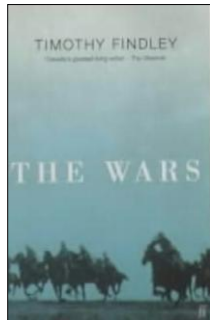
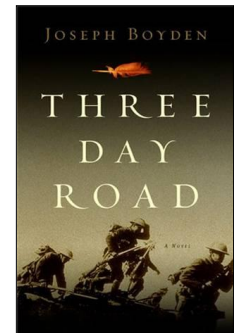


Canada and World War I

Now that the final World War I veteran has died, there has been a lot of attention this year paid to the “Great War”. Let’s look at some books that explore this war from a Canadian angle.

Three Day Road by Joseph Boyden

A powerful novel about the experience of two young Cree men in the bloody trenches of World War I and what it did to them afterwards. Boyden, a gifted storyteller, also deals with the decline of a culture in the shadow of a terrible war. Absolutely superb novel.

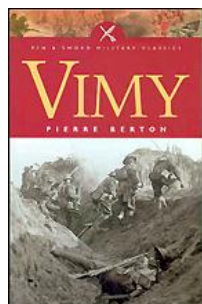
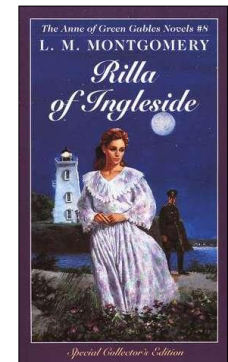


The Wars by Timothy Findley

This book, first published in 1977, is one of Findley’s earliest and probably one of his best. We see the war through the eyes of Robert Ross, a young officer. Mustard gas, mud, smoke and rotting corpses and all. The New Yorker magazine called it one of the best novels of the Great War.

Rilla of Ingleside by L. M. Montgomery

Published in 1921, this is the last novel of the Anne of Green Gables series. Anne’s daughter, Rilla, grows up in the shadow of the war. Some critics have cited it as one of the few Canadian novels, which dealt with the home experience during World War I. It is immediate, sad and although rather sentimental, a unique look at Canada during this decade. Be forewarned, Montgomery was not a friend of pacifists. It also is not a children’s book.



Vimy by Pierre Berton

The battle of Vimy Ridge forged Canada as a fighting nation and Berton does this justice. Lots of personal stories about the men who fought at Vimy as well as graphic descriptions of the conditions there. An accessible, fascinating history of this seminal battle

The danger tree: memory, war and a search for a family's past by David MacFarlane

Part memoir, part family history this wonderful book traces the Goodyear family of Newfoundland. MacFarlane's father was the only one of six brothers who survived the First World War. The book shows the after-effects of the war on him and his descendants. When it was published in 1991, it received almost universal praise. Critics called it remarkable, brilliant, intense and beautiful.



Tapestry of War by Sandra Gwyn

Another popular history of World War I. Gwyn uses diaries, letters and newspaper articles to flesh out the lives of ordinary and not-so-ordinary Canadians during this period. Since much of it takes place in Ottawa, it also has some local interest.