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# Crossing Boundaries on the Battlefield

## The Possibilities of Teacher Study Tours for Substantial Professional Learning

Blake Seward, Cindy Brown, Alan Sears, and Lee Windsor

History education in schools is being revolutionized. In Canada and around the world ministries of education, teachers, museum curators, public historians and scholars of history education are embracing a new approach to teaching and learning which includes knowing historical information but moves beyond that to focus on developing historical thinking. There are a number of specific frameworks for historical thinking but common to them all is an emphasis on developing student competencies with the key disciplinary processes of historical work – students are expected not only to know what historians know, but also how historians know.<sup>1</sup>

This disciplinary approach to history education is not wholly new. As Ken Osborne points out, advocates of a “source-method of teaching history” have been around for more than a century.<sup>2</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s a revival of this orientation to teaching about the past in schools took place under the guise of the New Social Studies. Emerging from the seminal work of Jerome Bruner on the structures of the disciplines, educational projects at Harvard and Carnegie Mellon Universities in the US, and through the Canada Studies Foundation (CSF) north of the border, developed teaching approaches and produced materials designed to move

**Abstract: History education in schools is being revolutionized. In Canada and around the world ministries of education, teachers, museum curators, public historians and scholars of history education are embracing new approaches to teaching and learning which include acquiring historical information but move beyond that to focus on developing historical thinking. A key area of capacity building to ensure the success of these reforms is the preparation of teachers to use these new approaches well. There is considerable evidence that both the initial preparation of history teachers and the professional development available to in-service teachers are not consistent with the disciplinary approaches advocated for history education in schools. This article describes recent trends in history education and argues that study tours combining attention to new developments in historiography with consideration of their implications for pedagogy have great potential to provide the kind of professional education necessary to support teaching that fosters growth in historical thinking.**

students from being passive receptors of historical knowledge to becoming active builders of it.<sup>3</sup> Any evidence we have about actual classroom practice, however, indicates that these movements failed to have much impact on history classrooms which remained places where students were

“bench bound listeners” studying a “dry-as-dust chronological story of uninterrupted political and economic progress.”<sup>4</sup>

Given this history of failed attempts to transform school history into a more disciplinary enterprise, why would there be any hope current efforts would be more successful? As one of us has suggested elsewhere, the building of capacity in a range of areas is essential for successful curricular reform.<sup>5</sup> Contemporary initiatives to transform history teaching differ from those of the past in that they are undergirded by key aspects of the necessary capacity including: a broad international consensus on what constitutes good history teaching; a solid and growing research base to inform materials development and teaching practice; clear and specific delineations of the conceptual and procedural knowledge involved; the development of high quality materials to support new teaching approaches; and the development of substantive assessment strategies to gauge the quality of key aspects of historical thinking.

A central area of concern, however, is the preparation of teachers to use these new approaches and materials well. The editors of a forthcoming book on history teacher education in Canada make the point that the preparation of history teachers

is often not consistent with the disciplinary approaches advocated for history education in schools. They argue that the enthusiastic reception of new approaches to teaching history may flounder if teachers are not well prepared during their professional education.<sup>6</sup>

Teacher education takes place in a number of phases normally including the completion of an initial academic degree followed by a year or two of professional education.<sup>7</sup> Like all professionals, practicing teachers are expected to continue their professional education through in-service learning opportunities throughout their careers. This is where the Cleghorn War and Memory Study Tour for Canadian Teachers comes in. Jointly run by the Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies (LCMSDS) at Wilfrid Laurier University and The Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society and the Faculty of Education at the University of New Brunswick, the tour is designed to be a professional development experience for teachers that combines attention to recent scholarship in history and history education. This combination in teacher in-service learning is rare but incredibly important. The kind of boundary crossing embedded in the tour makes for substantial professional learning that will provide a solid foundation for teaching history in disciplinary ways. In the remainder of this article we will more fully articulate contemporary changes to history education, describe the importance of boundary work in professional learning, and show how the Cleghorn Tour is one model for this kind of work.

