

Année universitaire 2014-2015

1<sup>ère</sup> session 2ème semestre  
**ENEAD**  
(Sujet semestre pair)

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IDENTIFICATION DU SUJET

Code UE : A6BCB3

Intitulé UE : civilisation britannique complément 3

EXAMEN

*Code épreuve : A6BCB3D*

*Intitulé épreuve : civilisation britannique complément 3*

*Durée épreuve : 1h30*

*Documents autorisés : aucun*

*Enseignant responsable : Yann BÉLIARD*

Le sujet comporte | 3 | page (s)

Oraux : L'épreuve écrite est suivie d'un oral

OUI  NON

Choisissez l'un des deux sujets suivants (dissertation OU commentaire).

Sujet de dissertation

Given that most people expected the war to be over by Christmas 1914, why did it take Britain and her allies until November 1918 to defeat Germany and her allies?

Sujet de commentaire (voir texte au dos).

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*A l'attention du candidat :*

- N'oubliez pas de reporter le code de l'épreuve et le code de l'élément pédagogique dans l'en-tête de la copie.
- Si le sujet comporte plusieurs parties, utilisez une copie par partie et portez le titre de la partie sur chaque copie
- Les résultats seront publiés par le Département.
- Si l'épreuve est suivie d'un oral, la convocation à cet oral est faite par le Département. Renseignez-vous dès maintenant auprès de votre secrétariat.

Extracts from the 2nd despatch written by Sir Douglas Haig on the Somme Offensive of July-November 1916.

1 "General Headquarters, 23rd December, 1916

My Lord;

I have the honour to submit the following report on the operations of the Forces under my Command since the 19th May, the date of my last Despatch. (...)

5 The object of that offensive was threefold:

To relieve the pressure on Verdun.

To assist our Allies in the other theatres of war by stopping any further transfer of German troops from the Western front.

To wear down the strength of the forces opposed to us. (...)

10 **General Review. Our Main Objects Achieved**

The three main objects with which we had commenced our offensive in July had already been achieved at the date when this account closes; in spite of the fact that the heavy autumn rains had prevented full advantage being taken of the favourable situation created by our advance, at a time when we had good grounds for hoping to achieve yet more important successes.

15 Verdun had been relieved; the main German forces had been held on the Western front; and the enemy's strength had been very considerably worn down.

20 Any one of these three results is in itself sufficient to justify the Somme battle. The attainment of all three of them affords ample compensation for the splendid efforts of our troops and for the sacrifices made by ourselves and our Allies. They have brought us a long step forward towards the final victory of the Allied cause.

The desperate struggle for the possession of Verdun had invested that place with a moral and political importance out of all proportion to its military value. Its fall would undoubtedly have been proclaimed as a great victory for our enemies, and would have shaken the faith of many in our ultimate success.

25 The failure of the enemy to capture it, despite great efforts and very heavy losses, was a severe blow to his prestige, especially in view of the confidence he had openly expressed as to the results of the struggle. (...)

### **Our Troops**

30 So far as these results are due to the action of the British forces, they have been attained by troops the vast majority of whom had been raised and trained during the war. Many of them, especially amongst the drafts sent to replace wastage, counted their service by months, and gained in the Somme battle their first experience of war. The conditions under which we entered the war had made this unavoidable.

35 We were compelled either to use hastily trained and inexperienced officers and men, or else to defer the offensive until we had trained them. In this latter case we should have failed our Allies. That these troops should have accomplished so much under such conditions, and against an Army and a nation whose chief concern for so many years has been preparation for war, constitutes a feat of which the history of our nation records no equal.

67  
40 The difficulties and hardships cheerfully overcome, and the endurance, determination and invincible courage shown in meeting them, can hardly be imagined by those who have not had personal experience of the battle, even though they have themselves seen something of war.

The events which I have described in this Despatch form but a bare outline of the more important occurrences. To deal in any detail even with these, without touching on the smaller fights and the ceaseless work in the trenches continuing day and night for five months, is not possible here.

45 Meanwhile, it must suffice to say that troops from every part of the British Isles, and from every Dominion and quarter of the Empire, whether Regulars, Territorials, or men of the New Armies, have borne a share in the Battle of the Somme. While some have been more fortunate than others in opportunities for distinction, all have done their duty nobly.

50 Among all the long roll of victories borne on the colours of our regiments, there has never been a higher test of the endurance and resolution of our infantry. They have shown themselves worthy of the highest traditions of our race, and of the proud records of former wars. (...)

### Future Prospects

In conclusion, I desire to add a few words as to future prospects.

55 The enemy's power has not yet been broken, nor is it yet possible to form an estimate of the time the war may last before the objects for which the Allies are fighting have been attained. But the Somme battle has placed beyond doubt the ability of the Allies to gain those objects.

60 The German Army is the mainstay of the Central Powers, and a full half of that Army, despite all the advantages of the defensive, supported by the strongest fortifications, suffered defeat on the Somme this year. Neither the victors nor the vanquished will forget this; and, though bad weather has given the enemy a respite, there will undoubtedly be many thousands in his ranks who will begin the new campaign with little confidence in their ability to resist our assaults or to overcome our defence.

65 Our new Armies entered the battle with the determination to win and with confidence in their power to do so. They have proved to themselves, to the enemy, and to the world that this confidence was justified, and in the fierce struggle they have been through they have learned many valuable lessons which will help them in the future.

I have the honour to be,  
Your Lordship's obedient Servant,  
D. HAIG, General,  
70 Commanding-in-Chief, British Armies in France."