

Ruthven Park & Historic Site
and Studio Babette Puppet Theatre
proudly present

From Ruthven to Passchendaele

a play with puppets by Studio Babette



Cast of Puppeteers

Helena Adamczyk	Andrew Thompson
Marie Franek	Lydia, Walter Thompson, Violet Thompson, Mike
Kerry Corrigan	Peggy Thompson, Colonel Thompson, Joseph
Natalie Campbell	Ruthven Park School Coordinator

Puppets ~ 1904

Drew, Colonel's son ~ age 10

Wally, Drew's brother ~ age 8

Pug, Drew's sister ~ age 5

Joseph, Six Nations Native Cayuga ~ age 10

Puppets ~ 1916-1918, 1929

Andrew ~ Lieutenant Andrew (*Drew*) Ruthven Thompson ~ age 23

Walter ~ Lieutenant Walter (*Wally*) Hepburn Thompson ~ age 21

Peggy ~ Gretchen Margaret (*Pug*) Hepburn Thompson ~ age 18

Lydia ~ British nurse/volunteer/actress ~ age 21

Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Thorburn Thompson MP ~ age 47

Violet Isabel Burns Thompson, Colonel's wife ~ age 40

Mike, Andrew's batman ~ age 20

Andrew in the Hospital ~ age 24

Peggy, nurse/volunteer ~ age 19

This play was written and built by **Studio Babette Puppet Theatre** and conceived for students interested in a personal account of Canada's role in WWI.

After the war, A.R. (Andrew) Thompson was promoted to Major. He became a successful lawyer and was appointed Usher of the Black Rod in Ottawa. Always a writer, he contributed articles to the Military Gazette for many years. He and Lydia remained a presence in Cayuga for the rest of their lives.

Poems quoted in this script are from *Hysteric Histories* by A.R. (Andrew) Thompson. The plot draws inspiration from the novel *No Path to Glory* by A.R. (Andrew) Thompson which, although purported to be fictional, has many similarities with his own experiences. Some of the dialogue is direct quotes from his novel and articles from the Military Gazette.

ACT I

- Scene 1 Spine Hospital, London, England December 1917
Scene 2 Ruthven by the Grand River, Cayuga June 1904
Scene 3 Spine Hospital, London, England December 1917
Scene 4 Ruthven House, Cayuga, Ontario October 1916

ACT II

- Scene 5 Camp Borden, ON, to Halifax, NS, to Liverpool, England October 1916
Scene 6 Liverpool, England October 1916
Scene 7 Folkestone, England October 1916
Scene 8 Arrival in France May 1917
Scene 9 Trenches in France June 1917
Scene 10 Trenches in France July 1917
Scene 11 London, England July 1917
Scene 12 Trenches in France August 1917
Scene 13 London, England/Trenches in France September 1917

ACT III

- Scene 14 The Road to Ypres October 1917
Scene 15 Passchendaele, Belgium November 1917
Scene 16 Spine Hospital, London, England November 1917
Scene 17 Spine Hospital, London, England January 1918
Scene 18 Ruthven House, Cayuga, Ontario January 1929
Scene 19 Spine Hospital, London, England January 1918

This event is made possible through the generous support received from
Veterans Affairs Canada's Community Engagement Partnership Fund.

SONGS

The Rose of No Man's Land - by Jack Caddigan and James Alexander Brennan, sung by Henry Burr

Keep the Home Fires Burning - music by Ivor Novello and words by Lena Ford, sung by John McCormack

Oh! What a Lovely War - by J.P. Long and M. Scott, from the movie *"Oh! What a Lovely War"*

It's a Long Way to Tippererary - by Jack Judge, sung by John McCormack

Pack Up Your Troubles - by George Henry Powell and Felix Powell, sung by Murray Thompson

Prayer from Hansel & Gretel - by Englebert Humperdinck, sung by Libera

When They Ask Us How Dangerous It Was - song by Herbert Reynolds/Jerome Kern, lyrics by Cole Porter,
from the movie *"Oh! What a Lovely War"*

Terms used in this play

AHSAREGOAH

Lt. Col. Thompson was an Honorary Chief of the tribes and his Iroquois name was "Ahsaregoah" which signifies "the sword". Two of the four Companies of the 114th Battalion were members of the Six Nations Confederacy.

BLIGHTY

Home; or a wound bad enough to have you sent home without too much long term injury.

BROCK'S RANGERS

114th Battalion Haldimand Rifles was given the nickname "Brocks Rangers" in memory of Isaac Brock and the men who fought with him in the War of 1812.

CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE (C.E.F)

At that time, Canada did not have an "army". The Canadian Expeditionary Force was the designation of the field force created by Canada for service overseas in the First World War. In the later stages of the war, particularly after their success at Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele, the Canadian Corps was regarded by friend and foe alike as the most effective Allied military formation on the Western Front.

