

# Battlefield Exploration



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## Canadians in Artois

*The battlefields of Artois are part of what historians call 'the Forgotten Front'. The area just north of Arras and of the Somme battlefields has always been considered less interesting, but nothing could be more wrong. These battlefields have played an important role in the history of Canada: Vimy Ridge is considered the birthplace of the nation!*

### The Tour

Your professional battlefield guide will come pick you up at your accommodation\* at about 9 am.

From Ypres you'll drive to **Notre Dame de Lorette**, to quickly glance at the largest French national military cemetery (containing over 40,000 French casualties) and see the impressive **Ring of Remembrance monument**, listing over 480,000 names of soldiers who were killed in the North of France during the Great War. The list obviously contains lots of Canadian names.

Next onwards to **Vimy Ridge** to visit the tunnels and trenches of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and see the impressive **National Canadian Memorial**, listing over 11,200 names of Canadian missing. The whole area is considered a Canadian Heritage Site and perfectly displays the result of intensive shelling and underground warfare. Canadian students will take you on tour of the tunnel system and the reconstructed trenches, while your private guide will explain all about the impressive memorial itself.

Lunch in Souchez or near Lens.

From Souchez we then continue to the Lens area to visit the brand new **Battle of Hill 70 Memorial Park**. The Hill 70 Memorial Park opened to the public in August 2017. The centrepiece of the Memorial is an obelisk signifying the victory of the Canadian Corps at the Battle of Hill 70. The Memorial Park is located near the start line where the Corps began its advance to capture Hill 70. The actual location of Hill 70 is 1.4 kilometres to the east. During the Battle of Hill 70 several Canadians were awarded the Victoria Cross. **Filip Konowal** was born in Kutkivtsi, Ukraine on 25 March 1887, and came to Canada about 1913. He enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1915, served with the 47th Infantry Battalion, and eventually was promoted to the rank of corporal.

Corporal Konowal earned the Victoria Cross for his actions from 22 to 24 August 1917 while leading his section in overcoming German resistance on Hill 70, near Lens in France. On route to Lens (Hill 70) we'll visit his private memorial. **Frederick Hobson** was born in London, England on 23 September 1873. After seeing action with the British Army during the South African War (1899-1902), he came to Canada and settled in Galt (now Cambridge), Ontario. Being 41 years old when he went to the recruiting office shortly after the First World War began, Hobson gave his year of birth as 1875 so that he would be allowed to enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. On 18 August 1917, during the battle of Hill 70, Sergeant Hobson was serving with the 20th Infantry Battalion on Hill 70. For his gallantry during the battle of Hill 70, Sergeant Hobson was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously. He is commemorated on the Vimy Ridge Memorial.

Before we drive back to Arras we'll also visit the **Canadian 15th Battalion Memorial** at Hill 70.

He died in Ottawa, Ontario on 3 June 1959.

Back to Ypres. End of the tour at about 5.30 pm.

*\* When accommodated in the Ypres area, there will be no extra charge for the pick-up and drop-off at your accommodation. If you want to be picked up from other places (like Bruges, Ghent, Lille, Arras, ... et cetera), there will be an extra charge for the extra mileage.*

## Practical Information

- » **Departure** from your accommodation in Ypres at about 9 am; back in Ypres by 6 pm.  
Other departure points (Bruges, Ghent, Lille, ...) are possible, but may result in an extra charge.
- » **Tariff:** € 275 (with a maximum of 7 participants).
  - > If more than 7 participants, tariff will be depending on the coach tariff.
  - > In the price is included: transportation with minibus and professional guide/driver.
  - > No entrance fees to be paid during this tour.
- » **Walking:** only short distances from the car to the actual sites. Never more than 750 yards.

**Want to add a specific site to the itinerary? Or want to combine several itineraries?  
Please let us know, and we'll provide a quote!**