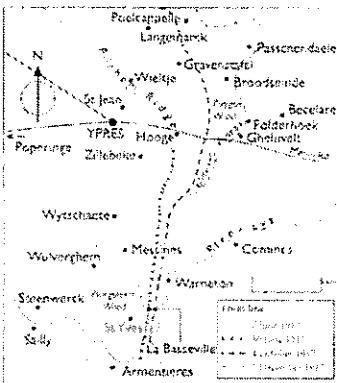


# Overview

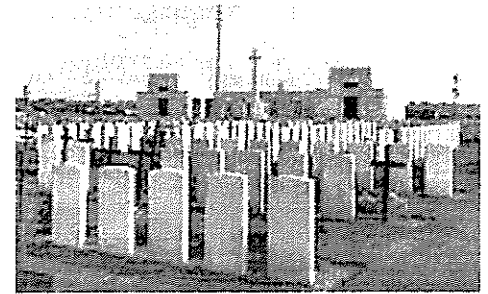
Key Dates	Event
<u>1917</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7-9 June</li> <li>• 12 June</li> <li>• 27-31 July</li> <li>• 4 October</li> <li>• 12 October</li> <li>• 18 October</li> <li>• 20 November</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Zealanders captures the village Messines, but is heavily damaged by German shelling</li> <li>• NZ division push back German outposts back to La Basseville</li> <li>• Crossing River Lys NZers capture, lose then recapture La Basseville</li> <li>• NZers attack on Gravenstafel Spur successful</li> <li>• NZ division attack on Bellevue Spur failed and there are many losses</li> <li>• NZers relieved by Canadian troops which captured ruins of Passchendaele village on 6 November</li> <li>• British high commander shuts down Passchendaele offensive with objectives unachieved.</li> </ul>
<u>1918</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 April</li> <li>• 28 September</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Germans recapture Passchendaele for Michael offensive</li> <li>• Passchendaele ruins recovered by Allies</li> </ul>



Main areas of conflict in Belgium during 1917.



Nearly everything is burnt. Many dead bodies are present, and there are few live people.



Passchendaele New British Cemetery. Here the bodies that were retrieved are buried.

The village of Passchendaele was attacked by the Allies because they needed to break through German defenses. This battle was fought with The Allies on the offensive and Imperial Germany as the defensive. The objective of this battle was to break through the German defenses and acquire the highlands which were Passchendaele. This was because the Allies had been occupying low lying lands for too long and the German had installed U-Boat docks and stations on the Belgian coasts. This prevented English naval ships from passing. This battle is relevant to WWI as it was part of a plan to break through German defenses. This happened in the village of Passchendaele in Belgium. The result of this battle was that winter was approaching and NZ forces were eventually pulled back with heavy casualties with their objective, which had now become unnecessary, unachieved. The duration of this battle was between July 1917 and November 1917.

A poetic soldier name Siegfried Sassoon recalls the horrors of this battle –

“I died in Hell (they called it Passchendaele)”

“so I fell into the bottomless mud, and lost the light.”

Sergeant Robert McKay wrote in his diary –

“was obliged to carry some of the wounded into the graveyard and look on helpless til they died”

“The enemy shells the stretcher bearers all the time.”

## Personal Significance

Many people's lives were affected because of the Passchendaele Battle. In this battle the New Zealand Division suffered more than 18,000 casualties including 5000 deaths. On October the 4<sup>th</sup> 320 lives were lost. On October the 12<sup>th</sup> NZ suffered a horrendous loss – 2700 casualties including 45 officers and 800 men who lay fatally wounded or dead in the mud. Because of this battle, many people were affected, especially after these two dates. This affected the families of those who lost their lives and the men who died in honor for our country will be remembered.



Private Leonard Hart

Private Leonard Hart recalls the horrors of October the 12<sup>th</sup> in a letter to his parents:

*"We asked one man who seemed a little better than the rest what was the meaning of it and he said that if we cared to crawl about the shell holes all round about him we would find dozens more in similar plight. When daylight came some of us, myself included, crawled out to some adjacent shell holes from where the cries were coming and were astonished to find about half a dozen Tommies, badly wounded, some insane, others almost dead with starvation and exposure, lying stuck in the mud and too weak to move. These chaps, wounded in the defence of their country, had been callously left to die the most awful of deaths in the half frozen mud while tens of thousands of able bodied men were camped within five miles of them behind the lines. They worked all day carrying out those Tommies of whom I am afraid some will be mad men for the rest of their lives even if they do recover from their wounds and exposure."*