### The Move to Historical Thinking

As we said above, source based or disciplinary approaches to history education have been around since the late 19th century. They

have fallen in and out of favour through many cycles of reform in education generally and history education in particular.<sup>8</sup> The current iteration of the approach began in the late 1970s in Britain with the Schools Council Project "History 13-16." A key purpose of the project was to re-think the philosophy of teaching history in British schools, by introducing students to "the language and meanings of historians."<sup>9</sup> The initiative was studied carefully and this body of work formed the basis for a burgeoning research community in history education in Britain. Colleagues around the world soon joined these British scholars with significant bodies of scholarship emerging from Europe, the US, Australia, and elsewhere.<sup>10</sup>

In Canada research on historical thinking has been very broad in scope in several ways including geographically, in terms of the cultural communities considered, and the age range of participants in studies. In addition to considerable work in English Canada, which will be discussed in some detail below, a number of francophone scholars have examined historical thinking of French-speaking students and adults in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada.<sup>11</sup> A growing amount of the research in Canada also considers the ways in which people from various ethnic and cultural communities understand and learn history.<sup>12</sup> Finally, research on historical thinking has been conducted with

students from elementary through high schools and, via the national project "Canadians and Their Pasts," with adults across the country.<sup>13</sup>

The model of historical thinking that is most influential in driving policy and curricular reform in public schooling across Canada is that developed by Peter Sexias and his colleagues at the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness at the University of British Columbia and articulated through the Historical Thinking Project (HTP).<sup>14</sup> The HTP sets out a framework of six historical thinking concepts which are designed to "help students think about how historians transform the past into history and to begin constructing history themselves."<sup>15</sup> The concepts and the key questions they are meant to address are set out in Table 1.

Each of the six concepts is further elaborated to illustrate the central elements involved in developing more sophisticated understanding of how historians work with them and to help students become increasingly skilled at using them to do history. For example, the elaboration of the use of evidence includes 5 guideposts to help teachers in planning, teaching, and assessing student progress in learning to use sources. Those are:

Guidepost 1: History is interpretation based on inferences made from primary sources. Primary sources can be accounts, but they can also be traces, relics, or records.

Guidepost 2: Asking good questions

**Table 1: Historical Thinking Concepts and Key Questions<sup>16</sup>**

| Concept                 | Key Question  |
|-------------------------|---|
| Historical Significance | How do we decide what is important to learn about the past? |
| Primary Source Evidence | How do we know what we know about the past?                 |
| Continuity & Change     | How can we make sense of the complex flows of history?      |
| Cause & Consequence     | Why do events happen, and what are their impacts?           |
| Historical Perspectives | How can we better understand the people of the past?        |
| Ethical Dimension       | How can history help us to live in the present?             |



**Lee Windsor lectures to 2010 Cleghorn War and Memory Study Tour on the main beach at Dieppe.**

about a source can turn it into evidence. Guidepost 3: Sourcing often begins before a source is read, with questions about who created it and when it was created. It involves inferring from the source the author's or creator's purposes, values, and worldview, either conscious or unconscious.

Guidepost 4: A source should be analysed in relation to the context of its historical setting: the conditions and worldviews prevalent at the time in question.

Guidepost 5: Inferences made from a source can never stand alone. They should always be corroborated – checked against other sources (primary or secondary).<sup>17</sup>

There is a large and growing body of international research indicating that even elementary school students can develop relatively sophisticated levels of this kind of thinking if properly taught.<sup>18</sup>

It should be emphasized that the HTP is not promoting a skills-based approach to teaching history that is devoid of learning content. Rather,

it presents content as inextricably bound up with the procedures of doing history. It would be impossible, for example, to set a source in context as advocated in guidepost 4 above, without substantial knowledge of the relevant context. Similarly, corroborating evidence as advocated in guidepost 5 requires one to know what other evidence exists and what it says about particular eras, events, or people. As Sexias and Tom Morton point out, "The six historical thinking concepts make no sense at all without the material, the topics, the substance, or what is often referred to as the 'content' of history."<sup>19</sup>

