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# Boys of the Maple Leaf

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BOYS OF THE MAPLE LEAF

by

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B.A. December 2014, Old Dominion University

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of  
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

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HISTORY

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## ABSTRACT

### BOYS OF THE MAPLE LEAF

Maggie Kontra Emmens  
Old Dominion University, 2016  
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This thesis examines the development of a distinctive Canadian national identity articulated in trench newspapers of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) fighting during World War I on European soil. Three English Canadian sources, *The Listening Post*, *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, and *The Iodine Chronicle*, form the bases for analysis and the inquiry into the history of nascent Canadian-ness among English Canadian soldiers in the European trenches between 1914 and 1919. The trench journals reflect specifics of their units, their locality in the trenches, and the affects of British roots, American influence, geographic influence, news from and memories of the Canadian homeland.

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This thesis is dedicated to the men and women who served during the First World War,  
especially those in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.  
Thank you.

*There are maple leaves in Flanders – scattered far and wide  
They came to fight for Empire – and for the Empire died.  
« Lest we forget » their standard set  
Is high and noble, but the way is rough.  
Hold courage high – needs must; we die –  
The glory of the Empire; 'tis enough,  
That we, like they, should make the supreme sacrifice.  
A Silent Toast – « The vanished host,  
Our comrades – those we loved the most –  
The men who paid the price. »*

*The Listening Post, no. 25, 21 May 1917*

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I thank the following Canadian institutions for access to their archives: Library and Archives Canada, the Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions (CIHM), the Canadian War Museum, and Wartime Canada through the University of Western Ontario.

I humbly thank God for granting me this ability to write and opening my mind to the possibility of academic achievement. This thesis could not have been completed without recognizing the support of very important people in my life, past and present. To my husband, Phil, who supported me in myriad ways throughout this process, especially letting me take over the dining room table, reminding me to relax, and making me laugh with jokes regarding “thesesitis.” To my children who listened to me rattle off little bits of history through the years without rolling their eyes too much. To my mom, Marika, who showed me that it is never too late to change careers and to pursue your passion. To the memory of my grandmother, Irén, who showed me what faith means and taught me the importance of humility and patience. To the memory of my grandfathers, László and Kálmán, who instilled in me my thirst for knowledge, my sense of place in the world, and how important ‘the story’ is to learning.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BAC-LAC	Bibliothèque et Archives Canada / Library and Archives Canada
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
CEF	Canadian Expeditionary Force
RSC	Revised Statutes of Canada
SC	Statutes of Canada

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## INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the articulation of a distinctive Canadian national identity in trench newspapers of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) fighting World War I on European soil. The content of these trench journals reflects specifics of their units and their locality in the trenches and reveals the effects of British roots, American influence, geographic position, news from and memories of the Canadian homeland.

Produced by specific divisions, papers including *The Gasper*, *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, *The Iodine Chronicle*, *Le Mouchoir*, *Le Canard Enchainé*, *The Whizz-Bang*, *Desert Dust-Bin*, and *Battalion Buzzer* ranged from handwritten sheets reproduced with carbon paper to elaborate printed publications including photos and high-quality drawings.<sup>1</sup> Almost every journal contained unofficial communication spread through rumor and gossip, speculation, and queries. Depending on the category, acceptable entries in the papers ranged from scraps of paper to formal documents. Some such as *Wipers Times*, *Fifth Gloucester Gazette*, *The Listening Post*, and *Le Canard Enchainé* were available for purchase on the home front. Constant censorship in the Great War meant that every journal bore evidence of the heavy hand of censors who examined and edited for facts of military importance and items that might negatively affect morale.<sup>2</sup>

This thesis examines *The Listening Post*, *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, and *The Iodine Chronicle*, written to promote camaraderie and solidarity while providing troops a form of

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<sup>1</sup> Graham Seal, “‘We’re Here Because We’re Here’: Trench Culture of the Great War,” *Folklore* 124, no. 2 (August 2013), 179; Graham Seal, *The Soldiers’ Press: Trench Journals in the First World War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 16.

<sup>2</sup> J. G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies 1914–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); James P Doughton, “Sketches of the Poilu’s World: Trench Cartoons from the Great War,” in *World War I and the Cultures of Modernity* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2000), 38, 174.

escape and entertainment, as examples of the Canadian trench press across the journalistic spectrum.<sup>3</sup> *The Listening Post* sought items highlighting “funny things that happen” from all ranks in order “to break trench monotony.”<sup>4</sup> Similarly, *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette* promoted “the merry laugh and entertainment which heralds the breaking-down of dull monotony and routine living” as a “feature of the social life of the [4<sup>th</sup>] battalion,” to represent “all ranks” therein, to give hope, pleasure, and growing smiles.<sup>5</sup> Within the pages of these two newspapers, soldiers from every rank contributed varied pieces of writing while officers and other higher-ranking officials only furnished write-ups in the anniversary or Christmas issues. Unlike the humorous opening pages of the above two journals, *The Iodine Chronicle*’s premier issue started on a congratulatory note to the unit’s former commanding officer on the occasion of his promotion and departure and welcomed the new commanding officer. It also mentioned the death of one of the unit’s majors and said farewell to one of the generals.<sup>6</sup> This chronicle, possibly shaped by propaganda officers, was informational containing what the officers believed their troops might find acceptable. Although the original intention to use this publication was to show views of soldiers from regions across Canada, it also serves as a research foil in a few

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<sup>3</sup> Canadian Army 7th Canadian Infantry Battalion 1st British Columbia Regiment, *The Listening Post* (France: British Expeditionary Force, 1915), accessed 9 March 2015, [http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.8\\_06774](http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.8_06774). Hereafter cited as *Listening Post*. Canadian Army 4th Battalion 1st Canadian Contingent, *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette* (Flanders: British Expeditionary Force, 1915), accessed 10 March 2015, <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/publication/400001120> and <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.odu.edu/trenchjournals/history/fromDatabasesLayer?accountid=12967>. Hereafter cited as *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*. Canadian Army Medical Corps No. 1 Canadian Field Ambulance 1st Canadian Division, *The Iodine Chronicle* (France: British Expeditionary Force, 1915), accessed 9 March 2015, [http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.8\\_06748](http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.8_06748) and <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.odu.edu/trenchjournals/history/fromDatabasesLayer?accountid=12967>. Hereafter cited as *Iodine Chronicle*. Field ambulance units, like this one, removed casualties from dressing stations and regimental aid posts near the front lines to casualty clearing stations outside enemy artillery range where emergency surgery was performed. Patients then, by ambulance train, proceeded to general stationary hospitals near the coast and from there to a special hospital or a convalescent hospital in England via hospital ship. See sketch of wounded soldier progress in Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1914-1916*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Toronto: Penguin Group, 2007), 197.

<sup>4</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 1, 10 August 1915.

<sup>5</sup> *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>6</sup> “Editorial,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 1, 25 October 1915.

ways. First, its shaping by officers rather than the enlisted gives it a more informational tone, less humor, less irony, and less sarcasm. Second, the majority of the medical corps was behind and outside of the trenches, which gave them a quieter environment and less exposure to flesh-seeking grenades, which allowed for more reflection or contemplation and related relaxing activities. Finally, this location far behind the main lines of fighting meant more opportunity for interaction with various national and dominion troops and less interrupted communication from home. In August 1915, mere months after arrival at the Western Front, the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, CEF, published its first newspaper. Later, the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, CEF, and the No. 1 Field Ambulance, CEF, both published their first journals in October 1915. All aimed to break the monotony and routine living of the war for a modest per-issue price of a half-franc, one franc, and a half-franc, respectively.<sup>7</sup>

Each of these newspapers' titles evoked the specifics of soldiers' lives in the trenches. *The Iodine Chronicle* referenced the use of iodine in the medical field and specifically by the No. 1 Field Ambulance. *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette* referred to a specific trench in Ploegsteert named Dead Horse Corner where much of the 4th Battalion spent its time. *The Listening Post* referred to one of the most difficult, vulnerable, nerve-wracking, and treacherous sentry-type night jobs. Men sat "between the lines in 'no-man's-land' to gauge" the enemy both critically and analytically from 20 to 40 meters (65-130 feet) away from the front line trench from dusk to dawn armed only with a rifle.<sup>8</sup> They spoke not a word but used their "own private wire" leading back to the front line "tied to a little finger or toe" using a number of pulls as indicators.<sup>9</sup> One

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<sup>7</sup> The first of the Canadian divisions arrived to the Western Front in February 1915, including the 7th and 4th Battalions, and the No. 1 Field Ambulance. See *Bibliothèque et Archives Canada-Library and Archives Canada*, Government of Canada, accessed 12 March 2015, <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/>. Hereafter cited as BAC-LAC.

<sup>8</sup> "Trench Terms and Their Meanings," *Listening Post*, no. 28, 15 March 1916; "Why the Listening Post?" *Listening Post*, no. 7, 29 October 1915; "Why the Listening Post?" *Listening Post*, no. 8, 25 November 1915; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 281-282.

<sup>9</sup> "Why the Listening Post?" *Listening Post*, no. 7, 29 October 1915.

soldier described listening post as the “dreary damp, despondent, despairing, dangerous drudgery of this devastating thrice damned duty.”<sup>10</sup> This string of alliteration indicated not only the perilous work but also the emotional toil associated with it.

The trench paper quotations appearing in this thesis come from three English-speaking Canadian sources located in Canadian archives and chosen for their location, unit origin, and number of available issues. All three sources came from the fields of France and Belgium throughout the Great War, and the Canadian units publishing them originated from various provinces. According to attestation records, the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion hailed from British Columbia, the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion came from Central Ontario, and the soldiers within the Medical Corps belonged to all parts of Canada. Facsimiles of all 33 issues of *The Listening Post* published from August 1915 to March 1919 during the war including a last anniversary edition in 1938 are available through the Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions (CIHM). Facsimiles of the first three issues of *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette* are available and it is entirely possible these were the only issues produced in October and December 1915 and June 1916.<sup>11</sup> All 16 issues of *The Iodine Chronicle*, from October 1915 through July 1918, are available through both CIHM and the ProQuest database, Trench Journals and Unit Magazines of the First World War. Issues 7 through 14 of this journal combined with two additional journals, *The Splint Record* and *Now & Then*, from No. 2 and 3 Field Ambulances, and incorporated into *N.Y.D.* With issue 15, it

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<sup>10</sup> “Why the Listening Post?” *Listening Post*, no. 8, 25 November 1915.

<sup>11</sup> According to the *Listening Post*, the editor of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* “closed his career” with that trench paper because of a severe wound in his thigh and hand incurred “during the operations on the Somme” and now “an inmate of the Edinburg War Hospital” in Scotland. “Mentioned in Despatches,” *Listening Post*, no. 20, 10 December 1916. Similarly, this was mentioned in the *Iodine Chronicle*, which wish the editor a speedy recovery. “Here and There,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 10, 22 December 1916. In a later issue of each paper, there were different reports of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* editor. The *Listening Post* reported said ex-private was on the editorial staff of the illustrated weekly *Canada*, which he used to pull information from for his trench paper (see footnote 114 on page 74 in this thesis). *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1917. The *Iodine Chronicle* reported said editor worked for a new trench paper entitled ‘Blighty’. “Exchanges,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 15, 29 March 1918.

reverted to its own journal again and completed its singular run through issue 16. The number of issues and their timespan allows for an examination of change over time, if any.

This thesis uses the trench press as a source to examine the history of nascent Canadian-ness formed or starting to form in the ranks of English-speaking Canadian soldiers in the European trenches between 1914 and 1919. Not all Canadians, either Anglophone or Francophone, viewed their ancestral roots in the same way. Language provisions in the 1867 Constitution Act, the 1969 Official Languages Act, and its subsequent modifications and amendments in 1988 and 2005, make clear that both the British and the French settlers have contributed to the making of Canada.<sup>12</sup> This examination focuses on Anglophone sources for their immediate availability and to highlight their relations to and interactions with other English speaking nations. Relations between these two primary groups of European settlers on Canada's shores are very complex and cannot be dissected and analyzed adequately in the limited scope of this paper.<sup>13</sup> Many Canadian authors, across all academic topics, tend to separate Canadians into two main groups on the lines of language: English Canadians and French Canadians. For the purposes of this thesis, English-speaking Canadians, generally the English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh, are all labeled English Canadians, as is common in Canada and as they are referred to in the trench press, in the political speeches of the time, and in the secondary sources used in the process of my research. British distinctions, e.g., Scotch-Canadian, Irish-Canadian, are virtually absent in the trench press. Canadians of non-British and non-French origins are either labeled by

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<sup>12</sup> Department of Justice Canada, "40 Years of the Official Languages Act," *Government of Canada News Releases*, 2009, accessed 6 September 2016, <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?m=/index&nid=480459>; Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, "Understanding Your Language Rights," Official Languages Act, 2014, accessed 6 September 2016, [http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/en/language\\_rights/act](http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/en/language_rights/act). This language act applies to federal institutions and departments (not provincial), Crown corporations (VIA Rail and Canada Post), and certain organizations (Air Canada, CN and NAV CANADA) that retained language obligations after privatization.

<sup>13</sup> No French Canadian trench newspapers have been analyzed in my research.

their national or linguistic origins, e.g., Italian-Canadians, Hungarian-Canadians, or thrown into whichever of the two main official language groups they most closely identify with.

As noted in the trench papers, Canadian soldiers in the Great War were volunteers and conscripts, urban and rural, employed and unemployed, white-collar and blue-collar, primarily male between the ages of 18 and 45, in the main native English speakers, and mostly from Ontario and the Western provinces.<sup>14</sup> As a Dominion government of the British Empire, the Canadian government primarily concerned itself with local issues while the British government dealt with external issues including military defense. Although Canada had a small militia after Confederation in 1867, it functioned more as a symbol of force rather than an actual military force.<sup>15</sup> In both the Boer War and the Great War, Canadians joined the battle after the British forces already absorbed the initial fighting, after enlisting a number of volunteer recruits, and after acquiring proper training, weapons, and equipment.<sup>16</sup>

In 1914, Canada, as a Dominion of the British Empire, did not form or contribute to foreign policy, did not decide to declare war, did not host, or participate in, diplomatic discussions; however, she did decide how to participate in this new war and what form that participation entailed.<sup>17</sup> Prime Minister Robert Borden and the leader of the opposition, former

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<sup>14</sup> The CEF, like its British counterpart, was an English-speaking institution. See Chris Sharpe, “Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1918,” *Canadian Military History* 24, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015), 37. In Table VI, Sharpe tabulated the numbers of total enlistment by province, as shown on attestation papers: Ontario led with 241,540, then the four Western provinces with 211,877, then the four Eastern provinces with 153,692. In Table IX, Sharpe tabulated the composition of those enlisted by place of birth, as shown on attestation papers: Canada led with 318,728, then British Isles and other British with 234,290, and the remainders listed as American, Other, and unstated totaling 63,322. See also an original 1982 article reprinted in the same 2015 issue as the above. Robert Craig Brown and Donald Loveridge, “Unrequited Faith Recruiting the CEF 1914-1918,” *Canadian Military History* 24, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015): 61-87.

<sup>15</sup> Desmond Morton argued that the post-Confederation militia was a means of seeking political gain, and for “show,” pomp and circumstance. See Desmond Morton, “Defending the Indefensible: Some Historical Perspectives on Canadian Defence 1867-1987,” *International Journal* 42, no. 4 (1987), 632.

<sup>16</sup> Morton, “Defending the Indefensible,” 628, 637, 643.

<sup>17</sup> G. W. L. Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919: Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War* (1962; repr., McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015), 5; Brian Douglas Tennyson, *Canada’s Great*

Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier, agreed that there was no distinction between Britain at war and Canada at war; and these sentiments echoed across Canada on Canadians' lips and written in newspapers like the Toronto *Globe* and the Montreal *Daily Star*.<sup>18</sup> Canada's population was almost 8 million, yet by war's end, almost 630,000 Canadians enlisted voluntarily and through conscription, and of those enlisted, over 59,000 laid down their lives and almost 173,000 incurred non-fatal casualties.<sup>19</sup> Men enlisted for a variety of reasons: to retain the integrity of and to defend the British Empire, to go on a great adventure, to leave behind boring lives or tedious jobs, or to escape unemployment. Some bowed to public coercion, wanted to show their manliness, or needed to settle a drinking bet. Others enlisted out of curiosity, as a point of pride or duty and honor, while laws conscripted the rest.

Under British protection and rule, the Dominion of Canada was not a nation, per se. Internally, Canada and her people divided over language, politics, nationality, and her relationship and responsibility to the British Empire.<sup>20</sup> As Benedict Anderson points out, defining a nation, a nationality, or nationalism is problematic, and he suggests that the nation is an imagined political community that is limited and sovereign.<sup>21</sup> A nation means more than a flag or banner, geographic or political boundaries, governing body/bodies, and common language(s). It means more than creating money and financial institutions, enforcing or defending geographic borders, and negotiating with neighboring nations. It also includes cultural roots, capitalism and expanding markets, opposing political parties, the press (newspapers and magazines, journalists and academics), home rule rather than foreign rule, the ability to create

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War, 1914-1918: How Canada Helped Save the British Empire and Became a North American Nation (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014), 4.

<sup>18</sup> Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, 5; Tennyson, *Canada's Great War*, 7, 11.

<sup>19</sup> Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, 548. See totals in tables 3 and 4.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed*, The Canadian Centenary Series 14 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 250-274.

<sup>21</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 3, 5-7.

laws (also treaties, war, and peace), centralized and standardized systems (e.g., in industry, education, etc.), population management through emigration and immigration, and negotiating racial equality. All these concepts, parts, and pieces of nationalism change over time through a process of negotiation and renegotiation, remembering and forgetting, creation and destruction. This collection of imagined ideas results in an intentional construction or fabrication of a national identity.

J. G. Fuller centered his arguments around the question of morale in the combined British and Dominion forces during World War I through hundreds of trench newspapers.<sup>22</sup> These journals, he argued, reflected a point in time not modified by later experiences like those that memoirs and autobiographies are wont to do. Fuller used these newspapers because they served as intra-unit communication, showed different emotions within the ranks, and deliberately expressed the spirit of the infantry.<sup>23</sup> Fuller explored that vital spark in his discussions of morale not only in the front line trenches but also in the quieter regions behind them, thereby looking at a holistic view of the infantry. Although he included one thin chapter on patriotism, he concluded that the British and Dominion troops did not show it on their sleeves because they implicitly believed in the Empire's superiority.<sup>24</sup>

Graham Seal uses World War I trench journals as a cultural and social inquiry into the English-speaking troops of allied nations as expressions of experience and the emotional reasons for soldiers remaining and fighting in the insanity of the trenches.<sup>25</sup> Seal explores the relationships as expressed in the mood, style, and character of the newspapers in order to understand the culture of the trenches as well as the nature and purpose of the trench press. In

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<sup>22</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale*.

<sup>23</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale*, 4.

<sup>24</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale*, 32-40.

<sup>25</sup> Seal, *The Soldiers' Press*, ix.



his chapter on identity, Seal explores the sense of belonging to a particular group within the community of the trenches rather than where they belonged in society but showing the reinforcement of existing stereotypes, gender relations, and class structures as exhibited in their home nations.<sup>26</sup>

Many military historians use the Canadian victory in the battle at Vimy Ridge not only as a key point on the Western Front but also as a springboard for Canada's independence from Britain. It is a consensus that Vimy was a key victory for the allied forces, that all four CEF divisions came together to fight, and that the CEF showed their British leaders and the enemy alike that they were capable "shock troops," madmen, and elite soldiers. It is also an agreement that the Canadian troops did not do this alone but received ample support from the British Empire's resources in leadership and administration as well as logistics of artillery, equipment, and supplies. When it comes to the argument that Vimy Ridge was the initiation of Canada's independence from Britain, the sources used for this thesis do not support that view.<sup>27</sup>

Unlike Fuller's use of morale, Seal's interpretation of a culture, and military historian views of Vimy Ridge as an imperial anti-coagulant, this thesis is an exploration of Anderson's multiple uses of nation and national identity as seen in the trench newspapers. Chapter 1 explores the connections between Britain and Canada and how the British cultural roots incorporated into Canadian identity through the call to arms and the similarities in and co-optation of class structure, military activities, pride, loyalty, and masculinity. Chapter 2 focuses on the sharing and overlap with the United States and its influence on Canadian identity regarding the economy and industry, migration, the media, conscription, prohibition, and sports. Chapter 3 surveys the personal and cultural connections that are unique to Canadians including

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<sup>26</sup> Seal, *The Soldiers' Press*, 214.

<sup>27</sup> If that were the case, then Canada would not have had the "long goodbye" from the British Empire lasting from Confederation in 1867 to full independence in 1982.

duty, unity of the British Empire, honor, and expressions of patriotism. Additionally, it is an exploration of the appearance of Canadian sentiments through the soldiers' impressions of weather, trench routines, contact with home, food, the rum ration, voluntary service, reinforcements, and conscripts. Chapter 4 concentrates on the natural and sporting symbols evoking connections within and a formation of a unique sense of Canadian-ness. On the battlefields of France and Belgium, Canadian soldiers experienced success and failure while they began to carve out their unique identity, their Canadian-ness, from a combination of factors evident in the pages of the trench newspapers – not only for themselves but for all Canadians past, present, and future.

## SONS OF THE EMPIRE

Britishness was central to Canadianess, and war strengthened a sense of shared British identity, especially among English-speaking Canadians.<sup>1</sup> British connections within the unique Canadian identity were evident in and forged during the Great War in: the call to arms in support of Britain due to its Dominion status within the British Empire; the notions regarding class and status common to all ranks; similarities in and adaptations of uniforms, terms, daily activities, drink, and food; and adopted ideas of duty, pride, loyalty, and masculinity.

Due to her place within the British Empire, Canada was legally and morally at war; but this commonwealth tie meant that the Canadians' engagement resembled participation in other past British imperial conflicts, beginning with the first overseas venture the Boer War (1899-1902). In 1914, Canada was neither a colony nor a nation, but a self-governing Dominion, with its capital at Ottawa, an arrangement unlike the crown colonies governed from Britain's capital, London. Canada was a part of the wider British Empire since it remained bound to British imperial policy, relied on the British imperial army and navy for the majority of its defense, and was therefore obligated to render assistance. By 1911, the British government accepted that the Dominions, like Canada, were not bound to contribute any naval or military troops outside their borders and they should decide to do so on their own.<sup>2</sup> Canada decided to support the British Empire as noted in the premier issue of *The Listening Post* with an earnest call to arms:

Come men, now you must do your best  
With England stand or fall ...  
Let us cheer for Britain dear

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<sup>1</sup> Phillip Buckner, "The Long Goodbye: English Canadians and the British World," in *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 181-208.

<sup>2</sup> Especially interesting is the 1911 quote from the Foreign Office mentioning this specific choice, see Jeffrey Grey, "War and the British World," in *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 238-239, fn 17.

Whose glory fadeth never  
 We'll join our hands from far and near  
 And firmly stand together.<sup>3</sup>

In the premier issue of *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, a poem detailed Canada's willingness to participate, as a dominion to its imperial head akin to an adult child's defense of its parent:

We are coming, Mother England,  
 One hundred thousand more,  
 To help you guard your island home  
 As we helped you once before; ...  
 We're coming, Mother England,  
 Seeking neither wealth nor fame;  
 We want to meet the ruffian Huns  
 To whom honour's but a name...  
 So, we're coming, Mother England,  
 To help you in your need,  
 And the Huns will find we're bulldogs  
 Of the old-time British breed.  
 For we won't lay down our weapons  
 'Till this bloody war is o'er....<sup>4</sup>

Canada, as the oldest Dominion, fought as a dutiful, responsible, and proud child of the British Empire. The primary Canadian forces arrived on English soil in early 1915 and trained under British officers rather than Canadian ones. Upon their arrival at Salisbury Plain, the Canadian Contingent trained based on British regulations, equipment, and fighting style including shooting rifles, stabbing with bayonets, and moving in short bounds in groups.<sup>5</sup> Once shipped to France, the Canadians served under British leadership since the BEF had already learned that "inexperienced troops suffered high casualties."<sup>6</sup> The *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* reported that British Tommies were matched one to one with the Canadians. As they observed the British soldier more closely they were "impressed by his bravery, his intelligence, and his cheery

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<sup>3</sup> "The Call to Arms," *Listening Post*, no. 1, 10 August 1915.

<sup>4</sup> "We're Coming, Mother England," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915. Also printed in "We're Coming, Mother England," *Listening Post*, no. 17, 7 July 1916.

<sup>5</sup> Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, 32-38; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 83-93.

<sup>6</sup> Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, 49-50; Cook, *At the Sharp End*, 97.

optimism under the most depressing conditions” thus deflating the sense of original moral superiority they may have felt prior to their entrance unto the field of battle.<sup>7</sup> Since many British-born men filled the CEF ranks, this insight reflected a Canadian-born soldier’s perspective. The Dominion troops learned from their British brothers the fine art of surviving trench warfare such as when to duck, when to hug the trench wall, and when to dive into a dugout based on sounds of explosives or barked orders from superior officers.<sup>8</sup> In the six to eight months before the first of the trench journals appeared, the Canadians supported their British kith and kin at several battles in the Ypres region; their trials as a Canadian division began only after Festubert.<sup>9</sup> General Sam Hughes, Canadian Minister of Militia and Defense, proudly congratulated the Canadian soldiers saying that although “the British soldier had always been a marvelous man ... in no period of British history, in none of Britain’s wars, has there been shown greater heroism, pluck, devotion, and courtesy than in this war” shown by “these boys.”<sup>10</sup> The First Canadian Contingent, containing the 4th and 7th Battalions and the No. 1 Field Ambulance, should be honored, according to the editors of *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette* in an early issue showing nascent patriotic sentiment. “No section of the community responded to the call of the blood more readily than did these men on the frontier-posts of the Dominion, and it would be rank injustice ... [if anyone tried by] belittling the patriotism and

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<sup>7</sup> “Notes and Comments,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915. Since North American neighbors, Canada and the United States, had worked out a mostly amicable relationship, and neighbors within Europe evidently could not, it is likely where this supercilious behavior came from.

<sup>8</sup> Cook, *Sharp End*, 99, 104.

<sup>9</sup> Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, 93-115. Field-Marshal Sir D. Haig moved the 1st Canadian Division under the command of Lt. Gen. Sir H. S. Rawlinson, both officers in the British Army. By the time the 2nd Canadian Division arrived in France, Lt. Gen. Sir E. A. H. Alderson (British Army) was put in command of both divisions. Due to the vehement requests from the Canadian government, all the Canadian troops combined under the umbrella of the Canadian Corps, led at first by Alderson, then by Lt. Gen. Sir J. H. G. Byng in 1916, then by the first Canadian-born, Lt. Gen. Sir A. W. Currie, in 1917.

<sup>10</sup> “Editorial,” *Listening Post*, no. 2, 30 August 1915.

sacrifices of these men.”<sup>11</sup> Some men, like the British immigrants, enlisted out of patriotic duty while others joined to avenge neutral Belgium, to go on a great adventure, to escape the boredom of the farm, small town, or unappealing job, or because they needed the employment. As the *Iodine Chronicle* noted:

Some had come for adventure,  
And some had joined up for beer,  
While some felt the need of Empire;  
But not a one thought of fear.<sup>12</sup>

This also implied naïveté and over-optimism regarding trench warfare, the nature and defense of overseas territory, the potential short-term battle, and aiding the British Empire. It also reflected general or universal optimism of troops entering World War I. The Canadian government offered \$1.10 per day on top of food, shelter, and clothing to every man who signed up and passed the initial requirements and inspections. The common assumption in Canada, as around the world, was that this would be a short war with men home by Christmas 1914. An entry in the September 1915 issue of *The Listening Post* summed up the continuing astonishment at the ever-increasing length of the war, “[Sergeant] to soldier looking through periscope ‘What are you looking for?’ ‘Peace’” came the reply, indicating that even after a year at war no cessation of activities was envisioned on the battlefield or on the horizon.<sup>13</sup> Since Canada had only a small permanent force of approximately 3,000 men, the majority of Canadian volunteer forces came from Ontario and the Western provinces – the largest geographic areas within English-speaking Canada and those with the most ties to the British Empire, although not the most highly

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<sup>11</sup> “Honour Where it is Due,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>12</sup> “To the First Contingent,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 6, 29 February 1916.

