

Hey there! I'm **Josh Rosen**, the illustrator of **History Comics: World War II: Fight on the Home Front!**

It's part of the hit **History Comics** graphic novel series. It teaches you about what life was like for folks back home during the Second World War.



While the book mostly focuses on the US, a lot of what it covers applies to Canada as well. But as a Canadian myself, I can't help but wonder . . . were there any experiences from that time that were unique to Canada alone?

To help me answer, I've brought a friend: **Leafy! The Talking Maple Leaf!**

That's right!

To start, one difference is that Canada joined the fight a little earlier!



GERMANY
POLAND

While the US entered the war in 1941, Canada entered in 1939. It joined Britain and France to stand against Germany's invasion of Poland.

Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King knew the war wouldn't be easy for Canada. In September 1939, he addressed the nation.

"The people of Canada *will*, I know, face the days of stress and strain which lie ahead with calm and resolute *courage*."

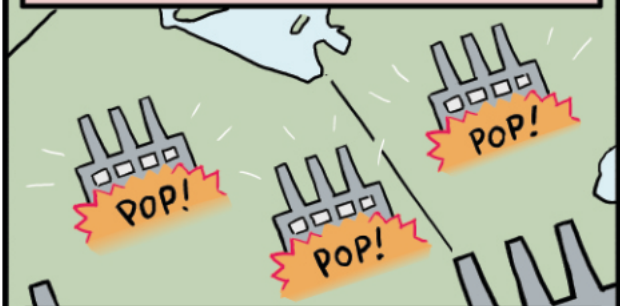
"There is *no home* in Canada, *no family*, and *no individual* whose fortunes and freedom are not *bound up* in the present struggle."



Over 1 million Canadians volunteered to serve in the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Navy, and Royal Canadian Air Force. They fought across land, sea, and air to stop the Axis powers.

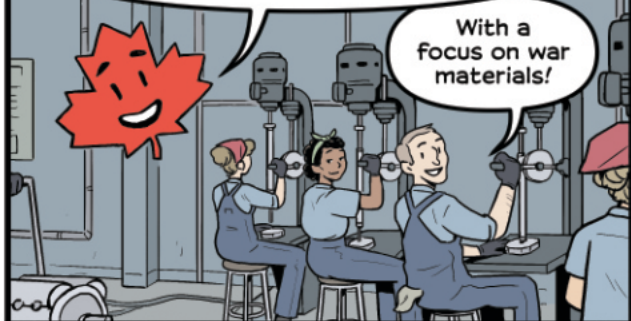


In order to support those brave troops from Canada and other allied nations, the whole Canadian economy was rearranged.



New factories popped up across the country, and existing factories shifted to producing military supplies.

Canada made a **shockingly** quick switch from being a country focused on farming and natural resource extraction to a country driven by **industrial manufacturing**.



Meanwhile, a large portion of the food and raw goods Canada was still producing started being shipped off to Britain. Average Canadians made do with less, in order to support those on the frontlines of the war.

By 1942, **25%** of all meat, **65%** of all cheese, and **13%** of all eggs were being shipped overseas.



To pull this shift off, the Canadian economy became tightly controlled. The government set up rules for what companies were allowed to produce, and what workers were allowed to be paid.

At least the prices aren't getting any **higher...**

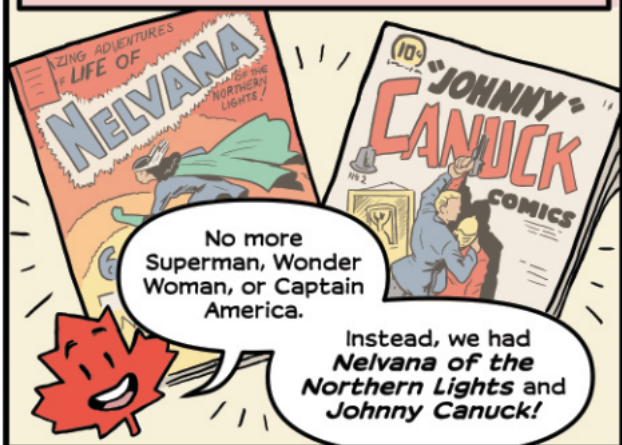


The government also regulated the price of basics like milk, sugar, and canned goods.

