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HistoriCity: essays on the history of southern Alberta

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HISTORICITY:

ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY
OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

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PREFACE

HISTORICITY: ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

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The University of Lethbridge was founded in 1967, Canada's centennial year. This shared anniversary means that the festivities of the sesquicentennial – 150 years since Confederation – form a backdrop to the institution's 50th birthday. We get to share in the cake and fireworks, and also in the self-reflection that anniversaries bring.

One of the things the years have brought us is a cadre of alumni, people who have attended this small liberal-arts university in the Alberta prairies, and found it to have been a defining time in their lives. Terry Whitehead is one of these people. He has been at the forefront of past graduates of this young university, who have felt driven to keep their connections to Lethbridge strong, and to support and inspire those who come after them. He has done this in many ways, including through founding prizes for excellence in short fiction, playwriting, and historical scholarship.

The HistoriCity Prize is part of this. In 2012 Terry Whitehead founded this prize for the best essay on a topic of local history or history of the university. It has been a wonderful initiative. Through this direction and generosity undergraduate students are supported and encouraged, and their original work contributes to wider knowledge of the city and University of Lethbridge. The prize committee, made up of members of the History Department and Lethbridge Historical Society, has read many dozens of essays over the past five years on a variety of interesting and innovative topics. Given that it is unfair that they should be the only ones to do so, the best of these essays are collected here. It is, as you will see, a diverse collection. We share here the work of students on cultural matters like local music and architecture, on elements of Lethbridge's military history, including its use as a wartime

internment camp, on temperance campaigns and education, and on the distinctive experiences of some minority groups in the area. The collection also includes papers looking at aspects of the history of the university itself, specifically the relation of the swim team with the community, and the evolution of the university's coat of arms.

Although the university's 50th anniversary is an inspiration and milestone for the prize, it is not its culmination. The HistoriCity Prize is ongoing and will continue to support student research in local history, and the connections to place and each other that that brings.

UL50
YEARS

University of
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JAZZ IN CANADA:

A REGIONAL LOOK AT A
LIMITED SUPPLY

JOHANNAH WIRZBA

Jazz is elusive. Jazz is transient and indefinable, ever changing and developing. This same elusiveness plagues researchers and historians when trying to decipher the history of jazz, and in particular, the history of jazz in Canada. It is clear that jazz did not progress as much, or in the same way, as it did in the United States. This paper will discuss what was going on, or more specifically not going on, in Canada, and why so little jazz developed. This paper will provide a broad overview of jazz throughout several time periods including the turn of the century, the 1930s and the 1960s. One of the main reasons for the underdevelopment of jazz culture seems to be simply the strongly regional nature of jazz in Canada. This paper will look at a specific region, namely Lethbridge, Alberta, as one of many examples of western jazz development and the rural nature of the city and its culture. It is interesting to see that – with the exception of large metropolises such as Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver – jazz and its genre affiliates really did not latch on to Canadians until well after the development of recording and distribution technologies.

If one were to ask a passerby on the street if they could tell us something about jazz in Canada, very few responses would most likely occur. Some may throw out names like Oscar Peterson, Diana Krall or even Michael Bublé. Some may stare blankly and throw the question back, “we have jazz in Canada?” But has this always been the case? While it could be argued that, in today’s society, jazz has been placed on the back burner; no longer considered the popular music of today, jazz and its genre-mates (swing, bebop, blues, etc.) carry with them a stigma. This stigma may be classified as either high-brow, lofty avant-garde noise, or simply outdated, old-fashioned music from long ago. In the 1930s, jazz

was in its prime, both in the United States and in Canada, but how did it fade away from the popular scene?

When discussing the early development of jazz it is important to look at the historical context from which it was grown. The practice of jazz grew out of many social and political factors, stemming primarily in the Southern United States. Jazz was built on the oppression that went along with slavery, and took many elements from the work songs of the cotton fields. New Orleans provided a synthesis of many different cultures to create a new type of music known as jazz. As jazz critic, Mark Miller, puts it, “jazz synthesized the expressive and extemporaneous qualities of blues, spirituals and work songs, the rhythmic vivacity of ragtime and the instrumentation and sheer presence of brass bands into a startling new sound.”¹ Over time minstrelsy developed, and together with European traditions, ragtime was created. These shows were seen as a way to enjoy the culture of African Americans while at the same time poking fun. This entire historical progression is largely missing from Canadian history. Some of these shows did travel to Canada, but because the cultural clash between black and white citizens was not as dominant in Canadian society, the shows did not have the same level of popularity or weight.

If minstrel shows presented an opportunity for white people in the United States to enjoy Black music while simultaneously denigrating its creators, they might have found the same appreciation in a Canadian society that was undoubtedly racist, although never to the same extent evident in the United States.²

This major civil issue was not nearly as prevalent in Canadian society.

¹ Mark Miller, *Such Melodious Racket: The Lost History of Jazz in Canada 1914-1949* (Toronto: Mercury Press, 1997), 15.

² Donald G. Wetherell with Irene Kmet, *Useful Pleasures: The Shaping of Leisure in Alberta 1896-1945* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1990), 216.

While Canada has had its struggles with developing English and French identities, both heritages came from the similar socio-economic structures of Britain and France. There were some Canadians who fostered anti-black attitudes and some instances of slavery, but these occurrences did not encompass all of society to the extent that they did in the southern states. Slavery in the south created a completely different social system, and meant a very different way of treating individuals. Canada had very little slavery, and not nearly to the same capacity that was had in the United States.

Canada is also a very young country. In general, Canada was very slow to develop a cultural identity. Most Canadian immigrants were more concerned with survival or livelihood, rather than finding a music, type of poetry, or artwork to define themselves. By the time Canadians decided that building a strong national identity and creating culture was important, jazz was already very popular and also distinctly American. Perhaps Canadians – looking to set themselves apart from Britain, France and the United States – did not want to promote a musical style that was so closely tied to American history.

Along with this idea of Canadians being slow to develop a cultural identity, they were also slow to pay for one. This can be seen throughout most aspects of the arts including theatre, art, literature and music. As Maria Tippett explains, despite popular belief that Canada simply did not have their share of wealthy citizens, instead many high-class Canadians sought to, “acquire status by attending cultural events and by collecting works of art, borrowing standards of excellence and taste from older and more seasoned cultures,” rather than cultivating a distinctly Canadian one.³

³ Maria Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts Before the Massey Commission*, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990), 94.

One of the biggest challenges that jazz faced when trying to spread and grow in Canada was simply a lack of interested parties. Jazz requires people. In general, jazz can be considered an urban tradition. Jazz sprouted out of many cultures mixing and musicians taking snippets from various musical schools. In order for this clash of customs and sounds to exist there simply must be people, a large number of people, to contribute and to listen. Canada, quite simply, did not have the same level of population as that of the United States. More to the point, Canada was primarily a rural country, and a massive one at that. For musicians of any sort to tour across the country would require great resources on their part, and many interested patrons on the part of Canadians. As well, these travelling groups were trying to make a living, and required some type of compensation for their time, travels and troubles. As we have already discussed, Canadians were not terribly quick to fund cultural events, nor were they swift in building venues for performances and concerts. Transportation across the country was also difficult, as the CPR lines did not then stretch to all corners. Even places like Edmonton, and other northern areas, were not linked to the southern, main rail line until the 1890s.⁴ Over time, more American musicians, like Jelly Roll Morton in the 1920s, Duke Ellington in the 1950s and 1960s, and others did travel to Canada for performances but the process was slow to catch on, particularly in the Canadian West.

These problems of transportation and lack of adequate facilities were primarily issues for travelling bands, but what about locals hoping to cultivate new types of music in their towns? This brings up the issue of professionalism in music. For Canadians, professionalism was a line that needed to be drawn within the realms of visual art, theatre, and poetry

⁴ Wetherell, *Useful Pleasures*, 217.

but not in music. Historian Donald G. Wetherell argues in his book, *Useful Pleasures*, Canadians felt no need to make the distinction between the amateur tradition and professionalism in the realm of music.

An immense variety of amateur musical events prevailed alongside a good deal of professional activity, though professionalism was less clear cut than in stage events. [...] On the one hand, people often attended musical events such as recitals and concerts to listen to the music. On the other hand, many participated, either by performing the music or by taking part in some other activity contingent on music, such as dancing.⁵

While this relaxing of the ‘professionalism’ lines may have encouraged more locals to contribute to the local music scene in general, jazz was still lacking in many communities. In Western Canada, immigrants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries originated primarily from Eastern European countries and Britain. Many of these people would have been schooled in, or at least more accustomed to traditional, classical music. “Particularly in Western Canada and Saskatchewan [...] the idea of the Eastern European immigrants being more traditionally flavoured ... and so there was not a strong influence in jazz at all. I think that’s sort of the cultural mix that was here.”⁶ Classical music tends to be written down, consisting of specific types of melodies and harmonies, with the use of instrumentation as melodious. In comparison, jazz is primarily an oral tradition passed down through generations, using syncopated

⁵ Wetherell, *Useful Pleasures*, 232-3.

⁶ Don Robb (Faculty of Music, University of Lethbridge), in discussion with the author, March 11, 2013.

rhythms and instrumentation for percussive emphasis. These two traditions are very different, and it can be a very difficult challenge to move from classical into jazz or swing where things are freer and more improvisational.

To expand on this further, as jazz began as chiefly an oral tradition, many Western Canadians would not have heard it before. In contrast, New Orleans, the birthplace of jazz, was constantly bombarded with new and old cultural elements along with many migrating populations who regularly collaborated and built on previous musical traditions. Where one musician would incorporate a verse of their favourite spiritual to their ragtime jive another would use a marching band as their influence. Many of these traditions simply were not present in Canada and so the roots of jazz were absent. Only much later, with developing technologies of sound recording, radio and film would Westerners be able to hear and understand these new sounds. Even later on, into the 1960s, the accessibility of jazz recordings and jazz programs was minimal on the prairies. Don Robb, Music Faculty member at the University of Lethbridge, recalls having very little access to jazz growing up in Regina in the 1960s. “The availability of [jazz recordings] was even smaller. And for many years, the rural population was the driving force” behind Western Canadian culture and therefore focused on their roots of classical or sometimes even country-western music.⁷ For Robb, though there was no local jazz band for him to play in, he was able to foster his love for jazz through his own initiative.

We had a set of, they were *Timelife* was the brand, and it was a set of vinyl records, and it was all the great Big Bands. And I used to

⁷ Don Robb interview.

love listening to those things. I remember quite distinctly, I had certain ones that I really liked ... and I would put on four or five. [...] It was really the swing stuff that appealed to me.⁸

Many Westerners were also sceptical of jazz because of the stigma attached to it. Jazz was often associated with ‘low-brow’ culture, and was generally reserved for the lower classes, and more profoundly, for the ‘inferior races’. For Canada, being primarily rural, many Canadians were also quite conservative with their social behaviours and in terms of politics. Jazz, along with its musical challenges, was also associated with dark, dangerous and deviant places and behaviours. Jazz then, was detrimental to one’s morals and one’s character. For those who were looking to cultivate a distinct Canadian culture, they did not want something that, it was feared, would corrupt their children and deviate from the norms of society. Even as jazz grew in popularity in the 1930s, it continued to be classified as “rhythmically exhilarating, nice to dance to, litting and a pleasant background for light entertainment, or it may be loud, vulgar and tedious.”⁹

Despite these challenges, it is important to note that jazz has been a very challenging thing to document . Jazz is hard to define and can encompass so many different kinds of music including swing, bebop, rhythm and blues, ragtime and much more. Jazz growing out of the oral tradition meant that music was rarely written down and in early times, recording technology was crude or nonexistent. Because of this we have little or no documentation of arrangements or compositions.

This being said it is important to note that jazz did have some presence in Canadian culture. Several scholars have put a great deal of

⁸ Don Robb interview.

⁹ Alberta Registered Music Teachers Association, M6364, File 2, GAI, as quoted in: Donald G. Wetherell with Irene Kmet, *Useful Pleasures: The Shaping of Leisure in Alberta 1896-1945* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1990), 243.

time, effort and research into discovering the world of jazz in Canada. Mark Miller has published numerous books, articles and reviews on the subject, including his 2007 book *Such Melodious Racket: The Lost History of Jazz in Canada 1914-1949*. One of the main problems in discovering jazz, Miller points out, is that jazz in Canada is so very regional. There are pockets here and there, major followings in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, but there is no overarching theme of jazz in Canada. In fact, one of Miller's major goals in creating an anthology of the most important Canadian jazz musicians was to create a national perspective. Miller wanted, "to hold jazz across Canada to a single paradigm rather than to standards that vary from city to city."¹⁰

In order to examine more closely the idea of Canada's jazz industry as regional, and largely without national perspective, we will look at a particular region of Canada, namely Lethbridge, Alberta. From its beginnings, Lethbridge has always had a rich culture. In an oral history interview taken in 1971, Mrs. Arnold Taylor who came to Lethbridge in 1904 describes the city of Lethbridge as having a "special flavour in many, many ways. And in one way, it was very cultured. There was music there. There were poets there. There were singers."¹¹ Despite Lethbridge's relatively small population around the turn of the century, the city seemed to attract many American travelling shows. Minstrel shows offering musical performances as well as theatrical skits were popular and entertaining to the people of southern Alberta, though "the context of the minstrel show had little direct relevance to the people of Alberta."¹² This form of entertainment was comparatively new and foreign. As entertainment continued to develop, new types of shows were created, and continued to entertain. The Majestic Theatre, then

¹⁰ Mark Miller, *The Miller Companion to Jazz in Canada*, (Toronto: Mercury Press, 2001), V.

¹¹ Mrs. Arnold Taylor, interview by Naomi Radford, July 16, 1971, A08, Our Heritage Audio History Collection, <http://brucehaig.net/AV/collection/A08.html>.

¹² Wetherell, *Useful Pleasures*, 216.

located on the corner of 5th Avenue and 6th Street according to the Lethbridge's insurance plan of 1910, was the place to be in Lethbridge, and often attracted various vaudeville shows and productions during the early 1910s.¹³ In a September issue of the *Lethbridge Herald*, one journalist describes the varying talent of a travelling show, Earl Fuller and His Band of Jazz Players, which showcased Japanese acrobats, a "charming" vaudeville show and the musical styling of Earl Fuller himself. The journalist urged that, "[I]overs of music who ordinarily have little love for Jazz will find much to admire and nothing to condemn in the offerings of this talented troupe." It was jazz that was "bound to bring forth unlimited praise and applause."¹⁴ Interestingly enough, only two days later the *Herald*, with a headline reading, "Real Jazz Music is Here to Stay Says Thompson," explained the general discontent of citizens towards the 'evil' jazz music. "With so much criticism of the effect of jazz upon the morals of the younger generation [...] a defender of this kind of music, which without a doubt has fastened itself upon the life and entertainment of the present day, may be looked upon as an oddity."¹⁵ This again ties in with the image of the Canadian rural West as socially conservative, and hesitant towards broadening musical genres. Harry Thompson, leader of his namesake orchestra, assured the locals that the morally ambiguous music of the past was surely *in the past*. "Music is the natural expression of emotions, [...] and jazz music is the purest form of real music, in that it expresses emotion." While these new ideas of jazz as professional musicianship and required talent, were beginning to infiltrate the Southern Alberta mindset, it is still clear from the way this article has been presented, that some Lethbridge women were still convinced of its detrimental effect on children's morals. Other touring

¹³ *Insurance Plan of Lethbridge*, map (Lethbridge: Chas E. Goad Company, October 1910).

¹⁴ *The Lethbridge Herald*, "'Daddy' of Jazz" at Head 'Pan' Bill," September 14, 1922.

¹⁵ *The Lethbridge Herald*, "Real Jazz Music is Here to Stay Says Thompson," September 16, 1922.

shows, such as the Rhondda Welsh Male Glee Singers, much preferred to perform the more traditional folk tunes of Wales as well as more classical pieces. When asked about the chorus' repertoire, business manager Ben Williams retorted, "[o]f course, we don't include jazz on our programs – that would never do for a chorus such as ours – but – well, I guess we all love a little jazz music, don't we."¹⁶

The popularity of jazz, despite common notions of its 'low-brow' nature is also seen through the growing popularity of swing dancing in the 1930s and 1940s. During the interwar years, jazz became increasingly popular across the continent and southern Alberta seemed to finally take a bit of a liking to it as well. Jazz became progressively trendier, largely because it was wonderful to dance to. Lethbridge had a flourishing dance culture during the interwar years and into the WWII era. Venues like the Trianon Ballroom, the Henderson Lake Pavilion and the Rainbow Ballroom crowded people in three or more nights a week. Generally live swing bands such as the local Royal Albertans Orchestra or Max Bateman's Orchestra accompanied these dances, but sometimes Lethbridge's own Alberta Ranch Boys – the city's most successful 'cowboy swing' band – would play. Dancers included members from the nearby British Commonwealth Air Training Plan Base as well as guards from the POW Camp 133 and civilians too!¹⁷ Many of these people were displaced from their homes, looking to escape from the gloom of everyday life.

So much of this dance craze was about socializing and enjoying the music, "creating temporary communities of people thrown together by temporary circumstances."¹⁸ As Aimée Viel argues, communal dances and the music to go along with them, "provided a release of tension,

¹⁶ *The Lethbridge Herald*, "Welsh Singers Enjoy Western Canada Tour," December 30, 1925.

¹⁷ Despite Lethbridge's diverse population consisting of former Japanese internment victims, German POWs and many British Commonwealth officers, most of the participants in these dances did not reflect this varied population.

¹⁸ Aimée Viel, *Lethbridge on the Homefront 1939-1945* (Lethbridge: Lethbridge Historical Society, 1998), 24.

and yet was driven by compelling rhythm and energy, manifest of the underlying spirit with which people – enlisted or civilian – confronted the demands placed upon them by [WWII] reality.”¹⁹ Women found these outings particularly liberating. After compiling many oral histories recounting these dance rituals, historian Lisa Doolittle concluded that, “frequent dancing at community events and at home significantly diminished the feelings of isolation for many prairie women.”²⁰ Weekly dances allowed for women, normally stuck at home or on the farm, to get out and socialize and experience popular culture.

After the war these weekly dances became less and less popular, largely due to increasing problems with alcohol abuse. Doolittle explains that, “[t]he end of the war seemed to destroy the imagined unity of the community.”²¹ Despite the dances’ decreased popularity, jazz continued to grow within Lethbridge. In the early 1960s the Lethbridge Big Band was formed. Originally started by a group of local doctors, the Lethbridge Big Band began as a hobby and was given free rehearsal space at the nurses’ residence hall in exchange for providing music for them music to dance to.²² Over time the band expanded their availability to play for local community events. The band, which is still in existence today, specialized in old swing hits such as *In the Mood* and *String of Pearls* but in recent years have expanded their repertoire to include some Norah Jones and Brian Setzer Orchestra tunes.

Over time, jazz music continued to be part of local events in Lethbridge history. In June of 1960, the Lethbridge Public Library released their brand new vinyl record collection for public use. While the collection caused controversy in the community as to appropriate use of taxpayers’ dollars, the collection was nonetheless released and feature

¹⁹ Viel, *Lethbridge on the Homefront*, 24.

²⁰ Lisa Doolittle, “The Trianon and On: Reading Mass Social Dancing in the 1930s and 1940s in Alberta, Canada,” in *Ballroom, Boogie, Shimmy Sham, Shake: A Social and Popular Dance Reader*, ed. Julie Malnig (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 112.

²¹ Doolittle, “The Trianon and On,” 117.

²² Don Robb interview.

selections such as *Jazz for People Who Hate Jazz* and Dave Brubeck's *Jazz Goes to College*.²³

The age of jazz in Lethbridge resurged in the 1980s, when the University of Lethbridge hosted *The Entertainer's Series*, a four night concert series featuring the Moe Koffman Jazz Quintet and Dizzy Gillespie.²⁴ Both men were very well received by their Lethbridge audiences. *Meliorist* reporter Simon Cashmore raved that, "Dizzy Gillespie is truly the King of Jazz. Long live the King!"²⁵ A similar response was given by the reporter for the Lethbridge College newspaper, calling Gillespie's performance, "an evening of fine jazz and great rapport between performer and audience."²⁶

While Lethbridge is only one example of Canada's diverse regionalism within the jazz tradition, it manages to represent many of the themes in Canadian jazz history. Despite great popularity in the 1930s, jazz was still received with caution as many continued to be concerned with the moral ambiguity of jazz. In later years jazz continued have a presence in the city, but largely, "in many ways jazz is a niche market."²⁷ It is difficult to appeal to all people in all things. In recent years, the city of Lethbridge formed the Lethbridge Jazz Society who has since put on several jazz festivals, starting in 2010.

Jazz in Canada is a challenging subject. For many reasons, jazz did not develop in the same way, and to the same extent that it did in the United States. Canada simply does not have the population or the historical background to bind jazz to its citizens. Canada has also been a very rural nation, while jazz is a very urban tradition, developing out of the synthesis of cultures and traditions. Despite these and other factors, some distinctly Canadian jazz has developed over time.

²³ *The Lethbridge Herald*, June 4 1960.

²⁴ *The Lethbridge Herald*, advertisement, September 11, 1982.

²⁵ Simon Cashmore, *The Meliorist*, "Dizzy jazz diddy wa diddies through the night," February 4, 1983.

²⁶ Rich Gossen, *The Endeavor*, "Crowd goes Dizzy," January 27, 1983.

²⁷ Don Robb interview.

One of the biggest problems with discovering Canadian jazz history is that the tradition is very regional. Upon diving into particular regional histories, one can dig up stories and instances of great jazz traditions. Despite the many challenges of finding the right resources, and talking to the most knowledgeable of people, it is clear that “Canada has a character and spirit of its own, which we should recognize and never take for granted.”²⁸

²⁸ Miller, *Such Melodious Racket*, 10.

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LETHBRIDGE / CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE

ANALYZING CANADIAN ARCHITECTURAL
STYLES AND EXAMPLES OF THEM IN
LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

CRAIG BOEHMER



Canadians often hear that they do not have a national culture with which every resident in Canada can identify. Our society is split on many cultural levels including, but not limited to: languages, regions, race, religions, economics, and politics. This creates a legitimate concern about whether or not a unifying national identity can exist within such a diverse society. After all, how can a fourth generation Japanese-Canadian have anything in common with a recent immigrant in Quebec from France, or a rancher in Alberta with a social elitist in Toronto? The buildings that abound throughout Canada's cities offer one perspective into a potential Canadian national identity. Societies can often be linked together through similar architecture. Traveling through rural Israel there are architectural reminders of Hellenistic influences throughout the region, as well as subsequent Imperial Roman influence and Crusader influence. The Hellenistic architecture ties Israel to an overall Hellenistic identity, similarly Roman and Crusader architecture link Israel to the cultural identities of those ruling powers. Can architecture in Canada link smaller cities and regions to a greater Canadian culture in a similar way? This question is the central point of this brief essay, which will analyze the architecture of the small city of Lethbridge in the semi-arid agricultural region of Southern Alberta. Lethbridge offers a good example because of its history; most of Lethbridge's most notable architectural landmarks were built during periods of time in Canada that were dominated by specific architectural styles.¹ Because of this, a stroll through Lethbridge can give evidence of the multitude of styles that dominate Canadian architecture.² This essay will analyze why the Victorian Neo-Gothic style is viewed as Canadian and how the St. Patrick Catholic Church in Lethbridge exemplifies it. Following

¹ *4th Ave Building Reports* (Lethbridge: Galt Museum Archives.) Accessed February 2013.

² *Ibid.*

the Victorian Neo-Gothic style the essay will analyse why the Beaux-Arts style became distinctly Canadian and how the Lethbridge Post Office is an example of it. The Chateau style will also be scrutinized as to whether it was Canadian or not and how the Banff Springs Hotel within the Lethbridge region is an example of it. The concluding style will be Canadian Modernism, as exemplified by Arthur Erickson in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in Canada and Lethbridge, specifically the University of Lethbridge. Due to the dominance of these architectural styles in Canada, it can be argued that cities that exhibit all these architectural styles can be linked to the overall Canadian architectural culture. Based on this theory, it can be seen that Canada does have a distinct architectural style and Lethbridge can be tied to the larger Canadian culture through having examples of these architectural styles.

At the risk of overstating the obvious, the year 1867 was very important for Canadian history. The British government formally recognized the creation of the Dominion of Canada. To mark the independence of their new dominion, the Canadian government oversaw the completion of the Centre Block of the Parliament buildings.³ The Canadian Parliament buildings were designed after the Victorian Neo-Gothic style.⁴ The Parliament buildings are arguably the most identifiable example of Canadian architecture. The Parliament buildings are a complex blend of Victorian Neo-Gothic and patriotically British and American building.⁵ The designer, Thomas Fuller, took the ideas of the Victorian Neo-Gothic style and adapted it for the central Canadian climate.⁶ This led to, among other things, steeper roofs on the buildings. Sir John A. MacDonald wanted Fuller to design the building to be a

³ Christopher Thomas, "Canadian Castles? The Question of National Styles in Architecture Revisited," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 5-27.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

symbol of the dominion's power. The Parliament buildings needed to symbolize the government of Canada so that the new citizens of Canada all over the dominion could see the buildings and acknowledge them as the centre for their new country.⁷

The Victorian Neo-Gothic style became popular in many Canadian buildings with both the University College of Toronto and the British Columbia Parliament building serving as striking examples of this architectural style.⁸ By the turn of the century, Canada had a wealth of Victorian Neo-Gothic buildings that was disproportionate to the size and population of the country.⁹ And Lethbridge, even though its building boom would come during a revival of the Neo-Gothic style, is no different than other Canadian cities.¹⁰ St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church today is located on Fourth Avenue South in downtown Lethbridge.¹¹ The church was begun in 1913 to replace a Roman Catholic Church that had been designed by David Gibb and built in 1887.¹² The basement was completed right away with a temporary roof installed over top of it in order to have a place of worship.¹³ This basement church would prove to be more permanent than first anticipated, as the building's completion was delayed due to two World Wars and the Great Depression; the building was finally completed in 1953.¹⁴ The church is currently in good repair and stands as a strikingly strong example of the Victorian Neo-Gothic style.¹⁵ The early twentieth century marked a revival of the Victorian Neo-Gothic style, and as such

⁷ Christopher Thomas, "Canadian Castles? The Question of National Styles in Architecture Revisited," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 5-27.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, *4th Ave Building Reports* (Lethbridge: Galt Museum Archives.) Accessed February 2013.

¹¹ Irma Dogteram, *Where Was It? A Guide to Early Lethbridge Buildings*, (Lethbridge: Lethbridge Historical Society, 2001).

¹² St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, *4th Ave Building Reports* (Lethbridge: Galt Museum Archives.) Accessed February 2013.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church is an example of how this revival shaped Canadian cities throughout the early twentieth century.¹⁶ It was a visual reminder to immigrants coming to Lethbridge from central Canada that this was indeed a region in the same nation. Just as St. Patrick's tall spire would have reminded those central-Canadians that they were still in their beloved Canada, it reminds current visitors to Lethbridge of the Neo-Gothic churches of smaller cities they might call home across this country.¹⁷ It is also easy to see some similarities in its architectural design with that of the centre block of the Parliament buildings, which had been redone around the same period.¹⁸ At the time it no doubt symbolized a desire to be recognized as an independent Canadian nation that was part of the whole British Empire.

During the twentieth century many Canadian architectural critics called the Victorian Neo-Gothic style, of which St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church is an example, prototypically Canadian.¹⁹ R.H. Hubbard, the curator for Canadian Art at the National Gallery of Canada, called the style "Canadian Gothic" and "the first national expression in architecture."²⁰ Alan Gowens wrote an article for a centennial anthology put together by W.L. Morton and the Canadian Council; in his article he echoed Hubbard and said it "represent[ed] national style" and that it was the "greatest single witness to the character of the new nation created in 1867."²¹ Vincent Massey also stated that the style was, "essentially Canadian" and that it fit perfectly into the northern setting that Canada is a part of.²² This idea of "northernness" was important to a number of Canadians at the beginning of the twentieth century. They attributed the Gothic style to the northern Germanic

¹⁶ Harold Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*. (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2000) 466-467.

¹⁷ Jacqueline Hucker, Leslie Maltland, and Shannon Ricketts, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles 2nd ed.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 132.

¹⁹ Thomas, "Canadian Castles?"

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

peoples and the Classical style to the Mediterranean peoples.²³ Therefore the Gothic style represented a pride in Canadian ethnic history as stated in 1907 by the romantic poet Wilfred Campbell. He went so far as to say that every aspect of the style's design, specifically in reference to the Parliament buildings, reflects the Canadian ancestry of the Celts, Saxons and Normans.²⁴ The style was used as an attempt to unite the French and English cultures into one united Canada. These interpretations must be tempered with the realization that many of those who were quoted above were alive during the 1950's-1970's, which was a period of time that experienced intense patriotism due in no small part to the centennial of 1967. However, even when we take the events of the twentieth century with a grain of salt, it is still evident that in today's Canada the Parliament buildings are instantly recognizable as being Canadian, and the large number of Victorian Neo-Gothic buildings scattered through Canadian cities is further evidence that the style was adopted into Canada on a wide scale.²⁵ Thus we see that the adoption of this style, in at least one of Lethbridge's dominant churches, is evidence of a tie between Lethbridge and an overarching Canadian culture. The placement of this example in Lethbridge is also important. The St. Patrick's church is located in the downtown core of Lethbridge close to the city hall. This placement shows the prominence of the Victorian Neo-Gothic style in the Lethbridge cityscape.

