



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM HISTORIC TRAIL



FIELD GUIDE



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
TRANSATLANTIC COUNCIL

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Field Guide contains information on the Flanders Field Historical Trail designed by Mr. Ross Vandry of Troop 230 in Stavanger, Norway as part of his Wood Badge ticket (NE-II187) in 2008. The guide is intended to be a starting point in your endeavor to learn about the history of the sites on the trail. Remember, this may be the only time your Scouts visit the Flanders Field area in their life so make it a great time!

While TAC tries to update these Field Guides when possible, it may be several years before the next revision. If you have comments or suggestions, please send them to Admin@tac-bsa.org or post them on the TAC Nation Facebook Group Page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/27951084309/>.

This guide can be printed as a 5½ x 4¼ inch pamphlet or read on a tablet or smart phone.



Front Cover: Poppy Fields in Flanders

Front Cover Inset: British Infantry walk on duck boards through the mud of Passchendaele.



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL

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GETTING PREPARED

Just like with any hike (or any activity in Scouting), the Historic Trail program starts with **Being Prepared**.

1. Review this Field Guide in detail.
2. Check local conditions and weather.
3. Study and Practice with the map and compass.
4. Pack rain gear and other weather-appropriate gear.
5. Take plenty of water.
6. Make sure socks and hiking shoes or boots fit correctly and are broken in.
7. Pack a first aid kit, "just in case."
8. Discuss the day's activities, so there are no surprises; discuss safe hiking.
9. Ensure Two-Deep Leadership at all times.
10. Check the Quick Quiz and keep it with you on the trail.



WHAT IS THE HISTORIC TRAIL?

Following the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) and into the early 1900's, a number of mutual defense agreements were made between the major powers in Europe. At the same time there was an increase in nationalism and imperialism by European countries as they tried to prove their dominance and strength. Although the causes for World War I are complex, it was these conditions that created the powder keg which was ignited by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914. The result was a war fought largely on the European continent that brought great human tragedy and introduced the concept of trench warfare.

The Transatlantic Council's Flanders Field World War I Historic Trail offers the opportunity to see one of the areas where trench warfare led to great destruction and the loss of life. Flanders Fields is the generic name for World War I battlefields around the city of Ypres, Belgium in the medieval County of Flanders. Ypres (Ieper in Flemish) was one of the main martyr towns of World War I. Shortly after the German invasion of Belgium, the front came to a standstill near this small town with devastating effects. Ypres was first shelled on October 7, 1914 and the last shells fell on the town on October 14, 1918. The battlefield was only a short distance from the center of the city during this period. The allied forces held a bulge of land into German held territory around the city called the Ypres Salient. Trenches ran from north to south in an arc around Ypres and a number of costly battles were fought in the area as allied troops held the area from German occupation. Estimates of casualties for British and Commonwealth forces resulting from the occupation and fighting around Ypres between 1914 and 1918 were in the region of 500,000 (dead, wounded and missing). During the four years of conflict all inhabitants were evacuated and the city was literally flattened. Resettlement did not occur until early 1919 and significant reconstruction began in 1921. Today the area has over 150 military cemeteries and numerous memorials, the most important being the Menin Gate in Ieper. Although America played only small part in the fighting around Ypres, this historic trail offers Scouts in the Transatlantic Council a chance to strengthen the strong international focus of scouting in Europe.

Goeije Reise! – Have a nice trip!



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
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HISTORIC TRAIL ROUTE

Hike

Where and How to Start

There are two trails you can take – one hiking and one biking! Both start in downtown Ypres (Ieper in Flemish) at the Grote Markt by the In Flanders Fields Museum in the Cloth Hall.

Distance and Time

The Ypres hike measures about 4 km in distance. Experienced adult hikers completed the route in about 1½ hours, stopping at each location to view the site. Younger and less-experienced hikers, and those who wish to take more time, will take longer, perhaps a 2 hours or more. Take the time to learn and enjoy the hike.

The Flanders Field Bike Route is about 32km with an optional 19km detour to visit several additional sites. Experienced bikers may finish this route in several hours but for most of us, this is an all day adventure. Just remember, the goal is the trail, not the finish.



Ruins of the Cloth Hall during WWI



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL

YPRES HIKING ROUTE

START – The Cloth Hall and Belfry

The **Cloth Hall** was one of the largest commercial buildings in the Middle Ages. Construction began about 1260 and the building was completed in 1304. Except for the lower portion of the belfry and a few pieces of wall of the west wing, the structure was completely destroyed during the First World War. The building was carefully reconstructed to its pre-war condition between 1933 and 1967. The Cloth Hall is 125 m wide and the belfry tower rises 70 m. high. The present spire with its helmet and dragon (1692) is an exact copy of the pre-war spire.

The In Flanders Fields Museum is located in the restored first floor of the Cloth Hall. The museum is interactive and takes you back to the Great War of 1914-1918. You are given the chance to experience the history first hand as a soldier or a nurse, as an inhabitant of Ypres or as a refugee. Exhibits include historical artifacts, suggestive sound and light evocations, documentary films and models which bear witness to the destruction of a whole region, the atrocities the war brought about and the hope and resurrection of Ypres.

Entrance fees for the museum as of January 2018 are:

Adult: 9€ Age 18-24: 5€ Age 7-17: 4€ Age <7: Free

Museum Hours:

1 April-15 November: 10.00-18.00

16 November-31 March: 10.00-17.00

Closed for several weeks following Christmas break each year

You are encouraged to check for updates and/or make a reservation on-line at the museum website: www.inflandersfields.be/en.

50°51'03.7"N 2°53'07.8"E – Grote Markt 34, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

Head east on Grote Markt until it becomes Menenstratt and continue until you arrive at the Menen Gate.



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YPRES HIKING ROUTE

Checkpoint #2 – Menin Gate

The **Menin Gate Memorial** was opened in 1927 in memory of the missing British and Commonwealth soldiers (except New Zealand and Newfoundland) who were killed in the battles in the Ypres Salient during World War I between 1914 and August 15, 1917, but whose grave sites are unknown. The monument bears the names of 54,896 soldiers. Those killed after August 15, 1917 are recognized at the Tyne Cot British Cemetery.

Every evening at 8:00 pm since 1928 the Last Post is sounded by buglers from the local fire brigade. This ceremony was stopped during German occupation during World War II but resumed on September 6, 1944 – the day Ypres was liberated. Last Post Ceremony information can be found at the Last Post Association website at www.lastpost.be. This includes a Book of Honor to add comments and a form to request participation in the Last Post Ceremony.

The Australian Memorial was erected in 1993 next to the Menin Gate in memory of the 43,000 Australians that fell in the Ypres Salient during World War I.

50°51'07.3"N 2°53'27.6"E – Menenstraat, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

Head south through the park keeping the canal on your left.

