



E. Wallace W. Watling

"Somewhere in France"



Overview

This lesson focuses upon using primary evidence and sources to establish historical perspective. It enables students to empathise with individuals in the past by gathering historical evidence about the Watling family of Chatham, New Brunswick. All of the templates, images, and archival sources used in this lesson plan can be found on the E. Wallace W. Watling [introductory page](#).

Historical Perspective

*How can we **ever understand** the past? (Seixas & Morton, 2013)*

Grade Levels: 7 to 9

Estimated Time: 2-3 class periods

Materials Required:

- Internet access to Canadian War Museum web site: [Canada at the First World War](#).
- Wallace Watling Family Event Cards (cut in advance – one set per student group);
- Markers, scissors, tape, mural paper;
- Photocopies of (or computer access to) primary archival source documents (as listed on introductory page);
- Photocopies of (or computer access to) scaffolding worksheets (as listed on introductory page);
- Large colour print image of Wallace Watling's boxing medals and accession record (as listed on introductory page);
- **Additional background reading:** Riedi E. & Mason T. (2006). "Leather" and the fighting spirit: Sport in the British army in *The First World War*. *Canadian Journal of History*, 41(3), 486-516;
- Quinn, S. (2010). *Agnes Warner and the nursing sisters of the great war*. Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions/ The New Brunswick Military Heritage Project;
- Silliker, G (2014). *A deadly drive: The Miramichi experience during the great war*. Victoria: Friesen Press;
- **Additional Internet resource:** *The Historical Thinking Project* (<http://historicalthinking.ca/>).

Lesson:

Part A - Introduction:

Think:

1. Commence the class by reviewing key events of the First World War (1914 – 1918), using the Canadian War Museum web site as a visual resource (Section 03 [“Key Canadian Events”](#)). Encourage students to take notes. Include as well:

- [Canada at War](#)
- [The Canadian Expeditionary Force](#)
- [Canadians Head Overseas](#)

End with [Tommy Canuck: The Infantry Soldier](#) (Point out that this web page will be particularly useful for students when completing the homework assignment. They may want to make note of the page address).



E. Wallace W. Watling:

2. Display the two First World War recruitment posters (found on introductory page under "Archival") on the whiteboard or classroom easel :

- [“Jump into your place” \(LAC C 93227\)](#)
- [“Can you not leave your job for a little?” \(CWM 19940004-149\)](#)

Demonstrate historical thinking by asking questions such as:

- What is the overall message (what does the poster want the public to do)?
- How does the poster make you feel?
- What effect would it have had on Canadians at the time?

Encourage students to help you with a more detailed analysis of the poster, providing guidance if necessary, by asking them to describe how the overall message is conveyed by the use of:

- Symbols and images;
- words;
- arrangement of the images and words;
- colours of the poster



Repeat this process again with the second poster, encouraging students to explain all aspects of the design, including the overall message, emotions played upon, etc.

Part B - Piecing Together the Watling Family Story:

Pair:

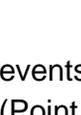
3. Explain to students that now the class is going to focus upon the war experience of a

particular New Brunswick family, the Watling family of Chatham, New Brunswick. Show students the image of Wallace Watling (PHF85.4-1 "[Wallace Watling With Trophies circa 1918](#)").

Wallace Watling enlisted with the 145th (Westmorland County) Battalion in 1915, and went overseas to France in 1916. He was a very able athlete in Track & Field, Rugby, and Boxing.

(Activity: Wallace Watling Family Event Cards)

Wallace Watling Timeline Activity

 <p>Edward Wallace Waits Watling joins the 75th Militia Regiment (Sussex, NB) - 1912</p>	 <p>Edward Wallace Waits Watling is born - March 16, 1888 - Chatham, NB</p>
 <p>Father, Alexander MacLaughlin Watling is born March 27, 1848 - Black River Bridge, NB</p>	 <p>Edward Wallace Waits Watling volunteers for the Canadian Over-Sea Expeditionary Force in Saint John, NB - April 10, 1915</p>
 <p>James Petrie Street Watling volunteers for the Canadian Over-Sea Expeditionary Force in Anner's (Nova Scotia) - April 22, 1915 - and is assigned to the Canadian Army Medical Corp.</p>	 <p>Alexander Watling is born - January 29, 1890 - Chatham, NB</p>
 <p>Edward Wallace Waits Watling is assigned to the 145th (Westmorland County) Battalion, with a rank of Lieutenant - 1916</p>	 <p>Alexander Watling volunteers for the Canadian Over-Sea expeditionary Force in Saint John, NB - April 10, 1915</p>
 <p>Edward Wallace Waits Watling, stationed at Camp Valcartier (Quebec), is deemed fit for overseas duty - September 17, 1916</p>	 <p>Alexander Watling volunteers for the 15th Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force at Camp Valcartier (Quebec) - September 4, 1914.</p>
<p>Jubal Watling is born, February 27, 1876 - Black River Bridge, NB</p>	<p>Alexander Watling re-enlists for in Halifax (Nova Scotia) - October 1, 1917 - and is assigned to the No. 9 Special Service Company CEF</p>

Working in groups, have students sort and organise event cards (prepared in advance) relating to the Watling family. Each group will also require a sheet of mural paper, tape, and markers.



