

# Indigenous Experience in WWI: Excerpts from *Three Day Road*

Francis Pegahmagabow was born in 1889 on the Parry Island Indian Reserve (now the [Wasauksing First Nation](#)), an Ojibwa community near Parry Sound, Ontario. When he is three, his father dies and his mother returns to her home in the [Henvey Inlet First Nation](#).

In the care of elder Noah Nebimanyquod — who had also raised Pegahmagabow's own orphaned father — young Francis spends his childhood steeped in the customs of the Anishnaabe. Nebimanyquod teaches him to fish and hunt, while his foster mother educates him about traditional medicine. He grows up practicing both traditional Anishnaabe spirituality and Roman Catholicism.

<https://www.cbc.ca/2017/canadathestoryofus/the-deadliest-sniper-of-wwi-was-francis-pegahmagabow-an-ojibwa-soldier-1.4083644>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYzDBeG3By0>

Pegahmagabow's life was inspiration to writer Joseph Boyden in his novel *Three Day Road*.

Excerpts from *Three Day Road*:

- Cree Aunt Niska, meets her nephew on his return from WWI (3-9)
- British colonization; Niska's epileptic visions (46-49)
- Residential school of Niska (89-95)
- Niska rescues Xavier from residential school (217-220)
- Xavier remembers Residential School (221-223)
- Xavier and Elijah decide to enlist; Niska goes to town to hear news (289-301)
- Cree Nephew and friend, Xavier and Elijah, travel south to enlist (161-163)
- Memories of the trauma in Passchendaele (302-307)
- Cree identity in a British war; Morphine addiction; trench raid (136-155)