Checkpoint #3 – Ramparts and Casemates

Ypres has been surrounded by **ramparts** from 1100 onwards. The present rampart structures date back to French construction in 1678. The ramparts were originally a clay wall with fortified gates, then with moats, walls, corner towers and underground vaults. Later on, the bastion system was adapted. In the First World War, the arches withstood the fiercest shelling. During the war shelters were dug into the ramparts to house large numbers of resting soldiers and other rear line units. In these covered halls, corridors and bunkers, there was provision for sleeping quarters, headquarters, and hospitals. (continued on next page)



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HISTORIC TRAIL

YPRES HIKING ROUTE

Checkpoint #3 – Ramparts and Casemates (cont.)

50°51'01.7"N 2°53'29.2"E – just east of Bollingstraat 1, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

Continue south through the park and then turn right and head towards your next stop, St Jacobs Church.

Checkpoint #4 – St Jacob's Church

The original **church** was built in the 12th century on the site of an earlier chapel. It was rebuilt as a Gothic hall church in 14-15th centuries and the tower added in 1634. The church was badly damaged during the 16th century iconoclastic fury, confiscated by France in 1798 and re-consecrated in 1802. The present day tower with louver holes and a stone spire was reconstructed after WWI.

50°51'00.9"N 2°53'25.4"E – Gezelleplein 9, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

After leaving the church, head back to the park along the canal and continue south. Eventually the path will curve west and stop at your next point, the Lille Gate.

Checkpoint #5 – Lille Gate

The oldest **city gate** in Ypres, it has three round bastions which are the remains of the Burgundian fortifications dating back to 1395. The Lille Gate is one of several entrances into the old fortified city. The original gateway to Lille, or Rijsel as it is called in Flemish, is the only one that survived the bombardment in the First World War and so has been preserved in its historic state after numerous alterations and reconstructions over the centuries.

50°50'39.8"N 2°53'25.0"E – Rijselstraat 208, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

About 50m after you cross over the gate, you will come to the Ramparts Cemetery, your next stop.



YPRES HIKING ROUTE

Checkpoint #6 – Ramparts Commonwealth Cemetery

This **small cemetery** is the only Commonwealth Graves Commission burial ground within the ancient walls of Ieper. The cemetery was begun in November 1914 by French troops defending the city and was used by Commonwealth troops from February 1915 until April 1918, by which time the Western Front had moved away from Ypres.

The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield who was also responsible for the nearby Menin Gate memorial. Located along the ramparts just to the west of the Lille Gate, this cemetery holds the remains of 198 Commonwealth soldiers from England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, New Zealand and Australia who died at different times during the fighting around the Ypres Salient. These include the graves of six New Zealand troops killed simultaneously by the same shell and symbolically grouped together in plot B-1-6.

50°50'40.7"N 2°53'21.4"E – Just south of Kanonweg 19-1, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

Now continue west along the path about 80 meters and look to the left for your next stop, one of the medieval towers.

Checkpoint #7 – Medieval Towers

The **Predikherentoren (Dominican's Tower)** was a part of a Burgundian rampart of the 14th century. This corner tower derives its name from the monastery ground of the Dominicans or Friars Preachers located nearby in the city. In the French period the tower was lowered and rebuilt as a shooting platform. In front of the tower in the wide Majoorchacht (Main Moat), a triangular island served as an advance fortification.

The **Lion's Tower** owes its name to its sturdiness: the walls are 2.40 meters thick. A brickwork tunnel passage or postern through the earth wall connects the tower to the inner city. This fortification tower was also lowered by Vauban and protected against artillery firing by means of an island. The narrow medieval arrow loops were later converted into a cannon hole. (continued on next page)



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Checkpoint #7 – Medieval Towers (cont.)

Both the Lion and Dominican Towers would have been extremely important parts of the medieval ramparts that protected the old city. It is thought that the towers date from around 1383, but it was not until the mid 1980's that they were both discovered again, buried and a long way from the public view for many centuries. They are well worth a close look at if you get the chance.

Lion's Tower – 50°50'39.6"N 2°53'15.0"E – Majoorgracht, 8900 Ieper

Dominican's Tower – 50°50'41.5"N 2°53'02.4"E – Majoorgracht, 8900 Ieper

After stopping at the Lion's Tower, continue northwest along the path. You can follow it about for about 300m to the Dominican Tower or make a right about halfway and head to Wateringsstraat. Once there, make a left and follow the road (it becomes Arsenaalstraat, then De Monststraat) and make a right on Seminairiestraat. Make the first left on Vismarkt to your next stop.

Checkpoint #8 – Old Fish Market

You'll first encounter The Fishermen's House was a toll house, a small, beautiful building with a baroque façade from 1689. Within the market area itself you will see two covered stone counters. After you pass through the market and reaching the next street look back towards the **Old Fish Market** at the bas-relief facade showing a statue of Neptune, king of the seas, and two other statues representing the two rivers Scheldt and Leie that flow through Ghent, the capital of the East Flanders province.

50°50'59.6"N 2°53'02.0"E – Vismarkt, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

Continue north and make a left on Boterstraat, then a right on Lange Meesstraat. At the end, make a left on Kortemeersstraat, then an immediate right on Herejanstraat and finally a right on Elverdingestraat. The next stop will be St George's Church on your right.



YPRES HIKING ROUTE

Checkpoint #9 – St George's Memorial Church

Saint George's Memorial Church was built to commemorate over 500,000 British and Commonwealth troops, who had died in the three battles fought for the Ypres Salient, during World War I. It was completed in 1929.

The church was built following an appeal led by The Ypres League and its President Field Marshal Sir John French, Earl of Ypres, for a British memorial church to be built. Land was given by the town, and the foundation stone was laid on 24 July 1927. The church was consecrated on 24 March 1929. The church is part of the Diocese in Europe of the Church of England and is also a Belgian national monument. The church is open every day from 9:30 am until dusk (4 pm in winter).

The church has many plaques and memorials to regiments, associations and individuals.

50°51'08.2"N 2°52'59.0"E – Elverdingsestraat 1, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

After leaving, head east toward the St Martin's Cathedral.

Checkpoint #10 – St Martin's Cathedral

The original **St. Martin's Cathedral** was begun in 1221, but its tower was not completed until 1434. The destruction of the cathedral during the Great War was widely reported and used for propaganda purposes. Today what remains of the shelled ruins can be seen at the side of the reconstructed cathedral. The ruins lie in an area called the "lapidarium" and include large pieces of masonry left as physical reminders of the destruction of what was described by Ypres historian Vernon de Deyne in 1918 as "one of the most important religious monuments of its period". Spread all over the interior of the cathedral are decorations from different times which survived the destruction.

(continued on next page)



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YPRES HIKING ROUTE

Checkpoint #10 – St Martin's Cathedral (cont.)

