Battle of Vimy Ridge:

This World War I skirmish in 1917 marked the first time that the Allies’ four Canadian divisions attacked together as the Canadian Corps. The corps launched their offensive at Vimy on Easter Sunday, and within three days had eradicated the German defenses. This swift victory was achieved through excellent artillery preparation and effective infantry tactics and was boosted by the Canadian advantage in personnel that allowed them to endure a higher casualty count. Part of the larger Battle of Arras, the capture of Vimy Ridge helped establish the Canadian Corps as a premier fighting force.

On Easter Sunday, April 9, at 5:30 a.m., the Canadian Corps swept forward in a sleet storm and took nearly all its objectives on schedule that day. Over the next three days, the last German defenses on the left were captured. This swift victory was achieved primarily through an excellent artillery preparation and creeping barrage, but also good infantry training and execution, effective infantry tactics (“leaning on the barrage”), poor German defensive plans, the sleet as cover, and the use of underground caves and tunnels contributed to the success. The Canadian Corps also outnumbered the defenders by 35,000 to 10,000, and, with flank support, deployed 1,130 guns. This latter concentration was more than double the density used at the [Battle of the Somme](http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/battle-of-the-somme).

Canadian casualties amounted to around 10,500, whereas the German defenders lost almost all their strength, including 4,000 prisoners. The capture of Vimy Ridge pointed to the future, where similar careful set-piece attacks in 1917 and 1918 established the Canadian Corps as a premier fighting force.