying the repeatedly destroyed trenches was hard as the churned-up earth was muddy from rain and shell holes filled with water
 - Allies recaptured Mount Sorrel
- casualties
 - Between 2-14 June

Pitching Your Graphic Novel

Step #1

5W's

Topic: Indigenous Contributions during WWI
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Who	- Francis "Peggy" Pegahmagabow, Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) chief, Indigenous rights advocate, war hero (born on 9 March 1891 on the Parry Island reserve, ON; died 5 August 1952 at Parry Island, ON)
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<p>What</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One of the first to sign on with the 23rd regiment (northern pioneers) overseas contingent in August 1914 - One of original member of the 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion - One of the most highly decorated Indigenous People in Canada during WWI - Awarded a 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal - In second battle of Ypres in April 1915 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where Germans used chlorine gas for first time - Francis survived - After service at Ypres, Francis promoted to lance corporal in 1915 - Reputation as deadly sniper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Credited with about 378 kills - Francis made his way into No Man's Land at night where he waited for german soldiers to arrive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - He was an effective marksman and scout - strong spiritual beliefs which fellow soldiers believed gave him courage in dangerous operations - June 1916: Battle of Mount Sorrel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Captured many German prisoners - Credited with capture of aprox. 300 prisoners over course of WWI - Suffered gunshot wound to leg - Despite injuries, returned to battlefield - Received his first Military Medal for facing enemy fire to dispatch critical messages in 1916 - Battle of Passchendaele in November 1917 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trudged through mud and heavy fire to help Canadians capture Passchendaele Ridge. - Won first bar to his Military Medal during this battle - Developed pneumonia in December 1917, hospitalized in England <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suffered from chest pain for rest of life - Despite serious injuries he returned to action - Received second bar to his Military Medal following Battle of the Scarpe in August 1918 - Awarded a 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal - He carried a medicine bag with him given to him before war by an elderly Indigenous person recognized him near an Ojibwa camp and gave it to him to protect him - Bag seemed to sometimes be hard as rock, at other times, appeared to contain nothing - He doesn't know what was really inside it - Wore it in trenches - Some indigenous soldiers including Francis chewed a dead twin in time of danger believing that it offered protection - Returned to Parry island in 1919 - Continued to serve with Algonquin Militia Regiment - Despite being a war hero he returned to Canada just to face the same persecution and poverty prior to WWI - Found his life regulated by powerful Indian agents who controlled even his pension - Frustrated by the government's treatment of Indigenous peoples and veterans, Francis became involved in local and federal politics - 1921-1925 Francis chief of Parry Island Band (Wasauksing First Nations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1933-1936 Band Councillor - During this time he sent letters to prime minister and policy makers demanding better treatment of indigenous people - Ultimate (unachieved) goal was to have band council have authority to overrule that of the Indian Agents - He was early activist in the national Indigenous rights movement - Died 5 August 1952 age 64 from heart attack after suffering for years from badly damaged lungs
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Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In second battle of Ypres in April 1915 - No Man's Land - Battle of Mount Sorrel in June 1916 - Battle of Passchendaele in November 1917 - Battle of the Scarpe in August 1918
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - April 1915 - June 1916 - November 1917 - August 1918
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After service at Ypres, Francis promoted to lance corporal in 1915 - Reputation as deadly sniper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Credited with about 378 kills - Received his first Military Medal for facing enemy fire to dispatch critical messages in 1916 - Won first bar to his Military Medal during Battle of Passchendaele - Received second bar to his Military Medal following Battle of the Scarpe in August 1918

Step #2

Story Spine

Once upon a time...	There was an Anishinaabe Lance Corporal named Francis "Peggy" Pegahmagabow. He was part of the 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion.
Every day...	He used his sniper skills to kill German soldiers and also captured several. At the end of WWI he would have captured approximately 300 prisoners. He also risked his life to face enemy fire to dispatch critical messages.
Until one day...	He got shot in the leg.
Because of that...	He was sent away from the front lines.

Because of that...	Despite his injuries however, he returned to the battle field and continued his duties of sniping and dispatching messages.
Because of that...	He received his first military medal. In later battles he would gain two bars on his military medal.
Until finally...	He returned home to Parry Island in 1919. When he arrived he was shocked to return to face the same persecution and poverty with an Indian Agent controlling his life despite being a highly decorated veteran
And ever since then...	Frustrated by the Canadian Government's treatment of Indigenous people and veterans, he worked in local and federal politics with the ultimate (unachieved) goal of the band council having the authority to overrule that of the Indian Agents. He served as chief and band councillor of the Parry Island Band. He sent letters to the prime minister and policy makers demanding better treatment of Indigenous People, becoming an early activist in the national Indigenous rights movement until his death on August 5th 1952 at the age of 64 from a heart attack.