

Jean Crankshaw

OVER THERE:

in the footsteps of Canadians who served in
the Great War

A photographic journey

Catalogue of images with accompanying text
from the 2006 exhibition at
J.W. Bush Gallery
Hamilton

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**1. A patch of blue,
Sanctuary Wood Trench Museum**

\$375



10.5 x 16 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

A patch of blue, reflected in the mud of the trenches, might have been all that many a soldier would see of the sky during the hours of daylight, this being a very unsafe time to be abroad. Sanctuary Wood was so named because in October 1914 this was a relatively safe place for the men displaced by the actions who were gathered together here. Sanctuary Wood is 3 km east of Ieper, Belgium.

2. Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing

\$180



11 x 14 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

Tyne Cot Memorial is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders. It is the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world. Designed by Herbert Baker with sculpture by F.V. Blundstone, the Memorial is a semicircular flint wall faced with panels of Portland stone on which are carved the 35,000 names of those who have no known grave.

3. The road to the cemetery

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

In this image the old signs to several cemeteries can still be seen inside the Lille Gate. Situated within Ieper, most British troops entered (and left) the Ypres Salient through the Lille Gate as the Menin Gate was particularly exposed to enemy observation and therefore fire.

4. Stones and crosses, Langemark German Cemetery

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

This image is an example of a minimalist technique which I have developed, using certain filters in Adobe Photoshop.

The flat stones are the grave markers. Each grave contains more than one soldier, some of whom are unknown. The basalt-lava crosses are symbolic; they do not mark graves. The cemetery is located about 3km from the Canadian monument at Vancouver Corner (see images 5 and 20), in the village of Langemark, Belgium.

5. The Brooding Soldier

\$975



37 x 42 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on canvas

This image shows head and shoulders of 'The Brooding Soldier', the Canadian Memorial at Vancouver Corner which marks the battlefield where 18,000 Canadians on the British left withstood the first German gas attacks on the 22-24 April 1915. 2000 Canadians fell and lie buried nearby.

The designer of the imposing monument was a Regina architect, Frederick Chapman Clemesha, who was wounded while serving with the Canadian Corps during the war. The monument stands at a cross-road named 'Vancouver Corner' by soldiers during the war, near the village of St Juliaan in Belgium.

6. A trench in Sanctuary Wood

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

The preserved trenches in Sanctuary Wood give us a mere glimpse of what it must have been like to live in the filth and mud of Flanders. Even today these trenches are only completely traversable in the drier months. This image shows a section of the original British trenches which have been preserved as they were found after the war. Dugouts, shell holes and shattered trees are part of the landscape.

7. The artistry of war

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

This collection of highly polished artillery shell cases, decorated with peaceful symbols such as flowers and doves, lines the walls of the café at Hooge Crater Museum. These examples of Trench Art were handmade by soldiers in the trenches.

'Interestingly, for the British and Belgian soldiers, and possibly the French and Germans as well, empty artillery shell cases remained the property of the state, and were supposed to be collected into dumps and then re-filled in munitions factories for later re-use. Technically speaking, making Trench Art from these materials was illegal, and for

Every evening since 1928, at precisely eight o'clock, except during WW2 when Ieper was occupied by the Germans, the Last Post - the traditional salute to the fallen warrior - has been played under the Menin Gate Memorial in Ieper, Belgium. The Menin Gate Buglers are past and present members of Ieper Fire Brigade.

The three buglers in this image are (from left to right) Dirk Vandekerckhove, Antoine Verschoot MBE, senior bugler with 50 years service and Raf Decombel. After the ceremony I and my fellow travellers drank a tot of whiskey with the buglers under the Menin Gate.

10. The Menin Gate, Ieper

\$305



11.5 x 11.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

A view of the Menin Gate from outside the ramparts. The Menin Gate Memorial is located in Ieper, Belgium. The memorial was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield as a monument dedicated to the missing British and Commonwealth soldiers who were killed in the fierce battles around the Ypres Salient area and who have no known grave. The large "*Hall of Memory*" contains the names of 54,896 soldiers who died before August 15, 1917, incised into vast panels. The Menin Gate Memorial does not list the names of the missing of New Zealand and Newfoundland soldiers who are honoured on separate memorials.

