

ACTIVITY # 2

QUOTATIONS

For each of the following quotations, explain what is meant by the quotation and tell why the quotation is important to Canadian history / World War I.

“As long as I live, I shall never forget that day ... Victoria had turned out to the last man, woman, and child. Even the dogs were there, marching. We were all excited, and embarrassed at being cheered, not having done anything yet.”

(Sandham Graves. “The Lost Diary”. D. F. Banfield, King’s Printer, Victoria BC 1941)

Explanation

Importance

“You secretly wondered if you would ever see home again. You couldn’t get out of your mind the strained look on your mother’s face as she said goodbye.”

From Doug Smith “Memoirs of an Old Sweat” (1961 pp 115 - 17)

Explanation

Importance

“The war of course would be over in three months...War was still a chivalrous, romantic thing; The awful casualties of modern warfare were not even suspected ...”

(L. M. Frost: “Fighting Men” pp 24 - 25)

Explanation

Importance

“The war goes on day and night, week in and week out ... It is continuous for over two hundred and fifty miles on this front alone. We fight on the earth, in the earth, under the earth and in the air overhead ... One of our chaps in writing home dated this letter, “ somewhere in Hell “. He was not far out.”

A Canadian Soldier (Aylmer Express 20 Jan 1916)

Explanation

Importance

“We lived mostly on bully beef and hardtack ... a kind of dog biscuit ... We always wondered why they were so particular about a man’s teeth in the army. Now I know. It’s on account of these biscuits. The chief ingredient is, I think, cement and they taste that way too ...”

Louis Keene

Explanation

Importance

“Humanity must be mad to do what it is doing. What scenes of horror and carnage! Hell cannot be so terrible.”

(French Lieutenant, 23 May 1916)

Explanation

Importance

“I never felt like a Canadian until Vimy. After that I was Canadian all the way. We had a feeling that we could not lose, and if the other Allies packed it up we could do the whole job ourselves.”

(H. F. Wood “Vimy!” p164)

Explanation

Importance

“We saw our first prisoner of war, but could not believe what we saw. Not after what we had heard and read. He was not a square-head with a double chin on the back of his neck, a spiked helmet low on his head and a big pipe on his mouth. He was just an average young man, who could have been one of us, was neither arrogant nor cringing, showed us snap shots of what we took to be his wife and child ...”

Unknown soldier

Explanation

Importance

“A few surgeons were at work upon them ... The smell of fresh, warm blood was thick in the air. One man lay deep in his blood. You could not have supposed that anyone had so much in him. Another’s head had lost all human semblance, and was a hideous pulp of eye and ear and jaw. Another, with chest torn open, lay gasping for the few minutes left of life. And as I waited for the ambulance more were brought in, and always more.”

T. H. Russel “World’s Greatest War” p391

Explanation

Importance

“The true horror of World War I was not in its maimed and killed, not in the length of the war, and not in its barbarism and atrocities - it was in the fact that so many men died and achieved nothing by it.”

Richard Watt. “Dare Call it Treason”. P84

Explanation

Importance

As a group, write your own personal quotation as a member of today's youth reflecting on World War I.