<sup>13</sup> “Ka-hoo-chi,” *Listening Post*, no. 4, 26 September 1915.

populated.<sup>14</sup> Many British-born Canadians headed to the Western provinces seeking fortune, many who found none ended up volunteering for military service to alleviate their economic hardship. As a result of unemployment and ties to their country of birth, Westerners predominated in the CEF ranks. Although the United States adopted a policy of neutrality, many Americans joined their Canadian brothers in arms via the porous border between the two nations.<sup>15</sup> Able to avoid continental entanglements, these two North American countries felt superior to those at war on the European continent; yet they volunteered to help because, according to trench press editorials, “imperialism ... is not a mere incident engendered by excessive flag-flapping, but is born of national exigencies demanding sacrifices by and for the people ... it has become an actuality revitalized by national sacrifice.”<sup>16</sup>

The English-speaking Canadians, according to this quote, saw no contradiction between imperialism and nationalism. In this sense, Britishness, or British imperialism, was central to Canadian national identity. Canadians were bound to join the war by imperial ties to the British Empire. The Americans incorporated into the Canadian ranks were not bound by this same imperialism, but joined out of cultural affinity with their neighboring brothers in arms. The Canadian war effort, at the outset, was thus filled with volunteers assisting in the defense of the British Empire and although neither Canada nor Britain were fighting on their own shores.<sup>17</sup>

Most early volunteers were urban rather than rural and British born rather than Canadian born. According to statistics from Library and Archives Canada, these men were “workers –

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<sup>14</sup> See population statistics of each province in the Area and Population tables of 1911. Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Canada Year Book 1918*, (Ottawa, Canada, 1919), 88-92, accessed 27 April 2016, [http://www66.statcan.gc.ca/eng/acyb\\_c1918-eng.aspx](http://www66.statcan.gc.ca/eng/acyb_c1918-eng.aspx).

<sup>15</sup> For an intriguing article on British-Canadian recruiting missions in the United States, see Richard Holt, “British Blood Calls British Blood: The British-Canadian Recruiting Mission of 1917-1918,” *Canadian Military History* 22, no. 1 (17 April 2015): 26-37.

<sup>16</sup> “Notes and Comments,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>17</sup> Canadians fighting outside of Canada was one of the reasons for heated parliamentary debate in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

either skilled, unskilled, or clerical; far more were students [and shopkeepers] than ranchers; and far more drawn from the urban workforce than hunters from the wild.”<sup>18</sup> Typically, British-born residents lived in the urban areas while the Canadian-born more likely lived in rural areas, according to urbanization records between 1901 and 1911.<sup>19</sup> Many jobs disappeared during the pre-war depression in Canada and the possibility of work by enlisting meant many urban unemployed grasped this opportunity.<sup>20</sup> Initially, farmers and their sons did not enlist because they thought producing agricultural goods was a better contribution to the war effort.<sup>21</sup> In later issues of trench newspapers, frequent references to farming indicated that many Canadian soldiers hailed from rural rather than the urban backgrounds of Toronto, Vancouver, and many cities in England. Night activities such as wiring, known as the “gentle art of farming No Man’s Land” where “a good crop is best assured by complete darkness. Moonlight and flarelight have an injurious effect and result in a poor crop. Wire will not grow in the daylight.”<sup>22</sup> In reality, and as the war dragged on, soldiers came from all areas.

We had men from the rolling prairies,  
Land of the care-free breeze;  
We had men from the farms and cities,  
And men of the Northern seas...  
There were men of professions and business,  
Who’d left families and quiet homes;  
Whilst others were from the street corners,  
And others were rolling stones...

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<sup>18</sup> Cook, *Sharp End*, 309, fn 11.

<sup>19</sup> Chris Sharpe, “Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1918,” *Canadian Military History* 24, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015), 29.

<sup>20</sup> Sharpe, “Enlistment,” 28; Brown and Loveridge, “Unrequited Faith,” 61-87. Vance argues that the attestation papers do not contain enough information to indicate the urban/rural split, although this is based on initial findings for his incomplete project. See Jonathan F. Vance, “Provincial Patterns of Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force,” *Canadian Military History* 17, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 75-78.

<sup>21</sup> Sharpe, “Enlistment,” 28. For an article regarding the plight of farmers during the war, see Mourad Djebabla, “‘Fight or Farm’: Canadian Farmers and the Dilemma of the War Effort in World War I (1914-1918),” *Canadian Military Journal* 13, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 57-67.

<sup>22</sup> “Trench Terms and Their Meanings,” *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1917.



But from all points of the compass,  
They gathered to step into line ...<sup>23</sup>

Soldiers from everywhere heeded the call to arms, regardless of location, type of employment, origin of birth, or previous military life.

Every Canadian soldier felt he had a job to carry out, an enemy to strike at, and an empire to protect, and he did so accepting the fickleness of Mother Nature and the drudgery of necessary trench routines. Water, waste, vermin and mud plagued the soldiers while war caused the erosion of landscape. The growth from puddles to flooding over the course of two years led to frustration and war weariness exacerbated by waterlogging due to military craters, trench and dugout cave-ins, excessive and extensive trenches that aggravated geologic conditions of the surrounding landscape. Dirty ditches in the ground became shelters where sandbags, timber, corrugated tin, wood, and bundles of sticks reinforced oozing walls and wet muddy floors.<sup>24</sup>

This semi-permanent bivouac, or “bivvy,” was “an edifice created ... from scraps of corrugated iron, empty petrol tins, mail-sacks, sandbags, and a few pieces of stolen timber. [Once completed it looked] like something between a battle-cruiser, Indian’s wigwam, and a mansion in the Tudor style. The doors of these edifices are never closed” reported the newspaper.<sup>25</sup> The irony of these descriptions was evident as there were no doors on these temporary shelters used during training or operations away from the main trenches housing the dugouts. “Battle cruisers” referred to British imperial naval vessels and “Tudor mansions” reflected Canada’s British roots. The “Indian’s wigwam” was unique to the First Nations people in Canada and the United States. Regattas, a series of boat races and accompanying elite social events, for rowing and sailing were popular in Britain dating back to the eighteenth century. The first 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Regatta held in

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<sup>23</sup> “To the First Contingent,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 6, 29 February 1916.

<sup>24</sup> Cook, *Sharp End*, 220.

<sup>25</sup> “Trench Terms and Their Meanings,” *Listening Post*, no. 27, 10 August 1917.

December 1915 featured “punting, paddling and puddling” as well as “skating, skiing and cussing parties” illuminated by “fireworks” courtesy of the Germans; and the competitors in the “trench digging and bailing contests” were warned against “walking on the parapet,” which could result in being sent “to England for repairs.”<sup>26</sup> This first wartime regatta detailed above, and others mentioned throughout the time period, pretended an elitist air demonstrating not only irony of environment but also the shaped British and Canadian conceptions of elite pastimes and pursuits. Like their British forebears and counterparts, the Canadian elite had their yacht and rowing clubs along the water in Nova Scotia, Ontario, and British Columbia.<sup>27</sup> This regatta advertisement also parodied typical weather related trench issues and routines easily recognized by soldiers regardless of nationality. Canadian soldiers with severe wounds, like many British Imperials, were shipped to England for major surgery, recovery, and convalescence prior to returning to the trench lines or returning to Canada permanently.<sup>28</sup> Other references to water included, as indicated by a parody of water-related dictionary definitions, *Dam* was “what the Engineers do to a river or ‘Ford’. By simply adding the letter ‘N’, we have a suitable prefix for use when referring to ... weather ... a route march ... a working party ... a leaky dugout” and so forth, “used unhesitatingly by all troops except the Padre.”<sup>29</sup> *Bay* was “a portion of a trench between two traverses. So named because it is frequently under water.”<sup>30</sup> Some did not complain of flooding, like “Private Seaward” because he “used to be a deep-water sailorman.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> “7th Battalion Regatta,” *Listening Post*, no. 9, 25 December 1915.

<sup>27</sup> The oldest is the Royal Canadian Yacht Club in Toronto, Ontario, founded in 1852. The Royal Canadian Henley Regatta, in St. Catharines, Ontario and started in 1880, is the oldest rowing regatta. It emulated the Henley Royal Regatta in Henley-on-Thames, England.

<sup>28</sup> Minor surgery was performed in the field (on the battlefield, in dressing stations, or in field hospitals) while only major surgery required a visit to Blighty. ‘Blighty’ is an informal war term for England (or somewhere in Britain) and also a slang military term for a serious enough wound that forced a shipment to a hospital in England for surgery or recuperation. The origin of the term is an English-Indian translation of an Urdu word.

<sup>29</sup> “Encyclopedia of Military Terms,” *Listening Post*, no. 14, 21 April 1916.

<sup>30</sup> “Dictionary of War Terms,” *Listening Post*, no. 26, 20 July 1917.

<sup>31</sup> “Ricochets,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

These referred to waterlogged trenches as well as the underwater capabilities and long-range undersea capabilities of the British navy that prowled and defended the waters touching every part of its empire since Canada did not have its own submarines. Another soldier “thought he had discovered a German submarine in the front line trench” referring not only to the constant flooding but also to fears of German capabilities and of their prowling right in Britain’s backyard and near Canada’s shores.<sup>32</sup>

Like water, mud affected clothing and shelter equally. Within the first year in the trenches, soldiers realized that “an ‘issue’ of clean laundry” was unlikely.<sup>33</sup> Their uniforms were not only khaki but also mud-colored since they “slopped around in it.”<sup>34</sup> Brass buttons and badges “shed their pristine sheen” and boots were not only “very far from clean” but also leaky “like sewers, while from out them streamlets” ran since often they “sank to rest in a foot of water and slime.”<sup>35</sup> Canadian military attire, for the enlisted men, adopted from the British with its brass buttons and badges except the Canadian khaki jackets sported seven smaller buttons instead of the five large buttons of the British. Canadian jackets had a tighter fit and a standing collar, as opposed to the looser fit and down collar of the British form, with collar and cap badges including the distinctive brass badge for each CEF battalion, and unit and formation patches sewn on each jacket shoulder to identify divisions, brigades, and units at a glance.<sup>36</sup>

Although the CEF began with Canadian made boots, due to substandard quality they were traded

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<sup>32</sup> “Dictionary of War Terms,” *Listening Post*, no. 26, 20 July 1917.

<sup>33</sup> Although noticed probably much sooner than a year, the mention of the state of clean laundry was not mentioned in these examples of trench press specifically until October 1915. It is quite probable this was known earlier in the muddy fields at Valcartier and at Salisbury Plain too.

<sup>34</sup> “Ricochets,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915; “Why the Listening Post?” *Listening Post*, no. 7, 29 October 1915; “The Embryo Warrior,” *Listening Post*, no. 20, 10 December 1916.

<sup>35</sup> “The Embryo Warrior,” *Listening Post*, no. 20, 10 December 1916; “Save Us from Our Friends,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915; “Fun From The Front,” *Listening Post*, no. 30, April 1918.

<sup>36</sup> Some of the uniforms had stand and fall collars with hooks and eyes in order to be worn in the Canadian or British fashion. Canadian generals wore exactly the same uniform as their British counterparts. For distinctions in Canadian uniforms, see René Chartrand, *The Canadian Corps in World War I* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2007).

for the superior British hob-nailed boots. Soldiers had “to slush, slide and swim towards the firing line” and occasionally “paddle to the trenches in the rear.”<sup>37</sup> Lack of clean water meant men wore their clothes for weeks at a time without changing, in winter or summer. In poetry and song, references to both clothing and shelter often appeared:

When I'm in mud from top to bottom  
And my clothes are all adrench  
Then I crawl into my funk-hole  
At the bottom of the trench.”<sup>38</sup>

The term ‘funk’ was British and Canadian slang for fear or panic hence here a fearful soldier jumped in to escape the terror of the trenches.<sup>39</sup> The British and Canadian noun meant fear, panic, and coward while the North American noun meant having a dejected state of mind – both applied equally.<sup>40</sup> Usually dug into the forward wall of the trench, soldiers curled up in these holes sheltering maybe half their bodies to escape from weather or artillery.<sup>41</sup> The irony once again was obvious that these panicked soldiers curled up into whatever shelter they could find even if barely safe. A funk-hole was described as a “baby dug-out” often “just a foot above the ground ... so narrow ... [the soldier] can scarcely turn around” while dug-outs were described as “deep holes in the ground, designed for the purpose of keeping out sun and rain, and occasionally shells. The accommodation is usually divided equally between the troops and trench rats.”<sup>42</sup> Often dugouts did not protect from weather as one soldier asked, “What did Sergeant-Major Jaminson say when he returned from leave and found his dug-out flooded and the furniture

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<sup>37</sup> “Fun From The Front,” *Listening Post*, no. 15, 18 May 1916; “The Bird Cage,” *Listening Post*, no. 16, 17 June 1916.

<sup>38</sup> “My Funk-Hole,” *Listening Post*, no. 24, 20 April 1917.

<sup>39</sup> For slang terms, see Peter Doyle, *Trench Talk: Words of the First World War* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2012).

<sup>40</sup> Oxford English Reference Dictionary, 2nd ed., s.v. “funk”; Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 1st ed., s.v. “funk”.

<sup>41</sup> See the cartoon on the cover, *Listening Post*, no. 31, July 1918; see photo in Cook, *Sharp End*, 225.

<sup>42</sup> “Trench Terms and Their Meanings,” *Listening Post*, no. 27, 10 August 1917; “My Funk-Hole,” *Listening Post*, no. 24, 20 April 1917.

afloat?”<sup>43</sup> Officers’ dugouts, both British and Canadian, often had luxuries of beds and furniture, while the typical soldier slept on a wooden bunk or on the floor, wrapped in his ground sheet surrounded by dozens of others. An early *Listening Post* mock encyclopedia entry noted a dugout was a “hole in the ground with a lid on ... the ‘Bungalow’ for Officers, the ‘Love in a Cottage’ for Sergeants, and the ‘Noah’s Ark’ for privates ... built for men, mice, rats, and cats ... decorated with jam, cheese, photographs, and fleas.”<sup>44</sup>

The communication trench typically held entrances to several dugouts on either side, each at least six meters (less than 20 feet) deep by two meters high and accessed by steps, with each entrance covered by a heavy blanket.<sup>45</sup> Whether funk-holes or dug-outs, they all applied as a “wet home in the trench” often referenced in poetry, song, definitions, editorials, and stories that “almost any building inspector would have condemned [them] on sight [as they were] neither safe nor sanitary” but still provided a shelter of sorts.<sup>46</sup> Soldiers accepted and welcomed any shelter from Mother Nature and enemy fire. Occasionally, shelters succumbed to enemy bombardment, noted in a soldier’s comment that “I never thought I would have to clean my bed with a shovel.”<sup>47</sup> Canadian solders, like their British equivalents and all other trench troops, suffered equally due to weather and its affects on clothing and shelter. They also were harried by day and night trench routines.

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<sup>43</sup> “Our Thirst for Knowledge,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915.

<sup>44</sup> “Encyclopedia of Trench Terms,” *Listening Post*, no. 14, 21 April 1916. Cottages refer to small houses in the country, especially for vacationing, in British parlance and refer to small simple houses in rural areas near a lake or river by Canadian definition. The word bungalow derives from a type of cottage built for early European settlers in Bengal and both British and Canadians use it as a term for a one-story house. This Canadian use of a term from British India further emphasizes British roots and shared experience in India and the colonies.

<sup>45</sup> Based on British models, typical Canadian dugouts housed 12-18 men (deep dugouts housed up to 41), on bunks in two tiers separated by a 2’6” pass-through. Each bunk measured 6’ by 2’3”. See General Staff War Office, *British Trench Warfare, 1917-1918: A Reference Manual*, Battery Press Reference Series (1917; repr., London: Imperial War Museum, 1997), 125-127. In theory, men slept on bunks rather than directly on the ground; however, bunks may have been unavailable due to construction or lack of lumber.

<sup>46</sup> “My Little Wet Home in the Trench,” *Listening Post*, no. 6, 20 October 1915; “Speculation,” *Listening Post*, no. 20, 10 December 1916.

<sup>47</sup> “No. 2 Company’s Notes,” *Listening Post*, no. 9, 25 December 1915.

Daily activity in and amongst the trenches depended on location and types of lines, artillery fire, and time of day. For every soldier in the BEF, including those in the CEF, each day began at dawn with ‘stand to’ where men crawled out of their shelters to prepare for an enemy attack. If no attack came, soldiers lined up for inspections, ate something resembling breakfast, lined up for their morning rum ration, and began to work in the trenches. Soldiers remained below ground and away from snipers and shells while repairing trenches and duckboards, cleaning latrines, or filling sandbags. During these work parties, there was “no standing about” in the trenches as collections of men usually drew some sort of enemy fire.<sup>48</sup> Depending on location within the different sections, there could be long periods of boredom on sentry duty or in manual labor, mixed with periods of terror from artillery and sniper fire. Constant activity in the trenches was a standard operating condition as noted in the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, “we ‘carry on’ from where we left off. To be quite correct, we don’t leave off at all – because trade union hours are not recognized in the trenches.”<sup>49</sup>

Trade unions were familiar to all Canadians employed in crafts, textiles, trades, mining and other resources, railroads, and manufacturing industries. British migrants would have brought ideas from the trade unions in the British Isles to Canada’s shores.<sup>50</sup> Labour unions, in Canada and in Britain, united workers and protected their rights especially against poor pay, long

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<sup>48</sup> The Imperial War Museum in London, England, has a permanent exhibition, called First World War Galleries, containing several trench signs. The Canadian War Museum also houses various trench signs in their archives, see “Communications Equipment - Do Not Stand About Here,” Canadian War Museum, accessed 6 July 2016, <http://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/objects-and-photos/equipment-and-vehicles/communications-equipment/do-not-stand-about-here/>.

<sup>49</sup> “Trench Routine,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December; for trade union hours, see Bryan D. Palmer, “Labour Protest and Organization in Nineteenth-Century Canada, 1820-1890,” *Labour / Le Travail* 20 (1987): 61-83; Eugene A. Forsey, *The Canadian Labour Movement 1812-1902* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1974); John Blackwood, ed., “The Nine-Hours Movement,” *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* 111, no. 675 (January 1872): 68-83.

<sup>50</sup> Humphrey Southall, “British Artisan Unions in the New World,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 15, no. 2 (April 1, 1989): 163-182.

hours, and risk of injury or death.<sup>51</sup> The Nine Hours Movement in Britain spurred the same movement in Canada, which sought to reduce the working day from 12 hours to 9 hours in 1872, albeit unsuccessful but a harbinger for changes to come.<sup>52</sup> In that same year, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald signed the Trade Unions Act to ensure unions were no longer illegal. In 1883, the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada emerged as a voice for the workingman. In 1894, the government adopted Labour Day as a national holiday and in 1900, created the Federal Department of Labour, which dealt with disputes between companies and their striking workers. The labor movement in Canada was not centralized between the 1880s and the 1920s, but rather a combination of local trades councils and general class-conscious activities.<sup>53</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century through the end of the war, the trades councils and labor unions rallied for the eight-hour workday for all workers regardless of industry -- ironically, these workday hours of 8, 9, or 12 did not apply to war.

Not only were routines unending, but they were working class in nature for the Canadian infantryman as well as his British counterpart. Typically, in both the British and Canadian forces, the working classes filled the non-commissioned ranks while the upper classes filled the officer ranks. In the wartime trenches, craftsmen employed the same talents and abilities learned and used on workshop floors, at construction sites, in the mines, and on the railroads, such as comradeship, shop-floor equality and autonomy, self-respect, pride in accomplishment, and style

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<sup>51</sup> See the effects of Britain's Nine-Hours Movement, the Trade Unions Act of 1872 resulting from the Toronto Typographical Union strike, and the American Federation of Labor in Forsey, *Canadian Labour Movement*, 6-7, 10, 11-13.

<sup>52</sup> Blackwood, "The Nine-Hours Movement," 68-83; John Battye, "The Nine Hour Pioneers: The Genesis of the Canadian Labour Movement," *Labour / Le Travail* 4 (1979): 25-56. Weekly working hours averaged 57 in 1870, 63 in 1900, and 58 in 1913, with the most hours in the service industries (up to 66 in 1900) rather than the textile, mining, or construction industries (up to 61 in 1900). See Michael Huberman, "Working Hours of the World Unite? New International Evidence of Worktime, 1870-1913," *Journal of Economic History* 64, no. 4 (December 2004): 964-1001.

<sup>53</sup> Craig Heron, "Labourism and the Canadian Working Class," *Labour / Le Travail* 13 (1984), 49, fn 17.

of work.<sup>54</sup> Much of that responsibility and pride transitioned during the war without too much compulsion from those in charge.

Since “stoppage of working parties” was one of the “things unlikely to happen,” even when away from the trenches the men looked for work to pass the time.<sup>55</sup> “Well known Western Canadian Regiment desires employment for their men whilst in billets. Specialty, trench digging and bomb proof shelters. Apply through usual channels,” read an advertisement in the *Listening Post*.<sup>56</sup> In fact, digging tools outnumbered rifles as noted by the “Motto for the 1st BC: ‘Your pick and shovel need you.’”<sup>57</sup> Filled sandbags created the front and back walls of the trenches, called parapets and parados respectively, stacked and layered in rows. Since weather and explosive ordinance often caused these bags to shift, lose density, or rot away, both parapets and parados often needed repairing with more sandbags of shoveled dirt and miscellaneous bits of refuse.<sup>58</sup> Regardless of their complaining, the Canadian soldiers noted that “we will do our working parties, / Grouse and growl but get the work done” highlighting their work ethic.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the soldiers acknowledged that although “working parties are the devil ... we’ll continue at this unpleasant pastime, / And the knowledge that we’ve done so.”<sup>60</sup> Clearly, these instances indicated not only submission to trench life and also a strong work ethic derived from the characteristic or stereotypical British including a grin-and-bear-it attitude.

Much of this centered in the British concept of masculinity especially the perceived need for a man to provide stability, income, and security for his family as well as pride for himself – inevitably tying into the dominant class structure prevalent in British society. It was the middle

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<sup>54</sup> Heron, “Labourism,” 51.

<sup>55</sup> “Things Unlikely to Happen,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>56</sup> “Advertisements,” *Listening Post*, no. 1, 10 August 1915; “The 5th Battalion’s Page,” *Listening Post*, no. 16, 17 June 1916.

<sup>57</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 6, 20 October 1915.

<sup>58</sup> Cook, *Sharp End*, 220-221.

<sup>59</sup> “Higho Worken Party,” *Listening Post*, no. 17, 7 July 1916.

<sup>60</sup> “Higho Worken Party,” *Listening Post*, no. 17, 7 July 1916.



class, especially in Victorian times, that defined the separation of home and work and this concept of masculinity as working and providing for and protecting the family, which in turn influenced men before and during the war.<sup>61</sup> Although masculinity in British terms meant both work and war, work seemed more prevalent. The working party showed up in descriptive verse:

Loaded down with stake and wire,  
Shovels, picks and Susie's sand bags,  
Mortar bombs, expanded metal,  
Newton Pippin's detonators,  
Mills grenades and other 'bangos',  
Cruising slowly twixt the shell holes<sup>62</sup>

The ditty describing daily toil and typical equipment revealed the connection to the British Empire as Susie, or Sister Susie, was Canadian and British slang for the women on the home front involved in war work provisioning kits, including empty hand-sewn sandbags, and distributing refreshments at rail stations.<sup>63</sup> Essential protection, sandbags were ubiquitous as soldiers sat, stared at, or filled them.<sup>64</sup> Always at hand, the sandbags were used for a range of purposes. As noted in Will Bird's memoir, "three men had been shredded to fragments" by a mortar and he had "to pick up legs and bits of flesh from underfoot and from the muddy walls" placing them in sandbags to be buried in one grave.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> For tying masculinity to social class, see Karen Harvey and Alexandra Shepard, "What Have Historians Done with Masculinity? Reflections on Five Centuries of British History, circa 1500-1950," *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005): 274-280. See also social class and masculinity as discussed in Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire, and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994) and Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914*, Studies in Imperialism (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004). Cohen argued that politeness, chivalry, and the refined gentleman embodied masculinity, showing that not all forms of masculinity were homogeneous. See Michèle Cohen, "'Manners' Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830," *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005): 312-329.

<sup>62</sup> "Higho Worken Party," *Listening Post*, no. 17, 7 July 1916.

<sup>63</sup> Doyle, *Trench Talk*, 76

<sup>64</sup> See the cartoon on the cover, *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1917.

<sup>65</sup> Will R. Bird and David A. Williams, *And We Go On: A Memoir of the Great War* (1930; repr., Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 17. Bird grew up in Nova Scotia and served in the CEF with the 42<sup>nd</sup> Battalion from October 1916 until the armistice.

Newton Pippins and Mills were brands of hand grenades used in the both British and Canadian ranks.<sup>66</sup> When an anti-soldier asked how he could dodge a working party, the sarcastic response was “volunteer for listening post, or ask your sergeant to let you go over on a one-man raid. Perhaps [then] he will let you off working party.”<sup>67</sup> Soldiers lived vicariously through comments and antics of the anti-hero knowing that shirking their duty was unthinkable and very un-British, no one ever volunteered for listening post but was assigned, and raiding groups included several men not just one. Shirking work was dangerous and could be effectively a death sentence just like listening post or a one-man raid. Canadian soldiers and their officers, much like their British fellows, pushed a sense of duty and the will for victory by justifying the war as the defense of a way of life at home. Life in the trenches was a series of tasks including rifle cleaning, trench clearing, personal hygiene maintenance, inspections of guns and feet, followed by the rum ration and a hunt for food.

The rum ration existed for all troops throughout the British Empire and totaled six ounces per week, issued to each soldier daily at dawn and dusk. It had to be drunk in the presence of officers, not hoarded for later consumption, and every soldier had the right of refusal, although very few did.<sup>68</sup> “It was early morning, that glorious period just after ‘stand-down’ and rum issue, when all the world seems painted in roseate hues, and life is just one long sweet song.”<sup>69</sup> This

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<sup>66</sup> For a description, see “Grenade, Hand, Newton Pippin,” Text, Imperial War Museums, accessed 26 July 2016, <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/30020067>; For a drawing and sectional of a Mill’s grenade, see “Shell of Mill’s Grenade and Diagram of Mill’s Hand Grenade, No. 5, MK. 2 (sectional),” Text and image, Imperial War Museums, accessed 26 July 2016, <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205218777>; For a photo, see BAC-LAC, *Detonating Mills’ Bombs*, February 1918, photograph, accessed 26 July 2016, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search/images>.

<sup>67</sup> “Answers to Correspondents,” *Listening Post*, no. 30, April 1918.

<sup>68</sup> Tim Cook, “‘More a Medicine Than a Beverage’: ‘Demon Rum’ and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First World War,” *Canadian Military History* 9, no. 1 (January 2000), 8; Jane Chapman and Dan Ellin, “Dominion Cartoon Satire as Trench Culture Narratives: Complaints, Endurance and Stoicism,” *Round Table* 103, no. 2 (April 2014), 178; Tim Cook, “‘I Will Meet the World with a Smile and a Joke’: Canadian Soldiers’ Humour in the Great War,” *Canadian Military History* 22, no. 2 (Spring 2013), 50; Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, New Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 50; Cook, *Sharp End*, 242.

