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# Booze, Temperance, and Soldiers on the Home Front

## The Unraveling of the Image of the Idealised Soldier in Canada

FAY WILSON

*Abstract: In 1916, Canadians were swept up in the rhetoric of a purifying Holy War. The citizen soldier became the embodiment of Christ in the ultimate fight against evil. As the mirror for the nation, he reflected the moral character and aspirations of purity. The behaviour of soldiers stationed in Calgary were publically scrutinised, especially as to their use of alcohol. The evils of alcohol galvanised various groups to move towards Prohibition as the ultimate war measure. This directly affected military recruitment efforts and served to alienate the soldier and the reality of his experiences from the home front.*

IN 1916, CALGARY was the centre of several cases of severe unrest amongst the soldiers in training. Within the span of eight months there were four violent outbursts resulting in the complete destruction of property of three restaurants suspected of being owned or employing enemy-aliens, and in the last case, the destruction of the barracks of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police (RNWMP). There were several injuries and one man was shot. Historian P. Whitney Lackenbauer analyses the riots, concluding “Calgary, in both frequency and severity, was one of the main centres of discontent.”<sup>1</sup>

1 P. Whitney Lackenbauer, “Under Siege: The CEF Attack on the RNWMP Barracks in Calgary, October 1916,” *Alberta History* 49, no. 3 (2001), 2.

The attack on the barracks was the culmination of several violent conflicts involving soldiers and alcohol in the city. Lackenbauer argues that the riots were a “product of miscommunication and military management.”<sup>2</sup> He also accurately identifies boredom, a nativist mentality, and predominantly, the lack of discipline on the part of military administration.<sup>3</sup> However, he does not factor in the social reform movement’s targeting of the behaviour of the men, nor does he explain the reason for the lack of military discipline aside from acknowledging that by October of 1916, the soldiers saw themselves as an easy and unfair target of the temperance forces.<sup>4</sup> This essay will demonstrate that there was far more happening in the culture of the home front. The animosity between the soldiers and the home front grew in large part because of the concerns of social reformists and the pre-war decisions of Canadian Expeditionary Force General Sam Hughes. Hughes upheld the anti-alcohol stance taken by society’s most elite and vocal members. He agreed that alcohol was the root of all evil and must be eradicated. This essay differs from previous analyses by examining the days leading up to the riots, and subsequently, Prohibition, which affected public perceptions of the soldiers.

In early April of 1915, a group of social reformists publicly denounced the behaviour of the soldiers who were based in Calgary’s training camp, resulting in an unexpected backlash from the community who were largely supportive of the soldiers. This explosive public discourse highlights a thinly-veiled animosity between the soldiers and social reformists despite both groups sharing a mutual support of the war effort. Newspaper reports of the spring of 1915 to the summer of 1916 indicate these years as the critical time leading up to a nationwide adoption of Prohibition and the subsequent institution of conscription. As Lackenbauer also notices at this juncture, “There was something in the air.”<sup>5</sup> The first contingent of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) had been deployed, casualties began to mount, and wounded soldiers were returning to Canada. Canadians, beginning to see the difficulties

2 P. Whitney Lackenbauer, “Soldiers Behaving Badly: CEF Soldier ‘Rioting’ in Canada During the First World War,” in Craig Mantle, ed., *The Apathetic and the Defiant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1812–1919* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2007), 195.

3 *Ibid.*, 217.

4 *Ibid.*, 217.

5 *Ibid.*, 2.

of the war, needed a higher purpose to continue in the battle. This essay aims to show that volunteer soldiers had become a mirror for the nation to reflect the social construct of a strong moral character within the dominant Christian society. Specifically, I will demonstrate this by examining the relationship of alcohol to Canadian soldiers, which was being used as a tool by social reformers to control soldiers in an effort to uphold the collective identity of Canadians as they persevered through wartime.

The tenacity of Canadians to persevere through the Great War rested on certain tenets being emphasized. An important aspect was the widespread acceptance and support by the Canadian people in their understanding of shared sacrifice.<sup>6</sup> Historian Lynette Finch assesses how this sacrifice was achieved, “The persuasion exercises of modern warfare are all designed to convince the population to unite behind the war—literally to own the war as their own.” Finch continues, “Propaganda, or psychological warfare, is dependent on creating a pseudo-environment that will form the conditions through which people decide how to respond to war.”<sup>7</sup> The Borden government, religious authorities, and middle class citizens carefully managed concepts of home front sacrifice.

Also feeding this requirement of absolute duty and sacrifice was the force and strength of the adherents to Protestantism in Canada. Church leaders were among the greatest proponents of the war effort on the home front. They encouraged patriotic Canadians to contribute to the war, both on the home front and overseas. Reverend Hindley, an executive member of the Congregational Church of Canada, strongly encouraged protecting the boys from “good Christian homes” from the ensnarement of alcohol while in training.<sup>8</sup> Contemporary theologian, Reverend S.D. Chown, head of the Methodist Church of Canada, questioned whether Britain had enough integrity worth fighting for, given that the sex and liquor trade in England were worse threats to Canadian men than the guns in France.<sup>9</sup> The leaders of many

<sup>6</sup> See also Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Lynette Finch, “Psychological Propaganda: The War of Ideas During the First Half of the Twentieth Century,” *Armed Forces and Society* 26, no. 3, (April, 2000), 374.

<sup>8</sup> “Treated Soldiers At City Brewery,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 5. October 1915, 5.

<sup>9</sup> “Journal of Proceedings of the 9th General Conference of the Methodist Church” (Toronto, 1914) in *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1914, quoted in Marshall, “Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour,” 118.

Protestant churches endorsed the war as the purifying agent that would cleanse Canada and the world from evil influences, embodied in the Kaiser's "Huns." The First World War was quickly framed as a Holy Crusade that was presented as worthy of complete sacrifice. This understanding resulted, as Richard Jenson examines, in varying political groups not necessarily aligned before the war being brought together in solidarity. Turning the First World War into a Holy War aligned women's suffrage supporters, temperance forces, the labour movement, and farmer's associations, forming a powerful coalition. As a result, soldiers became the "exemplars of sacrifice, manhood, nationalism and duty" that would "purify and validate" Canada as a nation.<sup>10</sup> All hope was put upon the citizen soldier, who became the embodiment of Christ in the ultimate fight between good and evil.

Jonathan Vance examines the use of Christian imagery at length, focusing on the interwar period as the era that mythologised the war to give it meaning and purpose.<sup>11</sup> However, these ideals were forged in the thick of fighting, both on the battlefield and on the home front. Michael Bliss confirms that by the end of the first year of the war, it had become "transfigured as a crusade for Christ rather than the defense of liberty."<sup>12</sup> The use of Christian imagery and symbolism between 1914 and 1918 served to reinforce the morals, morale, and political aspirations of several Canadian groups, and therefore issues of class, gender, labour, and agriculture were also at play. David Marshall writes, "The official position of the Methodist Church was that the war was a defensive one to defeat militarism and protect Christian civilization."<sup>13</sup> The Methodists succeeded in convincing many Canadians that failing to support the war as a noble and holy battle was tantamount to sin. After the first contingent of the CEF was deployed, casualties quickly mounted and the names of the soldiers were published in Canadian newspapers on a daily basis. How Canadians continued to show enthusiasm after the boys returned,

<sup>10</sup> Richard Jenson, "Nationalistic and Civic Duty in Wartime: Comparing World Wars in Canada and the United States" *Canadian Issues*, (Winter) 2004, 6–19.

<sup>11</sup> Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997).

<sup>12</sup> Michael Bliss, "The Methodist Church and World War I," *Canadian Historical Review* 49, no. 1, (1968), 213.

<sup>13</sup> David Marshall, "Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour: The Methodist Church and the Sanctification of the World War One," in *Canadian Churches and the First World War*, ed. Gordon L. Heath (Hamilton: McMaster Divinity College Press, 2014), 107.

either maimed or deceased, has been related to the unwavering faith that was expounded to the public via newspapers and the pulpit. Canadians were a deeply religious people and Bliss believes if not for this faith, they could not have maintained such strong morale throughout the war.<sup>14</sup> Marshall concurs, “The prevailing notions of nobility and Christ-like character persisted throughout the war because it helped many to cope with the brutality of the battlefield.”<sup>15</sup> Predominantly, alcohol was targeted as the scourge that threatened the purity of the young soldier, who was probably away from home for the first time. These concerns reignited a sixty-year-old battle for temperance. A drunken soldier could not possibly embody the hopes and dreams that sustained the home front as citizens read the daily casualty lists nor assuage the myriad fears that accompany war. Given the demand for personal holiness, the soldier became the mirror for Canadians as he represented Christ in the crusade against the “evil Hun.” The citizen soldier became increasingly alienated because whether he was upheld or condemned, he was never actually seen as an individual. Rather, he was somebody’s idea—a tool to achieve the redemption of a nation.

The problem of alcohol in training camps was not unique to the First World War. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, military camps for boys were set up across Canada due to an increasing concern regarding urban squalor. Their purpose was to stress “outdoor activity, fresh air and the strenuous character building qualities of nature.”<sup>16</sup> However, by the 1880s they instead had established a reputation for “excessive drinking and rowdy behavior.” The camps were viewed as “dirty, unsanitary places, noted for drunkenness and a wild holiday.” It was understood that no respectable mother should allow her son to attend the annual drills when the atmosphere was one of smoking, drinking, and affiliation with the lower classes.<sup>17</sup> The temperance movement was the most vocal in its opposition to these

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 220.

<sup>15</sup> David Marshall, “Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour: The Methodist Church and the Sanctification of the First World War,” in Gordon L. Hamilton Heath, ed., *Canadian Churches and the First World War* (Hamilton: McMaster Divinity College Press, 2014), 102–132, 112.