Working in collaboration with The History Education Network/ Histoire et éducation en réseau (THEN/HiER) the HTP has established a network of policy makers, practitioners, and publishers across the country and its framework (or ones very much like it) is showing up widely in curriculum documents and teaching materials. For example, the website for the grade 11 History of Canada in Manitoba states,

"Historical Thinking Concepts and Skills, based on the work of Dr. Peter Seixas of the University of British Columbia, are embedded throughout the curriculum and provide a foundation for historical inquiry," and the grade 11 Modern History curriculum in New Brunswick puts the HTP framework forward as an example of best practices in teaching history. Both the website in Manitoba and the curriculum guide in New Brunswick provide an extended description of the six concepts for teachers and ideas about how to incorporate them into their teaching.<sup>20</sup>

While not all jurisdictions draw so directly on the HTP framework of historical thinking, most have recently reformed their history curriculum to emphasize similar approaches to historical thinking. The "Program Rationale and Philosophy" for the new social studies curriculum in Alberta, for example, identifies developing historical thinking as a key outcome across grade levels and, as Christian Laville and others point out, recent reforms to the history curriculum



in Québec includes a considerable focus “on historical thinking and its conceptual apparatus.”<sup>21</sup> It is not an exaggeration to say that a discipline-based approach to history rooted in concepts and procedures associated with historical thinking has become the dominant model for the intended curriculum in history across Canada, indeed across much of the industrialized world. This begs the question: are teachers well prepared to teach history in this way? We will now turn to that question.

### Boundary Work in History Education

Many prospective social studies teachers enter their teacher education program with minimal academic education in history and almost no experience with doing history. Some have majored in other disciplines relevant to the

social studies curriculum including geography, political science, and economics; while others have a primary teaching subject other than social studies/history so may only have enough courses to constitute an academic minor – sometimes considerably less – in history. Even those who have majored in history in their academic degree program often have little or no experience with historical method. They have had plenty of classes covering historical content but, as one of us has argued elsewhere,

They haven’t struggled to define a significant and un (or under) explored question about the past to study; sat with a pile of diverse sources trying to weigh their relative merits and build an argument; or tried to make judgements about the moral actions of historical agents in particular times and places. They haven’t, in other words, had to think historically but rather have been relatively passive observers of others’ attempts to do so.<sup>22</sup>

This phenomenon extends beyond initial teacher education into professional development and in-service learning opportunities. Professional development workshops and educational conferences focus almost exclusively on the pedagogical elements of teachers’ work and not on new developments in academic fields. When teachers decide to pursue graduate education it is almost always in professional programs that offer little or no

contact with disciplinary work in the academic fields they teach. History teachers, in other words, exist very much on the margins of the discipline of history.

The forthcoming book on history teacher education in Canada mentioned above takes this to be a significant threat to the reformation of the history curriculum currently underway. It is almost impossible to imagine that history teachers with little or no actual experience with the concepts and processes associated with doing historical work will be able to teach them effectively to their students. A central focus of the book is to explore ways to foster opportunities for history teachers to develop facility with the disciplinary practices of history in their academic and professional degrees as well as in ongoing professional development and in-service learning experiences.<sup>23</sup> It is hoped this will move them, in the words of Etienne Wenger, from the periphery of professional practice toward the core. This does not necessarily mean making them historians but will include engaging them in “boundary practices” with historians in a range of settings.<sup>24</sup>