50°51'07.1"N 2°53'06.0"E – Sint-Maartensplein, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

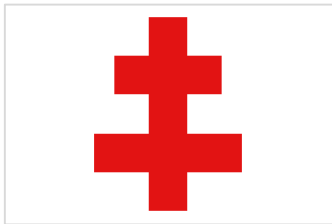
Just to the northeast of the cathedral is the next stop, the Munster War Memorial.

Checkpoint #11 – Munster War Memorial

Located on the side of the St. Martin's Cathedral, this **Celtic cross** was erected as a memorial by the people of Munster, Ireland to the soldiers from that area that died in the Ypres Salient.

50°51'08.0"N 2°53'07.3"E – Sint-Maartensplein, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

Head south to the Cloth Hall and you are now back where you started. Congratulations, you have now completed the Historic Trail around the town of Ypres. Now go enjoy some of the restaurants around the Grote Markt!



Flag of Ypres



WEST FLANDERS CYCLING ROUTE

Start – The Cloth Hall and Belfry

The **Cloth Hall** was one of the largest commercial buildings in the Middle Ages. Construction began about 1260 and the building was completed in 1304. Except for the lower portion of the belfry and a few pieces of wall of the west wing, the structure was completely destroyed during the First World War. The building was carefully reconstructed to its pre-war condition between 1933 and 1967. The Cloth Hall is 125 m wide and the belfry tower rises 70 m. high. The present spire with its helmet and dragon (1692) is an exact copy of the pre-war spire.

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50°51'03.7"N 2°53'07.8"E – Grote Markt 34, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

(continued on next page)



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL

WEST FLANDERS CYCLING ROUTE

Start – The Cloth Hall and Belfry

Cycling Directions: Starting from the Grote Markt follow the road going north to the right of the Cloth Hall (Dikmuidsestraat) to the north, After you will pass over a smaller canal on the along the way, turn left on Polenlaan and when you reach the canal, stay on the left side. Follow along the left side of the canal along where you will then find the well marked bike path. Shortly after passing under the N38 you will see a marker for the Essex Farm Road on the left.

Checkpoint #1 – Essex Farm Cemetery

The **Essex Farm Cemetery** contains 1,199 burials including that of Rifleman Valentine Joe Strudwick of the 8th Battalion who died on January 14th 1916 aged 15 – one of the youngest fatalities in the British Army in World War I. The site was an advanced aid station from April 1915 until August 1917. It was here that Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae (1872-1918), a surgeon attached to the 1st Field Artillery Brigade in the Canadian Army, wrote the poem "In Flanders Fields" which remains to this day one of the most memorable war poems ever written. McCrae wrote the poem after treating wounded soldiers for seventeen days in the Ypres Salient during the 2nd Battle of Ypres. He was particularly moved by the death of a young friend and former student Lieutenant Alexis Helmer from Ottawa who was killed by a shell burst on May 2, 1915. The poem was written by McCrae as he sat on the back of an ambulance at the aid station. In the nearby field he could see the wild poppies that appeared in the ditches. It is a lasting legacy of the terrible battle in the Ypres Salient in the spring of 1915. See the back cover for a copy of the poem.

50°52'17.6"N 2°52'23.0"E – Mccraepad, 8900 Ieper, Belgium

Cycling Directions: From Essex Farm Cemetery continue to follow the bike path to the bike/pedestrian crossing just past the industrial area on the opposite side of the canal. Follow this path all the way to Langemark. After passing the old train station and getting to the edge of town look to the left for the oak trees that were planted in the Langemark German Cemetery. Follow the road to the left to reach the cemetery.



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WEST FLANDERS CYCLING ROUTE

Checkpoint #2 – Langemark German Cemetery

44,061 German soldiers are buried here under the oak trees, a constant in most German Military cemeteries as a representation of strength. Unlike the Commonwealth cemeteries, **Langemark** has a number of mass graves. As you enter the cemetery you are confronted by a mass grave of 24,917 men whose names are inscribed on the blocks around it. In the older part of the cemetery the graves are marked by granite plaques bearing up to 20 names. The graves are watched over by the statues of four of their comrades designed by Emil Krieger in 1956.

50°55'11.5"N 2°55'01.6"E – Klerkenstraat 64, 8920 Poelkapelle, Belgium

Cycling Directions: When leaving Langemark German Cemetery follow the road to the left back into Langemark and continue straight through the town. Follow the road (Zonnebekestraat) to the N313. At this intersection you will be able to see the Canadian Memorial to your right.

Checkpoint #3 – Canadian Memorial at St Julien

The **Canadian Memorial at St. Julien**, also known as “The Brooding Soldier” was unveiled on July 8, 1923. The impressive granite monument rises nearly 11m above a garden of cedars trimmed into the shape of artillery shells. It is dedicated to the Canadian soldiers who died in the German gas attacks during the 2nd Battle of Ypres. The inscription on the monument reads:

THIS COLUMN MARKS THE BATTLEFIELD WHERE 18,000 CANADIANS ON THE
BRITISH LEFT WITHSTOOD THE FIRST GERMAN GAS ATTACKS THE 22ND-24TH
OF APRIL 1915. 2,000 FELL AND HERE LIE BURIED

50°53'58.8"N 2°56'24.7"E – Brugseweg, 8920 Langemark-Poelkapelle, Belgium

Cycling Directions: Go left when coming out of the Canadian Memorial then take the next two lefts until you are going east along the backside of the Canadian Memorial toward the old windmill. Stay to the right as you pass the windmill and follow O-L-Vrouwstraat which will lead you to the New Zealand Memorial.



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Checkpoint #4 – New Zealand Memorial

Tasked with the capture of the village of Gravenstafel during the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) New Zealand forces attacked on 4 October 1917. In spite of heavy resistance the New Zealanders made good progress and secured their objectives by the end of the first day, including the capture of Gravenstafel. 845 New Zealanders died during the battle, New Zealand's most tragic event. To commemorate the New Zealand victory a **monument** was erected in the village of Zonnebeke. Inscribed on the monument in English, French and Flemish is the following text:

"IN HONOUR OF THE MEN OF THE NEW ZEALAND DIVISION. THE BATTLE OF BROODSEINDE, 4TH OF OCTOBER 1917. THIS MONUMENT MARKS THE SITE OF GRAVENSTAFEL, WHICH ON 4TH OCTOBER, 1917, WAS CAPTURED BY THE NEW ZEALAND DIVISION AS PART OF A GENERAL ADVANCE TOWARDS PASSCHENDAELE."

50°53'26.6"N 2°58'45.0"E – Keerzelaarstraat, 8980 Zonnebeke, Belgium

Cycling Directions: From the New Zealand Memorial go left (southeast) on Graventafelstraat and take the first road to the right (Tynecotstraat)

Note: Signpost is visible only from the opposite direction! This one lane road will lead you directly to Tyne Cot Cemetery.