The difficulty with analyzing architectural styles is the non-linear nature of architectural styles in general. The Neo-Gothic movement had many different revivals through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. Each movement has a style slightly different than its predecessors and therefore it is given a unique sub-group within the

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Rickets, Maitland and Hucker, *Guide to Canadian Architecture*, 55.

overall movement.²⁶ Such difficulty is also found in distinguishing the major differences between the Beaux-Arts movement and the Edwardian Classic movement.²⁷ The two are so similar that for the sake of the brief essay, they will be referred to as one movement. Beaux-Arts was established in the Ecole de Beaux-Arts in Paris at the end of the nineteenth century.²⁸ This school was frequented by architects from all over the world, including a healthy dose of Canadian architects.²⁹ Edwardian was primarily the English adaptation of the Beaux-Art and many of the structures under the two styles can be confused for either style.³⁰

The Beaux-Arts style gained a lot of exposure during the “City Beautiful” movement that spread rapidly throughout Canada during the first two decades of the twentieth century.³¹ The most notably “Canadian” structures to come from the Beaux-Arts style are the Provincial Legislature buildings of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.³² It is easy to understand why they would be built after the Beaux-Arts style. Not only was the style extremely popular when these three provinces designed their Legislature buildings, but the style was also primarily used to express stark drama and permanence, both of which were exactly what the newly formed provincial governments would want to express in their government buildings.³³

Because the Beaux-Arts style was so elaborate, it was very expensive; the high cost ensured that only government buildings and very wealthy commercial buildings could afford to emulate it.³⁴ However, hundreds of Canadian cities and towns adopted the Beaux-Arts style and simplified it in order for it to better fit into the budgets of smaller town governments

²⁶ *Ibid*, 131.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 125.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 119.

²⁹ *Ibid*.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 125.

³¹ *Ibid*, 117.

³² *Ibid*, 117.

³³ *Ibid*.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 117.

and small town business.³⁵ This is why it can be so closely linked to Canadian culture, because the vast majority of Beaux-Arts architecture was adapted specifically for the economic environment of Canadian cities and towns, therefore the vast majority of Canada's Beaux-Arts architecture can be seen as an almost exclusive Canadian phenomenon.³⁶ One of these adaptations can be seen in Lethbridge. Again on Fourth Avenue, right in the middle of downtown Lethbridge, there exists one of Lethbridge's most notable buildings, the Post Office. The Post Office is a wonderful example of the Beaux-Arts movement.³⁷ It gives a sense of permanency to the downtown core, as if to say to visitors that Lethbridge has been, and will be, on this prairie forever. The building was created in 1912; it was designed by Public Works and supervised by David Ewart.³⁸ Today it stands as the "tallest, most ornate Public Works Canada heritage building in Alberta."³⁹ It was granted heritage classification status in 1982.⁴⁰ The prominence of the Lethbridge Post Office in Lethbridge's downtown is a visually striking reminder of the link that this architectural style has created throughout numerous Canadian cities and small towns.

In 1887, the Grande Allee Drill Hall in Quebec City was built; this hall is largely regarded as the first example of the Chateau style in Canada.⁴¹ The Chateau style originated in France and was based upon the old chateaus of the Loire Valley.⁴² From its French roots it caught on in England where it was blended with the castles of the Scottish highlands.⁴³ It then moved across the ocean to Canada, where it came to symbolize a true blend of two of the major cultural influences in Canada, French and British.⁴⁴ After the completion of the Grande Allee Drill Hall,

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 121.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Lethbridge Post Office, *4th Ave Building Reports* (Lethbridge: Galt Museum Archives). Accessed February 2013.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Ricketts, Maitland and Hucker, *Guide to Canadian Architecture*, 102.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

major railway corporations, specifically the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in Canada, decided to mimic this style in building hotels in order to appeal to primarily American tourists.⁴⁵ A number of early Chateau hotels were built throughout Canada, including the Banff Springs Hotel, which would become part of Canada's first National Park.⁴⁶ In 1892 the CPR financed the building of the Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City.⁴⁷ The choice of this location was not haphazard, nor was the choice of the style. While the other architectural styles of Canada were of a very serious and somber nature, this style was built to evoke the feelings of a fairy tale that are associated with the chateaus of Old France.⁴⁸ Building them in "New France" provided American tourists with visual reminders of the differences between Canada and America, thus giving Americans a reason to tour Canada and use the CPR to travel through Canada's fantastic landscapes.⁴⁹ The success the Chateau style hotels had in drawing tourists prompted a building movement across Canada. Chateaus were built in Canada's most memorable natural wonders as well as in notable cities. The Chateau hotels can be seen in every major city across Canada, literally providing a "connect the dots" pattern to encourage tourists to travel further and further on the railways. By the end of the 1920s, the CPR had built these grand hotels in Vancouver, Banff, Montreal, Quebec City, Victoria, and Lake Louise.⁵⁰ The success of the CPR's grand hotels led rivals to continue constructing them well into the twentieth century.⁵¹ The railway companies expanded the locations of the Chateaus across the country to include Alexandra Hotel in Winnipeg, the Palliser Hotel in Calgary, the Hotel Saskatchewan in Regina, the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, and the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa, to name just a few.⁵²

⁴⁵ Thomas, "Canadian Castles?"

⁴⁶ Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*, 333-335.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 335-336.

⁴⁸ Ricketts, Maitland and Hucker, *Guide to Canadian Architecture*, 99.

⁴⁹ Thomas, "Canadian Castles?"

⁵¹ Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*, 338.

⁵² *Ibid*, 478.

Of most importance to this particular essay was the construction of the Banff Springs Hotel in Banff National Park, approximately three hundred kilometres northwest of Lethbridge, Alberta. Unlike the previous two styles this style was reserved for grand hotels built by wealthy railway companies.⁵³ Because of this the smaller towns do not have them, however, because of how scattered they are throughout Canada, most small towns are not far from at least one of them. The Banff Springs Hotel can be included in the discussion of Lethbridge, not only because of its proximity to Lethbridge, but also because it is a part of the culture of southern Alberta and by extension a part of the culture of Lethbridge. Due to this it can be said that the Chateau style of hotels has definitively become a part of Lethbridge and therefore can be used to link Lethbridge to the wider Canadian culture. It is this link that is most important when discussing Canada's culture. Having a Chateau-style hotel in southern Alberta creates a visual link to Canadians, southern Albertans, and foreign tourists visiting the hotel.

Critics of this style say that it is not distinctive to Canada, nor was the style consistent when it was used in Canada.⁵⁴ Even though the Chateaus were originally designed by American architects to evoke a sense of Old France and the style was created in France and England, their widespread dispersion in Canada as well as their physical tie to so many of Canada's premier cities and natural wonders has left them as integral parts of Canadian architecture.⁵⁵ They may be the most easily recognizable Canadian style currently in existence in Canada. As for the inconsistency within Canada, each hotel's design adapted the style to better fit within the environment in which it was built.⁵⁶ Similarly, Canadian culture has been taken and adapted to fit within the wide

⁵³ *Ibid*, 478.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 478.

⁵⁵ Thomas, "Canadian Castles?"

⁵⁶ *Ibid*.

range of religious beliefs, geographic regions, and ethnicities of Canada. The adaptability of the Chateau style might be one of the reasons that it is so symbolic of an adaptable Canadian culture.

This adaptability to the wide range of Canadian geographies can also be seen in modern architecture. It is apparent specifically in the architects of Arthur Erickson, an architect born in Vancouver, who built many remarkable structures throughout the world.⁵⁷ He followed primarily the modernist style of architecture⁵⁸ and provides an example of a Canadian adaptation of this style. A building of note that he designed is Simon Fraser University (SFU). This was his first major building and he implemented his style fully in it. The building was designed to blend in with nature through mimicking the mountains that surround the SFU campus.⁵⁹ The SFU campus has a strong central axis connecting all the buildings, with terraces to mimic the rise and fall in elevation of mountain peaks.⁶⁰ Another example of his desire to blend modernity with naturalism was the Smith house he designed. He described his design for the Smith house, “I wanted the Smith house to reveal the site the same way it was revealed to me when I first walked onto it.”⁶¹ From this quotation we can understand that Erickson wanted his buildings to frame nature and to blend in with nature, not to limit it or destroy it. He wanted his buildings to provide the people who visited them with an opportunity to truly see how beautiful their natural environment was. These examples are both taken from the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, where he also designed the Museum of Anthropology to mimic the longhouse of the Kwakwaka’wakwa of the coast.⁶²

Fortunately, his talent can be seen across Canada, and not solely in BC’s Lower Mainland. Another very prominent example is the King’s

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*, 549.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 549.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

Landing in Toronto. The King's Landing is located on the coast of Lake Ontario and is a terraced residential building which imitates a wave crashing onto the shore from Lake Ontario.⁶³ A further example can be found in Lethbridge; he designed the University Hall of the University of Lethbridge.⁶⁴ He designed it in the same way he designed the other buildings mentioned: to blend into the horizon.⁶⁵ He used materials that would aesthetically blend into the prairie grasses of Lethbridge. The concrete used in the University Hall turns to a golden colour in the sunlight to imitate the prairies surrounding it. To imitate the coulees, pillars were used to give viewers the sense that University Hall was rolling as part of the prairies, and not simply a building stuck on top of the prairies. It must have looked particularly splendid from South Lethbridge before West Lethbridge was built up residentially, when the surroundings would have been the empty prairies Erickson was emulating.

Neo-Gothic, Beaux-Arts, Chateau, and Canadian Modernism are all examples of architectural styles that abound in Canada. In terms of Canadian culture, their roots are not nearly as important as how they are currently perceived. The Neo-Gothic Parliament buildings are a visual reminder of British-Canadian sovereignty and all the churches and buildings across Canada that are built in this style echo this sentiment. The Beaux-Arts symbolized permanence, these buildings represented the stability the Canadian government was trying to achieve, and they can be seen dotting Canadian towns in the forms of banks, libraries, and as the Provincial Legislative buildings of the Prairie Provinces. The Chateau style came about because of tourism, showing Americans that Canada was a world out of fantasy, very different than America. They

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ arthurerickson.com n.d. <http://arthurerickson.com/> (accessed February 2013).

Brian Turner and Sharon Turner. Interview by Craig Boehmer. Lethbridge, AB. February 22, 2013.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

still symbolize a connection between Canadians and their environment, as well as the notion that Canadians, if nothing else, are not Americans. Finally, the Canadian modernist movement, as symbolized by Arthur Erickson, illustrated an intimate link between Canadians and their environment, a connection that still persists among many Canadians today. These four architectural styles are aspects of Canadian society and symbolize Canadian culture. Lethbridge Alberta contains examples of all of these architectural styles, thus creating a city with physical ties to Canada as a whole. Canadians visiting Lethbridge can identify, based on its architecture, that it is a Canadian city as evidenced by the downtown core with its Neo-Gothic St. Patrick's Catholic Church, and its Beaux-Arts Post Office. The prominence of Banff as a vacation spot for many in Lethbridge, and the imposing view from Scenic Drive of University Hall, also show the importance these architectural styles have played in Lethbridge's development. Therefore we can establish that Lethbridge is an example of a Canadian city. As a result, we can discern that it shares with Canada a unique architectural culture, thus showing evidence of an overarching Canadian culture.

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CHINESE HUAQIAO

SOJOURNERS OR OVERSEAS CHINESE?

ALLAN CHIEM

Early Chinese immigrants in Canada were given the designation of “sojourner,” a temporary resident with no long term plans of fixed settlement. Their migratory habits caused people to think that because they had no intention of settling in the country, their contributions to the national history of Canada were minimal at best. Recent scholarship has tried to refute this past image of Chinese “sojourners,” instead insisting that it was white racism that prevented the Chinese from settling in the first place.¹ However, the Chinese immigrants referred to themselves as 華僑 (*huaqiao*); separated, this term is made up of two individual Chinese words: 華 (*hua*), meaning “Chinese” and 僑 (*qiao*), meaning “Overseas.”² Interestingly enough, when the two words are put together, it could mean “Overseas Chinese” but it is also the Chinese term for “sojourner.”³ Even the Chinese thought of themselves as sojourners, but it goes beyond the black-and-white distinctions of whether these immigrants belonged to China or to Canada. They were considered “nowhere men,” people who belonged to neither country.⁴ But a more appropriate term would be to call them “transnational,” because their migrant spaces could not be contained by the jurisdictional boundaries of nation-states.⁵ While it is true that they were crossing the geopolitically imagined borders of Canada, the United States, and China, the *huaqiao* themselves believed that they were only overseas, but still within the boundaries they created in their minds that was more based on ties between kith and kin.

In this paper, I will demonstrate that the *huaqiao*, while separated from their families and friends by an entire ocean, were not separated by a border. Chinese political organizations helped the *huaqiao* to protect themselves from oppression and bullying through strength in numbers

¹ Lisa Rose Mar, “Beyond Being Others: Chinese Canadians as National History,” *BC Studies* No.156 (Winter 2007/08): 16.

² Lily Chow, *Sojourners in the North* (Prince George: Caitlin Press, 1996), 6.

³ To this day, my parents and their friends still refer to themselves as *huaqiao*, even though they have no plans of ever returning to China. My siblings and I are called 土生 (*tusheng*), literally “Earth Born,” indicating that we were born in this land, in other words, native to Canada. I never thought about these distinctions or even what these words actually meant until I started researching this paper.

⁴ Mar, “Beyond Being Others,” 17.

⁵ Glen Peterson, “House Divided: Transnational Families in the Early Years of the People’s Republic of China,” *Asian Studies Review* Vol. 31 (March 2007): 25.

but also connected them to their villages in China. This strategy was employed throughout the *huaqiao* population, not just on the coast of British Columbia, but further inland as well. We will see that *huaqiao* borders extended out to wherever *huaqiao* were located, that even in the small town of Lethbridge, we can still see the functioning remnants of a *huaqiao* past. Wherever they went, the *huaqiao* were always home.

In the late 1850s, China, and more specifically the coast of Guangdong, was being battered by the naval fleets of the British and French. It is no coincidence that the majority of Chinese immigrants were farmers from the Guangdong region. Possessed with a hard-working nature and the knowledge that they could entrust their wives and children to the care of other members of the village, these men went seeking a better way to support their families.⁶ The potentially lucrative gold rush drew some of these men in, first into California, but eventually through to Victoria into the upper Fraser.⁷ It has been suggested that the first Prairie Chinese arrived into Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, not from the west coming through BC, but from the south, coming through Montana and Minnesota.⁸ As white prospectors moved away from older diggings onto newer and more promising regions, the Chinese took over the abandoned sites and continued working them. With new techniques and innovation in gold mining, the Chinese were able to extract out the last bits of gold that their Western counterparts never could manage with shovel, pick, and dynamite.⁹

After these gold mines were depleted, the Chinese were absorbed into other occupations, such as gardening, domestic work, canneries and railway construction.¹⁰ It would seem that these first Chinese immigrants from the west were banking on the “get rich quick” mentality

⁶ James Morton, *In the Sea of Sterile Mountains* (Vancouver: J.J. Douglas Ltd., 1974), 5.

⁷ Morton, *Sterile Mountains*, 7.

⁸ Brian L. Evans, *The Other Side of Gold Mountain: Glimpses of Chinese Pioneer Life On The Prairies From the Wallace B. Chung and Madeline H. Chung Collection* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2010), 10.

⁹ Evans, *Gold Mountain*, 12.

¹⁰ Stanislaw Andracki, *Immigration of Orientals into Canada with Special Reference to Chinese* (New York: Arno Press, 1978), 2.

of most gold miners. But those who came to the Prairies from the south knew that there was no gold to be found, except perhaps for a small bit in the North Saskatchewan River. The Prairie Chinese came looking for opportunities to make money in a slow and steady manner.¹¹ In later years, some tried their hands at shop keeping, owning laundries, pharmacies, restaurants, and Chinese import stores.¹² At first, the Chinese were “allowed the same rights, liberties, and privileges” as all other people in the Dominion.¹³ By the early 1870s, however, the attitude towards the Chinese was less welcoming. A combination of the belief that the colored races were inferior, their unsanitary living and working conditions,¹⁴ and their willingness to work for cheaper wages lent credence to a more negative attitude towards Chinese laborers.¹⁵ But the most damning feature of the Chinese immigrants was their custom of sojourning: of working hard, living frugally and then sending back money to their families or returning to China themselves. As the *Cariboo Sentinel* complained in 1867, “... they are filling the position of those who would bring wealth and population to the country, and at the same time carrying off our very life’s blood in the shape of our gold...”¹⁶ With these attitudes ensconced in the public mind, and the ability to legislate against the Chinese with their own responsible government after Confederation in 1871, white hostilities against the Chinese was inevitable.

Several bills passed between 1884 and 1923 attempted to take away the civil rights of the Chinese. The Chinese were disallowed from owning Crown Land in 1884; the \$50.00 Head Tax introduced in 1885

¹¹ Evens, *Gold Mountain*, 12.

¹² Patrick A Dunae et al., “Making the Inscrutable, Scrutable: Race and Space in Victoria’s Chinatown, 1891,” *BC Studies* No. 169 (Spring 2011), 63.

¹³ Patricia Roy, *A White Man’s Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989), 3.

¹⁴ Dunae et al., “Making the Inscrutable, Scrutable,” 66. Also, a Letter to the Editor in the November 28, 1911 edition of the *Lethbridge Daily Herald* expressed outrage from a citizen of Lethbridge discovering that the cleaning methods of a local Chinese laundry utilized human body fluids and had the potential to spread tuberculosis.

¹⁵ Roy, *A White Man’s Province*, 4.

¹⁶ Roy, *A White Man’s Province*, 10.

increased to \$100.00 in 1901 and then once again to \$500.00 in 1904; the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1923. In certain localities, bylaws were passed to contain and segregate the Chinese to one specific area of town. In Lethbridge, Bylaw 83, passed in 1910, while touting itself as a fire safety bylaw, actually forced all the Chinese laundries and subsequently, the other Chinese businesses, into the area that would eventually be known as “Chinatown.”¹⁷ On top of these humiliations and outright displays of hatred, the weather in Canada was cold and miserable compared to Guangdong. Not surprisingly, many Chinese men, feeling that they could never be accepted in such a harsh, hate filled environment, desired a return to China if they could afford it.¹⁸

However, the political scene in China drove many more to cross the Pacific going in the other direction. The continuously weakening Qing Empire was threatening to collapse, the British were tightening their hold over the Chinese after the signing of the Nanking Treaty, and a series of droughts and famines in south-east China meant that the Chinese in the region were forced to find alternative means to support their families.¹⁹ The politics in China, the desperation of the citizens, and the expansive and ambiguous borders of the *huaqiao* were all intricately linked together through the Chinese Canadians with the establishment of several political organizations, or *tongs*.

One of these organizations was the Hung Mun, or Chinese Freemasons (which has no relation to the Western Freemasons).²⁰ The origins of the Hung Mun began after the Manchus had overthrown the Ming Emperor and established the Qing Dynasty in 1644. Those who were loyal to the Ming went underground and formed a secret society, the Hung Mun, with the intention of overthrowing the Qing Emperor

¹⁷ “Area For Chinese Laundries Defined,” *The Lethbridge Daily Herald*, February 22, 1910.

¹⁸ Chow, *Sojourners*, 3-5.

¹⁹ Chow, *Sojourners*, 181.

²⁰ Evans, *Gold Mountain*, 43.

and restoring power to the Ming.²¹ In order to prevent infiltration from the Manchus, the Hung Mun were very selective of their recruits, with each new member having to be referred into the group by an already existing member, alongside a series of oaths and tests to prove loyalty to the Ming. Emboldened by a weakening Qing government, members of the Hung Mun managed to revolt and control half of China for nine years before being crushed by Qing soldiers during the Taiping Rebellion in 1864. Many of the surviving Hung Mun members fled to North America, establishing Hung Mun meeting halls wherever they immigrated to.²² Being a secret society with mysterious rites, a very selective recruitment policy, and utilizing a symbol that coincidentally looked like the already established Freemasons fraternity, the Hung Mun were mislabelled as the Chinese Freemasons.²³

In the early 1900s, when Dr. Sun Yat Sen toured Canada to rally overseas support for his revolutionary ideas, he joined the Hung Mun. Across Canada, Hung Mun members donated money to Sun Yat Sen's cause, in total contributing \$300,000 Canadian.²⁴ Sun was promising to overthrow the Qing and the Hung Mun's ultimate foundations were based on this one desire. In 1911, Sun sympathizers revolted and collapsed the Qing Empire and Dr. Sun Yat Sen was named provisional president of China.²⁵ When members of the Hung Mun requested to be involved in Sun's parliament, he refused, sparking outrage from Hung Mun members, who donated so much money to help his cause.²⁶ This small political scuffle in China reverberated throughout the prairies of Canada via newsfeeds provided by Canadian Hung Mun members. The borders of the *huaqiao* were so expansive, what happened in China inevitably would affect Canada as well.

²¹ Chow, *Sojourners*, 168.

²² Chow, *Sojourners*, 170.

²³ Chow, *Sojourners*, 172-3.

²⁴ Chow, *Sojourners*, 170-3.

²⁵ Evans, *Gold Mountain*, 44.

²⁶ Chow, *Sojourners*, 171.

Supporters of Sun broke away from the Hung Mun and established their own *tong*, called the Guomindang, or Chinese Nationalist League.²⁷ Hung Mun and Guomindang members, once allies, were now bitter opponents. The Chinese Nationalist League established and built their Lethbridge headquarters between 1909 and 1910, locating themselves at 309 2nd Avenue South.²⁸ To spite their rivals, the Lethbridge Hung Mun established their headquarters at 310 2nd Avenue South, directly across the street and facing the Chinese Nationalist League.²⁹ Albert Leong, who was born in Lethbridge's Chinatown and has called it his home his entire life, remembers a time when Nationalist League members and Hung Mun members would literally fight each other in the middle of Lethbridge's 2nd Avenue.

Vast distances could not separate the Chinese Canadians from their Chinese kin; they always managed to still feel connected to their home villages through the *tongs*. While operating as political organizations, the Hung Mun and Guomindang also functioned as communications hubs between China and Canada for the *huaqiao*. High powered Chinese officials would visit Nationalist and Freemasons locations across Canada, bringing news with them wherever they went; Chinese language newspapers were written in Victoria and Vancouver and distributed throughout the prairies through the *tong* network.³⁰ When the warlord Yuan Shih-kai bullied Sun Yat Sen out of his own cabinet and threatened to proclaim himself the new emperor of China, Guomindang members from Lethbridge and Edmonton formed a militia and prepared to head back to fight against Yuan.³¹ Disenfranchised from the politics in Canada, the *huaqiao* involved themselves with the politics in China, even though there was an entire ocean in between.

²⁷ Chow, *Sojourners*, 180.

²⁸ "Kuo Min Tang (Chinese Nationalist League) Building," last accessed March 11, 2014, <http://historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8729>

²⁹ "Chinese Free Masons Building," last accessed March 11, 2014, <https://hermis.alberta.ca/ARHP/Details.aspx?DeptID=1&ObjectID=4665-0486>

³⁰ Evans, *Gold Mountain*, 43.

³¹ Evans, *Gold Mountain*, 45.

The Hung Mun and Guomintang also provided the *huaqiao* with social assistance. They offered housing for new arrivals; they helped new Chinese immigrants find work; they connected their *huaqiao* members to their family back home by hosting celebrations that their families and villages would also have participated in at the time. Such examples include the ancestor remembrance festival known as Qing Ming in April and Chinese New Year in February. They offered them a group that they could belong to, utilizing strength in numbers to protect and help each other, both in their new home and the ones they left behind in their old homes. When the Japanese invaded China in 1937, Canadian Guomintang members rallied to raise money for China's war effort.³² When a letter from overseas informed of a shortage in the Chinese airforce, Guomintang members in Saskatchewan established a flight school to train pilots.³³ When the Prince George Hung Mun caught on fire, the fifteen members who were using the building as a residence had to be evacuated. Other members immediately stepped up to offer them their own houses to stay in and the Hung Mun gave each of the fifteen victims \$70.00 as compensation. When a member from the same Hung Mun was beaten up and robbed by two Caucasians, the Hung Mun put up a \$100.00 reward for anyone who could find the perpetrators.³⁴ Although the *tongs* were political entities, they existed to help the Chinese people, both in their homeland and the overseas *huaqiao*. Only political ideologies and the bitter memory of Sun Yat Sen's rejection of the Hung Mun kept both organizations apart from each other.

In Lethbridge, Albert Leong is happy to point out a very strange contradiction in the Lethbridge Chinese Freemasons' building: upon entering the premises, the first thing that anyone will notice is the altar,

³² Chow, *Sojourners*, 185-6.

³³ Evans, *Gold Mountain*, 46.

³⁴ Chow, *Sojourners*, 175-7.

above which hangs a sign denoting the area as the Freemason's gathering place. From 1924 all the way up to 2014, members of the Lethbridge Chinese Freemasons would stand in front of this sign and altar and burn incense before continuing with the day's activities. The sign is decorated with all the usual Hung Mun symbols: the five colored flag, symbolizing the original five founding members of the organization; the nine-pointed star that is a common Hung Mun symbol; and the square and compass which gave the Hung Mun its "Chinese Freemasons" misnomer. These are common symbols found in all Hung Mun buildings across Canada, but if one looks closely at the sign located in the Lethbridge chapter, another symbol can be found embedded within the sign that is very out of place: Sun Yat Sen's Nationalist flag. As Luong explains, "It's better now. In the old days, there was a lot of fighting between the two groups, but now everyone gets along. But maybe back then, even though they were fighting, they still felt that in the end, they were all Chinese. Chinese helping Chinese. That's why that Nationalist flag is part of the Freemasons altar."

Although their numbers are much smaller today, the Hung Mun and Guomintang still provide social assistance and cultural connections to any *huaqiao* who desire it. Hung Mun all across the nation, including Lethbridge, still host Chinese New Year celebrations every year. When Albert Luong was evicted from his childhood home due to the building's structural instability, the Hung Mun stepped up and offered him lodging in their building, just like they did for Chinese immigrants in the past, and the Lethbridge Guomintang members pooled together \$1000.00 to help in reconstructing Luong's home. Martial arts, Lion Dance, and Chinese language classes are still being offered in various Hung Mun and

Guomindang locations around Canada, still connecting the *huaqiao* and their 土生 (*tusheng* – “native born”) children to their Chinese roots.

The “sojourner” designation for early Chinese immigrants was both appropriate and misleading. While *huaqiao* does mean “sojourner,” the Chinese immigrants who came to Canada did not always plan on returning back to China. These men (and eventually women) did not restrict themselves to being either citizens of China or citizens of Canada only. Migration and border crossing was considered an everyday right for the *huaqiao*.³⁵ Their ambiguous imagined border spanned across oceans and encompassed lands that belonged to different nation-states, but in their minds, was always home, no matter where they were, or how far they were from their families. Chinese immigrants were always aware of events happening in China, and through organizations like the Hung Mun and the Guomindang, Chinese villagers were able to stay connected to their Canadian relatives. These *huaqiao* sojourned not from one country to another, but from one place in their home to another place in their home.

³⁵ Mar, “Beyond Being Others,” 18.

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LIFE BEHIND THE WIRE:

GERMAN PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS IN
SOUTHERN ALBERTA DURING WWII

KAYLEY BOWIE

Though over 70 years have passed by since the outbreak of the Second World War, it is a subject that continues to fascinate historians due to the incredible impact it had on numerous countries across the world. Canada is no exception; the six years in which it was at war against Germany alongside the British Empire saw drastic changes to many facets of daily life. Western Canadians rose to the occasion and mobilized both human and financial resources to aid in the war effort. While many are eager to commemorate our other wartime roles, the housing of thousands of Germans in prisoner of war (POW) camps across Alberta is a contribution less popularly celebrated or memorialized. Despite the fact that the POW camps in Alberta were the largest of their kind in North America, few people seem to remember it. According to most of the articles, interviews, and videos on the subject, the men in the camps had a pleasant experience and were treated with unexpected respect and dignity – enough to convince some to return to Canada after the war and make this country their home. However, the alleged fine life the POWs had in the camps may not be fully representative of the experience as some scholarly sources expose a darker side of daily life in the camps. The fact that portrayal of life in the camps appears to be so conflicting raises questions of investigation.

In this paper I will examine the history and operation of the POW camps in Southern Alberta from 1939-1945; specifically the camps located in Lethbridge and Medicine Hat, AB. Lethbridge's state of affairs prior to the start of the war will be discussed to provide context for the stories from the camp. Scholarly secondary research about prisoner life in the camps and first-hand accounts from former guards and prisoners will be compared to determine the extent to which the common

“happy prisoners” narrative is true. Possible reasons for why negative experiences from the camps are less visible will also be explored.

In the years prior to the outburst of WWII, Lethbridge, Alberta was a modest city of approximately 14,000 people. The city was barely 50 years old and had a very young population: 50% of Lethbridge’s citizens were under the age of 25, and another 42% were between the ages of 25 and 55.¹ A significant portion of the local population claimed to be of British descent, but large numbers of Chinese, German, Scandinavian, and Ukrainian immigrant groups had settled in the area. The city’s economy was primarily agricultural, which caused the area to suffer considerable devastation and hardship during the Great Depression. After Canada officially entered the war in September of 1939, about 1750 people enlisted or were conscripted.² Memories of the atrocities of WWI were fresh in the minds of Albertans, but many still displayed a ready willingness to fight for their country and King.

Initially, there were no plans for the construction of POW camps in Canada and the number of anticipated prisoners was relatively small. The government expected it to be a limited, short-term venture. A letter written to Prime Minister Mackenzie King’s private secretary reflected this viewpoint, stating: “The number of enemy aliens interned will not be large ... it would be manifestly wasteful to set up this expensive organization in every section of the country”³ As the war continued, the British government asked the Canadian government to accept increasing numbers of men; some were interned enemy aliens and the rest were captured prisoners of war. Canada was unprepared to receive this number of prisoners, but the government granted the British request. It was soon realized that the growing number of prisoners exceeded

¹ Aimée Viel, *Lethbridge on the Homefront: 1939 to 1945* (Lethbridge: Lethbridge Historical Society, 1998).

² Ibid.

³ John Joseph Kelly, “Der Deutsche Kriegsgefangener auf Alberta: Alberta and the Keeping of German Prisoners of War, 1939-1947” in *For King and Country: Alberta in the Second World War*, ed. K.W. Tingley (Canada: Provincial Museum of Alberta, 1995), 286.

the capacity of the existing camp system in Canada. On May 6, 1942, Camp 133 was opened at Ozada, Alberta, to temporarily accommodate between 12,000 – 13,000 men until larger, more permanent camps were ready. Conditions at Ozada were generally quite poor. Prisoners and guards were forced to live in tents, which were battered by wind and rain, and suffered from freezing temperatures during the fall. John Joseph Kelly notes, “There were no tears shed on 10 December 1942, when the prisoners started their move from Ozada to the newly erected camps at Medicine Hat and Lethbridge.”⁴

The two camps were built with a capacity of 12,500 POWs each and at a cost of over 4 million dollars total. At its peak, the Lethbridge camp held 13,650 German POWs and occupied some 638 acres.⁵ The camp layout included 36 dormitory-style barracks, two recreational halls, educational huts, workshops, mess halls, kitchens, an infirmary, and a detention centre. The recreational halls were the largest in all of Alberta and they acted as a multi-purpose venue for team sports, plays, and concerts. There were also three full-sized soccer fields. Defence around the camp was relatively low and consisted primarily of barbed wire fences and armed guard towers. Guard duty fell upon the Lethbridge unit of the Veterans Guard of Canada, who were reportedly eager and able but also extremely outnumbered. Some believe that there were not enough guards or ammunition in Lethbridge to prevent a mass breakout if one had occurred, but apparently the prisoners never considered attempting it.⁶

The POWs remained in the camp for over three years until the process of repatriation began in the spring of 1946, half a year after the war had ended. Men were repatriated according to a system of psychological assessment to determine their level of support for

⁴ Kelly, 290.