Wenger conducted research on what he called “communities of practice” which, he argued, are tightly bound systems of work with well-established (although ideally fluid) bodies of knowledge and practice and clear boundaries. They cannot, however, “be considered in isolation from the rest of the world, or understood independently from other practices.”<sup>25</sup> Different communities of practice often interrelate and overlap and “interacting across practices forces members to take a fresh look at their own assumptions. As a result boundary crossing can be the source of a deep kind of learning.”<sup>26</sup>

History teachers and historians constitute two related and overlapping communities of practice, and productive “boundary practices” between them could




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**Jane Ann Sears points to the name of “her” soldier on the Menin Gate wall of the missing. Each teacher was required to prepare a short presentation on a soldier killed during the First or Second World Wars.**

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**The 2012 Cleghorn War and Memory Study Tour at the Menin Gate in Ieper (Ypres), Belgium.**

help move teachers toward the core of historical practice and help historians become better teachers. A number of contributors to the forthcoming book tentatively titled *Becoming a History Teacher: Sustaining Practices in Historical Thinking and Knowing* describe their experience with boundary practices particularly in pre-service teacher education programs. Ruth Sandwell and Theodore Christou, for example, write about curriculum methods courses they teach that engage students in doing original historical investigations and thinking about the implications of this experience for their own teaching.<sup>27</sup>

Amy von Heyking describes a Canadian history course at the University of Lethbridge jointly designed and taught by a faculty member from the Faculty of Education and one from the Department of History. The course weaves together consideration of the historical content with questions about how best to shape it pedagogically for significant student learning of key historical ideas and processes. As von Heyking writes, "In this course, which we referred to as 'Canadian History for Teachers,' we wanted students to receive instruction that explicitly attended to epistemological and pedagogical issues as they learned the specific historical content."<sup>28</sup> The Cleghorn Tour takes up just the kind of boundary work described in von Heyking's chapter by bringing together historians and educators who have constructed a learning experience where both pre- and in-service teachers are immersed in the concurrent consideration of historical work and the implications of that for their own professional practice. We will now turn to a discussion of the Tour and, in particular, the elements that contribute to its potential as



Photo courtesy of Blake Seward

a significant professional learning experience.

**The Cleghorn War and Memory Study Tour as an Example of Boundary Work in History Education**

Since 2007 the Gregg Centre at SUNB and LCMSDS at Wilfrid Laurier have partnered to deliver a professional learning opportunity for Canadian history and social studies teachers interested in improving their teaching about Canada's participation in the First and Second World Wars. Held annually in July, the tour brings teachers from across Canada to important historic sites including Ypres, Vimy Ridge, and Amiens from the Great War and the Second World War battlefields of Dieppe and Normandy. A typical itinerary is shown in Table 2. In 2012 the Faculty of Education at UNB became involved in helping to develop both graduate and undergraduate courses in the teaching of history to be offered in conjunction with the tour.

**Table 2: 2012 Itinerary**

**Day 1 (July 8)** – Group meets in Paris before traveling to the northern end

of the Western Front and working our way south.

**Day 2 (July 9)** – Drive to Ypres and Introduction to the Great War.

**Day 3 (July 10)** – Canada's experience in the Ypres Salient in 1915-16.

**Day 4 (July 11)** – Passchendaele 1917, Drive to Arras.

**Day 5 (July 12)** – Vimy Ridge and the Arras Sector, 1917.

**Day 6 (July 13)** – The Somme 1916, Beaumont-Hamel, The Hundred Days Campaign 1918, drive to Dieppe.

**Day 7 (July 14)** – Introduction to Canada and the Second World War, The Dieppe Raid, drive to Bayeux. Our home for the next week is Le Moulin Morin, west of Bayeux in Calvados, Normandy.