<sup>69</sup> “A Trench Tragedy,” *Listening Post*, no. 13, 30 March 1916.

often welcome ration came in one-gallon earthenware jugs stamped with the initials for the Special Red Demerara (SRD) consisting of 186-proof Jamaican rum. Humorous alternative terms showed up in print such as “Seldom Reaches Destination,” “Sometimes Relentlessly Diluted,” or “Slips Right Down.”<sup>70</sup> Rum and other strong spirits had long formed an institutionalized and regimented part of the British soldier’s ritual and reward for enduring warfare in the trenches and elsewhere. Since the eighteenth century, the rum or spirit ration had been part of a British soldier’s diet.<sup>71</sup> Complaints rose in the ranks when this particular liquid went missing, even a month later, as noted in the December issue: “Members of the 4th Battalion are still anxious to know what became of their rum issue on ... the cold and frosty morning ... of November 15th.”<sup>72</sup> Medical staff, like stretcher-bearers, complained of lack of spirits in the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, “Will Jimmy Walker ever come back? If not, could he send ‘Johnny’ along as a substitute?”<sup>73</sup>

The *Iodine Chronicle* issues did not mention rum anywhere in print. One possible explanation for its absence was that this particular field ambulance journal featured articles from the quieter areas and hospitals rather than from the troops on the front lines. Front line soldiers tended to focus on the rum ration because it steeled the will before combat and served as a stimulant in the bitter winter, a morale booster, and a sleep inducer. It helped soldiers endure the daily trials of war.<sup>74</sup> One of the “things unlikely to happen” included “a full issue of rum for the privates” intimating that officers received their fair share, possibly more, since rum allocation was left to commanding officers, medical officers, and quartermasters.<sup>75</sup> If the commanding

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<sup>70</sup> “S.R.D.” *Listening Post*, no. 31, July 1918.

<sup>71</sup> Horsley, “Rum Ration into the British Army,” 204.

<sup>72</sup> “Ricochets,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915.

<sup>73</sup> “Stretcher-Bearer Notes,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915. Johnnie Walker is the brand name of a blended Scotch whiskey widely available.

<sup>74</sup> Cook, “More a Medicine,” 8, 10; Bull, “Trenchtown,” in *Trench*, 74; Ellis, *Eye-Deep in Hell*, 133.

<sup>75</sup> “Things Unlikely to Happen,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915; Cook, *Sharp End*, 242.

officer was a teetotaler, then the men suffered without rum or with alternatives such as pea soup or lime juice heralding fearful soldiers' questions, "Will we get any more rum, now that we have an RSM who is teetotal?"<sup>76</sup> The December 1915 issue of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* included an editorial comment regarding the anti-rum manifesto submitted by the Canadian Women's Christian Temperance Union. It stated that the "existing two-tablespoon" rum ration was curtailed to be replaced by pea soup but there were "no provisions for cooking" said soup and it was "frequently impossible to light fires in the front trenches."<sup>77</sup> The editorial clearly pointed out that the impertinent Canadian public had no idea of the physical and mental strain of the trenches and should be restrained from interfering in the lives of Canadian soldiers in active service. The Canadian provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario enacted prohibition in 1916, while British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick enacted it in 1917, all during wartime. Most provinces repealed prohibition laws sometime in the 1920s. In 1917, Prime Minister Borden also inquired about drunkenness among the troops overseas and found that "the Canadian troops are not addicted to the habit of drunkenness ... there is less drinking among the Canadian troops than among any other troops in the United Kingdom ... and drinking is almost at a minimum."<sup>78</sup> In contrast, the United Kingdom never enacted prohibition of alcohol even though temperance societies existed. Several articles and letters from doctors on both sides of the rum question in the early 1915 *British Medical Journal* attested to the controversy surrounding the rum ration for their soldiers.<sup>79</sup> The Strength of Britain Movement temperance

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<sup>76</sup> Cook, *Sharp End*, 242. RSM signifies Regimental Sergeant Major in the British army. See "The 8th Battalion's Page," *Listening Post*, no. 12, 15 March 1916.

<sup>77</sup> "Save Us from Our Friends," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915. Pea soup and lime juice appear only in this one mention.

<sup>78</sup> Robert L. Borden, "Speech before the House of Commons," 18 May 1917, BAC-LAC, accessed 27 April 2016, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/primeministers/h4-4072-e.html>.

<sup>79</sup> Victor Horsley, "On the Alleged Responsibility of the Medical Profession for the Reintroduction of the Rum Ration into the British Army," *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2822 (30 January 1915): 203-206; J. W. Astley Cooper and Chas. A. Mercier, "The Rum Ration," *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2823 (6 February 1915): 270-

group placed a full-page display advertisement in *The Times* arguing that liquor was “draining away Britain’s strength” and “its vital bearing on the issue of the war.”<sup>80</sup> Soldiers, Canadian and British alike, relied on their rum issue, especially on cold winter nights because “after the rum issue, there is that ‘tired feeling.’ Then comes sleep, and forgetfulness, and peace.”<sup>81</sup> In addition, the rum issue, “that potent liquid,” would convince the “platoons for a few brief, but glorious moments that not only did their country need them, but that it even appreciated their services.”<sup>82</sup> There was not enough evidence in the trench papers to indicate that Canada or the British Empire did not appreciate the soldiers; however, this particular comment was published after almost two months of trench tours and actions in the Bully sector where little forward progress was made.<sup>83</sup> Many of the Canadian losses were due to choices made by British officers in failed attacks against fortified enemy areas, and very few men volunteered in early 1917, thereby forcing lengthy trench tours for already exhausted troops. The soldiers clearly saw rum as a reward and expected it as their due for their daily toils.

Next to rum, another chief concern was food. According to the trench newspapers, the label *Rations* was “an all-embracing term covering things eatable and things issued to eat, such as ‘Biscuits’, ‘Bully’, and ‘Maconochies’.”<sup>84</sup> Yet, the men complained that bully beef and

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272; Robert Simpson, “The Rum Ration,” *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2824 (13 February 1915): 316-317; Victor Horsley and Thomas Dutton, “The Rum Ration,” *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2825 (20 February 1915): 359-360; “Military Hygiene and the Efficiency of the Soldier,” *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2826 (27 February 1915): 380; Josiah Oldfield and Chas. A. Mercier, “The Rum Ration,” *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2826 (27 February 1915): 399-400; W. Collier et al., “The Rum Ration,” *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2827 (6 March 1915): 447-449; Charles H. Melville et al., “The Rum Ration,” *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2829 (20 March 1915): 529-530.

<sup>80</sup> “Strength of Britain Movement,” *The Times*, 15 December 1916.

<sup>81</sup> “Save Us from Our Friends,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915; “Trench Routines,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915.

<sup>82</sup> “The Fighting Spirit of the Trenches,” *Listening Post*, no. 23, 22 March 1917.

<sup>83</sup> See the timeline in “How the Seventh Spent its Time,” *Listening Post*, no. 33, March 1919. This area contained the enemy’s fortified main defensive lines of advanced field works, three trench lines, several concrete and barbed wire enhanced machine-gun placements, and the usual maze of connecting tunnels and communication trenches – all constructed and fortified over two years. See Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, 246.

<sup>84</sup> “Trench Terms and Their Meanings,” *Listening Post*, no. 28, 20 September 1917.

biscuits were both “chief horrors of this awful war.”<sup>85</sup> Tins of bully beef, such as those prepared by the Maconochie Brothers of London, often contained much more fat and gristle than meat, and soldiers complained that they issued these as rations in the front lines “to convince a hungry soldier he is not hungry.”<sup>86</sup> Soldiers’ complaints that Maconochies contained less meat cannot be verified; however, it is quite possible that these types of canned food, reduced in quality, would end up shipped to soldiers without the Army’s knowledge or quality checks since they relied on original contracts with such large suppliers. Canadian soldiers sometimes had a choice between the British or Canadian versions of bully beef but the “William Davies brand from Canada was universally regarded as the worst ... often used to pave dugout entrances.”<sup>87</sup> According to the *British Medical Journal*, the British Army and Navy had used tins of “Moir’s Soldier’s Ration or Maconochie’s Service Ration” as emergency eats since the late nineteenth century, touted as the best of the “numerous forms of prepared food” when compared to German *erbswurst*, American *panole*, or the French cakes of powdered meat.<sup>88</sup> Unfortunately, on the front lines these emergency rations were the norm rather than the exception, because “tis bully and biscuits we chew / For it’s days since we tasted a stew,” sometimes “stewed chicken ... made out of Macanochie,” and that “if you take a chance and risk it, on bully beef and biscuit, / your time on earth, old pal, is mighty brief.”<sup>89</sup> Due to lack of resources, some trench chefs made the occasional substitution:

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<sup>85</sup> “Dictionary of War Terms,” *Listening Post*, no. 26, 20 July 1917.

<sup>86</sup> “The 10th Battalion’s Page,” *Listening Post*, no. 17, 7 July 1916; “Encyclopedia of Military Terms,” *Listening Post*, no. 12, 15 March 1916.

<sup>87</sup> Cook, *Sharp End*, 246.

<sup>88</sup> “Emergency Rations,” *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2055 (19 May 1900): 1243-1244. This assertion in the BMJ as the ‘best’ was because of its vegetables, broth, and meat; however, soldiers often complained of the lack in quality and quantity in each tin. Emergency rations, like Maconochie, were passable if soldiers were hungry enough.

<sup>89</sup> “My Little Wet Home in the Trench,” *Listening Post*, no. 6, 20 October 1915; “5th Battalion Column,” *Listening Post*, no. 20, 10 December 1916; “Life in the Trenches,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 5, 20 January 1916.

The slabs of meat that [chef] calls steaks,  
 Have often equine histories,  
 While the dope that he hands around as stew,  
 Should class with 'unsolved mysteries'.<sup>90</sup>

Other cooks specialized in epicurean delights on the fly like a recipe containing hand-fed mice, chlorinated water, Keating's, cheese, and Plum and Apple<sup>91</sup> while other recipes prompted the question, "Why did the stew taste so funny the day after the Transport lost their dog?"<sup>92</sup> Both the British and Canadian troops used Keating's lice and insect powder, which looked like black pepper, and soldiers jokingly confused the two as food additives within the pages of the trench press. Both their food rations contained tinned jam in various flavors; however, plum and apple seemed the most common and the least appetizing according to complaints in the trench newspapers. It is difficult to tell from the trench journals themselves, but presumably the upper echelons kept the other flavors of jam to themselves or the manufacturer used the cheaper fruits.<sup>93</sup> Often officers received packages of jam and other items from relatives in Britain, especially from London stores, like Harrods, Marks & Spencer, and Selfridges, which specialized in these kinds of shipments.<sup>94</sup> These humorous anecdotes revealed the lack of proper meat, the delay of supplies, and the ingenuity of the cooks rather more often than the actual use of atypical animals for food. There were no substitutions for the biscuit rations "used by troops to sharpen their teeth on, to write home on, or (when pulverized) to make puddings of."<sup>95</sup> Hard

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<sup>90</sup> "Sandbag Duff," *Listening Post*, no. 11, 3 February 1916.

<sup>91</sup> "Dug-out Pie," *Listening Post*, no. 23, 22 March 1917.

<sup>92</sup> "What We Want to Know," *Iodine Chronicle*, no.1, 25 October 1915

<sup>93</sup> Charges that manufacturers used cheaper fruits nor that those upper echelons kept the other flavors to themselves are conjecture. Availability of fruit could have been scarce during wartime and led to manufacturing changes; or, since families shipped care packages from home (or from stores near home) the more expensive fruit jams and jellies could have been obtained directly from care packages.

<sup>94</sup> For archival information from Marks & Spencer, see "Marks in Time," Marks and Spencer Company Archive, accessed 29 July 2016, <https://marksintime.marksandspencer.com/the-collection>. For Harrods as a supplier during the war, see T. S. Crawford, *Wiltshire and the Great War: Training the Empire's Soldiers* (Reading: DPF Publishing, 1999), 114, 116, 196. In *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, Harrods advertised useful service items throughout the war period including kits, portable items, clothing, and comfort parcels.

<sup>95</sup> "Encyclopedia of Military Terms," *Listening Post*, no. 12, 15 March 1916.

tack was another test of soldiers' teeth as they could sometimes be softened "ranging from a sharp blow with your entrenching tool to placing them in front of a tank," sometimes used as "bomb-throwing material," and after the war "they will be used for making roads, feeding crocodiles, or shooting at mad elephants."<sup>96</sup> The reference to puddings related to British cuisine while the roads, crocodiles, and elephants alluded not to the empire as a whole but to the British colonies in Northern Africa and India specifically and to British fighting experience abroad. As noted by references to raisin pie, pork and beans, fruit, frozen fish, steaks, potatoes, and detailed lists of holiday menus (real or imaginary), Canadian soldiers revealed their obsession with food.

Similarities to British mates included heeding the call to arms, accepting the vagaries of Mother Nature and the drudgeries of trench routines, looking forward to the rum issue, and grousing about the food. Similarities did not extend to governance. Canadians were British subjects legally and shared a sense of British history, duty, culture, ideals, and ethnicity; however, Canada made its own decisions regarding support of British war efforts through supplies and soldiers. As noted in early issues of Canadian trench journals, duty to Mother England were foundations of Canadian choices as "sons of the Empire:"

Brothers in the Empire's cause,  
 Together here they stand:  
 Defenders of the Nation's laws,  
 United hand in hand ...  
 When Britain calls her sons come forth,  
 To muster for the light,  
 With pride to show their own true worth  
 For what they know is right.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> "What They Didn't Say," *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 2, 15 November 1915; "Answers to Correspondents," *Listening Post*, no. 30, August 1918; "Our Thirst for Knowledge," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915; "Encyclopedia of Military Terms," *Listening Post*, no. 12, 15 March 1916.

<sup>97</sup> "Sons of the Empire," *Listening Post*, no. 7, 29 October 1915; See also "The Call to Arms," *Listening Post*, no. 1, 10 August 1915; "We're Coming, Mother England," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915; "We're Coming, Mother England," *Listening Post*, no. 17, 7 July 1916.



The Canadians went to Flanders because “blood is thicker than water, and the call was too insistent to be denied.”<sup>98</sup> These soldiers were “Canadian either by birth or by adoption” and their presence in the battlefields was “sufficient proof that in thought, sentiment, and loyalty” they were “thoroughly and openly British” because “a nation’s truest representatives are the defenders of its honour.”<sup>99</sup> Soldiers called to each other’s honor, to “feel proud” in belonging “to the Canadian Contingent,” and to “uphold the Dignity and Honour of that glorious Dominion of ours.”<sup>100</sup> As the war continued, the death toll rose and the requests for more able bodied men came from trench newspapers as early as November 1915, using the words “National Service” and linking glory to dying for one’s country. Since these newspapers were mailed home with some frequency, using them for recruitment seemed ideal. The call was about glory and pride using visions of standing shoulder to shoulder with “chest thrown out with a true manly heart beating under the King’s” uniform in defense of the Empire.<sup>101</sup> This conceptualization of masculinity implied that real men signed up to defend the Empire and the poem after this call to arms intimated that those who stayed at home contained small slim souls, were labeled slackers, and subject to evident shame. Additionally, a poem entitled “Motherland” described recruits coming from all parts of the vast British Empire and threatened with this curse: “May the Briton who shirks in your hour of need / Sink into a grave of shame.”<sup>102</sup> Knowing that so-called slackers read these papers, one newly minted soldier wrote in rhyme about his identity disk lamenting “How sick those chaps at home must be, / Why couldn’t they be brave like me?”<sup>103</sup> Others commented “to ‘the man who stayed at home’: Don’t you read this dope because you

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<sup>98</sup> “War and National Honour,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>99</sup> “The Citizen Soldiers’ Demand,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

<sup>100</sup> “The 10th Battalion’s Page,” *Listening Post*, no. 17, 7 July 1916.

<sup>101</sup> “Editorial,” *Listening Post*, no. 8, 25 November 1915.

<sup>102</sup> “Motherland,” *Listening Post*, no. 30, April 1918.

<sup>103</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 13, 30 March 1916.

would neither understand or appreciate it.”<sup>104</sup> As noted in a poem entitled “To the Slacker,” a soldier fumed, “When I have time for thinking, / I think of you, a young galoot, / From duty daily slinking” mentioning his walks in the park, his clean clothes, and his desk job supposedly serving the country.<sup>105</sup> Some soldiers rhymed their disdain:

“Now you young sport in Canada,  
Still wearing a civvy coat ...  
you really get my goat.  
The Armouries ain’t so far from town,  
So take a step inside ...  
... you’ll swell with pride ...  
And then you’ll feel you’re something real --  
A man, my boy, a MAN!”<sup>106</sup>

These were clear appeals to masculinity and pointed to what most Victorian men thought they should and should not be. From Victorian times onward, the men’s realm contained politics, war, and conflict while the women’s realm included keeping the hearth and home.<sup>107</sup> The British Army and its visible soldiers, both in and out of battle, helped to shape the values of Victorian culture where men were loyal, hardy, recklessly brave, gallant, strong, heroic, courageous, and willing to fight for Queen, country, and Empire.<sup>108</sup> A constant reaffirmation that soldiering and signing up to fight for one’s country indicated a youth matured into a man. Boys, youth, and young men heard and read adventure stories of brave soldiers, adventurers, and hunters, joined groups like the Boy Scouts of Canada and the military cadets sponsored by the Canadian government, and practiced or played with rifles and pistols. Firearms were a part of Canadian male youth culture from the late nineteenth century onwards through the encouragement of

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<sup>104</sup> “The 10th Battalion’s Page,” *Listening Post*, no. 15, 18 May 1916.

<sup>105</sup> “To the Slacker,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>106</sup> “To Whom It May Concern,” *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1917.

<sup>107</sup> Streets, *Martial Races*, 42.

<sup>108</sup> See descriptions of Havelock of Lucknow and T.E. Lawrence in Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*; Also see the descriptions of the Highland soldier activities and perceptions, both in and out of battle, in Streets, *Martial Races*. Both Dawson and Streets also discuss the effects of Garnet Wolseley, Fred Roberts, Horatio Herbert Kitchner, and others on the idea of masculinity.

hunting as a sport and rifles marketed as toys.<sup>109</sup> Participation in these masculine activities through scouts, cadets, and hunting encouraged good character, enhanced physical and mental fitness, encouraged a sense of place in society, and trained them for the ‘manly game’ of war. War was the ultimate test of masculinity, patriotism for the nation, and a connection to British imperial identity, especially in the Dominions like Canada. Both recruitment and chastisement appeared in the trench journals to convince Canadian men to uphold their own masculinity and to enlist in support of the British Empire.

In 1914, the Dominion of Canada and its soldier residents enthusiastically answered the call to help defend the British Empire as a matter of duty, although not directly in defense of its own geographic borders. By 1915, although still part of the British Expeditionary Force, the Canadians organized into a distinct corps serving together as a separate army within the greater Imperial army for the remainder of the war. As the trench newspapers show, the Canadian soldiers, like their British counterparts, accepted the trials of Mother Nature and service in the trenches, looked forward to the rum issue, complained about similar foods, and shared a British mentality regarding work, responsibility, and duty. Although very much British in its roots and managed by the Empire during the war, Canada was a domestically independent Dominion, it was geographically located on another continent, and shared a border with the United States. It was these similarities and differences, along with tremendous losses during the Somme offensive and the triumph at Vimy Ridge, along with subsequent victories, which contributed to forging the unique Canadian identity and the consideration of Canada as a nation apart from the British Empire.

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<sup>109</sup> R. Blake Brown, “‘Every Boy Ought to Learn to Shoot and to Obey Orders’: Guns, Boys, and the Law in English Canada from the Late Nineteenth Century to the Great War,” *Canadian Historical Review* 93, no. 2 (2012): 196-226.

## BROTHERS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

On 18 November 1916, at the Lawyers' Club of New York City, Canadian Prime Minister Borden delivered a speech outlining the marked similarities between the United States and Canada sharing a boundary "which is at once unguarded and invisible."<sup>1</sup> His inspiration, the lengthy shared Canadian-American border, was reflected in the trench newspapers' emphasis on neighborly connections in their pages. The nearness of the United States affected the emerging unique Canadian identity, since a healthy majority of Canadians lived within 200 kilometers of the American border. Along the length of this border in economy and industry, migration, news, conscription, prohibition, and sports were shared.

Borden listed shared attributes including vast territories in comparison to Europe, an abundance and variety of natural resources, national development, federal and state or provincial authority, common language and literature, "like ideals of democracy," exchanged immigrants, social ties, and a legal system guided by precedent.<sup>2</sup> These positive aspects of Canadian-American culture ran parallel to negative cross-border interactions offering both closeness and uncomfortable nearness. Although the primary objective of the 1867 Confederation of Canada was to unite the British eastern colonies with the north and western British territories, fear of the United States and possible invasion was also a factor.<sup>3</sup> This apprehension of Americans crossing

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<sup>1</sup> Robert L. Borden, *Canada at War: A Speech Delivered by Robert Borden in New York City* (Ottawa: King's Press, 1916), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Borden, *Speech in New York City*, 1-4.

<sup>3</sup> Fear of American aggression at the border was based on the War of 1812, American support of the 1837 rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada, the American Civil War, and the Fenian raids of the late 1860s. See a summary in Tennyson, *Canada's Great War*, 18-21. See also Edgar McInnis, *The Unguarded Frontier: a History of American-Canadian Relations*, (New York: Russell & Russell, 1970), 242-247. Fear of the Americans also rose during the 1911 federal elections, when the Conservative Party attacked the reciprocity agreement proposed by Prime Minister Laurier. The Conservatives argued that it would lead to a rupture with the British Empire followed by annexation by the United States. President Taft believed this reciprocity idea could be used for his own political gain in 1912. Kendrick A. Clements, "Manifest Destiny and Canadian Reciprocity in 1911," *Pacific Historical*

the border through military aggression was evident in contingency planning for a possible Canadian-American war that continued even after World War I.<sup>4</sup> The Canadian border with the United States totals close to 9,000 kilometers, touching seven provinces and one territory, and in its early years this border was undefended and porous.<sup>5</sup> Ideas moved back and forth across this boundary, like changes in politics and governmental policies, religious beliefs and organizations, the uniform gauge on railways, changes in tariffs, and ideas on education.<sup>6</sup> Diplomatic understandings between the two governments reached back to the Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817 and the Treaty of Washington of 1871.<sup>7</sup> These major treaties and subsequent points of contention between them eventually led to the creation of the Department of External Affairs (1909) for conflicts over various Canadian-American interchanges and/or operations and the International Joint Commission (1912) for conflicts over shared waters.<sup>8</sup> Canadian solutions and interactions with the United States are, and always were, about compromise, harmony, and cooperation.<sup>9</sup>

Contrasted to the early and popular settling in the United States, Canada had limited areas for suitable population and expansion due to its geography, geology, and climate – these

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*Review* 42, no. 1 (1973), 35-36. See also Richard Preston, “Two Centuries in the Shadow of Behemoth: The Effect on the Canadian Psyche,” *International Journal* 31, no. 3 (1976): 413-433.

<sup>4</sup> Preston, “Two Centuries,” 427-428, fn21.

<sup>5</sup> The Treaty of 1908 was a treaty between His Majesty King Edward VII and the United States respecting the demarcation of the international boundary between the United States and Canada signed at Washington on 11 April 1908. See the definitions in the International Boundary Commission Act (RSC, 1985, c. I-16), accessed 8 September 2016, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-16/page-1.html>. The border remains still somewhat “undefended and porous” as of 2016. Although demilitarized, it remains monitored including a sometimes lengthy, border crossing process and the latest order requires passports even if driving or walking across the border.

<sup>6</sup> Fred Landon, “Our Neighbours and Ourselves,” *Quarterly Review of Commerce (pre-1986)* 11, no. 2 (1944): 53-57.

<sup>7</sup> Preston, “Two Centuries,” 413-433.

<sup>8</sup> Preston, “Two Centuries,” 425; The Department of External Affairs is now called Global Affairs Canada, see Global Affairs Canada/Affaires mondiales Canada, 2016, accessed 8 September 2016, <http://www.international.gc.ca>. For information regarding the International Joint Commission and its affairs, see International Joint Commission/Commission mixte internationale, 2016, accessed 8 September 2016, <http://www.ijc.org>.

<sup>9</sup> McInnis, *The Unguarded Frontier*, 3.

limitations also contributed to Canada's persistent connection with Great Britain.<sup>10</sup> The adherence to monarchy and the structure of Canada's executive branch of government rejects the republicanism of its southern neighbor as well as aspects of American democracy.<sup>11</sup> Debates with the United States over Alaska, conflicting ideas of Reciprocity, and the 1911 election, fostered some Canadian dislike and distrust of their rude, domineering, and aggressive neighbor. These feelings carried over into the Great War and beyond, forcing negotiations aimed at establishing harmony on both sides of the border. By the conclusion of the war, Canada realized the importance of amicable and cooperative relations among all three governments: Canadian, American, and British.

The shared border allowed for economic integration and American investment in Canada reaching up to 23% of foreign investment by 1914, including over 400 American-owned businesses incorporated in Canada.<sup>12</sup> These American-owned companies were Canadian companies according to Canadian corporate law even though they had American owners or shareholders.<sup>13</sup> Investment in Canada allowed American firms to open connections to the rest of the British Empire. This was good news for American trade expansion and foreign market penetration, but led to some real or presumed losses in the Canadian economy. In parliamentary debates over imagined or actual losses of revenue, sometimes Canada chafed against British domination in their external commercial dealings. During the war, therefore, Canada partially turned towards the United States and away from Britain for investment and economic

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<sup>10</sup> That British connection persists today. After the 1982 Constitution Act (Canada), also known as the 1982 Canada Act (Great Britain), Canada was no longer the 'Dominion of Canada' but remains the only constitutional monarchy in North America. It is a parliamentary democracy made up of the Sovereign, the Senate, and the House of Commons. All Canadian laws must receive royal assent once they have passed in both Houses, and the Sovereign's representative is the Governor General. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship: Study Guide* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2012), 10, 14-29.

<sup>11</sup> McNinnis, *The Unguarded Frontier*, 252.

<sup>12</sup> Tennyson, *Canada's Great War*, 22; John Herd Thompson, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 41-98.

<sup>13</sup> Tennyson, *Canada's Great War*, 22; Thompson, *Canada and the United States*, 41-98.

opportunity, which led to fears of bondage to a different power.<sup>14</sup> This anxiety about American influence occasionally warranted a negative piece regarding American businesses or businessmen in the trench press.

It has been reported that Mr. Henry Ford has been trying to offset the damage done to his motor car business ... by subscribing 10,000 dollars to the Canadian Red Cross Society [which should be refunded]. ... We can get victory in this war without the use of 'tainted' money. We don't want his money nor his cars, and we trust that the people in Canada will remember this.<sup>15</sup>

The common assumption was that that Henry Ford privately owned both the Ford Company in the United States (Ford-USA) and the Ford Company in Canada (Ford-Canada); however, Ford-Canada was a publicly traded company and Ford's first foreign market entry, while Ford-USA was privately owned.<sup>16</sup> The geographic location of the Ford-Canada plant not only made Canadians the earliest adopters of motorcars but also led to the growth of their national automobile industry.<sup>17</sup> Unlike other American automobile manufacturers in Canada, Ford-Canada was Canadian owned and operated; therefore, the trench newspaper editor's comment seems odd but perhaps also tainted because the United States refused to enter the war. Although the negative comment appeared hostile towards an American businessman, not purchasing a Canadian made product hurt the national economy more than the American one. It seems plausible that this kind of industrial anti-Americanism occurred because at the turn of the century, American firms controlled or influenced over a hundred companies in Canada and by 1934, the list included over 1,350 companies.<sup>18</sup> However, American President Woodrow

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<sup>14</sup> Preston, "Two Centuries," 427.

