**Major Canadian Battles of WWI**

1. **April 1915 - 2nd Battle of Ypres – Chemical Warfare**

**Objective** - defensive effort vs. Germany

* Germans use poisonous gas on Canadians at Ypres
* Canadians urinate on cloth to counteract the gas and hold off the Germans
* This battle helps to create Canada’s reputation of having amazing soldiers

1. **July-November 1916 – Battle of the Somme**

**Objective** – break through German defense lines in the Somme

* Major British invasion along the Western front
* 56,000 men die on the first day of fighting – massive waste of life
* Beaumont Hamel – Newfoundland regiment loses 720/811 that first morning
* British introduce the world to a new invention – the tank

**3. April 1917 – Vimy Ridge**

**Objective**: capture the German high ground at Vimy Ridge

**What Happened:**

* Canadians practiced the invasion in fields applying actual measurements
* Canadians dug holes underground to provide an element of surprise during the invasion
* Trench raids (55 in total) wherein Canadians invaded German trenches at night to kidnap the enemy, gain understanding of enemy lines
* Random and varied artillery barrage to keep Germans off-balanced – two week bombardment, Germans called it the “w
* eek of suffering”
* Canadians struggled to capture the entire ridge, but were in a strong position after the first day – by the 12th of April the entire ridge was in Canadian hands

**Aftermath**

* 3,598 killed and 7,004 wounded
* The German Sixth Army suffered an unknown number of casualties with an approximate 4,000 men becoming [prisoners of war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prisoners_of_war)
* France gave 250 acres of land to Canadians in honour of their efforts in WWI and specifically at Vimy
* Massive monument honours the dead Canadians at Vimy

**Canada becomes a country**

For the first time in our history, people around the world referred to the soldiers as “Canadians” instead of calling them British