Begin by encouraging students to draw a timeline (like in the previous class) that represents the duration of the First World War (you may wish to consult the Canadian War Museum web site, section 03 "[Key Canadian Events](#)").

Now encourage students to sort and arrange the events of the Watling Family - creating a group timeline of the family's war experience. (Point out that this family timeline will be particularly useful when completing the homework assignment.)



Think:

(Template: Wallace Watling Family Group Sheet)

4. Provide each student with a copy of the Wallace Watling Family Group Sheet. Also provide each student working-group with copies of the following primary source archival documents:

- 1891 Census - Chatham;
- Wallace Watling Military Personnel Records;
- Alexander Watling Attestation Papers 1914;
- George Maxwell Watling Attestation Papers 1916;
- James Petrie Watling Attestation Papers 1915;
- Alexander Watling Obituary (June 6, 1917);
- Wallace Watling Military Cross Citation, October 12, 1918;
- Christina Watling Obituary (November, 1943).

Working in groups, encourage students to fill out their own individual Wallace Watling Family Group Sheet with as much information as they can pull from these primary source documents and family event card timeline. (Point out that this information will be particularly helpful when completing the homework assignment.)

Additional Resources:

- [Lest We Forget First World War Student Information Package](#)

(These information sheets will help to interpret the documents found in the service files of the Canadian Expeditionary Force – including those of Wallace Watling. Please disregard the password request.)

- [Cursive Letter Writing Guide](#)

(Template: Interpreting Artefacts)

5. Remaining in working groups, now encourage students to examine the artifact source: Wallace Watling's boxing medals—and record their evidence using the interpreting artifacts template. Explain that they will be asking similar questions as was asked with the previous archival sources:

- What is it? Where and when was it created? Who created it? Why (do you think)?
- What does this mean? What clues can you draw from this artefact source about Wallace Watling?



6. Now provide students with additional information, by handing out the artefact accession record and the 1939 newspaper source (“Sport is rated good training for army men”):

- What is the significance of the medals?
- What more information about who won them and why can you pull from the museum’s accession record?
- How does this evidence relate to the newspaper article?

Have students add the evidence that they have collected to their Wallace Watling Family Group Sheet.

Part C - Greetings from Somewhere in France:

Think Aloud:

7. Wrap-up by explaining and demonstrating the writing assignment (below): Using a “think aloud” strategy, model for students specific questions to ask when writing historical fiction. Since none of us can actually know all that was happening in the lives of Wallace Watling or Christina Watling in the fall of 1918, we can fill in the blanks with our imaginations, and use evidence to reconstruct a fictional letter from France. Questions to encourage:

- From the perspective of Wallace Watling, what was happening in his life on October 13, 1918?
- Do you think his athletic abilities would have helped him at Arleaux?
- What events in his life do you think he would want to tell his sister about?
- What would he be wondering about home?
- From the perspective of Christina Watling, what do you think could have been happening in her life on October 13, 1918?
- What events in her life do you think she would want to tell her brother?
- What would she be wondering about home?

8. In preparation for the letter-writing assignment, encourage students to indicate whether they would like to play the role of Wallace Watling or Christina Watling. Allow time in class for students to draft a short outline of their letter from the front, framing it around the topic: **“Greetings from Somewhere in France”** Demonstrate a correct format (and salutation) for letter writing (perhaps provide examples from the period, [such as this from the collection of The Albert County Museum](#))

As part of the assignment, provide students with ground rules for writing historical fiction, adapted from *The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts* (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 166). You may also wish that students submit an annotated bibliography in advance (with their first draft), before submitting their final copy for marking. To extend the assignment, have students exchange their completed letters (between Wallace and Christina Watling) and write a response.

Part D – Formative Assessment:

Student Writing Assignment: “Greetings from Somewhere in France”

Due date:

News travels slowly during wartime. Based upon discussions in class, and evidence that you have gathered from primary sources examined in class, assume the role of either Wallace Watling or Christina Watling.

*The date is **October 13, 1918**, and you have just learned about the death of your father (Alexander). You are writing your brother/sister from “somewhere in France” and want to share with them what life is like for you. You are also thinking about home and wondering what life is like there, without your father.*

Here are some questions to think about when writing your letter:

- 1. How can I use language and dialogue to create an authentic sense of the time period?*
- 2. How can I make my character authentic, with perspectives that reflect the time and place in which they lived?*
- 3. What evidence do I have that this is what my character would believe or do?*
- 4. What other options might my character have, given this time and setting?*
- 5. What is my point of view?*
- 6. How accurate or plausible is my letter?*
- 7. How does my letter help others understand the past in ways that other sources do not?*

Assessment Rubric:

Criteria for Historical Thinking about Significance	Very well	To some extent	To a limited degree	Not at all
Student formats the letter with a return mailing address, date and salutation.	3	2	1	0
Student places their character in the historical context of what was happening – or had recently happened - in France. in 1918.	3	2	1	0

Student makes more than three references to evidence drawn from primary sources analysed in class.	4	3	2	0
Student explains how their character's life has changed as a result of the First World War.	3	2	1	0
Student makes reference to at least three specific events (during the First World War) that relate to their character's life.	3	2	1	0
Student demonstrates how their character felt about these life events .	3	2	1	0
Student makes reference to the lives of at least three other members of the Watling family that relates to evidence drawn from primary sources.	3	2	1	0
Student includes a bibliography of additional sources consulted.	3	2	1	0