<sup>15</sup> "Editorial," *Listening Post*, no. 9, 25 December 1915.

<sup>16</sup> Dimitry Anastakis, "From Independence to Integration: The Corporate Evolution of the Ford Motor Company of Canada, 1904-2004," *The Business History Review* 78, no. 2 (2004): 214, 215, 219. Henry Ford initially controlled a minority interest of less than 13% of Ford-Canada. Mr. Ford wholly owned the US and the London, England facilities as well as other foreign production sites, but not Ford-Canada or Ford-Canada's subsidiaries.

<sup>17</sup> Anastakis, "From Independence to Integration," 225.

<sup>18</sup> These are not very large numbers of investment. From 1909 to 1918, an average of approximately 26 American-owned businesses established themselves in Canada each year, totaling 264; in 1919, that number jumped

Wilson's choice to stay out of the war during his first term (1913-1917) probably incurred more wrath than the number of business investments during that same time. Anti-American attitudes reigned especially during the 1911 federal elections in Canada, specifically around Prime Minister Laurier's proposed reciprocity treaty that would enable both free trade and cultural and economic ties between the countries.<sup>19</sup> This reciprocity agreement would reduce or eliminate taxes and duty fees on export and import from the United States. Since far more raw materials and farm products were exported from Canada, the Canadian economy would suffer. Although American economic interests were great, they did not dominate the Canadian economy. The possibility that they might do so caused much fear just as the possibility of military invasion did.

Beyond economic and industrial investment, the shared border also allowed for easy travel and migration between countries. A Canadian news tidbit appeared in the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* saying, "Of the [20,634 immigrant] arrivals [in Saskatchewan] in 1914, 12,043 came from the United States ... During 1913, 22,142 [of the 44,543] immigrants came from the United States."<sup>20</sup> Saskatchewan, like the rest of the Canadian West, used incentives similar to the American homestead laws and acts to encourage settlement. The Canadian government, taking advantage of the disappearance of available land for homesteaders in America, sponsored an aggressive program throughout the United Kingdom, continental Europe, and the United States promoting Canada as the 'Last Best West' and using the enticement of free land, which

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to 49 and stayed at that yearly average through the 1920s, indicating that war did little to change American investment in Canada. According to economists, increases in Canadian tariffs stimulated larger changes in investment. See Herbert Marshall, Frank Southard, and Kenneth W. Taylor, *Canadian-American Industry, Relations of Canada and the United States* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1970), 19-21. These companies varied in size and products, (e.g., pins, buttons, seeds, foundries, automobiles, liquors, clocks, paper mills, rubber, et cetera) and formed a significant portion of manufacturing production within Canada.

<sup>19</sup> The reciprocity agreement would reduce or eliminate tariffs on raw materials and farm products. W. M. Baker, "A Case Study of Anti-Americanism in English-Speaking Canada: The Election Campaign of 1911," *Canadian Historical Review* 51, no. 4 (December 1970): 426-449; Clements, "Manifest Destiny and Canadian Reciprocity in 1911," 32-52.

<sup>20</sup> "Canadian News Items," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915.



resulted in an immigration boom up to the beginning of the First World War.<sup>21</sup> Southern Saskatchewan experienced a large influx of farmers to work its southern fertile soils since climate limited agriculture through the rest of the province.<sup>22</sup> English-speakers and immigrants from Europe and the United States settled in the Canadian West, and farmers settled in the Prairie Provinces.<sup>23</sup> Many groups of settlers with common ties congregated in their own communities, preserving their language, religions, customs, and experiences like the Ukrainians, Germans, Mennonites, Hutterites, and Doukhobors.<sup>24</sup> During World War I, wheat prices increased, more farms extended their seed boundaries, and many German-American settlers came from North and South Dakota.<sup>25</sup> Immigration in Canada reached record levels in 1913 (reaching over 400,000 in that year alone) and accounts for the mention of American immigrant

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<sup>21</sup> In 1896, Clifford Sifton, the first Minister of the Interior (1896-1905), started this program. For details on this promotion of Canada having the ‘Last Best West’ see Robert Vineberg, *Responding to Immigrants’ Settlement Needs The Canadian Experience*, Springer Briefs in Population Studies (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 7-17; Ninette Kelley, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 113-166; Kerry Alcorn, *Border Crossings: US Culture and Education in Saskatchewan, 1905-1937* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2013), 9; Alan B. Anderson, *Settling Saskatchewan* (Regina, SK: University Regina Press, 2013), 3-4. Sifton’s programs affected immigration up to 1930. See Anderson, *Settling Saskatchewan*, 3-6.

<sup>22</sup> Saskatchewan has a large percentage of Canada’s farmland, especially land producing wheat, and typically exports the majority of its crop. In the north, there are ample amounts of potash (used for fertilizer). Frank D. Lewis, “Farm Settlement on the Canadian Prairies, 1898 to 1911,” *The Journal of Economic History* 41, no. 3 (1981): 517-535.

<sup>23</sup> Authors Lew and Cater surmised that a portion of this American share of migrants could have been a number of Canadians returning from the US. See Byron Lew and Bruce Cater, “Canadian Emigration to the U.S., 1900–1930: Characterizing Movers and Stayers, and the Differential Impact of Immigration Policy on the Mobility of French and English Canadians” (CNEH 2012 Conference, Banff: Canadian Network for Economic History, 2012), accessed 9 August 2016, <http://www.economichistory.ca/pdfs/2012/lew-cater.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> For an overview of ethnic enclaves and the types of bloc settlements, see Anderson, *Settling Saskatchewan*, 8-9. For an interesting look at German-Canadians, see Gerhard P. Bassler, “Silent or Silenced Co-Founders of Canada? Reflections on the History of German Canadians,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 22, no. 1 (February 1990): 38-46. The immigrant movement, in pursuit of progress and prosperity, to both the Canadian and American west also gave them opportunity to create a slice of home, Old World style. See Alcorn, *Border Crossings*, 25-64. Furthermore, these immigrants initially were not forced to speak and learn English; therefore, they could found settlements with their languages, religions, customs, and traditions. See Anderson, *Settling Saskatchewan*, 9, fn 33.

<sup>25</sup> The German-Americans (most likely Volga Germans and German Menonites) may have expanded into Canada for more farmlands and their skills in dryland farming or to escape discrimination regarding their ties to their homeland, language, and religious groups. Clearly not all Germans moved out of the United States. For an overview, see Anderson, *Settling Saskatchewan*, 1-21; Alcorn, *Border Crossings*, 5-14.

numbers quoted in the trench press.<sup>26</sup> This influx of American settlers, as well as the geographic closeness of the border, contributed to the stream of various forms of American media, organizations, and shared solutions for similar Midwest and Prairie problems.<sup>27</sup>

Besides money and people, news also traversed this shared border. An advertisement mocking the intense flooding in the trenches referred to the famous tragic dam break at Johnstown in 1889, and recurrent flooding in the Pennsylvanian town celebrated in plays and other works of the time.<sup>28</sup> The trench press also included criticisms of American culture, like “Recent official figures show that the sewers of the cities of the United States are long enough to girdle the earth,”<sup>29</sup> cheekily implying either the tremendous need for cleanliness or that their large population required this much to adequately keep the country clean. These are two indications that Canadian newspapers and news outlets would have relayed American news as warranted, much like current times, and that soldiers in the trenches were concerned with news and considered it relevant.

“American mud has something all its own. It gets there every time; when it arrives, it’s there to stay, and you’ve got to go some to get it off. You can bet your bottom dollar, it’s no

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<sup>26</sup> See summary of immigration to Canada from the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) culled from federal documents, their own records, and various books on refugees. Canadian Council for Refugees/Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés, May 2000, accessed 9 August 2016, <http://ccrweb.ca/en/hundred-years-immigration-canada-1900-1999>. From 1900 to 1920, the vast number of immigrants came from two influential nations. Of the 3.4 million immigrants in those 20 years, the top two were Great Britain and the United States where 1.36 million came from Britain and 1.18 million came from America. Alan B. Anderson and James Frideres, *Ethnicity in Canada: Theoretical Perspectives* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1981), 140-155. According to Alcorn, the Anglo-Celtic majority did not exist in Saskatchewan between 1905 and 1937. During this time, Saskatchewan filled with minorities avoiding British or American influence and dominance. See Alcorn, *Border Crossings*, 7, 17-22. Anderson indicated the American migrants were mainly unskilled Eastern European farm labor. See Anderson, *Settling Saskatchewan*, 9, fn 31.

<sup>27</sup> Media here includes radio, motion pictures (silent films), newspapers, and magazines, but neither television (and television broadcasting) nor sound films since those were developed during the inter-war period. Saskatchewan, including the other Prairie Provinces of Alberta and Manitoba, is part of the North American Great Plains region that extends south through Texas; therefore, solutions to Prairie problems meant easily looking to the southern Midwest states to find them. Alcorn, *Border Crossings*, 25-64.

<sup>28</sup> For the mock regatta, see the cover, *Listening Post*, no. 21, 25 January 1917.

<sup>29</sup> Dead Horse Corner Gazette, no. 1, October 1915.

cinch to make your get-away; no, siree! America's the land that put the 'M' in MUD, see?"<sup>30</sup>

This sassy quote implied several things about Canadian perceptions of Americans. First, it implied Americans were quick to arrive and slow to leave, as in the historic annexations of Texas and the Philippines. This also reflected Canadian fears of American aspirations for annexation of Canadian territories stemming from potential or perceived attempts beginning with Confederation and up to the 1910s. Second, the description of mud used recognizably American turns of phrase. "Bet your bottom dollar," meaning absolutely or without a doubt, comes from nineteenth century gamblers wagering their entire stack of dollars down to the bottom. The phrase "it's a cinch" derived from nineteenth century cowboy culture, meaning something easily done like the cinch on a horse saddle. The emphatic informal phrase "no, siree/yes, siree" came from the cowboy era as well, as a variant of the words sir or sire. Although these turns of phrase showed up in Canadian speech, cowboys and ranchers roamed the Canadian West, and ubiquitous gamblers do not have geographic boundaries, the quote therefore depicts Americans as territorially aggressive, gamblers, and cowboys.

As long as her close neighbor to the south, the United States, remained neutral, Canadian conscription was difficult to enforce. In addition, parliamentary officials feared that Canadian conscription might fuel civil unrest in Quebec, Canada's only predominately French province. Neutrality and delayed entry into the war by the United States fostered resentment, irritation, and criticism in Canada as her sacrifices at the front and at home mounted.<sup>31</sup> As the war continued, volunteers decreased, needing active recruitment to bolster the ranks. The trench newspapers published comments, poems, and jokes hoping that readers at home might be persuaded to sign

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<sup>30</sup> "Muds I have Met," *Listening Post*, no. 22, 15 February 1917.

<sup>31</sup> McInnis, *The Unguarded Frontier*, 334-335. McInnis specifically discussed Canadian attitudes of criticism, scorn, and anger towards President Wilson's policies, rising debates in American government and media, and the American diatribes against Great Britain especially in the Hearst publications.

up. By 1917, the situation changed with the United States declaration of war on Germany in April and on Austria-Hungary in December. Since they maintained only a small army, the American government passed the Selective Service Act resulting in 2.8 million conscripted into military service of the 24 million draft cards submitted.<sup>32</sup> In short order, two comments appeared in *The Listening Post* regarding the American declaration of war.

Proof of America's determination not to be dictated to by Germany ... We cannot refrain from commenting on the remarkable change in public opinion in America which has made such a drastic step possible, and we rejoice to note that United States independence – of which we have heard so much in other years – is once more about to vindicate itself.<sup>33</sup>

Finally the Americans joined the rest of the combatants after staying neutral for much of the war, ironically reminding the Canadian readers of the implications of their neighbor's independence from the British Empire. The trench paper noted the American enthusiasm, likened to the fascination with games and sporting events: "With the return of Spring, the exciting sport of 'Over the Top' seems about to attain a universal vogue. At latest advices it appears to be catching on even in America to the exclusion of other pursuits."<sup>34</sup> American troops landed on European soil in the summer of 1917, then fought in the fields of France in the spring of 1918 until the end. Unlike Canada, the United States did not rely on volunteers and bolstered its ranks with conscription.

Although controversy over the daily rum issue took on a decidedly Canadian tone in the trench newspapers, the temperance unions pushing the controversy were not new to Canada but

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<sup>32</sup> "World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, M1509," United States National Archives, 2016, accessed 8 August 2016, <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww1/draft-registration/>; "Induction Statistics," United States Selective Service System, 2016, accessed 8 August 2016, <https://www.sss.gov/About/History-And-Records/Induction-Statistics>; "Background of Selective Service," United States Selective Service System, 2016, accessed 8 August 2016, <https://www.sss.gov/About/History-And-Records/Background-Of-Selective-Service>; Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 20-53.

<sup>33</sup> "A Reply to Germany Drastic Action by US Government. Significant Step," *Listening Post*, no. 24, 20 April 1917.

<sup>34</sup> "The Latest Craze," *Listening Post*, no. 25, 21 May 1917.

an import from the United States.<sup>35</sup> The council responsible for the Canada Temperance Act of 1878 included the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), an American organization with a Canadian chapter founded in 1874. In 1898, Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier called a national referendum on prohibition resulting in 51% in favor and 49% against.<sup>36</sup> The temperance movement in Canada and America had similar struggles from the 1840s to the end of the Great War. American anti-alcohol groups of the temperance movement stirred up in the mid-nineteenth century much like similar groups in Canada.<sup>37</sup> Canada remained a mix of dry and wet provinces during the 1910s, national prohibition in Canada occurred under the War Measures Act during the Great War and ended shortly thereafter. When the federal government returned alcohol control to the provinces, each of them, except Prince Edward Island, created provincial liquor control boards in the 1920s.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps due to the British social influence, Canadian attitudes towards alcohol provided for more moderate governmental policies than in the United States. In addition, while women headed the temperance leagues in both countries, women's suffrage was not the same on either side of the border. Canadian women did not get to vote until 1918 and therefore did not vote during the prohibition referendum of 1898. In the United States, women received the national vote in 1920, with the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Since the United Kingdom never enacted this alcohol law, this was not an effect of the British Empire but rather one from their close border neighbors. Prince Edward Island was dry from 1901, but Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick enacted prohibition during the Great War. That left the wet provinces of Quebec and Nova Scotia as well as the two territories of Northwest and Yukon.

<sup>36</sup> Referendums are indicators of the population's general sentiment rather than those of legislators, representatives, or political parties. According to Dostie and Dupré, this was the first national referendum on prohibition in the world. See Benoit Dostie and Ruth Dupré, " 'The People's Will': Canadians and the 1898 Referendum on Alcohol Prohibition," *Explorations in Economic History* 49, no. 4 (October 2012): 498-515.

<sup>37</sup> For more detail on American prohibition and anti-prohibition, see Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics, the Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928); *The Anti-Prohibition Manual: A Summary of Facts and Figures Dealing with Prohibition* (Cincinnati, OH: National Wholesale Liquor Dealers Association of America, 1917); J. C. Burnham, "New Perspectives on the Prohibition 'Experiment' of the 1920's," *Journal of Social History* 2, no. 1 (1968): 51-68; James H. Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); Ernest Hurst Cherrington, *The Evolution of Prohibition in the United States of America* (Westerville, OH: American issue Press, 1920).

<sup>38</sup> Dostie and Dupré, "The People's Will," 500-501. Prohibition did not end in Prince Edward Island until 1948.

Amendment, but in several states they were able to vote prior to that. Some female leaders in the temperance leagues therefore had ample opportunity to exercise their voting privileges regarding prohibition.

In addition to alcohol, another American influence involved sports, especially baseball as noted by several references in the Canadian trench press. During the American Progressive Era (1890-1920), baseball dominated American sports and was considered the national pastime.<sup>39</sup> Sharing a border also meant sharing sports and as hockey moved south, baseball moved north. A challenge appeared in *The Listening Post* between two artillery brigades and their respective unit baseball teams starting with: “Bring over your ‘near ball team’ and get a d—n good trimming” and ending with a comment, “It sure was some ball game.”<sup>40</sup> Divisional baseball teams also showed up in the *Iodine Chronicle* as noted with a reference to their graceful pitcher.<sup>41</sup> Canadians widely played baseball but the rules differed from American ones and depended on the province.<sup>42</sup> In the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, a section in the Sport Gossip page described the interruption of a baseball game in a small town well outside the trench area by a German shell landing in a nearby field. The pitcher chastised the fielder who missed an easy fly ball, “If you are going to play ball, play ball, and quit watching the shells.”<sup>43</sup> Probably meant to be ironic, this statement indicated that even during periods of relief from the trenches, participating and paying attention during a baseball game pointed to several possibilities. It underlined the inability to escape war, reflected the constant fear of artillery, proved leisure time was important

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<sup>39</sup> Steven Riess, “I Am Not a Baseball Historian,” *Rethinking History* 5, no. 1 (2001), 29. For labor and business conditions in professional baseball before and during the First World War, see Robert Fredrick Burk, *Never Just a Game: Players, Owners, and American Baseball to 1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

<sup>40</sup> “A Challenge,” *Listening Post*, no. 17, 7 July 1916.

<sup>41</sup> “Queries,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 2, 15 November 1915.

<sup>42</sup> Colin Howell, “Canada: Internationalizing America’s National Pastime,” in *Baseball without Borders: The International Pastime*, ed. George Gmelch (Lincoln: Bison Books, 2006), 213-214. Howell looks at baseball in Canada from the nineteenth century to the early twenty-first century.

<sup>43</sup> “Sport Gossip,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915.

for soldier sanity and morale, and pointed to the seriousness of winning not only the game of baseball but also the game of war.<sup>44</sup> Reference to German bombing near baseball diamonds also appeared in the *Iodine Chronicle*.<sup>45</sup> Another question in the sports column in the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* appeared: “Which ball team are you ‘rooting’ for this season?” This revealed Canadians’ interest in American professional baseball and the reference to “rooting” someone on, in an informal cheer, was used in North American parlance. Professional baseball dominated American sports, drew large crowds and garnered substantial press, since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, hence the overflow into Canadian leisure culture as a social activity and a town booster.<sup>46</sup> The first issue of the *Iodine Chronicle* featured an advertisement asking for “a baseball team to beat the Divisional Supply Column” and, in a later spring issue, a lengthy article described past and present baseball teams, players, and games because, “Spring is here! so’s the war, so are we, and so is baseball.”<sup>47</sup> Baseball to Americans was much like hockey to Canadians in its symbolism and in its location in the center of large metropolitan areas.<sup>48</sup> Canadians participated in American baseball leagues but did not own major league teams until 1969 and 1976 with the purchase of the Montreal Expos and the Toronto Blue Jays, respectively. Of the shared North American sports leagues of the time (the National League and the American

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<sup>44</sup> The soldiers often referred to the war as a game in jokes, songs, and poetry throughout the trench press.

<sup>45</sup> “Ampoules,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 2, 15 November 1915.

<sup>46</sup> Steven Riess, “I Am Not a Baseball Historian,” *Rethinking History* 5, no. 1 (2001), 29. Stacy L. Lorenz, “‘A Lively Interest on the Prairies’: Western Canada, the Mass Media, and a ‘World of Sport’ 1870-1939,” *Journal of Sport History* 27, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 195-227; Colin Howell, “Baseball, Class and Community in the Maritime Provinces, 1870-1910,” *Histoire Sociale / Social History* 22, no. 44 (November 1989): 265-286; Robin John Anderson, “‘On the Edge of the Baseball Map’ with the 1908 Vancouver Beavers,” *Canadian Historical Review* 77, no. 4 (1996): 538-574.

<sup>47</sup> “Advertisements,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no.1, 25 October 1915; “Play Ball,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 8, 15 June 1916. Baseball items featured most prominently in the *Iodine Chronicle* (seven mentions), while the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* featured two and the *Listening Post* featured one. For more on the popularity of baseball during the war, see Andrew Horrall, “‘Keep-A-Fighting! Play the Game!’ Baseball and the Canadian Forces during the First World War,” *Canadian Military History* 10, no. 2 (January 20, 2012): 27-40.

<sup>48</sup> Riess, “Baseball Historian,” 35. Typically, American baseball teams stayed in the cities that founded them, unlike franchise shifts in professional football and basketball. This idea of static American baseball franchises was similar to Canadian hockey franchises.

League (baseball) and the Canadian National Hockey Association), Canada formed more professional hockey teams than baseball teams. Coverage of various sporting events appeared in the Canadian media including, but not limited to, British football and cricket, Canadian hockey and lacrosse, and American boxing and baseball.<sup>49</sup> The diffusion model could explain baseball's appearance as a popular social pastime in Canada much like hockey's appearance on America's athletic scene.<sup>50</sup>

An unguarded and permeable Canadian-American border meant that Canadian identity was infused with "Americanisms." These links and evolving relationships with this southern neighbor changed Canada and her people enough for a realization of the constraints as well as the benefits of the British Empire and a broadening of sentiment for greater eventual autonomy. Canadians defined themselves not only in terms of their British brothers in arms, but in terms of their American neighbors too. This process of feeling out the similarities and differences between Canadians and Britons and simultaneously between Canadians and Americans makes them uniquely Canadian.

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<sup>49</sup> Lorenz, "A Lively Interest," 204. Lorenz also mentioned that although Canadians avidly followed baseball, nothing compared to the popularity of hockey. On the explosion of Canadian interest in baseball in the 1920s, see Stacy L. Lorenz, "'Bowling Down to Babe Ruth': Major League Baseball and Canadian Popular Culture, 1920-1929," *Canadian Journal of History of Sport* 26, no. 1 (May 1995): 22-39.

<sup>50</sup> In the diffusion model, sports originates in highly developed metropolises, then spreads out to remote areas and colonies through introduction by the elites, then gradually filters down to the masses (like professional football in Britain, or soccer in North America, coming out of 'folk football'). See Howell, "Canada: Internationalizing America's National Pastime," 212-214. According to Howell, historians cannot agree whether baseball originated in Ontario or New York. There is also disagreement on who was influencing whom, especially with migration.



## CANADA'S SONS

The various Canadian trench journals offer a mix of reasons why soldiers chose to fight under the Canadian Red Ensign and subject to the British Union Jack. In a series of speeches at Canadian Clubs in Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, and Winnipeg in December 1914, Prime Minister Borden often referred to the “appalling struggle” which has involved or has been forced upon “our Empire” appealing to the imperial, legal, as well as affective connection to the British.<sup>1</sup> Why people fight and die for their country or community is a complex and timeless question of the ages, and a personal and cultural connection to a particular nation is a combination of geography, religion, language, and authority.<sup>2</sup> An obvious connection was to Britain as one of its Dominions, and many British-born had settled in Canada for a chance at better and more prosperous lives.

The limited run of three issues of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* ranging from October 1915 to June 1916, makes it impossible to determine if there was a change over time from a more British mindset to a more Canadian mindset. The poem, “The Battle of Langemarck,” where a Canadian from Ottawa “waited for the spring/ For word to tell me how they served their country and their King”<sup>3</sup> demonstrated this interconnectedness and suggested there was no differentiation between serving Canada and its Empire. In the poem, “The Answered Call,” Canadians stood to protect “England’s shore” near Calais, at Ypres, and in the hamlet then known as Saint-Julien.

We up and dressed, prepared for the test,  
Knowing our chance had come

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<sup>1</sup> Robert L. Borden, *Canada at War: Speeches Delivered by Robert Borden before the Canadian Clubs* (Ottawa: King’s Press, 1914).

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 5-7, 9-36, 46, 83-87, 90, 109-111.

<sup>3</sup> “The Battle of Langemarck,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

To avenge the dead who had fought and bled  
 On the plains of gallant Belgium. ...  
 "On, Canadians!" our Colonel cried,  
 "Onward to victory!"  
 And show those Huns how Canada's sons  
 Are ready for the day!"<sup>4</sup>

Canadians fought for the Empire while showing their steadfastness not only for England but for Canada as well. In the third and unfortunately final issue of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, there was a particularly patriotic poem found on the last page, which could indicate a coming sense of nationalism:

Hats off to the First Canadians,  
 Men of heart and hand,  
 Who recked not of danger or death  
 When called to make a stand.

Canada's name was at stake;  
 No malingering there;  
 A noble band of the Maple Leaf brand  
 Filled the breach, but not with despair.

All honour to those who fell;  
 'Somewhere in France,' they sleep;  
 But Canada's name is emblazoned in fame  
 By heroes whose mem'ry we keep.<sup>5</sup>

The thirty issues of *The Listening Post*, and the coverage from the beginning to the end of the Great War may allow for a better look into the emergence of Canadian nationalism. The appeals start out by heeding the call of Mother England in poems, songs, and articles. On the first page of the first issue of *The Listening Post*, the song "The Call to Arms" called men to "do your best/With England stand or fall ... We'll fight and conquer without fear/Beneath our Colors ever ... Her sons are real true blue ... Then let us cheer for Britain dear/Whose glory fadeth

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<sup>4</sup> "The Answered Call," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915.

<sup>5</sup> "Vive L'Entente," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

never.”<sup>6</sup> This was sung to the tune of “Maple Leaf Forever,” which contained a conscious combination of Canadian and British ties.

In days of yore, from Britain’s shore, Wolfe the dauntless hero came,  
And planted firm Britannia’s flag on Canada’s fair domain,  
Here may it wave, our boast, our pride, and joined in love together  
The Thistle, Shamrock, Rose entwine, the Maple Leaf forever.  
Chorus:  
The Maple Leaf our emblem dear, the Maple Leaf forever,  
God save our King and Heaven bless the Maple Leaf forever.<sup>7</sup>

The Scotch thistle, the Irish shamrock, and the English rose all appear together with the Canadian maple leaf denoting the British roots of most English-speaking Canadians. This song was popular, especially with Anglophones, and often sung alongside “God Save the King” and “O Canada.”<sup>8</sup> Since Canada was a Dominion, the official national anthem was the same as Britain’s; however, the English lyrics of “O Canada” were sung together with it since 1908.<sup>9</sup> These songs further established the complicated but complementary connection to British roots within the Canadian identity, by emphasizing the English language and the number of British imperial symbols, but unfortunately forgetting or disregarding the equally valid French connections in Canada. The internal Canadian strife between the English and French languages, and between the Anglophones and Francophones, is complex and begs further detailed analysis beyond the reach of this thesis.

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<sup>6</sup> “The Call to Arms,” *Listening Post*, no. 1, 10 August 1915.

<sup>7</sup> *Canadian Soldiers’ Song Book* (1919), 10. The YMCA in their recreation centers, roadside canteens, and hostels provided this booklet. Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), “Canadian Soldiers’ Song Book,” Wartime Canada, 2016, accessed 17 August 2016, <http://wartimecanada.ca/document/world-war-i/music/canadian-soldiers-song-book>. For an article on the work of the YMCA in France, see Ella C. Sykes, “With the Y.M.C.A. in France,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 65, no. 3350 (1917): 205-211.

<sup>8</sup> “O Canada” did not become Canada’s national anthem until 1967 (with both English and French lyrics) and officially sanctioned under the National Anthem Act (RSC, 1985, c. N-2) in 1980. Eugenia Powers, “O Canada: Shan’t Be Chant,” *Performing Arts & Entertainment in Canada* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 8-10; Mary Copland Kennedy and Susan Carol Guerrini, “Patriotism, Nationalism, and National Identity in Music Education: ‘O Canada,’ How Well Do We Know Thee?” *International Journal of Music Education* 31, no. 1 (February 1, 2013), 80, 90.