**Day 8 (July 15)** – Wrap-up workshop on the First World War in the classroom, introduction to the Normandy region.

**Day 9 (July 16)** – Canada on Juno Beach, 6 June 1944.

**Day 10 (July 17)** – British and American beaches and the wider Overlord plan.

**Day 11 (July 18)** – Canada's Defence of the Normandy Beachhead, June-July 1944.

**Day 12 (July 19)** – Verrières Ridge, July-August 1944.





Photo by Cindy Brown

**Donita Duplisea shares the story of Rifleman Ernest William Bradley of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles who was killed on 8 June 1944 defending the village of Putot-en-Bessin in Normandy. These soldier presentations require teachers to engage in a cross boundary exercise using primary documents to foster their historical thinking.**

**Day 13 (July 20) – The “Falaise Gap”**

Climax to the Normandy Campaign, Wrap-up discussion on the Second World War in the classroom.

**Day 14 (July 21) – Return to Paris for flights to Canada.**

Study tours for teachers and students are not new but the Cleghorn Tour, we believe, pushes professional learning beyond simply the experience of seeing places often taught about. It is, we argue, more than a tour but a substantial professional learning experience rooted in the kind of boundary work discussed above, and designed to foster the kind of knowledge and skills teachers need to teach in ways consistent with current curricular emphasis on the development of historical thinking. There are a number of specific elements of the program that contribute to this.

First, it is an example of cross boundary collaboration between historians and educators and includes attention to both historical and pedagogical learning. Historians

from the Gregg Centre and LCMSDS and Blake Seward, an award-winning history teacher from southeastern Ontario, created the tour. The syllabus for 2012 reads, in part, “The 2012 Cleghorn War and Memory Study Tour is designed to introduce educators to the history of Canada in two world wars and the potential for using the subject as a vehicle to foster historical thinking skills and ‘historical consciousness’ in today’s young people.” The collaboration with the Faculty of Education at UNB begun in 2012 strengthens the professional education aspect of the endeavour.

In preparation for the tour teachers are required to read both new historical work on the events in question as well as some of the latest work on history teaching and historical thinking outlined above. Each day of the tour includes onsite lectures on the relevant history and educational seminars considering how the historical content covered fits with the teachers’ current understandings and approaches to

teaching and what implication it might have for reshaping both of those. Assignments for the teachers include attention to both the history involved and pedagogical questions related to it. One assignment, for example, requires participants to work with primary sources to prepare a biography of a soldier killed in one of the conflicts examined on the tour. The teachers present their biography at the relevant cemetery or memorial site and in written form, but they are also asked to write a short essay outlining how they might use this activity in their own teaching to foster historical thinking in their students. As stated above, this kind of cross boundary consideration of both recent scholarship in disciplinary and professional fields is very rare in either pre-service or in-service teacher education.

Second, experiences on the tour are designed to reshape the cognitive frames of participants in terms of how they understand the history of the period, their approaches to teaching it, and their conceptions of history as

a discipline. Space does not permit a detailed discussion of the cognitive revolution of the twentieth century and its implications for history and social studies teachers but here we will focus on one of those lessons in particular: “prior knowledge matters.”<sup>29</sup> A central tenet of research in cognition is that people come to any learning situation with a set of cognitive structures that filter and shape new information in powerful ways. Howard Gardner calls these structures “mental representations” and argues they underlie the fact that “individuals do not just react to or perform in the world; they possess minds and these minds contain images, schemes, pictures, frames, languages, ideas, and the like.”<sup>30</sup> The literature uses a range of terms but generally refers to this phenomenon as prior knowledge; meaning the knowledge learners bring with them to the classroom or any other learning situation.

Research demonstrates not only that learners bring mental representations or schemata with them to learning situations, but that these filter and shape new learning. These are sometimes substantial and sometimes charming but “many are simply wrong.”<sup>31</sup> When presented with information that does not fit existing frameworks learners will often distort it or discard it completely rather than doing the difficult work necessary to restructure their frameworks. Research on prior knowledge consistently shows cognitive schema to be persistent and resistant to change. As Gardner puts it, “If one wants to educate for genuine understanding...it is important to identify these early

representations, appreciate their power, and confront them directly and repeatedly.”<sup>32</sup>

Both the historical content and the pedagogical processes examined on the tour are often new to participants and challenge long held ways of thinking. The historians involved, for example, make the case that new historical work (often based on new archival evidence available since the fall of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany) has led to new – sometimes radically new – understandings of aspects of the histories of both World Wars. There are too many examples to explore in detail so two brief descriptions will have to suffice.