⁵ Georgia Fooks, *Prairie Prisoners: POWs in Lethbridge During Two World Conflicts* (Lethbridge: Lethbridge Historical Society, 2002), 43.

⁶ “Theo’s Letters Home,” *The Enemy Within*, directed by Eva Colmer (Canada: National Film Board of Canada, 2003), online.

Nazism and Hitler. Men designated as “Black” were determined to be strong supporters, “Grey” indicated a level of indifference, and “White” signified anti-Nazi sentiments. Men with White or Grey designations were repatriated much more quickly than those who still showed support for the Nazis.⁷ By this point, over 6000 prisoners had applied to remain in Canada, though this was prohibited by the Geneva Convention and the men had to be returned to Britain. The reasons for wanting to stay in Canada varied amongst prisoners. Some were from areas of Germany that were now under Soviet control. For others, the most familiar feeling of a place of belonging was Canada. Many faced uncertain futures in bombed-out Germany, unsure of how their homes and families had fared during the war. A significant number of POWs returned to permanently settle in Canada after finding the living conditions in Germany to be deplorable.

These are the men whose stories are consistently told and fondly remembered as part of the camp’s positive image. Popular online examinations of the POW camps refer to them as “posh” and “carefree havens” for men who were happy to bask in Canadian hospitality.⁸ The camps undoubtedly provided certain luxuries that would not have been available to men fighting on the battlefields of Europe or Africa. In addition, because Nazi Germany was a police state overseen by ruthless dictators and opposition was not tolerated, many POWs were grateful to serve out the remainder of the war within the relatively safe confines of a prison camp in Alberta.⁹ Leo Hoecker, a former POW, recalls his capture on the front and another man’s reaction: “I remember one guy grinning as though he’d just won a million bucks. I guess he didn’t mind leaving the front.”¹⁰

⁷ David Carter, *POW Behind Canadian Barbed Wire: Alien, Refugee, and Prisoner of War Camps in Canada 1914–1946* (Elkwater: Eagle Butte Press, 1998), 225.

⁸ CBC Digital Archives, *Canada’s Forgotten Prisoner of War Camps*, (6 September 2013), <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/categories/war-conflict/prisoners-of-war/canadas-forgotten-pow-camps/canadas-posh-pow-camps.html> (Accessed 13 April 2014).

⁹ Carter, 104.

¹⁰ John Melady, *Escape From Canada! The Untold Story of German POWs in Canada 1939-1945* (Toronto: Gage Publishing Ltd., 1981), 3.

Overall, the camp conditions in Lethbridge were more than acceptable, particularly in comparison to other camps across Canada. Regulations ensured that the food was sufficient in quality and quantity, and satisfactory bedding and clothing were provided to all prisoners. It was ensured that all men received a prescribed amount of air space in the dormitories and they were not to be employed in any dangerous or unhealthy work.¹¹ The shared impression of the treatment of POWs by guards and administrators was highly positive. Major Henry Smith of the Veterans Guard wrote, “We treated the P.O.W. really too well compared to how the British and Canadian P.O.W. in Germany were treated. I personally do not know of any case where the P.O.W. were genuinely mistreated.”¹²

Many oral and written recounts from former prisoners also highlight the respectable treatment they received in the camps. A former POW who wrote to a camp commandant almost two years after the war reflected upon his experience: “I honestly believe that many a former POW will agree with me, if I say, that your country has done a lot to show Germans in Canadian custody the value of democratic life.”¹³ Postcards published by the Prisoner’s War Aid (YCMA) also show a lighter side of life in the camps. One such postcard depicts prisoners lounging in chairs outside, listening to music, reading, and enjoying the sunshine (with barbed wire barely featured in the background).¹⁴ They enjoyed plenty of games and entertainment in the recreation halls and on the soccer fields, including boxing, wrestling, tennis, skating, and more. The prisoners had a 55-piece band and several other musical groups.¹⁵ William Hurst, a former guard, recalled the prisoners’ enjoyment of recreation and stimulation: “Within the compound was

¹¹ Fooks, 64.

¹² Kelly, 300.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Rohloff Maximilian, “Postcards and Newsletters from Prisoner of War Camp 133 At Lethbridge (1943-1945),” Galt Museum Archives, Accession #19891055000.

¹⁵ Graham Chandler, *The Happiest Prisoners*, (15 March 2012), <http://legionmagazine.com/en/2012/03/the-happiest-prisoners> (Accessed 14 April 2014).

a field with bleachers where they played soccer, and we could hear the excitement of the crowd during these games.”¹⁶ The final POW newsletter, published and circulated within the camp in 1946, featured silly comics and poems as well as a farewell to Lethbridge.¹⁷

However, negative experiences and suggestions about the darker side of the prison camps are hidden amidst the fond recollections of life behind the wire. It is much harder to dig up unpleasant memories about camp life, but certain events provide hints about prisoner unrest and dissatisfaction. Attempted escapes were not uncommon and point to the existence of unhappy sentiments towards imprisonment. It was also a large part of the reason that the government felt it was important to put prisoners to work as a labour force: prisoners who were kept busy did not have time to plot escapes and it would be easier to handle the camp.¹⁸ Unfortunately, some POWs used this as an opportunity to walk away from labour projects where they were employed and escape. In total, about a hundred German prisoners escaped from Canadian camps. A former prisoner at Medicine Hat, Horst Liebeck stated that he had arrived at the prison camp already determined to make an escape and that he kept track of his location on a map while on the train there so he could run away.¹⁹

Another recurring problem was the refusal of certain POWs to acknowledge the authority of guards and administrative personnel. In one such situation, which came to be known as the “Battle of Ozada”, six German Luftwaffe prisoners demanded that Canadian non-officers salute them and refused to remove their rank badges. The men were sentenced to 28 days detention but, upon being released, they seized several Canadian officers as hostages for six hours. During the following

¹⁶ Joseph W. Hurst, “Personal Letter and Poem (1945-2008),” Veterans Guard of Canada fonds, Galt Museum Archives, Accession #20081068000.

¹⁷ Rohloff Maximilian, “Postcards and Newsletters from Prisoner of War Camp 133 At Lethbridge (1943-1945),” Galt Museum Archives, Accession #19891055000.

¹⁸ Kelly, 294.

¹⁹ Melady, 25.

weeks, the prisoners refused to parade for the daily count and eventually went on a hunger strike. They caused enough trouble that they were sent to other POW camps, where they were court martialled for inciting the POWs to mutiny.²⁰ In a different altercation, a German prisoner received 28 days for spitting a mouthful of water on a Canadian soldier. There are many other similar recorded incidents of prisoners receiving sentences of confined detention for rejecting authority. Those in charge adopted informal means of punishment as a method of controlling attitude and behaviour in the camps, but the guards' punishments were minor in comparison to punishment handed out by other prisoners.

Not all of the POWs were quick to throw aside their beliefs or support of Hitler's policies. One former guard recalls, "The Nazis [in the camps] were totally convinced about fascism ... they were blinded by their beliefs. It could be broad daylight, twelve noon, but if the Fuehrer told them it was dark outside, well then it was dark."²¹ This ideological clash between prisoners caused fights, some of which turned violent and even deadly. A great deal of fear existed within the camps and in the last years, prisoners were constantly appealing to the authorities for protection from their fellow inmates. In Lethbridge, at least one incident is recorded where an inmate risked his life by running out into no-man's land where the guards took him out of the camp.²² He took the chance of being shot over the fear of being harmed by fellow POWs. This fear was not unfounded. There were multiple incidences of inmates brutally beating other prisoners, and in some cases, killing them. After an attempt was made on Hitler's life in 1944, some POWs began making plans to eliminate anyone suspected of traitorous activity against the German Army. At the Medicine Hat camp, four prisoners concocted a scheme

²⁰ Kelly, 289.

²¹ William Repka and Kathleen M. Repka, *Dangerous Patriots: Canada's Unknown Prisoners of War* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1982), 36.

²² Fooks, 62.

to kill Karl Lehmann, a former respected academic at the University of Erlangen. They lured him into a hut, beat him, and slipped a noose around his neck.²³ They left him dead, believing they had fulfilled their obligation to the Germany Army. Two years later, the four killers met their own nooses in the largest mass hanging in Canada in more than 60 years. Any POWs who actively voiced anti-Nazi sentiments were at risk of being targeted and may have had to endure the constant threat of retribution from militant POWs. A former medical orderly believed many of the “accidental deaths” in the Lethbridge camp were really executions of anti-Nazis, with others even driven to commit suicide.²⁴

It is also important to consider, as John Melady states in his book, that even when prisoner-of-war compounds are well-staffed, reasonably comfortable, and miles from the war zone, as the camp in Lethbridge was, they are – essentially and always – prisons.²⁵ The camp restricted freedom and privacy. The prisoners could not come and go as they wished and they could not enjoy normal relationships with anyone outside of the camp (especially with women). Military POWs were not allowed visitors, and no POW was allowed the use of a telephone.²⁶ They were isolated from the outside world except for the time they may have spent working on nearby farms. Inside the wire was a world where women and children did not exist. An incident in the Bowmanville camp, though not in Alberta, demonstrates the impact that this lack of contact had on the German men. A guard brought his 10-year-old son to the camp with him and the boy spent several hours socializing with the prisoners. Those who spoke English fawned over him, showed him around, and played with him. “That little fellow got such good treatment,” recalled Siegfried Bruse, a former prisoner in the camp.

²³ Carter, 213.

²⁴ Ibid, 179.

²⁵ Melady, 14.

²⁶ Melady, 34.

“We hadn’t seen a child in such a long time ... for us it was a tremendous thing.”²⁷ It was obvious that for the POWs, the visit was emotionally charged and a reminder of what had been kept from them during their time in camp. Beyond what little contact letters provided, the men were essentially deprived of outside interaction and would have been lonely for their families and friends from home.

The story of German POWs in southern Alberta has remained a relatively quiet one since the end of the war and a surprisingly large percent of the general population is unaware of this part of local history. Attempts to unearth the experience of the POWs in Canadian camps have created an overwhelmingly positive narrative about an alleged fine life lived by prisoners. A feature-length documentary, “The Enemy Within”, directed by filmmaker Eva Colmers in 2003, further boosts the optimistic version of life behind the wire. Her father, Theo Melzer, spent 3 years in Camp 133. Theo’s letters, preserved by his mother during his time in camp, comment on the positive aspects of his imprisonment: “It may be comforting for you to know that a humane enemy took us in, and treatment and food are good.”²⁸

While it is certain that the POWs in the Lethbridge and Medicine Hat camps were treated well in comparison to the treatment suffered by other interned groups, both at home and abroad, to imply that imprisonment was a blessing for all men is a false generalization. Escapes, disobedience, deaths, and the lack of freedom and privacy are reminders that being treated with human decency and respect does not turn imprisonment into a vacation, nor does it make all men bear fond memories of their experience. The Medicine Hat camp paper, P.O.W. WOW, published by the Veterans Guard, seems to agree: “The facts are

²⁷ Ibid, 41.

²⁸ “Letters From Theo.”

that the German POWs in Canada were never pampered but treated as soldiers ... the Vets did their guard duty, unmoved by either sympathy or hatred."²⁹ This presents a very neutral view of the treatment of POWs: they were not coddled or spoiled, but rather, treated according to the rules of the Red Cross and the Geneva Convention as they should have been. So why is it that this eagerness to recall the positive stories remains so persistent? I have come to several likely conclusions.

In the happy prisoner narrative, men who have shared their stories are typically those who chose to move back and settle in Canada. Prisoners who moved back were much more likely to have had a pleasant experience and would portray Canada in a positive light. Others, like Eva Colmers' father, passed the story of their experience onto their children, who then shared them with the public. Because fond memories of imprisonment seem so unusual, especially in comparison with horror stories from camps in places like the Soviet Union, they are more likely to receive prolonged attention as an anomaly. Additionally, imagining the camps as havens for German prisoners helps to sustain the Canadian self-image of us as champions of human rights, despite the historical abuse of different groups in Canada. Digging into the negative side of this part of history does not necessarily tarnish this reputation, as the treatment of German POWs in camps was predominantly humane and respectful; however, it does underline the importance of questioning the popular narrative.

²⁹ Melady, 38.

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"A PECULIAR PEOPLE":

PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH HUTTERITES IN
SOUTHERN ALBERTA, 1918–1945

NAOMI ENTZ

In 1918 approximately 1,000 Hutterites immigrated to the Canadian Prairies from the United States. Fleeing persecution brought on by resisting military service, the Hutterites unknowingly walked straight into yet another environment laced with ethnic hatred and prejudice. Hutterites entered Canada with the promise from government officials of exemption from military service, the right to independent schools, and permission to live communally. Right away these privileges evoked a local uproar in Southern Alberta, where the majority of Hutterites had settled. So much so, that by 1919 the promise of exemption from military service had been revoked. The Hutterites of Southern Alberta have, since their immigration to the region in 1918, been victim to discriminatory public opinion and biased provincial legislation, a situation which was only perpetuated by wartime anxieties and the realization that not all Canadians shared the same national identity.

The intent of this paper is to investigate the existence and motivation of discriminatory opinions held by the general public toward the Hutterite community in Southern Alberta spanning the period of the World Wars (1918-1945). I have chosen to focus specifically on Southern Alberta because this area saw the most Hutterite settlement and expansion in the first half of the twentieth century. I will begin by briefly outlining the key elements of Hutterite history and structure which are relevant for understanding the situation the Hutterites encountered in Alberta in 1918. Next, I will explore the fluctuating and at times overtly discriminatory public opinion towards the Hutterite community from their initial immigration in 1918 to the close of the Second World War. My analysis here is based on previous literature on the experiences of the Hutterite people in Southern Alberta, as well as

newspaper articles written during the time period from various towns and cities in Southern Alberta. This section is further divided into three distinct time periods: World War I, the Interwar Period, and World War II. In the final section I will take a look at the previous three time periods collectively and consider the motivations and consequences of such discriminatory public opinion. I will argue specifically that, due to their isolationist lifestyle and their adherence to non-resistance, the Hutterites of Southern Alberta became a scapegoat in the eyes of the public because they demonstrated a sharp deviance from local and nationalist values, leading to the realization that not all Canadians shared the same national identity during this time period.

A basic understanding of the Hutterites and their history is necessary to understand their isolation from modern society, and their commitment to pacifism. David Flint states that, “[n]o country has tolerated the Hutterites for long nor been able to bring about a thorough assimilation of them.”¹ A quick survey of their history indicates that they are a people always on the move. A product of the Anabaptist religions of the sixteenth century Christian Reformation², the Hutterites have made their homes in Moravia, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and, finally, Canada; their constant displacement coming largely as a result of their total opposition to war³. The Hutterite adherence to non-resistance is derived from a belief that their patience and trust in God will repay previous wrongs done against them. Only in this way do they believe that God’s love can bring peace to the world⁴. Hutterites prefer to live in isolated communities, a feature which has allowed them to largely resist assimilation, but which has also led to a great deal of hardship.

¹ David Flint, *The Hutterites: A Study in Prejudice* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975): 66.

² Flint, 67.

³ William G. Laatsch, “Hutterite Colonization in Alberta,” *Journal of Geography* 70, 6 (1971): 347.

⁴ Flint, 72.

Hutterite settlement in the United States, which began in 1878, received relatively little attention until World War I. When it became obvious that the Hutterites would not contribute in any way to the war effort, nationalistic and patriotic public opinion turned against them⁵. In one instance local patriots managed to steal 200 steers and 1000 sheep from a Hutterite community, which they sold and donated a portion of the money to the War Loan Committee.⁶ In total 503 conscientious objectors were tried for refusing to enlist, 142 were sentenced to life imprisonment, and 17 were sentenced to death, a charge which was later commuted.⁷ Persecutions ultimately lead the Hutterites to look north for peaceful habitation. Years earlier, in 1898, when the first Hutterite colony in Canada was established as a result of conscription pressures brought by the Spanish- American War, the Canadian government had guaranteed the Hutterites military exemption, right to independent schools, and permission to live communally.⁸ Though this colony was quickly abandoned it did set the legal precedent in Western Canada for pacifism and communal ownership of property.⁹ It was this legal precedent that attracted Hutterite communities to Canada.

Hutterite communities, assured by officials in Ottawa that the exemptions granted in 1898 still applied,¹⁰ headed north in 1918, establishing eleven colonies clustered around the Magrath area.¹¹ Samuel Hofer writes that the Hutterites' arrival in Canada during the First World War was timed perfectly as the prairies were suffering from an acute labour shortage.¹² The Hutterites were viewed as a considerable economic value for their reputation as hard workers. While this might have been true from a governmental perspective, which was focused on the labour-power the Hutterites might provide for the war effort on

⁵ Samuel Hofer, *The Hutterites* (Saskatoon: Hofer Publishers, 1998), 99.

⁶ Hofer, 99.

⁷ Flint, 73.

⁸ Laatsch, 348.

⁹ Thomas Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada 1900-1945*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 16.

¹⁰ Laatsch, 438.

¹¹ Laatsch, 357.

¹² Hofer, 102.

the prairies, William Laatsch states that the “entry of the Hutterites by permission of Ottawa was unpopular in Canada.”¹³ ‘Bob’ Edwards from the *Calgary Eye Opener* was particularly vocal about his disapproval for what he referred to as “undesirables”.¹⁴ In his opinion these “Mennonite slackers” “should have been shoo’d back at the line.” Another fear appeared to be the huge number of Hutterites who were coming from the United States. According to the press and the House of Commons, 30,000 to 60,000 were said to be immigrating. In reality this number was much closer to 1,000.¹⁵ However, this narrative was readily absorbed by the public already anxious from the pressures of conscription and the fear that immigrants would take over their land.

Like other parts of Canada during the First World War, both national and local situations contributed to anxieties and unease left by Southern Albertans. When war broke out in 1914 the province of Alberta found itself in the most desperate depression of its short existence. Not until the summer of 1915 would the depression lift only to return a few years later with the start of the interwar years.¹⁶ High unemployment led many Albertans to join the war effort early on. By 1918 farmer worker’s wages had increased from \$27 per month in 1915 to \$60.¹⁷ This, however, was accompanied by the problem of inflation; by the end of the war food and fuel had doubled in price. Another significant concern faced by Southern Albertans was conscription. Although the war had initially relied only on voluntary enlistment it became evident by 1917 that conscription would be needed to win the war. Many farmers were furious. They needed sons and labourers to remain at home to harvest increasingly valuable crops.¹⁸

It was into this tense situation that Hutterite immigrants entered in 1918. Various groups across Southern Alberta complained of the

¹³ Laatsch, 348.

¹⁴ *Calgary Eye Opener*, Sept 21st.

¹⁵ Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 77.

¹⁶ Eric Strikwerda and Alvin Finkel, “War, Repression, and Depression, 1914-39.” In *Working People in Alberta: A History*, ed. Alvin Finkel, 77-107, (Canada: Athabasca University Press, 2012), 77.

¹⁷ Strikwerda & Finkel, 82.

¹⁸ Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd, 2007): 154.

privileges guaranteed to Hutterites and demanded that foreign immigration be stopped. Of particular concern to veteran associations was that returning soldiers would be unable to compete with the highly efficient Hutterite farming.¹⁹ The *Calgary Eye-Opener* stated that “it is maddening to think that just at the time when Soldier Land Settlement problems are presenting so many difficulties ... hordes of Mennonites²⁰ are allowed to flock into Canada ... to escape military service.²¹ In April of 1919 Parliament gave into public opinion and revoked military exemption and ended further immigration stating that Hutterite immigrants were “undesirable” due to their “peculiar customs, habits, modes of living, and methods of holding property and because of the probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time.”²² However, the termination of Hutterite immigration did not entirely dispel public fears. On November 5, 1919 the *Granum Herald* ran an article citing a claim that “to outwit the immigration authorities [Hutterites were] entering in automobiles,”²³ having found it difficult to board trains. Clearly Hutterites still presented a problem in the eyes of the public. Public opinion, fraught with prejudice and anxiety, had managed to alter government policy regarding the Hutterites, a trend that continued through the interwar years and World War II.

Hutterite immigrants already settled in Canada kept a low profile and rode out the rest of the First World War. During the twenties and thirties they remained largely withdrawn from Canadian society and “concentrated on protecting the integrity of their communal colonies from local prejudice and discriminatory legislation.”²⁴ At the same time

¹⁹ Flint, 92.

²⁰ Mennonite in this case includes Hutterites as well. The *Calgary Eye-Opener* did not distinguish between the two groups.

²¹ Quoted in Flint, 92.

²² “Prohibit entry of undesirables” *Granum Herald*, May 14, 1919, 7.

²³ “Alleged Evasion of Immigration Law,” *Granum Herald*, November 5, 1919, 3.

²⁴ Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 120.

however they did continue to expand. Between 1918 and 1929 they established eleven more colonies in Southern Alberta.²⁵ Coinciding with the immigration of a large population of Mennonites to the prairies, Hutterite expansion began to cause a stir. The United Farmers of Alberta, along with the Board of Trade, put pressure on the Federal Government to prevent immigration and expansion, claiming that the Hutterites were buying up all the best land.²⁶

It was during the depression years of the thirties that the Hutterites became seen as valuable citizens. As the situation on the prairie worsened the Hutterites became somewhat of a saving grace. Colonies did not seem to suffer as much as individual farmers. Their self-sufficient economies and diversity in production allowed them to be better off than their neighbours.²⁷ This theme was expressed in Byron Tanner's talk at the Cardston Rotary in July of 1932: "the Hutterite Brethren had not cost the Government anything for Direct Relief, nor for prisons, or Old Age Pensions."²⁸ They were able to sustain themselves without government relief, pay their taxes, and buy out farmers who would not meet their mortgage. In a complete reversal of the attitudes, municipal councils and business groups from Raymond, Milk River, Warner, Cardston, and Lethbridge began to apply pressure on the both the federal and provincial government to open up Hutterite immigration from South Dakota.²⁹ The Mayor of Raymond, W. Meeks, wrote the Premier in 1934 concerning the establishment of Rockport Colony, that "their entrance will be a decided advantage to the vendors and to their creditors."³⁰ In a time of great economic crisis the Hutterites had become an asset to their neighbours on the prairie and the government of Alberta on the brink of bankruptcy.

²⁵ Hofer, 102.

²⁶ Hofer, 102.

²⁷ Hofer, 103.

²⁸ "Hutterites Theme of Rotary Address" *Cardston News*, July 21, 1932, 1.

²⁹ Flint, 109.

³⁰ Quoted in Laatsch, 350.

However, the positive public opinion towards the Hutterites in the Depression did not last through the Second World War. The primary objection was their continued expansion while their neighbours were fighting a war in which they refused to get involved in. This was especially troublesome as farming had become profitable once more because of the war effort.³¹ Hutterites, as conscientious objectors, largely refused to join any branch of the military forces. The exceptions to this were the 276 Hutterites who served in the public service works in Canada and the US, and 26 who joined the armed forces.³² In the summer of 1940 the Lethbridge City Council passed a resolution stating that there were groups in Southern Alberta (Mennonites, Hutterites, and Doukhobors) who receive special privileges “which tend to prevent such groups from becoming true Canadians.”³³ It also called for the prohibition of further immigration of members of such groups. Later that year, in October, the *Cardston News* ran an unsigned article, stating that the Prime Minister’s office had asserted that the Hutterite brethren would continue to be exempted from military service. Though the author found the industry of the Hutterites “admirable” he saw “no good reason why [special privileges of exemption] should apply to any particular class who may desire to settle this Dominion.”³⁴ While this author disagrees with the privilege granted to the Hutterites his approach is rather mild compared to many others. A letter to the editor of the *Cardston News* asked “why are these colonies allowed to go their own sweet way when the youth of this country is being drafted into war service without option?”³⁵ This, however, was not entirely true, and to counter this inaccuracy on August 29, 1942 the *Lethbridge Herald* clarified for its readers that Hutterites were indeed receiving the same treatment at

³¹ Laatsch, 350.

³² Hofer, 105.

³³ Howard Palmer, “Ethnic Relations in Wartime: Nationalism and European Minorities in Alberta During the Second World War.” In *A Nation of Immigrants*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Paula Draper, and Roberta Ventresca, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 465.

³⁴ “Immunity from Military Service,” *Cardston News*, October 8, 1940, 2.

³⁵ “Why Special Consideration for Hutterites?” *Cardston News*, January 14, 1943, 2.

any other conscientious objectors, citing that some had been called up for non-combat service.³⁶ But, for individuals opposed to Hutterite expansion, even alternative, non-combatant service was not enough. Almost overnight the Hutterites went from a considerable asset on the prairie to a group of people who resisted the demands of the nation.

Anti-Hutterite agitation centered in the Mormon town of Raymond, primarily because the Mormons thought of Southern Alberta as 'Mormon Country' and because of the high degree of Hutterite settlement in the area.³⁷ On March 10, 1942 the citizens of Raymond stated that "Canadian people refuse any longer to see their persons sent to war while these isolated islands of people are allowed to enjoy their special privileges making large profits at the expense of the nation which gives them the special right."³⁸ Five days later the Hutterite question was further discussed when 700 people attended a mass meeting.³⁹ Disapproval of government policy was not limited to Raymond, but felt throughout Southern Alberta. Members of the Canadian Legion passed a resolution recommending that because Parliament has "exempted them from military service, special taxes be imposed upon [Hutterites], to counterbalance to some small degree the special privileges they enjoy."⁴⁰ In 1942, largely influenced by the Provincial Treasurer Solon Law, the government passed the Land Sales Prohibition Act which prevented the sale of land to "enemy aliens" and Hutterites. Law claimed that the bill was necessary "to allay public feeling which has been aroused to the point of threatened violent in some instances."⁴¹ The bill received strong support and seems to have temporarily decreased hostile feeling until it was disallowed on April 7, 1943 for its inclusion of "enemy aliens."⁴² At this public opinion once again soared. Rulon Dahl,

³⁶ "Hutterites and War Service," *Lethbridge Herald*, August 29, 1942, 14.

³⁷ Palmer, "Ethnic Relations in Wartime", 470.

³⁸ Quoted in Laatsch, 350.

³⁹ "700 Attend Mass Meeting Sunday," *Raymond Recorder*, March 20, 1942, 1.

⁴⁰ "Special Tax on Hutterites urged in View of Military Exemption", *Lethbridge Herald*, June 19, 1940, 11.

⁴¹ Quoted in Laatsch, 350.

⁴² Palmer, *Ethnic Relations in Wartime*, 470.

a prominent member of the Raymond community, wrote the editor of the *Lethbridge Herald* in April of 1943 expressing his disapproval at the disallowing of the bill; “Under wartime regulation our foodstuffs are rationed, home building is curtailed, business expansion is prohibited ... but why are these Hutterites granted their every wish.”⁴³ The government of Alberta, ever vigilant of public opinion, passed the Land Sales Prohibition Act in March of 1944. This time the act included only Hutterites and prohibited both the sale and lease of land to them. This finally satisfied public anxieties.⁴⁴ But it was certainly not the end of the interplay between Hutterites, public opinion, and government action, which saw the establishment of the Communal Property Act in 1947, a further measure to restrict Hutterite expansion.

Canada, a nation composed of immigrants, is ironically not very welcoming of strangers regardless of where they are from.⁴⁵ This is easily seen by tracing the experience of the Hutterites and other minority groups in Southern Alberta. From the very beginning the Hutterites were discriminated against and pressured to either assimilate to larger national attitudes or leave. Two key cultural attitudes of the time, conformity and Social Darwinism, contributed largely to the treatment of the Hutterites in Southern Alberta. Conformity and its overt pressures to assimilate to the will of the majority created what David Flint calls “a social tyranny in Canada”⁴⁶ during the First and Second World Wars. It was expected that newly immigrated citizens of Canada would assimilate to the Canadian identity, an identity which during wartime clearly included military duty. Any citizen who did not do their national duty was then subject to persecution. “The majority dictated that there must be no conscientious objectors, and those who persisted in being

⁴³ “The Hutterite Question,” letter to the editor, *Lethbridge Herald*, April 22, 1943, 4.

⁴⁴ Palmer, *Ethnic Relations in Wartime* 471.

⁴⁵ Hofer, 102.

⁴⁶ Flint, 89.

different must be assimilated or face intimidation and persecution.”⁴⁷ Clearly the Hutterites were a perfect candidate. Throughout both the First and Second World Wars the Hutterites refused to budge on their belief in non-resistance. While the Hutterite’s Anabaptist brothers, the Mennonites, compromised somewhat to societal factors and thus gained some public acceptance, the Hutterites did not and therefore incurred continuing hostility.⁴⁸ Although pacifism had gained somewhat of a following from the 19th century, Canadians still considered it “incompatible with ‘true Canadian citizenship.’”⁴⁹ Perhaps what offended most Southern Albertans then was the way in which the Hutterites challenged the Canadian identity of wartime nationalism and duty, by their very existence. Their refusal to assimilate and enlist challenged the idea of a national identity which during war times needed to be blatantly nationalistic.

The second key cultural attitude of the time was Social Darwinism, a belief which in Canada translated into Canadian superiority over ‘lesser races’. Such superiority made it necessary, if not mandatory, to assimilate minority groups into the larger national scheme. To this extent the education of Hutterite youngsters came to the front. In an article published in 1927 the argument is summed up as: “if Alberta and Canada are ever to assimilate them it must be through the schools.”⁵⁰ The agenda of the ‘Social Gospel’ movement included the belief that it was the Christian duty to raise minority groups from their “inferiority.”⁵¹ Some people believed that the Hutterites were denied freedom of choice by the structure of their communal systems. They felt it their obligation to extend the ideas of individualism and democracy to these “oppressed” people.⁵² In World War Two the communal structure of Hutterite

⁴⁷ Flint, 89.