<sup>9</sup> Powers. “O Canada: Shan’t be Chant,” 8-10. The original song, “Chant national,” had French lyrics, composed in 1880 by a French Canadian, and played and sung throughout the French-speaking environs of Canada. The original French melody and lyrics remain as part of the official national anthem.

Duty was a part of Canadian identity, even though inherited from its early British settlers. In late 1914, Prime Minister Borden appealed to the Canadian sense of allegiance to the British Empire in Toronto: “The call of duty has not fallen upon unheeding ears in this country ... every community has responded with an ardour and a spirit which emphasize the strength of the ties that bind together the Dominions of this Empire.”<sup>10</sup> He appealed to responsibility and loyalty as he reminded those gathered at the club that contingents of enlisted men will “proceed regularly and continuously until peace is achieved” or until no more are needed and that Canada will give whatever number demanded for “the preservation of our Empire.”<sup>11</sup> As noted in the trench press, the Canadians went to Flanders because “blood is thicker than water,” and the call of duty and honor within that blood tie was inexorable as men championed their Empire’s cause.<sup>12</sup> The prime minister understood his imperial-minded constituents in Ontario and used words to remind and inspire fealty to the Crown. The *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* was a product of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, whose subsidiary title was Central Ontario Regiment. In Manitoba, the first of the four Western provinces, Borden praised all the “great western provinces” from Winnipeg as the “gateway city to the West,” and the Westerners that “have responded so splendidly to the call of duty, ... the justice of the cause, ... and the obligation” to our Empire.<sup>13</sup> Although he did not travel throughout the Western Provinces, he knew the words spoken in Winnipeg would travel all the way to the Pacific edge of British Columbia. The popular and long running trench paper, *The Listening Post*, was a product of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, which hailed from British Columbia and held the subsidiary title 1<sup>st</sup> British Columbia Regiment.

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<sup>10</sup> Borden, “Speech before the Canadian and Empire Clubs at Toronto, 5 December 1914,” in *Canada at War*, 7.

<sup>11</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Toronto,” in *Canada at War*, 7.

<sup>12</sup> “War and National Honor,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>13</sup> Borden, “Speech before the Canadian Club at Winnipeg, 29 December 1914,” in *Canada at War*, 25.

When Borden spoke in Halifax, in his native province of Nova Scotia, he spoke of “our citizens” and “our own territory,” reaching out to his fellow Maritimers about the Empire and praising how they had “nobly responded to the call of duty.”<sup>14</sup> As a province bordering the Atlantic Ocean, he appealed specifically to the fishing and trans-ocean transportation industries by reminding them that the “ocean pathways are the veins and arteries of the Empire, and when these are cut or obstructed [our Empire] cannot continue to exist.”<sup>15</sup> The prime minister understood the heavy influence of ocean-based trade with the British Isles and continental Europe and the large number of Scotch, Irish, and English migrants who relied on the waterways for work in the Maritimes as he invoked images of blood and ties that bind.

Unity of Empire was another inherited part of Canadian identity. Within four months of the war, Borden assured Torontonians that “this war has demonstrated the essential unity of the Empire.”<sup>16</sup> The newspaper of the Central Ontarian 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion echoed Borden’s words of unity: “... our very presence here on the battlefields is sufficient proof that in thought, sentiment, and loyalty we are thoroughly and openly British.”<sup>17</sup> In the poem, “Sons of Empire,” the first few lines speak of that unity:

Brothers in the Empire's cause,  
 Together here they stand;  
 Defenders of the Nation's laws,  
 United hand in hand.  
 Here on this friendly, foreign soil  
 Where heroes fell before ...  
 When Britain calls her sons come forth,  
 To muster for the fight,  
 With pride to show their own true worth  
 For what they know is right.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Borden, “Speech before the Canadian Club at Halifax, 18 December 1914,” in *Canada at War*, 17.

<sup>15</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Halifax,” in *Canada at War*, 21.

<sup>16</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Toronto,” in *Canada at War*, 8.

<sup>17</sup> “The Citizens Soldiers’ Demand,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

<sup>18</sup> “Sons of the Empire,” *Listening Post*, no. 6, 20 October 1915.

There was no separation between what was British and what was Canadian – seemingly, English-speaking Canadians straddled both nationalities without strife. Similar to Prime Minister Borden’s other city speeches, in Manitoba he mentioned the “unity of purpose which actuates the entire Empire” and how the “self-governing Dominions are united by the ties of a common allegiance to the Crown.”<sup>19</sup> In his Halifax speech, he concluded that there has been “no weakness and no disunion” within our Empire because its unity and enduring strength “are securely founded upon its liberties” and the “tie of a common allegiance and of a common ideal, present today an unbroken front.”<sup>20</sup> This unbroken front of the Atlantic evoked fears of German threat on the high seas, including submarine warfare, which meant that Canada’s shores could be in danger at any moment.<sup>21</sup>

Although there was potential disunity within Canada’s borders between the English and French Canadians, the prime minister invoked the idea of the Dominion as a whole during his early wartime speech in Montreal. Prime Minister Borden often mentioned the link to the Empire hoping that “every man in Canada” will realize that this “momentous nature of the struggle in which we are engaged ... challenges the continued existence of this Empire and involves the destiny of this Dominion.”<sup>22</sup> The prime minister wanted to unify the English and French Canadians in his appeal, especially during war, since a country divided falls quickly. If Canada fell because of an English-French fracture, the British Empire would fall too since Canada was the Empire’s oldest and largest Dominion. Borden reminded the Montréalais that

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<sup>19</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Winnipeg,” in *Canada at War*, 28. There was no indication if he was including the self-governing Dominions of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Newfoundland.

<sup>20</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Halifax,” in *Canada at War*, 24.

<sup>21</sup> If the Germans breached Canada’s shores first, then by geographic proximity the American shores would be next. This potential for Atlantic war and the German threat at sea eventually led the United States to give up its neutrality and enter the war.

<sup>22</sup> Borden, “Speech before the Canadian Club at Montreal, 7 December 1914,” in *Canada at War*, 12. Brown and Cook argue that Borden expected the war to unite the country while ignoring the internal divisions especially voiced by the French Canadians, like the place of the French language and Canada’s relationship with the British Empire. Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 251-265.

even the mostly French province had an important connection to Great Britain: “the development of self-government has proceeded in the overseas Dominions” and the “enjoyment of these powers has not weakened, but rather strengthened, the bonds which hold together the Empire.”<sup>23</sup> This reminder specifically spoke to the anti-imperialist French majority who had to support the Empire in order to survive as a nation. French Canadians, many known as vocal nationalists, often called for separation from the British Empire. One of the most vociferous Canadian nationalists (and anti-imperialist) was Henri Bourassa, who often led French Canadian opposition to the workings of English-speaking Canadians in both federal and provincial government. Bourassa called for consideration of “a broader duty than [Canada’s] ‘Imperial’ obligations” and to consider her “relations with the world at large.”<sup>24</sup> In this sense, Bourassa upheld the idea of duty but added that Canada should come first. He never denied the ties that bound Canada to Great Britain and France and those ties that obligated Canada to help during the war; however, he argued, Canada should not be bankrupted in the process.<sup>25</sup> Seen as a traitor by some and savior by others, Bourassa was castigated by many Anglophones. Yet, the English-speaking Canadians also were rent by conflicting sentiments and aspirations. The trench press suggests that these conflicting ties bear further scrutiny in the English-speaking Canadian context.

In addition to duty and unity of the British Empire, the sense of honor contributed to Canadian identity. The first few pages in the premier issue of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*

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<sup>23</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Montreal,” in *Canada at War*, 15.

<sup>24</sup> Henri Bourassa, *The Duty of Canada at the Present Hour* (Montreal: Imprimerie du ‘Devoir’, 1914).

<sup>25</sup> Bourassa, *Duty of Canada*. In his missive, he warned of bankruptcy on many levels: population, banking, trade, economy, etc. The front cover mentioned that Bourassa’s speech never made it to the floor of the House of Commons in Ottawa, prompting this special publication. Brown and Cook include a translation of an editorial Bourassa printed in his newspaper in 1918 speaking of the cultural division between the French and English in Canada. See Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 274. Both Borden and Bourassa wanted an independent Canada as they voiced the two sides of the same Canadian nationalist coin. Bourassa wanted Canada free from all imperial commitments and responsibilities while Borden wanted Canada as an equal partner in the British Empire.

heralded national honor as “why we Canadians are in Flanders to-day. Blood is thicker than water, and the call was too insistent to be denied ... [men] died to uphold that honour, and we ourselves stand pledged to make, if need be, the self-same sacrifice.”<sup>26</sup> This piece of editorial prose preceded a multi-stanza poem, “We’re Coming, Mother England,” printed in the later pages of this same issue. The first issue of the *Iodine Chronicle* included a poem extolling Canada’s choice to help:

Fair Canada! vast Canada!  
 She heard the martial drums ...  
 She heard the Motherland’s appeal  
 For men both true and brave,  
 The country’s life and liberty  
 From cruel foes to save. ...  
 In Canada, vast Canada --  
 There’s many empty homes --  
 For lads are come, from town and plain,  
 To follow Britain’s drums.”<sup>27</sup>

The poem mirrored the complex interconnection between British and Canadian sentiment. As members of the British Empire, Canadians answered “the call of the blood” by going to war. News items in the paper were relayed from the provinces of Canada, through various Canadian-based newspapers, rather than anywhere in England, Scotland, Wales, or Ireland. Although Canadians went to fight for Britain, they realized quickly, as noted in the second issue, a change in reasons to fight in that they “shall exact heavy toll for each life that has been taken, and for every drop of Canadian blood that was been spilt in France or Flanders. *It is our own quarrel now.*”<sup>28</sup> The spilling of Canadian blood made the war ‘truly, madly, deeply’ Canada’s cause.

Another aspect of Canadian identity involved patriotism and national spirit; however, some early ideals presented by the prime minister differed from the expression of patriotism in

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<sup>26</sup> “War and National Honour,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>27</sup> “Fair Canada,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 1, 25 October 1915.

<sup>28</sup> “Peace on Earth,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915. Emphasis was the editor’s own.



the trench journals. In his 1914 speeches, Prime Minister Borden drew attention to patriotism and national spirit. He praised Toronto for its “spirit of patriotism” made manifest in its “generous and effective aid for all purposes.”<sup>29</sup> Although patriotism and national spirit were omitted in most of the Montreal speech, Borden concluded, “In this great testing time, Canada has made known to the Empire and to the world her true spirit” and warmly appreciated the “magnificently generous response of Montreal to every appeal for patriotic purposes [that] has already spoken for itself.”<sup>30</sup> In Halifax, Borden stated that since the war began, “one cannot but perceive an awakened national spirit and consciousness in this Dominion.”<sup>31</sup> The Canadian trench newspapers did not present that same national spirit and patriotism when Borden proposed them. These ideas showed up briefly in the multi-page anniversary or Christmas issues and then finally in the last issue of *The Listening Post*, and usually incorporated in the commanders’ comments rather than the reflections of the men slogging in the trenches. This suggests that the average soldier would have not seen the war as defending Canada. As indicated in earlier passages, the English-speaking Canadian went to war to defend the Empire rather than the nation of Canada. These foot soldiers wondered what one wrote: “As I sit and try to fathom why I joined this khaki crew, / Was it for patriotic reason, or was curiosity the thing?”<sup>32</sup> Again, patriotic sentiment for Canada was unclear. None of the issues of *The Iodine Chronicle* specifically mentioned Canadian national spirit or patriotism. It seems that as the *Listening Post* editor

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<sup>29</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Toronto,” in *Canada at War*, 8; Sharpe, “Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.” In Table VI, Sharpe tabulated the numbers of total enlistment by province, as shown on attestation papers: Ontario led with 241,540.

<sup>30</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Montreal,” in *Canada at War*, 16. One of the reasons Borden omitted these references was simply because of the anti-imperialist sentiment within French Canada but subtly and skillfully emphasized its nationalism. Refer back to earlier discussion of Henri Bourassa. For an interesting number comparison, see Sharpe, “Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.” In Table VI, Sharpe tabulated the numbers of total enlistment by province, as shown on attestation papers: Quebec came in second in numbers with 87,480, but included only 23.4% of the total eligible males in the province. Manitoba at 61.1%, Alberta at 52.4%, and British Columbia at 50.8% all had provincial totals much lower than Quebec, and Quebec had considerably fewer enlistments overall.

<sup>31</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Halifax,” in *Canada at War*, 23.

<sup>32</sup> “To Whom it may Concern,” *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1916.

pointed out, “The average Canadian does not wear his patriotism on his sleeve, but once his country is in peril no-one is readier to respond to the call of duty.”<sup>33</sup> This points to a strong connection of duty to country, which Prime Minister Borden emphasized when he extolled the virtues of the Canadian people “from ocean to ocean” and their “wonderful and beautiful spirit of mutual helpfulness, of desire to aid, the spirit of self-sacrifice, of patriotism, of devotion,” which “will leave an enduring mark upon our national life.”<sup>34</sup> It is clear that duty to country was a means of forging national identity. Although Borden used the word ‘patriotism’, he specifically referred to service in war as a causal link. Evidence from the trench journals indicated that Canada was still in the midst, or perhaps even in the beginnings, of perceiving its separateness as a nation apart from the British Empire.

Other aspects of Canadian identity beyond duty, unity of empire, honor, and patriotism or nationalism appeared in the trench newspapers. A unique Canadian sentiment or atmosphere appeared in the soldiers’ impressions of weather, trench routines, contact with home, food, the rum ration, voluntary service, reinforcements, and conscripts.

Canadian soldiers had suffered in trenches in earlier British conflicts; however, the Great War’s industrialized killing technology required deeper and more permanent trenches to protect the soldiers.<sup>35</sup> Narrow communication trenches seven feet deep connected the front lines to each of the rear lines for communication, provisions, and troop rotations. These communication trenches meandered like rivers rather than reproduced the zigzag of the front line trench.<sup>36</sup> These trenches, frontline or communication, were deep enough to hold significant amounts of water making them resemble rivers. Similarly, large shell holes also filled with water during the rainy

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<sup>33</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 23, 22 March 1917.

<sup>34</sup> Borden, “Canadian Club at Halifax,” in *Canada at War*, 23.

<sup>35</sup> Cook, *Sharp End*, 217-218.

<sup>36</sup> See engineering drawing in Cook, *Sharp End*, 218.

seasons, reminding soldiers of the ponds and small lakes at home. Hence, Canadian summer recreations of boating and swimming made frequent appearances in the trench literature. For example, the *Listening Post* proposed a contingency plan based on the ever-present possibility of flooding during a mock sporting challenge. “In the event of the course being too wet, a boat race along the entire Canadian front line [instead of the mule race]. If no boats are available the combatants have expressed their willingness to swim half the distance.”<sup>37</sup> Thanks to the extensive and well-connected Canadian waterways, boating is a ubiquitous, popular summer activity. In the 1910s, Canadians paddled canoes and rowed oared rowboats, sailed in their sailboats, and toiled around in their motorboats – the newest fascination since the turn of the century. The extensive wilderness, wide-open spaces, and hidden valleys among the many mountainous regions prompted many Canadian city dwellers to frequent lakeside vacation homes. The Muskoka region of Ontario, the Laurentides of Quebec (also known as the Laurentian region), the Banff region of Alberta (especially known for Canada’s oldest national park established in 1885), and the Revelstoke region and Okanagan Valley of British Columbia all featured these idyllic vacation spots. Canadian troops pined for relaxing and refreshing jumps off a wharf into a cool mountain fed lake in the middle of summer.

In the 1917 “Grand Regatta,” the advertisement for “log riding” and “river driving” reflected the Canadian logger lifestyle while “the great barrel rolling act” alluded to a feature of Canadian daring at Horseshoe Falls in the Niagara Falls region.<sup>38</sup> Although illegal, daredevils had traversed the falls inside various types of barrels and other objects as early as 1901 – many

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<sup>37</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 9, 25 December 1915.

<sup>38</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 21, 25 January 1917; Niagara Falls has three parts: Horseshoe Falls in Canada and American Falls and Bridal Veil Falls in the United States.

plunging to their demise.<sup>39</sup> Since timber was one of Canada's largest exports, logging was a well-known Canadian industry depending on heavily muscled loggers, lumberjacks, beasts, and their activities. Logging typically began in the early winter since it was easier to fell trees when sap did not run. All winter long, loggers moved cut trees to local riverbanks to await the spring thaw and the river drive. During the river drive, men shuttled these logs to mills and paper plants downstream by standing on the logs with long hooked poles balancing and moving the timber on the water to prevent any logjams.<sup>40</sup> Logging and river drives were features on stamps from the Dominion of Newfoundland in 1910.<sup>41</sup> Riding logs and river driving required good balance and quick footwork, tested in competitive events like tree cutting and birling, also known as logrolling, among these workers during the off-season.<sup>42</sup> Canadian soldiers, familiar with logging and missing home, attempted riding logs and birling in available expanses of water where felled trees were available. In 1916, the need for experienced lumbermen to produce lumber in the British forests prompted the first forestry battalion in the CEF, the 224<sup>th</sup>.<sup>43</sup> By the end of the war, the expanded Canadian Forestry Corps contained 101 companies totaling over 31,000 men.<sup>44</sup> These lumbermen provided milled lumber for the construction of trenches and

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<sup>39</sup> Pierre Berton, *Niagara: A History of the Falls* (New York: Kodansha International, 1997). By 1900, the falls also were known for suicide since close to a thousand people had intentionally had hurled themselves into the hypnotic stream. The only two survivors who went over the falls in a barrel prior to World War I were Annie Taylor in 1901, and Bobby Leach in 1911.

<sup>40</sup> Ken Drushka, *Canada's Forests: A History* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 17-42.

<sup>41</sup> Newfoundland was not incorporated into Canada until 1949, however, was a Dominion within the British Empire from 1907 and sent troops during the First World War. The Royal Newfoundland Regiment served directly under British command and never part of the CEF. For a variety of stamp images, see Canada Post Archives, BAC-LAC, accessed 27 July 2016, [http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/020117/020117030604\\_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/020117/020117030604_e.html).

<sup>42</sup> Lumberjack activities and friendly competitions included axe throwing, caber tossing, tree climbing, log splitting, tree cutting, and birling (aka logrolling). Organized forestry-oriented sporting competitions came about in the later twentieth century; however, the modern Scottish Highland Games began in the Victorian era. C. Zarnowski, "Working at Play: The Phenomenon of 19th Century Worker-Competitions," *Journal of Leisure Research* 36, no. 2 (2004): 257-281.

<sup>43</sup> In the last two years of war, Britain felled half of its productive forests to meet military needs. See J. R. McNeill, "Woods and Warfare in World History," *Environmental History* 9, no. 3 (2004), 399.

<sup>44</sup> Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force*, 499-500; Charles Wesley Bird and J.B. Davies, *The Canadian Forestry Corps: Its Inception, Development and Achievements* (London H.M. Stationery Office, 1919). BAC-LAC

various buildings, railroad ties, and constructed airfields and runways. Foresters employed as soldiers would have been participants, if not the creators of the log riding and river driving events in the mock regatta.

The *Listening Post* also alluded to typical Canadian outdoor activities: “Will there be an issue of canoes and skis for the Listening Post at some future date?” and presented mock sporting challenges in the trenches.<sup>45</sup> The news items implied that the standing water would be deep enough in the summer and frozen enough in the winter for “participants” to enjoy these pastimes. After a fairly wet winter, another soldier asked “if the headquarters batmen have ordered their trench canoes for next winter’s campaign.”<sup>46</sup> Canoes conjured characteristic visions of Canadian summer due to the plethora of rivers, shorelines, and lakes of varying size and depth in many regions of the country. Of the six major water divides in North America, three begin in Canada and had their history associated with early fur trade routes.<sup>47</sup> Canada’s vast interior provided areas prime for expeditions. The canoe is one of the best modes of transport and exploration of the Canadian wilderness, often tracing routes originally navigated during the fur trade.<sup>48</sup> Canoeing in Canada was usually associated with the First Nations people or with the *voyageurs* engaging in fur trading activities from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Many of the great Canadian explorers, like Champlain, Fraser, Radisson, and Groseilliers, were connected in some way to the fur trade and used canoes in their expeditions. Postage stamps, one of the

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contains several photographs of the forestry corps in action, see Image Archives, BAC-LAC, accessed 22 August 2016, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search/images>.

<sup>45</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 9, 25 December 1915.

<sup>46</sup> “Wanted to Know,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915. Batmen were soldiers assigned to commissioned officers as personal servants and used as runners, valets, drivers, bodyguards, foxhole diggers, etc.

<sup>47</sup> Eric W. Morse, *Fur Trade Canoe Routes of Canada/Then and Now* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1969). The six major water divides in North America are Great, Laurentian, Arctic, St. Lawrence, Eastern, and Great Basin. The Laurentian and Arctic begin and end in Canada while the St. Lawrence begins in Canada and ends in the United States. The Great water divide runs along the western mountain region of North America, starting in northern Alaska, traversing two Western Canadian provinces, several West Central American states, and Mexico, then ending in Central America.

<sup>48</sup> Morse, *Fur Trade*, 118.

simplest forms of promotion of national identity, and one that was exported on letters traveling worldwide, featured exploration by canoe as early as 1908.<sup>49</sup>

The motorboat too made an appearance in the trench press. One soldier wondered who “telegraphed home to Canada for a Motor Boat Catalogue.”<sup>50</sup> Created in the late nineteenth century in England, motorboats, like canoes, were a popular feature on lakes and reminded Canadians of summer activity.<sup>51</sup> In addition, ordering from a catalogue began in Canada as early as the late nineteenth century.<sup>52</sup> The T. Eaton Company pioneered mail-order shopping in Canada, when founder Timothy Eaton used the catalogue to supplement his department store sales, expanding the large department store’s reach from every major Canadian city to the outskirts and small towns.<sup>53</sup> He sold clothing, furniture, farming and mining equipment, and houses (especially marketed to the expansion in the Prairie Provinces) including architect’s plans and associated housing materials.<sup>54</sup> Since many department store employees voluntarily enlisted, they knew of their stores’ order by mail capabilities. The ubiquitous Eaton’s catalogue spurred other department stores and many manufacturers to create their own shopping catalogues, especially for luxury items like motorboats. Magazines, like the American *The Motor Boat: Devoted to All Types of Power Craft*, featured articles and advertisements for all things related to

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<sup>49</sup> Canada Post Archives, BAC-LAC, accessed 27 July 2016, [http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/020117/020117030104\\_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/020117/020117030104_e.html).

<sup>50</sup>“Wanted to Know,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

<sup>51</sup> Attributing this to England is debatable since Germans also claimed creation for motorboats, particularly with Daimler engines. See the mention of Daimler and his experiments on a French lake in 1886 in Claude Johnson, “The Horseless Carriage - 1885-1905,” *Journal of the Society of Arts* 54, no. 2778 (1906), 359-360.

<sup>52</sup> Kristina Urquhart, “Canada’s Mail-Order History,” *Applied Arts Magazine*, October/November 2015; Joy L. Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) Although Eaton’s is the most popular and widely known catalogue, the Montreal department store, Carsley’s, introduced its first mail-order catalogue two years ahead of Eaton in 1882.

<sup>53</sup> Timothy Eaton followed many other mail-order barons with catalogues like Pryce-Jones and the Royal Welsh Warehouse in Britain, Au Bon Marché in Paris, and Montgomery Ward, Hammacher Schlemmer, and Sears in the United States.

<sup>54</sup> G. P. de T. Glazebrook, Katharine B. Brett, and Judith McEvel, *A Shopper’s View of Canada’s Past: Pages from Eaton’s Catalogues, 1886-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969); Robert D. Watt, *The Shopping Guide of the West: Woodward’s Catalogue, 1898-1953* (Vancouver: J. J. Douglas, 1977).

this summertime activity from companies in Canada, the United States, and Europe.<sup>55</sup>

References to relaxing and fun activities lightened the mood for soldiers in and out of the trenches, forced to make the best of the flooded and muddy spring and summer seasons.

Winter weather's appearances in print were less pervasive than spring and summer mud. However, in typical Canadian fashion, a soldier remarked "during the recent frosty weather, skates figured very prominently in several raids made by Canadians."<sup>56</sup> This played on the familiar Canadian winter pastime of skating recognized by all for many centuries prior to the founding of Canada. Combining skating with a stick and puck would be known as a particularly Canadian activity.<sup>57</sup> These same skating Canadians "slipped it over Fritz" as only "good old hockey players" could.<sup>58</sup> This envisioned Canadians slipping past German defenses in order to achieve a victory, much like a puck sliding past an ever-vigilant hockey goalie.

As a Canadian company went over the top during a heavy snowstorm, their Captain declared, "Come on men. This is an ideal day for a 'slay drive."<sup>59</sup> Canadians, never shy of snow thanks to their long winter season, would have responded to the call to outdoor recreation in a snowstorm. 'Slay drive' here played on the phrase 'sleigh drive' in a few ways. First, as a mode of transport or recreational activity: Canadian winters featured horse-drawn sleighs; dog-drawn sleighs appeared most of the year in the northern Canadian territories, Yukon and Northwest; and Canadian children often used wooden push sleighs and toboggans on their neighborhood snow covered slopes. A toboggan, originally transport for Aboriginal and First Nations people in northern Canada, is a rail-less sleigh or sled with its parallel wooden slats turned up at the front

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<sup>55</sup> Examples of this magazine are found at *The Motor Boat: Devoted to All Types of Power Craft*, 1904, accessed 25 August 2016, <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000045468>.

<sup>56</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 24, 20 April 1917.

<sup>57</sup> Typically, men played hockey while women cheered them on, however, in 1963 another version of the game involving a stick and a ring, known as ringette, featured female players.

<sup>58</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 24, 20 April 1917.

<sup>59</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 25, 21 May 1917.

to form a J-shape.<sup>60</sup> Next, this could also refer to the Great Sleigh Drive in its military connection referring to a daring Prussian military maneuver against Sweden during the winter campaign of the Franco-Dutch War (1672-1678).<sup>61</sup> Finally, using the homophone of slay for sleigh, this phrase intimated an aggressive over the top maneuver to gain victory over the Germans by either cutting off the enemy retreat or killing them. Alternatively, perhaps even more ironically, many of the participants in a slay drive were driving to the death.

Whether it was summer or winter, weather in the trenches often affected work and made soldiers grumble and grouse.

Each day means more digging and cleaning,  
The mud from a caved in old trench.  
Every other day here it's raining;  
Which means one continual drench.<sup>62</sup>

Civilian papers, according to the soldier writers, described battles and victories yet never mentioned picks and shovels and the perpetual digging and waiting soldiers experienced on a daily basis.<sup>63</sup> Submitting to Mother Nature, soldiers marched to war, regardless of weather.

“Though it rains, storms and drenches, / We are going to the trenches.”<sup>64</sup> Weather made soldiers grumble for home, especially wet weather and the ever-present mud in the trenches.

Though we long for the land of the Maple  
Though we long for the mountains and trees;

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<sup>60</sup> An image search in BAC-LAC shows several drawings and paintings featuring toboggan parties from as early as the 1860s. For one example, see *The Toboggan Party*, ca. 1872-1875, illuminated composite photograph, Rideau Hall, Ottawa, accessed 26 July 2016, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/search/images>.

<sup>61</sup> See description and analysis in Robert M. Citino, *The German Way of War: From the Thirty Years' War to the Third Reich*, (University Press of Kansas, 2005), 22-33.

<sup>62</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 19, 10 August 1916.