<sup>16</sup> Mark Moss, *Manliness and Militarism: Educating Young Boys in Ontario for War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 15–16.

<sup>17</sup> Mike O’Brien, “Manhood and the Militia Myth: Class and Militarism in Ontario, 1902–1914,” *Labour/La Travail* 42, (Fall 1998), 124.

camps.<sup>18</sup> In 1911, Canadian Minister of Militia Sam Hughes sought to build a network of armouries for training across Canada. As he strove for the military camps to achieve middle-class respectability, the teetotaling general set out to eradicate the reputation of the “godless and wicked” camps. Hughes imposed his strict stance by banning alcohol entirely and dismissing boys upon the first incident of drunkenness. This earned him public approval from the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).<sup>19</sup> However, it was viewed with disdain by most of the military personnel. Brigadier-General W.H. Cotton accurately declared it would only serve to fill the local saloons.<sup>20</sup>

The call to ban alcohol resulted in heated arguments on both sides of the Atlantic. Most leaders overseas, including many clergymen, were reluctant to take this simple pleasure away from the dreary and often monotonous life of the soldier in the trenches. Tim Cook has shown how Sam Hughes’ attempt to control the soldiers by restricting alcohol resulted in a variety of problems that had widespread effects both in Britain and Canada. As shameful and alarming stories of drunken soldiers on the rampage through British villages trickled home in the fall of 1915, many God-fearing families wondered if they should allow their sons to enlist.<sup>21</sup> To avoid public displays of drunkenness amongst soldiers, the head of the British Expeditionary Force, General Alderson, overruled Hughes and instituted a beer canteen at Salisbury training camp. Beer was sold at five cents a pint, and within two months, netted \$100,000.<sup>22</sup> While this greatly reduced incidences in British villages, and women and children no longer needed to hide when they saw Canadian soldiers in town, it outraged many on the home front.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, many members of the clergy wondered if Great Britain was worth fighting for and mothers drew their arms tighter around their sons.

Sandra Gwyn notes, “Although never mentioned in newspapers, this problem of drunkenness [was] quite widely known back home

<sup>18</sup> Moss, *Manliness and Militarism*, 33.

<sup>19</sup> O’Brien, “Manhood and the Militia Myth,” 139.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>21</sup> Tim Cook, *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1917–1918, Volume II* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2008), 175.

<sup>22</sup> Tim Cook, *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1917–1918, Volume II*, (Viking Canada, 2008), 175.

<sup>23</sup> For further reading on the topic of drunken soldiers overseas, see Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

because of all [the letters] that were crossing the Atlantic.”<sup>24</sup> While reports from temperance workers overseas in Britain and France told tales of drunkenness and loose women, the public perception on the home front remained firm in the belief that the boys were innocents led astray, but could yet be saved. The temperance force warned Canadians that the young men overseas were being enticed by the ‘Demon Rum,’ and this was making them susceptible to ensnarement by women of ill repute. Many members of the clergy questioned whether Britain had enough integrity worth fighting for, given that the sex and liquor trade in England were worse threats to Canadian men than the guns in France.<sup>25</sup> In answer to this, Marshall says, “To bolster confidence at home, they were told of examples of boys committed to living Christian lives overseas. Despite wet canteens, they were assured the army was not undermining their faith or moral character.”<sup>26</sup> However, perceptions were different at home where the soldier’s activities were evident in the streets, and the conduct of some was undeniable. In light of this, Marshall explains, “Temperance groups increased their efforts to control soldiers still training at home.”<sup>27</sup>

Military training during World War I differed from the summer camps in that instead of just twelve days a year, the recruits were totally immersed into military life. The majority of recruits were citizen soldiers; fresh-faced farm boys who had never been away from home. Mothers were reluctant to let their boys join the atmosphere that exposed them to the coarser nature of working class men. They failed to accept that the purpose of military training was to form a disciplined and cohesive fighting unit. The training extended far beyond the battlefield and usually began in the saloons and beer canteens. Manly pursuits such as engaging in a heavy night of

<sup>24</sup> Sandra Gwyn, *Tapestry of War: A Private View of Canadians in the Great War* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1992), 115. Gwyn is referring to the letters between Agar Adamson and Mabel Adamson. Being a high-ranking officer, Adamson’s letters were not subject to censorship.

<sup>25</sup> “Journal of Proceedings of the 9th General Conference of the Methodist Church,” *The Christian Guardian* (18 November 1914), quoted in David Marshall, “Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour,” 118.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>27</sup> David Marshall, “Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour,” 108. For further reading on the subject of masculinity within the military culture, see Mark Humphries, “War’s Long Shadow: Masculinity, Medicine and the Gendered Politics of Trauma, 1914–1939,” *Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 3 (September, 2010): 89–110.



drinking served to forge the comradeship that was crucial as the men went into battle together. Tim Cook explains the importance of this masculine activity: “The act of drinking was often understood to be one of the distinguishing markers between men and boys ... after the first few sputtering attempts, an infantryman learned to hold his rum, and these young soldiers soon measured up to the groups’ expectations.”<sup>28</sup> However, middle-class Canadians viewed alcohol as the corrupter of all that was decent and if not managed, would be the ruin of Canadian soldiers, and by extension, all Canadians.

On the eve of the institution of prohibition in Canada, tempers flared and incidences between soldiers and authorities were deepening rifts. As young men struggled with the idealistic notions of a Holy Crusade, the purpose of their training was to harden them for battle. Soldiers saw the absurdity of the circumstances being forced upon them by an idealistic and poorly informed group. As Cook writes, “The bizarre contradiction that soldiers were being made into disciplined fighting machines, but at the same time being dissuaded from drinking alcohol because it might drive them to immoral actions, was not lost on them.”<sup>29</sup> Marshall extends this, “The soldiers’ disillusionment was often rooted in their resentment toward the Methodist Church’s insistence that the soldier submit to a strict moral code with respect to swearing, gambling, drinking, and sexual activity in particular.”<sup>30</sup> Ironically, as society’s most influential members galvanised the home front’s participation, their chosen methods were alienating the soldier.

Food was the sole area in which the soldier retained any agency after he joined the army. Rachel Duffet writes, “The shock of the military environment was profound, and the home training camps were the site of the men’s difficult transition from domestic familiarity to life in the ranks.”<sup>31</sup> Stuart Mintz describes war as, “Probably the single most powerful instrument of dietary change in human experience ... large numbers of persons are assembled to do things together, ultimately to kill together. While learning how, they

<sup>28</sup> Tim Cook, “‘He was Determined to Go’: Underage Soldiers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force,” *Social History* 41, no. 81, (2008), 56.

<sup>29</sup> Tim Cook, “‘Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers’: Alcohol, Soldiers and Temperance Groups in the Great War,” *Social History* 35, no. 70, (2002), 323.

<sup>30</sup> David Marshall, “Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour,” 104.

<sup>31</sup> Rachel Duffet, *The Stomach For Fighting: Food and the Soldiers of the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 20.

must eat together.”<sup>32</sup> Cook adds drinking together as a key element and posits, “Alcohol was the essential and prime component of the militia’s training regime (and there) was no hesitation in providing alcohol to Canadian troops who fought under British command in the South African War from 1899–1902.”<sup>33</sup>

When the soldiers moved into Canadian cities over the winter of 1915, residents began to observe the drunken camaraderie that served to form the men into cohesive fighting units. Knowledge of unacceptable incidents was unavoidable and hard to keep from the public despite censorship. Jenson’s study corroborates this: “Admitting there was far too much corruption at home, supporters held up the soldiers as exemplars of sacrifice, manhood, nationalism, and civic duty.”<sup>34</sup> This study contributes to the existing historiography by highlighting a controversial incident which was not a departure from the middle-class response to the soldiers in training. It is a response to James Woods’ call for a greater understanding of the role of the citizen soldier as he struggled with maintaining the Canadian home front’s ideal, by showing the lived experience of the soldier in light of the ideal symbol that was being forced upon him.<sup>35</sup> It also shows that while they publicly went along with the rhetoric, the military and governing authorities were not operating under the illusion of the symbol of the ideal soldier. The following pages examine the months leading up to complete prohibition. By using Calgary, Alberta as a case study, I will highlight how the interactions between soldiers and civilians drove the temperance campaign to a successful outcome, despite government and military efforts to downplay the soldiers’ conduct.

**COME TO CALGARY. THE AQUARIUM CITY, FULL OF SHARKS!  
BOOZORIUM PARK!**<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Sidney Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Power and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 25.

<sup>33</sup> Cook, “Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers,” 317.

<sup>34</sup> Richard Jenson, “Nationalistic and Civic Duty in Wartime: Comparing World Wars in Canada and the United States,” *Canadian Issues* (Winter, 2004), 6–19.

<sup>35</sup> James Wood, *Militia Myths: Ideas of the Canadian Citizen Soldier, 1896–1921* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 10.

<sup>36</sup> Bob Edwards, *The Calgary Eyeopener, 5 October 1912*, in Hugh Dempsey, ed., *The Best of Bob Edwards* (Edmonton, Hurtig Publishing: 1975), 243.