Checkpoint #5 – Tyne Cot Commonwealth Cemetery

Tyne Cot Cemetery is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world. It resides in an area fought over during the 3rd Battle of Ypres (or the Battle of Passchendaele) in 1917. The original cemetery was small with some 300 graves. Between 1919 and 1921 almost 12,000 dead were brought to Tyne Cot from surrounding battlefields. The cemetery was inaugurated in 1927 and is maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. (continued on next page)



WEST FLANDERS CYCLING ROUTE

Checkpoint #5 – Tyne Cot Commonwealth Cemetery (cont.)

The stone wall surrounding the cemetery makes up the Memorial to the Missing and bears the names of nearly 35,000 British and New Zealand soldiers who fell after August 16, 1917 – a continuation of the names inscribed on the Menin Gate. The Cross of Sacrifice was built on top of a German pill box in the center of the cemetery, purportedly at the suggestion of King George V of England.

50°53'13.6"N 3°00'03.2"E – Vijfwegestraat, 8980 Zonnebeke, Belgium

Cycling Directions: When coming out of the Tyne Cot Cemetery main entrance turn left and follow the road to Vijfwegenstraat where you will go left and then jiggling to the left onto Albertstraat and left again onto Maagdestraat. Follow the signs in Zonnebeke to the museum.

Checkpoint #6 – Memorial Museum of Passchendaele

A small but excellent **museum** reflecting on the British attack in 1917 that lasted 100 days for a gain of only five miles at the cost of 500,000 casualties. There are several diorama's including a remake of a British bunker network with communication and dressing post, headquarters, workplaces and dormitories. Information panels are in multiple languages and quite useful.

50°52'14.3"N 2°59'17.6"E – Berten Pilstraat 5a, 8980 Zonnebeke, Belgium

At this point, you have completed the main cycle route and can either ride back to Ypres or your hotel/campsite or continue on the optional portion of the cycling route.

Cycling Directions: After leaving the park in front of the museum, make a left on Berten Pilstraat and then a right on Grote Molenstraat. Follow for about 200m and then turn left on Citernestraat. Follow this road continuing to a short hairpin turn (right then left on Lange Dreve) shortly after which you will arrive at Polygon Wood (on the right) and Buttes New British (on the left) cemeteries.



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Checkpoint #7 – Polygon Wood & Buttes New British Commonwealth Cemeteries

Polygon Wood was totally destroyed during World War I. Within the wood there are two cemeteries, **Polygon Wood and Buttes New British**. Polygon Wood Cemetery was made at the close of the Third Battle of Ypres and contains 103 Commonwealth burials (17 unknowns) and one German grave. The Buttes New British Cemetery was created after the war and contains 2,108 burials. Because the graves were moved after the war 1,677 are unidentified. There are also two significant memorials in this cemetery: the New Zealand Memorial to the Missing which contains the names of 378 New Zealanders “who fell in the Polygon Wood Sector September 1917 to May 1918 and whose graves are known only to God” and the Australian Memorial on a butte in Polygon Wood commemorating the Fifth Australian Division.

50°51'25.1"N 2°59'26.7"E – Lange Dreve, 8980 Zonnebeke, Belgium

Cycling Directions: *Continuing west along Lange Dreve to the end of the forest area and turn right onto Lotegatstraat. When you come to a fork with three options go left on Grote Molenstraat. Follow this road nearly three kilometers (the name will change to Oude Kortrijkstraat along the way) to a small wood and bear left on Begijnenbosstraat which you will follow to the N8 (a major road). Turn left then take the first right which will be Canadalaan. Follow Canadalaan to Sanctuary Wood Cemetery.*

Checkpoint #8 – Sanctuary Wood Cemetery

The **Sanctuary Wood** site has a museum and rather extensive trenches that give a good idea of what it might have been like in the Ypres Salient. The area got its name during the First Battle of Ypres in 1914 when soldiers separated from their units came to this wood as a sanctuary from the fighting before rejoining their units.

(continued on next page)



WEST FLANDERS CYCLING ROUTE

Checkpoint #8 – Sanctuary Wood Cemetery (cont.)

The **cemetery** is located about 100m down the road from the museum. There were originally three cemeteries in Sanctuary Wood but all were severely damaged during the Battle of Mount Sorrel in 1916 – two were never found. The current cemetery was begun in June 1916 and includes graves concentrated from 18 other sites after the war. Approximately 60% of the burials are unknown soldiers.

50°50'18.0"N 2°56'39.8"E – Canadalaan 26, 8902 Ieper, Belgium

Shortly beyond the cemetery is a small coffee shop and museum where you can see the trenches. Continue beyond the museum to the end of the road and take the cycle path to the left which will lead you to the Hill 62 Monument. From the Hill 62 monument follow the path southeast until you reach Pappotstraat and follow this to the right. Continue to the next T intersection and turn right – there will be two roads, you should follow the smaller road on the left and bear left when this road ends. Shortly after crossing the railroad tracks you will reach the 14th Light Division Memorial, Hill 60 Monument and Caterpillar Crater.

Checkpoint #9 – Hill 60 and Caterpillar Crater

The site of numerous battles throughout the war, the **Hill 60** was heavily shelled and mined by both sides of the conflict. Much of the fighting here was underground as the Germans were well aware of the British attempts to dig mines under Hill 60 and in response dug their own exploratory tunnels. **Caterpillar crater** is the site of one of the mines detonated during the Battle of Messines. A memorial to the 1st Australian Tunneling Company at the site bears damage from battles during World War II.

50°49'20.7"N 2°55'41.8"E – Zwarteleenstraat 75, 8902 Ieper, Belgium

Continue west until you reach the intersection with Komenseweg and follow this road to the right. Railway Dugout Burial Grounds will be on your left approximately 2.5 km further along.



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WEST FLANDERS CYCLING ROUTE

Checkpoint #10 – Railway Dugouts Burial Grounds

Railway Dugouts Burial Grounds sits on an embankment overlooking a site known as Transport Farm. Burials began in April, 1915 with larger numbers occurring in 1916 and 1917 when Advanced Dressing Stations were located in the dugouts and on the farm. Many gravesites were obliterated by shell fire during the war before they could be marked. After the war, graves were brought in from battlefields and smaller cemeteries raising the number of burials from 1,705 known and marked graves to nearly 2,500. Over 400 are unknown and 261 others are represented by special memorials including soldiers buried in the Valley Cottages Cemetery in Zillebeke which was destroyed during the war and all of the graves and bodies lost. The present cemetery is enclosed by a rubble wall and pond.

50°50'06.2"N 2°54'09.0"E – Komenseweg, 8902 Ieper, Belgium

You have now completed the optional cycle route and can either ride back to Ypres or your hotel/campsite!



