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Shoestring Soldiers: The 1st Canadian Division at War, 1914-1915

Andrew Iarocci

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The Great War was a pivotal experience for twentieth-century Canada. *Shoestring Soldiers* is the first scholarly study since 1938 to focus exclusively on Canada's initial overseas experience from late 1914 to the end of 1915.

In this exciting new work, Andrew Iarocci challenges the dominant view that the 1st Canadian Division was poorly prepared for war in 1914, and less than effective during battles in 1915. He examines the first generations of men to serve overseas with the division: their training, leadership, morale, and combat operations from Salisbury Plain to the Ypres Salient, from the La Bassée Canal to Ploegsteert Wood. Iarocci contends that setbacks and high losses in battle were not so much the products of poor training and weak leadership as they were of inadequate material resources on the Western Front.

Shoestring Soldiers incorporates a wealth of research material from official documents, soldiers' letters and diaries, and the battlefields themselves, surveyed extensively by the author. It marks an important contribution to the growing body of literature on Canada in the First World War.

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