Alberta quickly became another area in the west to be defined by social class as businessmen from eastern Canada exploited its vast resources of land, oil, and timber.<sup>37</sup> Calgary was incorporated in 1884 and designated as a city in 1886. By 1901, a population of 4,000 foreshadowed rapid growth as a result of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) rails laid down in tandem with an agricultural boom. Further growth ensued when oil was discovered in Turner Valley in 1914, and Calgary became the administrative center of the burgeoning oil and gas industry.<sup>38</sup> Calgary's stunning growth, which included many non-British immigrants, was a factor in the great concern for social cleansing.<sup>39</sup> At the turn of the century, Calgary was also well on its way to becoming another "booze, brothel, and gambling capital of the far Western Plains", according to James Gray.<sup>40</sup> Over a span of five blocks downtown, there were ten bars along 9th Avenue's "Whiskey Row."<sup>41</sup> By 1911, Calgary was in the later transitional phases of growing out of a predominantly masculine, lawless, frontier mentality to one that was dominated by a business-minded middle-class community, now infiltrated with a feminine influence. Churches competed with brothels and barrooms, with over thirty Protestant churches filling their pews every Sunday.<sup>42</sup>

In 1914, Alberta reformists began an "Abolish the Bar" movement "to inundate the province" with meetings set up across Southern Alberta.<sup>43</sup> Chapters of the Moral Reform and Temperance League (MRTL) joined together, and involved most of the Protestant denominations. Their first plan of attack, according to *Calgary Herald* reports, was to conduct a preliminary educational campaign. Ministers were encouraged to specifically prepare sermons dealing with the temperance question. "[The idea being] to get people gradually interested and adjusted up to the point where a vigorous

<sup>37</sup> John Kenney, "The Business Career of RB Bennett: 1897–1927," Unpublished Master's Thesis: Concordia University, Montreal, 1977, 1.

<sup>38</sup> Wayne K.D. Davies "Calgary, Alberta," in David J. Wishart, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2011), available: <http://plainshumanities.unl.edu/encyclopedia/doc/egp.ct.008>, [Accessed 1 December 2014].

<sup>39</sup> David Jones, "Census figures," *Alberta History* 56, no. 1 (2008), 9.

<sup>40</sup> James Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies*, (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1971), 141.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>43</sup> "Abolish the Bar," *Calgary Herald (CH)*, 7 January 1914, 1.

campaign can be brought on with hope and success.”<sup>44</sup> W.M. Davidson, editor of the *Morning Albertan* supported reform-minded work and published corresponding speeches and articles on a regular basis.<sup>45</sup> Highly political groups such as the United Farmers of Alberta and newspapers such as the *Western Producer* and the *Albertan* contributed to the culture bolstering this community, all emphasising a near-complete embracing of social reform in the west, accompanying an assimilation of British values.<sup>46</sup>

In January of 1914, reformers were contending with the “evils” present in Calgary; the greatest in their estimation were drunkenness and immoral young men. These were prominent subjects in sermons. Reverend Marshall warned the young people of his congregation at the Central Methodist Church to guard against “Impure thoughts, immoral behaviour, immoral literature, obscene pictures and immoral women. Evil companions had the greatest effect on the character, perhaps the strongest.” This was why the MRTL wanted to eliminate the bar room.<sup>47</sup> The MRTL was ramping up to hold a convention in mid-February and they began with pre-convention rallies to stir up the people with a “Spirit of hostility against the liquor traffic.”<sup>48</sup> The speakers present agreed the liquor traffic was a “crime against humanity.” Reverend Fulton, a guest speaker from the United States, said he had seen more drunks on the streets of Calgary at one time than he had witnessed on the streets of Chicago, which was acknowledged to be the worst city in the States. While he agreed that they could always count on the farmers’ support, considering the amount of crops absorbed into alcohol, “the great fight will be right here in Calgary, in Edmonton, and in Lethbridge.”<sup>49</sup> The convention opened on 18 February 1914, with 133 delegates representing several towns, villages, and cities across Southern Alberta, and presided over by Calgary mayor Herbert A. Sinnott, and with Dr. George

<sup>44</sup> “Moral Reformers Planning Great Temperance Fight,” *CH*, 14 January 1914, 12.

<sup>45</sup> Hugh A. Dempsey, “The Day Alberta Went Dry,” *Alberta History* 58, no. 2 (Spring, 2010), 4.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 10. See also Bradford James Rennie, *The Rise of the Agrarian Democracy: The United Farmers and Farm Women of Alberta, 1909–1921* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

<sup>47</sup> “Problems of the Present Day Are Preacher’s Topics,” *CH*, 14 January 1914, 12.

<sup>48</sup> “Big Mass Meeting On Sunday,” *CH*, 6 February 1914, 1, and “Strong Resolution Against the Liquor Traffic,” 9 February 1914, 11.

<sup>49</sup> “Powerful Address By Rev. Fulton,” *CH*, 9 February 1914, 11.

Kerby, president of Mount Royal College, sitting as chairman.<sup>50</sup> As they discussed the mandates they would pursue, several resolutions were passed, including an anti-cigarette clause. The Total Prohibition resolution passed with a majority of 126 to 34, calling for legislation that would enact the “full extent of Powers” of the provincial government.<sup>51</sup> Fulton “denounced” the provincial government for its license policy, because “Saloons would always defy the law.” Fulton’s logic was that if the doors were supposed to close early, they would just open the back door. Similarly, if they were told to close entirely, they would “conduct their trade in the cellars” and no matter what regulations were introduced, the saloons would always defy them. Therefore, he believed that the only possible means to control them was to enact full prohibition. Perhaps this logic only seems flawed in hindsight, but Fulton was emphatic. He knew that this was a “stern fight which only a man could undertake.” It could not be “enforced by a jellyfish.” With “real men behind us to enforce” the legislation, only then would we “be able to appreciate all that Prohibition means.” The delegation also elected men into various offices, some of those chosen would participate in the “notorious report” that will be examined in detail.<sup>52</sup>

On the second day of the convention, the president of McArthur Baptist College, Dr. Sharpe, “started a lively discussion when he moved a resolution [to] make a moral survey of the province of Alberta.” He reasoned that it was important to gather as much information as possible and it could only be done properly with an appointed committee to carry it out. His suggestion was objected to by a few based on the amount of money it would cost to undertake such a work, however, the motion was passed by a “small majority.” This is significant, as we shall see. It was also agreed that the government be asked to cancel all club licenses in the province. The fact that many small Alberta towns had more bars than was lawful created a demand for the government to “take steps to remedy this.” It was agreed that there should be a law banning any man who held liquor interests to be allowed to run for the office of mayor or

<sup>50</sup> Sinnott served as mayor from 1913–1914. The City Of Calgary, (2011), “The City of Calgary Municipal Handbook,”

<sup>51</sup> “Prohibition Resolution Passed at Temperance Conference” *CH*, 9 February 1914, 1.

<sup>52</sup> “Stevens Elected President of Alberta Moral Reform League,” *CH*, 19 February 1914, 12.

alderman in any Southern Alberta town. Further there should be laws that would jail “Interdicts and Indians” who were caught with liquor and who would not disclose who supplied the alcohol.<sup>53</sup> It was a very productive day. This report concluded the first convention of the Southern Alberta chapter of the MRTL.

Presumably, reform workers were busy throughout the month of March presenting their resolutions to the provincial government. The *Herald* did not report on the response of the government directly, but by April, there were concerted efforts to curb the liquor traffic along the southern boundary of Alberta.<sup>54</sup> The decision to distribute advertisements in newspapers was taken on by the churches. The *Herald* reported, “Those behind this new progressive idea represents nearly all the churches of this city. The majority of them are businessmen who understand the power of modern publicity.” Regarding promotion, it was argued that if businesses, political, and charitable groups “have been built up, it is logical to conclude that any who may be lukewarm or indifferent ... may be influenced and led to unite in pushing ahead the most important undertaking on earth by advertising.”<sup>55</sup>

The newspapers were silent on the issue of Prohibition in the summer of 1914, with all eyes turned onto unfolding world events. Members of the MRTL were making inroads into positions of government. Dr. Kerby announced his candidacy for the school board.<sup>56</sup> Reverend A.R. Aldridge, who had been the assistant secretary for the MRTL resigned his position and accepted the nomination for Edmonton South. Although it was not published in their list of resolutions, it is not a stretch to assume the league intended on infiltrating public offices with Prohibition-minded adherents.<sup>57</sup>

When war was declared and recruiting began, Calgary hosted several regiments and it was not long before the issue of soldiers and immorality was spotlighted. In November, the *Herald* defended the young men, calling them “earnest and honest,” resulting in not one reported case for the garrison guard to deal with. However, “It would be almost too much to ask that the guard room will remain

<sup>53</sup> “Will Raise Big Sum For Temperance Campaign,” *CH*, 20 February 1914, 13.

<sup>54</sup> “Heavy Liquor Fines,” *CH*, 2 April 1914, 5.

<sup>55</sup> “Will Advertise Work of Church In Newspapers,” *CH*, 11 April 1914.

<sup>56</sup> “Dr. Kerby Candidate For School Board,” *CH*, 24 November 1914, 1.