Flag of West Flanders



OTHER SITES

Optional Checkpoint #1 – Flanders American Cemetery

The **Flanders Field American Cemetery and Memorial** in Belgium occupies a 6.2-acre site (the smallest permanent American military cemetery in Europe). Masses of graceful trees and shrubbery frame the burial area and screen it from passing traffic. At the ends of the paths leading to three of the corners of the cemetery are circular retreats, with benches and urns. At this peaceful site rest 368 of our military dead, most of whom gave their lives in liberating the soil of Belgium in World War I. These soldiers are from the four American divisions that fought in the Ypres area in October-November, 1918: 27th, 30th, 37th and 91st. Their headstones are aligned in four symmetrical areas around the white stone chapel that stands in the center of the cemetery.

A Memorial Chapel made of white Pouillenay stone sits in the center of the site. The altar inside the chapel is made of black and white Grand Antique marble with draped flags on each side; above it is a crusader's sword outlined in gold. The chapel furniture is made of carved oak, stained black with white veining to harmonize with the altar; 43 names are inscribed on the Walls of the Missing. On three of the outer walls there is the inscription in French, Flemish and English:

THIS CHAPEL HAS BEEN ERECTED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN MEMORY OF HER SOLDIERS WHO FOUGHT AND DIED IN BELGIUM DURING THE WORLD WAR. THESE GRAVES ARE THE PERMANENT AND VISIBLE SYMBOL OF THE HEROIC DEVOTION WITH WHICH THEY GAVE THEIR LIVES TO THE COMMON CAUSE OF HUMANITY.

Beneath the three inscriptions there are sculptured bas-relief figures meant to symbolizing Grief, Remembrance and History respectively. More Information can be found at www.abmc.gov.

50°52'25.0"N 3°27'07.8"E – Wortegemseweg 117, 8790 Waregem



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL

OTHER SITES

Optional Checkpoint #2 – Bayernwald (German Trenches)

This site has a whole system of restored **German trenches** including four bunkers. The site is further enhanced with information panels, with clear text and many wartime photographs. Adolf Hitler served here as a runner from 1914-15 and received the Iron Cross.

All visits are arranged from the Heuvelland (Kemmel) Tourist Information Office where you will be given an access code to enter the site.

50°48'04.4"N 2°52'34.7"E – Voormezelestraat, 8950 Heuvelland, Belgium

Kemmel village can be found about six miles south-west of Ypres. From the tourist information center, return to the roundabout and turn left onto N331 heading back towards Ypres. Continue past La Laiterie Cemetery (on the left), and then past a Demarcation stone and the Kemmel American Monument on the right. After the American monument take the next right turn, just after a large two-tone building on the left with the word "PREFAB" printed on it. There is a signpost here as well.



OTHER SITES

Optional Checkpoint #3 – Lone Tree Cemetery and Pool of Peace

At the start of the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917, 19 mines were detonated underneath the German lines at Messines. Most of the craters created from these mines are now gone, but Spanbroekmolen (the largest) has been preserved as a memorial and called “The Pool of Peace”. Adjacent to the **Pool of Peace** is the Lone Tree Cemetery. This is one of 19 cemeteries that which were made shortly after the start of the Battle of Messines in June, 1917. The **Lone Tree Cemetery** has 88 burials (9 unknown) and most internments are of soldiers who died in the offensive.

50°48'04.4"N 2°52'34.7"E – Voormezelestraat, 8950 Heuvelland, Belgium

Lone Tree Cemetery (Spanbroekmolen) is located 8.5 kilometers south of Ieper town center, on a road leading from the Rijselseweg, N365, which connects Ieper to Wijtschate and on to Armentieres.



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL

OPTIONAL SITES MAP



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



11



8



9

YPRES HIKE

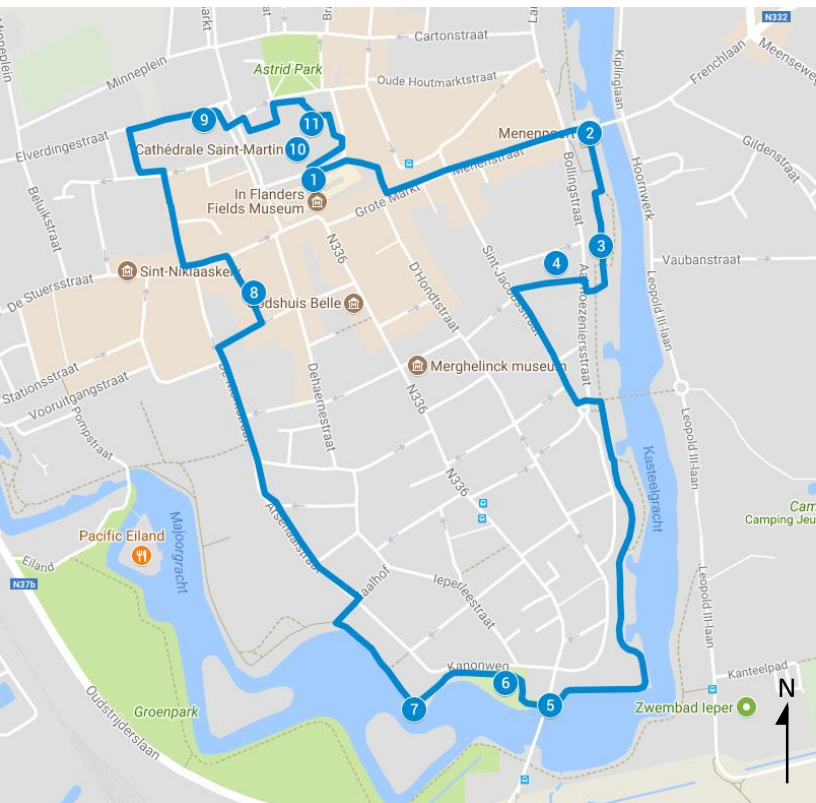


10



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL

YPRES HIKE ROUTE MAP



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



7



8



9

WEST FLANDERS BIKE ROUTE



10



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL

CYCLING ROUTE MAP



FLANDERS FIELD, BELGIUM
HISTORIC TRAIL

BACKGROUND READINGS

This should be read by all Scouts and Scouters before visiting the Ypres area and completing the historic trail. This is by necessity only a brief summary of the key events around the Ypres area during World War I. For further details you are encouraged to read further from the many sources available such as books and the internet.

INTRODUCTION: Following France's defeat and the loss of Alsace and Lorraine to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), the major powers of Europe had been preparing for the next major conflict. France was in an alliance with Russia against Germany's alliance with Austria-Hungary and Italy. As a result, Germany recognized that any future war with France would have to be fought on two fronts: with France to the west and Russia to the east.

On June 28, 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated by a Serbian student named Gavrilo Princip. Austro-Hungary demanded action by Serbia to punish the groups believed responsible. When Austria-Hungary deemed that Serbia had not complied, they declared war on Serbia. Due to the alliances existing at the time this conflict then quickly escalated to into a full scale war.