CHIN-STRAPPED

Tired, exhausted. From the sense that a man could be so tired he was held upright only by the chinstrap of his cap or helmet.

DOSS

Sleep. (*Mike: "Another long night with no doss. I'm completely chin-strapped"*)

DUCKBOARDS

During World War I, duckboards were used to line the bottom of trenches on the Western Front, as these were regularly flooded. Mud and water would lie in the trenches for months on end. The boards helped to keep the soldiers' feet dry and prevent the development of trench foot caused by prolonged standing in waterlogged conditions. They also allowed for troops' easier movement through the trench systems. In the Ypres Salient duckboards were laid at ground-level to help soldiers advance to the front lines. Falling or slipping off the duckboards could often be deadly, with unfortunate soldiers drowning in mud under the weight of their equipment. Duckboards were invented by Canadians, who modeled them on wooden sidewalks used in the Canadian north to travel over muskeg.

FENIAN RAIDS

Between 1866 and 1871, the Fenian raids of the Fenian Brotherhood, who were based in the United States, were fought to bring pressure on Britain to withdraw from Ireland. The raids were made on British army forts, customs posts and other targets in Canada. David Thompson MP was second in command of the 37th Haldimand Rifles, in the Fenian Raids.

HUN, JERRY, HEINIE, FRITZ

Slang words for German soldiers.

LUNDY'S LANE

The Battle of Lundy's Lane took place on July 25 1814, in the War of 1812, in what is now Niagara Falls, Ontario. It was one of the bloodiest battles of the war, and one of the deadliest battles ever fought on Canadian soil. The British won a strategic victory but both sides suffered heavy casualties. Lt. Colonel David Thompson MPP was in the militia that fought in that battle.

MILITIA

The term militia refers to a military force composed of ordinary citizens to provide defense, emergency law enforcement, or paramilitary service, in times of emergency without being paid a regular salary or committed to a fixed term of service.

PASSCHENDAELE, YPRES

The Battle of the Somme, 1917 - Places of heavy fighting in Belgium, just over the border from France.

PEOPLE OF THE GREAT SWAMP

Cayuga Natives

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Remembrance Day is a memorial day observed in Commonwealth countries since the end of World War I to remember the members of their armed forces who have died in the line of duty. Remembrance Day is observed on 11 November to recall the end of hostilities of World War I on that date in 1918. Hostilities formally ended "at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month," in accordance with the Armistice, signed by representatives of Germany and the Entente between 5:12 and 5:20 that morning. ("At the 11th hour" refers to the passing of the 11th hour, or 11:00 a.m.)

The day was specifically dedicated by King George V on 7 November 1919 as a day of remembrance for members of the armed forces who were killed during World War I.

RUTHVEN PARK AND HISTORIC SITE

Ruthven Park is the former home of five generations of the Thompson family. With members of the military, actors, businessmen and politicians, the family contributed to the formative years of the country and to the building of our nation up until the 1990's. They were also active members of the Haldimand community. The Lower Grand River Land Trust Inc., a non-profit, non-government, volunteer based organization, owns and manages this legendary landmark. Incorporated in 1994, the Trust continues their role as responsible stewards to conserve the property in its entirety.

SIX NATIONS

The Iroquois, also known as the Haudenosaunee or the "People of the Longhouse", are a league of several nations and tribes of indigenous people of North America.

The original Iroquois League was often known as the Five Nations, as it was composed of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca nations. After the Tuscarora nation joined the League in 1722, the Iroquois became known as the Six Nations.

STUDIO BABETTE PUPPET THEATRE

Studio Babette was formed in 2007 and operates from Hamilton, Dundas & Greensville. We strive to provide quality puppet performances in a myriad of styles, which reflect the European background of traditional puppet forms, combined with the unique artistry of modern Canadian puppetry.

TOM LONGBOAT

From rural back roads near his home on the Six Nations reserve to Madison Square Gardens to the 1908 Olympic marathon in London, England, Tom Longboat raced his way to fame as the greatest distance runner Canada has ever known. *(author - Bruce Kidd)*

TRENCH ART

Commonly defined as any decorative item made by soldiers, prisoners of war or civilians, where the manufacture is directly linked to armed conflict or its consequences. Mike makes "a flower vase out of a shell casing" for his sweetheart Rosie.

TRENCH FOOT

Trench foot is a medical condition caused by prolonged exposure of the feet to damp, unsanitary, and cold conditions. *(see duckboards)*

UNIFORMS

Officers had to buy their own uniforms and buy food for their troops.

WORLD WAR I

A global war centred in Europe, from July 28, 1914 to November 11, 1918. Allies (**based on the Triple Entente of the United Kingdom, France and Russia**) vs the Central Powers (**Germany, Austro-Hungary and Turkey**). It ended with the Treaty of Versailles.