<sup>57</sup> “Rev. Aldridge of Edmonton Accepts Nomination for Edmonton South,” *CH*, 24 November 1914, 1.

unoccupied during the whole time that the soldiers are with us.” It certainly was a wonderful target to aim for though, and suggestions were made on how citizens could help in “the good cause.” At this point, the first contingent had arrived on Salisbury Plains and Canadians were already aware of the men who had “disgraced their uniforms by over indulgence in strong drink.” The *Herald* warned that this same fate was in store for the second contingent, “even before they cross the water, if they show themselves weak enough to fall by the wayside.” Calgarians were already concerned with the soldier’s first payday. When the boys are “flush with money, it will be the easiest thing imaginable for unwise friends to help some of the soldiers into serious trouble.” This could be ameliorated with a “world of caution.”<sup>58</sup>

By the first of December 1914, also the first payday for the soldiers at the Calgary garrison, efforts were already being made to curtail their activity. The police courts were filled with young men that had reached the city intending to enlist, but instead were charged with drunkenness. This exacerbated the demand to begin restrictions in their best interests.<sup>59</sup> As seems to be common where unruly drinking takes place, it was noticed that more “disorderly houses” were being raided since the soldiers arrived.<sup>60</sup> These conditions led to the decision to delay the soldiers’ payday, moving it from December 16 to the 22, “on account of the nearness of Christmas.” Officials noted the soldiers would have to stretch their wages into the New Year. But probably the most compelling reason for the announcement was, “the probability that the absent minded beggars would spend all their cash before the festive season and then repent while others had coins jingling in their pockets.” The community responded to the paymaster’s decision, “with delight,” because this would “keep them out of temptation, but when the pay does come it will be much larger. The result will be that Tommy Atkins in Calgary will be able to have a right jolly Christmas.”<sup>61</sup> The holidays passed without reported incidents, but by the middle of January 1915, the *Herald* was recommending that bars be closed at 7 p.m. for “good business policy” and for the good of the public. They argued, “On several occasions lately, this paper has

<sup>58</sup> “Where Citizens Can Help,” *CH*, 24 November 1914, 6.

<sup>59</sup> “Would Be Soldiers Throng Police Court,” *CH*, 2 December 1914, 4.

<sup>60</sup> “Detectives Gather In Undesirable Citizens,” *CH*, 2 December 1914, 7.

<sup>61</sup> “Soldiers Will Not Be Paid Till Dec. 22,” *CH*, 15 December 1914, 4.

drawn attention to the temptations in the way of young men who are in camp here and too many of whom were to be found in uniform in the hotel bars.” The editor also urged the public to stop treating the soldiers or tempting them in any way to drink.<sup>62</sup>

Westerners resented how the bulk of volunteers were drawn from the western provinces, yet were still being shipped to train at Valcartier, Quebec.<sup>63</sup> Calgary leaders approached Sam Hughes to keep the men in the west. In March of 1915, the *Calgary Herald* noted the desire to have troops remain in their respective cities to boost the local economy, with the added bonus of increasing employment to the area.<sup>64</sup> With Hughes approval, Calgary became the headquarters for Military District 13.<sup>65</sup> Soon soldiers became a constant presence on the streets.<sup>66</sup> At this point, nobody objected to their presence because of the economic potential they brought. Preparations for Sarcee Camp began in April 1915 and it was suitable for housing and training troops later that summer. It was originally designed to accommodate about 6,000 troops, but often held almost double that number. In the winter and spring of 1915, the regiments were still quartered in the downtown district around Victoria Park. Inherent problems followed. Again, due to Hughes insistence that all training camps both in Canada and in England be ‘dry,’ no beer canteens were allowed. Inevitably, the soldiers took to the local saloons, just as they had in England and all points between.<sup>67</sup> In the land where temperance groups were holding a growing and powerful influence, this was intolerable.

### TIME TO CRACK DOWN

The *Herald* tried to uphold the moral character of the soldiers, but author James Gray records that the seedier side of Calgary was one

<sup>62</sup> “Close Bars At 7 P.M.,” *CH*, 14 January 1915, 6.

<sup>63</sup> “Calgary May Lose All Troops Soon,” *Calgary Herald* (*CH*), 20 March 1915, 1.

<sup>64</sup> “What Winnipeg Did,” 20 March 1915, 16, *CH*.

<sup>65</sup> L. James Dempsey, “Monuments on the Hill: World War I Emblems in Calgary,” *Alberta History* 57.2 (Spring 2009), 3. Available: <http://www.albertahistory.org/default/index.cfm/membership/>, [accessed 15 October 2014].

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>67</sup> “Strong Plea From Church For Sobriety,” *CH*, 5 April 1915, 1.



of brothels and barrooms, and a great temptation for the men.<sup>68</sup> The legal case files of prominent Calgary lawyer, J. McKinley Cameron show Calgary's downtown barracks provided a lively and prolific clientele for several brothels. Cameron was a criminal defense lawyer who would later take on the famous trial of Emilio Picariello and Filomena Losandro in 1922.<sup>69</sup> In one particular incident, case files show depositions taken from two policemen, three soldiers, and a woman who was charged with keeping a common bawdy house. The woman pleaded not guilty. In the evidence brought forth against her, the first soldier testified he was there with the others looking for, in his words, "a piece of tail." However, nothing happened because the police got there too soon. The second man volunteered to Cameron's objection that he was in the 50th Battalion and testified that he and two other men went to a house "for the usual thing," where he was let in through the back door. When asked if he was at the right house, he said he had no idea because, "There was no satisfaction on my part." When asked if he had been served anything to drink, the private testified he merely sat in the kitchen alone with a glass of water. The third private testified he had been to the house on the Thursday before. On the night in question, he had gone alone, but the "girl had turned him away." This private had learned about the house while he was in the latrine of the barracks. He maintained that some of his acquaintances told him there was "nothing doing there," but he took a chance and sure enough, "there was nothing doing." Police Sergeant Brechon swore he watched the house for three hours that night and saw three soldiers go in, whereupon he and Sergeant Taylor entered the premises. Brechon had surveyed the house on prior nights and testified, "It looked like a picket parade, two were on sentry and several called there." The brothel under investigation was said to be just two blocks from the barracks. After reviewing this deposition, court magistrate Gilbert Sanders pronounced the madam guilty and fined her \$50. The soldiers were quietly freed and this very common incident was not reported in the newspapers.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies*.

<sup>69</sup> J. McKinley Cameron, "The King vs. Emilio Picariello, Re Liquor Offence, Blairmore, 1922," Series M-6840-344450, Glenbow Archives (GAI).

<sup>70</sup> J. McKinley Cameron, "The King vs. Ethel Marie Wood, re Inmate of disorderly house," 1915, Series M-6840-55,138. GAI,

At the end of February and during the first week of March 1915, the *Morning Albertan* published a series of editorials by Dr. Blow, a prominent eye, ear, and nose specialist, who was outraged that prominent Calgarians were supportive of a wet canteen for the military. According to the Calgary historian Manfred Baum, Blow “played a significant role in Alberta’s early economic and political development” and “was responsible for the construction of a number of downtown office blocks and served for ten years on the Alberta Legislature, commencing in 1913.”<sup>71</sup> A history of Alberta compiled in 1912 featured Dr. Blow as a man of fixed “character for morality and integrity,” who had “attained the highest measure of perfection possible. He has not only kept pace with the onward march of progress but has been a leader in the vanguard.”<sup>72</sup> From this book, it can be ascertained that Calgary businessmen held formidable clout. With such men protesting conditions in Calgary, Calgary’s do-gooders earnestly campaigned against allowing soldiers access to local bars and called for an outright ban on this practice, as was beginning to be legislated in Ontario. Concerns and charges grew for and against prohibition, all bringing the issue of soldiers’ choices of activities to the forefront. On 3 March 1915, the *Morning Albertan* published the discussion of a meeting of the Calgary Presbytery concerning soldiers’ conduct. It was their conclusion that, “The commanding officer of the troops should declare all barrooms out of bounds and that he and the chief of police should cooperate” to prevent a further “disgraceful condition of affairs where soldiers were allowed to drink at hotels freely.”<sup>73</sup>

Bob Edwards, editor of the satirical *Eyeopener*, addressed the lack of a beer canteen at the military camp, crediting the character and morale of the soldiers, “So few of them have taken undue advantage of the personal liberty allowed them while off duty.” In early April, Edwards acknowledged there were a few whose behaviour was “more conspicuous,” but the “good example of the majority have brought the

<sup>71</sup> Manfred Baum, “Calgary: Atlantic Avenue Inglewood, Historical Walking Tours, “ *Old Town Calgary Society*, 10, available: <http://www.culture.alberta.ca/heritage-and-museums/resources/historical-walking-and-driving-tours/docs/Tour-Calgary-Atlantic-Inglewood.pdf>, [accessed 26 November 2015].

<sup>72</sup> Archibald Oswald MacRae, *History of the Province of Alberta*, (Calgary: The Western Canada History Company, 1912), 636.

<sup>73</sup> “Want Hotel Bars To Be Declared ‘Out of Bounds,’” *Morning Albertan (MA)*, 3 March 1915, 5.

ultra-jovial to their senses, [with the] “incurrigibles” already weeded out.” Edwards continued to sing high praise for the men, “One would have to travel a long, long way before meeting such a splendid, earnest body of men as we have here in training, They [look] the part they have been called to play with credit and distinction.”<sup>74</sup> As one who perpetually made fun of the pious Victorian middle class, Edwards also understood the necessity of portraying the soldiers in a positive light for the war effort.

### **GALLONS OF TROUBLE CAN COME OUT OF A PINT FLASK.<sup>75</sup>**

Behind closed doors, the published meetings of Calgary’s most prominent and morally influential men heightened the perception that the public must be made aware of the soldiers’ conduct and serious action taken. The following actions are reminiscent of Craig Heron’s analysis of a 1913 survey taken in working class saloons in Hamilton, Ontario. Heron writes that activist Bryce M. Stewart came to Hamilton to oversee “a cross-country series of ‘preliminary social surveys’ jointly sponsored by the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches.” Their aim was to gather information on “poverty, public health, housing, moral purity, and other features of contemporary urban life in Canada.” A group of volunteers entered fifty-seven Hamilton hotels and barrooms on a Saturday night in April 1913, counting the patrons and observing their behaviour to produce a census.<sup>76</sup>

In similar fashion, between 1 March and 1 April 1915, a self-appointed ‘citizens committee’ composed of Calgary clergymen and deacons, embarked on a holy mission. This was the fulfillment of the idea first suggested by Reverend Sharpe during the MRTL convention in February. They stood outside of ten bars between the hours of seven p.m. and ten p.m. and enumerated 1,043 soldiers in uniform and 1,709 civilians. On 5 April, they announced their findings at a meeting at the Central Methodist Church, and the facts of the case were presented to Calgary newspapers. Not only was it imperative to alert the good citizens of Calgary, but it was also agreed that a

<sup>74</sup> Bob Edwards, “Eyeopeners,” *Calgary Eyeopener*, 3 April 1915, 1.