very long quote

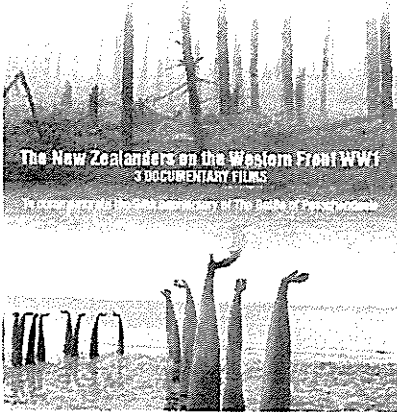
Leonard Hart describes the experience discovering the "Tommies". The Tommies will have suffered shell shock – where the neurotic cracks are created by the explosion of the shells. The effects of shell shock are often varied – from moderate panic attacks to mental and physical paralysis. Some had to be sent home to recover, however most still experienced the aftereffects of shell shocks years later.

One prominent sacrifice was made by the Newlove family which had eight boys. Three of them, Charles, Edwin and Leslie, went to war and none of them returned. Charles went missing during October the 4<sup>th</sup>. Edwin and Leslie died during the second attack at Bellevue Spur. Leslie's body was swallowed by the mud and Edwin's body was buried. The experience of having to hear of the deaths periodically would have been extremely heartbreaking for ~~her~~ <sup>their</sup> mother and the Newlove family.

## National Significance

The Passchendaele Battle continues to affect New Zealand to this day due to New Zealand's participation in the battle.

Author: Nathan Malzer, director: Helen Purvis and film-maker David Snyders present thanks to



Poster used to advertise screenings of *New Zealanders on the Western Front*.

On 2011, 12<sup>th</sup> of October, Devonport held a commemoration event to mark the 94<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Passchendaele Battle. The Passchendaele society held screening events for a movie called *New Zealanders on the Western Front* in various cinemas and a commemoration ceremony at the Auckland Cenotaph. The Society held question and answers sessions after every movie session. The movie contained interesting footage of NZers on the Western Front in World War I, focusing on Passchendaele in particular. ✓

In 1925 Gordon Gates agreed to name a steamroller *Passchendaele* in honor of those who died in the battle who were involved with New Zealand Railways. The steamroller was used to haul the Duke and Duchess of York's royal train. During World War II the gleaming nameplate was removed.

Later it was put on display and when it was removed from service in 1967, *Passchendaele* had steamed more than 2.4 million kilometers. It is now undergoing restoration in Paekakariki.

A museum and cenotaph was established in Auckland called the Auckland War Memorial Museum. A total of 193,500 pounds was funded by Auckland citizens, ✓ businesses, the Auckland Savings Bank and the NZ government. ASB had donated 25,000 pounds. The museum was first opened on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November, 1929 by Sir Charles Ferguson. The museum was based on Greek temples, the Parthenon had Ionic columns. It was also decorated with Maori motifs and a frieze depicting 44 scenes from WWI.

The cenotaph is enclosed in a square which reads, "Remember - this is holy ground Tread not upon it except in reverence". A water feature in front of the museum and cenotaph reads "They shall not grow old, as we that are left to grow old, age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning we will remember them." ✓

The museum is related to the Passchendaele Battle as the northern side of the museum has engraved names of specific battles fought in Passchendaele. The specific battles fought in Passchendaele were in La Basseville, Gravenstafel Spur, Bellevue Spur, Polygon Wood and Poldephoek Spur.

On level three of the museum, there is a sanctuary dedicated to WWI. The names of the Roll of Honour ✓ are engraved into white Sicilian marble slab walls, chosen specifically for its durability. There is a stained glass ceiling which the light that passed through it matched a pattern on the floor of the museum. There is also an altar in the Sanctuary and there people leave wreaths and flowers for those who died in the war. ✓



Auckland War Memorial Museum and Cenotaph.

## Bibliography

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/atoz/shellshock.htm> date last visited - 7.5.12

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/> date last visited - 6.5.12

<http://www.speculator.co.nz/2011/passchendaele-commemoration-in-devonport/> date last visited - 8.5.12

### Declaration of Authenticity

Name Rachel Ahn

Form Class 11SR

Date 7.5.12

### History Internal Assessment – AS91002 (1.2)

I declare that this is an original piece of work undertaken by me this year without any undue assistance (ie. copying, dictation or other direction) from other than my teacher.

Signed Rachel Ahn

CUT THIS OFF AND ATTACH THIS TO THE BACK OF YOUR ASSIGNMENT ✓