A commonly accepted account of the causes of the First World War in school textbooks is that a combination of factors common to all the principal protagonists (a race for colonies, an excessive build up of arms, potentially hostile secret alliances, etc.) spiralled out of control leading to the onset of hostilities. No state, in other words, had more hostile intent than any other, and therefore none were more or less culpable for the beginning of the war

or the manner of its execution. This is a common theme in the teaching of the First World War not the least because it allows for safe blame-free discussions of all the countries involved.

On the tour, however, participants are introduced to the great historical controversy over particular German responsibility for the war. That debate began in 1914 and flared anew in 1961 when Fritz Fischer revived the notion of German war guilt.<sup>33</sup> Fischer’s work ignited a storm among historians inside Germany over whether connections exist between German expansionist war aims in 1914 and those of Hitler’s Nazis in 1939. Newer, post-Cold War research continues to feed the debate.<sup>34</sup> Teachers are challenged to consider both sides of the debate and how they might engage their own students on contentious historical questions.

Standing on the beach at Dieppe in July 2012 participants were asked to give their impressions in a word or short phrase of the Dieppe Raid of August 1942. The responses included words like fiasco, rout, embarrassment, humiliation,

Photo by Cindy Brown



**Ali Papazoglou contemplates the grave of the subject of her soldier presentation – Private W.P. Duffy of the 24th Canadian Infantry Battalion, killed on 28 May 1917.**





**Lee Windsor directs an examination of the Battle of Normandy using one of the best sources of primary evidence available – the ground over which the fighting took place.**

failure, massacre, and disaster. This consensus is also reflected in several Canadian school textbooks that were examined as part of our consideration of the event.<sup>35</sup> However, in presentations at sites in and around Dieppe, participants were challenged with scholarship that argues for a more complex understanding of the purposes, events, and outcomes of the raid including the view that it was successful in its key goals: developing Allied methods for re-entering Europe and shifting German attention and resources away from the Eastern front where beleaguered Soviet forces were in danger of collapse.<sup>36</sup>

These kinds of historical debates are raised at virtually every location on the tour. They challenge commonly accepted historical accounts and also common ways history teachers often think about the discipline itself. As

pointed out above, public school students (and all too often university undergraduates) are most often presented with a “bland consensus version of history” with no sense that historical knowledge is both fluid (it changes over time with the finding of new evidence or new interpretations of old evidence) and contested (on almost every important question historians hold a range of views).<sup>37</sup> An understanding of history as a changing and contested discipline is essential for teachers who hope to foster complex levels of historical thinking in their own students.

As pointed out above, research on cognition demonstrates long held conceptions are difficult to change and certainly will not be altered in a typical professional development workshop of several hours. The tour places participants in a concentrated, fairly long-term experience that

allows their preconceptions to be, as Gardner puts it, confronted “directly and repeatedly.” They are challenged in the presentations during the onsite lectures, but also in the professional seminars that follow and through informal conversations with tour leaders and peers in the vans, at meals, and other times. We live together for two weeks and the conversations about new learning go on virtually all the time. It is important to note that the intent is not to have the teachers replace one narrative with another but to recognize the possibility of several legitimate and contested narratives. We believe this is exactly the kind of experience that can lead to profound changes in previously held conceptions of both history as a discipline and historical knowledge about particular events.

Finally, a number of aspects of the tour engage the teachers with

specific work related to the historical thinking concepts discussed above. The most obvious of these is attention to historical evidence which is taken up in several ways. In virtually all of the site-based presentations the historians on the tour overtly discuss the evidence, particularly recent additions to the corpus, on which various interpretations of the events in question are based. In this way, teachers see examples both of the kinds of evidence that are used to construct historical accounts but also the ways in which that evidence is assessed, contextualized, and corroborated.