THE SCHLIEFFEN PLAN: The Schlieffen Plan, named after its chief architect Count Alfred Graf von Schlieffen (shown to the right), was the Germany strategy to quickly knock France out of any conflict before the enormous Russian army could be mobilized. To accomplish this Schlieffen proposed committing the bulk of the German armies to a sweeping attack through neutral Belgium to outflank the French armies. This would allow Germany forces to pass through the Flanders plains which offered the fastest route to France and to attack the rear of the French armies where they would be the weakest. The plan called for the defeat of France within six weeks followed by the redeployment of German troops to the Eastern Front to defend against advancement of Russian forces.



BACKGROUND READINGS

INITIAL CONFLICTS AND THE RACE TO THE SEA: Immediately after declaring war, Germany invaded Belgium and France following the Schlieffen Plan. During the first month of the war Germany secured a number of victories and was pushing retreating allied troops towards Paris. As the German 1st and 2nd armies approached Paris they began sweeping to the south-east in an attempt to encircle the French army. The allies recognized that this left the German right flank open and vulnerable. The allied counterattack into the German flank was called the Battle of the Marne and it resulted in a German retreat of 65 km to the River Aisne on September 9-13, 1914. The area around the River Aisne offered a strategic advantage to the Germans and they dug trenches and prepare to repel further allied advances. The allies made a number of attempts to cross the Aisne River during the Battle of the Aisne from September 13-28, 1914, but were unsuccessful. Both sides refused to retreat and began digging defensive trenches. The Battle of the Marne and the Battle of the Aisne marked the abandonment of the Schlieffen Plan and the start of trench warfare that would last for the next four years with little significant movement of the front lines.

With advancement stopped near Paris, the Germans attempted to push around the allied forces farther to the north in what become known as the "Race to the Sea". This marked the first fighting in the Ypres area with two key battles taking place in October-November, 1914: the Battle of the Yser and the 1st Battle of Ypres. Allied successes in stopping Germany advancement in these two battles marked the end of the Race to the Sea and the ultimate trench warfare that would last most of the rest of the war.

THE BATTLE OF THE YSER (OCTOBER 16-31, 1914): As Germany tried to maneuver around the allies and capture key Belgian seaports at Calais, Boulogne and Dunkirk; the entire Belgian army was sent to defend the front. The initial fighting started at Diksmuide on October 16, 1914 where Belgian forces backed by French marines fought off a limited thrust by the Germans. The main German offensive then began on October 18 and after four days of fighting they had reached the River Yser. German forces established a small bridgehead across the Yser and shelled Diksmuide heavily, but the city did not fall.



BACKGROUND READINGS

With pressure building on the Belgian army the decision was made on October 25th to open the Nieuwpoort drainage canals to the sea and flood the low-lying marshlands. Diksmuide finally fell to the Germans on October 29th, but faced with French and Belgian counter-attacks and with movement hindered by the flooding further German attacks were called off and the front stabilized.

The Battle of Yser was important for several reasons. First, it marked the loss by the Germans in the Race for the Sea. Secondly, the Germans were unable to defeat the Belgian army. Finally, due to the flooding, it meant the remaining fighting would be done in the Flanders Fields area around Ypres before the entire frontline would settle into a stalemate of trench warfare.

THE 1ST BATTLE OF YPRES (OCTOBER 19 – NOVEMBER 22, 1914): The 1st Battle of Ypres, along with the Battle of Yser, marked the end of the Race to the Sea. It was the last major battle in 1914 and was actually a series of battles around the Ypres area:

- Battle of Langemarck – October 21-24
- Battle of Gheluvelt – October 29-31
- Battle of Nonne Bosschen – November 11

The Germans call the battle “The Massacre of the Innocents of Ypres” because during the fighting eight German units consisting of young volunteers, mostly enthusiastic but untrained student, were decimated during a failed attack on a highly experienced British Expeditionary Force (BEF). The battle officially began on October 19th when the British and French troops preparing for an attack on Menin were suddenly attacked by German troops who initiated contact from the Yser down to Ypres. Allied units were forced to pull back to Ypres.

THE BATTLE OF LANGEMARCK: Langemarck is a small village to the northeast of Ypres. British forces under Sir John French launched an attack on the Germans and made some initial progress but stalled in their advance as they encountered a much larger German force than expected.



BACKGROUND READINGS

The next day the Germans launched a counterattack that forced back British forces. The following day the Germans repulsed a French counterattack.

THE BATTLE OF GHELUVELT: The Germans tried to break the British line in the area between Plogesteert Wood and Gheluvelt. An initial attack on October 29 captured a key crossroad near Gheluvelt and the main German attack was launched on October 30. The British line was partially breached and Gheluvelt captured by the Germans. With the frontline close to collapse the British fell back to the outskirts of Ypres. The frontline was restored however due to a brave counterattack by a small number of men from the 2nd Worcesters who were able to drive the Germans back east Gheluvelt, but the Germans continued to hold the high ground of the Messines Ridge.

THE BATTLE OF NONNE BOSSCHEN: The last major thrust by the German army against the British line occurred on November 11, 1914 near Nonne Bosschen (Nuns" Woods) just north of Menin Road and only four miles from Ypres itself as the Germans attempted to capture the town of Hooge. Despite initial success, the German effort stalled and the British were able to assemble a group of soldiers who stopped the advance and eventually forced the German units back to their lines. At the end of the 1st Battle of Ypres, the allied forces held an area of land around Ypres that projected into the German held territory which become known as the Ypres Salient. The Germans held the high ridges looking down on the shallow trenches of the allies. The cost had been high. The British Expeditionary Force which had numbered 160,000 and been the only true pre-war professional army for the Allies had suffered 86,237 casualties. The French lost around 50,000 and the Germans also suffered a tremendous number of casualties.

Although minor fighting continued until late November, the start of the winter season forced both sides to stop any new significant offensive attacks. Over the next four years numerous attacks and counter-attacks would occur with a great loss of life but little movement in the Salient frontlines until the final allied push in late 1918. As winter fell in 1914 the ground war was now a stalemate as Allied and German armies dug trenches along a 475 mile line from the North Sea to Switzerland.



BACKGROUND READINGS

THE 2ND BATTLE OF YPRES (APRIL 22 –MAY 25, 1915): The 2nd Battle of Ypres was a German offensive launched in the spring of 1915 partially to hide the movement of troops to fight the Russians on the Eastern Front. Although the result of the battle did not favor one side significantly over the other, this battle is also known as the first time that Germany used poison gas on a large scale on the Western Front. The battle consisted of four major actions:

- The Battle of Gravenstafel – April 22–23
- The Battle of St Julien – April 24-May 4
- The Battle of Frezenberg – May 8-13
- The Battle of Bellewaarde – May 24-25

THE BATTLE OF GRAVENSTAFEL: On April 22, 1915 the Germans released 168 tons of chlorine gas over a four mile section of the Allied lines around Ypres. Because the gas was denser than air it quickly filled the Allied trenches and forced the French and Colonial Moroccan and Algerian troops out and into heavy German fire. Within 10 minutes 6,000 allied soldiers died and many more were blinded. The remaining troops abandon their positions creating a significant gap in the defensive line. German troops began moving into the breach that evening but, fortunately for the Allies, halted their advance due to darkness. That evening British and Canadian troops were brought up to re-enforce the defensive line and were able to limit further German advances, but at a high cost. Over half of the original 10,000 strong Canadian force was killed or wounded.