⁴⁸ Palmer, *Ethnic Relations in Wartime*, 472.

⁴⁹ Palmer, *Ethnic Relations in Wartime*, 465.

⁵⁰ “Magrath’s Indignation,” *Cardston News*, February 10, 1927, 4.

⁵¹ Flint, 90.

⁵² Palmer, *Ethnic Relations in Wartime*, 469.

Colonies was especially bothersome because of the community's ties to Germany.

Together these prevailing attitudes, along with wartime anxieties and the economic downturn of the Great Depression, set the stage in Southern Alberta for explicit discrimination. There were several other factors associated specifically with Hutterite communities that caused Southern Albertans to be increasingly wary of them. One such feature was their continued use of the German language. This was offensive to the public as the use of German was associated with the 'Hun' against whom the nation was fighting.⁵³ Another was their isolation and 'alienness.' Any difference seems to have made the general public nervous. And the Hutterites were certainly different, thereby making them victim of suspicion and prejudice.

While it is obvious that the Hutterites were victim of considerable discrimination since their immigration in 1918, what is perhaps less obvious is the ways in which the Hutterites have also contributed to the notions of Canadian identity. Of considerable importance is the Hutterite contribution to Canada's tradition of pacifism. Thomas Socknat outlines two distinct but complementary pacifist traditions in Canada: liberal Protestant and humanitarian tradition, exemplified by the Peace Movement on the one hand, and historic non-resistance and religious sects such as the Hutterites and the Mennonites on the other.⁵⁴ Socknat states that the influence of these isolationist communities, who held pacifism as the social norm, contributed to the "pacifist hope of building a new social order along communal line."⁵⁵ Hutterite communities in Southern Alberta contributed to Canada's pacifist tradition by their commitment to pacifism despite

⁵³ Howard Palmer, "Land of the Second Chance: a History of Ethnic Groups in Southern Alberta," (Alberta: *Lethbridge Herald*, 1972), 42.

⁵⁴ Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 291.

⁵⁵ Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 292. Check Quote

intense pressure and discrimination. As conscientious objectors the Hutterites contributed to the development and maintenance of the peace movement in Canada. Thus, if today the Canadian identity is primarily constituted by an emphasis on peace and peacekeeping, perhaps the Hutterites can be integrated into the larger national identity. However, it is essential to remember that peacetime Canada has been substantially different from wartime Canada. During times of war, when the whole population is meant to be doing their best to contribute to the war effort, it is seen as unacceptable, and even dangerous, to promote pacifist ideologies. During wartimes one must be committed to the larger nationalist movement, which, in the case of Canada, was the belief that each individual must do their part for the nation. However, this active opposition to war in times of war is exactly what Socknat sees as important for sustaining the peace movement.⁵⁶

While it can be argued that the Hutterites have contributed to the Canadian identity through their pacifism, during the First and Second World War they failed to fit into any discourse of national identity and as a result were discriminated against. From their tendency to reside in isolated communities, to their strange clothing, to their offensive use of German, and, most importantly, their refusal to join the war effort, the Hutterites frustrated their neighbours by resisting the national identity. Their peculiar customs and habits highlighted difference and their military exemption privilege. They enflamed public opinion by not contributing to the national war effort. As a result many people in Southern Alberta vocalized their displeasure at Hutterite privilege. Public opinion was such that at various points of time, both during war and peace time, the federal and provincial government enacted policies

⁵⁶ Thomas Socknat, "Conscientious Objectors in the context of Canadian Peace Movements," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 25 (2007): 61.

to counter previous Hutterite rights and prevent further expansion.

Groups such as the Hutterites, who have historically been isolated both physically and ideologically from the dominant Canadian population, point to alternative Canadian identities. For the Hutterites, the monumental events in Canadian history which the general public might see as contributing to the identity of the nation are meaningless, as they themselves did not participate in them and indeed opposed them. The celebrated involvement of Canadian soldiers at Vimy Ridge in World War I, and the subsequent national growth and pride associated with this battle are of no particular importance to the Hutterites, and I would argue many other residents of Canada. Here it might be pointed out that these events are meaningless because these groups do not want to gain meaning through them. This is of course true, but does not eliminate the fact that for Hutterites and other groups within Canada dominant discourses and identities do not fit and are indeed meaningless. This raises the problematic question of the basis and existence of a national identity. What constitutes to create a national identity? I would suggest that there cannot be one single national identity. Though there might be a dominant identity, there are also multiple national identities which can at times be quite different from the dominant identity.

As demonstrated by the experience of the Hutterites in Alberta the failure to assimilate to local and nationalist pressures during both wartime and peacetime can lead to discrimination and prejudice. The Hutterites, because of their opposition to war and refusal to get actively involved in the national effort, incurred intense discrimination and government policies intended to curb their expansion and perhaps aid in their assimilation. However, through their unpopular resistance

they have nevertheless contributed substantially to aspects of the Canadian identity. Hutterite pacifism has played a significant part in the development and maintenance of Canadian pacifist traditions. Additionally, the Hutterite opposition to war and refusal to contribute to the war effort serves to challenge the notion of a collective Canadian identity. Groups like the Hutterites remind us of alternative Canadian histories, histories that do not necessarily include what many Canadians consider as the fundamental moments in Canadian history such as war. The Hutterites do however have their own Canadian identity, an identity derived in part from fluctuating public opinion and government intervention in their settlement.

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Woman's Christian



BANISH THE BAR!

TEMPERANCE CAMPAIGNS IN ALBERTA,
LATE 1800S — EARLY 1900S

RIANE MCCALLUM

The public sale and consumption of alcohol was particularly controversial in Alberta during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. White English settlers were especially offended by alcohol and its perceived effects on the respectability of the new settlement of the prairie west. Armed with Protestant religious zeal and a passion for the Empire, many of these well-intending white men and women sought to attack the “liquor problem” head on. Reform movements were organized and flourished in Southern Alberta during this time period as a method of combating these moral problems. Targeting the problem of alcohol, these reform movements consistently promoted ideals of the British Empire in regards to gender, religion, race, class, and respectability. Because Canada was still a part of the British Empire, the settlement of the prairie west had an imperialist agenda.¹ As a means of strengthening the Empire as a whole, new settlers to the prairie west were expected to uphold British ideals. Although the movement did not end up accomplishing a long-term temperate society, the efforts of the social reformers consistently promoted one type of British Canadian ideal. This can be clearly seen through the temperance campaigns of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Alberta.

Anti-alcohol campaigners in the west were generally one type of person. In accordance to the English (and thus, Canadian) ideal, those who were against the consumption of liquor most often belonged to the middle class.² As temperance was believed to be a cause for the Empire, temperance workers were white and generally of English descent. If they were not English by birth, many chose to profess loyalty to the Crown. Finally, they were devout members of their religious denomination, and viewed their campaign as their own personal crusade against

¹ Lesley Erikson, *Westward Bound: Sex, Violence, the Law, and the Making of a Settler Society* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011): 18.

² Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, “Oh, Lord, pour a cordial in her wounded heart,” in *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays* ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993): 70.

evil, attempting to embody the social gospel.³ Usually this religious denomination was a Protestant form of Christianity, such as Methodist or Presbyterian. The most prominent organization against alcohol was the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).⁴ Although the most vocal of the temperance campaigns were women, many English men also took up arms against the 'demon drink.' The reformers believed that alcohol was the sole cause of all social ills that were plaguing society. It was blamed for spousal abuse, poverty, child neglect, filth, and disease.⁵ Should alcohol remain to be consumed publicly, these reformers believed that society would regress down a slippery slope into moral chaos and ruin. As it was the hope for Canada to become a new and improved Britain, the effects of alcohol consumption certainly had no place.

Although Canada became a self-governing Dominion in 1867, it still largely identified itself as a British Nation.⁶ As such, the Canadian government worked to settle its lands with the good of the Empire in mind. Alberta did not join the Dominion as its own province until 1905. Prior to this, the area was under the control of the Dominion as the North West Territories (NWT). The Dominion of Canada had been greatly concerned over the settlement of the NWT. Possession of the NWT was a key component of Canada's nation-building goals, and during the late nineteenth century the threat of American expansion into the NWT was very real.⁷ As a means of combating this, the government of Canada under the leadership of Sir John A. MacDonald, constructed a transnational railway, completed in 1885. This new railway encouraged settlement in the prairie west by making travel, communication, and access to supplies from the East much simpler.

³ Carol Lee Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffraists, 1877-1918* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983): 63.

⁴ Tim Cook, "Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers: Alcohol, Soldiers, and Temperance Groups in the Great War," *Histoire sociale/ Social History* 35, no. 70 (2002): 315.

⁵ Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth Century Small-Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996): 91.

⁶ Erikson, *Westward Bound*: 18.

⁷ Doug Orwam, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West 1856-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980): 121.

According to the elite in power, settlers to the new west would ideally be English, middle class farmers who would farm the prairie land. Settlement of the prairies was promoted all over Eastern Canada and England. Canada hoped that British settlers would be honoured to settle the prairie west, as they would, “have the satisfaction of feeling that he is assisting to build up a great British Empire, having for its seat the northern half of the continent of North America.”⁸ The North West Territories was promoted as the “Last Best West.” Settlers were promised a land of equal opportunity, wholesome living, and fertile crops. Promotional posters depicted white men working in the fields while their white wives took care of their white children.⁹ The Dominion of Canada had high hopes that Western Canada would become a settlement of British ideals.

However, the North West Territories was far from the British ideal. The land was not nearly as “open” as had been promised. In the 1880’s, many American and Canadian free-range ranchers had already laid claims to large areas of land, often resulting in fraudulent acquisition of land.¹⁰ The Government of Canada struggled to gain control over the land they had promised to incoming settlers. Free range ranching was not the only economic obstacle to the ideal settlement of the west, as a rampant whiskey trade had also been notoriously operating out of many areas, most infamously at Fort Whoop Up. Fort Whoop Up was home to many American whiskey traders, as well as a sizable population of Blackfoot people. The whiskey traders made quite a profit off of exchanging whiskey for fur to the Blackfoot, and the trade was hugely detrimental to the population. The dangerous concoction and highly addictive nature of the substance was disrupting their traditional values

⁸ *Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, 1879, ‘Reports of the Tenant Farmers’ Delegate,’* iv, in Doug Owram, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West 1856-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980):129.

⁹ Erikson, *Westward Bound*: 28.

¹⁰ Simon M. Evans, *The Bar U & Canadian Ranching History* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2004): 35.

and ways of life by making them incapable of hunting. The Blackfoot leader, Chief Crowfoot said this of the whiskey trade, “The whiskey brought among us by the traders is fast killing us off. We are powerless before this evil. We are unable to resist the temptation to drink when brought in contact with the white man’s water. Our horses, buffalo robes, and other articles of trade go for whiskey.”¹¹

In addition to the whiskey trade, coalmining, too, was quite lucrative in the late nineteenth century in the Fort Whoop Up area. However, the coalminers themselves were often young, single, transient men.¹² Because they were single and did not have families to look after, their income was more expendable. Drinking liquor at the local saloon became a popular avenue for spending their wages. Liquor seemed to go hand in hand with prostitution, and the local brothels were heavily frequented during this time as well.¹³ Many middle class citizens who viewed themselves as “respectable” were staunchly opposed to alcohol and prostitution. In Lethbridge, near Fort Whoop Up, a letter was written to the editor of the Lethbridge Daily News which stated,

To The Editor of the News,

Sir, -- Is it not time the prostitutes dances were a thing of the past. Surely there are enough law-abiding people in Lethbridge to compel the harlots and other dissolute personas with which the town is infested, to make themselves a little less conspicuous. I believe Lethbridge possesses the doubtful honour, of being the only town in the Dominion, where prostitutes are allowed to hold public dances in the very heart of the town, at which gatherings they make night

¹¹ Chief Crowfoot, in *The Whiskey Trade: Liquor comes to the native world and brings addiction and death*. <http://www.bestlibrary.org/files/the-whiskey-trade.pdf> (Accessed 3 April 2015).

¹² Belinda Crowson, *We Don't Talk About Those Women: Lethbridge's Red Light District 1880s to 1940* (Lethbridge, AB: Lethbridge Historical Society, 2010): 9.

¹³ Crowson, *We Don't Talk About Those Women*: 8.

hideous with their riot and debauchery, plying their nefarious trade under the noses of our much vaunted Police force.

In "ye olden time," our ancestors, varied the monotony of their existence by stoning harlots to death. Whilst not advocating violence, I am of the opinion that it would be in the interest of morality if such gatherings were done away with.

*Truly yours,
A Lover of Decency¹⁴*

The heavy drinking and use of prostitution was certainly not what the Canadian government had in mind when they envisioned the development of Canada.¹⁵

Eventually, the whiskey trade and immorality of the lifestyle of the west caught the attention of the Canadian government. The North West Mounted Police were sent out to establish peace and order in the North West Territories. As part of their duties, the NWMP analyzed the abuse of alcohol in the NWT. Convinced that liquor was entirely harmful, laws were put in place in 1888 to prevent over consumption of liquor. This law prevented all First Nations from possessing alcohol, and white citizens were only allowed if they had a permit.¹⁶ Violations of the law were supposed to result in heavy fines. The reality of these regulations was entirely opposite to the intent. Racial lines were clear, as the Blackfoot people were often heavily fined while the authorities turned a blind eye to a white man drinking without a permit. In addition, there were instances of NWMP officers who struggled with alcohol addictions

¹⁴ N.A., "Stop the Dances," *Lethbridge Daily News*, 9 January 1891, http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n5jp0005.jpg, (Accessed 1 April 2015): 3.

¹⁵ Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001): 6.

¹⁶ William M. Baker, *Pioneer Policing in Southern Alberta: Deane of the Mounties 1888-1914* (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 1993): 33.

themselves. The permit system was so ineffective that it was repealed in 1892, and was deemed by those who experienced it as a total disaster.¹⁷

Although white men made up a majority of the population in the NWT, white women, too, settled the west. Often, they were understood to be the victims of the immorality caused by over-consumption of alcohol and prostitution and were the most vocal in their disregard for the substance. However, they did not possess the right to vote. At first, many traditional women I not believe that this was a substantial matter.¹⁸ Believing in upholding their sphere of the home, these white women sought to change the minds of their husbands, and hoped they would then support their cause politically. However this was often not the reality of their situation, and so many women joined in the fight for suffrage as a means to enact a legal prohibition on liquor.¹⁹

Despite the failure of the prohibition measures of the late 1800s, the fight for temperance and prohibition continued on into the twentieth century with white men and women at the frontlines against liquor consumption. However even with their hard work and dedication, the temperance cause remained dormant politically because it lacked legitimacy.²⁰ The failure of the past prohibition coupled with the lack of legal enforcement meant that the petition of the WCTU and other reform movements could be largely ignored by the general population. However, this would all change at the onset of the First World War.

The First World War provided the temperance campaign with a legitimacy they had previously lacked.²¹ All aspects of Canadian society were altered in order to support the war effort. Canada and the British Empire believed they needed all hands on deck in order to win the war, and this effort involved sacrifice.²² At the onset of the war,

¹⁷ Baker, *Pioneer Policing in Southern Alberta*: 34.

¹⁸ Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred?*: 69.

¹⁹ Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred?*: 69.

²⁰ Cook, "Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers": 316.

²¹ Cook, "Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers": 316.

²² Cook, "Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers": 314.

temperance workers, and specifically the WCTU sprang into action in a way they never had before, proselytizing all over Southern Alberta on the detrimental nature of the drink. Pledging their loyalty to the Crown and the Allied efforts, temperance was promoted as a method of victory. Liquor was now a threat to the Dominion of Canada and the Empire itself, as it decreased productivity and wasted precious funds, both of which were necessary for an Allied victory.²³ Women of the WCTU held temperance rallies, converting many men to their cause with their eloquence and skilled debates.²⁴ An anti-temperance campaign retaliated, however, they were not nearly as well organized and may have done considerable more harm than good for their cause.²⁵ The issue became so widespread in Alberta that by 1915, the Government of Alberta decide to hold a provincial plebiscite on the matter. On July 21, 1915 the men of Alberta voted (women could not vote in provincial or federal elections until 1918). The result was a sweeping victory on the part of the temperance campaign. A legal prohibition was to be enacted the following year. Hotel owners in Alberta were given one year to drain their liquor, and the new liquor law was to be enacted the following year. The legal prohibition in Alberta was to last until 1923.

The legal prohibition was enacted under the Liquor Act, which prohibited the public sale and consumption of alcohol. Included in this prohibition was “all fermented, spirituous, an malt liquors, and all combinations of liquors and all drinks an drinkable liquids which are intoxicating; an any liquor which contains more than two and a half percent of proof spirits shall be conclusively deemed to be intoxicating,”²⁶ Alcohol was still allowed for medicinal and sacramental purposes.

²³ Catherine Anne Cavanaugh, Michael Payne, Donald Grant Wetherell, *Alberta Formed, Alberta Transformed* (Calgary, Edmonton: University of Calgary Press, 2006): 391.

²⁴ N.A. “A Convincing Address,” *The High River Times* 15 July 1915, http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n8hp0895.jpg (Accessed 23 April 2015).

²⁵ N.A. “Who Am I?” *The High River Times*, 15 July 1915, http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n8hp0894.jpg (Accessed 23 April 2015).

²⁶ Government of Alberta, *An Act Representing the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors*. 1 July 1916. <http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/law/page.aspx?id=2901397> (Accessed 3 April 2015).

To shape the argument that temperance campaigns were a means to recreate the British Empire in Canada, I have primarily used Adele Perry's *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871*. Here, Perry effectively argues that the colonization of British Columbia was shaped by reformers who wished to stabilize the area as white society, according to British standards.²⁷ The mental framework can be applied to temperance reformers of Southern Alberta, who sought to establish standards of respectability by criminalizing alcohol as a substance. In addition, the population of Alberta was largely a working class, immigrant community, similar to Perry's study on the British Columbian settlers. This was a particular threat to the Empire, and so reformers believed it was their duty to civilize this new population for the good of Canada as a nation and the Empire as a whole. Another large source used for the shaping of this paper is Leslie Erikson's *Westward Bound*. Here, she outlines those criminalized throughout the early years of Alberta's history. She argues that it was more likely that a person would be criminalized if they were not a white, English settler.²⁸ When studying the temperance movements in Alberta, this argument could also be made. Drunkenness was often viewed as a particular problem for those who were not white nor English, and so reformers targeted those people in particular. Finally, the work of Ian Tyrell has been especially helpful, as he has studied the organization of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in great detail. Although his work centres on the American branch of the WCTU, he also addresses the international role of the organization.²⁹ The international nature of the WCTU allowed it to easily transfer into Canada, and was spread to Alberta by the early 19th century. In Alberta,

²⁷ Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*: 4.

²⁸ Erikson, *Westward Bound*: 13.

²⁹ Ian M. Tyrell, *Woman's World, Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880 - 1930* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991): 2.

its influence is particularly clear through the person of Louise McKinney.

Much of the evidence I have depended upon has come from various Albertan newspapers, published before, during, and after Prohibition. These articles can be challenging, as the identity of the authors are largely unknown. However, they do provided a helpful insight into the dominant conversations of the time period, in regards to race and respectability in the liquor issue. In addition, I have used a great deal of sources from the Women's Christian Temperance Union fonds, found at the Glenbow Museum and Archives. These include propaganda leaflets, political cartoons, and magazine publications all aimed at promoting temperance and prohibition in Alberta and the Dominion. The WCTU fonds contain information published in Alberta itself, as well as publications of the Dominion WCTU. Many of the items used in this paper were published outside of the province of Alberta, which make them limiting in some ways, as I cannot be certain that they were used specifically in Southern Alberta. However, they demonstrate the ideals of the WCTU as a whole, and events in Southern Alberta reflect the same sentiments expressed in Dominion publications. Because they were found within the fonds of the Alberta WCTU, it can be assumed that Dominion Chapters of the WCTU would have been heavily influential.

The temperance movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century promoted the middle class. Many of the movements, such as the WCTU, were run by middle class citizens who viewed liquor and the frequenting of saloons as a problem of the lower class.³⁰ While the perceived effects of alcohol, such as a poverty, spousal abuse, child neglect, filth, and disease were indeed problems of the lower class, the

³⁰ Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*: 91.

middle class reformers mistakenly placed sole responsibility for these problems on the public consumption of alcohol. It is clear that the temperance workers, both men and women, believed that purchasing alcohol led to poor decisions which caused them to become members of the lower classes. The Alberta Prohibition Association published this small article on the effects of liquor:

Abstain, because the beer room is a bank you deposit:

Your money – and lose it;

Your time – and lose it;

Your character – and lose it;

Your health – and lose it;

Your strength – and lose it;

Your manly independence – and lose it;

Your self-control – and lose it.³¹

This illustrates the negative characteristics of those who were in the lower classes – no money, no time for leisure, no character, no health, physically weak and lacking any sort of independence and self-control. The opposite of these characteristics were especially valued in Alberta by the social reformers, an alcohol undermined every one of them.

Alcohol consumption was part of the working class culture for many reasons, including health. In a time when many liquids were not safe for consumption – such as milk or water – alcohol was a safe remedy. Often, mothers would give their children a drop of gin if they believed they were getting sick, as a preventative measure.³² This was acceptable in the working class culture, and indeed in many middle class circles

³¹ A.B. O'Brien, M.D., F.R.C.S. *Alcohol and Faintness*, no date. Women's Christian Temperance Union fonds, Glenbow Archives, M1708-179.

³² Warsh, "Oh, Lord, pour a cordial on her wounded heart," :74.

as well. However, the reformers believed that even one drop of alcohol could make any person susceptible to certain ruin. Allowing children to partake in the drink in any manner was simply the beginning of a slippery slope into a lifetime of drunkenness and poverty.³³

Temperance movements in Alberta had very clear British ideals in terms of family, and the role that each gender was expected to assume. Alcohol was believed to be a very real threat to the institution of the family, as it could undermine the family in a very real way. When western Canada was first settled, the family was to be the building block of society.³⁴ Proper men would marry proper women. Together they would raise proper children and the cycle would continue until society as a whole was properly civilized. Reformers felt that by outlawing alcohol, they were protecting the home.³⁵ Alcohol was a threat to establishment of the family because of the effect it was believed to have on each of the genders.

Women were viewed as particularly vulnerable to the drink, due to their delicate nature.³⁶ A maternal feminism was often embodied by social reformers, who felt that children had a right to a proper mother. An alcoholic mother would deny children this right. Social reformers in Alberta like the women of the WCTU were raised with the British ideology of “True Womanhood.” True Womanhood abided by the belief that women were to be pious, pure, and submissive.³⁷ Alcohol poisoned each of these attributes by affecting a woman’s mind. When a woman’s mind was affected, social reformers believed that she could no longer be a nurturing woman – a key characteristic of ideal feminism.³⁸ A mother addicted to the drink was a danger to her children. One doctor related a story of a woman who was so inebriated that she lay on her bed, not noticing that her infant was beneath her. Her child suffocated and died

³³ Warsh, “Oh, Lord, pour a cordial on her wounded heart”: 76.

³⁴ Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*: 145.

³⁵ Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*: 100.

³⁶ Warsh, “Oh, Lord, pour a cordial on her wounded heart”: 70.

³⁷ Warsh, “Oh, Lord, pour a cordial on her wounded heart”: 70.

³⁸ Daniel Coleman, *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006): 129.

an avoidable death, all because the mother's mind was poisoned by the liquor.³⁹ Social reformers believed that by abolishing liquor, not only were they civilizing society, they were also protecting young children from inebriate mothers. By civilizing society, they were saving souls. By abolishing alcohol, they were saving lives.

The WCTU petitioned for mothers in particular to avoid the drink on the grounds that it would be detrimental to their children. If mothers were harming their children, they were failing to fulfill their God-given duty as proper mothers. They were also not fulfilling their duty as citizens of the Empire, raising children without the influence of alcohol. Pamphlets were published by the WCTU which promoted the belief that mothers should avoid alcohol at all costs. For example, one published by the Dominion WCTU stated,

*To Mothers! Alcohol is a **poison** found in all intoxicating drinks. It is a **fact** that an expectant mother who takes alcohol passes it into the system of her child. That the unborn child of a drinking mother can be intoxicated before birth. **This means** that the unborn child and the infant child of a drinking mother are being poisoned. **Nursing mothers** may increase the quantity of milk by taking stout or porter, but the quality of milk is thereby injured. **Gin** is sometimes given for small ailments to young infants. This is not merely a bad habit, but one that may **permanently injure the child**.⁴⁰*

This hostility toward the use of alcohol in any manner whatsoever emphasizes the lengths to which temperance workers campaigned to mothers in particular. All mothers were to take warning, as the very lives of their children were feared to be permanently at risk.

³⁹ Warsh, "Oh, Lord, pour a cordial on her wounded heart": 70.

⁴⁰ N.A. "To Mothers!" Women's Christian Temperance Union fonds, Glenbow Archives, M 1708-179: 67.

One Albertan woman in particular embodied the ideal of an English-Canadian woman. Louise Crummy McKinney was prominent member of the WCTU for most of her adult life. Born into a devout Methodist family in Ontario, Louise was well versed in the evils of alcohol from a young age. Although her parents were Irish, McKinney would later become the vice president of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, suggesting that she fully embraced the ideals of the Empire.⁴¹ In 1901, McKinney and her husband moved from Ontario to Claresholm, Alberta, where he became a farmer. Together they assisted in the establishment of the first Methodist church in the area. Along with her devotion to Methodism, McKinney was passionate about her work with the WCTU, and was firmly convinced that alcohol had no justifiable place in human lives. She held the American founder of the organization, Frances Willard, in such high regard that she was the namesake of her only son, Willard.⁴² Love of Frances Willard was in fact characteristic of an international WCTU, who revered her as a type of mythical saint.⁴³ McKinney was an active and important member of the WCTU in Alberta. She was one of the founders of the WCTU in Alberta and the west, unrelenting in her fight against liquor.⁴⁴ As the wife of a farmer and mother to a son, devout Methodist, and champion of a temperate Empire, McKinney embodied the traits that were most desirable in Canada as part of the Empire.

Although women were viewed as more delicate than men, the consumption of liquor was also an affront on the ideal British and Canadian man. White men who settled in the west had very specific expectations placed upon them. They were to be hard working, pious, kind, strong, and devoted to supporting the community, along with

⁴¹ Grant MacEwan, *Mighty Women: Stories of Western Canadian Pioneers* (Vancouver&Toronto: Greystone, 1995): 145.

⁴² MacEwan, *Mighty Women*: 145.

⁴³ Tyrell, *Woman's World, Woman's Empire*: 119.

⁴⁴ MacEwan, *Mighty Women*: 139.

their wives and children.⁴⁵ Alcohol undermined a man's traditional role. A man who was addicted to the drink was pitied and looked down upon. Prior to the provincial plebiscite in 1915 on the drink question, the *High River Times* published a scathing account of those men who felt that alcohol consumption was a personal liberty and not something to be regulated. It stated, "The men who boast about "personal liberty" are generally the sort who are leaning over the bar while their wives are struggling to get the supper ready and manage six children. Some liberty for the wife, who, presumably, isn't supposed to have any."⁴⁶ Men who were against prohibition were portrayed here as men who had no respect for their wives and families, directly opposing the British Canadian ideal of a true man.

Western men who did not fit the British and Canadian ideal of a true man were targeted for reform by method of "Muscular Christianity." This was supposed to introduce Christian values to single, male workers who lived beyond the social norms and expectations the Canadian elite had placed upon them.⁴⁷ Men who participated in public drinking rejected the social expectations placed upon them, by denying their Christian duty of sobriety, and disrespecting their role as respectable men of the new Canadian west. Muscular Christianity was to convince young men that strong, masculine men were indeed devoted Christians. Temperance could be a show of masculinity, and intemperance a show of male weakness.

Protestant Christianity, specifically Methodism, had close ties to English-Canadian nationalist aspirations.⁴⁸ Not surprisingly then, it was the Methodists who were most often at the forefront of the anti-alcohol campaign in Alberta. In High River, Alberta, local historian

⁴⁵ Coleman, *White Civility*: 129.

⁴⁶ N.A. *The High River Times*, 1 July, 1915, http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n8hp0894.jpg (Accessed 23 April 2015).

⁴⁷ Coleman, *White Civility*: 145.

⁴⁸ Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred?*: 59.

Bert Sheppard stated that it was the Methodists who pushed for the dry vote in High River.⁴⁹ Louise McKinney, acting president of the national WCTU and vice-president of the World WCTU established the first Methodist church in the prairie town of Claresholm, Alberta.⁵⁰ Protestant Christianity as a whole and Methodism in particular provided a religious justification for temperance movements. Daily newspapers such as the *High River Times* from High River, Alberta, published cartoons in their weekly newspaper which portrayed rowdy men in the bar while women, children, and the local minister looked on in disappointment and sadness.



The High River Times, 1 July 1915,

http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n8hp0905.jpg (Accessed 23 April 2015).

The minister in this cartoon clearly disdains the liquor interests, and justified his disdain through religious principles. This justification was explained and promoted across branches of the WCTU through a variety of ways.

⁴⁹ Bert Sheppard, *Spitzee Days*. (1971) <http://www.ourroots.ca/e/page.aspx?id=272992> (Accessed 22 April 2015): 200.

⁵⁰ MacEwan, *Mighty Women*: 139.

Often, hymns sung by the organization would emphasize God's position on alcohol consumption, pitying those who were entrapped in the snares of addiction. Although original hymns were written during this time period, the WCTU also utilized traditional hymns and altered the lyrics to fit their mandate. For example, the words of the traditional hymn "Doxology" appear altered at the end of a songbook entitled, *Hymns for Use in WCTU Meetings*, published in 1908. The traditional hymn is sung as follows,

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost*⁵¹

However, in the *Hymns for Use in WCTU Meetings*, this version appears:

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him who heals the drunkard's woe
Praise Him who leads the temperance host
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost*⁵²

This traditional hymn was altered to promote temperance ideals, and show pity for those who consumed alcohol. Those who enjoyed the drink were believed to be in need of healing. In addition, this short hymn explicitly states that it was God who was leading their temperance campaign, providing all the justification they needed.