<sup>75</sup> Dempsey, ed., “The Best of Bob Edwards,” 137.

<sup>76</sup> Craig Heron, “The Boys and Their Booze: Masculinity and Public Drinking in Working Class Hamilton, 1890–1946,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 86, (2005), 424.

delegation should be sent to the legislature in Edmonton immediately. They intended to demand from Premier Sifton an enactment of the early closing of bars and to ban soldiers from entering saloons at all. This delegation would be comprised of prominent members and clergymen, representing several Alberta towns and cities.<sup>77</sup> The *Morning Albertan* published the full report the next morning and the *Calgary Daily Herald* listed the findings in detail. Both papers' front page was devoted to the issue, noting the subsequent reactions being expressed throughout the city. The report accused soldiers of 'allegedly' drinking and 'misconduct' with women of ill repute. The report was received by many leading citizens, including the newly-elected Mayor Costello, as a slanderous attack on the fine boys in khaki. Michael Capps Costello served as mayor of Calgary from 1915 to 1919. There had historically been a certain amount of friction between Calgary's mayor and the chief of police, but Costello had maintained excellent relations with the police force.<sup>78</sup> Costello "expressed the opinion that the attitude of certain adherents of prohibition might do the cause more harm than good."<sup>79</sup>

**"IF EVERYONE MINDED THEIR OWN BUSINESS, WHAT A HAPPIER, BRIGHTER WORLD IT WOULD BE."<sup>80</sup>**

Along with Mayor Costello, Calgary Police Chief Alfred Cuddy was indignant with the publication of the following statement, "Your committee is of the opinion that the police department is not taking hold of this matter with the firmness which the situation demands." The committee called for greatly enlarging the force as long as Calgary was a garrison city, in addition to greater force being taken with the houses of ill fame. The police were accused of not taking control of intoxicated soldiers but were turning them over to the military authorities instead. Mayor Costello answered these charges by acknowledging the situation in Calgary may not be ideal, but

<sup>77</sup> "Calgary Soldiers Resent Insinuations Against Sobriety and Moral Standards," *MA*, 8 April 1915, 1, and "Recommend That The Bars Of Province Close At 7 P.M.," *CH*, 8 April 1915, 1.

<sup>78</sup> David Bright, "Technology and Law Enforcement: The Transformation of the Calgary Police Force, 1900-1940," *Urban History* 33, no. 2, (Spring, 1995), 34.

<sup>79</sup> "Unity is Essential," *MA*, 9 April 1915, 7.

<sup>80</sup> "Make Mountains Out of Molehills," *MA*, 9 April 1915, 7.

enforcement had been very satisfactory. He also upheld the character of the soldiers, having known many when they were still civilians.<sup>81</sup>

The citizen's report charged that several 'spotters' had been chased through the streets and assaulted by soldiers and civilians. Therefore, they argued,

We strongly protest against that condition which permits several hundred drunken and drinking soldiers and civilians to molest law-abiding citizens and we recommend that our police department deal with all drunks (with no partiality).<sup>82</sup>

This denunciation of the police department would have been particularly galling to Cuddy. He had been hired in 1911 to implement a stronger police presence due to the concern for the rise of non-British immigrants and rampant lawlessness in the eyes of reformers. When he arrived, Calgary held the reputation as a wide-open, lawless city that was "soft on crime."<sup>83</sup> Under Cuddy, the police force was at its greatest strength.<sup>84</sup> Cuddy transformed the force with discipline, creating a "hard-nosed morality squad."<sup>85</sup> Gray argues that it was not Cuddy alone who was responsible for sweeping the city clean, because the First World War was "the most important factor."<sup>86</sup> Gray's assertion contributes to the argument that the war gave new impetus to the enforcement of the goals of the social reformists.

The most indignant of all were the soldiers stationed at the Victoria Park barracks. The *Herald* describes them as becoming a "seething mass" as the report was passed around the camp. By parade time they were threatening mutiny and rumored to have refused to 'stand to.' Lieutenant Colonel Bell called a special parade and warned the soldiers that their actions could exacerbate the issue and bring further discredit to the men. He trusted that Calgarians would wisely judge the report. Colonel Cruikshank was out of town, therefore there was no official military response that week. Colonel Mason took responsibility for damage control by insisting there was

<sup>81</sup> "Mayor and Police Chief Make Denial," *CH*, 9 April 1915, 1.

<sup>82</sup> "The Report," *CH*, 9 April 1915, 1.

<sup>83</sup> Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies*, 163.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

no truth to the soldier's refusal to parade. Instead he said, the men had been on a long march the night before and had gone to bed after midnight, so reveille was postponed one hour later the next morning. On the evening of the publication, many soldiers convened at the Palliser Hotel and marched on to protest in front of the homes of the citizens' committee. The *Morning Albertan* reported, "To maintain strict discipline was almost a superhuman task, a hundred or so of the men made a rendezvous at the Palliser Hotel. In double file they made a march of protest to the houses of the members lilting the refrain, "Are We Bums?" "Are We Toughs?"<sup>87</sup>

They remained under the watchful eye of Cuddy's officers, at the urgent request of the terrified committee. Regarding the soldiers' response, the *Albertan* headlines of 9 April reported, "They declare that the report published yesterday is untrue, unjust and generally unfair."<sup>88</sup> Another private told the *Albertan* that the tainted report caused him to be spat upon by three girls at a theatre.<sup>89</sup> This shows the results of the deepening divide being experienced by the soldiers and citizens of Calgary. It was at this point the *Albertan* changed the direction of their allegiance after the soldiers also lined up outside the office of the newspaper, "under the misapprehension that the morning paper was a member of the committee." They issued a "Stirring appeal to submerge personal feeling during the strife and present a united front for the sake and good of the empire."<sup>90</sup>

The report was commissioned by over fifty of Calgary's most pious and influential citizens, whose headquarters were at the Central Methodist Church. It was signed and authorised by the following men: Reverend R. Sharpe as chairman of the committee, prominent businessmen F.E. Werry, Thomas Underwood, A.H. Cushing, J.P. Woodhall, and ex-alderman W.G. Hunt. However, Hunt, Woodhall, and Underwood immediately repudiated signing when it was clear that it would not be accepted in the spirit intended. Many local residents were fiercely defensive regarding the judgment against the soldiers. This report could be construed as unpatriotic. It is interesting that Hunt would deny his involvement, because this was not his first

<sup>87</sup> "Soldiers At Barracks Greatly Excited Over Committee's Allegations," *CH*, 8 April 1915, 1.

<sup>88</sup> "Soldiers resent the Statements of the Committee, *MA*, 9 April 1915, 1.

<sup>89</sup> "Unity is Essential," *MA*, 9 April 1915, 5.

<sup>90</sup> "Created A Sensation," *MA*, 9 April 1915, 1.

foray into exposing immorality in Calgary. In 1906, Hunt was part of a “Citizens’ Committee” demanding more stringent measures to be taken with the local prostitutes.<sup>91</sup>

William George Hunt was on the Resolutions Committee of the Calgary chapter of the MRTL, and was a prosperous businessman; he owned the Hope Block on 15 Avenue and 1st Street West.<sup>92</sup> Hunt served as an alderman from 1905 to 1906, and again in 1914 and 1915.<sup>93</sup> He unsuccessfully ran for mayor against Costello in the spring election of 1915. Costello’s files show a bitter animosity toward Hunt during the mayoral campaign period, which may have affected Costello’s outrage and denunciation of the report.<sup>94</sup> During the campaign, Hunt tried to bring in Prohibition as a topic of discussion, a tactic that had been eschewed by Canadian politicians of all stripes. The *Herald* called this an act of desperation and charged that Hunt “has hit upon this bogeyman stunt to endeavor to swing the temperance and prohibition voters of Calgary to his support. It is an old election dodge but can have no effect on this occasion.” The *Herald* maintained that city council had nothing to do with the liquor interests and that Hunt would have “the liquor men after his scalp.”<sup>95</sup> Even Dr. Kerby distanced himself from Hunt, the *Herald* citing that “Rival newspapers tried to link them in last ditch attempts to beat Costello.” It also described Kerby as being “very indignant” and he “at once repudiated it.” He told the paper, “It is true that I have been invited to attend the meeting and address the gathering, but I have no intention of speaking on anything except school matters.” Kerby reiterated that Hunt was not a running mate.<sup>96</sup> This shows that Hunt and his ilk were already being edged out due to their misguided fanaticism, and perhaps after the disastrous election, he realised fairly quickly that the citizen’s report was about to turn into another debacle he would have to live down.

<sup>91</sup> Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies*, 148.

<sup>92</sup> “Alberta Temperance and Moral Reform League Opens Convention Here,” *CH*, 18 February 1915, 1.

<sup>93</sup> City of Calgary, “Biography of William George Hunt,” *City of Calgary Past Mayors and Aldermen*, available: <http://www.calgary.ca/CA/City-Clerks/Pages/Corporate-records/Archives/Historical-information/Past-Mayors-and-Aldermen.aspx>, [accessed 25 Feb 2015].

<sup>94</sup> Dr. M. Costello, “Bitter Warfare is Waged by Costello Against Hunt,” 2 December 1911, Scrapbook of Clippings, M-2743, *GAL*.

