

# Inspector Rex's History Snippet #25

## John Monash (1865-1931)



Source: [Sir John Monash](#)

John Monash was actually an Australian but in those days Great Britain and Australia were bound up together. His parents came from Prussia not far away from the home of Ludendorff the future head of the German armed forces. Monash was Jewish. The name "Monash" is a form of the Hebrew "Manasseh." The maiden name of his mother was also "Manasse." In Prussia and the German Empire the authorities at that time would not let a Jew serve as an officer. In Australia John Monash became a colonel by serving part time in the militia.

# On 1 June 1918, the promotion of Monash to lieutenant general and commander of the Australian Corps was confirmed, at the time the largest individual corps on the Western Front.

Monash was a noted advocate of the co-ordinated use of infantry, aircraft, artillery and tanks.

Monash also placed great emphasis on the welfare of his troop and the economy of force, i.e. sparing the lives of his men.

There were officers in the Australian Army who disliked Monash because of his personality that they associated with his Jewishness. They induced Prime Minister Billy Hughes to replace him. Hughes traveled to the Western Front in order to do so. Upon meeting Monash however, and talking with others about him, Hughes decided to leave Monash in command.

The Allied forces at the Battle of Amiens, 8 August 1918, consisted of British, Canadian, and Australian troops. Field Marshal Douglas Haig was in overall command. The Australian Corps led the attack. In 45 to 95 minutes it was over.

The defeated German leader, General Erich Ludendorff, described it in the following words: "August 8th was the black day of the German Army in the history of the war".

Monash went on to defeat the Germans in other places and breach the Hindenburg Line in effect ending the First World War.

### **Comment by Inspector Rex**

General Sir John Monash is on the reverse of the \$100 Australian banknote.

Women are always depicted on the obverse (front-usually of a coin) of a banknote.

Dame Nellie Melba is on the obverse of the \$100 note.