<sup>63</sup> Canadian papers delivered to the front lines include, but not limited to or exclusive, *Toronto Globe* (now known nationally as *The Globe and Mail*), *Halifax Herald*, *Toronto Star*, *Manitoba Free Press*, *Montreal Gazette*, *Montreal Star*, *Le Devoir*, et cetera. Some of these daily newspapers may have only been delivered once a week or so and may have been a few weeks behind in date due to shipping and so forth. For a listing of newspapers, see *The Canadian Newspaper Directory*, 12th ed. (Montreal: A. McKim, 1919).

<sup>64</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 22, 15 February 1917.



Is it much wonder when living  
In a land where it's mud to our knees?<sup>65</sup>

The only physical connection to home for most Canadian soldiers was the mail. The *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* noted “the most popular man in D Company – Johnnie Miche, mail-carrier,” emphasizing that any soldier carrying and delivering the mail in any company was a favorite and quite welcome.<sup>66</sup> Royal Mail Canada, a governmental department, created the Canadian Postal Corps in 1911 in order to deliver mail specifically for armed forces around the world. Canadian mail went to London via transatlantic ships, then bagged and delivered by ration train. Unlike fellow soldiers from the British Isles, Canadians could expect mail delivery to the troops on the front lines to take three weeks or more since the transatlantic trip alone took 10 days. Once begun, mail service from home arrived daily and contained various bits of news from family, friends, and communities. Letters were far from one-sided as noted in a poem from a writer in Stirling, Ontario about “Somewhere in Flanders” where “From there comes the news of each soldier boy,/The messages sent are greeted with joy.”<sup>67</sup> Mail call created a very social experience as men shared their home news, and contents of any parcels, with each other.<sup>68</sup> Care packages also came with letters as noted by a few lines of thank you in some of the trench newspapers, such as “the boys of the 102nd Rocky Mountain Rangers wish to thank the ladies ... for the parcels of luxuries received last week. The contents of the pepper boxes were highly

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<sup>65</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 19, 10 August 1916. The maple leaf along with other reminders of nature and wilderness are expounded in a later chapter. Compositions in this trench journal, written from the British Columbian point of view, highlighted the mountains and trees of the Okanagan Valley and Fraser Valley and the surrounding Rocky Mountain ranges, displaying a longing for home and the associated Western Canadian nature symbolism.

<sup>66</sup> “Ricochets,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>67</sup> “Somewhere in Flanders,” *Listening Post*, no. 15, 18 May 1916.

<sup>68</sup> In the *Toronto Star*, a short article appeared reminding family members of the importance of correctly labeling correspondence and packages, to ensure against loss, generally to the CEF in care of the Army Post Office, London rather than to battalion/brigade/division names or numbers, since those tended to change. “Letters To and From the Front,” *Toronto Star*, 18 January 1917.

appreciated both by the cooks and the other recipients.”<sup>69</sup> Pepper, popular in Europe thanks to trading from Southeast Asia, allowed soldiers to add flavor to, or cover the taste of, wartime meals.<sup>70</sup> Some packets to the front contained useless items like “two pairs of embroidered carpet slippers” and “eighteen dozen sun shields,” but these items made for humorous comment shared by the soldier readers.<sup>71</sup> Some wanted to know about postal oddities like “the officer of the First Canadian Division who lately received a parcel from home containing a bundle of hem-stitched sandbags for his personal use.”<sup>72</sup> After all, it was the privates in the trench mud filling them every day rather than the officers. Some mailed bundles came from home while others, such as the above “pepper boxes” from the Soldiers Comfort Club in Kamloops, British Columbia, came from ladies groups. Not all care packages came from Canada; for example, the sun shields arrived from the Windsor Ward Branch of the Queen Mary’s Needlework Guild (QMNG) in Belfast, Ireland. Although the QMNG, created in 1882 and renamed in 1914, was known for sending useful soldier comforts such as knitted socks and caps, the occasional impractical yet well-meaning item appeared. Other well-meaning items arriving by mail for troop relief included reading material but sometimes the senders sent ill-chosen, impractical, or unpopular titles as noted in the amusing poem “From a Dug-out”:

When we ain’t a-sniping Strafers,  
 When ain’t inhalin’ gas,  
 When we ain’t exchanging’ chaffers,  
 With a Frenchy, or a lass;  
 When the firmament ain’t moving,  
 An’ we’ve got an hour to waste,  
 We employs our time, improving

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<sup>69</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 9, 25 December 1915.

<sup>70</sup> Since black pepper is native to south India, the efforts of the East India Company (1600-1874) in the South East and Southeast Asia, and the subsequent British control of India can be thanked for its popularity among the masses. For an interesting overview of trading see Erik Gilbert and Jonathan T Reynolds, *Trading Tastes: Commodity and Culture Exchange to 1750* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006).

<sup>71</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 11, 3 February 1916; *Listening Post*, no. 2, 30 August 1915. Embroidered carpet slippers and sun shields were connected to Victorian British, elite and wealthy middle class.

<sup>72</sup> “Our Thirst for Knowledge,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915.

Of our Liter-ary taste.

We 'ave studied Mrs. Beeton<sup>73</sup>  
 On the makin' of horsdœvres,  
 (It's a chapter that I'm sweet on,  
 'Cos its soothing for the nerves).  
 We 'ave picked out trains and stations  
 In a Nineteen-seven Guide,<sup>74</sup>  
 An' our volume on 'Equations'  
 Makes us swell with joy an' pride

We 'ave scanned the spicy verses  
 In the Parish Magazines,  
 We 'ave studied 'Hints for Nurses,'  
 An' the 'Care of Kidney Beans.'  
 But I fear this lurid writing  
 Soon will 'ave its final shunt,  
 For it's really too exciting  
 For a soldier at the front.<sup>75</sup>

This sarcastic poem indicated that soldiers clearly had time for reading but often castoffs were sent to the front in a manner similar to collections for the poor and church donations, as the poem indicated the out of date guide to trains and stations, a book of mathematical equations, and issues of religious periodicals. Soldiers had little use for cookbooks and etiquette manuals at the front. The mail carrier was often a harassed soldier too. A short playlet, "Pity the Poor Mail Clerk," sets the scene in a wartime postal outlet as "a stable, barn, dug-out or 'cushy billet'" at "any old time at all" describing the hero as "Herbert, a poor, but honest and virtuous, mail clerk"

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<sup>73</sup> The inclusion of Mrs. Beeton here acknowledges the connection between the Dominion and its Empire. Mrs. Beeton was a Victorian English writer known for her 1861 bestseller, *Mrs. Beaton's Book of Household Management*. She often contributed articles to *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (published 1852-1879). She became an acknowledged domestic authority and helped to shape middle class Victorian society. Her book has been reprinted throughout the years, including the latest in 2016. According to *The British Medical Journal* in August 1912, "Mrs. Beeton still reigns as the authority on matters of cookery and household management, every year sees an increase in the numerous imitators who endeavor, with varying success, to follow in her footsteps." See "Notes On Books," *The British Medical Journal* 2, no. 2695 (24 August 1912): 443-444. For an interesting article exploring cooking culture, see Suzanne Daly and Ross G. Forman, "Introduction: Cooking Culture: Situating Food and Drink in the Nineteenth Century," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 36, no. 2 (2008): 363-373.

<sup>74</sup> Another connection between the Dominion, Empire, and the Victorian era is the mention of the trains and stations guide since railway travel was so important not only throughout Britain and throughout continental Europe, but also integral to westward expansion in both Canada and the United States.

<sup>75</sup> "From a Dug-out," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

and the villain as “a disgruntled private.”<sup>76</sup> Mail stations during the war stood in any reasonable available covered building to keep articles of various sizes and numbers dry in mail sacks. The mail carrier was clearly welcome and a stalwart hero to the entrenched soldiers.<sup>77</sup> “Pity the Poor Mail Clerk” started with the villain’s question:

“Canadian mail in?”

“No.”

“Why isn’t it in?”

“Don’t know.”

“Why don’t you know?”

“Search me.”

“Has the mail boat been sunk?”

“How do I know.”

“Well, you ought to know. When will it be in?”

“How the Dickens can I tell.”

“Say, you haven’t brought me a letter for umpteen days ...”<sup>78</sup>

The playlet continued in this back and forth fashion as the villain asked for several different types of envelopes and other items typically stocked by the mail office to find that nothing was in stock. The intimation of lack of stock indicated not only that wartime soldiers often wrote letters home but also replenishing items proved difficult especially when bombing or enemy forward movement disrupted supply lines. The short dramatic piece ended with the disgruntled soldier who “eventually beats it, expressing the opinion as he goes that the Mail Clerk isn’t on his job and should be fired forthwith.”<sup>79</sup> This reflected soldiers’ acute longing, loneliness, and homesickness and reliance on (or gratefulness for) communication from home and noted the futility of depending on the mail or wishing another soldier fired from his post as if he were civilian. Loneliness and homesickness was a far greater problem for Canadian soldiers than his

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<sup>76</sup> “Pity the Poor Mail Clerk,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 11, 29 March 1917.

<sup>77</sup> “Ricochets,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>78</sup> “Pity the Poor Mail Clerk,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 11, 29 March 1917.

<sup>79</sup> “Pity the Poor Mail Clerk,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 11, 29 March 1917.

fellows from England and its environs since mail took much longer to arrive and leave consisted of trips to London rather than home in Canada.

With the mail from home came the Canadian newspapers. Having caught up with opinions of the press, soldiers often commented in their own trench press about such volatile topics as the controversy over the rum issue. For example, the editor of *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* included the following Canadian news item: “a vote of the Canadian people is to be taken after the war to see if the country desires a continuance of Prohibition.”<sup>80</sup> This entry not only informed soldiers about news from home but also allayed their fears that temperance societies might interfere in political matters. Similarly, the editor of *Listening Post* included results of their impromptu polling: “By voting three to one against Prohibition, British Columbian soldiers have shown that they will not welcome a dry reception on their return unless its an extra dry one,” implying a martini would be more welcome than anything non-alcoholic.<sup>81</sup> The rum, doled out in two tablespoonful measures after the early morning stand-to, helped the soldiers to cope on many levels. Canadian soldiers took umbrage at the news from Canada that temperance unions had called for a stop of the rum issue. “All the excellent blundering misinformed, busybodies who would preach teetotalism at 4am on the parapet, have no idea what it is like ... when the vital tide is at its lowest ebb. There are no teetotalers in the trench at that hour, when the rum comes round.”<sup>82</sup>

Temperance unions were not new to Canada. Since the United Kingdom never enacted prohibition, this was not an effect of the British Empire but rather an influence from their close American neighbors. As a response to the temperance leagues in Canada, Prime Minister Borden inquired about drunkenness in the troops overseas but reports from several generals

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<sup>80</sup> “Canadian News Items,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

<sup>81</sup> “Editorial,” *Listening Post*, no. 20, 10 December 1916.

<sup>82</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 7, 29 October 1915.

indicated that it was generally not a problem.<sup>83</sup> The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), an American organization, had a Canadian chapter founded in 1874. Within a year, a new federation, comprised of the WCTU and other similar societies as well as church groups, formed called the Dominion Alliance for the Total Suppression of the Liquor Traffic. In 1877, the Dominion Alliance and several provincial organizations banded as the Council of the Dominion Alliance. This alliance was responsible for the Canada Temperance Act of 1878. The Act allowed all provinces to decide their local alcohol distribution laws. The first province to enact prohibition was Prince Edward Island in 1901. During the war, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario enacted prohibition in 1916, then British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick enacted them in 1917. The temperance societies believed that alcohol, especially spirits such as rum, disrupted the home front leading to the assumption that the rum issue for Canadian soldiers at the front disrupted battle efficiency. Canadian soldiers valued their rum ration and one soldier poet reacted with hostility towards those teetotalers at home:

Here we are in muddy Flanders,  
Far from comforts and home cheer,  
And it raises up our danders  
Every now and then, to hear  
... temperance workers  
Making squeals about our rum.  
Sure enough they want to stop it,  
Claiming that it does no good ...  
But if they could see our faces,  
Or imagine how it cheers,  
When it hits the frozen places,  
They'd be stricken dumb for years.<sup>84</sup>

This soldier continued in verse that these teetotalers should not complain until they were standing in the front lines to experience the horrors of war firsthand, for those few moments

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<sup>83</sup> Robert L. Borden, "Speech before the House of Commons," 18 May 1917, BAC-LAC, accessed 27 April 2016, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/primeministers/h4-4072-e.html>.

<sup>84</sup> "To Teetotalers," *Listening Post*, no. 19, 10 August 1916.

would surely stop their complaints since “they would sooner criticize, than come and fight.”<sup>85</sup> It was clear to this soldier in particular, and presumably others, that folks at home had no idea about the actions in the trenches especially in the front line. After ‘standing to’ in the early morning waiting for the enemy to attack and before ‘going over the top’ to attack the enemy, a “tot of rum is accepted by even hardened teetotalers.”<sup>86</sup>

A later issue of *Listening Post* assured anxious soldiers, “We can find no authority for the statement that the rum issue is going to be stopped.”<sup>87</sup> This appeared well before the 1917 prohibition in British Columbia pointing out that fears of losing the rum issue was a concern. After this prohibition and the raging of the press, an entire page devoted to the rum controversy appeared in the *Listening Post*, which printed excerpts of amusing letters, mock or true, with “points of view of widely differing parties.”<sup>88</sup> Some letters on the pro side came from Horatio Bottomley, then editor of the popular *John Bull* magazine, a private with a distinctly Irish surname, and two unnamed officers. Only one of six letters was on the con side with a pastor extolling the virtues of hot cocoa or pea soup. The absence of entries against the rum ration, in this entire rum controversy page, indicated that the trench newspaper editors and their readers favored alcohol’s continuance. The controlled rum ration instituted in the trenches for the infantry throughout World War I drew on a long-standing naval tradition of a daily issue of ‘grog’ that was not to end until 1972.<sup>89</sup> The rum issue was not enough to make soldiers drunk but “the ration gave a sense of warmth, caused men to digest food well, and had a slightly

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<sup>85</sup> “To Teetotalers,” *Listening Post*, no. 19, 10 August 1916.

<sup>86</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 1, 10 August 1915.

<sup>87</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 9, 25 December 1915.

<sup>88</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 28, 20 September 1917.

<sup>89</sup> “1972: Last rum rations for Canadian Sailors,” *CBC Television News*, aired 30 March 1972, on CBC; Basil Gingell, “The Navy to lose its daily rum ration,” *The Times*, 18 December 1969; Basil Gingell, “Navy ends the rum ration,” *The Times*, 30 July 1970; Tom Colls, “What did they do with the drunken sailor?” *BBC Today*, aired on 30 July 2010, on BBC 4; “The Canadian Navy doesn’t need a complete ban on alcohol,” *The Globe and Mail*, 16 July 2014; John Robson, “Yo ho no bottles of rum,” *Toronto Sun*, 17 December 2014.

soporific effect. If a man went to bed immediately it was difficult to see that alcohol could do him any harm.”<sup>90</sup>

The Canadian newspapers also referred to immigration. According to the editor of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, Canada was no longer a “dumping ground for misfits and failures” and other “riff-raff which Great Britain used to think fit to pour into the Dominion under the auspices of various charitable organizations.”<sup>91</sup> This referenced some of the ways Britain filled its colonies with settlers early on in the creation of its Empire and in the creation of the Dominion of Canada. From 1815 to 1850, many British immigrated to Canada due to the industrial changes and population growth in England and the potato famine in Ireland.<sup>92</sup> The gold rush populated British Columbia, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories in the late 1850s. Ethnic settlements from all over Europe populated the Prairie Provinces from the 1860s into the early twentieth century.<sup>93</sup> The trench press editor went on to mention that now Canada held open wide her arms “to take men to the bosom of her vast Provinces, to offer ... almost untouched wealth in her lands ... and, above all, a religious and political freedom not surpassed even in England.”<sup>94</sup> This sounded quite open and inviting, yet in the next breath he demanded that her land be not given away “to alien races and possibly potential enemies” nor permit entry for those

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<sup>90</sup> “Military Hygiene and the Efficiency of the Soldier,” *The British Medical Journal* 1, no. 2826 (27 February 1915): 380.

<sup>91</sup> “The Voice of Canada,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

<sup>92</sup> Marjory Harper, “Rhetoric and Reality: British Migration to Canada, 1867-1967,” in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip Buckner (Oxford University Press, 2010), 160-180; In 1911, the *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* reported nearly two million immigrants to Canada since the turn of the century, including 750,000 from the UK, 700,000 from the US, and the remainder (from highest to lowest) from Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, Sweden, Germany, France, Norway, and Syria. See “Home Industries,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 59, no. 3077 (10 November 1911): 1145-1146.

<sup>93</sup> In 1896, Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, created an aggressive program of promoting Canada as the ‘Last Best West’ throughout the United Kingdom, continental Europe, and the United States using the enticement of free land, which resulted in an immigration boom up to the beginning of the First World War. See Vineberg, *Responding to Immigrants’ Settlement Needs*, 7-17; Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 113-166.

<sup>94</sup> “The Voice of Canada,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.



bearing “insidious poison” that would surely “pollute the arteries ... and destroy the entire fabric” of Canadian life.<sup>95</sup>

Pre-war prejudice and xenophobia wound its way through Canadian society and carried through to the war, reflecting some Canadian conceptions of the darker sides of nationalist sentiment.<sup>96</sup> The gains in both urban and rural populations between 1901 and 1910 shifted ethnic composition from English-speaking Britons and Americans to diverse multi-lingual immigrants, resulting in problems and tensions revealed in public outcries against the ‘Other’ in parliament, the press, and in the neighborhood shops and streets.<sup>97</sup> Often overworked and underpaid factory workers, and other working classes, lived in overcrowded and poorly serviced tenement buildings and channeled their rage and frustrations onto the immigrants rather than at the factories or local and federal governments.<sup>98</sup> Nationalist ideas can spill over to racial intolerance but there is a muddied line where national uniqueness or exclusivity becomes discrimination and where stereotypes become the basis for bigotry. The war built upon earlier voiced prejudices, originating from these frustrated organized workers, against foreigners creating more bitter and angry backlashes against the existing immigrant communities in Canada. The actions enacted by government, in the War Measures Act of 1914, included forced registration, restrictions, internment, and disenfranchisement of those immigrants welcomed with open arms in previous

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<sup>95</sup> “The Voice of Canada,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

<sup>96</sup> Kelley argued that enemy aliens encountered animosity before and during the war. See Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 172. Brown and Cook argued that for many Canadians, building a better Canada did not include immigrants and there was a problem in inspiring both a true Canadian spirit as well as an attachment to British ideals and institutions. See Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 303.

<sup>97</sup> Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 113-116.

<sup>98</sup> This included large and small industrial factory workers, miners, loggers, and railway workers. When unionized or organized workers created strikes, business owners used immigrants to break them. See Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 113-118. These increasingly vocal disgruntled organized workers used terms for immigrants such as tramps, loafers, ex-convicts, the servile, criminals, and moral degenerates. See Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 118.

decades.<sup>99</sup> This proclamation also promised that as long as these enemy aliens acted without dissent or conflict, they would fall under jurisdictional protection as citizens. But, the trench newspaper editor argued, the Canadian government should “make it possible for only Britishers, Americans, and members of the Allied nations to settle in our midst and enjoy the freedom which is our birthright and for which so many of our own countrymen have already laid down their lives.”<sup>100</sup> Supposedly, these settlers were the ‘right kind’ of immigrants who would contribute to Canada’s growth as opposed to the deported, interned, or unwanted ‘enemy aliens’.<sup>101</sup> These ‘enemy aliens’ had a dual role as both insider, legally belonging to Canada, and outsider, not substantively belonging to Canada.<sup>102</sup> As the Canadian population declined due to injury, death, and conscription during the war years, various industries needed workers and implored the government to release these interned outsiders for their labor needs – much to the displeasure of members of parliament and both returning and active soldiers.<sup>103</sup> Although immigrants, British and others, had been welcomed to settle in Canada around the turn of the century, the uneasiness of Canadians towards “others” before and during the war reflected a sense of emerging Canadian identity. This negotiation of otherness occurred among all types of

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<sup>99</sup> Specifically targeted were those of German and Austro-Hungarian origin along with those from anywhere in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. See Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 113-166, 172; James Farney and Bhadan S. Kordan, “The Predicament of Belonging: The Status of Enemy Aliens in Canada, 1914,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 39, no. 1 (Winter 2005): 74-89. For details of possible actions against immigrants, see item 6, the special powers of Governor in Council, in Canadian War Measures Act, 1914. “Canadian War Measures Act,” Council on Foreign Relations, accessed 13 May 2016, <http://www.cfr.org/canada/canadian-war-measures-act/p24846>.

<sup>100</sup> “Build Strong,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915; See also “The Citizen Soldiers’ Demand,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

<sup>101</sup> Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 169. Not only should they contribute to Canada’s growth but also they should be of a certain “racial and political character” that could easily assimilate into the existing Canadian society. Brown and Cook argued that the war deepened suspicions regarding Others and continued to do so for years to come. See Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 320.

<sup>102</sup> For the argument regarding defining the internal foreigner, see Rita Dhamoon and Yasmeen Abu-Laban, “Dangerous (Internal) Foreigners and Nation-Building: The Case of Canada,” *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale de Science Politique* 30, no. 2 (2009), 169-170. In addition, Benedict Anderson argues that nationalism had its roots in fear and hatred of outsiders/Others, and was associated with racism. See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 141-154.

<sup>103</sup> Kelley, *Making of the Mosaic*, 174-175, fn 29, 30.

Canadians, with British, French, and European roots including the Canadian-born and, in turn, affected enlistment, recruitment, and conscription throughout the Great War.

Soldiers serving in the CEF, whether Canadian-born, British-born, or European-born Canadian settlers, either voluntarily joined to fight for Canada and Empire or enlisted through conscription in the later part of the war. At the war's onset, Prime Minister Borden promised Britain a mere 25,000 soldiers, by November of that year the number doubled to 50,000, but by the end of the war, Canada supplied almost 630,000 soldiers. According to Militia and Defense Records compiled in 1929, the approximately 630,000 men and women in the CEF included Canadians, Newfoundlanders, English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, other British, Americans, and others, presumably immigrants.<sup>104</sup> Also noted in the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, "We are sure some cosmopolitan bunch. In a certain section the following nationalities are represented: English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, Manx, Canadian, American, French, and Swedish."<sup>105</sup> This was an interesting conception of diversity suggesting a British and North Sea influence on the racial construction of what Canadians 'should' look like. This nationalistic representation within the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion's ranks also showed that Canadians were proud of their roots, served alongside their settler neighbors, and did not see a conflict between being both Canadian and another nationality.<sup>106</sup> The last issue of *The Listening Post* printed on foreign soil ended with 21 pages of an alphabetical list of names and ID numbers of the battalion's soldiers killed in action, died of wounds, or missing. Following this were five pages enumerating honors and decorations awarded, such as the Victoria Cross (VC), Distinguished Service Orders (DSO), Military Cross

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<sup>104</sup> See "Table XII: CEF Nationality and Area of Service" in Sharpe, "Enlistment," 45.

<sup>105</sup> "Ricochets," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>106</sup> In fact, Canadians to this day proclaim their roots by using terms to describe themselves like Scotch-Canadian, Irish-Canadian, and so forth, especially if their mother tongue is from their country of origin, like Italian-Canadians, Ukrainian-Canadians, et cetera.

(MC), and other military medals including some from France and Belgium.<sup>107</sup> For example, Private M. J. O'Rourke, a stretcher-bearer, received the Victoria Cross for saving many lives over the course of three days and nights while under incessant heavy fire.<sup>108</sup> Captain W. D. Holmes, killed in action after 17 months of service, received both a DSO and an MC for cutting through German wire entanglements and leading a surprise bombing attack on an enemy trench.<sup>109</sup> Many of these soldiers listed in the 26 pages bore surnames that were clearly of mixed British origin (e.g., O'Connor, MacDonald, Brown) but there were some of French origin (e.g., LaCroix, Gagnon) and of other European origins (e.g., Lapsansky, Nickotivich) mixed in.<sup>110</sup> It is clear from these pages of lists that men of diverse ancestry fought together within the Canadian Expeditionary Force ranks.

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<sup>107</sup> "Honours List," *Listening Post*, no. 33, March 1919; The first three levels of awards within the military ranks of the British Empire include: Victoria Cross (VC), award for conspicuous bravery in the face of the enemy regardless of rank; Distinguished Service Order (DSO), award for officers showing meritorious or distinguished service in combat; and Military Cross (MC), award for officers showing gallantry during active operations against the enemy (Bars were awarded for further gallant acts if they already had an MC).

<sup>108</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 30, April 1918; "Honours List," *Listening Post*, no. 33, March 1919; Nicholson, *CEF*, 290; Michael Kevin Dooley, "'Our Mickey': The Story of Private James O'Rourke, VC.MM (CEF), 1879-1957," *Labour / Le Travail* 47 (Spring 2001): 171-184. His digitized file is available online at "Item: OROURKE, MICHAEL JAMES (428545)," BAC-LAC, accessed 29 August 2016, <http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=7484-42>.

<sup>109</sup> O'Moore Creagh and E. M. Humphris, *The V.C. and D.S.O. Book: Distinguished Service Order 1886-1915*, vol. 2, 3 vols. (1924; repr., Uckfield, East Sussex: Naval and Military Press, 2001), 438. The digitized service file for William Dumbleton Holmes is available online at "Item: HOLMES, WILLIAM DUMBLETON ()," BAC-LAC, accessed 29 August 2016, <http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B4465-S005>.

<sup>110</sup> Although an interesting mix of assorted origins, there is not enough information in these surnames to indicate whether they were native-born, settlers, and/or children of settlers from Canada without further research. For the use of surnames as indicators of national origins or ethnicity including a brief historiography, see Abraham D. Lavender, "United States Ethnic Groups in 1790: Given Names as Suggestions of Ethnic Identity," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 9, no. 1 (1989): 36-66. For an article rejecting the use of ethnicity by comparing surnames, see Donald H. Akenson, "Why the Accepted Estimates of Ethnicity of the American People, 1790, Are Unacceptable," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (1984): 102-119. For the commentary on Akenson's article, see Thomas L. Purvis, "Why the Accepted Estimates of Ethnicity of the American People, 1790, Are Unacceptable: Commentary," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (1984): 119-135. For an overview of surname usage, see Sonia E. Colantonio et al., "Use of Surname Models in Human Population Biology: A Review of Recent Developments," *Human Biology* 75, no. 6 (December 2003): 785-807. For identifying the regionalization of European populations using surname distributions as a proxy for cultural and genetic structure, see James Cheshire, Pablo Mateos, and Paul A. Longley, "Delineating Europe's Cultural Regions: Population Structure and Surname Clustering," *Human Biology* 83, no. 5 (October 2011): 573-598.

As news flowed from Europe to Canada during the first few months of battle, volunteers filled the CEF ranks from major cities and towns to aid Britain. According to British strategists and military leaders, the required ratio of enlistments to men at the front should have been at least three to one.<sup>111</sup> The first contingent of Canadian soldiers overseas numbered just over 31,000, which meant that at least 93,000 needed to be on the enlistment rolls at home. By the end of 1914, almost 60,000 voluntarily answered the call to arms, but this number was well under the desired number.<sup>112</sup> In July 1915, Canadian Prime Minister Robert Borden promised 150,000 soldiers, at the end of summer 1915, he promised 250,000, and in early 1916, he promised up to 500,000 men to Britain.<sup>113</sup> Recruiters faced an impossible task to fill these conscription orders in a total population of 8 million, which included the already enlisted. Many Canadians remembered Borden's comments in Halifax from December 1914, "Under the laws of Canada, our citizens may be called out to defend our own territory, but cannot be required to go beyond the seas except for the defence of Canada itself. There has not been, there will not be, compulsion or conscription."<sup>114</sup> In this same speech he had forewarned, probably under the assumption of a quick war like many of his European counterparts, "I fix no limit on the force we shall send forward, for no man can predict with confidence what the ultimate need may be. The preservation of our Empire is worth fighting for, and Canada is prepared to send all that are necessary."<sup>115</sup> The intent was to create and maintain a Canadian overseas force; however, if accounting for a mere ten-percent loss each month due to casualties the minimum enlistment

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<sup>111</sup> Sharpe, "Enlistment," 20.

