



## News Release

---

### Canada's Last Surviving Great War Veteran Turns 107

**Toronto, Ontario – July 23rd** – The Dominion Institute wishes Canada's last surviving Great War veteran John Babcock a happy 107<sup>th</sup> birthday. "As our last living link to the First World War, Mr. Babcock is a national treasure" says Rudyard Griffiths, Co-founder of the Dominion Institute. "It is our pleasure to send him our best wishes today."

When Canadian veteran Dwight Wilson passed away on May 9, 2007, John Babcock became the only remaining veteran of the First World War. Born in Ontario, Mr. Babcock joined the 146<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force at the age of 15. He now lives in Spokane, Washington.

Mr. Babcock constitutes Canada's only living link to the sacrifices and triumphs of the more than a half million Canadians who served in the First World War and the more than 60,000 who died between 1914 and 1918. The Dominion Institute supports the idea of a government led National Day of Commemoration to honour the memories of First World War veterans. Properly planned in advance and adequately funded, a national day of commemoration could engage Canadians not only through events at the National War Memorial and on Parliament Hill but also at local cenotaphs and monuments nationwide.

Recent surveys undertaken by the Dominion Institute reveal that Canadians' knowledge of the First World War is fading rapidly with barely one in four being able to name the battle of Vimy Ridge as a key Canadian victory in the First World War. It is the Institute's view that a National Day of Commemoration could afford an important occasion for Canadians young and old to come together to renew the pledge made by our forbearers at the end of the Great War - never to forget.

Visit [www.dominion.ca](http://www.dominion.ca) to access information on the Dominion Institute's Memory Project, a speakers' bureau of veteran volunteers from across the country, and copies of past polls.

**Contact:** Rudyard Griffiths, Cofounder  
Phone: 416-727-9626, Email: [rudyard@dominion.ca](mailto:rudyard@dominion.ca)