

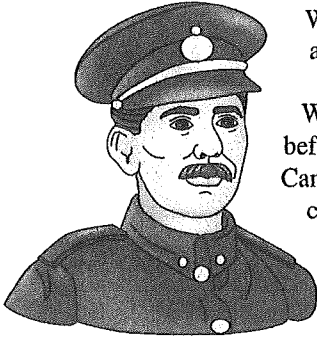
# Coming Home



Canada was slow in bringing its soldiers home from Europe. Most were kept for months in Great Britain. Others were assigned tasks in Germany or in Russia to help keep the peace. In late 1918, soldiers began to return to Canada.

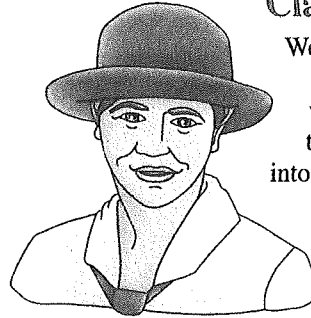
## Economic Downturn

### Tom



We were welcomed home with parades and ceremonies. After the celebrations we began trying to adjust to civilian life. We expected to go back to life as it was before the war. We found instead that Canada, like the rest of the world, had changed. To make matters worse, the world went into an economic slump. The munitions factories were closed. Wheat prices had fallen. We expected to return to the jobs we had before the war. Many of us have found ourselves without jobs right at a time when prices are rising! We fought and risked our lives for our country. We think our country should make sure we have secure jobs now.

### Claudette



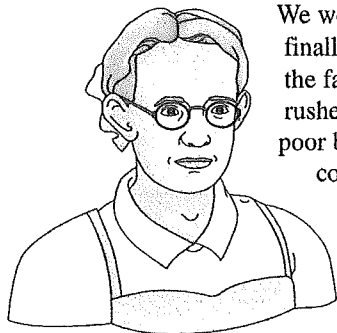
We women worked in the food industry, hotels, schools, offices—wherever we were needed. During the war over 100 000 of us moved into the jobs held by men. I drove a bus. Now that the war is over, I want to keep using the skills that I have learned. And I need to keep earning a living! I can't afford to give up my job to a returning soldier just because I am a woman. We knew when we took these jobs that when the war was over we were expected to return to our former roles working at home. But the situation has changed. I am as grateful as anybody else to the soldiers who fought for our country. But my boyfriend was killed in the war. I don't expect to marry soon. I have to support myself.

**Below:** Soldiers were welcomed home with great excitement. Soon, however, they found themselves competing for scarce jobs. Hours were long, pay was low, and many workers were unhappy.



# The Flu Epidemic

## Jeanette



We were so happy when the soldiers finally started coming home. Late in the fall of 1918 all over Canada we rushed to meet boats and trains. Our poor boys seemed tired and some were coughing. We didn't realize that they were carrying the virus that caused the Spanish flu.\* Within a week my healthy neighbour was dead. It was that sudden. A cough, a temperature, then pneumonia set in.

## The Spanish Flu

In 1918, thousands of soldiers arrived home from the war in Europe. Many had the Spanish flu. Within weeks, thousands of people all over Canada were deathly ill. The epidemic spread rapidly. Before it was over, about 50 000 Canadians had died. People between the ages of 20 and 40 were hit particularly hard. Most deaths resulted from the pneumonia that accompanied the flu.

The flu's early symptoms (fever, sore muscles, tiredness, and headache) were miserable but not alarming, and many victims got better. Others were less fortunate. As the disease progressed from the throat to the lungs, victims often became delirious. A blood-tinged froth sometimes gushed from their nose and throat, which they attempted to clear in their fight for oxygen. They turned purple from lack of oxygen as they neared death. For this reason, the Spanish flu also came to be known as Purple Death. The disease killed about one in 20 across Canada. In an attempt to control the disease, the nation's schools and other public places were closed. Public gatherings were cancelled. In some cities, authorities ordered people not to shake hands and stores not to hold sales.

The Spanish flu attacked people of all ages. In some cases it killed whole families. The flu claimed the lives of more people worldwide than any war, disease, or famine in history. It was responsible for the deaths of approximately 30 000 000 people around the world. Quebec and Labrador (in the colony of Newfoundland) experienced the greatest number of deaths, over 14 000 people. In Ontario, the flu claimed 8 700 lives.

As a result of the Spanish flu epidemic, the federal government took on the responsibility for the health of Canadians. The first federal department of health was created to co-ordinate health-care services throughout the country.



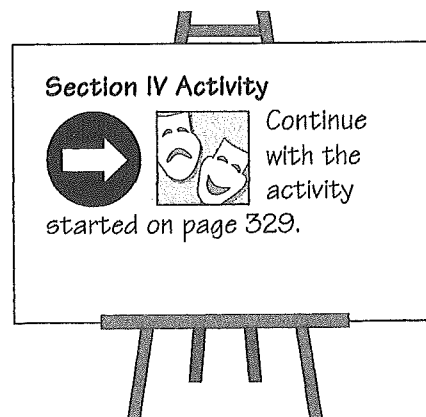
Different parts of Canada used different methods to try to control the Spanish flu epidemic. Some Prairie towns refused to allow trains to stop at their stations. The government of Alberta passed a law requiring everyone to wear a mask when in public.

## Other Flu Epidemics

Scientists point to major flu epidemics in 1957 and 1968, which claimed the lives of 17 000 000 people around the world. They believe another deadly flu may occur in the future. Scientists are studying the genetic material of the virus, recovered from bodies of Spanish flu victims. They believe their research will save lives when another flu epidemic sweeps the world.

## For Your Notebook

1. Make a bar graph comparing the number of Canadians who died in World War I with those who died from the Spanish Flu of 1918 (see page 361).
- 2.



\*Influenza, a highly contagious illness, is commonly called the flu.

# BLACKLINE MASTER



Examining Perspectives  
Pages 330–331

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## COMING HOME

Read pages 330–331. Paraphrase the issue(s) raised by each person, then brainstorm with your group to identify possible government responses to each issue.

Issue	Government Response
