

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2014



The businesses and services whose ads appear on these pages remind you to honour Canada's veterans on Remembrance Day.



TREASURES and HEIRLOOMS

By Rob Reid

November is typically the month that most Canadians commemorate our military men and women, both past and present. This year of 2014 is also 100 years after the start of World War One.

The First World War of 1914-1918 was the worst conflict Canada has ever taken part in. With Britain declaring war on Germany on Aug. 4, 1914, Canada was automatically at war as a British dominion. However, Canada had some autonomy to determine the level of the country's involvement. After the Governor General declared war on Aug. 5, 1914 an independent Canadian expeditionary force was raised.

By the end of the war in 1918, over 620,000 Canadians were mobilized and Canada's total casualties stood at over 60,000 killed and 250,000 wounded. The total number of civilian and military casualties for the entire conflict worldwide was over 37 million.

Here are the three medals typically issued to soldiers of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. They are (right to left) the Victory Medal, the British War Medal and the 1914-15 Star. The first two are much more common than the 1914-15 Star as a soldier had to have reached the front lines by Dec. 31 1915 to be eligible for the Star.

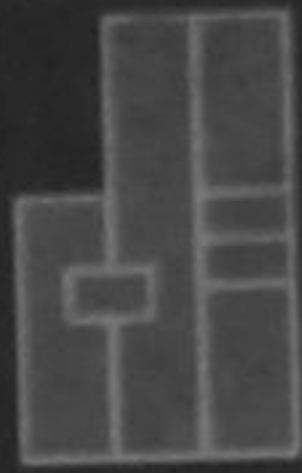
Thus soldiers who enlisted later in the war received only the Victory and British War Medal.

These three medals are sometimes referred to as "Pip, Squeak and Wilfred" which was a soldier's nickname for them and comes from the characters in a British newspaper cartoon strip published in 1919, the same year medals were issued to veterans.

Typically the soldier's name, rank and serial number can be found engraved on the edge, or back, of the medal and with this information one can begin to discover what happened to him. Medals are treasured by families but there is a strong collectors' market as well. The higher the rank and experience of the individual the greater the desirability.

On Nov. 11 please take a few moments to remember, respect and give thanks for the sacrifices of our military men and women in the past, present and future.

I welcome inquiries about any objects and look forward to seeing and perhaps writing about them. Please forward a photo and a description to me through Stouffville Free Press or drop them off at Reid's Antiques, 6397 Main St. Stouffville during regular business hours or via Robert@reidsantiques.com



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