On the evening of April 22, the 10th Battalion (Calgary Highlanders) and 2nd Canadian Brigade Group were also tasked with counterattacking into the gap created by the gas attack at an oak plantation called Kitchener's Wood. The battalions launched an attack with 1,600 men who were initially thwarted by a strong hedge interlaced with wire. Breaking through the hedge raised the awareness of the German machine gunners 200 yards away. The battalions completed the charge and displaced the Germans but suffered 75% casualties. After the war, the Allied Supreme Commander Marshal Ferdinand Foch called the assault the "greatest act of the war."



BACKGROUND READINGS

The slow German response to the gap created by the gas attack and the rapid deployment and courage of the Allied troops greatly limited any advantage gained by the Germans.

THE BATTLE OF ST. JULIEN: On the morning of April 24th the Germans launched another gas attack on Canadian forces holding the small village of St. Julien. Countermeasures were ineffective and the line broke allowing the Germans to capture the village. Over the next two days the Northumberland Brigade attempted two separate counter-attacks. Although they were able to establish a new line close to the village, they did not retake St. Julien and suffered the loss of nearly 2,000 – two-thirds of its original numbers.

THE BATTLE OF FREZENBERG: The Germans again tried to break Allied lines. After a failed assault on Frezenberg, the Germans launched another gas attack on May 10th but made little progress. After six days of fighting the Germans were able to gain only 1000 yards.

THE BATTLE OF BELLWAARDE: On the May 24th the Germans made the last of their gas attacks during the 2nd Battle of Ypres. This time the target was a 4.5 mile long line along the front at Ballewaarde. British troops were able to make a stand against the initial German push but were eventually forced to retreat back towards Ypres. Later British counter-attacks were repelled by the Germans.

Although the Germans again failed to capture Ypres, the Salient had been reduced to only three miles deep and the city itself was much closer to the frontline. Over the next two years Ypres would be shelled into rubble, but the ground offensives were now focused in other areas away from Ypres so there was a period of relative quiet. The use of gas had given the Germans a tactical surprise, but they were unable to make significant advancements as a result. Although poison gas would be used again during the war by both sides, effective countermeasures were made available and it never again provided the same opportunity for a major breakthrough as it did during the 2nd Battle of Ypres.



BACKGROUND READINGS

THE BATTLE OF MESSINES (JUNE 7-14, 1917): The Battle of Messines was a prelude to the 3rd Battle of Ypres designed to remove the German fortifications on the Messine Ridge looking down on Ypres. At the start of the attack the Allies detonated 19 mines – large caches of explosives buried in tunnels beneath the German lines that had taken over a year to put into place. These massive explosions killed 10,000 Germans, destroyed much of the fortifications on the Messine Ridge (as well as the town of Messines itself) and were heard as far away as Dublin and London. German troops were in chaos following the detonations and surrendered in large numbers to Allied troops and the Messine Ridge and the villages of Messine and Wytschaete were captured within hours with almost no opposition. On June 9-10 the Germans attempted several counter-attacks along the new British line but these were easily repulsed and resulted in additional territorial gains by the Allies.

The battle was a decisive Allied victory and all their objectives were reached within 12 hours. Allied losses were a modest 23,000. The largest mine was located at Spanbroekmolen and the crater is preserved today as the “Pool of Peace”.

THE 3RD BATTLE OF YPRES (A.K.A. BATTLE OF PASSCHENDAELE) (JULY 31 – NOVEMBER 10, 1917): Following the success at the Battle of Messines, strategies from this earlier engagement were applied to the Allied attack on Passchendaele but with much less success due to changing weather conditions. Ground conditions in the Ypres area were bad because the area had been heavily shelled and partially flooded. A combination of unseasonably heavy rains and destroyed drainage canals resulting in a treacherous terrain. Troops walked along boards laid across the mud which made them easier to target by the enemy. In addition, they often carried over 100 lbs. of equipment and if they fell off the boards would often drown before they could be rescued. The 3rd Battle of Ypres was the result of Allied plans to open a corridor in the front line to ease pressure on French troops and allow the Allies to reach German submarine bases on the Belgian Coast. The objective for the troops around Ypres was the capture of Passchendaele. The battle itself consisted of a significant number of smaller conflicts:



BACKGROUND READINGS

- The Battle of Pilckem Ridge – July 31
- The Battle of Menin Road – September 20-25
- The Battle of Polygon Wood – September 26-October 3
- The Battle of Broodseinde – October 4
- The Battle of Poelcappelle – October 9
- The 1st Battle of Passchendaele – October 12
- The 2nd Battle of Passchendaele – October 26-November 10

THE BATTLE OF PILCKEM RIDGE: On July 27th the Allies advanced on the Yser Canal, easily securing the site as they found the German trenches empty. Four days later the main offensive assault began as the Allies advanced 2,000 yards and captured the Pilckem Ridge. This one action however came at the cost the lives of 32,000 killed, wounded or missing.

THE BATTLE OF MENIN ROAD: The German troops had re-established a semi-permanent front line with deep trenches and concrete pillboxes. On September 20, 1917 Allied troop advanced on and captured the Menin Road after a gain of 1,500 yards. Despite intense counter-attacks by the Germans they were able to hold the position but lost another 21,000 soldiers.

THE BATTLE OF POLYGON WOOD: Allied troops, largely British, advanced an additional 2,000 yards on the southwestern side of the Ypres Salient to Polygon Wood and Broodseinde. The movement cost an additional 30,000 casualties and meant that the British line was now overlooked by the Passchendaele Ridge which became an important objective.

THE BATTLE OF BROODSEINDE: New Zealand troops were assigned the task of capturing a spur coming off the Passchendaele Ridge and provide flanking coverage for Australian troops advancing on Broodseinde Ridge. Heavy artillery bombardment by the Allies caught many Germans on the front line and disrupted their defenses which mistakenly caused the British high command to believe that German resistance was faltering.



BACKGROUND READINGS

THE BATTLE OF POELCAPPELLE: On October 9, 1917 Allied units advanced on Poelcappelle, but due to exhaustion and tough enemy counter-attacks the attack was a failure.

