

History Lecture #23 Canada As It Might Be

Monday, December 5, 2016 2:29 PM

Recap

- Fighting ended November 11 1918
- The end of the war would not technically end until July 1919



Audio 1

The Balance Sheet

- Hall of Mirrors - Sir William Orpen
 - William Orpen was the greatest of the great portrait painters
 - Only the rich and famous could afford him
 - He began to record the elements of WW I with art
 - Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles with all of the Allied leaders discussing the terms of peace after the end of the war
 - Captured some of the greatest leaders in one of the greatest buildings
 - There is savage irony in the painting
 - This painting is a critique of world politicians
 - The hall of mirrors is the greatest place to build the new world but the men are all small are bitter and small and crippled and old
 - They are not fit to build a new world
 - They destroyed the world then they're going to rebuild it ???
- Four empires fell:
 - German
 - Austro-Hungarian
 - Russian
 - Ottoman
 - British (weakened fatally)
 - Britain came into the war as the biggest financial empire and came out as a shadow of its self with the title now passed to the U.S
 - The war destroyed British economy
- Map of Europe was redrawn and many nations were created after the reconstruction of Europe, Asia, Middle East
- New States
 - Poland
 - Jordan
 - Austria
 - Hungary
 - Syria
 - USSR
 - Yugoslavia
- The greatest legacy of WW I was violence
 - Legacy in violence that brought socialist Germany
 - Legacy of violence lead to the USSR
 - Violence lead to many conflicts in Middle East going on till today
- Total Casualties
 - 37 million
 - 8.5 million dead
 - 7.7 million prisoners and missing
 - 21 million wounded
 - 50 million dead in influenza pandemic
 - War creates situations where sickness can easily spread
- Life expectancy dropped after the war
 - Life expectancy 44 years for men 50 years for women after war

Land Fit for Heroes

- There was a considerable amount of hope

- The war was being fought to make the world a better place
- 60 000 Canadian deaths became its own legacy
 - Those deaths had to bring about a better world as a way to honor them
- Many people came back from the war unemployed
- The mood was mixed
 - There were celebrations
 - The overwhelming emotion had been that a huge weight had been lifted off peoples backs
 - People are exhausted so people were more so relieved
- People embraced the idea that this is the country's chance to start again and create a new and better nation
- People proposed ideas for how to make the country better
 - Electoral reform
 - Fixing the senate
 - Prohibition
- Stephen Leacock
 - Talked about the unsolved riddle of social justice
 - He said to make Canada a welfare state
 - Universal healthcare
 - Free public education

The Spirit of the Canadian Corps

- Canadians looked to Canada's military to make the country better
- The Corp brought together different people of different races and religions etc. to become a fighting force on the Western fronts
- Legacy of bravery, unity and spirit
- Take that spirit and transform it on to Canadian society
- They thought this can fix all the problems of Canada, everything that was ever wrong with the country

Full Citizenship for First Nations

- Before 1914 indigenous peoples were wards of the government
 - They had no right to vote, make decisions of their property, must remain on their reserves
- But during the war the indigenous people reacted enthusiastically to the war
 - Even though they had no rights
- 4000 men listed for service
 - 1/3 of eligible males
 - Higher than the national average and more than any other group
 - They were all volunteers
 - Were not subject to conscription
- Had the ability to vote in the army
- Native leaders used the war as proof that first nations have earned their place in Canadian society
- There are calls to improve education and to give them the vote

A Classless Society

- The Boy Who Came Home - Harry Amoss (1921)
 - Expression of the ambition of a classless society
 - About two lovers who were separated by war, and class (British and French Canadian)
 - Class is dissolved when Harry and an industrialists son fought together on the same front even though they're part of different classes
 - The war has shown Canadians how to build a better and classless society
- In the Canadian Corps you get promoted on Merit
 - Canadian Corps is a true meritocracy

Ending Racial Animosity

- Before the war there were a lot of immigrants from Eastern Europe
- There was concern that these people where not assimilating into Canadian culture
- People saw the war as a solution to this
- The Translation of John Snaith - Britton Cooke (1926)
 - All ethnic stereo-types pledge to be full Canadians

Uniting the Two Solitudes

- Redemption - H. Beckles Willson (1919)
 - Story of two friends English and French Canadians
 - French Canadian stops supporting the war
 - He then changes his mind enlists in the war, fights and becomes a hero
 - Friends meet in hospital after heroic fighting
 - Talk about how war has redeemed but also separated their friendship
 - Transforms their friendship on Canadian society
 - Decide that war is Canada's redemption and have to forget about the past and look to the future
- The war is the way out of division