

## **Gunners climb Vimy Peak for Exercise VIMY GUNNER**

*By Bombardier Tyson Penrod, B Troop, 20 Independent Field Battery, RCA*

**On 8 September 2021, approximately 20 soldiers from 20th Independent Field Battery climbed Vimy Peak in Waterton National Park National Park.**



The soldiers of 20th Independent Field Battery (20 Ind Fd Bty) deployed to Waterton National Park with the ambition of conquering Vimy Peak. This adventure training served as the Battery's contribution to UBIQUE 150.

Vimy Peak is an approximately 2,300 metre summit located in Waterton Lakes National Park in Southern Alberta. Originally named Sheep Mountain, it was renamed in 1917 to commemorate those who fought in the Battle of Vimy Ridge and honour the victory. In 1943, the Geographical Names Board of Canada officially adopted the name of Vimy Peak.





*Gunners from 20th Independent Field Battery (20 Ind Fd Bty) hike to the top of Vimy Peak in Waterton National Park on Exercise VIMY GUNNER on 8 September 2021. Exercise VIMY GUNNER was 20 Ind Fd Bty's event to mark UBIQUE 150.*

Morale was high amongst the soldiers on the first leg of their journey. The first eight kilometers proved to be a serene stroll through the mountain environment. Gunners of 20 Ind Fd Bty recounted stories of their summer training, sang songs, and shared laughs. By the 12 kilometer mark, the steep elevation change and constant switchbacks offered by the mountain began to pay toll on the bodies of the troops.

The most challenging portion was the final push for the summit. Experienced hikers are likely familiar with the difficulties of “scrambling” up a mountainside. With the peak slowly approaching, soldiers persevered by crawling hand and foot through the scree to reach the top. Troops encouraged one another to continue climbing as the thought of flying the RCA flag at the top of Vimy Peak served as motivation.



*Gunners from 20th Independent Field Battery (20 Ind Fd Bty) rest at the top Vimy Peak in Waterton National Park on Exercise VIMY GUNNER on 8 September 2021. Exercise VIMY GUNNER was 20 Ind Fd Bty's event to mark UBIQUE 150.*

The view at the top was undeniably worth the arduous journey. The highlight of this adventure training was watching two highly deserving soldiers promoted on the summit of Vimy Peak. After a brief celebration atop of the windy mountain, the hikers made their descent down the hiking trail. The journey down the mountain was discernably quiet compared to the first leg of the adventure.

The soreness and fatigue set in as we neared the vehicles. Thankfully, the QM had prepared a BBQ to refuel the victorious troops before reconsolidating back to Vimy Ridge Armoury in Lethbridge, Alberta.