<sup>112</sup> According to Chris Sharpe, more than 70% of these 60,000 were British-born rather than native-born. See Sharpe, "Enlistment," 19.

<sup>113</sup> Brown and Cook argue that Borden insisted on making these enormous contributions to the war effort in order to gain an adequate Canadian voice in British foreign policy. Canada wanted to be a partner in the imperial war firm rather than just a clerk. Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 275-285.

<sup>114</sup> Robert L. Borden, "Speech before the Canadian Club of Halifax," 18 December 1914, BAC-LAC, accessed 27 April 2016, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/primeministers/h4-4043-e.html>.

<sup>115</sup> Borden, "Speech before the Canadian Club of Halifax."

would be 50,000 per month. If the suggested ratio of three to one is included, that meant backup enlistment required at least 150,000 per month. Based on the population of Canada at that time, this projection was nigh impossible.

Print publications attempted to drum up the necessary fervor to impel men to enlist. Home news publications, like *Canada*, styling itself as “An illustrated weekly journal for all interested in the Dominion,” published articles concerning federal and provincial news, the progress of the war from a Canadian perspective, photographs, war expenditure numbers, casualty lists, lists of commissions, and numbers of medals awarded.<sup>116</sup> By March 1916, the trench newspaper editors wrote of this “critical time in our Empire” where “we must become a military machine” by organizing men of all ages, men earlier rejected for military work, men with physical defects, and even organizing women for “the business of war.”<sup>117</sup> With each issue moving forward, there were mentions of recruitments. Since soldiers often mailed issues of the trench newspapers home, these papers were another means of encouraging enrollment. By August, “all forty-eight battalions of the first four divisions of the Canadian Corps were in France.”<sup>118</sup> Within a few months of Premier Borden’s promise, praise for Canadian reinforcements supporting the Empire showed up in print:

We asked the boys to come over,  
And now they’re here with us ...  
So now they are here defending  
Old Britain’s gracious cause,  
And we hope, with faith unending  
They’ll never shirk or pause  
Until the boys who came before ...

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<sup>116</sup> “Canadians’ News Items,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915; “News in Brief,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915; “Canadian News Items,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916. The editor referenced his source of Canadian news to this illustrated weekly journal printed from 1906-1934; although various collections were found online, not for the period that the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* issued. The casualty lists and commission lists are extensive; presumably, these lists would either repel or attract future enlistees.

<sup>117</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 12, 15 March 1916.

<sup>118</sup> Sharpe, “Enlistment,” 39.

Are well avenged with blood and gore ...  
 We each must play our little part,  
 Unto the bitter end<sup>119</sup>

Soldiers were in need with every trench journal issue: “The response so far’s magnificent,/But thousands more must yet be sent” and in order to avoid conscription “one man in three they have to get” and “every man is put to the test.”<sup>120</sup> This comment also upheld the three to one ratio suggested by military leaders. Appeals even came directly from home to those not yet enlisted:

“[Soldiers] are fighting for us, our homes and our all,  
 They’re dying for us, shall we heed their call?  
 Come, don the khaki, the uniform grace,  
 Answer the summons, take some heroes place.”<sup>121</sup>

The avoidance of conscription highlighted the news of the Military Service Act (MSA) signed in London to conscript Britons from the United Kingdom and the British colonies in January 1916. Since the Dominions, like Canada, were home-ruled, they did not fall under this Act but fears of it still reigned.

Some appeals to recruitment involved humor, especially seen in “Flanders as a Health Resort” calling to those with dull uninteresting duties in life extolling the virtues of joining the army for “fresh thrills and new excitements” and feeling the “blood coursing madly through your veins” where the “stimulating effects of the crescendo whistle of approaching shrapnel are truly amazing.”<sup>122</sup> Some saw the writing on the wall regarding eventual conscription, noting that men joining later than the first three Canadian Contingents would be faced with the question: “Did

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<sup>119</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 14, 21 April 1916.

<sup>120</sup> “To the Boys at Home,” *Listening Post*, no. 15, 18 May 1916.

<sup>121</sup> “Somewhere in Flanders,” *Listening Post*, no. 15, 18 May 1916. The editors noted that this poem was written in Canada, not in the trenches, and then sent to them to be included in their trench paper.

<sup>122</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 20, 10 December 1916.

you Go, or were you Pushed?”<sup>123</sup> Although originally against compulsion or conscription in 1914, Prime Minister Borden told the House of Commons in May 1917,

Everything possible has been done, it seems to me, in the way of voluntary enlistment. All citizens are liable to military service for the defence of their country, and I conceive that the battle for Canadian liberty and autonomy is being fought today on the plains of France and of Belgium. ... I believe the time has come when the authority of the state should be invoked to provide reinforcements necessary to sustain the gallant men at the front who have held the line for months ... and who are fighting in France and Belgium that Canada may live in the future. ... Early proposals will be made on the part of the Government to provide, by compulsory military enlistment on a selective basis, such reinforcements as may be necessary to maintain the Canadian army to-day in the field as one of the finest fighting units of the Empire.<sup>124</sup>

In this speech, Borden had to convince parliament to either create a new definition or change the emphasis on what defense of Canada meant. On 29 August 1917, the Military Service Act (MSA) became law, and “defined all male British subjects between the ages of eighteen and forty-five as eligible for military service.”<sup>125</sup> Many throughout the country applied for exemptions and there were barely enough signed attestation papers for new recruits to backfill the existing soldier losses, even after the cancellation of exemptions in April 1918. This government measure was much later than the British equivalent (also called the Military Service Act and signed in London on 27 January 1916) indicating not only a difference in perspective but also the effect of Canadian public opinion on the Houses of Parliament. In his early speeches in 1914, Borden ensured his listening public that conscription would not take place.<sup>126</sup> According to statistic reports, volunteers filled 125 full battalions, 123 half battalions, and 10 disbanded battalions prior to the MSA enforcement.<sup>127</sup> The volunteer enlistments were not keeping up with

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<sup>123</sup> “Notes and Comments,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915.

<sup>124</sup> Robert L. Borden, “Speech before the House of Commons,” 18 May 1917, BAC-LAC, accessed 27 April 2016, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/primeministers/h4-4072-e.html>; Regarding enlistment falling off in 1917, see Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 267-268.

<sup>125</sup> Sharpe, “Enlistment,” 43.

<sup>126</sup> Borden, “Speech before the Canadian Club of Halifax.”

<sup>127</sup> Brown and Loveridge, “Unrequited Faith,” 84. See table IV. A full battalion contained 1,000 men.



the casualty rate.<sup>128</sup> For a battalion on the front lines, a reduction in men meant a reduction in firepower, which increased soldiers' stress and ineffectiveness. Agricultural and manufacturing industries used several thousand men in Canada to supply the Empire's great war machine, and bolstering the Canadian economy, thereby limiting the number of available men for soldiering. Somehow, the limited number within the population had to both bolster the economy by working at home industries and fill the front lines abroad in the wake of devastating losses and casualties.<sup>129</sup> Yet, every soldier asked men to join using a variety of methods noted in the trench newspapers. Recruitment posters, newspapers, radio, churches, and members of Parliament along with other politicians also encouraged men to join.

With lengthening casualty lists every year, Canadians realized the reality of this gruesome war and fewer volunteers enlisted. Death tolls were high, yet mentions of death were rare in the trench journals as compared to humorous or neutral entries. These journals were meant to offer levity during times of boredom and fear. However, death appeared in each of the three issues of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* with a simple central black-bordered square stating "In Memory of Fallen Comrades." This understated square quietly highlighted the negative result of soldiers in the trenches but did not take away from the lightheartedness of the journal itself – an indication of respect for death and also its ubiquity. The black border was a long-standing mark on correspondence regarding death, including mourning stationery, condolence notes, and so forth.<sup>130</sup> In the *Iodine Chronicle*, soldier death first appeared in the

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<sup>128</sup> Tennyson, *Canada's Great War*, 97, 105.

<sup>129</sup> Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 220; Tennyson, *Canada's Great War*, 97-110.

<sup>130</sup> "Notices to Correspondents," *The London Reader* 39, no. 1007 (August 19, 1882): 384; "Notices to Correspondents," *The London Reader* 40, no. 1020 (November 18, 1882): 72; "Notices to Correspondents," *The London Reader* 44, no. 1141 (March 14, 1885): 480; Caroline Archer, "Print's Past: Funeraria," *Printweek*, 13 November 2003; Caroline Archer, "Print's Past: Mourning Stationery," *Printweek*, 27 January 2005; Esther Schor, *Bearing the Dead: The British Culture of Mourning from the Enlightenment to Victoria* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Chris Woodyard, *The Victorian Book of the Dead* (Dayton, OH: Kestrel Publications, 2014).

second issue on the last page in a poem called “The Last Trench.” Death depicted in poetry did not appear again in this chronicle until issue twelve and even then, it marked only the last two stanzas rather than the entire poem of issue two. At the end of 1917, issue 14 contained four mentions of death in the two center pages, mostly in prose. Starting around Christmas (or the Christmas issue) and through the end of a year was a typical time when memories of the dead were prevalent in the trench press. Placing these mentions in the issue’s center pages indicated their central importance but also allowed for lighthearted content at the beginning and at the end to wash away some of the sorrow of fallen comrades. The last and longest issue contained many articles mentioning death within its pages alongside lighthearted poetry and mostly prose as “it is now our time to mourn our dead” and “to their parents and relatives we send our deepest sympathy, and to our murdered comrades we say, ‘Peace be with you.’”<sup>131</sup> In contrast to the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, death did not appear in the *Listening Post* until the tenth issue in the early part of 1916. Recounting the Christmas dinner from the previous month with its “impressive silence that followed the toast ‘Absent Friends’ was a deep tribute to the memory of the men who have laid down their lives in our glorious cause.”<sup>132</sup> From this issue through the last, death in poems, stories, or news briefs appeared at least once and sometimes twice per issue embedded within the surrounding jocularity. These interspersions of death symbolized the ever-present danger and grief constantly hounding each Canadian soldier. A remarkable number of five mentions of death appeared in issue 25, starting as early as the editorial section with a poem and then written on every other page throughout, yet interwoven between articles of mirth.

There are maple leaves in Flanders – scattered far and wide.  
 They came to fight for Empire – and for Empire died.  
 “Lest we forget” their standard set  
 Is high and noble, but the way is rough.

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<sup>131</sup> “To Our Comrades,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 16, July 1918.

<sup>132</sup> “Our Christmas Dinner,” *Listening Post*, no. 10, 20 January 1916.

Hold courage high – needs must; we die --  
 The glory of the Empire; 'tis enough,  
 That we, like they, should make the supreme sacrifice.  
 A Silent Toast – “The vanished host,  
 Our comrades – those we loved the most --  
 The men who paid the price.”<sup>133</sup>

Dated 20 May 1917, this issue ran after the intense battle at Vimy Ridge. As noted by military historians like Tim Cook, the tenacious Canadian Corps held the line and became the Empire's elite fighting troops especially after their triumph at this ridge and subsequent victories.

Throughout the rest of the issues, there are mentions of not only battlefield death but of the victories too, like at Vimy Ridge, Hill 70, and Passchendaele. The final issue, dated March 1919, contained a six-page article describing “The Seventh at War” including two hand-drawn but detailed maps of the four and half years the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion spent in France, Belgium, and Germany.<sup>134</sup> Dying for one's country or nation assumed a moral grandeur that dying for a chosen organization could not represent since joining or leaving an organization is done at will.<sup>135</sup>

Men fought and died for Canada even though uniquely national Canadian spirit and Canadian patriotism did not appear fully formed. As the trench papers indicate, patriotic sentiment only showed up briefly in the multi-page anniversary or Christmas issues and then finally in the last issue of *The Listening Post*. Usually commanders wrote these nationalistic types of pieces rather than the men slogging in the trenches for “nobody seems to have the nerve to admit that he enlisted for patriotic reasons.”<sup>136</sup> One foot soldier questioned his choice to enlist in verse, possibly echoing what many thought, “As I sit and try to fathom why I joined this khaki

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<sup>133</sup> “Editorial,” *Listening Post*, no. 25, 21 May 1917.

<sup>134</sup> The censorship restrictions normally present were no longer in force, allowing not only the above-mentioned article but also a hand-drawn timeline and a listing of dates and battalion movement.

<sup>135</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 144. Anderson offers the Labour Party, American Medical Association, and Amnesty International as examples of organizations.

<sup>136</sup> *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1917.

crew, /Was it for patriotic reason, or was curiosity the thing?"<sup>137</sup> This 'lack of knowing' at the lower echelons is an indication that Canadian nationalism was not a conscious motivation for most soldiers. Nonetheless, symbols of Canadian identity appeared which appealed to the troops in distinctly Canadian ways.

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<sup>137</sup> "To Whom it may Concern," *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1917.

## THE CANADIAN BRAND

Today, the international community recognizes several emblems of Canada including the maple leaf, moose, beaver, canoe, mounted police, snow, and hockey. Many were not officially designated until the second half of the twentieth century but they appear as *de facto* symbols of Canada much earlier. Natural images like the maple leaf and wilderness landscapes are characteristically associated with Canada. Some relate to winter activity like hockey, while others relate to summer activity like lacrosse and canoeing. The Canadian connection between nature and nation is particularly evident in the trench publications, which aim to lighten the hearts and distract the minds of soldiers serving on foreign soil and in unfamiliar European landscapes.

Ten species of maple tree, *Acer* L., grow naturally in Canada and at least one of those grows in each province.<sup>1</sup> The maple leaf featured on the 1965 Canadian flag is a combination of these ten varied leaf shapes. During the war years, the reverse of all Canadian decimal coins (1c, 5c, 10c, 25c, 50c) and the front side of the one-dollar note, featured maple leaves.<sup>2</sup> Of the several hundred units in the five divisions of the CEF, an overwhelming majority of bronze military cap badges featured the maple leaf only approximately 25 did not.<sup>3</sup> The Dominion's *de*

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<sup>1</sup> Montgomery, *Trees of Canada*, 45-51; Canada Department of Forestry, *Native Trees of Canada*, 238-259. At least 115 species of maple grow throughout the northern half of the world, with the most abundant in the Himalayas and in China. Two of the ten species (Broadleaf Maple and Vine Maple) are only found in southwest British Columbia. One of the ten species (Douglas Maple) thrives from the western shore to the mountains of western Alberta. As a hardwood, in general maples are in demand for furniture and interior woodwork. Only two species (Sugar Maple and Black Maple) produce sap that is good enough for sugar and syrup.

<sup>2</sup> The front sides (face/obverse) of Canadian coins always featured the reigning British monarch. Pictorial designs on the reverse side of coins did not appear until 1937, like the bull moose/caribou on the quarter and the beaver on the nickel. Royal Canadian Mint, 2016, accessed 1 August 2016, <http://www.mint.ca>; The Bank of Canada Museum, 2016, accessed 2 August 2016, <http://www.bankofcanadamuseum.ca>.

<sup>3</sup> Drawings of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion cap badge and the general Canadian cap badge appeared on the cover from issue 4 onward, see *Listening Post*, no. 4, 26 September 1915. Drawings of the cap badges of the Western Brigade showed up in the honors list in one of the Christmas issues of *The Listening Post*. See "Honours List," *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1917. For pictures of each of the brass badges, see "CEF Canadian Expeditionary Force

*jure* flag from 1801 to 1965 was the Union Jack, but the Canadian Red Ensign served as Canada's *de facto* banner, from 1868 to 1965, and it featured not only the Union Jack but also maple leaves in the crest.<sup>4</sup> Soldiers wrote of the maple leaf in many poems and stories, often referring to themselves as “the boys of the Maple Leaf” and “a noble band of the Maple Leaf brand.”<sup>5</sup> They often referred to Canada as the “Land of the Maple.”<sup>6</sup> The maple has been immortalized in commemorations of Canadian participation in WWI, and its importance has been embodied in public gestures including Prime Minister Robert Borden's planting of maple seeds to mark the graves of Canadian heroes.<sup>7</sup> The *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* reported in 1915 that the “Overseas Club has decided to plant an avenue of maples at Langemaarcke, to beautify the Canadian Soldiers' Cemetery at that place.”<sup>8</sup> According to Veterans Affairs Canada photographs, an engraved maple leaf sits on Canadian soldiers' graves in various war cemeteries in Belgium and France.<sup>9</sup> The maple leaves on the grave markers are a later affectation since during the war soldiers' graves were marked by “rows of little wooden crosses” inscribed with

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Army Cap Badges,” *The British & Commonwealth Military Badge Forum*, 2011, [www.britishbadgeforum.com/canadian\\_expeditionary\\_force/cef\\_index.htm](http://www.britishbadgeforum.com/canadian_expeditionary_force/cef_index.htm); however, there are a few spaces indicating missing badges and 25 is an estimate.

<sup>4</sup> The crest on the red ensign up to 1921 incorporated the arms of the four founding provinces. After King George V ordered a new coat of arms for Canada in 1921, that shield replaced the crest on the red ensign. In 1957 a minor change of the color of maple leaves from green to red on the shield remained until the new national flag, created in 1965, featured one central red maple leaf.

<sup>5</sup> “Our Canadian Boys,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 3, 30 November 1915; “Vive L'Entente,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

<sup>6</sup> “Play Ball,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 8, 15 June 1916; “Current Events,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 14, 22 December 1917; “Confederation Day,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 16, July 1918; “Sidelights,” *Listening Post*, no. 19, 10 August 1916.

<sup>7</sup> “Editorial,” *Listening Post*, no. 2, 30 August 1915; “A Memorial to the Over-Seas Troops,” *The Spectator*, 21 August 1915. Article repeated in the Australian newspaper, *The Advertiser*, 12 October 1915, and in the New Zealand newspaper, *Clutha Leader*, 26 October 1915.

<sup>8</sup> “Notes and Comments,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 1, October 1915; Also see the above newspaper articles in the *British Spectator*, the *Australian Advertiser*, and the *New Zealand Clutha Leader*.

<sup>9</sup> There is no indication if there are maple trees at these cemeteries or if they survived from their planting during the war. All the present Canadian war memorials contain maple trees. “History: First World War (1914-1918),” Veterans Affairs Canada/Anciens Combattants Canada, 2016, accessed 2 August 2016, <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/overseas/first-world-war>. There are maples planted in the Sanctuary Wood Cemetery, Zillebeke, however, since this cemetery was extended between 1927 and 1932, it is possible that maples could have been planted at that later date. Just west of this is the Maple Copse Cemetery featuring four groups of three maples at each corner; however, there is no indication of the planting date. See Jeroen Geurst, *Cemeteries of the Great War by Sir Edwin Lutjens* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2010), 357-359, 404-406.

rank, name, and number.<sup>10</sup> Yet these markers at sites of memory, like the Great War cemeteries, and their emblem-engraved headstones placed in row upon row are a physical manifestation of national identity and soldier unity, an affirmation of citizenship.<sup>11</sup> As one soldier poet wrote: “There are maple leaves in Flanders – scattered far and wide / They came to fight for Empire – and for the Empire died.”<sup>12</sup> The maple leaves, like the poppies and crosses, all marked the places of fallen Canadian soldiers. In the autumn, fallen maple leaves are shades of red, many like the red poppies of the Flanders area in France and Belgium. This line above echoed Canadian Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae’s sentiments in his now iconic poem, “In Flanders Fields.”<sup>13</sup> The corn poppy, *Papaver rhoeas*, is not native to Canada but examples of them adorn the lapels of a plethora of Canadians on and around 11 November every year since its adoption as a symbol of remembrance in 1921.<sup>14</sup> As early as two weeks before, the Royal Canadian Legion presents

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<sup>10</sup> “A Letter from Brig-Gen F O W Loomis, CMG, DSO,” *Listening Post*, no. 29, 1 December 1917; See hand drawn image of a small wooden cross on the grave of an unknown British soldier in *Listening Post*, no. 31, July 1918. Gravestones replaced wooden markers in the 1920s. Regimental emblems appeared for the headstones of British units, while the five Dominions each had their own national emblems engraved on their soldiers’ headstones (Canada: maple leaf, Australia: rising sun, New Zealand: fern, South Africa: springbok, and Newfoundland: caribou). See Geurst, *Cemeteries*, 96, 97.

<sup>11</sup> In the case of Canada, the planted maple trees on the cemetery grounds and the maple leaf on each grave marker are the items of national identity. Jay Winter, “Historians and Sites of Memory,” in *Memory in Mind and Culture*, ed. Pascal Boyer and James V. Wertsch (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 257; Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*, Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 78-116.

<sup>12</sup> “Editorial,” *Listening Post*, no. 25, 21 May 1917. This also appeared after mentions of the popular book *Maple Leaves in Flanders Fields*. There are 128 species of maple trees throughout the world; however, they are naturally rare in France and Belgium (not counting those planted on cemetery grounds) and different from typical Canadian species.

<sup>13</sup> John McCrae, *In Flanders Fields, and Other Poems* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1919), 3. “In Flanders fields the poppies blow/Between the crosses, row on row,/That mark our place.” This was the most popular poem of the era, written by McCrae in the back of an ambulance, and first appeared anonymously in *Punch* in December 1915. See Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, 270-271; Don Gillmor, *Canada: A People’s History*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001), 91-94.

<sup>14</sup> In Canada, 11 November is Remembrance Day. “Poppies For Remembrance,” *The British Medical Journal* 2, no. 3176 (1921): 805; “‘I Hope Young People Never See War,’” *Maclean’s*, 18 November 2002; Richard Dalby, “Poppies, Poppies, Poppies,” *Bee Culture* 129, no. 6 (June 2001): 29; “100 Ways the First World War Shaped Canada,” *Canadian Geographic* 134, no. 4 (August 2014): 13-82. For an overview of remembrance in Canada with details on honoring and remembering as well as “everything poppy” by the Royal Canadian Legion, see “Honor and Remember,” Royal Canadian Legion, accessed 14 September 2016, <http://www.legion.ca/honour-remember/>. In addition, on 30 June 1948, an Act of Parliament gave the Legion trademark copyright of the poppy symbol in order to safeguard it as a sacred symbol of remembrance.

the Canadian Governor General with the first poppy of the year, which starts their annual poppy campaign. In 2004, the Royal Canadian Mint issued its first 25-cent Poppy Coin.<sup>15</sup> During the Legion's annual campaign, this simple red flower features prominently in the various forms of media, in schools, and in celebrations across the country. In early November, poppies are almost as ubiquitous as the color-changing maple leaves.

*Maple Leaves in Flanders Fields*, showed up in two issues of *The Listening Post* as “an informal chronicle of the 1st British Columbia Regiment ... there is a wealth of entertainment in this volume ... For sheer readability its equal has not appeared for many a day. A copy ought to be in the hands or the home of every Canadian soldier on active service.”<sup>16</sup> In addition, the author used the pen name of Herbert Rae but according to the newspaper print “the author has seen fit to assume an anonymity which deceives no one.”<sup>17</sup> Three issues later another mention of the book appeared: “Did you ever read «Maple Leaves in Flanders Fields»? Well you should read it. Its good! And it was written by a real Scotch Canadian – Hop into the next book store and get one – take it from us, you won't regret it.”<sup>18</sup> Two months later a review of three summary sentences appeared in *America*.<sup>19</sup> Two months after the external review, a section written by Brigadier General Odlum mentioned the book as well as revealing the author as none other than *The Listening Post's* first editor, Captain George Gibson, the then battalion Medical

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<sup>15</sup> According to the mint, this was the world's first colored circulation coin. “Coloured Poppy Coins,” *Royal Canadian Mint*, accessed 2 September 2016, <http://www.mint.ca/store/mint/about-the-mint/coloured-poppy-coin-1600014#.V9mevTu9Lwx>.

<sup>16</sup> “Mentioned in Dispatches,” *Listening Post*, no. 21, 25 January 1917; Herbert Rae, *Maple Leaves in Flanders Fields* (London: Smith, Elder and Company, 1916).

<sup>17</sup> “Mentioned in Dispatches,” *Listening Post*, no. 21, 25 January 1917.

<sup>18</sup> “Mentioned in Dispatches,” *Listening Post*, no. 24, 20 April 1917.

<sup>19</sup> *America* is a weekly Catholic magazine, begun in 1909, published by Jesuits and containing timely, thought-provoking articles written by prestigious writers and theologians. Synopsis from EBSCOhost Humanities International Complete, accessed 2 September 2016, <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.odu.edu/ehost/search/advanced?sid=78ce7165-46ce-4ff8-8834-18c85ab6014b%40sessionmgr105&vid=1&hid=108>.



Officer.<sup>20</sup> “It was Capt. Gibson’s genius which stamped on the paper the character which has since endured. He made it a journal of broad interest instead of restricting it to purely local news.”<sup>21</sup> The most important link to Canadian symbolism is the title itself since the author did not discuss the maple but humorously recounted the efforts of the Canadian soldiers from Valcartier, to England, and various towns, or ruined remnants of villages, in Belgium and France.

The maple leaf also played a key role in the naming of The King George and Queen Mary Maple Leaf Club. An announcement appeared in *The Listening Post* for this club in London as “a comfortable and respectable home for Canadian Soldiers on leave ... where accommodation will be available and where pay cheques can be cast in safe custody.”<sup>22</sup> Representatives of this club, “distinguished by banners and badges exhibiting the Maple Leaf,” waited at Victoria Station to meet leave trains.<sup>23</sup> This club was part of a collection of three imperial clubs, officially known as The King George and Queen Mary Clubs, sponsored by royalty specifically for soldiers of the British Empire.<sup>24</sup> Open for business in August 1915, the Maple Leaf Club, the brainchild of its founder and president Lady Drummond of Montreal, offered a place for enlisted soldiers apart from the existing British gentlemen’s clubs that

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<sup>20</sup> Captain George Gibson was the editor of the first four issues. See first page of *Listening Post*, no. 1, 10 August 1915, *Listening Post*, no. 2, 30 August 1915, *Listening Post*, no. 3, 12 September 1915, and *Listening Post*, no. 4, 26 September 1915.

<sup>21</sup> “Two Years of Change,” *Listening Post*, no. 27, 10 August 1917.

<sup>22</sup> “Maple Leaf Club, London for Canadians on Leave,” *Listening Post*, no. 14, 21 April 1916; “Canadians’ News Items,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915; “The Canadian Rendezvous in London,” *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916; “This and That,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 9, 5 August 1916; See also Sarah Cozzi, “‘When You’re A Long, Long Way From Home’: The Establishment of Canadian-Only Social Clubs for CEF Soldiers in London, 1915–1919,” *Canadian Military History* 20, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 45-60. BAC-LAC contains several boxes of material related to the Maple Leaf Club, however, since these have not been released in online format all quotes from the archives will depend on Sarah Cozzi’s published work cited above.

<sup>23</sup> “Maple Leaf Club, London for Canadians on Leave,” *Listening Post*, no. 14, 21 April 1916; See also Cozzi, “Canadian-Only Social Clubs,” 45-60.