Social Reformers such as the WCTU would often use Christ as an example of why it is important to live a temperate lifestyle. If God was

⁵¹ Traditional Hymn

⁵² *Hymns for Use in WCTU Meetings*. 1888. Found on: https://archive.org/stream/cihm_94452#page/n5/mode/2up (Accessed 2 April 2015): 47.

the leader of the temperance campaign, then Christ was portrayed as the example of how to live temperance out on earth. In an edition of the WCTU *Temperance Lesson Quarterly* published in 1918, a lesson was provided to teachers entitled, “How Christ Grew Strong,” which states,

*Christ's physical growth was important; health and strength are the royal foundations of an effective life, and our Lord could not have endured what he had to endure without a superb physique. But a strong body is worse than useless without wisdom... It has been proved by patient, thorough, an convincing scientific experiments, that alcohol even in small amounts lessens muscular an nervous endurance, diminishes accuracy, makes a worker in every respect a poorer worker. Total abstinence is necessary if a worker would be at his best.*⁵³

That which Christ had to endure was a painful crucifixion, which they believed to result in salvation for humanity as a whole. Temperance was required in order to become like Christ. To acquire a superb physique such as Christ's, total abstinence was necessary. Of course, the irony in this way of thinking is that there are multiple stories in the bible when Christ himself consumes wine.

Anti-liquor campaigns were dominated by an English Protestant Christianity, both internationally and in Alberta. Although there were some temperance campaigns organized by other denominations such as Catholicism, they were very much the minority. Many other religions felt marginalized by the anti-liquor movement and its religious zeal, believing that the removal of liquor was an attack on their own culture

⁵³ Mrs. Blanche Read Johnson, “How Christ Grew Strong,” in *Temperance Lessons Quarterly* (London, Canada: Dominion WCTU, 1918):

and religion. During the time leading up to the Provincial Plebiscite on Prohibition, two Catholic priests wrote letters to the Editor, encouraging people to vote wet. They stated,

*We missionaries of this province have seen days of prohibition here when the law was disregarded by the people... whiskey was sold by individuals and in houses and peddled out in the lanes of the cities... We therefore hope that our old friends will vote "No," and against the proposed liquor act. We... find that the liquor act would only take away the liberty of the poor people and give the rich their necessities.*⁵⁴

These Catholic priests clearly believed that legal prohibition would only advance one class of people in Alberta – the Protestant middle class who were working so hard to criminalize alcohol consumption. In addition to this, the priests may have felt that their religious ceremony was also being attacked by the temperance campaigns. The traditional Catholic Mass required the use of sacramental wine to complete the ritual. Although sacramental wine remained legal under the Liquor Act, members of the WCTU were staunch believers that just ‘one drop’ of alcohol would place one on a slippery slope to certain ruin. This belief is made clear in an anecdotal story that had been published in the *World Book of Temperance* in 1908,

‘Come in and take a drop.’ The first drop led to other drops. He dropped his position, he dropped his respectability, he dropped his fortune, he dropped his friends, he dropped finally all his prospects

⁵⁴ Father Lacombe and Father Doucette, “Priests Speak Out Against Prohibition,” *The High River Times*, 15 July 1915, *The Best of Times: The War Years, 1914-1919* (High River, Alberta: A History of High River and District, 2003): 218.

⁵⁵ Dr. and Mrs. Wilbur F. Crafts, *World Book of Temperance*, 1908. Women’s Christian Temperance Union Fonds, Glenbow Archives M-1708-135.

*in life, and his hopes for eternity, and then came the last drop on the gallows. BEWARE OF THE FIRST DROP.*⁵⁵

This story was accompanied by a cartoon depicting a man about to be hung, ominously predicting the future of anyone who took just one drop of alcohol. Although it does not clarify if sacramental liquor is excluded, it can be assumed that ‘one drop’ of liquor includes any and all liquor.

Protestant Christianity played a huge role in the temperance movements of Southern Alberta, yet it has been argued that Methodism in the west “never seemed to decide clearly whether they were spreading Christian civilization, moral respectability, or the blessings of the British civilization.”⁵⁶ Moral respectability was a key element of the anti-liquor movement. As was illustrated in the anecdote mentioned earlier, just one drop of alcohol could send a person into a downward spiral to physical and spiritual ruin. Alcohol was a poison to the mind, and prevented people from thinking and behaving properly. This could cause damage to entire communities. Respectability became a major cause for concern in the anti-liquor controversy. On July 1, 1915, just a few weeks before the prohibition plebiscite, an article was published in the *High River Times* which stated,

*The greatest question is that: as to whether, in any period of its history the liquor traffic ever benefitted any legitimate business or furthered any good cause. If it has, then let the liquor advocates tell us what it is. Silence. Yes, an unbroken silence, too... The liquor traffic in this or any other country never did any good to the community. Instead, it has been a demoralizing influence against which very common sense person has been fighting for years.*⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Orwam, *Promise of Eden*: 148.

⁵⁷ N.A. *High River Times*, 1 July 1915, http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n8hp0910.jpg (Accessed 23 April 2015).

Liquor traffic was promoted as a poison to the communities in Southern Alberta. Respectable, progressive communities were not to allow alcohol, if they were to have any common sense.

Hard work was one of the most respectable attributes a person could possess, according to British and Canadian ideals.⁵⁸ Alcohol was a poison to the mind, and so inhibited a person from working to the best of their ability. Social reformers believed alcohol made a person physically weak, and so pitifully disdained those who took part in the drink. When one was inebriated, they could not fulfill their important roles of hard work and respectability. It would seem that all professions were helpless in the face of the “demon drink.”

Professions which had traditionally been viewed as “respectable” were threatened by the lucrative business that bootlegging afforded them. Doctors, for example, could make quite a profit by bootlegging medicinal liquors. The Liquor Act allowed medicinal prescriptions, but presumably did not think doctors would be vulnerable to the temptation of bootlegging.⁵⁹ Doctors who participated in the bootlegging game could make quite a profit off, especially during the holiday season. Line ups were long as people waited for their “prescriptions” to be filled by the doctor. However, many ‘respectable’ people felt that a doctor in the bootlegging game was especially insulting, as this profession was generally regarded as morally upstanding. In the small town of High River, Alberta, the local doctor, Dr. Stanley, was a staunch prohibitionist and devoted Methodist and so was mightily offended by the abuse of his trade.⁶⁰ In a letter to the editor, published in May 1919 he condemned bootlegging doctors, stating, “...unworthy members are doing so much to debauch

⁵⁸ Orwam, *Promise of Eden*, 126.

⁵⁹ Government of Alberta, *An Act Representing the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors*. 1 July 1916. <http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/law/page.aspx?id=2901397> (Accessed 3 April 2015).

⁶⁰ Sheppard, *Spitzee Days*: 25.

the community and bring discredit upon the entire profession.”⁶¹ Respectability and credibility were not synonymous with alcohol consumption and bootlegging in Southern Alberta during this time. The illegal sale of liquor was in direct opposition to ideals of the Empire, which stressed deference to authority in order to create a peaceful and civil society.

Bootlegging as an activity was heavily frowned upon by the social reform movements. However, just as in the prohibition days of the NWT, prosecution for liquor crimes was racially segregated. First Nations people were especially criminalized for possessing the substance, as they were a direct target for the “civilizing” forces of the reformers. First Nations people were believed to be backward and immoral.⁶² When alcohol was added to the mix, reformers believed they could not be trusted. Additionally, organizations such as the WCTU believed that it was the duty of the government to help those who could not help themselves, especially in terms of alcohol consumption and addiction.⁶³ Those who were not white, English, and middle class were more likely to be criminalized for possession of liquor, or for participating in bootlegging.⁶⁴ Bootlegging in general was described as an outsider problem. The concept of race appeared frequently in the reports of bootlegging crimes during the prohibition era, supporting the notion that temperance campaigns promoted a white, English, middle class civility. For example, in 1921, the *High River Times* published an article on bootlegging that was particularly forceful in regards to the business of bootleggers. Published under the title, “They’re Slimy Individuals,” the article stated,

⁶¹ Dr. G.D. Stanley, “Doctors and the Bootlegging Game,” *The High River Times*, 22 May 1919, *The Best of Times: The Roarin’ Twenties* (High River, Alberta: A History of High River and District, 2003): 24.

⁶² Sarah Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997):161.

⁶³ Tyrell, *Woman’s World, Woman’s Empire*: 147.

⁶⁴ Erikson. *Westward Bound*: 225.

That the bootlegger is an elusive individual goes without saying. In the cities, police every once in a while attempt to round up the slimy characters. The fact remains, however, that there is a force behind the bootlegger that should be taken by the throat and strangled. In the leading hotels up at Edmonton there is in existence an organization headed by Jews who supply whiskey to the bootleggers...⁶⁵

It is difficult to determine what the “force” behind a bootlegger was. However, it is notable that the blame for bootlegging was placed upon the Jewish community – an outsider community both in term of race and religion.

Fears surrounding the idea of non-British immigrants, such as a Jewish population, were palpable during the prohibition years. Prohibition was an attempt at controlling new populations.⁶⁶ This is made clear in opinions of the time, which reflect a desire to strictly regulate liquor laws in the face of new settlers. In the days leading up to the prohibition in 1916, an article was published in the Lethbridge Herald which stated,

Saturday, July 1st is distant less than seven weeks. On that date the province goes dry. The event is momentous in any community, and even more so than usual in this province where an enormous expansion with the attendant influx of new settlers awaits us. We have been assured by the powers that be that the prohibition measure will be vigorously and impartially enforced.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ N.A., “They’re Slimy Individuals,” *The High River Times*, 10 March 1921, *The Best of Times: The Roarin’ Twenties* (High River, Alberta: A History of High River and District, 2003): 330.

⁶⁶ Erikson, *Westward Bound*: 226.

⁶⁷ N.A. “Prohibition and Hotels,” *The High River Times*, 31 May 1916, http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n8hp0910.jpg (Accessed 3 April 2015).

Although the article does not state just who exactly these new settlers are, the fact that they were outsiders is important. Immigrants were not to be trusted around alcohol. This was a sentiment that was emphasized throughout the prohibition years by the temperance movements in Southern Alberta.

Alberta was not the only province who feared immigration, rather temperance workers were participating in a nation-wide trend that believed outsiders were responsible for bootlegging. In Ontario, a scathing warning was published by the Ontario WCTU which noted the tendency of foreigners to participate in bootlegging. Published in 1921, it stated,

Did you know that in the last 10 years over one million eight hundred thousand immigrants have entered Canada? And that in 1921 over 148 000 arrived?

Do you know that of our 9 millions of population, 4 million came to us in 20 years, and of these only 1 ¼ were of British stock? Do you know that these new Canadians represent 51 nationalities – Hebrews, Chinese, Greek, Hindu, Swedish, Armenian, Syrian, Polish, Japanese, Italian, Russian, Norwegian, Galician, Hungarian, Austrian, German, etc., etc.?

Look over that list and ask yourself, “Who of these will bring to this Country the moral standards and religious ideals that Canadians hold dear?”

...What will happen if we receive these strangers into our citizenship, and do not Christianize and Canadianize them?

... Who are the boss bootleggers? Look at court records and you will see that they are largely foreigners.

... Unless these people are given the Gospel, to replace their present ideals of life and conduct and are brought in touch with Canadian standards of living, the outlook is serious indeed ... Canadians must wake up, or they will lose their proud position in the front ranks of progress. Canadians must also remember that the foreigner is their responsibility, since they invited him to Canada.⁶⁸

This sentiment expressed in this excerpt was not unique to the province of Ontario. In fact, the exact same sentiments can be found in Alberta during this time period, proving that Dominion WCTU publications were influential all over Canada.

Perhaps the clearest example of this fear of foreigners and bootlegging was the infamous story of Italian immigrant and bootlegger Emilio Picarello (Emperor Pic) and his accomplice, Florence Lassandro. Emperor Pic ran a bootlegging operation out of Blairmore, Alberta during the prohibition years. Known as “the biggest bootlegger of the Crow’s Nest Pass,” Picarello, his son Stephen, and Lassandro were all heavily involved in the activity of bootlegging, Stephen and Lassandro serving as police decoys who pretended to be lovers while liquor exchanges were being made.⁶⁹ On the night of September 22, 1922, Stephen was involved in a high-speed police chase which left him wounded. Both Emperor Pic and Lassandro were arrested for the retribution style murder of a Constable Stephen Lawson – the man who was believed to have injured Stephen Picarello. Believing that “women don’t hang,” Lassandro took the blame for the incident. However, it has

⁶⁸ Ontario Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, “Our Foreign Citizens,” 1921, Women’s Christian Temperance Union fonds, Glenbow Archives M1708-179.

⁶⁹ Erikson, *Westward Bound*: 225.

never been made clear who really was to blame. Both Lassandro and Picarello were sentenced to death by hanging, and were hanged on May 2, 1923.

This story is most important because of the Italian identity of the both Picarello and Lassandro. Their immigrant status and involvement with alcohol meant that they were solid enemies of the reform movements, who were working so hard to build a sober, English empire in western Canada.⁷⁰ Letters poured in from all over Canada, petitioning Prime Minister Mackenzie King to either transfer Lassandro's punishment to a life time prison sentence, or begging that she be hanged. Emily Murphy, a first-wave feminist, prohibitionist, and Methodist, forcefully joined the conversation. In a letter to the Prime Minister, she stated, "I desire to protest against the pernicious doctrine that because a person who commits murder is a woman, that person should escape from capital punishment. As women we claim the privileges for our sex, and we accordingly are prepared to take upon ourselves the weight of this penalty."⁷¹ Although she was speaking of equality in all areas of life, the Italian community believed that support was not given to Lassandro because she was Italian. One Italian journalist stated that women had not been hung in Canada for the last twenty-four years, presumably because they were English.⁷² Bootleggers were looked down upon, and Italian bootleggers even more so.

After prohibition was repealed in 1923, social reformers continued to push for abstinence from booze and liquors on racial grounds. In a letter written to the WCTU in 1924, a certain Mr. Krett urged them to continue in the fight against the traffic of liquor, particularly because of the effect that liquor had on other ethnicities. He stated,

⁷⁰ Erikson, *Westward Bound*: 225.

⁷¹ Emily Murphy, Edmonton, to W.L.M. King, Prime Minister, Canada, 2 February 1923 in Lesley Erikson, *Westward Bound: Sex, Violence, the Law, and the Making of a Settler Society* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011): 227.

⁷² Erikson, *Westward Bound*: 227.

*The Slavonic people as a race and the Russian people especially were users of hard liquors and so the Ukrainians were to a lesser degree. The bulk of these which have settled the Northern portion of Alberta found about the same conditions here when the bars were in existence. 1915 made a turn of the situation.*⁷³

This letter was in turn distributed by the WCTU as a means of maintaining support within the movement. M.E. Rush of the WCTU distributed the letter, and prefaced it by noting that Mr. Krett was himself a Slavonic man. She went on to say,

*Think of our present opportunity. In this colony of new Canadians we now have some key people to help in a never ending Prohibition campaign. . There is now available a worker who can travel this colony from end to end – not only spreading Prohibition propaganda as he goes but encouraging and organizing friends of the Prohibition to do the same... He knows the language of the people and can get into their homes and hearts as few English speaking persons could.*⁷⁴

In effect, this letter acknowledged the superiority of the English speaking, white people of Canada. By Mr. Krett appealing to the WCTU – a white, middle class, English organization – he was admitting that his own people needed to be refined by the more civilized middle class. The opportunistic response on the part of the WCTU showed that they agreed with this, supporting the claim that prohibition was in part racially motivated as was demonstrated in the Ontario publication on foreigners.

⁷³ Mr. Krett, Alberta Provincial Woman's Christian Temperance Union fonds, Glenbow Archives M 1708-179.

⁷⁴ M.E. Rush, , Alberta Provincial Woman's Christian Temperance Union fonds, Glenbow Archives M 1708-179.

The efforts of the prohibition movement eventually failed, as the legal prohibition in Alberta was repealed in favour of a government controlled sale of all liquors in November, 1923.⁷⁵ Although the social reformers in Alberta had worked long and hard in their fight for abstinence, legal Prohibition on alcohol had only lasted a short seven and a half years. There are many reasons why Albertans became disenchanted with the temperance campaign.

Support for the prohibition movement had been gradually waning over the years. This was largely due to the ineffectiveness of the measures. As early as 1917, just one year after the Liquor Act was enacted, it became clear that the large amounts of “dry” votes did not reflect popular conviction on the matter. One gentleman wrote to *The High River Times* expressing this sentiment. He stated,

*People do not look upon the Liquor Act as they do other laws. They want to assist in the enforcement of laws against stealing and murder, but ask them to assist in giving information in connection with violations of the Liquor Act and they will reply, “I am not an informer.” Frequently, you will find a man that says he voted for the act. He gave both time and money in support thereof, but there his duty ended. Multiply that many by thousands and you have thousands with zero sentiment for the act, and it follows that there is zero enforcement. The bootlegger, meanwhile, succeeds because of co-operation and team play.*⁷⁶

This suggests that many people were not convinced upon the temperance matter, as the 1915 vote suggested. In addition, no amount

⁷⁵ *High River Times*

⁷⁶ N.A. “Co-Operation Lacking in Enforcement of Liquor Act,” *The High River Times* 10 May 1917, http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n8jp0264.jpg (Accessed 23 April 2015).

of legislation could have removed the thirst for liquor. Albertans may have been able to recognize the amount of damage that liquor could do, but many felt that it access to legal alcohol should be afforded to them by basic civil liberties. For this reason, many assisted in bootlegging, and the Liquor Act was largely ignored.

Aside from the relative ineffectiveness of the Liquor Act, temperance was initially legitimized as a war-time measure. The WCTU promoted temperance as a means of keeping the home front a safe and wholesome place that the men would be proud to return home to. A WCTU magazine published this cartoon, depicting this exact sentiment:



Temperance Lessons Quarterly (London, Canada: Dominion WCTU, 1918)

The Canadian soldier is returning home to his white family, who by waving the flag of temperance, are welcoming him home to the land of honor, truth, sobriety, purity, integrity, and so on. The temperance workers believed that they were making Canada worthy of the

sacrifice of the men overseas. However, the men returning home did not reciprocate these sentiments. In fact, they felt that temperance was an insult to their sacrifice overseas.⁷⁷ They believed that they had sacrificed in order to enjoy the pleasures of life, such as public consumption of alcohol. Additionally, alcohol had been a party of the culture of war. It was used to boost morale, and provided soldiers with courage to participate in activities that would have been horrific to witness.⁷⁸ Returning soldiers were not only displeased with the actions of the temperance campaigns, they vocally rebutted the claims of the temperance workers.⁷⁹ This lack of support on the part of the soldiers contributed to the waning support for the temperance movement.

It is interesting to note that Prohibition was enacted when women were not enfranchised in 1915. In 1923 women possessed the right to vote. Yet it was during the 1923 plebiscite that the Prohibition measures were voted against. The addition of women to the voting list could suggest a few different things. First of all, it may suggest that it truly was one class of women who were adamant that liquor should be outlawed. This group of middle class women were wealthy and educated. They did not see the need for alcohol. Yet there were other classes of women who had depended on alcohol for many reasons other than drunkenness, as was stated earlier. These uses could have been medicinal, or for sacramental purposes, such as used during the Catholic Mass. Women outside of the realm of the WCTU may have been offended by the criminalization of all liquor, and so voted “wet” in the 1923 plebiscite.

The social reformers who advocated temperance did so upon the basis of British and Canadian ideals. They were, in a sense, trying to establish a mini Britain in Alberta by attacking the problem of liquor.

⁷⁷ Tim Cook, “Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers” 329.

⁷⁸ 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 (2000): 3.

⁷⁹ Cook, “Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers”: 329.

However, there were many immigrants to Alberta during the early twentieth century. For many, alcohol was a part of the culture they brought along with them.⁸⁰ To be criminalized for enjoying a pint of beer seemed wholly unnecessary outside of wartime sacrifice. The threats of the temperance workers were often believed to be excessive, and an infringement on personal liberties. This was clear from the start of Prohibition, in the days leading up to the first provincial plebiscite in 1915. A half page advertisement was taken out in the *High River Times*, which asked readers in a riddle-like fashion, “Who Am I?”

*I was born of hysteria – my heart is cruel, my eyes are blind to justice.
I glory in jails. Intimidation is my best friend.*

*I dethrone reason, but have no brains. I breed hatred, strife and
bitterness where peace and friendship should reign.*

*I make a great noise but never tell the truth. My tongue is dipped in
gall. I take much but give nothing in return but deception, frau,
and failure.*

*When I speak, Fanaticism is glad, Oppression shouts for joy and
Freedom weeps.⁸¹*

The answer to this ominous riddle was the proposed Liquor Act. Although the author of this riddle is unknown, the fact remains clear that there were citizens who felt that the Liquor Act was an affront to their civil liberties. This sentiment did not go dormant after the Prohibition began.⁸² It became a cause for the eventual repeal of the Liquor Act in 1923.

⁸⁰ James H. Gray, *Booze: When Whiskey Ruled the West* (Saskatoon, SK: Fifth House Ltd., 1995): 115.

⁸¹ N.A. “Who Am I?” *The High River Times* 15 July 1915,
http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/np_page2.asp?code=n8hp0894.jpg
(Accessed 23 April 2015).

⁸² Gray, *Booze*: 233.

The temperance movements in Southern Alberta during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were working to establish a British and Canadian civilized society. Liquor and its effect upon the mind of those who consumed it was believed to cause many social evils which were detrimental to the ideal English society that was envisioned by Canadian nationalists. Alcohol was an attack on the family, making the mothers unable to care for their children. Fathers were feared to spend all their wages at the local bar. Their role as a provider was threatened by the temptation of alcohol. The effect of alcohol upon mothers and fathers left children without proper parents, leaving the family unstable. Without proper families, society could not progress in a civilized manner. Alcohol was also seen as a problem of the uncivilized lower classes. Liquor consumption was often equated with problems of the working class, such as ill health, filth, and poverty. To justify their actions beyond class and gender, social reform movements such as the WCTU used their Protestant Christianity as a basis for anti-liquor sentiment. Traditional hymns were altered to suit the needs of the temperance campaigns, and published in hymn books that were distributed all over the Dominion.

Perhaps the most notable element of the temperance campaigns was the way it criminalized races other than those who were white and English. The prohibition days of the NWT enforced the permit system much more heavily on the Blackfoot people in the area. When prohibition was enacted again in 1916, many newspapers and pamphlets promote temperance as a way to control a new immigrant population that was inhabiting Alberta. Many reformers felt it was their God-given duty to educate immigrants in the ways of Christianity and Canadian standards. New immigrants were a

threat to this, as was exemplified in the case of Emperor Pic and Florence Lassandro, bootleggers out of the Crow's Nest Pass.

Although the reformers eventually failed with the repeal of the Liquor Act in 1923, their actions provide a unique perspective on the history of Southern Alberta. By understanding the forces that were at work in the early years of Alberta's history, one can better understand the character of Alberta as a whole. The ideal for Alberta was to contribute to Canada's role as new and improved Britain, and in fact, outshine and replace Britain in many respects.⁸³ Although this never did become a reality, the goal still existed and influenced many ideals at the time in regards to class, gender, religion, respectability, and class. Understanding the role of the elite in Alberta can shed light on some of the more puzzling aspects of Alberta's character – such as its stereotypical identity as the bible belt of Canada. The early elite of Alberta who were staunch Protestants and devoted temperance workers can help explain a lot of this. They were hugely influential at Alberta's conception, and so were influential in ideals that became the norm, especially in regards to respectability, religion, gender roles, class, and race.

English Canadians attempted and eventually failed at recreating a new and improved Britain in the Prairie Provinces through the promotion of prohibition. Ultimately, Albertans felt it was their personal decision whether or not to consume alcohol, and regarded temperance workers as fanatics who did not enjoy a bit of fun. However, by understanding prohibition in this light, it can assist in understanding Alberta as a whole. Alcohol consumption and its effects on the mental state of the consumer has always been a controversial subject. This study explains the origins of anti-alcohol consumption in Alberta.

⁸³ Orwam, *Promise of Eden*: 134.

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VOICES OF WAR:

THE 1918 FIELD DIARIES OF
LIEUT. A. G. VIRTUE AND
LIEUT. D. S. MACPHERSON

CAITLIN RATCLIFFE

World War One had an incalculable impact on the Canadian identity. Acutely aware of the war's lasting national importance, the contemporary Canadian government was careful to thoroughly document the conflict. At the level of individual units, this documentation took the form of War Diaries, a new and interesting genre that developed in the First World War. The primary archival source I intend to examine is the 1918 Field Diary of Lieutenant Abner Gladstone Virtue of the 61st Battery, Canadian Field Artillery (C.F.A.). A barrister-at-law from Lethbridge, Alberta, Virtue's biography is remarkably similar to that of Lieutenant Donald Stuart Macpherson of the 23rd Battery, C.F.A. from Orangeville, Ontario. Macpherson's Diary, as revised by Macpherson in 1965 and published by his son in 2001, provides an interesting comparison to Virtue's unpublished record. An analysis of these Diaries reveals the experiences of the small-town artillery men and their responses to the last year of World War One.

The Genre of the Field Diary

Contrary to our modern expectations of a "diary," War Diaries are *not* personal diaries. Notably, they were mandatory documents, required of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (C.E.F.) from the start of the First World War to "maintain a daily account of the 'Actions in the Field.'"¹ Intended to document the activities of units, not of individuals, War Diaries are fundamentally different from other primary sources from the trenches. In contrast to the intensive and personal prose of the French soldiers' epistolary tradition,² the entries of the Diaries are fragmentary and mainly militarily-orientated. While lacking many of the personal and social elements of letters, War Diaries are valuable sources of "how

¹ Library and Archives Canada, *War Diaries of the First World War*, (11 January 2016), <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/pages/war-diaries.aspx> (Accessed 10 April 2016).

² Martha Hanna, "A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition of France during World War I," *The American Historical Review* 108 (2003): 1338.

and where [a specific] unit was deployed and the wartime experiences of its individual members.”³ The content of the Diaries often varied based on the size of the unit, and the quality of the records were dependent upon the “ability of the junior officer responsible for writing the diary on a day-to-day basis.”⁴ As a result, the quantity and nature of the entries varied accordingly.⁵ The Diaries are inherently incomplete, as “[b]esides being overworked, exhausted, and sometimes without the necessary literary skills, the battalion war diarists often did not have a full picture of the battle.”⁶ Despite these shortcomings, War Diaries are unique historic records.

The mandatory nature of the documents is significant, as it means these records were created with a deliberately historical purpose in mind. Even as events were in the process of unfolding, the Canadian government was laying the foundations for the war’s histories. From the beginning, unit histories were recognized as important, since “official histories would never be able to document adequately the role of most regiments or batteries in battle.”⁷ The diarists were aware of this purpose, and it fundamentally shaped their entries. For instance, an inadequate entry in the 18th Battalion’s War Diary on the Somme is accompanied by a note directly acknowledging the entry as “Not much help to a historian.”⁸ More subtly, Virtue concludes his 1918 diary with the simple touching line: “Another fine day.”⁹ Clearly, the eyes of future historians influenced the pens of the diarists.

Despite their obvious historical importance, the Diaries were not necessarily carefully maintained. According to the veterans, the documents were often seen at best as simply “an official return, to

³ Library and Archives Canada, *War Diaries of the First World War*.

⁴ Library and Archives Canada, *War Diaries of the First World War*.

⁵ The National Archives, *British Army war diaries 1914-1922*, (n.d.), <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-war-diaries-1914-1922/> (Accessed 10 April 2016).

⁶ Tim Cook, *Clio’s Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 22.

⁷ Cook, 170.

⁸ Cook, 21.

⁹ Abner Gladstone Virtue, Field Diary 61st Battery C.F.A. 1918, Galt Museum & Archives 20121021: December 31.

be rendered more or less perfunctorily every month,” and at worst as “a bit of a nuisance” and a “necessary evil.”¹⁰ Consequently, the diaries may record very little factual information, most of which was “necessarily... a good deal of hearsay.”¹¹ This shortcoming is certainly apparent in some of Virtue’s entries. During his time in the hospital from November 2 to December 15, the battery’s activities are recorded in brackets. As Virtue himself was not with the unit, it must be assumed that he got this field information from a fellow officer after his recovery. While Virtue was careful to follow up on his battery’s actions, other officers were not so diligent, resulting in criticism of the Diaries as accurate primary sources.

In addition to a fundamental reliance on hearsay and widespread neglect, War Diaries have been harshly condemned for offering “little recognitions of the conditions under which the fighting soldier existed, which, more often than not, were dreadful.”¹² Despite – or perhaps, due to – the diarists’ proximity to the battlefields, War Diaries have been criticized as “bland,” “factual,” and “‘bloodless’ in their description of battle and the men who were engaged in it.”¹³ Certainly, a brief glance at Virtue’s and Macpherson’s Diaries proves this to be true, as neither contains any detail more graphic than a casualty number: even the death of Macpherson’s brother is remarkably understated.¹⁴ In the epilogue to his published Diaries, Macpherson directly addresses the significant absence of any horrific, realistic descriptions of his wartime experiences. Macpherson describes his Diary as “a means of escape from the war and not an attempt to portray war in all its stark reality,” since “[s]anity and peace of mind could be preserved only by thinking and talking and writing about the more normal things of life.”¹⁵

¹⁰ Cook, 22; 63; 59.

¹¹ Cook, 59.

¹² Cook, 240-1.

¹³ Cook, 179.

¹⁴ Donald Stuart Macpherson, *A Soldier's Diary: The WW1 Diaries of Donald Macpherson*, intro. Kenneth Macpherson (St. Catharines: Vanwell Publishing Limited, 2001): 153-4.

¹⁵ Macpherson, 188.

It may be assumed that other officers adopted the same tactic for dealing with the ongoing trauma of the war. Despite their official nature, War Diaries had the potential to become meaningful personal records for the officers as, while recording the unit's activity, diarists often took the opportunity to insert their own commentary. The resulting combination of military and personal affairs is an invaluable source of insight into the experiences of Canadians in the First World War.