The names of another 34,984 of those who died without graves in the area between August 16, 1917 and the end of the war, are recorded on plaques at the Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing (see image 2) located just outside the village of Passendaele (see image 28) which had been captured by Canadian troops at great human cost

11. The Cloth Hall, Ieper

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

Ypres (now called Ieper), once one of the great Flemish cloth towns, has at its centre the Grote Markt, dominated by the Cloth Hall, with its 70 metre high Belfry, which is the centre of the three towers in this image. Most of the building, along with most of Ypres, was destroyed during WWI but has since been rebuilt to its original form. The In Flanders Fields Museum, situated in the Cloth Hall, is a stark reminder of the series of events that took place during WWI.

12. Leaving Railway Wood

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

On my first visit to the battlefields in 2005 there was a light snowfall on the morning of April 9th as we left Ieper. We had a long day ahead of us, covering ground which would include the Battles of Mount Sorrel, 1916, Vimy Ridge, 9-12 April 1917 and Canal Du Nord 1918.

We took the track which skirts Railway Wood, heading towards the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Memorial at Westhoek. We stopped just past Railway Wood for me to get some photographs of the landscape. As I turned back to look at the wood, I saw a line of ghostly figures emerging from the wood, heads bowed.

'...the next day the battle abated with the Patricias having only four officers and one hundred and fifty men left. Their turn came to be relieved. Lt. Niven formed them up behind the trench and marched at the head of the column, carrying the colours, past Bellewaerde Lake, Railway Wood down to the Menin Road cheered by all the troops they passed...'

Howard Martin: <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/howard.martin/Bland.html>

13. Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Memorial, Westhoek

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

To create this image I have used a technique similar to that used in image 4.

The Patricias arrived in Ypres for the first time on 8th April 1915. At that time the area was still well away from the front line trenches and the town and villages were still intact and inhabited. Woods and copses dotted the landscape and the bright green leaves of spring lifted the men's spirits. They occupied trenches along the southern edge of Polygon Wood (see image 14).

Half a kilometre from Westhoek, along a narrow lane called Prinses Patriciastraat, stands the Memorial to the P.P.C.L.I. commemorating their stubborn defence of the Frezenberg Ridge in 1915. On a plaque are inscribed the words *"Here 8 May 1915 'the originals' of P.P.C.L.I. commanded by their founder Major A. Hamilton Gault DSO held firm, counted not the cost"*.

The trench line that marked the right flank of the P.P.C.L.I. where they joined the King's Royal Rifle Corps can still be seen, running from the memorial to wood in the distance. The wood at the end of the line from the memorial is Hooze Chateau Wood. Brigade headquarters were in Railway Wood (see image 12).

14. The Battlefield, 90 years on

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

This image shows farmland near Ieper, Belgium, with Polygon Wood in the far distance. On October 1, 1917 east of Polygon Wood Lieutenant-Colonel Philip Eric Bent collected and organised a group of men and led them forward to the counter-attack. Charging forward in front of his men, he inspired them by shouting, "Come on the Tigers!"

His actions won the day and secured the position, but during the charge he was cut down by enemy fire. For his actions he was awarded a posthumous VC. His name is on the Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing (see image 2). Philip Eric Bent was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia on January 3, 1891.

15. A long way from Newfoundland: Masnières caribou

\$180



14 x 11 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

On the busy main Cambrai road heading north out of Masnières stands one of the five bronze Caribou monuments erected in France and Belgium in memory of major actions fought by the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment. The Newfoundlanders as part of 88th Brigade, 29th Division, captured the village on November 20th 1917. The memorial marks their furthest advance.

The other four caribou are at Beaumont Hamel (see images 29 and 30), Gueudecourt, Monchy-le-Preux and Courtrai, the latter being the only caribou memorial in Belgium. A sixth caribou stands in St John's Newfoundland.

