

Battlefield Exploration



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The 1914 Battle of Mons

The battlefields of the first British battle in the Great War are certainly worth a visit. Several memorials tell the story of heroism and horror, but the military cemetery, with both German and British casualties will certainly cling to memory. And the unbelievable story of the Angels of Mons is one of those great mystery stories in the history of the Great War.

The Tour

Your professional battlefield guide will come pick you up at your accommodation*.

From Ypres you'll drive along the motorways to the Mons area. Our first stop will be at **Casteau**, where you can find the memorial for the First British Shots fired on the Western Front in the First World War. Just opposite is also the memorial to the Canadian outpost on 11 November 1918. The Canadians had recaptured Mons just prior to the Armistice.

Passing S.H.A.P.E. (Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Europe) you'll then drive to **Nimy** to see the spot where the first VCs of the Great War were awarded to Lieutenant Maurice Dease and private Sidney Godley. Defence of the Nimy railway bridge was heroic but nevertheless the British troops needed to retreat once the road bridge was captured by the Germans. Oskar Niemeyer played an important role in this German success.

From Nimy we drive to **Ville-sur-Haine** to see the memorial to George Lawrence Price. Private Price was the last Commonwealth soldier to be killed in the Great War: at 10.58 am on 11 November 1918.

Next onwards to **Obourg** to see the memorial to the Middlesex Regiment at Obourg Railway Station. Here one unknown British soldier held off the German advance by getting a machine gun into action from the top of the former railway station. The unknown soldier did not survive his action though. Next we follow the retreat of the Middlesex Regiment onto the high ground of **La Bascule**. At the crossroads we'll find two memorials: one for the Royal Irish Rifles that defended the area and the Memorial to the First and Last Battle. Passing the Chateau Gendebien, used as a

military hospital during the Battle of Mons, we drive into the city centre of Mons. Lunch at the **Grand Place**.

After lunch we visit the **Mons Memorial Museum** to learn all about the first British battle of the First World War, but also get more information on the years of German occupation. You'll have about 1 hour to explore the museum.

Along the road to Binche we then drive towards the **St Symphorien Cemetery**, where both German and British graves can be found. The cemetery – one of the most beautiful and interesting cemeteries of the First World War – holds the graves of Maurice Dease, George Lawrence Price (= the last Commonwealth soldier to be killed in the Great War), John Parr (the first British casualty in the Battle of Mons), Oskar Niemeyer, ... and many more.

Return to Ypres by 5 pm.

** When accommodated in the Ypres area, there will be no extra charge for the pick-up and drop-off at your accommodation. If you want to be picked up from other places (like Bruges, Ghent, Lille, Arras, ... et cetera), there will be an extra charge for the extra mileage.*

Practical Information

- » **Departure** from your accommodation in Ypres at about 9 am; back in Ypres by 5 pm. Other departure points (Bruges, Ghent, Lille, ...) are possible, but may result in an extra charge.
- » **Tariff:** € 275 (with a maximum of 7 participants).
 - > If more than 7 participants, tariff will be depending on the coach tariff.
 - > In the price is included: transportation with minibus and professional guide/driver.
 - > Extra entrance fee to be paid during this tour: € 9 p.p. for the Mons Memorial Museum. This is optional, however; you can also decide not to visit the museum.
- » **Walking:** only short distances from the car to the actual sites. Never more than 500 yards.

**Want to add a specific site to the itinerary? Or want to combine several itineraries?
Please let us know, and we'll provide a quote!**