Canadian Soldiers in the Great War

At the opening of World War One, Canada's professional army was "almost nonexistent."¹⁶ With Britain's entry into the war in 1914, Canada raised a force of 600,000 men, including 1500 from Lethbridge.¹⁷ Canada sent 424,000 soldiers overseas; 60,000 did not return.¹⁸ Like other inexperienced troops on the Western Front, Canadians initially suffered from "the difficult learning curve" that characterized the battlefields of the First World War, and went through "several difficult and costly battles in the first two years of the war."¹⁹ The Battle of Somme in 1916, which included Lethbridge's 20th and 39th Batteries,²⁰ marked the turning point for Allied perceptions of Canadian troops. Tim Cook argues that, following this battle, Canadian troops developed a lasting reputation as "one of the finest fighting formations in the Great War."²¹ By the time Virtue and Macpherson went to France in 1917, the Canadian troops were regarded "by both allies and enemies as shock troops that were thrown into the bloodiest campaigns to deliver victory."²² Into this context of the newborn national army entered two small-town artillerymen.

¹⁶ Cook, 10.

¹⁷ Christopher R. Kilford, *Lethbridge at War: The Military History of Lethbridge from 1900 to 1996* (Lethbridge: Battery Books and Publishing, 1996), 27.

¹⁸ Cook, 10.

¹⁹ Cook, 11.

²⁰ Kilford, 53.

²¹ Cook, 10.

²² Cook, 10.

Abner Gladstone Virtue (November 14, 1891 – August 4, 1960)

Born in Beachburg, Ontario, Virtue came to Lethbridge with his parents and seven siblings at the age of ten.²³ He graduated from Lethbridge's Central School in 1908 and began his lifelong career in law, starting at the Simmons and Shepherd office in Lethbridge before studying at Osgoode Hall in Toronto and ultimately graduating from the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Laws (L.L.B.) in 1913. Notably, he was the Law Society of Alberta's gold medal recipient in 1913, placing first among the thirty-three candidates who wrote examinations for admission to the Alberta Bar.²⁴ He was admitted to the bar on November 29, 1913, and practiced law until late 1915.

In 1915, Virtue entered the Royal School of Artillery at Kingston, Ontario and earned commission as a Lieutenant. Transferring from Lethbridge's inactive 25th Battery, Virtue was assigned to the 61st Battery in May, 1916.²⁵ The battery trained in Ontario until September, and then was shipped to England to continue training for the better part of the year.²⁶ Joining Lethbridge's 20th and 39th Batteries, the 61st Battery arrived in France by August 21, 1917 as part of the 14th Artillery Brigade²⁷ and began actual service in the line by September 5, 1917.²⁸ In France, Virtue served with distinction for sixteen months, earning the military cross for his gallantry in the Battle of Burlon Woods.²⁹ As a Lieutenant, Virtue kept the War Diary for his battery during their time in France. During the year 1918, Virtue's Diary covers the battery's movement around the northern countryside of France, both on and off

²³ N.A., "In the News" *Lethbridge Herald*, 27 September 2000, <http://0-lethbridgeherald.newspaperarchive.com.darius.uleth.ca/lethbridge-herald/2000-09-27/page-16> (Accessed 10 April 2016): 16.

²⁴ N.A., "Lethbridge Man Won the Gold Medal" *Lethbridge Herald*, 11 August 1913, <http://0-lethbridgeherald.newspaperarchive.com.darius.uleth.ca/lethbridge-herald/1913-08-11/page-1> (Accessed 10 April 2016): 1.

²⁵ Abner Gladstone Virtue, Officer's Declaration Paper C.E.F., Soldiers of the First World War database, Library and Archives Canada, <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=292664> (Accessed 14 April 2016).

²⁶ Kilford, 50.

²⁷ Kilford, 56.

²⁸ Virtue, September 5.

²⁹ N.A., "In the News" *Lethbridge Herald*, 27 September 2000.

the frontlines. Most notable is Virtue's careful record of the battery's participation in the Hundred Days Offensive, starting from the Battle of Amiens in early August and continuing without respite until October. Horrendous conditions and chronic stress contributed to Virtue's diagnosis with the flu on November 2. He was immediately taken to the hospital and did not rejoin his battery until December 15. Interestingly, none of these wartime experiences were reported in the *Lethbridge Herald* although Virtue often appears in the paper later in his life.

Following the war, Virtue returned to Lethbridge with the rest of the battery in 1919.³⁰ He married Sara Edythe Torrance – who is probably the “E.” referenced in Virtue's *Diary*³¹ – on June 25, 1919 and the couple had two daughters, Joan and Edythe. After Sara's death in February, 1922, Virtue married Marian Fraser Ellis in November, 1925. The union produced two children: Charles G., who eventually followed his father into law,³² and Carol.³³ Virtue resumed his successful legal career, which he continued until his death. This career included six years of service as an alderman for the Lethbridge City council,³⁴ notably as an Independent candidate.³⁵ Virtue was involved in many aspects of the Lethbridge community throughout the rest of his life, including the Lethbridge Municipal Hospital Board, the Lethbridge Public School Board, the YMCA, and the Lethbridge First Baptist Church.³⁶ For his contribution to his community as a lawyer and as a volunteer, he was designated as the King's Counsel (KC) for Lethbridge in 1935.³⁷ Virtue passed away on August 4, 1960 at the age of sixty-nine.

³⁰ Kilford, 61.

³¹ Virtue, April 13.

³² N.A., “In the News” *Lethbridge Herald*, 27 September 2000.

³³ N.A., “Deaths: Virtue” *Lethbridge Herald*, 24 October 1981, <http://0-lethbridgeherald.newspaperarchive.com.darius.uleth.ca/lethbridge-herald/1981-10-24/page-18> (Accessed 10 April 2016): 18.

³⁴ N.A., “In the News” *Lethbridge Herald*, 27 September 2000.

³⁵ N.A., “Citizens Sign Nomination Papers Civic Candidates” *Lethbridge Herald*, 4 December 1946, <http://0-lethbridgeherald.newspaperarchive.com.darius.uleth.ca/lethbridge-herald/1946-12-04/page-14> (Accessed 10 April 2016): 14.

³⁶ Chris Morrison, “Biographical Sketch of Abner Gladstone Virtue,” Galt Museum & Archives 20121021.

³⁷ N.A., “A. B. Hogg And A. G. Virtue Are Named K.C.'s In Alberta List” *Lethbridge Herald*, 2 January 1935, <http://0-lethbridgeherald.newspaperarchive.com.darius.uleth.ca/lethbridge-herald/1935-01-02/page-2> (Accessed 10 April 2016): 2.

Donald Stuart Macpherson (March 17, 1895 – August 19, 1991)

Macpherson's hometown of Orangeville, Ontario was a small town with a population roughly equivalent to Lethbridge in the early twentieth century. In the 1901 census, Lethbridge and Orangeville were approximately the same size, at 2,072 and 2,511 respectively.³⁸ By the census of 1911, Lethbridge had undergone a population growth of 389% to 8,050, rapidly outpacing Orangeville's 2,340.³⁹ Although Lethbridge saw growth that Orangeville ultimately did not, it is notable that Virtue and Macpherson both spent their formative years in a similar small-town environment. Much like Virtue, Macpherson was a middle-class, educated young man. Four years Virtue's junior, Macpherson was still enrolled in post-secondary school at the outbreak of World War One, studying Education at the University of Toronto.⁴⁰ Macpherson taught for one school year at Annette Street Public School before enlisting.⁴¹ Benefitting from a shared higher-level education that many diarists lacked,⁴² Virtue and Macpherson's Diaries were regularly maintained at a more advanced standard than many of the other War Diaries of the period.

Macpherson enlisted as a gunner in the 67th Battery in July, 1916: half a year after Virtue. Like Virtue, Macpherson's early war experience included training in Canada – in Macpherson's case, at Niagara-on-the-Lake and Petawawa – in the early part of 1916, followed by more training in England during the autumn and winter of that year. The 67th Battery was sent to France in January, 1917, where Macpherson participated as a signaller in the now-famous battles of Vimy Ridge, Hill 70, and Passchendaele. In contrast to Virtue, who was already ranked as Lieutenant prior to his transfer to the 61st Battery,⁴³ Macpherson did

³⁸ Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *1901 Census*, <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1901> (Accessed 10 April 2016).

³⁹ Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *1911 Census*, <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1911> (Accessed 10 April 2016).

⁴⁰ Macpherson, v.

⁴¹ Macpherson, 191.

⁴² Cook, 22.

⁴³ Virtue, Officer's Declaration Paper C.E.F.

not begin the war as an officer. Returning to England in late 1917, he completed a Cadet Course and was commissioned as Lieutenant on May 17, 1918.⁴⁴ Following this commission, Macpherson was posted to the 23rd Battery. However, his time at the front as an officer was limited by the wounds he received at the Battle of Amiens: a battle in which Virtue also participated. Macpherson was forced to return to England for the last five months of the year.⁴⁵

After the war's official conclusion, Macpherson was demobilized in 1919 and returned to Canada. Along with many other veterans, including Virtue, Macpherson resumed his pre-war career, returning to teach at Annette Street School in Toronto.⁴⁶ After graduating from Queen's University in 1929, he married Carrie Birdsall Macfayden, and the couple had three children: Kenneth, Mary, and Ian.⁴⁷ For the rest of his career, Macpherson was employed as the principal at seven schools in Toronto and retired in 1960,⁴⁸ the year of Virtue's death. Macpherson lived for another thirty-one years, and passed away in Port Hope on August 19, 1991. Virtue and Macpherson lived very similar lives; they were approximately the same age, came from equivalent socioeconomic conditions, and followed a parallel trajectory before, during, and after the war. Due to this personal resemblance, Virtue's and Macpherson's 1918 War Diaries are comparable.

The Diaries of Virtue and Macpherson

Though the Diaries were initially similar documents, the final presentations of Virtue's and Macpherson's writing styles differs dramatically. Virtue's entries, taken directly from the physical copy of his diary, are in their original fragmentary form. In contrast,

⁴⁴ Macpherson, 191-2.

⁴⁵ Macpherson, 192.

⁴⁶ Macpherson, vi.

⁴⁷ N.A., *Family: Donald Stuart MacPherson/Carrie Birdsall MacFayden (F808)*, (n.d.), <http://clark-debisschop.co.uk/tng/familygroup.php?familyID=F808&tree=Clark> (Accessed 10 April 2016).

⁴⁸ Macpherson, vi.

Macpherson retyped and revised his Diaries in 1965. Published by his son and noted naval historian, Kenneth Macpherson, Macpherson's Diary clearly has an additional audience in mind: the casual reader. While Virtue and Macpherson were both originally writing for some vague future historian, the revision and publication of Macpherson's Diaries fundamentally changed the nature of his entries. To engage the casual reader, the Macphersons wrote in full sentences, included helpful subheadings, and reduced military jargon to make the Diary more accessible. While any changes to the primary source may seem detrimental to scholarly analysis, this revision has additional benefits. The glossary provided by the Macphersons is particularly helpful, and may be used to understand terms in both Diaries. For instance, "Blighty" is referenced as a place name by both Virtue and Macpherson.⁴⁹ In Virtue's Diary, neither I nor Chris Morrison, the individual who wrote the transcription of the Diary for the Galt Archives, knew the location of "Blighty." Conveniently, Macpherson's glossary identifies this as "an affectionate name for England."⁵⁰ Although the revisions complicate an analysis of Macpherson's Diary as a primary source, this clarification of terms is useful.

Due to the harsh living conditions of soldiers during the war, the Diary entries were often written at a later date. In Virtue's Diary, this is readily apparent. For instance, Virtue entered a description of the night's raids on July 22, followed by the comment "We did not then know the significance of these raids"⁵¹: implying the entry was made long enough afterwards for the significance to have since become clear. Similarly, Virtue's entries during his time in the hospital from November 2 to December 14 were necessarily written after the fact, as Virtue was

⁴⁹ Virtue, July 1.

⁵⁰ Macpherson, 190.

⁵¹ Virtue, July 22.

not actually with the unit whose movements he described. It is likely that many of Macpherson's entries were also completed in retrospect, as the often hectic and stressful conditions did not enable daily writing. However, it is less obvious in Macpherson's writing as he consistently uses the present tense. Possibly a result of the revision process, this style creates an ongoing sense to action more likely to keep a casual reader engaged.

Despite differences in writing styles, Virtue and Macpherson's Diaries both include several key features. Most notably, both men were involved in the Battle of Amiens and included details regarding the secret night marches to the battlefield. Lasting from August 8 to 12, this battle is identified by Kilford as the turning point in the Allied offensive.⁵² Appropriately, it is the longest entry in Virtue's Diary and is described in detail by Macpherson, as the injuries he sustained marked the end of his active participation in the war. This event is one of the few occasions when Virtue and Macpherson's experiences directly overlap.

While the two men are rarely in the same place at the same time, their Diaries share many thematic similarities. In the men's descriptions of their time in France, the living conditions – now understood to be horrendous – are remarkably downplayed. Neither man focused on the trauma-inducing experiences of the war, although Virtue often described his extreme discomfort with heartbreaking simplicity. For instance, he simply recorded how on the night of March 30, after a “wet, cold, and muddy day,” he “went to bed in a large hole.”⁵³ Throughout Virtue's Diary, the sentence fragments powerfully and touchingly conveys the soldiers' misery. In its expanded form, Macpherson loses this simple expression of emotion.

⁵² Kilford, 57.

⁵³ Virtue, March 30.

In addition, both men recorded the day's weather with a remarkable diligence. In Virtue's case, many entries consist *solely* of the day's weather, and the extreme cold of January stands in sharp contrast to the uncomfortable heat of May. With publication in mind, Macpherson's entries are necessarily more detailed. As weather reports are often uninteresting reading material, Macpherson was careful to also include his day's activities in a given entry. This division between a strictly military focus and the inclusion of personal details characterizes the differences between Virtue's and Macpherson's Diaries.

As previously discussed, War Diaries were mandatory documents intended to record the movement and activities of individual units, with an eye to future historical studies of the war. In Virtue's unprocessed Diary, the military emphasis is apparent; however, his writing is not without personal touches. For instance, a visit from Brigadier General W. O. H. Dodds on January 23 is recorded with the irreverent comment that the General "Made various foolish remarks re camouflage."⁵⁴ Similarly, the orders cancelling the battery's move to the Army School at Aire, which everyone had been "greatly pleased" about,⁵⁵ is accompanied simply with the commentary, "Ugh!"⁵⁶ Evidently, the official nature and content of the War Diaries did not prevent Virtue from inserting his own opinions. Notably, Virtue took the Diary with him while on leave to England. Therefore, the four entries from June 30 to July 16 record his personal activities, rather than that of the battery's. Despite these hints of personality, Virtue's military focus becomes increasingly obvious following the Battle of Amiens. During the period later designated as the "Hundred Days Offensive,"⁵⁷ Virtue diligently recorded the battery's actions with limited personal commentary. The unrelenting pressure of

⁵⁴ Virtue, January 23.

⁵⁵ Virtue, March 19.

⁵⁶ Virtue, March 21.

⁵⁷ Jonathan F. Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 11.

the situation and horrific living conditions clearly restrained Virtue's pen to more serious matters.

Near the end of the Allies' offensive push, Virtue's sickness and subsequent separation from his unit offers an interesting revelation into his use of the Diary. In the first week of his hospitalization, Virtue used the Diary to record details about the "nice" English nurses, who greeted the sick soldiers by the nickname "Canada."⁵⁸ Interestingly, Macpherson is also careful to mention the "skillful," "efficient," and cheerful nurses while he was hospitalized.⁵⁹ As Virtue's time in the hospital lengthened, however, he entirely neglected the Diary as both a personal and military record. The only entries are the battery's movements contained in brackets, indicating he probably received this information from a fellow officer at a later date. Evidently, Virtue was careful to maintain the Diary as a military record when it was required of him, and felt free to include his personal commentary when doing so. Nonetheless, he was not dependent upon it as a personal source of release, and did not sustain the habit of writing when it was not necessary.

In contrast, Macpherson's Diary was his self-described "hold on sanity,"⁶⁰ an absolutely necessary personal measure that enabled him to survive the horrors of war. An avid diary-writer, Macpherson's entries contain a great deal more personal information than Virtue's. This is particularly noticeable during Macpherson's time in the hospital. Contrasting Virtue's neglect of his Diary, Macpherson used his to carefully document even mundane details such as ordering clothes from the tailor.⁶¹ These differences could be the result of Macpherson's revision process. If the published Diaries are to appeal to the general public, they must contain personal information that Virtue, writing for strictly historical purposes, did not feel obligated to provide.

⁵⁸ Virtue, November 3, 4, and 10.

⁵⁹ Macpherson, 150.

⁶⁰ Macpherson, back cover.

⁶¹ Macpherson, 153.

Conclusion

Intertwining the public with the private, War Diaries combine military history with personal records. These documents, as required by the Canadian government in the First World War, are inherently revealing. Created in notoriously poor conditions, the details the soldiers chose to record are significant for that very reason. The comments that Virtue and Macpherson consciously and deliberately entered in their limited space highlights the mixing of personal life with military affairs that defined the officers' experiences of the war. Recorded in different writing styles, Virtue and Macpherson lived remarkably similar lives, and their Diaries reveal how the two educated, small-town Canadian artillerymen responded to the personally and culturally traumatic events of the Great War. In the words of Macpherson himself, the Diary "doesn't say much about the strategy and tactics of modern warfare; but it may tell you something of the way in which a whole generation of Canadians responded to the call of duty."⁶²

⁶² Macpherson, vii.

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Shanks Lake 1950



THE DEEP-ROOTED EFFECTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND UNEMPLOYMENT ON ALBERTA EDUCATION

BETWEEN 1930–1935

ROBYN PUGH



In the 1930s Canada, and the rest of the Western World, was hit by a massive stock market collapse that was followed by economic turmoil. The economic collapse came as a shock, and as a result the government was slow to make the necessary changes to adequately support its citizens during these tough times.¹ Unfortunately, this was not the reality and Canada saw little economic improvement over the course of the decade. These hard economic times would ripple through the country, affecting government departments and citizens in unprecedented ways. One government department hit particularly hard during the Great Depression was education; the hard times for the education department directly impacted the school-aged children of Canada in various ways.

Education was, and still is, heavily government funded. Because of the reliance on government subsidy, education departments across Canada had their annual budgets slashed year after year, regardless of enrollment numbers.² Between 1930 and 1935 provincial education departments were hit by budget cuts, some harder than others. Alberta was one of the hardest hit, and faced total budget cuts of over four million dollars in the first five years of the Great Depression.³ Overall, the poor economy in the 1930s led to slashed budgets, poor teaching salaries, older students, and more students missing school. By analyzing just a few aspects of these annual reports, links can be made between Alberta's unemployment and the province's education budgets, teacher salaries, school buildings and supplies, and overall attendance by students.

In 1930 the total budget set by education departments across the country amounted to about ninety-seven million dollars. By 1935 this number had fallen to only seventy-nine million, with provinces

¹ Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owrarn, "The Great Depression 1929-1939." *A History of the Canadian Economy*, 2nd ed., (Montreal and Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd. 1996) 353.

² R.D. Gidney, and W.P.J. Millar, *How Schools Worked* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012) 179.

³ Alberta, Department of Education, "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta", 31 December 1930, 107.
Alberta, Department of Education, "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta", 31 December 1936, 94.

allocating an average of 7.6% less of their total budgets towards education.⁴ These cuts were in part due to the province's reliance on income taxes for much of their revenue. As the number of unemployed citizens increased, income tax revenues dropped, leading to cuts by provincial governments.⁵ All provincial education departments, including Alberta, released annual reports, which contained information about annual budgets, teacher salaries, and in-depth enrollment information.

The methodology for this paper is based on the examination of the budget cuts the department faced over the first five years, and the effect this had on both teachers and students. The paper will also analyze the attendance reports, which mention not only those children attending school, but also the reasons why other children were being excused from compulsory education. These findings will then be placed in the context of the "Dirty Thirties" in order to show the deep connection between unemployment and education. It should be noted that the biggest limitation of using the annual reports as a primary source is the lack of definitions for the reasons children were excused from school. Some of the excused absences were placed under vague categories such as "poverty", and no explanation was given as to what situation must be present in order for poverty to be a child's reason for missing school. "Leaving the district" was another vague reason children were excused from the school. There is no information to indicate whether these children had just left the district they were in, or left the province as a whole. These unclear terms made it challenging to fully understand the reasons children were missing school, and led to qualified conclusions when considering them in conjunction with the greater social and economic context of the Great Depression.

⁴ Gidney and Millar, 179.

⁵ Gidney and Millar, 182-183.

Since the government financially supported the Department of Education, the economic state of Canada during the Great Depression is important to know. In the twentieth century Canada had a very large and fragile export market that was based on products such as wheat and barley, which were grown abundantly in the province of Alberta.⁶ Wholesale prices of wheat in 1930 were barley half of what they had been in 1929 and the value continued to drop over the coming years, which left the Prairie Provinces particularly dry and profitless.⁷ The education budget for the 1929 school year had been \$16,334,106.25,⁸ by 1935 the annual report notes a budget of \$11,681,001.51.⁹ In five years millions had been slashed from the education budget in the province of Alberta, arguably due to the Great Depression hitting Canada. The provincial government made cuts to all service departments, and as a result the Department of Education also had to make cuts.

What is most alarming about these budget cut is that it occurred despite the increase of over 3000 students¹⁰ and about 200 teachers¹¹ between 1930 and 1935. The reason for this increase in students was quite possibly related to the poor economy at the time as well. Due to the lack of job opportunities in this decade the enrollment at the secondary level, grade eight to twelve, continued to rise.¹² As one Ontario school inspector said “hard times fill the school”, and the hard times of the Great Depression would prove this statement to be true.¹³ Few job opportunities led to a decreased desire to leave school, which in

⁶ Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owrarn, “The Great Depression 1929-1939.” *A History of the Canadian Economy*, 2nd ed., (Montreal and Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd. 1996) 354.

⁷ Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owrarn, “The Great Depression 1929-1939.” *A History of the Canadian Economy*, 2nd ed., (Montreal and Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd. 1996) 357.

⁸ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1930, 107.

⁹ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1936, 94.

¹⁰ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1929, 79.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 91.

¹¹ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1930, 107.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 109.

¹² Amy Von Heyking, *Creating Citizens: history and identity in Alberta's schools, 1905-1980* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2006), 30.

¹³ Gidney and Millar, 62.

turn caused an increased demand for teachers in order to keep class sizes reasonable as enrollment increased. The percentage of total enrollment for grades seven to twelve rose from 28.79% in 1930 to 34.76% by 1935.¹⁴ Teacher salary was the biggest portion of school budget and since more teachers had to be hired on a decreased budget, large cuts to salary occurred.

One's salary as a teacher at this time was based on gender, class of certification, and whether you were teaching in a rural or urban school. In 1929 a male teacher with a first class certification averaged a salary of \$1,670.76, while female teachers with the same certification averaged a salary of \$1,234.04.¹⁵ Despite the gender discrepancy, both male and female teachers suffered salary cuts by 1935. Male first class teachers were averaging a salary cut of about \$400 and female first class teachers saw a decrease in their salaries of \$280.¹⁶ Although it appears that male teachers were harder hit by the salary cuts, it is important to keep in mind there was an increase in the number of female teachers hired during the early 1930s. This is arguably because they were cheaper than their male counterparts, which made them a more affordable choice in a time of strained budgets. It is also important to note that not all teachers, even within Alberta, faced the same salary cuts. Rural teachers were often harder hit than urban teachers since school budgets were cut even more drastically in small rural schools. In cities, salary cuts in Alberta averaged 9%, while rural area teachers faced 28% cuts.¹⁷ Despite large reductions in the salaries of teachers across the province, budgets were still strained and as a result other areas of the budget were targeted.

According to the annual reports, large cuts were made across the board, not just in the area of teacher salaries. Other major cuts occurred

¹⁴ "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1930, 92.

"Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1935, 88.

¹⁵ "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1929, 95.

¹⁶ "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1935, 109.

¹⁷ Gidney and Millar, 181.

under the building and repairs of school portion of budget. This portion of the budget took a hit of \$1,761,069.43 between 1930 and 1935.¹⁸ It is very possible that the Department of Education felt that the building and fixing of schools would be an area of spending to cut with minimal impact. As it will be emphasized later, the lack of repairs and building of schools left some school aged children without education, resulting in a greater impact than predicted by Alberta Education. Other areas that were affected by reduced budgets included school supplies, equipment, and book funds. The annual report in 1929 pointed out the new textbooks the school would be receiving,¹⁹ but by 1935 there was no mention of new books, which reflect the harsh realities of cuts. Although it is hard to prove new books determine a student's success, it is plausible that poor funding strained resources within the school. There are also letters that the Alberta Department of Education received from students and teachers begging for notebooks, writing utensils, and even textbooks to allow optimal learning.²⁰ Salary, building and repairs, and overall teacher and student material cuts highlight the fact that the province's decreased education budgets had a direct impact on children attending school. Though class sizes may have remained reasonable, inadequate schools and minimal supplies within them were a reality many children that attended school faced.

Besides examining the budgets, attendance is another area of these department reports that showcases the tough times present in Alberta during the Great Depression. As already mentioned, attendance was increasing, especially in the upper grade levels. Since high unemployment and minimal job opportunities led to less desire to venture into the workforce, students were staying in schools longer and thus achieving higher-grade levels of education. The tough circumstances of the 1930s

¹⁸ "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1930, 107.

"Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1935, 106.

¹⁹ "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1929, 17.

²⁰ Gidney and Millar, 193.

can be further demonstrated by examining those students who did not attend school. Education became compulsory in the late nineteenth century as society began to value education more, but many working class families still supplemented household income with children's wages.²¹ The annual attendance reports make note of not just how many children were enrolled in school, but also why children were not attending to school. Since school attendance was compulsory local attendance officers were responsible for making sure children were in school.²² Attendance officers tracked attendance by sending out preliminary letters to parents to remind them to send their children to school, if parents still refused to send their children to school warning notices would follow.

In 1929, 2,927 Preliminary Letters were sent out and 2,104 of these children returned to school.²³ The children that did not return had their circumstance investigated by attendance officers and various reasons were listed for this absence. Leaving the district affected 91 students, sickness affected 71, school closure resulted in six students not attending school, being too old/young for school excused sixteen children, while work excused two; the remaining 248 cases required further investigation. 1,375 Warning Notices were issued following the Preliminary Letters. These Warning Notices showed similar reasons for children not attending school, with 975 students returning. In this case 38 had been removed from the district, 25 were sick, 23 were too old/young for school, four were working at home, and another 295 required more investigation. It is worthwhile to note that the annual reports did not specify what the investigation entailed or how exactly the attendance officers went about investigating these absences.

²¹ Robert McIntosh, "Constructing the Child: New Approaches to the History of Childhood in Canada." *Acadiensis* 28, no.2 (Spring 1999): 129-130.

²² "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1929, 67.

²³ "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1929, 67.

In 1930, the reasons for exemption were the same with one exception, poverty.²⁴ It appears that poverty, however this term was defined and possibly for the first time, allowed children to miss school. The 1930 report allowed thirty-five students to be exempted based on poverty alone. This number continued to increase over the years, and by 1935 73 students were absent from school due to “poverty”.²⁵ This makes up only a small percentage of school-age children, but it appears that this had not been an issue in the 1920s, making context key to the importance of this exemption reason.

Poverty was becoming the reality for many families due to unemployment reaching over 20% of citizens by 1935.²⁶ Poverty is often the result of low income and can be tied to a lack of food, clothing, housing, and undernourishment.²⁷ In fact, per capita income in Alberta had dropped from \$548 in 1929 to \$212 by 1933.²⁸ Reduced and absent household income led to many families “living on the edge of survival, skimping on food and clothes so that they could pay the rent.”²⁹ Between 1930 and 1935, 241 children in Alberta were excused from school as a result of the poverty stricken situation they were living in.³⁰ In 1935 there were 73 children in such a dire state of poverty they were excused from school, and an argument could be made that many more of the 167,954 students in attendance that year were in situations that were only marginally better.³¹ This was not an issue only Alberta faced,

²⁴ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1930, 81.

²⁵ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 78.

²⁶ Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owrarn, “The Great Depression 1929-1939.” *A History of the Canadian Economy*. 2nd ed. Montreal and Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd. (1996): 18.

²⁷ Harp and Hofley, 43.

²⁸ Howard Palmer and Tamara Palmer, *Alberta: A New History* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1990), 244.

²⁹ Lara Campbell, *Respectable Citizens: Gender, Family, and Unemployment in Ontario's Great Depression* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 128.

³⁰ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1930, 81.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1931, 88.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1932, 63.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1933, 63.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1934, 68.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 78.

³¹ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 91.

a newspaper in Montreal made note of the increasing poverty and its connection to 9-11% of their total absences in the 1930-1931 school year.³² If children were missing school in Montreal as a result of the economic conditions that led many families into situations of poverty, this can be extrapolated to provinces such as Alberta since they had similar financial circumstances that resulted in high poverty rates.³³

Unemployment may lead a family into a state of poverty, but it can also lead to illness. Although nutrition was not as openly discussed and emphasized as it is today, there were still reports of the role nutrition played in overall health. In Britain, reports began to make connections between income and poverty, and nutrition and health.³⁴ The argument being made was that “healthy foods” such as fruits, vegetables, dairy, and protein were hard to afford for low-income families. In Britain, the government appeared resistant to see these connections,³⁵ and it is plausible that if similar reports were circulating in Canada the Canadian government was just as unwilling. Sadly, undernourishment was the reality for many of the families on the dole or other relief functions.³⁶ Fruits and vegetables became luxuries for unemployed families who could not afford food that would meet nutritional standards.³⁷ There appears to be a connection between long-term unemployment and a lack of proper nutrition, which can also be tied to poor health. Once again in Montreal 50% of all school children had some form of disease or physical health issue during the 1930s.³⁸ It is because of these facts that connections can be made between the rates of sick children being excused from school and the deep effects of the unemployment during the Great Depression as well. Between 1930 and 1935, a total of 274

³² Wendy Johnston, “Keeping Children in School: The Response of the Montreal Catholic School Commission to the Depression of the 1930s”, *Historical Papers* 20, no.1 (1985): 197.

³³ Gidney and Millar, 55-56.

³⁴ Madeleine Mayhew, “The 1930s Nutrition Controversy.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 23, no.3 (Jul 1988): 445, 448-449.

³⁵ Mayew, 452.

³⁶ Campbell, 34

³⁷ Campbell, 31-33.

³⁸ Johnston, 199.

children were excused due to illness in Alberta;³⁹ these numbers combined with the poverty exemptions are alarming and very crucial to the greater social and economic context.