<sup>95</sup> “He Should Dream Again,” *CH*, 10 December 1914, 10.

<sup>96</sup> “Dr. Kerby Has No Connection With Hunt’s Campaign,” *CH*, 12 December 1914, 10.

Hunt's biography shows the strong link between Calgary's middle-class businessmen and their contributions to morality based activities, in an effort to create stronger commerce activity. Thomas Underwood was also featured in the Alberta history of 1912, chronicled as one "honoured for his straightforward methods he has followed." He was also noted as occupying "a more enviable position in business circles."<sup>97</sup> Underwood held the position on the MRTL on the policy and platforms committee.<sup>98</sup> In similar fashion, Polycarp Spurgeon Woodhall was "one of the most successful businessmen in Calgary."<sup>99</sup> The *Morning Albertan* published a letter from a soldier hinting at the animosity the committee aided in creating. The soldier "strongly criticizes one of the members of the committee, an owner of a large block in this city." He wrote, "We take our oath to be faithful and honest to death. If it wasn't for these same Tommies, how much business would there be in Calgary?" The soldier perhaps correctly identified the hypocrisy of certain business owners. He demanded an apology from the committee and threatened that the ranks would lobby for transfer to another city.<sup>100</sup>

When Hunt, Underwood, and Woodhall denied signing the report, the breach in the ranks of the temperance people quickly widened. Woodhall claimed he had not read the full report and did not stand behind many of the accusations. Hunt said he did not agree with "some of the statements." Nor did Underwood "concur" with some of its findings. F.H. Werry of the Temperance and Moral Reform League challenged this, saying they were present, heard the report, and agreed with it. Although Hunt had a few objections that had been struck from the report, Werry countered that Hunt had stood behind every word, even though, "The report as first drafted was far worse than when it finally appeared. If any of the moral reformers of Calgary repudiate the report, then it is time they were reformed themselves."<sup>101</sup>

It is possible that the three men who recanted became aware that moral reform objectives were colliding with their business interests and reputation in the community. Moreover, the citizen's committee did not represent all of Calgary's Christian leaders. Public opinion did not

<sup>97</sup> MacRae, *History of the Province of Alberta*, 510.

<sup>98</sup> Alberta Temperance and Moral Reform League Opens Convention Here," *CH*, 18 February 1914, 1.

<sup>99</sup> MacRae, *History of the Province of Alberta*, 926.

<sup>100</sup> "A Soldier's Protest," *MA*, 10 April 1915.

<sup>101</sup> "Two Members Of The Committee Refute The Report," *CH*, 6 April 1915, 1.



support the efforts of the citizen's committee, nor was the reaction of local ministers in solidarity with the findings of the report. The churches were divided on the issue. Reverend Fallis of the Trinity Methodist Church, while not sure it was used in the wisest of ways, defended the motives, which was the intention to "simply awaken the public's interest." It was compiled to "protect the soldier from the things that spelled harm to them." Reverend Thompson of the Anglican Church was quick to argue that the proper tactic would be to help the soldier and create alternatives to the saloon; he distanced his congregation from the 'fanatics.'<sup>102</sup> Within a few days, the *Calgary Herald* refused to allow further discussion of the report. Within a week, the incident disappeared from public debate in both papers. This was likely due to a letter written by Gilbert Sanders to federal authorities.

Court Magistrate Gilbert Sanders dealt with all the drinking and bawdy-house infractions at this time. Calgary's reputation of leniency in 1911 had also resulted in a call for a new magistrate, therefore as the former head of the RNWMP, Sanders was appointed to reside over the courts.<sup>103</sup> He had served the Prairie West since 1887 and presided over some of the most notorious cases, including against Louis Riel. He had a solid reputation as a magistrate who passed fair and impartial judgments, although he believed most crime was linked to the rising immigrant population. He "echoed the prevailing middle class obsession which placed the responsibility on crime on a lack of both religion and discipline in the home." However, he was never publically vocal in support of moral reform. Sanders was not supportive of Prohibition legislation, believing it was a demoralising act and was "satisfying the whims of the fanatic, the politician, and the bootlegger, and in the long run [was] making poor legislation." In his mind, Prohibition only "promoted disrespect for the law."<sup>104</sup> He held a different understanding of the crux of the problem of drunken soldiers.<sup>105</sup>

In April of 1915, Sanders wrote a memorandum to the federal government in response to the citizen's committee's charges of drunkenness and immorality amongst soldiers. Sanders maintained that Sam Hughes had overridden the king's regulations by ordering that the soldiers of the CEF be immediately discharged after the first

<sup>102</sup> "Report Gets Praise and Blame in City Pulpits," *MA*, 12 April 1915, 5.

<sup>103</sup> Thomas Thorner, "Keeper of the King's Peace," 47.

<sup>104</sup> 3 March 1914, *CH*, in Thomas Thorner, "Keeper of the King's Peace," 48.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

charge of drunkenness, a rule Hughes endorsed while reorganising the training camps before the war. According to Sanders, this harsh decree deprived the CEF of many valuable men. Therefore, the military authorities had responded by overlooking all cases of drunkenness within the ranks “for fear of losing good soldiers.” He added, “This order is one which apparently applied to the Permanent Militia in time of Peace and it is causing amongst the Expeditionary Force, a serious loss of men whom a large amount of time and money has been expended in their training.” Sanders concluded with, “This operates against good discipline.”<sup>106</sup> The federal government responded with a vague answer calling his charges “unanswerable.” The commissioner assured Sanders that “The King’s orders should not be over-ridden,” as Hughes had done, and “possibly some good may come from his memorandum.”<sup>107</sup> There is no discernable “good” indicated except that the newspapers continued to highlight the positive qualities of the men in khaki. This incident foreshadowed deeper conflicts between city authorities and the soldiers. It also indicates the disconnect between the military and the social reformists, evident in the disparate philosophies of Sanders and Cuddy in dealing with the men. Cuddy understood his responsibility to Calgarians. Unfortunately, his notion of “Calgarian” was a small representation of citizens, which excluded the working class, and catered to the voice of the middle class; the group who most needed to retain the perception of the saintly soldier. Cuddy’s reputation as a strong enforcer of the law was at stake and his measure of success was based on how well he cleaned up the city and protected the purity of the enlisted men. Sanders’ loyalty to the cause of the Great War is evident in that he left the court to join the CEF in later 1915. He returned to the magistrate’s office after the war, but William Davidson replaced him from 1915 to 1918 and upheld Cuddy’s philosophy of enforcement. As has been discussed, the temperance cause gained momentum directly as a result of the war. The most obvious examples of the dangers of vice in Calgary were the citizen soldiers in training, and they were quickly targeted. Sam Hughes embodied the dichotomy of the age. He was in charge of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and ultimately for recruiting. But his commitment to his prohibition stance and his pre-war promise to

<sup>106</sup> Gilbert Sanders to The House of Commons, 10 April 1915, M-1093, *GAI*.

<sup>107</sup> The House of Commons to Gilbert Sanders, 10 April 1915, Personal Papers, M-1093, File 74, *GAI*.

Canadian mothers to maintain the purity of their sons contributed to the breach in relations between the military, the government, and local citizens.<sup>108</sup>

Despite the poor reception of the citizen's report, the MRTL was successful when they lobbied the provincial government, demanding a referendum on the subject of the sale of alcohol. A plebiscite for the Prohibition Act in Alberta was set for 21 July 1915. The day before the vote, the *Herald* promised full coverage, with returns announced on flashing bulletin boards on First Street West, in addition to extra editions of the paper.<sup>109</sup> Additionally, they printed a synopsis of the ten pertinent items that would be legislated under the act. These items outlined what was considered to be intoxicating alcohol, who would be allowed to buy, sell and distribute alcohol, and restrictions surrounding where limited quantities may be stored. Liquor could still be manufactured in Alberta and shipped out of province, and individuals could purchase liquor from out of province vendors. Liquor manufactured within Alberta could not be sold in Alberta. This act targeted the working class and provided many lucrative loopholes during the Prohibition era for distilleries and breweries.<sup>110</sup>

The day after the election, the *Herald* reported a record day at the polls, with "a constant stream of voters so heavy that long before noon, it was estimated that from one-fifth to one-half had registered their vote." There was "a great dissatisfaction" reported at many polling booths because of the inconvenient and limited places to vote. Also, "licensed victuallers were highly incensed at the tactics adopted by their opponents." It was noted that the temperance people tried to take over the booths and prevent any 'wets' from casting a ballot. One representative told the *Herald*, "Not the least active member of the opposition who were harassing voters, was W.G. Hunt, who was resorting to every conceivable device in challenging the voters."<sup>111</sup> The editorials of 21 July 1915 held a poem submitted by an overseas soldier protesting the desire of prohibitionists to take away the rum ration, as follows:

I suppose we're a lot of heathens,

<sup>108</sup> "Dry Canteens For All Military Units," *CH*, 5 April 1915, 7.

<sup>109</sup> "Herald Will Have Complete Returns of Tomorrow's Voting," *CH*, 20 July 1915, 1.

<sup>110</sup> "The Chief Provisions of the Proposed Alberta Liquor Act," *CH*, 20 July 1915, 1.

<sup>111</sup> "Vote on Liquor Act is Expected to Be Record Poll Here," *CH*, 21 July 1915, 1.

Don't live on the angel plan,  
 But we're sticking it here in the trenches  
 And doing the best we can.

While preachers over in Canada,  
 Who rave about kingdom-come,  
 Ain't pleased with our ability  
 And are wanting to stop our rum.

Water, they say, would be better,  
 Water! Great Scott! out here?  
 We're up to our knees in water,  
 Do they think we're standing in beer?