In addition to this secondary look at evidence, participants do their own primary source investigation in preparing the biography of the soldier assigned to them.<sup>38</sup> They receive the soldier's military personnel file from Library and Archives Canada and are directed to other sources such as war diaries, regimental histories, official military histories, and secondary books and articles that can provide context for their soldier's service. Each one struggles to make sense of data that is often incomplete, illegible, or contradictory. Frequently, they are left with more questions than answers. They are, in a small but real way, doing history. In the end they develop compelling accounts and many reflect on the questions they intend to continue to pursue following the tour. We have heard from a number from the 2012 tour who have continued the search for information since returning home from France, found new sources, and have refined or revised their accounts accordingly; great examples of the living nature of historical work.

Ken Osborne recently reflected on his 40 years as a history educator in *The Canadian Historical Review*. He described just this sort of experience with a primary source historical investigation as a seminal part of his own education as a history teacher. That experience and others led him

to conclude that "there is a case to be made for requiring anyone who plans to teach history to do some original work of this kind, no matter how limited in scope. There is no better way to learn what history entails as a form of disciplined inquiry."<sup>39</sup> We could not agree more.

All of the other historical thinking concepts are taken up in substantial ways as part of the tour. Establishing historical significance, for example, permeates the experience. A framing question for each of the seminars is to consider which of the events covered during the day are historically significant and why. In addition participants are continually asked to think about whether the iconic events of Canadian military history including the Battle of Vimy Ridge and the D-Day assault on Juno Beach deserve their place in the canon relative to other events. Alternative conceptions of what might be considered significant are provided at various points and numerous debates ensue.

In a similar way the concept of continuity and change cycles through the tour particularly with regard to consideration of the similarities and differences between the two wars. Taken for granted are assumptions about the static nature of combat during the First World War (i.e. trench warfare remained largely the same for the four years of the war) or the vast differences in strategy and technique between the First and Second World Wars are challenged and discussed throughout. Participants are frequently asked to wrestle with questions about what changed and what stayed the same.

Cause and consequence are considered in the macro sense in looking at general causes for the wars themselves or the consequences of large scale strategic initiatives such as the 1916 Somme offensive. These concepts are also examined in microcosms such as decisions made by particular commanders on the

ground in response to the quickly evolving circumstances of combat. Participants consider the role of nations, individuals, geography, and weather (among other things) in shaping events, as well as a range of complex accounts of the impact of particular decisions and initiatives. Throughout, the teachers are put in the position of wrestling with the reconciliation of their preconceptions of the causes and consequences of particular events or actions with new information and alternative accounts.

Finally, the concepts of historical perspective taking and the ethical dimension of history weave together and show up in consideration of elements of both wars. Participants are continually asked, for example, to put themselves in the place of Great War commanders faced with poorly or half trained troops, inadequate resources, and a compelling need to disrupt enemy lines on one front in order to prevent a possible disastrous collapse of allied forces on another. Facile condemnations of "donkey generals" fall away, or are at least challenged, as the teachers struggle to fully understand the historical context in which decisions were made and to answer the question, what would you do? Consideration of the bombing of the French city of Caen in the Second World War allows for discussion of how armies deal with civilians in the battlespace both in historical and contemporary settings. When, if ever, might it be right to launch relatively indiscriminate weapons into zones where civilians are present in large numbers? What responsibilities do attacking armies have to civilian populations vis-à-vis the safety and security of their own troops and the successful prosecution of the war? These are just some of the questions that inundated the Allied powers as they advanced into France in 1944 and persist within military circles today. They resonate throughout the two weeks of the tour as well.