An argument can be made that the unemployment of fathers and mothers during the Great Depression had adverse effects on a child's health and ability to attend school, but malnutrition is not the only cause for illness. In the annual report for 1933 there was a note about children being improperly dressed for school, especially in the winter months.⁴⁰ It makes sense that in times of smaller household income clothing is one area where mothers would skimp, or try to cut out entirely. Children were going to school barefoot and without proper clothing to keep them warm.⁴¹ Some rural schools even altered their school year so "summer vacation" occurred during the winter months.⁴² This allowed the schools to save money on heating the building during the coldest months, and kept children without acceptable clothing home and out of the cold. Once again an argument can be made that children in low-income households were missing out on school, this time because their parents were unable to properly dress them for the harsh climate in Alberta. Costs of school supplies could also keep some children from attending, although this reason was not highlighted in the annual reports.⁴³ By examining just a few of the reasons children were not attending school, parallels can be drawn with the state of the economy and unemployment during the early 1930s, and overall attendance exemptions in schools. "Many children were kept home from school because they had inadequate winter clothing, no shoes, or not enough food to eat."⁴⁴

³⁹ "Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1930, 81.

"Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1931, 88.

"Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1932, 63.

"Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1933, 63.

"Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1934, 68.

"Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1935, 78.

"Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta," 1933, 18.

⁴¹ Campbell, 41.

⁴² Gidney and Millar, 187.

⁴³ Gidney and Millar, 56.

⁴⁴ Campbell, p.41

Illness and poverty aside, children moving, the physical state of school buildings, and work exemptions are also notable areas that correspond with the present state of affairs in the first half of the Dirty Thirties.

Although the population in Alberta remained fairly stagnant over the 1930s, there were still a number of people who left the province or abandoned their farmland due to dire financial situations.⁴⁵ Since Alberta was unable to profit from agriculture during the Great Depression and other employment opportunities were minimal, some families decided to leave. Leaving the district, however this exemption was defined, affected an increasing number of students in the first half of the decade. In 1930 only 58 of the exempted students were fell under the category of “leaving the district”⁴⁶ by 1935 this number was 86.⁴⁷ In the first half of the 1930s, 504 students were removed or left the district and as a result they were excused from attending school.⁴⁸

Cuts by the government extended beyond the Department of Education, and road maintenance budgets falls 7.1% in the first five years of the Depression.⁴⁹ The 1933 annual report was the first report of the decade to cite road conditions as a reason to not attend school;⁵⁰ by 1935 fifteen students were missing school because of poor road conditions.⁵¹ This can be tied to the cuts to building schools and overall repairs that were mentioned previously in the paper. To deal with cuts some schools ran on shortened or altered calendars in order to prevent closure, but this did not resolve the issue.⁵² There were also an increasing number of students being exempted from school due to school closures

⁴⁵ Palmer and Palmer, 245-246.

⁴⁶ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1929, 67.

⁴⁷ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 78.

⁴⁸ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1930, 81.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1931, 88.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1932, 63.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1933, 63.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1934, 68.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 78.

⁴⁹ Gidney and Millar, 184.

⁵⁰ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1933, 63.

⁵¹ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, p.78.

⁵² Gidney and Millar, 185, 187.

or not being within a reasonable distance in this decade. In 1930, only seven students⁵³ were affected by these cuts, but by 1935, as a result of budget cuts, 22 students were affected by the lack of schools, or the complete closure of them.⁵⁴ Since a limited number of schools were being built and renovated, and roads, especially rural ones, were not being maintained a connection can be made between the budgets cuts by both the Provincial Government and the Department of Education, and its effect on school aged children.

“Work” is the final area that attendance exemptions will be studied. Despite new ideals revolving around the importance of education,⁵⁵ there still appears to be tension around children attending school when they could be making money. These issues were more present in low-income families, which included an increasing number of families in Alberta in the early 1930s as unemployment rose. Between 1928 and 1933 the average per capita income had dropped from \$548 to \$212.⁵⁶ This massive cut to household income led desperate situations within the family and any economic contributions a child or young person could make appeared to have trumped their opportunity for education.⁵⁷ Although children working “rarely made the difference between a family having, or not having, enough money to provide themselves with the bare essentials,”⁵⁸ there was still a belief that any contribution that they could make would help. According to Ontario family court records, the parents who did not get work permits for their children found ways to avoid sending their children to school since whatever income they could

⁵³ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1930, 81.

⁵⁴ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1930, 81.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1931, 88.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1932, 63.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1933, 63.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1934, 68.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 78.

⁵⁵ Campbell p.94

⁵⁶ Hayking p.55

⁵⁷ Campbell p.94

⁵⁸ Neil Sutherland, *Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada from the Great War to the Age of Television* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997), 132.

bring in was just too valuable to give it up for education.⁵⁹ This made it extremely hard for attendance officers to enforce school attendance. A Canadian Youth Commission study in 1947 noted the sacrifices some of the older children and young adults made, leaving school for work, led to some resentment towards their parents.⁶⁰ This is understandable since many children were not given a choice, and any income they were able to provide was handed over to their mother, and added to the budget for the entire family. It is also worthwhile to note that when compared to total poverty numbers of 211, and illness numbers of 274, “work” exemptions affected a substantially smaller number of children when compared to the other exemptions discussed. In fact, between 1930 and 1935 only forty-eight students who were exempted based on this reason.⁶¹ This proves that although this exemption existed it did not affect the same percentage of students as some of the other, more prominent exemptions discussed in this paper.

The general trend in 1930s education in Alberta was that “fewer children were starting school, but they stay[ed] longer because fewer jobs [were] open.”⁶² This decrease in overall enrollment numbers was not seen until the later half of the decade and was arguably as result of the delayed marriage age.⁶³ The marriage rate was the lowest in 1932, and tied to high unemployment.⁶⁴ People were not getting married because men did not have jobs, and were thus seen as unable to support a family. Although illegitimate pregnancies were present during this decade, an argument could be made that lower marriage rates are tied

⁵⁹ Campbell 94-95.

⁶⁰ Campbell, 90-91.

⁶¹ “Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1930, 81.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1931, 88.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1932, 63.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1933, 63.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1934, 68.

“Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta,” 1935, 78.

⁶² “Two Million Children Across Canada Returning to Schools: Quints to Commence Studies,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 31, 1938, p.11.

⁶³ Campbell, 100.

⁶⁴ Campbell, 100.

to lower birth rates, which would affect enrollment records in schools in the later half of the decade. This is supported by the peaked enrollment in Alberta education in 1934.⁶⁵ Taking into consideration the change in enrollment in the later years of the decade the Department of Education appeared to face its hardest times in the first half of the Dirty Thirties. These five years had higher attendance rates, and the harsh effects of unemployment and budget cuts challenged a child's ability to attend school. There was also a change in government in Alberta on 22 August 1935, which led to reforms in education in the following years by premier, and previous principal, William Aberhart.⁶⁶ Sadly, the changes that occurred in the Department of Education in the second half of the decade did not erase the first half of the 1930s and its effects on school aged children.

The Great Depression was a challenging time for Canada, especially Alberta. The first five years would be the most trying, and had a huge impact on education in the province. Although a reduced budget is not directly to blame for the intriguing attendance reports in the Department of Education's Annual Reports, there is an obvious connection made to the greater context of unemployment in the Depression. High unemployment led to smaller government budgets, on all levels, which led to cuts in crucial departments such as education. This decrease in funds was further challenged when more students attended school for longer periods of time because of meek employment opportunities. Teacher salaries would take the brunt of the impact, but the school buildings and the supplies they housed would also face reductions. Finally unemployment, and more particularly low household income, led to increasing rates of children becoming ill or living in a

⁶⁵ "Two Million Children Across Canada Returning to Schools: Quints to Commence Studies," *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 31, 1938, p.11.

⁶⁶ Palmer and Palmer, 266 and 269.

state of poverty, increasing the number of children staying home. A number of students also left the district, or were forced out of school in order to work, both as a result of the grim financial situations within their families. By examining just a few aspects of Alberta's Department of Education Annual Reports, examples can be highlighted, which showcase the devastating effects of unemployment on education and how it in turn affects children.

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PRONGHORN SWIMMING OR LETHBRIDGE SWIMMING:

CHARTING THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE SWIM TEAM AND
THE LETHBRIDGE COMMUNITY

SCOTT HUNTER

Lethbridge is a university town, the entire west-side is a product of its inception almost fifty years ago. Inter-collegiate sports, while not the purpose of a university nor a concern of primacy in Canada, have become fixtures at universities across North America. The University of Lethbridge is no different. For almost as many years as the university has existed it has had varsity athletes, Pronghorns as they are now called, to represent the school in athletic competition. For decades, student-athletes have proudly donned the blue-and-gold to compete and to foster school and community pride.

The University of Lethbridge Pronghorn Swim Team became a part of this tradition during the 1990-91 academic year, when the program was officially implemented. The history of the Pronghorns (Horns) Swim Team is tied to the community of Lethbridge, more specifically to the Lethbridge Amateur Swim Club (LASC). The LASC, whose existence predates the Horns, is a product of the popularity competitive swimming has enjoyed in Southern Alberta for generations. The U of L, in founding the Horns Swim Team, hoped to tap that popularity. The strong base of swimming in Lethbridge has also helped to ensure the survival of the Horns in the face of varsity sport cutbacks. The Horns Swim Team, while still a varsity team, is also a community team. The relationship the Horns have enjoyed with the Lethbridge community, through their close partnership and unity with the LASC, is responsible for their creation, survival and continued success.

Swimming in popular imagery is a simple sport which does not require expensive equipment or overly technical venues. This is something of a misconception. The sport of swimming requires a pool. And in the Canadian climate an indoor pool is a necessity. Because of

this, participation in competitive swimming is not equal, it is dominated by members of the middle and upper classes.¹ The history of the Horns Swim Team, as with the history of any swim team, must begin with the pool. Without an indoor pool, of sufficient space and quality, competitive swimming in Lethbridge would never have started.

The Max Bell Regional Aquatic Center (MBRAC) has been the home of the Horns since its founding. The MBRAC, located at the center of the U of L campus, was completed in 1985, before the creation of a varsity swim team had ever been seriously contemplated.² The MBRAC was (and continues to be) a beautiful 50-meter, eight-lane pool. The Australian national swim team used the pool for a pre-championship staging camp in 1991 and in a letter expressing their gratitude described themselves as having “enjoyed ideal conditions.”³ The MBRAC was established as a world class facility. Naturally the LASC began using the pool shortly after completion of the building. To the Department of Physical Education the new pool represented: “The most dramatic development of the eighties.”⁴ The construction of a pool on campus was the first crucial step in the creation of the Horns Swim Team.

The MBRAC was not built for the Horns Swim Team nor was consideration given at the time for the development of a varsity team in the near future. Instead, the pool was built to fill a gap in the recreational opportunities of Southern Albertans. The Board of Governors of the U of L believed that the “the joint use of a facility of this nature [an aquatics facility] are not presently available to the people of Southern Alberta.”⁵ The U of L wanted a pool, not for the exclusive use of students nor the training needs of a non-existent varsity team, but as a way for the university to contribute to the community. The Board of Governors, in

¹ Donald Hastings, Sammy Zahran and Sherry Cable, “Drowning in Inequalities: Swimming and Social Justice,” *Journal of Black Studies* 36, no. 6 (July 2006): 896.

² “Program review, University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study” (April 1988) University of Lethbridge Archives: 18.

³ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1991-12-12.

⁴ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 3.

⁵ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1984-12-21.

1974, made the acquisition of a pool a priority at the expense of all other recreational facilities.⁶ The exact reasoning for making the top priority a pool is unclear, it was perhaps simply reflective of the conception of swimming as “a keystone cultural activity.”⁷ Whatever the motivations behind the university’s “pool-first” approach, the community quickly became involved and continued to be involved through the creation of the Horns Swim Team.

In 1975 the U of L submitted its plan for the MBRAC to all levels of government.⁸ The plan was enthusiastically adopted by the City of Lethbridge and subsequently made a part of their Major Facilities Plan.⁹ The negotiations between the university and the city regarding the construction of the pool were soon accompanied by the input of citizens. Mr. Anthony Van Deurzen, for example, wrote to the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the U of L, Mr. B. Thacker, about the “gross underutilization hence increased costs”¹⁰ if two separate aquatic facilities were constructed. The university heeded his advice. The MBRAC, despite being located at the U of L, is truly a community pool. Understanding the motivations behind the construction of the MBRAC is key to realizing how little thought was given to varsity swimming and how much the team owes its existence to the already well-established presence of swimming in Lethbridge.

The impetus for the U of L Varsity Swim Team can be traced to April 1988 and a report entitled: “The University of Lethbridge: Department of Physical Education: Self Study and Review.” Prior to this point no one at the university had begun to discuss the idea of varsity swimming at Lethbridge. Swimming had been contested at the varsity level since 1965, with the inaugural Canadian Inter-University Athletic Union

⁶ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1979-04-26.

⁷ Scott Clearly, “The Ethos Aquatic: Benjamin Franklin and the Art of Swimming,” *Early American Literature* 46, no. 1 (January 2011): 52.

⁸ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1979-04-26.

⁹ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1979-04-26.

¹⁰ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1978-02-16.

(CIAU) Swimming Championships taking place in March of that year.¹¹ Varsity swimming in Lethbridge would not join this tradition until 1990. Before discussing the circumstances of this origin, it is prudent to first discuss Canadian inter-university athletics more broadly.

Inter-university sport in Canada has a long tradition, one which is independent of American varsity-athletics. Inter-collegiate sport in the United States is beleaguered by criticisms of professional athletes masquerading as students in contrast to Canada where “separation of amateur from professional sports”¹² is clear and meaningful. The modern history of Canadian varsity athletics dates to 1961 and the creation of the CIAU, which represented the “first truly national intercollegiate sport association.”¹³ Canadian universities, in order to participate in inter-collegiate varsity athletics, must adhere to the rules and requirements placed upon them by the CIAU. The University of Lethbridge was also (and continues to be) a member of the Canada West Universities Athletic Association (CWUAA) which operated within the CIAU as a regional governing body. The U of L Swim Team first entered the CWUAA fraternity, as an exhibition team, during the 1988-89 academic year.¹⁴

The Department of Physical Education, as one of the seventeen academic disciplines in the Faculty of Arts and Science, conducted a review of itself in April of 1988.¹⁵ The review was organized into the department’s four major program areas: curriculum, inter-university athletics, recreation services and aquatics.¹⁶ The outcome of this review would transform the composition of inter-university athletics at the U of L for decades. The authors began their review with a pre-existing mandate of what they believed the role of the University of Lethbridge

¹¹ Patrick J. Harrigan, “Asserting Authority: The Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union, 1961-1975,” *Sport History Review* 37, (2006): 151.

¹² Patrick J. Harrigan, “The Controversy About Athletic Scholarships in Canadian Universities: A Historical Perspective,” *Sport History Review* 32, (2001): 141.

¹³ Harrigan, “Asserting Authority,” 150.

¹⁴ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1989-09-21.

¹⁵ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 7.

¹⁶ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 7.

should be in administering varsity sports. “The University of Lethbridge attempts to provide a wide range of competitive opportunities for students being mindful of the unique influence of the Southern Alberta sporting community as well as membership requirements of the Canada West University Athletic Association.”¹⁷ The mission statement can be simplified into three separate, but equally important parts.

The first aspect, was the emphasis on “competitive opportunities.”¹⁸ The U of L wanted to compete in varsity athletics, but not merely for the sake of participation. Routinely losing does not instill a campus with pride nor does it promote a university to potential students. Because of this the 1988 report recommended an elimination of the men’s volleyball, cross country and judo teams.¹⁹ Men’s volleyball, in contrast to the women’s volleyball program was notoriously bad.²⁰ The authors of the report noted the high “yearly turnover” of players and staff as a by-product of the team’s lack of success.²¹ The cross country program was also eliminated in part because of a competition problem. Cross country running, like swimming and track and field, is composed of distinct male and female teams that compete separately, but are coached jointly. In 1988, when the cross country team was eliminated, it had a male to female participation ratio of ten to one.²² The men’s team may have been competitive, but sports that utilize a single coach for both genders must be competitive in both men’s and women’s competition.

The elimination of cross country and men’s volleyball was also appealing because it brought gender equality to the sports teams at the U of L. Previously, male sports had been overrepresented, because the U of L had only a men’s ice hockey team.²³ Maintaining the women’s volleyball team offset the men’s hockey team and brought parity to the

¹⁷ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 7.

¹⁸ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 7.

¹⁹ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 50.

²⁰ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 48.

²¹ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 48.

²² University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 48.

²³ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 7.

program. Gender equality was not included in the mission statement of the report, but it was a part of the department's: "Goals of the Athletics Program." The Program required the university to "Provide equal opportunities for men and women."²⁴ Swimming fit this requirement, because it was participated in on equal terms by both genders. Creating parity in the team ratio and eliminating the gender skew of the cross country team fit the departmental goal of equal opportunity.

The second aspect of the mission statement was "the unique influence of the Southern Alberta sporting community."²⁵ Here, as in the first requirement, men's volleyball was not in line with the vision of the department. The University had struggled to find people within the community who had the right "expertise to handle the coaching responsibilities."²⁶ The implications of this are twofold. Firstly, it meant coaching had to be recruited from outside Southern Alberta. Secondly, it meant the citizens of Lethbridge did not have a familiarity with the sport or a support base capable of producing quality coaching for men's volleyball. The absence of community support made the elimination of the team an easy choice.

The third aspect mandated that the university compete in sports that were in conformity with the "membership requirements of the Canada West University Athletic Association."²⁷ Judo was not a varsity sport recognized by the CWUAA. This meant that despite the success of the Judo program it did not improve the standing of the university within the CWUAA. Judo lost its status as a varsity sport, but continued to be a sport supported by the university that existed in a quasi-club status.²⁸ Judo, cross country and men's volleyball, in one aspect or another, contravened the mandate the University of Lethbridge had set for itself

²⁴ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 45.

²⁵ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 7.

²⁶ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 51.

²⁷ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 7.

²⁸ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1994-01-28.

when it came to varsity sport. They were replaced by a proposal for a varsity swim team.²⁹ A swim team that was capable of meeting the department's expectations, largely on the strength of the sport within the community.

Swimming was a CWUAA sport in contrast to judo. Swimming, unlike men's volleyball and cross country, had the potential to be competitive, because of the already well-established LASC who already trained at the university. The LASC was envisioned as acting as a feeder program for the planned varsity team. Former Pronghorn Swimming and LASC head coach Brad Mori highlighted the experience of Jeffery Nicol as an excellent example of the feeder program in action.³⁰ Nicol who swam with the LASC as a child went on to become a U of L record holder and a CIS national finalist.³¹ The report planned for the swim team to "start small and build in time"³² to the achievements of swimmers like Nicol. The final aspect of the mandate, a connection of the sport to the community of Lethbridge was also addressed. The authors stated that: "Even more importantly [than swimming being a CWUAA sport] there is a swimmer's base in Lethbridge and Southern Alberta."³³

The connection between the community and the Horns Swim Team was evident immediately. The first head coach of the swim team was Uriy Toudjarov. Toudjarov, a French national, was also the head coach of the LASC and had lived in Lethbridge since 1987.³⁴ He provided a stable coaching solution and embodied the university's mandate of having its sports teams directly connected to the community. The Horns Swim Team existed initially as an offshoot of an already flourishing LASC program. The Horns Swim Team was "zero risk-all reward." If the team

²⁹ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge): 1994-01-28.

³⁰ Brad Mori (Former Pronghorn Swimming and LASC Head Coach), in discussion with the author, October 29, 2016. Note that written consent obtained.

³¹ CIS (Canadian Inter-University Sport) replaced the CIAU in 2001. The CIS has since been replaced with U Sports.

³² University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 51.

³³ University of Lethbridge Department of Physical Education: Self-Study, 51.

failed to become competitive or became impractical it could be folded easily. Swimmers could re-enter the LASC program and their coach could return to a single job as LASC coach. The current coach of the Horns Swim Team and LASC Peter Schori refers to his job as really two jobs.³⁵

Toudjarov agreed with Schori and in his second year passed off his duties as head coach of the Horns to his assistant Phil Uren. Uren, while head coach of the Horns, was also an assistant with the LASC, head coach of the Lethbridge Summer Swim Club, and an anthropology student.³⁶ He was connected to the community through his work experience and to the U of L through his studies, making him, in the eyes of the university, the ideal coach. Uren was instrumental in growing the varsity team doubling the number of swimmers from 1991 to 1992.³⁷ Uren attributed the team's expansion to his plan of "aggressive recruiting designed to draw talented swimmers from the High Schools in Southern Alberta."³⁸ Uren understood the popularity of competitive swimming in Southern Alberta and used the newly created Horns team to recruit swimmers who otherwise would have left the region for swimming opportunities elsewhere. Within the team were numerous Lethbridge natives who progressed from the LASC to the Horns when they entered university. The 1993-94 season saw the hiring of a new coach, Bill Barton.³⁹ The Horns thrived under Barton even as they faced budgetary constraints and the threat of elimination during the U of L's 1994-95 budget crisis.

During the 1994-95 academic year the university faced massive budget cuts. The cuts were so severe that university administration requested the athletics budget be cut by \$65,000 immediately with

³⁴ Pronghorn Athletics Game Day Magazine, (1989-90), University of Lethbridge Archives.

³⁵ Peter Schori (Current Pronghorn Swimming and LASC Head Coach), in discussion with the author, October 25, 2016.

³⁶ Pronghorn Athletics Game Day Magazine, (1991-92), University of Lethbridge Archives.

³⁷ Pronghorn Athletics Game Day Magazine, (1991-92), University of Lethbridge Archives and Pronghorn Athletics Game Day Magazine, (1992-93), University of Lethbridge Archives.

³⁸ Pronghorn Athletics Game Day Magazine, (1991-92), University of Lethbridge Archives.

³⁹ Pronghorn Athletics Game Day Magazine, (1993-94), University of Lethbridge Archives.

another \$30,000 cut requested the next year.⁴⁰ The task of implementing this Herculean cut fell to the General Faculties Council Advisory Committee on Inter-University Athletics. Rather than implement cuts equally across all of the sports teams the committee decided to terminate certain sports in an attempt to allow other sports to continue almost unobstructed.⁴¹ Swimming, along with hockey and basketball, were spared.

The inclusion of swimming alongside the popular, big money, spectator sports of hockey and basketball may appear odd, but not when understood within the context of Lethbridge and how the university viewed the purpose of swimming and varsity athletics in general. Swimming, despite not being a money making spectator sport was favoured by the Advisory Committee, because of a belief that it was “an emerging sport” that showed “signs of achieving national prominence.”⁴² National prominence did not translate into increased ticket sales, but it did create invaluable national attention for the school. Bill Barton and his swimming superstar Dean Kondziolka were what the committee alluded to when they mentioned “national prominence.”⁴³

Barton, the coach, and Kondziolka, the swimmer, had arrived together from the University of California, Berkley, the previous year.⁴⁴ Kondziolka, originally from Mississauga, Ontario, was a swimming superstar who had medaled at both the World Student Games and the Pan Pacific Games the summer before his inaugural year at the university.⁴⁵ He would go on to win the 50 meters freestyle at the CIAU National Championships, a feat no Horns swimmer has ever duplicated. Then LASC President David Hignell wrote with pride about Kondziolka as “a Canadian record holder, an international champion, and [someone

⁴⁰ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-28.

⁴¹ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-28.

⁴² Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-28.

⁴³ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-28.

⁴⁴ Pronghorn Athletics Game Day Magazine, (1993-94), University of Lethbridge Archives.

⁴⁵ Pronghorn Athletics Game Day Magazine, (1993-94), University of Lethbridge Archives.

who] will in all probability, be a member of Canada's 1996 Olympic Swim Team." ⁴⁶ Kondziolka was a winner. It mattered to the community and to the University that he stay in Lethbridge.

The committee further rationalized their choice of swimming outside the parameters of athletic excellence by discussing the cost of the team and its unity with the community. Swimming and judo were described as "relatively low cost and, because of their high involvement with the community, address directly the university's mandate to share its athletic facilities with the community." ⁴⁷ The recommendation of the advisory committee, to keep swimming and judo, was in line with predictions *The Meliorist*, the University of Lethbridge student paper, had made about the outcome of the cutbacks. The author opined that, "swim club and judo ... have a chance of avoiding termination due largely to their low operating costs." The university used swimming as a way to bridge the divide between the university and the community, while also saving money. The "high involvement with community" the Advisory Committee spoke of was a direct reference to the high degree of unity between the Horns Swim Team and the LASC. The survival of swimming during the 1994-95 budget cuts was assured through close ties to the community, which were enhanced by the presence of Kondziolka. The two teams, or "high performance partners," ⁴⁸ as they would later be called, were becoming increasingly interconnected in the lead up to the budget crisis.

The Board of Governors faced considerable backlash within the community, especially from the parents and executive of the LASC, when news of the proposed budget cuts became known. The LASC was not funded by the university and so from a monetary stand point

⁴⁶ Letter from LASC Club President David Hignell to David Hughes Chair of the Board of Governors, Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-27.

⁴⁷ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-28.

⁴⁸ "Horns impress at season opener," *Meliorist* (Lethbridge), 8 November 2001, <http://digital.library.uleth.ca/cdm/compoundobject/collection/archives/id/17708/rec/1> (Accessed October 20 2016).

was not affected. The survival of the LASC was never in doubt, but the parents of the club understood the importance of maintaining the varsity team alongside the LASC. The Horns Swim Team existed on the strength of the LASC, but the LASC also benefited from their union. The most obvious area of mutual benefit was in the quality of coaching. Brad Mori and Peter Schori, both head coaches of the Horns Swim Team and LASC, agree that the quality of coaching attracted to Lethbridge was greatly enhanced by the dual programs.⁴⁹ The President of the LASC during the budget crisis, David Hignell, wrote to the Board of Governors to remind them that “close to half of the pronghorn Swim Team are swimmers who have come to the university via the LA Swim Club.”⁵⁰ The Horns may have represented the university, but they were a team built from within the Lethbridge community.

Bruce Anderson, a parent of two high school aged swimmers, wrote an impassioned letter to the Board of Governors. He highlighted the dedication and commitment of his family “to create a successful competitive swimming organization, not only at the club level [LASC] but also at the University.”⁵¹ Anderson did not see two separate clubs, but rather a single organization in which his family had invested their time into: competitive swimming in Lethbridge. The LASC existed for children, the Horns existed for adults. The poster-family of this unity was the Pinder family. Shelly Pinder, and her two brothers, all swam for the LASC as children and all went on to study at the U of L and compete for the Pronghorns.⁵² This was the opportunity Anderson wanted to be able to provide for his children: “We want our children to have an opportunity (for both financial and personal reasons) to attend university here in Lethbridge, and while attending to be able to continue

⁴⁹ Mori, October 29, 2016 and Schori, October 25, 2016.

⁵⁰ Letter from LASC Club President David Hignell to David Hughes Chair of the Board of Governors, Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-27.

⁵¹ Letter from LASC parent Bruce Anderson to David Hughes Chair of the Board of Governors, Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-17.

⁵² Stephen Tipper, “Player Profile: Shelly Pinder,” *Meliorist* (Lethbridge), 6 November 1997, <http://digitallibrary.uleth.ca/cdm/compoundobject/collection/archives/id/15686/rec/4> (Accessed October 20 2016).

participating in the sport they (and we their parents) have gained so much from.”⁵³ Anderson understood that, “playing at the collegiate level is quite an accomplishment,”⁵⁴ and did everything in his power to ensure his children that opportunity in Lethbridge. He wrote, as he put it, “for selfish reasons,”⁵⁵ but the reasons he advocated aligned with the mandate of the university with regard to varsity sport. Swimming along with men’s hockey, judo and men’s and women’s basketball survived the budget cuts.⁵⁶

The close unity that the budget crisis had fostered between the Horns and the LASC presented an opportunity for further formal unity between the clubs. They already shared a training facility, practice times, equipment and informally a coach. Following the budget crisis the informal sharing of a coach become formalized, and a hallmark for the unity between the two programs. Beginning in 1995, the LASC was contracted by the U of L to, “provide coaching services for [the] U of L [Swim] team.”⁵⁷ From that point forward the head coach of the Horns Swim Team was not an employee of the university, but of the LASC. The Horns had taken a further step away from the university and into the community, a community that had protected them during budget cuts the previous year.

The Board of Governors was enthusiastic about the new venture especially the “cost and administrative efficiencies”⁵⁸ that it presented. They also noted that the “quality of coaching to both the University and the club can be enhanced by a shared agreement.”⁵⁹ Mori supported this assertion, stating that the combined coaching position “allows

⁵³ Letter from LASC parent Bruce Anderson to David Hughes Chair of the Board of Governors, Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-17.

⁵⁴ John Lubker and Edward Etzel, “College Adjustment Experiences of First-Year Students: Disengaged Athletes, Nonathletes, and Current Varsity Athletes,” *NASPA Journal* 44, no. 3 (2007): 458.

⁵⁵ Letter from LASC parent Bruce Anderson to David Hughes Chair of the Board of Governors, Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1994-01-17.

⁵⁶ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1995-01-19.

⁵⁷ Schori, October 25, 2016.

⁵⁸ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1995-05-18.

⁵⁹ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1995-05-18.

the employment of a coach of caliber.”⁶⁰ The university was however prudent to ensure that Pronghorn swimming did not simply become enveloped within the LASC. They wanted to ensure the Horns Swim Team maintained its distinctive identity as a varsity program. The board required “that a number of exclusive Pronghorn practices be held”⁶¹ to ensure a degree of separation between the programs. The university wanted the Horns Swim Team to be a connection to the community, they did not want them to simply become a part of the community.

Aside from the obvious financial and administrative benefits the new agreement also had several performance benefits. The formalized unity of coaching allowed the head coach to develop swimmers over longer periods of time throughout their swimming careers. When the coaching position became formally shared, the university envisioned a program “designed to develop swimmers from novice to the elite or University level.”⁶² Mori described the set-up as “an ideal position for a swim coach, because it allows you to work with kids from a young age through to the end of their university careers.”⁶³ The unity of the coaching duties between both clubs allowed Lethbridge to continually produce swimming excellence far above the normal output of such a small center.

Ryan Thornley, who swam for the Horns from 2009-2014, and who holds no less than five individual school records, is a perfect example of the excellence the shared coaching scheme has fostered.⁶⁴ Thornley did not swim with the LASC as a child, but rather upon completion of his eligibility as a varsity athlete. He swam as a Pronghorn varsity athlete for five years, the maximum allowed in Canada, before swimming an additional two years with the LASC.⁶⁵ The shared coaching agreement

⁶⁰ Mori, October 29, 2016.