Oh! It sounds all right from a pulpit,  
 Where you sit in a cushioned pew,

But try four days in the trenches  
 And see how water would do.

They haven't the heart to say "Thank you,"  
 For fighting in their behalf.  
 Perhaps they object to our smoking,  
 Perhaps it's a fault if we laugh!

Some of those coffee-faced blighters,  
 I think must be German bred,  
 It's time they called in a doctor  
 For it's water they have in their head.<sup>112</sup>

The liquor act passed with a majority, with equal representation in both rural and urban populations.<sup>113</sup> The soldiers' vote however, was challenged. Not many were able to vote, but those who did were called back to prove that they were actually entitled to vote. The *Herald* noted that it was very unlikely that military authorities would give the men another day's leave to appear, "Hence, the soldiers who had their votes challenged will lose them," because if they failed

<sup>112</sup> G. Drewett.

<sup>113</sup> "Majority for Liquor Act in Neighborhood of 20,000," *CH*, 21 July 1915, 1.

to appear, their vote would not be counted. This would apply to nearly every soldier who voted. An estimated 1,000 men showed up to vote; Cuddy said about a third more appeared, but left when they grew tired of waiting in the hot sun.<sup>114</sup> Despite the criticism of this obvious prejudice shown by the “drys,” the *Herald* vowed to “support the government in the utmost in a stringent enforcement of the law as endorsed by yesterday’s vote.”<sup>115</sup> The following day, the MRTL issued a statement regarding the question of the validity of the soldiers’ votes, and decided to cancel the challenge due to the sweeping majority of votes in favour of the act.<sup>116</sup> The soldier’s voice was rendered absolutely inconsequential.

The rest of the summer saw many regiments deployed overseas and the issue of conscription intensified. News reports focused on federal war concerns and the internment of enemy aliens. The long winter eventually took its toll on the bored soldiers still awaiting deployment. In February of 1916, soldiers descended upon three restaurants believed to be either owned by Germans, or guilty of employing Germans. They destroyed the establishments and yet later, these were referred to as “small” because the targets of the men were supposedly enemy aliens.<sup>117</sup> The destruction began, according to Lackenbauer, when an employee of a downtown cabaret supposedly declared that, “he was there to serve gentlemen and not soldiers.”<sup>118</sup> These riots, inspired by a shared hatred for the Germans, provided the means to prove allegiance to the ranks. Attempts to quell drinking were not successful. Eventually the saloons were forced to forbid soldiers from entering and charges were laid against anyone who sold alcohol to them. These measures were enforced until Prohibition became the law of the land.

### **JOHN BARLEYCORN IS DOWN AND OUT.**<sup>119</sup>

<sup>114</sup> “Large Number of Voting Soldiers Are Summoned,” *CH*, 22 July 1915, 1.

<sup>115</sup> “Yesterday’s Vote,” *CH*, 22 July 1915, 6.

<sup>116</sup> “Disputed Ballots Are Abandoned By Both Interests,” *CH*, 23 July 1915, 6.

<sup>117</sup> James Abel Hornby to Costello, Personal Papers, James A. Hornby, M-537-2, 12 October 1916, *GAI*.

<sup>118</sup> Lackenbauer, “Under Siege,” 4.

<sup>119</sup> “Alberta Went Dry Without Much Disturbance,” *MH*, 3 July 1916, 1.

On 1 July 1916, Alberta enacted the Prohibition Act to the delight of temperance workers.<sup>120</sup> On 30 June 1916, every saloon in Calgary was filled to capacity and drunken soldiers trundled to their barracks with their pockets loaded with the last legal offerings of ale and whiskey. To their disappointment, it was confiscated upon their rowdy arrival at camp.<sup>121</sup> The act promised to regulate the behaviour of those regarded as being the most vulnerable to the ravages of alcohol and whom needed outside influence to control their impulses. In the sixty years previous, this targeted group was composed of the working class, but in 1916, nobody needed the guidance of the forces of social reform more than the citizen soldier boy. Further, nobody needed the reassurance that this was happening more than the middle class citizen who laboured for the cause of purity and holiness.

Unfortunately, reality proved that purity and holiness was harder to achieve and could not simply be legislated. Despite punitive legislation to prevent bootlegging and supplying alcohol to soldiers, it was common for police to haul in drunken soldiers on a regular basis. The summer of 1916 passed and the controversy of drunken soldiers remained. The police and the new court magistrate Davidson imposed harsh fines for soldiers who broke the liquor laws. While fines for citizens for drunkenness were minimal at four to five dollars, soldiers were fined fifty dollars per offense. This was an impossible sum for these men to pay. Consequently, those who could not pay were shipped to the Lethbridge prison to serve thirty days. Lackenbauer has examined the resulting actions created by these harsh terms, as follows.

On the night of 11 October 1916, 200 soldiers marched to the barracks of the RNWMP to demand the release of six soldiers being transported to Lethbridge and rumoured to be confined at the barracks until morning. Local citizens joined the group as they made their way to the holding area. The soldiers were fueled by alcohol and stormed the barracks demanding their release and proceeded to destroy the building. Several officers were seriously injured, and one was shot. Lackenbauer argues this demonstrates the lack of discipline the military had on the soldiers.<sup>122</sup> While this

<sup>120</sup> Hugh Dempsey, "The Day Alberta Went Dry," *Alberta History*, 58, no. 2 (Spring, 2010), 13–14.

<sup>121</sup> Harry M. Sanders, "Calgary's King Edward Hotel," *Alberta History* 51, no. 4 (2003), 46–50.

<sup>122</sup> Lackenbauer, "Under Siege," 2–12.

is accurate, it must be acknowledged that Sam Hughes effectively tied the hands of military authorities to act appropriately in cases of drunkenness in his insistence on immediate discharge for the first offense. As Magistrate Sanders had warned, recruitment needs had exceeded the dwindling supply of volunteers. Discharging men for behaviour that historically was not only acceptable, but an integral part of the military experience, forced them to turn a blind eye to this particular offense. The melding of total war sacrifice with the idealistic faith that the war was the purifying agent for Canada could not be sustained without consciously overlooking these indiscretions. Recruitment numbers could not be filled amidst so many public displays of drunkenness. This created an impasse.

Local authorities were at a loss as to how to curtail such incidents. On 12 October 1916, Alderman James A. Hornby wrote to Director General of the National Service Board and future Prime Minister R.B. Bennett to appeal for government intervention. Hornby believed it was “time for Ottawa to make a careful inquiry and make arrangements so that there were no further occurrences of this nature.” Hornby was most concerned that enforcement of the liquor law was not being properly enforced among men who, once they donned the uniform, “feel that they are amenable only to their superior officer.” He also requested that the provincial attorney general inquire into the “incumbent of the Magistrate’s chair. I have watched his judgments very carefully [and] they are being made [in many cases] more especially to the military men.”<sup>123</sup> Bennett rejected Hornby’s charge regarding the attitude of the men, writing, “I am not disposed to think that citizen soldiers should believe that they are not subject to the civil law of the country, and I doubt very much [it] would be sound policy to carry into effect the suggestions you make.” Bennett called the proposed interference of the federal government upon the appointment of the magistrate as “impertinent.” Bennett agreed however, that the “outbreak” negatively affected the views towards the discipline of the district.<sup>124</sup> While Bennett conceded there was a discipline problem within the district, he did not speak to the reasons for the lack of discipline, as had been explained by Magistrate Sanders a year earlier. Federal and military officials were not willing to officially acknowledge the damaging effects upon recruitment

<sup>123</sup> James Abel Hornby to R.B. Bennett, 12 Oct 1916, Personal Papers, M-537-2, *GAI*

<sup>124</sup> James Abel Hornby, *GAI* “Letter from Bennett,” 21 November 1916.

that was inevitable when moral reformers demanded tighter moral regulations in light of the growing animosity.

## CONCLUSION

The citizen soldier in training was an extension of the sacrifices made on the home front and he faced a dichotomy of reactions from the local community. He became a problem to control, but also represented the hope and pride of a just nation. This ideal necessitated a Christ-like purity upheld in all manner of demeanor. The citizen soldier was expected to embody all of the manly ideals upheld for society and sanctioned by the church. Geoffrey Troughton examines similar concepts being shaped in New Zealand during the Great War, noting a new conception of Jesus, who reflected a vision of masculinity that soldiers were supposed to appreciate; He was an image of the ideal soldier. Troughton declares that the rhetoric surrounding the war, “Made soldiers into Christ figures and Christ into a soldier.”<sup>125</sup> The implementation of the Prohibition Act in provinces across Canada did not stem the animosity between civilians and soldiers that had grown as a result of the draconian measures taken to control their behaviour. Newspapers reported outbreaks and disturbances by soldiers occurring nationwide, including Toronto, Niagara-On-The-Lake, Regina, and Winnipeg. The common response of the soldiers was to riot when social control groups used alcohol as a tool to manipulate public discourse in order to enact their pet project of prohibition. By censuring the soldiers’ actions, they failed to see the man under the uniform. The soldiers were supposed to embody the Edwardian/Victorian ideal of masculinity. As we have seen, this was an ideal that encompassed holding the British Protestant values of ‘manly’ strength, self-control, and purity.

Gilbert Sander’s letter written in April of 1915 to the federal government, described the contradiction happening within the military and explains the tensions between the public, the courts, and military authorities in the matter of discipline. Moral reformers were reacting to the soldiers’ drunken behaviour. Their Edwardian/Victorian worldview influenced them to believe that purity and

<sup>125</sup> Geoffrey Troughton, “Jesus and the Ideal of the Manly Man in New Zealand After World War One,” *Journal of Religious History* 30, no. 1 (February, 2006), 51.



holiness was possible only if the boys were under their guidance and kept away from immoral influences. It would seem the absolute factor for this disconnect was a matter of faith for social reformers, or lack of on the part of military officials. In light of this, the appointment of the egocentric Sam Hughes is most puzzling. His banning of wet canteens in 1911 should have been enough reason to replace him when actual war was declared, and his lack of ability to apply reason over faith became apparent.

