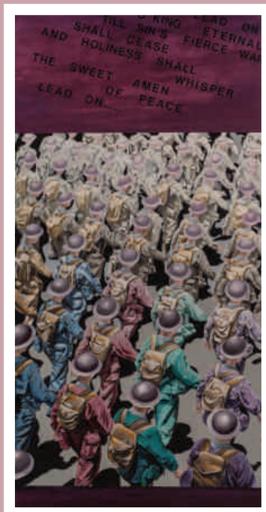


TELLING THE STORY IN WORDS, PAINTINGS & PHOTOGRAPHS



Private Roy
Molly Lamb Bobak



On a Mighty Mission
Frances Ferdinands



The Return to Mons
Inglis Sheldon-Williams

CWM 19710261-0813
Beaverbrook Collection of War Art
© Canadian War Museum

We learn about the world around us through many sources. In learning about war we can count on first hand reports from soldiers who have been there, or reporters sent specifically to tell the story. Our exhibits include excerpts from one of Farley Mowat's book about his experiences in World War II. You can also see poems by soldiers who were there. While war is a terrible thing, not all experiences of war are bad, as witnessed by Gordon Keenan's story of the "Cave Inn".

Photographs and paintings are another way of telling the story of war. As is the case with news reports and personal tales, pictures can also be used to give a very personal, or even distorted picture of "the facts". The photographer must choose which pictures to take and which to ignore. (Nowadays photos can easily be changed to tell a lie.) Paintings, of course, can tell whatever story the artist wants to tell. We are fortunate to have in this exhibit a number of paintings and photographs of war.

- The large originals on loan from New Hope United Church had been hanging for years in the hall at nearby Canton United Church. One at least is copied from a contemporary issue of the London Illustrated News. It is possible that they were painted by Albert Robinson who has work in the Canadian War Museum, probably to help the residents of central Ontario get a better picture of what was happening so far away.
- The painting of Private Roy is one of the most famous works of Molly Lamb Bobak, the first Canadian woman to be sent overseas as an official war artist. In 1995 she was awarded the Order of Canada and her work is found in collections across Canada. She died in March 2014, the last of Canada's 32 official war artists from World War II. In 1946 Eva May Roy was a private working at an armed forces canteen in Halifax, *and her portrait captures two significant elements of emerging Canadian culture* – the value of females in the war enterprise, and the ethnicity of Canadians involved in the war. In later years Roy came to live with a relative in Cobourg and was a resident here at the time of her death in 1990.
- Frances Ferdinands has her art studio in the Hills of Northumberland. She has produced many allegorical paintings, including a number of works which are commentaries on war. *They challenge us to think about war in new ways.* The verse by Ernest Shurtleff concludes: *For not with swords' loud clashing, nor roll of stirring drums; but deeds of love and mercy the heavenly kingdom comes.*
- We have three pictures from the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. Each depicts the Central Square in the City of Mons, Belgium, at the end of World War II - two photographs and one painting. *They provide an opportunity to compare the story as told by paint, camera and word.*



NOVEMBER 11, 1918

This photograph is of the main square of the City of Mons, Belgium, taken on the 11th of November 1918, after the Armistice was declared. The soldiers are of the 42nd Battalion Royal Highlanders of Canada (Black Watch).

- Typical of all soldiers, they are taking their rest when they can
- The citizens also appear tired and watchful
- Note the Canadian Highlanders in their kilts. Look at their boots.
- Note the flags mounted on the building in the background. Is one of them a Japanese flag? Why?

Resting in Mons
George Metcalf Archival Collection
CWM 19930065-429



This is a photograph of General Currie taking the salute on that day. Note the officers and men saluting the colours.

Do they appear to be in any danger?

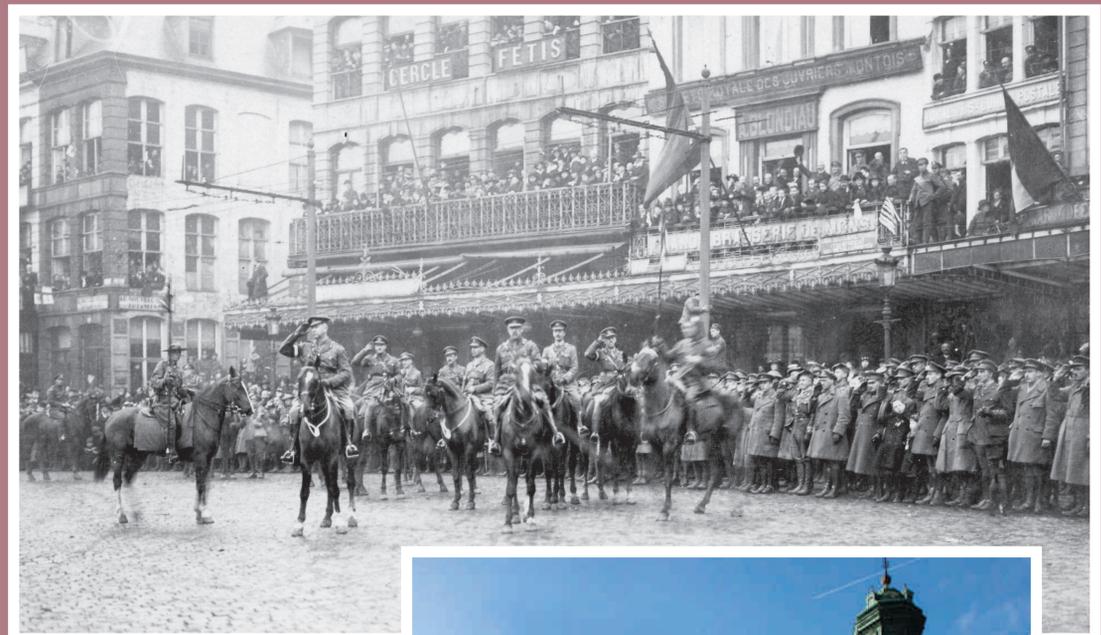
(Excerpt from the June 13, 1927 editorial of the Port Hope Evening Guide)

Headquarters Staff assembled in the centre of the town as the eleven o'clock signal sounded that the official armistice was effective from that hour. Along the route that they had carefully and with safety made their way to the centre of the town, passing the dead and dying and the wounded, victims of their madness. It was common talk among the soldiers that while the staff were congratulating themselves upon the great victory and enjoying the pride upon having 'fired the last shot in the Great War,' a sergeant advanced and whispered to one of the Staff that unless they withdrew immediately to a place of safety, they would not be allowed to leave the place alive, as the guns of the indignant Canadian soldiers were already trained on them. In less time than it takes to tell the story, Headquarters got into motors and were fleeing for their lives.

Does it look like Currie and others "...got into motors and were fleeing for their lives."?

Does this say anything about the state of the press of the time?

Do you think Currie was justified in suing for libel?



The Canadians in Mons
George Metcalf Archival Collection
CWM 19900076-637



Mons Square today
Background for soldiers photo at
top and Currie's photo above.



This is the official painting of the same scene by Inglis Harry Jodrel Sheldon-Williams from the Beaverbrook Collection of War Art.

- Note the uniforms of the officers and men and the presence of cavalry
- A dead German soldier is painted in as well.
- The civilians appear to be refugees with their belongings in tow.

This is an allegorical painting. What does that mean? Why is the painting so different from the photograph?