Restrictions were also made on "non-essential" goods entering the country. Things like American magazines, candy bars, and . . .



For a few years, American comics disappeared from Canada. Replacing them were black and white comics featuring Canadian-themed superheroes, referred to as "Canadian Whites."



When not buying comics, Canadians also spent money on war bonds! Or "victory bonds," as they were known in Canada. Adults and children alike took part in selling them.

One notable campaign involved staging a fake Nazi invasion of Winnipeg. Called *If Day*, the performance was meant to show what might happen if Germany won the war.



The "Nazis" took over the entire city for the day, burning books in the middle of the street and taking prominent politicians "hostage."



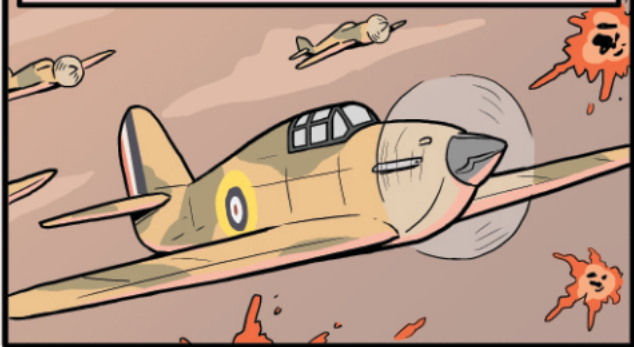
The demonstration clearly had an effect— it raised over \$3 Million dollars in a single day.

Many regular Canadian citizens rose to prominence during the war years. One of the most notable being *Elsie MacGill!*



Elsie was the first woman ever to earn a master's degree in aeronautical engineering.

During the war years, Elsie oversaw Canada's production of the Hawker Hurricane fighter plane. It was one of the main fighters flown by the Allies during the Battle of Britain.



Over 1,400 planes were produced under Elsie's watch.



"**War effort** is a man staying and working an extra hour, or two or **five** hours a day; it is a woman cutting short her noon hour to get back to finish the job."

"War effort is something, which is as **microscopic** in the unit as the individual, but as **mighty** in the sum total as an army."



Another Canadian of note during the war was **Tommy Prince!**



Tommy was an Ojibwe soldier who stood out in combat for his cleverness, courage, and abilities as a sniper and scout.

Tommy was a member of the First Special Service Force, the precursor to modern special forces.



He became one of the most decorated Canadian soldiers of the war, earning the American Silver Star and the British Military Medal, among other accolades.

After the war, Tommy used his platform as a war hero to fight for the rights of Indigenous people in Canada.



He represented the First Nations communities of Manitoba in Parliament, and fought hard to get the government to honor Crown treaties and abolish the Indian Act.

Sadly, there were shameful parts to Canada's wartime years too . . . As in the US, Canada forcibly relocates those of Japanese descent. 22,000 Japanese Canadians had their property stripped and were placed in internment camps.



About 600 Italian Canadians and 800 German Canadians were also detained for a time. Political dissidents were often held without trial under the Canadian War Measures Act.

WWII introduced profound changes to all parts of Canadian life, some of which never fully went away.

This pamphlet only covers a small portion of it

So to learn *more* ways about how WWII changed society, be sure to read ...

... *Word War II: Fight on the Home Front!*

Hey! WAIT a minute!

Josh! What do you think you're *doing*?

WE'RE the *actual* narrators of the book!

Yeah! What's all this talking maple leaf stuff?

Quit tryin' to steal our *job*!

I ... uh ... Leafy? Help?

Woops! Gotta go!

Check out **History Comics: World War II!**

And support your local *bookstoooooores!*