

He was determined to go: Underage Soldiers in
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 **"He was determined to go": Underage Soldiers in the
Canadian Expeditionary Force**

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Abstract

As many as 20,000 underage soldiers served overseas in the First World War, but their service has often been overlooked because it has been difficult to distinguish them from their older comrades. Adolescents often lied about their age in order to enlist, impelled by a sense of adventure, peer pressure, and fierce patriotism. Studying the reaction of young soldiers to the war effort, as well as their interaction with parents, society, and the military forces, reveals that, despite the agony of parents and the problems underage soldiers sometimes presented for the military establishment, young Canadians were approvingly incorporated into and constituted an important part of Canada's war effort.

Abstract

Jusqu'à 20,000 soldats d'âge mineur ont servi à l'étranger durant la Première Guerre mondiale, mais leur participation est souvent passée inaperçue compte tenu de la difficulté de les distinguer de leurs camarades plus âgés. Les adolescents mentaient souvent sur leur âge afin de s'enrôler, poussés par le goût de l'aventure, la pression de leurs pairs et la fièvre du patriotisme. On constate en étudiant la réaction des soldats adolescents à l'effort de guerre et leurs rapports avec leurs parents, la société et les forces militaires qu'en dépit de l'agonie des parents et des problèmes que ces soldats représentaient parfois pour l'establishment militaire, les jeunes Canadiens étaient intégrés favorablement à l'effort de guerre du Canada et en représentaient un volet important.

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TIM COOK*

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