<sup>24</sup> Mary MacLeod Moore, *The Story of the King George and Queen Mary Maple Leaf Club, London, 1915-1919*, (London, 1919), 7-8; Cozzi, “Canadian-Only Social Clubs,” 51. The three imperial clubs included the Maple Leaf Club, the Victoria League Club, and the Peel Club.

unlocked their doors for Canadian officers or had affiliations with Canadian gentlemen's clubs.<sup>25</sup> Lady Drummond's idea was to ensure that Canadian soldiers on leave from the front could find a Canadian home away from home with a "warm welcome, congenial companionships and board and lodging at a reasonable rate" and "have a chance to get 'cleaned up' after the hardships of trench life."<sup>26</sup> The club had sleeping rooms, recreational facilities, reading and dining rooms with imperial and provincial flags as well as paintings of Canadian landscapes on the walls.<sup>27</sup> Eager to curtail frivolous and wasteful soldier spending while on leave, Lady Drummond appealed to the Canadian military to set up an official pay office at the club.<sup>28</sup> In its four years, the club occupied 14 houses and two huts, served over a million meals, offered over half a million beds, cashed over eight million dollars-worth of Canadian pay, and greeted close to nine hundred thousand Canadians.<sup>29</sup> By featuring many aspects of "Canadiana," the Maple Leaf Club contributed to the growing sense of the distinctive nationalism of those serving in the CEF and the broader Canadian public.

References to Canada are sparse overall, but where the homeland is mentioned, the connection between the nation and nature is particularly strong and the Canadian landscape appears in stark contrast to the western front scenery. Beyond maple leaves, men wrote about scenes of Canadian nature in the trench journals. The poem, "A Glimpse of Home," detailed Canadian winter with snow, ice-crusting streams, the frosted air, a Moose's echoing call on the

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<sup>25</sup> Cozzi, "Canadian-Only Social Clubs," 49.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Cozzi, "Canadian-Only Social Clubs," 50.

<sup>27</sup> Cozzi, "Canadian-Only Social Clubs," 51. Also evident in the photos accompanying the Cozzi article.

<sup>28</sup> Cozzi, "Canadian-Only Social Clubs," 53. The idea of Canadian soldiers spending their money throughout London is also mentioned in Rae, *Maple Leaves*, 59.

<sup>29</sup> Moore, *Maple Leaf Club*, 28. The actual amount for cheques cashed according to Moore was \$8,840,262 CAD in 1919, which equates to approximately \$117.7 million CAD in 2016. Bank of Canada, "Inflation Calculator," accessed 2 August 2016, <http://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>.

breeze, untouched forests filled with hibernating beasts, and skulking coyotes.<sup>30</sup> During the winter season, snow and ice covers much of Canada, the northern forests usually teeming with life during the spring and summer turn quiet, and the non-hibernating animals such as moose and coyotes hunt for available food. Moose that populate every Canadian province, are herbivores that eat new growth on deciduous trees and aquatic plants in summer, and known to strip bark off trees in winter.<sup>31</sup> Moose typically call during both the mating season in early autumn and the popular hunting season in winter.<sup>32</sup> While not an official symbol, the 25-cent piece features caribou, since 1937, and often mistakenly called moose.<sup>33</sup> This largest member of the deer family, *Alces alces*, are iconic, rather than official, symbols of Canadian wilderness much like the cougar, timber wolf, and grizzly bear.<sup>34</sup>

Another soldier poem recalled the prairie, the plains, the peaceful untouched soil, and the coyote's midnight call.<sup>35</sup> The Canadian Prairie Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, featured grasslands, plains and farmland, and ranches respectively; providing Canadians with potash, agricultural products, cattle and oil. Along with British Columbia, they comprise

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<sup>30</sup> "A Glimpse of Home," *Listening Post*, no. 22, 15 February 1917. This mention of moose and coyotes in the same seasonal reference is unusual. Larger coyotes can hunt moose, although rare. See J.F. Benson and B.R. Patterson, "Moose (*Alces Alces*) Predation by Eastern Coyotes (*Canis Latrans*) and Eastern Coyote × Eastern Wolf (*Canis Latrans* × *Canis Lycaon*) Hybrids," *Canadian Journal of Zoology* 91, no. 11 (November 2013): 837-841.

<sup>31</sup> Moose are browsers rather than grazers or foragers. Browsers also bark peel, especially in winter.

<sup>32</sup> For early references to Canadian moose hunt, see James Macauley, ed., "A Moose-Hunt in Canada East," *The Leisure Hour: A Family Journal of Instruction and Recreation*, Jan. 1852-Dec. 1876, no. 679 (31 December 1864): 839-840; Dunraven, "Moose-Hunting in Canada," ed. James Knowles, *The Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review*, Mar. 1877-Dec. 1900 6, no. 29 (July 1879): 45-65.

<sup>33</sup> Many people, even Canadians, mistake the caribou for a moose. For information on Canadian circulation 25-cent coins, see "25 cents," *Royal Canadian Mint*, accessed 2 September 2016, <http://www.mint.ca/store/mint/learn/25-cents-5300010#.V8zCSWW9Lww>. The moose did not appear on coins until 2004, featured on a \$5 coin then in 2012, on a silver coin.

<sup>34</sup> These four iconic animals, including white tailed deer and bison featured on \$5 silver coins starting in 2011. See "Silver Wildlife Series," *Royal Canadian Mint*, accessed 2 September 2016, [https://www.mint.ca/store/content/bullionProductDetails.jsp?itemId=prod1630044&cat=Bullion+Products&nId=500002&parentnId=1300002&nodeGroup=About+the+Mint&lang=en\\_CA](https://www.mint.ca/store/content/bullionProductDetails.jsp?itemId=prod1630044&cat=Bullion+Products&nId=500002&parentnId=1300002&nodeGroup=About+the+Mint&lang=en_CA).

<sup>35</sup> "The Exile," *Listening Post*, no. 23, 22 March 1917.

Western Canada.<sup>36</sup> In the 1918 Christmas issue, a soldier described Canada with her rolling prairies, log-crammed rivers, and apple orchards while an alternate described elk, cattle, partridge, bison, wild birds, and the colors of the prairie.<sup>37</sup>

One wrote of where a British Columbian soldier grew up, using sights and sounds of nature:

Where row on row the mountains rise,  
And monstrous valleys loom between;  
Where glacial rivers seethe and dance,  
Riot and roar their icy spleen,  
And shiv'ring poplars fringe the bank  
With furbelows of rustling green;

There, where the flutt'ring insects ply  
Their tiny trades, and clear the cry  
Of homing wild-fowl fills the air  
When sunset stains the western sky,  
And faint the northwind mountains lie  
Inexorable, gaunt and bare ...<sup>38</sup>

British Columbia, at the western edge of Canada, contains the Rocky Mountain Range along its eastern border and touches the Pacific Ocean along its western border. This province's mountains, valleys, dramatic canyons, forests, and waterways provide spectacular scenery, national parks, hunting, and fishing since much of the territory is wild or semi-wild.<sup>39</sup> With the advent of the railroad in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mining and forest industries replaced the fur trade. One soldier wrote of logging roads, partridges, the tall grass of summer, and trout waiting in the stream of a hidden river.<sup>40</sup> The Fraser Valley dominates much of the southern interior, featuring the Fraser River, salmon, cedar, early fur trade, a limited gold

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<sup>36</sup> An extensive online collection of Canadian Prairie material shows farmers and ranchers as the mainstay of the area. See University of Alberta Libraries, "Peel's Prairie Provinces," 2013, <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/>.

<sup>37</sup> "If God so Wills," *Listening Post*, no. 32, December 1918; "The Open Range," *Listening Post*, no. 32, December 1918.

<sup>38</sup> "Lines Written on the Grave of a British Columbian Soldier," *Listening Post*, no. 26, 20 July 1917.

<sup>39</sup> The second oldest national park, Glacier National Park, established in 1886 (after Banff National Park in 1885), contains Canada's largest cave system, active glaciers, and features Rogers Pass running through its heart.

<sup>40</sup> "A July Dream," *Listening Post*, no. 27, 10 August 1917.

rush, farming, and ranches.<sup>41</sup> Nearby, the lush Okanagan Valley featured vast orchards, lakes, and mountains.<sup>42</sup> In an autumn issue, a soldier described the changing colors of maple leaves, ripening corn in the fields, the singing of the Bobolink, and the sound of the plunging seas.<sup>43</sup> Bobolink, a type of blackbird that breeds in the summer in open grassy fields and hay fields, inhabits much of southern Canada and the northern United States.<sup>44</sup> Another soldier, presumably the rancher in his title, described his longing for Alberta and its “vast, silent plain ... wild, wind-swept prairie,” animals such as bison, moose, and deer, the Chinook winds, the winding Bow River, the rounding up and branding of cattle, fresh air, and “fields of alfalfa and clover” and “wild prairie hay.”<sup>45</sup> The Chinook winds are most frequent in southern Alberta and typically blow in wet warm air pushing back the Arctic winds during the middle of winter giving days of unseasonably warm weather especially in Calgary and Lethbridge.<sup>46</sup> Used during the fur trade, the 567 km-long (365 mi) Bow River flows from the Rocky Mountains in Alberta, through the province, joins the South Saskatchewan River, and eventually flows into Hudson Bay.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> John A. Cherrington, *The Fraser Valley: A History* (Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour, 1992); Jeff Oliver, *Landscapes and Social Transformations on the Northwest Coast: Colonial Encounters in the Fraser Valley* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2010).

<sup>42</sup> According to some researchers, the Okanagan in particular prompted many Britishers to vacation and settle there because of the transformation and loss of the British countryside. See Margaret A. Ormsby, “Fruit Marketing in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia,” *Agricultural History* 9, no. 2 (1935): 80-97; John R. Wagner, “Landscape Aesthetics, Water, and Settler Colonialism in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia,” *Journal of Ecological Anthropology* 12, no. 1 (2008): 22-38; Paul M. Koroscil, *The British Garden of Eden: Settlement History of the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia* (Burnaby, B.C.: Department of Geography, Simon Fraser University, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> “Changing Maple Leaves,” *Listening Post*, no. 28, 20 September 1917.

<sup>44</sup> This bird’s name comes from its song. Miyoko Chu, *Songbird Journeys: Four Seasons In the Lives of Migratory Birds* (New York: Walker Books, 2007), 136-151.

<sup>45</sup> “The Song of the Rancher,” *Listening Post*, no. 30, April 1918.

<sup>46</sup> Lawrence C. Nkemdirim, “Canada’s Chinook Belt,” *International Journal of Climatology* 16, no. 4 (April 1996): 441-462. References to the Chinook winds found in archives of *The Calgary Weekly Herald* from 1888 to 1901. See University of Alberta Libraries, “Peel’s Prairie Provinces,” 2013, accessed 4 August 2016, <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/CWH/>. The paper existed from 1883 through 1932 and there are some archived copies at the University of Alberta. There have been many references to the Chinook winds as a quote from this paper in 1900 but I have not found the actual article, just the same repeated reference to the quote.

<sup>47</sup> Communities along the Bow River include, but are not limited to, Banff, Lake Louise, Canmore, and Alberta. The river runs through Banff National Park, known as Canada’s first national park created in 1887 (then known as Rocky Mountain Park). The Bow River is a frequent destination for fishermen, featuring rainbow and brown trout,

The paintings in the Maple Leaf Club and the poems in the trench newspapers were visual and mental prompts evoking associations and sentiments of Canadian-ness – a picturesque but imagined link to Canadian identity. The Club’s paintings of Canadian landscapes on its walls that reminded Canadian soldiers of home also evoked landscape and served as the constructions of scenery that Simon Schama suggested are works of the human mind interconnected with memories, myths, and meaning.<sup>48</sup> Modern transport, industry, and business are typically absent from landscape paintings and focus on wild, natural, picturesque scenery thereby evoking an imagined sense of peace and harmony.<sup>49</sup> Canada was born out of its natural, unspoiled, and unconquered spaces and much of that nature remains wild in its northern regions, a constant reminder of the nation’s origins.<sup>50</sup> The government’s creation of national parks entwines landscape with national identity. Furthermore, these places of natural land formations and wildlife are far from human habitation and, when visited, their sounds or lacks thereof evoke a connection to ancient and godly power.<sup>51</sup> These soldiers’ poems induced memories of Canada, a connection to a higher power, and reminders of simpler, relaxing, peaceful times in the midst of exploding shells, flying bullets, and flesh-seeking grenade shrapnel.

The trench newspapers also contain references to outdoor sports including lacrosse. Officially labeled as the summer sport of Canada in 1994, the game has been popular since

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and boaters on rafts, in canoes or kayaks. See Christopher Armstrong, HV Nelles, and Mathew Dominic Evanden, *The River Returns: An Environmental History of the Bow* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009).

<sup>48</sup> Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 6-7. Nature can be both life-affirming and life-destroying, as noted in myths of ancient social groups. For examples specifically related to rivers and mountains, see Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, 256-263, 451-452.

<sup>49</sup> Canadian mountain landscapes rarely show logging trucks and deforestation and Canadian river landscapes avoid picturing commercial boats hauling industrial goods. For ideas regarding nationalism and rivers, see Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, 363-367.

<sup>50</sup> As noted earlier, most of the Canadian population lives in southern Canada within 200 miles of the American border.

<sup>51</sup> Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, 16, 408-411.

before Europeans stepped foot on Canadian soil.<sup>52</sup> Originating with several of the First Nations tribes in early Canada, lacrosse was an amusement played with three foot long sticks with a netted round hoop at one end, a heavy wooden ball, and a goal at each end of a field of play.<sup>53</sup> Historically, matches occurred between aboriginal tribes and villages to quicken and strengthen the body for combat.<sup>54</sup> Britishers in the late nineteenth century ranked the game above cricket or golf for its inexpensive materials, variety, ingenuity, interest, excitement, and liveliness.<sup>55</sup> According to William George Beers, a dentist, Canadian nationalist, and premier advocate of the sport, “Lacrosse quickens and brightens the mind. The close quarters in struggling for the ball, the contests of strength and agility, will bring out dormant energies in boys, develop their pluck and manliness, give them self-confidence” and “they will forget or never know the meaning of fear.”<sup>56</sup> Scattered references to lacrosse appeared in the trench press:

You may talk about lacrosse, for  
It's a pretty speedy game,  
And when Canucks get on the job  
'Tis very far from tame.  
But out here we cannot play it  
For you see we're in a fix,  
The reason is not far to see --  
We haven't got the sticks.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> National Sports of Canada Act (SC 1994, c 16), accessed 8 September 2016, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-16.7/page-1.html>; William George Beers, *Lacrosse: The National Game of Canada* (Dawson, 1869); “CBC Archives - Lacrosse,” various dates, accessed 4 August 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/categories/sports/lacrosse/>.

<sup>53</sup> Beers, *Lacrosse*, 10-15. Beers, known as the father of lacrosse, developed this game from the First Nations game of baggataway. See Miller Stewart, “Lacrosse, Originally an Old Indian Game Called Baggataway,” *Over the Hill* (CBC, 26 June 1964), accessed 4 August 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/lacrosse-originally-an-old-indian-game-called-baggataway>.

<sup>54</sup> Beers, *Lacrosse*, 7-10. This idea of sport to promote healthy, muscular bodies revealed the connection to Victorian ideas of masculinity.

<sup>55</sup> Beers, *Lacrosse*, 37-40.

<sup>56</sup> Beers, *Lacrosse*, 42-44. With this book, Beers codified the game of lacrosse. He started playing as a child; studied matches played by local First Nations tribes in his youth; and in 1860 outlined field size, player counts, and basic rules not quite as wild and violent as the original. This need for order and gentlemanly conduct further affirmed his British ideals. He pushed for the creation of the National Lacrosse Association in 1867, published his book in 1869, and actively promoted the sport throughout his life.

<sup>57</sup> “Ampoules,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 11, 29 March 1917.

This poem ended with a question to the men asking, “who’s going to send away for some of Joe Lally’s best?” referring to the renowned lacrosse player and manufacturer of lacrosse sticks in Cornwall, Ontario.<sup>58</sup>

Two amusing spoofs involving this game of netted sticks appeared in *The Listening Post*. “A Vancouver paper gravely informs us that the Canadian Troops are supplied with thousands of lacrosse sticks with which they catch the bombs and throw them back to the senders.”<sup>59</sup> This appealed to the popularity of the sport as uniquely Canadian as well as making fun of the homefront press in their lack of accurate information. Poking fun at the enemy while invoking the sport’s acclaim and the hardiness of Canadian troops appeared in this entry:

Extract from a German air observers report after watching the hurricane finish of a Lacrosse game: ‘At the junction of DXYK and FLZN troops are observed to be practicing long distance bomb throwing with a singular type of latticed stick. I would submit that reports of the declining morale of these troops is quite without foundation. They appeared to derive great enjoyment from this species of training, and were encouraged by large masses of their fellow soldiers who eagerly watched them from a safe distance....’<sup>60</sup>

Lacrosse emphasized physical aggression, rapid and unpredictable changes in play, and danger – skills useful in the trenches and all the markers of uninhibited masculinity appealing to the men on and off the field. This excerpt also draws attention to Beers’ argument regarding the benefits of lacrosse in several ways. First, it enhanced masculinity; second, it was a symbol of national identity since appropriated from the First Nations around the time of confederation; and lastly, much like Beers, this promoted it as a national pastime.

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<sup>58</sup> “Ampoules,” *Iodine Chronicle*, no. 11, 29 March 1917; “Joe Lally Talks Lacrosse,” *The Montreal Gazette*, 27 June 1947. In 1903, Joe Lally took over the production business from his brother, Frank, who started the business in the 1880s.

<sup>59</sup> “Ka-hoo-chi,” *Listening Post*, no. 4, 26 September 1915; There was no evidence that a newspaper actually printed this story. Its appearance in ‘Ka-hoo-chi’ suggested it was a joke, since this popular *Listening Post* column often printed them as such.

<sup>60</sup> “Fun from the Front,” *Listening Post*, no. 26, 20 July 1917. This was a spoof as there was no evidence of such a report.



Another sport resembling lacrosse in masculinity, violence, design of play, and Canadian identity is hockey, known officially as the winter sport of Canada since 1994 (at the same time lacrosse became the summer sport).<sup>61</sup> Hockey has been a popular activity for most of Canada's national history. The first Canadian indoor hockey game was played in Montreal in 1875; it was not invented in Canada, but its popularity began in Nova Scotia amid the ice and snow of winter and the open space of the Canadian landscape.<sup>62</sup> Hockey, like lacrosse, is a rough sport requiring courage, strength, and agility. References to hockey showed up in the trench journals: "During the recent frosty weather skates figured very prominently in several raids made by Canadians. That is where they slipped it over Fritz. Good old hockey players!"<sup>63</sup> This alluded to the courage and physical dominance displayed both in the sport of hockey and on the battlefield. Hockey, like lacrosse, displayed masculinity. Many Canadian hockey players joined the CEF, from various senior division clubs from Western Canada including the Winnipeg Victorians and the Winnipeg Hockey Club, as noted in the sports gossip column of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*.<sup>64</sup> These hockey-related remarks in the trench newspapers emphasized Canadian uniqueness in addition to a masculinity needed on the battlefield and within a nation struggling to define itself.

The canoe signifies Canadian relationships between man and nature, First Nations and European settlers, and the regional differences that unify the nation.<sup>65</sup> This vehicle for popular

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<sup>61</sup> National Sports of Canada Act (SC 1994, c 16), accessed 8 September 2016, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-16.7/page-1.html>

<sup>62</sup> Martin Jones, *Hockey's Home Halifax-Dartmouth: The Origin of Canada's Game* (Halifax, NS: Nimbus Pub, 2002); Society for International Hockey Research, "Report of the Sub-Committee Looking into Claim That Windsor, Nova Scotia, Is the Birthplace of Hockey," *The Hockey Research Journal* 6, no. 1 (Fall 2002), accessed 4 August 2016, [http://www.sihrhockey.org/\\_a/public/horg\\_2002\\_report.cfm](http://www.sihrhockey.org/_a/public/horg_2002_report.cfm).

<sup>63</sup> "Stray Shots by the Sniper," *Listening Post*, no. 24, 20 April 1917.

<sup>64</sup> "Sports Gossip," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 2, December 1915.

<sup>65</sup> James Raffan, *Bark, Skin & Cedar: Exploring the Canoe in the Canadian Experience* (Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers, 1999), 242. Unlike Raffan, Erickson emphasizes the canoe's link to colonialism and the competitive claims to land and resources between the early colonizers and the existing First Nations people as well

physical activity in Canada links a sport with nature and emphasizes another unique Canadian identity marker, also appearing in the trench press. Wilderness dominates Canada's landscape, with the largest percentage of the population living only in the regions near the southern border. Much of Canada is accessible by canoe, without very long portages, from the Atlantic Ocean touching the Maritime Provinces to the Arctic Ocean touching the Northwest Territories.<sup>66</sup> The canoe is not only a historical vehicle but also a connection to wilderness.<sup>67</sup> This indigenous conveyance, just as the indigenous game of lacrosse, is an aspect unique to Canada and its inhabitants. First Nations people used different types of canoes, depending on location and resources, for transportation long before Europeans touched Canada's shores. Realizing the effectiveness of the canoe in cooperation with indigenous tribes, fur traders and early explorers used this vehicle extensively to traverse and conquer the nation's wild spaces. In addition, canoeing required balance, strength, and endurance, which were markers of masculinity in tune with the frontier image of manhood. Eventually other forms of cross-country transportation, like rail and road, moved the primitive canoe into the realm of sport and recreation. But, the effectiveness of canoes as transport through narrow and winding rivers appealed to soldiers in the trenches, especially during instances of flooding, as men asked, "Will there be an issue of Canoes ... for the Listening Post at some future date?"<sup>68</sup> Have the headquarters batmen "ordered their trench canoes for next winter's campaign?"<sup>69</sup> In Canada, a nation of rivers, canoes are both visible and invisible because they are everywhere and serve as a conveyance across water,

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as between the French and the English – the canoe as a vehicle of control and conflict. See Bruce Erickson, *Canoe Nation: Nature, Race, and the Making of a Canadian Icon* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 35-86. Dean argues that the canoe and canoeing were connected to Canadian nationalism during the 1960s, incidentally including the national flag creation in 1965 and the centennial of the Confederation in 1967. See Misao Dean, "The Centennial Voyageur Canoe Pageant as Historical Re-Enactment," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 40, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 43-67.

<sup>66</sup> Portage is carrying a canoe and its cargo over land between two waterways.

<sup>67</sup> Erickson, *Canoe Nation*, 2.

<sup>68</sup> "No. 2 Company's Notes," *Listening Post*, no. 9, 25 December 1915.

<sup>69</sup> "Our Thirst for Knowledge," *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, no. 3, June 1916.

shallow or deep, rough or calm. But they differ depending on locality and natural resources from the East to the West. The canoe narrative, in all its forms, is part of the “imagined community” of the nation of Canada.

Renderings of these symbols including the maple leaf, wilderness and its natural inhabitants, hockey, lacrosse, and the canoe that form the history of Canada play to the imagination of Canadians regardless of occupation, social position, heritage, or race. These symbols of home inspired the Canadian soldier abroad by reminding him of his uniqueness and contributed to shaping a Canadian space within the British Empire. Ultimately, they evoked associations with a uniquely Canadian identity.

## CONCLUSION

A nation is a complex amalgamation and, as Benedict Anderson argues, it is where its people agree to certain aspects defining their nationality and certain official symbols emerge as part of this imagined and agreed upon national identity.<sup>1</sup> Ideas, phrases, and symbols of unique Canadian identity, like the maple leaf and others, appeared in the trench newspapers linking the soldiers together during the war.

Canadian identity was forged on Canadian soil. But, it continued to emerge and solidify on the European battlefields appearing in the trench press in witty remarks on weather, work, news from home via post, status of recruits and conscripts, and the ever-present injury, maiming, and death. In a full-page article in the last issue of *The Listening Post*, Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Currie wrote specifically of Canada as a nation:

By the definite victory they won, paying for it with their lives, their limbs, their health, by their unfaltering devotion, generous sacrifice and splendid bravery, these khaki clad men have made *permanently secure* the freedom and prosperity of the country – they have written “CANADA” in bold, outstanding letters in the world’s Roll of Honour – they have secured for Canada the right to speak as a *nation admired and respected* in the Concert of Nations. ... But the men, who for years have fought, suffered and tendered their lives daily on the battlefields of Europe *for Canada’s sake*, with the “CANADA” badge on their shoulder and “CANADA” engraved in their hearts as their constant inspiration, can and will continue to uphold their Canadian ideal by becoming *useful Canadian* citizens. Their military life has been to them a complementary education. Their conception of citizenship has been enlarged so as to include *duties* besides privileges – of those duties they have performed the most sacred and most onerous – they have shed their blood in the defence of the State. ... Having attained the status of a nation, Canada must be prepared to face with courage and resolution the problems incumbent upon nations. Amongst those, preparedness for defence is and will remain most essential.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

<sup>2</sup> “Back to Mufti,” *Listening Post*, no. 33, March 1919. The emphasis, noted by italics, was Currie’s own. Mufti, or being in mufti, is the civilian clothes worn by military personnel (and others) when not dressed in uniform. During World War I, many soldiers did not have the opportunity to dress in anything other than uniform until they returned home in 1919 or later.

As Currie pointed out, it was after four years of war that Canada could see the possibility of a distinct nationality and potential independence from the British Empire. The Great War was a mere beginning step on the road to independence. For it was not until the Queen returned its constitution to Canada in 1982 that the country no longer officially considered itself a Dominion.<sup>3</sup>

The trench newspapers also offer opportunities to examine the anti-soldier, censorship, humor, and other emotions in articles and stories, sometimes spanning multiple issues, beyond the scope of this thesis. In addition, the Anglophone-Francophone relations in Canada (language, nationality, imperialism, education, prime ministers/cabinet ministers and political parties) and the First Nations-Canadian relations (settlements, fur trade, identity) await fleshing out. Furthermore, the place and reverberations of mainstream and trench media both on the front lines and on the home front through the Great War needs more attention. Lastly, government appreciation of soldier efforts in the British Empire emphasizing the individual Dominions awaits further scrutiny. These direct links to identity would further expand the understanding of how certain communities interconnect and interact in the imagined ‘land of the Maple’ hidden in the wilds of the Canadian landscape.

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<sup>3</sup> Government Acts of national identity appeared after this time, such as the National Symbol of Canada Act declaring the beaver in 1985. The National Sports of Canada Act declared hockey and lacrosse in 1994. The recognition of the national arboreal emblem as the maple tree happened in 1996. The National Horse of Canada Act declared the Canadian horse in 2002. Finally, the House of Commons declared the Maple Leaf Tartan in 2011. Official recognized symbols of Canadian identity are found at Government of Canada, “Official Symbols of Canada,” January 2016, accessed 2 September 2016, <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444070816842>. Although widely known and strongly associated with Canadian identity, some symbols are unofficial such as The Great Seal of Canada, the maple leaf, the Parliament buildings, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP or Mounties). Government of Canada, “Unofficial Symbols of Canada,” January 2016, accessed 2 September 2016, <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444070816837>.

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Maggie Kontra Emmens, known to her parents as Ann Margaret, was born in Montreal, Canada into a family steeped in Hungarian heritage. Although beginning her studies in Canada and Florida, she took time off to take care of her family, then taught in the technical corporate arena for several years in the information technology industry. In 2014, she received a Bachelor of Arts in History from Old Dominion University, remaining on the Dean's List throughout. During her graduate studies at Old Dominion University, Maggie worked as a teaching assistant for Dr. Anna Mirkova in World History in late 2015, a teaching assistant for Dr. Brett Bebbler in Historical Methods in early 2016, and as a research assistant for Dr. Maura Hametz in late 2016. She received a Master of Arts in History from Old Dominion University in December 2016. She intends to continue her studies in History by working towards her doctorate.