



# **The Bitter Harvest of War: New Brunswick and the Conscription Crisis of 1917 (New Brunswick Military Heritage Series)**

*Andrew Theobald*

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In 1917, the Canadian Corps captured Vimy Ridge in northern France, and a myth grew that Canada — as a nation — was born on its slopes. But the cost was tremendous: 10,000 Canadians were killed, wounded, or went missing in the three-day battle. Shortly thereafter, Prime Minister Robert Borden assembled a "Union Government" to support conscription and called an election on the issue. Canada split along ethnic lines: English Canadians supported conscription; French Canadians rejected it. By year end, Canada teetered on the brink of civil war.

As Andrew Theobald reveals, New Brunswickers were not spared the bitter divisiveness of the larger national debate. Determined to win the election, federal politicians fanned the flames of ethnic tension, pitting English against French and Irish Catholics against Protestants. In the end, the Conscription Crisis of 1917 fractured the ethnic harmony of New Brunswick, leaving a lasting and tragic legacy.

*The Bitter Harvest of War* is Volume 11 in the New Brunswick Military Heritage Series.

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