THE 1ST BATTLE OF PASSCHENDAELE: On October 12, 1917 a second attempt was made to capture Poelcappelle. Heavy rains and mud prevented moving Allied artillery closer to the battlefield. In addition, Allied troop morale was low after the long running battle and German defenses were well prepared. As a result only minimal gains were made and 13,000 more casualties were suffered by the Allies, including 2,700 New Zealanders, the blackest day in their recorded history. Due to the poor ground conditions and stiff German resistance the Allies had now suffered over 100,000 casualties for only little ground gain and no significant strategic breakthroughs.

THE 2ND BATTLE OF PASSCHENDAELE: After heavy depletion of Allied troops, two divisions of Canadian Corps were moved to the front line to replace the New Zealanders. On October 26, 20,000 Canadians moved up the Passchendaele Ridge gaining only a few hundred yards at the cost of 12,000 casualties. Four days later a second offensive was attempted with two British divisions added for reinforcement which did capture the village of Passchendaele in heavy rains. For the next five days these troops faced shelling and counter-attacks from the Germans. By the time two new Canadian divisions arrived as further reinforcements, four-fifths of the original two Canadian divisions had been lost. The fresh Canadian forces further pushed the advancement and secured key strong points.

At the end of the three-month long Battle of Passchendaele, the Allies controlled the high ground around Passchendaele. However the advancement had been only five miles in total at a cost of over 500,000 men, including 140,000 killed in action. Ultimately, with heavy losses on both sides and little in the way of territorial gain, this action was viewed as a stalemate. More than any other battle, the Battle of Passchendaele has come to symbolize the horrific nature of the battles of the World War I and the uselessness of the tactics employed.



BACKGROUND READINGS

GERMAN 1918 OFFENSIVE (APRIL 9-29, 1918): On March 3, 1918, the Russians signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk which marked their surrender to the Germans and Russia's exit from World War I. This freed 50 German divisions for action on the Western Front. Germany recognized that the only chance for victory was to quickly defeat the Allies before significant material and manpower could arrive from the United States which had entered the war on the side of the Allies in December 1917. On March 21, 1918 the Germans launched Operation Michael against British troops with the largest artillery barrage of the war (1,100,000 shells in five hours). German troops swiftly gained ground but the advancement came to a halt near Amiens, France due to logistics and stiff resistance by the Allies. The German advancement in Operation Michael forced the Allies to move British forces to Amiens which left the approaches to the port cities of Calais, Boulogne and Dunkirk vulnerable. On April 9, 1918 the Germans began Operation Georgette in the Ypres area to capture these port cities and try to strangle the Allied supply lines. Again the Germans experienced early success capturing the Messine Ridge and most of the territory lost during the Battle of Passchendaele, however logistics problems and Allied counter-attacks at the Battle of the Lys again stalled the offensive. Although German attacks continued with a mixture of success along the Western Front, The Battle of the Lys marked the end of significant fighting in the Ypres area during the German Offensive.

LIBERATION OF THE SALIENT AND THE END OF THE WAR (AUGUST-NOVEMBER, 1918): In the summer of 1918 the tide turned for the Allies after the German Spring Offensive. British forces advanced and recaptured the villages of Loker, Kemmel, Drauter, Nieuwkerke, Ploegsteert and Nieppe. Finally in September, 1918 the Allies launched the "Liberation Offensive". On September 28 the entire Salient was reconquered in a single day. The second phase took place from October 14-17, 1918 as the offensive moved towards Wervik and Lys and the Yser front began moving as well. In the third and final phase, the Belgian army made further advances after overcoming stiff German resistance at Lys. The advancement is finally halted by the declaration of peace on November 11, 1918 after 1568 days of war on the Western Front.



HISTORIC TRAIL QUIZ

Ypres Hike Questions

1. When did construction on the Cloth Hall begin? _____
2. What happens at the Menin Gate each evening? _____
3. When was the tower added to St Jacob's Church? _____
4. Soldiers from what countries are buried at Ramparts Cemetery? _____
5. What are names of the Medieval Towers? _____
6. Why was the St George's Memorial Church built and when? _____

West Flanders Cycling Route Questions

7. What famous poet is buried at Essex Farm Cemetery? _____
8. What is his famous poem called? _____
9. How many German soldiers are buried at Langemark? _____
10. What town did the New Zealanders capture
during the Third battle of Ypres? _____
11. What is the largest commonwealth cemetery in the world? _____
12. How long did the Battle of Passchendaele last? _____

Other Sites Questions

13. How many Americans are buried at Flanders Field? _____
14. What infamous person served at the
Bayernwald German Trenches? _____
15. How many mines were detonated under
the German lines at Messines? _____

Answers on page 43



BSA REQUIREMENTS

Completion of the Flanders Field Historic Trail may complete the following Requirements:

Cub Scouts:

Tiger:

My Tiger Jungle	Req 1
Tigers in the Wild	Req 1, 2, 4
Tiger Tales	Req 7
Rolling Tigers	Req 1,4, 5

Wolf:

Paws on the Path	Req 1-5
Finding Your Way	Req 4

Bear:

Fur, Feathers, and Ferns	Req 1
Paws for Action	Req 2B

Webelos:

Webelos Walkabout	Req 1-6
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Scouts BSA:

Tenderfoot:	Req 4d, 5a, 5b, 5c
Second Class:	Req 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 6c
First Class:	Req 4a, 4b



*Note: Requirements for the Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Hiking, Orienteering, Cycling and American Heritage Merit Badges and the Cub Scout Outdoor Activity Award can be earned by completing this hike and learning about sites found on this hike.



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is a solid black rectangular bar at the very top edge of the image, which appears to be part of a scanner or a binding element. The rest of the page is empty except for the lines.

NOTES

Quiz Answers: 1) 1260, 2) The Last Post is sounded, 3) 1634, 4) England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, New Zealand and Australia, 5) Lion's Tower and Dominican's Tower, 6) To honor Commonwealth soldiers who fought in the area and in 1929, 7) Lt-Colonel John McCrae, MD, 8) In Flanders Fields, 9) 44,061 soldiers, 10) Gravenstafel, 11) Tyne Cot Commonwealth Cemetery, 12) 100 days, 13) 368, 14) Adolph Hitler, 15) 19



This Historic Trail was put together by Mr. Ross Vandry of Troop 230 in Stavanger, Norway in 2008 as part of his Wood Badge ticket (NE-II-187). Much of the information has been accumulated through reference books and internet web sources. He would also like to express gratitude to Wim Keereman, a teacher at the International School of Stavanger who is originally from the Ieper area and has led a number of high school trips to the localities listed as part of Flanders Field Historic Trail. Wim was of great assistance in providing information and insight into the localities during the preparation of this guide.

Additional Historic Trails in the Transatlantic Council area can be found at <http://tac-bsa.org> or by scanning the QR Code below.

In Flanders Fields
By: Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD
(1872-1918) Canadian Army

In Flanders Fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