## Conclusion: Touring with a Bigger Purpose

We have all kinds of anecdotal evidence that the tour is effective in changing teachers' conceptions of historical knowledge and how it should be taught. Participants often write to tell us about how the tour has changed their thinking about the discipline of history and the particular content of Canada's participation in the two world wars. They also share with us some of the ways they are reshaping their teaching to reflect those new understandings. Teachers like Mark Perry of Hampton, NB who returned from a tour and instigated a classroom project called Hampton Remembers that took on a life of its own and resulted in two books produced by students about the men and women from Hampton who went to war.<sup>40</sup> Stephen Wilson of Springfield, NB participated on the 2008 tour and has since worked each year with students to research soldiers from both wars as a part of his Canadian history course.<sup>41</sup> Mason Black, a computer science teacher in Eastern Ontario initiated the creation of a cell phone applications with his students. Students have written a programming code that transcribes historical information from 6 June 1944 primary documents of Canadian soldiers and superimposes this translated data digitally on to maps of Juno Beach. Phone users can navigate and follow the life of each soldier.<sup>42</sup> Part of our plan for the future is to document the professional learning acquired on the tour in more systematic ways.

The online Oxford Dictionaries define tour as: "A journey for pleasure in which several different places are visited." The Cleghorn War and Memory Study Tour certainly fits all the aspects of that definition; we visit several different places and do have a good time. However, while this definition might do justice to most

tours and even some battlefield tours, it does not fully describe the intent or outcome of the Cleghorn study tour. Neither the places visited nor the good times are central to the tour; the former are vehicles for fostering professional learning and the latter a byproduct of people with a common interest sharing an intense experience in interesting places. For us, the tour is a teaching tool to support the transformation of history education described at the beginning of this paper by providing teachers with the intellectual and pedagogical capacity to teach history effectively including the systematic fostering of historical thinking in their students.

### Notes

1. There is a range of work around the world but some key examples include: Peter Stearns, Peter Seixas, and Samuel S. Wineburg, eds. *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History: National and International Perspectives* (New York & London: New York University Press, 2000); Peter Seixas, ed., *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004); Stéphane Lévesque, *Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-First Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Penney Clark, ed., *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011).
2. Ken Osborne, "Fred Morrow Fling and the Source-Method of Teaching History," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 31, no.4 (2003), pp.466-501.
3. Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1960); Edwin Fenton, *Teaching the New Social Studies in Secondary Schools; an Inductive Approach* (New York: Holt, 1966); Edwin Fenton, *The New Social Studies* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967); James P. Shaver and Harold Berlak, *Democracy, Pluralism, and the Social Studies; Readings and Commentary: an Approach to Curriculum Decisions in the Social Studies* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968); John N. Grant, "The Canada Studies Foundation: An Historical Overview," in *The Canada Studies Foundation* (Toronto: The Canada Studies Foundation, 1986), pp.9-35; Ken Osborne, "Teaching Canadian History: A Century of Debate," in *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), pp.55-96.

4. A.B. Hodgetts, *What Culture? What Heritage?: A Study of Civic Education in Canada* (Toronto: OISE Press, 1968), pp.44 & 24. Hodgetts study was completed in 1968 but more recent studies have produced similar results. See, for example, Anna Clark, "Teaching the Nation's Story: Comparing Public Debates and Classroom Perspectives of History Education in Australia and Canada," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 41, no.6 (2009), pp.745-62.
5. Andrew S. Hughes, Murray Print, and Alan Sears, "Curriculum Capacity and Citizenship Education: A Comparative Analysis," *Compare* 40, no.3 (2010), pp.293-309.
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8. Ken Osborne, "'Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping': History in Canadian Schools – Past, Present and Future," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no.3 (2000), pp.404-35.
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  13. Amy von Heyking, "Historical Thinking in Elementary Education," in *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), pp.175-194. See the website for Canadians and Their Pasts at <<http://www.canadiansandtheirpasts.ca/index.html>>.
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  42. Blake Seward, personal communication.

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