In Calgary, the device of using the soldiers as a means to achieve prohibition was met with a major consensus decrying such tactics. This is evident in that even the *Morning Albertan* immediately stopped publishing anything that criticised the men in khaki and denounced any who would use such measures to further their temperance agenda. Only four short days after the report was published, and the day after the sympathetic but firm Premier Sifton refused to bow to partisan tactics, Mrs. Woodhall, whose husband had signed and then quickly repudiated the report, spoke about the duty of women in the temperance cause. She “called upon the women of the city to their share in seeing that the plebiscite carried in July ... it was the privilege and duty of the women of Alberta to create a public sentiment that the men would be almost compelled to vote.”<sup>126</sup> Temperance workers were shifting the focus to the importance of the role of women to achieve their agenda, and away from soldiers’ conduct. By Saturday, the *Morning Albertan* had labeled the citizen’s committee report as “The Notorious Report.”<sup>127</sup> Even though it has been demonstrated in Cameron’s legal case files, and in the revelations of James Gray, the soldiers were indeed engaging in illegal and immoral activities.

Soldiers’ letters have also indicated that they were not happy with the reputation they held on both the home front and overseas. The soldiers in training were in a liminal phase as a rite of passage so described by noted ethnographer, Arnold van Gennep, who posited that this phase was fraught with danger and uncertainties due to the social order they were being forced to enter.<sup>128</sup> The soldiers were stepping into a new world, shedding their civilian rights and coming under the control of the military. With alcohol being the historic ritual accompanying the military’s rite of passage as described by

<sup>126</sup> “Women are Called Upon To Aid the ‘Dry’ Campaign,” MA, 12 April 1915, 5.

<sup>127</sup> “Calm Succeeds Storm,” MA, 10 April 1915.

<sup>128</sup> Arthur Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, (University of Chicago: 2011).

Tim Cook, the citizen soldiers necessarily had to step away from a world of social control and holiness in order to become men who could face death and destruction in cataclysmic proportions.<sup>129</sup>

“Fear gives rise to policies,” writes political scientist and social anthropologist Iver Neumann, “many which are geared towards heightening security.” Policies may have many effects, he explains, including marginalising those in the liminal phase.<sup>130</sup> Members of the social reform movement were motivated by deep fears that accompany war and sought to maintain control in areas where they could see their influence. Their fears heightened their faith; the assurance of faith was born out in behaviour that strove to be as pure and holy as Christ was. The soldiers may very well have carried this faith also, however, in the new world of combat training, there was no room for a serious entertaining of Christian values lived out in the same manner as civilians were able to.

Still, the war served as a springboard for Prohibitionists, who in 1914, had called for “real men” to lead the fight. The rhetoric, based on the British values of sacrifice and duty, was emphasised in recruitment and also used by Prohibitionists to further their agenda. They declared that if war was to be the purifier of the nation, then Prohibition must be complete. It was a firmly held position that Canadians would never achieve the God-ordained purity it was meant to as long ‘King Alcohol’ ruled. Church leaders, some who were formerly pacifists, began to convince their congregations that the war held a noble purpose, and touted its potential to purify individual Canadians, and the nation of Canada, as pure silver which had gone through the fire.<sup>131</sup> Scripture highlighting the promise of purity through pain was directed to both individuals and nations, and was quoted regularly from the pulpit and in newspaper headlines.<sup>132</sup> The fiery sermons usually served to create fear and trembling and were aimed against those who would threaten the purity of the faithful, but

<sup>129</sup> Tim Cook, “Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers,” *Social History* 35, 70, (2002): 317.

<sup>130</sup> Iver Neuman, “Introduction to the Forum on Liminality,” *Review of International Studies* 38, 2, (April 2012): 473.

<sup>131</sup> For Biblical references, see Psalm 66:10, I Peter 1:7, I Cor.3:15, Ps. 17:3, Ps. 26:6, Zach. 13:9, Job 23:10, Ps.7:9, Ex. 15:25 and Mal. 3:3.

<sup>132</sup> David Marshall, “Khaki Has Become a Sacred Colour: The Methodist Church and the Sanctification of the World War One,” in *Canadian Churches and the First World War*, ed. Gordon L. Heath, (Hamilton: McMaster Divinity College Press, 2014), 107.

ultimately, these fears produced obedience in the listeners. For this generation, the enemy had a tangible face. The Biblical enemy, once an otherworldly devil, had become personified in the Kaiser and his minions. On the home front, the bar owners became emissaries of the Kaiser and therefore, Satan. James Pitsula also notes the carefully managed notions of duty and sacrifice contrasted with the ‘evil Hun,’ associated with the liquor trade.<sup>133</sup> These examples, and those cited throughout the body of this essay, show the philosophy behind the creation of the ideal image of the soldiers, who were expected to reflect the social construct by which Canadians ordered their understanding of sacrifice and duty.

Though deeply religious, this was not an age of grace. The salvation of Christ had to be earned. While the sacrifice of Christ offered redemption and comfort, it became the soldiers’ duty as His representatives, to bear the cross in word and deed, and to personify the ideal image of Christ. This Christ, as has been shown, was a heroic and masculine entity. American evangelist, Billy Sunday, a popular and oft-quoted speaker, equated manliness with Christ and abstinence.<sup>134</sup> This was the example used for youth cadets before the war began, its energy harnessed by Hughes in a bid to win public favour. Additionally, the “ideal soldier,” it was believed, came from a middle class home; therefore, the negative influence of working class habits caused great concern.

The working class was historically the target of social reformers who believed the working class inhabited the dark bar rooms where dangerous uprisings and every manner of immoral behaviour took place. The working class were not seen as capable of having free thought to decide for themselves, but were led astray in the saloons because there was nowhere else to go. Social reform groups had been working on improving the conditions of the labouring classes and wrought some truly beneficial improvements. These included public health, education, and recreational outlets such as parks, libraries, the Boy Scouts, and the Young Men’s Christian Association. Efforts were redoubled for the soldiers and using their prior experience, reformists

<sup>133</sup> “Rev. A.T. Sowerby Delivers a Powerful Sermon at Broadway Baptist Church,” *Manitoba Free Press* May 24, 1915, 2.

<sup>134</sup> Roger A. Bruns, *Preacher: Billy Sunday and the Redemption of Urban America* (Grand Rapid Michigan: Eerdmans 1991), quoted in Michael Kimmel, “Manhood in America: A Cultural History” (New York: Oxford University Press 2012), 137.

created clubrooms and activities, and supported the Red Cross and the tobacco fund. In addition to these and many more efforts, they supported the returning soldiers. Through the Patriotic Fund, they assisted the wives and children of the men. But the good coming out of these attempts was always overshadowed by the specter of alcohol, which was largely blamed on the working class soldiers who were considered base. They were corrupting the middle class boys.

However, the melding of these various classes of men was necessary to form cohesive fighting units. Prohibition was a divisive factor in the military; it separated the men and after it was adopted, and created an imbalance. The military authorities could not embrace Prohibition for these reasons, but this was lost on Sam Hughes. To maintain recruitment, the military had to publically uphold Prohibition values. By mid-1916, as Robert Rutherford notes, “The pool of willing and able recruits had all but dried up,” and the newspapers began to discuss the possibility of conscription.<sup>135</sup> One of Canada’s greatest and most divisive crises—conscription—was enacted in 1917, and had the war not ended in 1918, threatened to dismantle Canada. Its effects are still felt within relations between Francophone and Anglophone Canadians.

It has been argued that after the Battle of the Somme, coincidentally beginning on 1 July 1916, Victorian/Edwardian ideals were swept away, ushering in the existential crisis of modernity. This rendered a complicated and jaded attitude that would influence Western society for decades to follow.<sup>136</sup> Prohibition could not last under the disillusionment of the interwar period. In Canada, it was the returning veterans who were most vocal in demanding the repeal of prohibition. It is not unreasonable to characterise Prohibition as the one of the greatest failed experiments of social control. It targeted the marginalised and accommodated the wealthy. First World War soldiers were the ideal foil to highlight the need for absolute measures and could veil the larger issues of class and race.

While the military was engaged in an imperative effort of recruitment, they were willing to utilise the idea of a Holy War and

<sup>135</sup> Robert Rutherford, *Hometown Horizon: Local Responses to Canada’s Great War*, (UBC Press: Toronto, 2004), 80.

<sup>136</sup> For further reading, see Modris Eckstien, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1989) and Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, (Oxford: University Press, 1975).

the image of the idealised soldier. All the while the scrutiny of the temperance movement unveiled the soldier as being very human and susceptible to alcohol. He was no longer the glorified and Christ-like soldier. This unraveling of the idealised soldier to some degree complicated recruitment efforts and played on the fears of the home front. Historians Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English agree, “The Union government reflected the nation in its own nervousness ... [and] the confidence in the ability of the state to direct the economy and *to enter new areas of social concern weakened.*”<sup>137</sup> In 1917, the ultimate answer to waning recruitment became conscription. Although my research does not directly point to the implementation of conscription, these issues may have contributed as a factor leading to it. This essay by no means addresses the larger issues taking place across Canada at the time. Although Prohibition was eventually realised across the nation, how it was achieved and how the populations accepted it were varied and are worthy of individual studies.



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<sup>137</sup> Robert Bothwell, *Ian Drummond and John English, Canada: 1900–1945*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 133.