16. 109664: Shoeing Smith Corporal

\$180



11 x 14 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

ALBERT JAMES WEBB, with the Fort Garry Horse

17. Known and Unknown: Y Ravine Cemetery, Beaumont-Hamel

\$180



14 x 11 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

18. Keepers of the piece

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

In Vimy Memorial Park, beyond the rim of Winnipeg Crater (seen in the foreground) a flock of sheep is scattered among the contours of old shell holes and trenches. Signs warn tourists to stay on the path, as there are still unexploded munitions in the soil everywhere. The grass is trimmed by sheep, because it would be too dangerous to mow. Sheep are lost regularly due to the explosives being set off by their weight.

19. Vimy Ridge, April 9 2005

\$375



16 x 10.5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

The battle of Vimy Ridge, April 9th 1917 is one of the greatest battles in Canada's history. If you haven't yet done so, read Pierre Berton's *Vimy*.

The Canadian National Vimy Memorial was designed by Canadian architect and sculptor, Walter Seymour Allward of Toronto. The memorial is undergoing a major restoration project and is currently inaccessible to the public. It is planned that the work will be completed for the 90th anniversary of the battle in April 1917.

Lest we forget; it is important to remember for without our past we become nothing. This image dates from my first visit to Vimy in April 2005. I was on a reconnaissance journey to the battlefields of Belgium and France, taking photographs for a book project and was unaware that the memorial was under restoration until I arrived there. Therefore I was very frustrated not to have access to the memorial, other than through my zoom lens. Seen here is the back of the memorial and the green construction huts.

20. They fell in Flanders

\$375



10.5 x 16 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

This is a digital composition consisting of a blood red backcloth, names of Canadians from part of panel 10 of the Menin Gate (see image 10) and the Brooding Soldier (see image 5).

21. November 11th, 2005 1

\$250



7.25 x 10.25 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

22. Will ye go lassie go?

\$180



14 x 11 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

23. November 11th, 2005 3

\$180



14 x 11 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

24. November 11th, 2005 2

\$250



10.75 x 7.25 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

25. Overlooking the Ancre Valley, June 2006

\$95



(Unframed) 17 x 6 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

26. Bourslon Wood

\$95



(Unframed) 7 x 6 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

This is a panorama of two images. Bourslon Wood was captured during the Battle of Cambrai, November 23rd 1917.

27. Source Farm, Passendaele

\$95



(Unframed) 17 x 6 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

October 30th 1917: North of Furst Farm, Source Farm and Vapour Farm were positions key to the day's action but difficult to reinforce, isolated as they were by the swampy source of a stream. As commander of a company of the 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles, Major George Pearkes had been ordered to capture Vapour Farm and the outlying defences of Passchendaele. But just before the advance got underway, a piece of shrapnel struck him in the left thigh and knocked him down. He struggled to his feet and was able to drag himself forward. With some 50 troops, he reached the objective only to find that both flanks were dangerously exposed. The battalion on the left had failed to capture Source Farm and so his unit turned its attention to it and took it by storm. He seized and held the two farms against a series of counter-attacks, keeping the battalion headquarters informed of the situation by carrier pigeon. For his gallantry, he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

28. Passendaele Village

\$95



(Unframed) 17 x 6 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

During the Battle of Passchendaele 1917 nine Canadian's won the Victoria Cross, seven of them in or near the village of Passendaele (as it is now called).

They were: Robertson (in Passendaele village);
Barron, Holmes, Kinross, O'Kelly, Pearkes (see image 27) and Shankland (just outside the village);

McKenzie and Mullin at Meetscheele Spur overlooking the spot where Major Talbot Mercer Papineau MC, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (Eastern Ontario Regt.) died 30th October 1917, age 34. Papineau is commemorated on the Menin Gate (see images 9 and 10).

29. Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial Park

\$85



(Unframed) 10 x 8 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on premium semi gloss paper

Of the five memorials established in France and Belgium in memory of major actions fought by the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, the largest is the thirty hectare site at Beaumont-Hamel. This site commemorates all Newfoundlanders who fought in the Great War, particularly those who have no known grave. Near the entrance to the park on a mound, surrounded by rock and shrubs native to Newfoundland, there stands a great bronze caribou, the emblem of the Newfoundland Regiment.

This aerial view, taken in June from a helicopter, shows the whole of the memorial park (enclosed by trees) and the surrounding countryside from the northwest. Y-ravine and the German trenches are in the foreground; on the right surrounded by trees is Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery No. 2. Sheep, used to trim the grass, are clustered in the shade under the trees in the lighter field. The Danger Tree, caribou and visitor centre can be seen near the top of the treed area.

30. Front line trenches, Beaumont-Hamel

\$85



(Unframed) 10 x 8 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on premium semi gloss paper

This aerial view shows the caribou at the left and the Danger Tree at the right. The path goes from the caribou, along the main British Trench and across the British Front Line, the deep trench which crosses the path between the caribou and the Danger Tree. The trench just visible beyond the Danger Tree at the top right corner is Wellington Trench.

31. Shot at Dawn

\$85



(Unframed) 10 x 8 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on premium semi gloss paper

Come Laliberté was born on 24 March 1893 in Lotbinière (Quebec). During March 1915 he enlisted in the 41st Battalion, traveling with them to England in June 1915. During the summer of 1916 Laliberté left the ranks and refused to go forward. He was tried for desertion, found guilty and sentenced to death by shooting. On 4 August 1916, Laliberté (aged 26) was executed by firing squad. His remains are now located in Poperinghe New Military Cemetery.

During W.W. I, 23 Canadians were "shot at dawn". Twenty-three young Canadian men were executed for desertion.

"Those who go to war at the request of their nation do not know the fate that lies in store for them. This was a war of such overwhelming sound, fury and unrelenting horror that few combatants could remain unaffected," said Minister Duhamel. "While we cannot relive those awful years of a nation at peril in total war, and although the culture of that time is subsequently too distant for us to comprehend fully, we can give these 23 soldiers a dignity that is their due, and provide closure to their families."

The Honourable Ron J. Duhamel, Minister of Veterans Affairs, Dec. 11, 2001

32. The killing post

\$85



(Unframed) 10 x 8 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on premium semi gloss paper

The execution post exhibited in the courtyard of Poperinge Town Hall, with a quote by Rudyard Kipling.

33. Restoration: The Spirit of Canada, Vimy

\$85



(Unframed) 8 x 10 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on premium semi gloss paper

This figure of a weeping woman, The Spirit of Canada, at The Canadian National Vimy Memorial (see image 19) is under restoration.

34. In Memoriam

\$40



(Unframed) 7.5 x 5 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on premium semi gloss paper

35. Panel 32

\$85



(Unframed) 9.5 x 7 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

All of these men were in the Canadian Machine Gun Corps. They have no known graves. Their names are inscribed on Panel 32 of the Menin Gate

Private W.F LENZ, 9th Coy. Canadian Machine Gun Corps was a Hamilton Stelco worker before the war.

36. Answer the call: Beaumont-Hamel

\$85



(Unframed) 9.5 x 7 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

Call to arms, Visitor Centre, Beaumont-Hamel

37. Poppies of Flanders

\$85



(Unframed) 9.5 x 7 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

Photographed at Essex Farm where John McCrae wrote 'In Flanders Fields'. He was a Canadian physician and fought on the Western Front in 1914, but was then transferred to the medical corps and assigned to a hospital in France. He died of pneumonia while on active duty in 1918.

38. Visitors Book

\$85



(Unframed) 9.5 x 7 inches. Archival Giclée print, pigment inks on velvet fine art paper

Every Commonwealth War Graves cemetery and memorial in France and Belgium has a visitors' book in an alcove at the entrance. This one is at Crest Farm, Passendaele.

PLEASE NOTE:

The price quoted for images 1 – 24 includes a frame.
The price quoted for images 25 – 38 is for the unframed print.