⁶¹ Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1995-05-18.

⁶² Board of Governors Minutes, (University of Lethbridge), 1995-05-18.

⁶³ “Coach Navigates Familiar Waters at the Max Bell Centre,” *Legend* (Lethbridge), October 2005, <http://digitallibrary.uleth.ca/cdm/compoundobject/collection/archives/id/356/rec/1> (Accessed October 20 2016).

⁶⁴ Ryan Thornley (Pronghorn Swimming Alum), in discussion with the author, November 3, 2016.

⁶⁵ Canadian intervarsity athletics allow athletes to compete for five years, in contrast to the USA where athletes have only four years athletic eligibility. The CIAU attempted in 1971 to conform to the American system, but the proposal failed and Canada has remained distinct ever since. See Harrigan, “Asserting Authority,” 157.

allowed Thornley to make the switch to post-varsity swimming seamlessly, maintaining his coach, training partners and training facility throughout. A decade earlier Andrea Kilam, a freshman on the Horns Women's relay at the 1994 CWUAA Championship, discussed the benefits of having a long term coach.⁶⁶ She described herself and her fellow relay members as having been "swimming with [Head Coach Bill Barton] for a long time. We've moved through the ranks together so we'll be ready."⁶⁷ The experiences of Kilam and Thornley are not isolated events they are the norm for a joint program that has fostered an excellence neither program could achieve solitarily.

The relationship between the Horns Swim Team and LASC only grew stronger over time. By 1998, *The Meliorist* described the two as "partner teams."⁶⁸ This was a mantra that the *Meliorist* continued into 2000, referring to the teams as "club counterparts."⁶⁹ The close unity of the two programs has continued to benefit the Horns. Former Horns Men's Swim Team Captain Nick van der Sloot recalled the "tons" of "unexpected" support Horns swimmers received from the community before travelling to Toronto for the 2016 Swimming Olympic Trials.⁷⁰ Support ranged from gift cards, donated by local businesses, to monetary donations from community members. The outpouring of support may have surprised van der Sloot, but it should not have been unexpected given the longstanding relationship the Horns Swim Team has had with Lethbridge.

Ryan Thornley, who is currently employed as a coach by the LASC, reflected on the LASC mentioning memories of "family, community,

⁶⁶ "Swimmers go for gold at finals," *Meliorist* (Lethbridge), 19 January 1995, <http://digitallibrary.uleth.ca/cdm/compoundobject/collection/archives/id/14489/rec/1> (Accessed October 20 2016).

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ "Swimmers make waves in Calgary," *Meliorist* (Lethbridge), 19 November 1998, <http://digitallibrary.uleth.ca/cdm/compoundobject/collection/archives/id/16113/rec/1> (Accessed October 20 2016).

⁶⁹ "Horns continue to improve in the pool." *Meliorist* (Lethbridge). 10 February 2000. <http://digitallibrary.uleth.ca/cdm/compoundobject/collection/archives/id/16834/rec/1> (Accessed October 20 2016).

⁷⁰ Nick van der Sloot (Pronghorn Swimming Alum), in discussion with the author, October 29, 2016.

home kind of thing.”⁷¹ The close knit relationship was no accident. Former head coach Brad Mori ensured his varsity swimmers were involved in the community through dog-walking with the Lethbridge SPCA and the drive-home service known as Operation Red Nose.⁷² Being involved in the community was a mandated goal for all Horns Swim Team Members and was outlined in the Pronghorn Swim Team Handbook. The Handbook stated: “Graduate student/athletes and contributing members of society.”⁷³ The emphasis on producing individuals ready to meaningfully contribute to their communities demonstrates just how key the community relationship was for Mori. Having both swam and coached for the Horns he had seen first-hand the importance of the community in the success of Pronghorn swimming. Mori’s commitment to community involvement was continued aggressively by his successor Peter Schori in 2012. Spencer Simkin, a former Pronghorn athlete, who swam under both coaches, described the relationship with the community as something that “grew and fostered during my time here [at the U of L].”⁷⁴

Not all former athletes were aware of the special relationship the Horns and the LASC shared. One athlete when asked his thoughts on the LASC, responded simply “a swim team.”⁷⁵ He did not associate any special significance or greater meaning to the club. Heather Dutton, another former Horn, commented that LASC brought back “good memories” and that it was “fun to train with young kids.”⁷⁶ The importance of fun to the success of a program cannot be overstated. Former Horns Swim Team and LASC coach Andrew Moss boasted in the *Lethbridge Herald* about how exciting it was to be a Pronghorn swimmer: “The energy and team spirit of the ‘Horns Swim Team is

⁷¹ Thornley, November 3, 2016.

⁷² Mori, October 29, 2016. Operation Red Nose is a holiday season safe ride program operated by varsity athletes at the University of Lethbridge. ORN offers free rides and vehicle transport to late night party goers.

⁷³ University of Lethbridge Pronghorn Swimming Mission Statement, academic year 2012-2013, accessed November 2.

⁷⁴ Spencer Simkin (Pronghorn Swimming Alum), in discussion with the author, November 1, 2016.

⁷⁵ Anonymous (Pronghorn Swimming Alum), in discussion with the author, October 29, 2016.

⁷⁶ Heather Dutton (Pronghorn Swimming Alum), in discussion with the author, October 29, 2016.

second to none across university programs in Canada.”⁷⁷ Moss may have been exaggerating for effect, aware of how important a positive image was for the Horns in the Lethbridge community. It was not enough for the team to represent “health, vigour, discipline and athleticism,”⁷⁸ they had to be happy too.

The Horns Swim Team and its coaches were so pre-occupied with their community relationships that they may have alienated their relationship to the student body at the university. In 2009, the *Meliorist* described the swim team as “one of the smallest and unrecognized teams at the U of L.”⁷⁹ The Horns Swim Team neglected their relationship with the students, but it was a relationship they got nothing from. The team was born out of community involvement in swimming. The team had survived for almost three decades, including the budget crisis of 1994-95, not because of the support they enjoyed from the student body, but rather from the support they enjoyed in the community. The characterization of the team in *The Meliorist* was fair, but irrelevant to the program’s longevity.

The Horns Swim Team has represented the University of Lethbridge for over 25 years and continues to do so. The relationship the Horns have enjoyed with the LASC, and the community of Lethbridge, also continues today as strongly as when it was originally forged. This essay has focused on the benefits of combining the varsity and community programs. This is not to say drawbacks to this relationship do not exist. Current Head Coach Peter Schori in a moment of candor, commented that “in a perfect world I would not coach both programs.”⁸⁰ He does however recognize that without the shared coaching agreement in place, the U of L would be unlikely to have a swim team and he would not be

⁷⁷ “Horn Swimmers Making Waves,” *Lethbridge Daily Herald*, 7 December 2004, [http://lethbridgeherald.newspaperarchive.com/lethbridge-herald/2004-12-07/page-12/pageno-156740083?tag=U of L +swim+team&rtserp=tags/U of L-swim-team](http://lethbridgeherald.newspaperarchive.com/lethbridge-herald/2004-12-07/page-12/pageno-156740083?tag=U%20of%20L%20swim%20team&rtserp=tags/U%20of%20L%20swim%20team) (Accessed October 19 2016).

⁷⁸ Ellen Wright, “Spectacular Bodies: The Swimsuit, Sexuality and Hollywood,” *Sport in History* 35, no. 3 (August 2015): 444.

⁷⁹ “Pronghorn Report Card: Swimming: Room to grow: B-.” *Meliorist* (Lethbridge). 26 March 2009. <http://digitallibrary.uleth.ca/cdm/compoundobject/collection/archives/id/22522/rec/1> (Accessed October 20 2016).

⁸⁰ Schori, October 25, 2016.

coaching in Lethbridge.⁸¹ The Horns Swim Team was created on the back of the LASC, benefitting from an established, successful program and a high level of parental dedication. The closeness of this relationship and the profile of the team within the community saved them during the budget crisis of 1994-95. The relationship of the Horns to the Lethbridge community has survived into the present and continues to thrive being beneficial to both the Horns and the LASC for the foreseeable future.

⁸¹ Schori, October 25, 2016.

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SHIFTING TOWARDS INCLUSION:

THE UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE,
AND ITS COAT OF ARMS

SHELBY FORSTER

The University of Lethbridge, like all universities, has undergone a shift in the mission of the institution. This shift can be seen most obviously in the “statement of philosophy” shown in the university calendar each year. A mission statement represents the ideals of the institution, whereas the societal identity is the reality produced from those ideals. The mandate, or mission, of a post secondary educational institution is fundamental to the role it will play in society. Identity, related closely to reputation, is crucial to any post-secondary education, as it is what draws, or repels potential students, faculty, and donors.¹ Finding an accurate way to positively and accurately represent an educational institution brings many school administrators to the development of a coat of arms; the primary role of a coat of arms is to identify the thing in which it represents.² Heraldry is the study of any work relating to coat of arms.³ There have been many studies conducted on the history of heraldry in Canada, such as Swan’s “Canada: Symbols of Sovereignty”,⁴ or Beddoe’s “Canadian Heraldry”.⁵ However, there is a lack of Canadian study on coats of arms representing post-secondary educational institutions. By studying the official coat of arms the University of Lethbridge has had, this paper will explore the change in the institution’s mission, and argue that this is represented in the coat of arms. A gradual shift in philosophy at the University of Lethbridge has been accurately represented in its coat of arms; the two distinct coats of arms represent a move toward an inclusive institution, while expanding the educational opportunities it provides.

In 1979, during a General Faculties Council meeting, accusations of the university going off its original mandate were brought forward by a member of the council saying:

¹ Ka Skallerud, “School Reputation and its Relation to Parents’ Satisfaction and Loyalty” *The International Journal of Educational Management* 25, no. 4 (2011): 671.

² Conrad Swan, *Canada: Symbols of Sovereignty*. (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 3.

³ Colonel A. G. Puttock, *A Dictionary of Heraldry and Related Subjects*. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1970), 70.

⁴ Swan, *Symbols of Sovereignty*.

⁵ Alan Beddoe, *Beddoe’s Canadian Heraldry*. (Belleville, Ontario: Mika Publishing Company, 1981).

*“Such dedication to humane values surely is not the exclusive prerogative of the ‘Liberal Arts’ Such dedication must be shared by the social sciences and the natural sciences - by the professions - the lawyers and accountants, the engineers and the architects, the dentists and the doctors. It must be shared by artisans and tradesmen - the butchers and bakers and candlestick makers. Indeed, it must be shared by every man and woman in our society. And God help our society if it is not. God help this University if it continues to maintain this elitist attitude of exclusiveness”.*⁶

This demand for change shows that the university has not always reached the ideals which were set forth in the Waterton Conference to, “cultivate humane values ... foster intellectual growth, social development, aesthetic sensitivity, personal ethics, and physical wellbeing”.⁷ Nevertheless, the University of Lethbridge has adapted over time the ideals set forth in its original mandate, and the alterations of the coat of arms embody this adaptation.

In 1968, the University of Lethbridge hosted a competition for students to design a coat of arms that would represent the newly-developed school. Don Matisz was an art student at the time, and entered his submission, after a week of on and off sketching.⁸ Matisz conducted his own research and learned of the specific parts of a coat of arms that were mandatory; items such as a crest and supporters to hold the crest. Matisz won the competition and was rewarded with prize money for his contribution to the university.⁹ As an art and history student of the University of Lethbridge, Matisz was able to acknowledge

⁶ University of Lethbridge Archives. Minutes of the Open Session of the Meeting of the Board of Governors of The University of Lethbridge. Held on Thursday, September 27, 1979

⁷ *University of Lethbridge Calendar*, 1968-69.

⁸ Don Matisz, telephone interview by author. November 10, 2016.

⁹ Don Matisz, telephone interview by author. November 10, 2016.

important aspects of the university community, and used his art talent to create an aesthetically appealing arms. This coat of arms was used as the University's coat of arms until 2012, when a new coat of arms was developed that would meet with the heraldic regulations of the Public Register of Arms, Flags and Badges of Canada.¹⁰

Before exploring the coat of arms, it is important to understand the historical importance, and context of heraldry. Traditionally, the purpose of a coat of arms was to distinguish families on the battle field, this slowly evolved to a sign of aristocracy, and has now evolved into an un pompous form of identification.¹¹ In 2009, Ian MacLachlan, a geography professor at the University of Lethbridge, persuaded the Dean to commission a committee to develop a heraldically correct coat of arms. This committee was chaired by MacLachlan, but had many other members from the University contribute. The Committee originally thought they would finish the project in approximately nine months, but it was not finished for over two years.¹² The Governor General was even invited to attend the 2010 spring convocation to present the coat of arms which they projected to have finished by then. This presentation was not carried out however, as the arms was not ready until the 2012 convocation.¹³

Beginning the coat of arms was the most difficult part of the project. The committee members were unsure whether they should celebrate symmetry, or emphasize diversity.¹⁴ Other issues such as what to include from the original coat of arms, and what to add or remove was a struggle for the newly formed committee.¹⁵ The committee members knew of the original arms, and took it into consideration, but they believed that it was their duty to create a new, distinguished arms which would accurately represent the identity of the University.¹⁶

¹⁰ Public Register of Arms, Flags, and Badges. <http://reg.gg.ca/heraldry/pub-reg/main.asp?lang;e>

¹¹ Forest D Pass, "Strange Whims of Crest Fiends: Marketing Heraldry in the United States, 1880-1980." *Journal of American Studies* 50, (2016): 592.

¹² Ian MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

¹³ President's Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. June 2, 2009.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Jan MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

¹⁶ Jan MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

Once the content of the arms was decided, the hard part still was not over. The committee was forced to fire the first artists chosen by the Canadian Heraldic Authority, which annoyed both the committee members, and the Chief Herald of Canada.¹⁷ One example of why the committee searched for a new artist was that the committee members were concerned with the look of one of the supporters, a mule deer, stating that it looked like a cartoon kangaroo, with a smirk on its face.¹⁸ In an interview, MacLachlan said “I remember looking into the eyes of the committee members, and wondering if we were just too difficult to please”.¹⁹ However, the committee members continued the two year long process and were extremely gratified with the final result.²⁰ The second artist, Robert Grey,²¹ added the “wow” that the committee had been looking for, and with a few minor tweaks, they approved the drawing and the coat of arms was finalized.²²

Aesthetically appealing colour schemes are essential in creating a desirable appearance of any coat of arms. A blue and gold scheme was used in both versions, however, the new coat of arms has more vivid colouring. When applying for heraldic approval, the exact colour of the gold and blue was recorded, and any version of the coat of arms now produced must have the exact colouring, or else it is deemed flawed. When describing the colours used in the arms, the term used for mandating a specific colour is “proper”; proper means that any replicated arms must be the exact colour tint provided, example azure (blue).²³ The colour of the ungulates was a debate for some time. The option of their bodies being completely yellow, and their hooves and antlers blue was considered, however a more accurate look was eventually decided upon; even though the final colours are not totally realistic.²⁴

¹⁷ Ian MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

¹⁸ President’s Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. September 27, 2010

¹⁹ Jan MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

²⁰ Jan MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

²¹ President’s Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. November 26, 2011.

²² President’s Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. June 22, 2011

²³ Puttock, *Dictionary of Heraldry*, 98

²⁴ President’s Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. March 10, 2009.

With some basic background knowledge on the coat of arms development, and heraldic rules, it is now possible to analyze the coat of arms of the University of Lethbridge. Matisz was required by the University to include “Fiat Lux” in the coat of arms as it was, and remains, the University’s moto.²⁵ Fiat Lux comes from the Latin Vulgate version of The Bible, during the creation story in Genesis 1:3, where God says, “let there be light.”²⁶ Fiat Lux was extremely influential in Matisz’s overall development of the coat of arms. Matisz placed an Aztec looking sun at the top of the arms, as it gave the coat of arms interest, as well as a more historical look. The sun, along with the moto, represents intellectual and societal enlightenment. Matisz chose to bring focus to the sun as he believed that, “if you have knowledge and you never share it, you may as well be in the dark.”²⁷ This theme of enlightenment continues to be of significance in the University’s mission, as “What makes you shine?” is now the catch phrase associated with the institution. The theme of enlightenment has not changed since the inception of the university, and remains a main theme in the coat of arms, and the university’s mission statement. The “sun in splendor”, as it is termed, is a testament to the university’s commitment to its goal of enlightening all who come through its doors. However, this is where the permanence of the university mission ends.



1968 Coat of Arms

Supporters on coat of arms are on nearly every arms registered with the Canadian Heraldic Authority. The University of Alberta, for example, has a pronghorn and a bear as the supporters, representing a native ungulate in Alberta and the university’s mascot.²⁸ The University

²⁵ Don Matisz, telephone interview by author. November 10, 2016.

²⁶ Gen. 1:3

²⁷ Don Matisz, interview by Graham Ruttan, First Generation of the University of Lethbridge Oral History Project, June 11, 2010.

²⁸ University of Alberta. Public Register of Arms, Flags, and Badges. <http://reg.gg.ca/heraldry/pubreg/project.asp?lang=e&Project0=1747>

of Lethbridge has a pronghorn as one of the supporters in both of its coat of arms. The pronghorn was an obvious choice, as it is the University's mascot. The pronghorn, on both the original and the new coat of arms, is male, and on the dexter, meaning left side, of the arms supporting the crest. The drawings of the pronghorns are different in the two separate coat of arms, however, it is a uniting factor of the two arms.

On the original coat of arms, drawn by Matisz, the deer is a white tail buck, the antlers are very prominent, and a sense of admiration is felt for the seemingly proud stag. The white tail deer is a native ungulate to Southern Alberta and can commonly be seen on campus. The supporters chosen for the second coat of arms were not an easy decision for the committee, ideas such as a bison, buffalo, or even a beaver were considered.²⁹ On the second, heraldically correct coat of arms the supporter is slightly different from the first arms; the supporter is a mule deer. To the untrained eye, the differences between the two types of deer are not obvious, however, the mule deer has large prominent ears, and a white tail with a black tip on the bottom.³⁰ The white tail deer, in contrast, has a brown tail, however, when alarmed it sticks straight in the air, showing the white underside for which it was named.³¹ It is unclear why the committee of the second coat of arms chose to use a mule deer instead of a white tail, however this distinction is not terribly important in the study of the changing mission of the university. The important distinction between the two deer, is that the mule deer is female. The committee intentionally chose to use a female supporter to show the inclusion of the two sexes. One of the first questions posed at the first meeting was whether one of the supporters should be female.³² The committee found it important to show that the two sexes are on equal

²⁹ President's Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. June 2, 2009.

³⁰ Alberta Hunters Education Instructors Association. <https://319.yessecure.com/Main>

³¹ Ibid.

³² President's Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. October 30, 2008.

footing at the University of Lethbridge, and this is represented in the university's mission statement. Even in the twenty years from 1996 to 2016, the mission statement has changed from no mention of gender equality to the following promise to society, "we promote diversity and gender equity, and ensure equal opportunity for participation".³³

Along with changes to the supporters, came additions to the coat of arms, not seen in the original arms. The original coat of arms did not have a book in it, and this is one of the reasons why it was not considered heraldically correct. Under the Canadian rules, a book is mandatory for any coat of arms to be considered heraldically correct in representing an educational institution.³⁴ The book was a struggle for the committee, as they viewed it as over used and cliché. In the end, the committee members agreed to have the book at the top of the arms at an angle, so the reader could theoretically read it, had the words been legible. The angle of the book, on the top of the coat of arms, was intentional as the V formed by the pages was meant to represent the coulees in which the campus is nestled in. MacLachlan believed that the coulees should be represented strongly as he pointed out, "(U of L) is the campus in the coulees, it is the most dramatic physical feature".³⁵

The strict regulations of the Canadian Heraldic Authority show an interesting parallel path leading towards stricter regulations in educational society. A study was conducted on Canadian universities, and it highlighted a trend towards more stringent regulations dictating an acceptable absence for a class, test, or assignment.³⁶ Universities



2012 Coat of Arms

³³ *University of Lethbridge Calendar, 2015-17*

³⁴ Ian MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

³⁵ Ian MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

³⁶ Joelle Zimmermann, Stuart B. Kamenetsky, and Syb Pongracic, "Special Consideration in Post-Secondary Institutions: Trends at a Canadian University." *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 45, no 4. (2015): 262

in Canada were concerned with the number of students applying for special consideration, so more rules and regulations were put in place, therefore the professors did not have to make their own judgement calls on each individual case. This reliance on official rules is not isolated to acceptable absences.³⁷ The formal, written out mandates of the university have been slowly increasing along with this trend towards a more regulated society. The mission statement in the early years of the University of Lethbridge was a paragraph long, whereas now, the mission statement spans nearly 11 pages.³⁸ The book is an addition to the coat of arms because it was mandated by official rules, and not the choice of the institution.

In the original coat of arms, there is no connection with the black foot culture. This nevertheless, was not a fault of Matisz, but a fault of the University's mission statement. Nowhere in the 1968 mission statement is the Blackfoot culture, or any other culture for that matter, discussed.³⁹ Tracing the statement of philosophy of the University through the years in the calendar shows a slow shift towards inclusion of the First Nations. It is natural then, that the second coat of arms, developed from 2009 to 2012, would include much more reference to the Blackfoot culture. The University of Lethbridge is situated on historically Blackfoot territory, and therefore, a recognition of the land and its inhabitants is crucial. Leroy Little Bear was on the committee, and was the authority on the feather placement.⁴⁰ The crest rests on a rock which, at first glance, does not look significant, but is laid with symbolism. The rock represents the Medicine Rock, which is an important legend in the black foot culture. In the atrium of the Fine Arts building of the university hangs a story of the medicine rock, and its importance to the University. The acceptance

³⁷ Zimmermann (2015): 264

³⁸ *University of Lethbridge Calendar*, 2016-17

³⁹ *University of Lethbridge Calendar*, 1968-67

⁴⁰ President's Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. September 14, 2009.

of the Blackfoot culture, and an acknowledged debt to the Blackfoot people for their land, which was not present in the first arms or mission statement, is represented clearly in the coat of arms, as well as the newer mission statements of the university.

Blackfoot is not the only culture that the University has increasingly accepted and supported since 1968. The opportunities to learn about new cultures at the university is immense. Student exchanges around the world are available through the university; students may travel anywhere, including Chile, the Netherlands, Taiwan, India, and many more locations.⁴¹ The university has advanced to a more inclusive community through its widespread acceptance of other cultures. In the first ever university newspaper printed, *The Meliorist*, the final three pages were an article written by an English teacher from a college in Los Angeles, Jerry Farber. The article is titled, “The Student as Nigger”, and argues that professors have become so extreme in their petty rules at universities, that the student has become a slave.⁴² The content of the article is a discussion for another day, however, the title itself shows the societal change in what the university has deemed acceptable. The University of Lethbridge has increased its inclusion of other cultures tenfold since its inception, and this is evident through the additions of the medicine rock, and eagle feather in the current coat of arms.

The grass directly above the *Fiat Lux* is a rough fescue, which is Alberta’s provincial grass the Provincial flower of Alberta, the Wild Rose, is also shown. The grass and flower represent the greater community the university is situated within. The University of Lethbridge was established as the third university in Alberta and is tied closely with the Province, as well as the greater geographical, economic, and social

⁴¹ Semester Exchanges. University of Lethbridge.
<http://www.uleth.ca/international/content/semester-exchanges>

⁴² Jerry Farber, “The Student as Nigger”, *The Meliorist*, September 28, 1967.

landscape. The acknowledgement in the coat of arms of the larger community which the university is situated, shows the appreciation of Alberta, after an originally rocky relationship with the government of Alberta.

Hanging from the two ungulates hooves of the second coat of arms are miner's lanterns. These lanterns carry the idea of *Fiat Lux*, and the sun in splendor, but they also have a deeper meaning. Lethbridge was once named Coal Banks, and the mining industry was essential in the formation of Lethbridge as a city.⁴³ The committee members were interested in including some form of lantern to represent further the theme of light in the coat of arms, and this direct correlation to Lethbridge's past was readily accepted.⁴⁴ The addition of the lantern is also represented in the university's mission statement. The mission statements slowly started including information on "who we are" and "why we exist" in the explanation of the mandate, this shows an acknowledgment of the past, and why the university is where it is today.

It is interesting to note that the 20th century was a time of shifting styles in heraldry.⁴⁵ When Alberta was formed as a province, a large initiative was under way to form a proper heraldic coat of arms for all the provinces. The provincial government insisted on a simple, pictorial arms, and would not concede to the wishes of the Canadian Secretary of State for an altered version.⁴⁶ Finally, after months of delay, the Canadian officials accepted the arms and said, "Although the design is of the poorest class of heraldry, I can see no positive objection ... Unfortunately, in all such cases we get the discredit of the poor design, and not the real authors thereof!"⁴⁷ It is clear that the national officials were not impressed with the identification that Alberta put forth in its

⁴³ Alex Johnston and Andy den Otter, *Lethbridge: A Centennial History* (Lethbridge Historical Society, 1985), 37

⁴⁴ President's Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge, June 30, 2009.

⁴⁵ Swan, *Symbols of Sovereignty*, 210.

⁴⁶ Swan, *Symbols of Sovereignty*, 211

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 211.

coat of arms, however the provincial government was very pleased. The change in heraldic style during this time brought forth a more simplistic design than that of the earlier heraldic designs, and this simpler design spoke to the residents and officials of Alberta.

This simpler style can be seen in the second coat of arms, as the “artistic flare” of the first coat of arms was left behind for a more clear, defined, and obvious representation of the university.

Identification is the purpose of any coat of arms, and therefore, the insistence on the part of Alberta for their own design is fulfilling the very purpose of a coat of arms. For this same reason, it is important to not discredit the original coat of arms, because it was not officially registered. The University put out a call for suggestions for the coat of arms that would represent the people, land, and mission, and Matisz’ was the winner of all possible selections. The selectors of the coat of arms believed that the arms represented the identity of the University, and were proud of the character which it displayed; and this is the most important part of a coat of arms. Nevertheless, the mission of the University had shifted enough since 1968 to warrant the creation of a new arms which represents the ideals of the University more completely.

A significant challenge in the creation of a coat of arms is deciding what should be included, for it is impossible to include every aspect of a university in one picture. In virtually every mission statement there has been a recognition of the university being located in a primarily agricultural area, however no acknowledgement of this is given in the coat of arms. In response to a question about this, MacLachlan said that, because the university never had an agricultural faculty, it was not essential to the university.⁴⁸ Meeting minutes show that original

⁴⁸ Ian MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

sketches of the arms had cultivated fields in the background, along with the coulees, however the base of the arms was changed, and the cultivated fields removed.⁴⁹ A shift away from young people becoming involved in agriculture has been prevalent in society as a whole, so the university following suite, whether intentional or not, can be expected.⁵⁰ Agriculture is just one example of a part of the university that had to be left out. A fine line must be drawn between including all that needs to be included in an arms, and creating a cluttered arms, so tough decisions had to be made on what, or what not to include.

One very crucial aspect of the University of Lethbridge remains unaddressed in the coat of arms. What about the liberal education system the University prides itself on? In the *Journal of Education* from 1909, the US commissioner of education wrote, "One cannot permit the educational standing of one's own institution To be left in question before the rest of the world".⁵¹ The author was referring to a standardizing of education that he argued must take place, however, this quotation stands true for the identity of a school. Why does the coat of arms not give the direct impression that the university is a liberal arts institution? Perhaps the addition of all the different aspects of campus included in the arms represent together the liberal education philosophy? The liberal education philosophy at many schools is beginning to slip away, and this is a cause of great concern for society; just two small things that liberal education teaches, are critical thinking and source analysis, these skills are used in everyday life, but are not always recognized when applying for a job after graduation.⁵² This decline of liberal arts education shows that the university must be proud of the intellect it fosters through its wide range of teaching. Numerous

⁴⁹ President's Advisory Committee on the Coat of Arms, University of Lethbridge. February 24, 2009

⁵⁰ Section 6- Characteristics of farm operators, Canada and provinces: census years 1991 to 2006. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/95-632-x/2007000/t/4185586-eng.htm>

⁵¹ Elmer E Brown, "Standardizing Education." *The Journal of Education* 70, no. 7 (1909): 179.

⁵² Lorraine Smith Pangle, "Reclaiming the Core: Liberal Education in the Twenty-First Century", *Perspectives on Political Science* 42, (2013): 208.

books have been written, like Fareed Zakaria’s “In Defense of a Liberal Education”,⁵³ in which the author spends over 200 pages arguing for liberal education. The detailed minutes of the dean’s committee have no mention of representing the liberal education system. This is the biggest blunder in the coat of arms, for although I concede that liberal education would be difficult to represent in a pictorial form, no attempts were documented of the committee attempting to capture this fundamental aspect of the university.

The University shield must also be discussed when understanding the official identifying symbols of the university. The shield is different from a coat of arms, in that it is a simpler version, containing just the shield from the University of Lethbridge Shield arms, and the “Fiat Lux” ribbon. The difference between the shield and the coat of arms has, throughout the university’s history, been constantly confused, and this confusion has muddied the waters of the actual coat of arms. Even the official documents published by the University have misrepresented the symbols, and caused confusion among students, and faculty. For example, in the 2000-2001 University of Lethbridge Calendar, a picture of the shield, and a description of it are given under the heading, “The Coat of Arms”.⁵⁴ The shield was designed to be a simple way for the university to make its documents official. The “g” in Lethbridge on the shield was a specially designed letter; no fonts on Microsoft Word, or any other font generating machine have the same “g”, this was done intentionally so people could not fake a university letterhead.⁵⁵ Although the university shield is notably more recognizable to the average person as an official



⁵³ Fareed Zakaria, *In Defense of a Liberal Education*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015).

⁵⁴ *University of Lethbridge Calendar*, 2000-01

⁵⁵ Ian MacLachlan, interview. October 24, 2016.

symbol of the University of Lethbridge, the crest is substantially more important when studying the identity of the institution.

The coat of arms developed in 1968 by art and history student Don Matisz showed an accurate representation of what the university exemplified at the time. The “sun in splendor”, along with the pronghorn and FIAT LUX show continuing themes of the university 50 years later. The reworking of these elements of the arms into the 2012 coat of arms show the university’s dedication to its past, but also the excitement of the future. The University of Lethbridge has transformed into an inclusive institution and culture, while expanding the educational opportunities for its students, faculty, and greater community; the coat of arms transformation accurately represents the shift in the University’s mission over the past 50 years.

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