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ANSWERING DEMOCRACY’S CALL: U.S. CITIZEN ENLISTEES IN
THE FIRST WORLD WAR CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

by

June A. Mastan

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ANSWERING DEMOCRACY’S CALL: U.S. CITIZEN ENLISTEES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

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Abstract

This study explores the close relationship between Britain, the United States, and Canada at the beginning of the twentieth-century. The true closeness of this relationship becomes more evident throughout the First World War when issues of citizenship between the three nations assumed a substantial level of fluidity. Analyzing the motivations that compelled almost 36,000 U.S. citizens to enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the First World War provides a window through which we can view this relationship. Some citizens of the United States sought to join the war effort through military service, even though their country was a declared neutral and doing so potentially put their citizenship at risk. These enlistments, mostly volunteers who crossed the border, took place from 1914 through 1918, including after the United States entered the war.

There has been no extensive study of these American volunteers as a group. This study samples 1,000 American-born enlistees and analyzes their demographics. Several of them also left behind letters, journals, and books that shed considerable light on their reasons for enlisting. These reasons ranged from a strong desire to protect democracy and the British Empire to a desire for military service as a rite of passage to adulthood. Some joined out of a youthful interest in adventure, while others saw service in the CEF as a job with an allowance for support of their families. In addition to these white men, others sought to join the CEF as well. Also analyzed in this study are a selection of African American volunteers who, although accepted, faced discrimination and consignment to a non-fighting battalion. The dissertation also explores a sample of women who volunteered as nurses, and served as officers for the first time in any military. In the end, none of these Americans suffered any negative consequences to their
citizenship. This study argues that it is because of the close relationship between Britain, the United States, and Canada.
Introduction

“I wasn’t English; I wasn’t Canadian. I was from the good old U.S.A. and from all we could understand the States were neutral.” – Joseph Shuter Smith

“No country or flag can be mine except the United States, but if I could go to this war as a citizen of the world, I would pray to be allowed.” - Edwin Austin Abbey

Almost 40,000 men born in the United States served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the First World War. The two American men quoted above, Joseph Shuter Smith and Edwin Austin Abbey, both enlisted in the CEF in 1914. Their quotes, clearly acknowledging allegiance to the United States, also show that both men were thinking about the war as a cause greater than one nation or one person, compelling them to join up. The majority of American-born men volunteered to serve, with many crossing the border from the United States to Canada to enlist, while some were already living in Canada at the time of their enlistment. These men began volunteering with Canada’s entrance in the war in August 1914, and they continued to do so, even after the United States declared war in April 1917. Most had no prior military experience. While the birthplaces of many of these men clustered around states bordering Canada, volunteers came from across the United States. Why would these men willingly disregard the neutrality declaration of the United States and potentially risk their American citizenship to volunteer with the Canadians?

1 Joseph Shuter Smith, Over There and Back in Three Uniforms, being the experiences of an American boy in the Canadian, British and American armies at the front and through no man’s land (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1918), 11.
3 The exact number of U.S. citizens who joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force as cited by the Canadian War Museum is 35,599. See Library and Archives Canada, RG24, Vol. 1753, Page 1, File DHS 7-25. Letter dated June 7, 1933 from Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid to Dr. A.G. Doughty, C.M.G., Deputy Minister, Department of Public Archives: Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
This work argues that while the United States was no longer a British colony, the political, cultural, religious, and economic ties binding Britain and the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century were stronger and deeper than previously imagined. As a result, with the outbreak in 1914 of the first all-European war in a century, a number of Americans either ignored or defied the United States’ declared neutrality because they felt compelled to assist Britain. For some of these Americans, enlisting in the CEF, the army of one of Great Britain’s colonial Dominions, provided an effective means to do so. This study provides the first in-depth analysis of a selection of these American citizen volunteers. In addition, I argue that because of quickly escalating troop needs, questions of citizenship among these close allies developed a certain amount of fluidity during the war. The Americans who enlisted in the CEF were not particularly concerned about what might happen to their citizenship, and the government in Washington raised no objections, quietly letting it happen. Meanwhile, Canada elected not to ask any citizenship questions of its military enlistees. Britain, which quickly needed increasing numbers of troops, did not ask Canada any questions about the origins of the troops it sent. On the contrary, Britain welcomed them. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the relationship between Britain and its two North American descendent societies was closer than we previously realized. Examining the experiences of these soldiers is essential to understanding the depth of that relationship. I argue that this fluidity of citizenship during the war demonstrated and symbolized the common bond and heritage uniting Britain, Canada, and the United States.

**Britain and the United States – Post Colonial Ties**

Britain and the United States had worked out their major differences well before the start of the First World War through treaties and diplomacy. The two did not think of each other in
terms of their relationship before American independence. Britain knew that the United States would never be subservient again, having instead developed into an ambitious global economic and financial powerhouse. In 1914, the two shared a close relationship as world powers with many common interests and needs. Britain represented an experienced imperialist, while the United States had fairly recently joined these ranks in the international arena with the Spanish-American War in 1898.\textsuperscript{4} Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam became territories under the United States as a result. These are small territorial conquests compared to other empires of the time. Frederick Cooper argues that the “United States may well have become a nation state because it pretended to be one.”\textsuperscript{5} In the brief history of the United States, those in power never lacked for boldness or self-confidence. This small foray into outside empire building by the United States appears more like an effort to find ways to assert the power of the United States on a global stage, rather than really build an overseas empire. American imperialist ambitions on the North American continent certainly predated the Spanish American War and later the Philippine-American War (1899-1902). While initially confined to the North American continent, one has only to examine the treaties between the American government and the Native American population, as well as the enslavement of Blacks to find evidence that the former colony of Britain understood the colonizing process quite well. The American government did not think of itself as a colonizer, preferring instead to speak of a certain limitless nature to the borders of the United States. Cooper notes that those in power in the United States, particularly after the Civil War, found many ways to practice exclusion, particularly of Blacks and Native Americans who


did not fit their image of model Americans. The armies built by the Canadians and the British for the First World War, followed by the Americans at a later date reflected a similar sense of white, European exclusivity. The three epitomized a shared Anglo-Saxon vision.

For Britain and the United States, this is not to imply that the two powers never viewed each other warily from time to time or disagreed. It means that Britain and the United States had a strong enough relationship to work out any problems. Canada also found itself in a new position as a dominion faced with the requirement to take an active role in a European war for the first time. Previously, European troops came to North America to fight wars, but this marked the first time large numbers of Canadians, along with some Americans, went to Europe to fight. Since Canada, as a dominion, functioned as a North American extension of Britain, it quickly became the most expedient and practical means for Americans eager to get to the war.

Britain and the United States mirrored each other in many ways. For a major sector of the American population, a combination of common ancestral roots among long-established families and recent immigrants from Britain meant many close family connections on both sides of the Atlantic. The United States and Britain shared a common language and culture, the same religious affiliations, as well as a mutual respect for democracy. Britain’s influence among its settler colonies, both past and present, remained undeniable. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and even the British in South Africa shared a tendency to “stress more and more not their differences from Britain but their claim to shared Britishness, even better Britishness,” ostensibly some type of upgraded rendition. Even in the United States, Britishness remained the “gold standard” of sorts. The American government remained in the firm control of men of mostly Anglo-Saxon origins. The settler colonies, and the United States to a large degree, followed the

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6 Cooper, 196.
British model, the foundations of which stressed the need for strict cultural and racial conformity. In the United States, as with the settler colonies, this model excluded many, including the indigenous populations, Blacks, and Asians. For the most part, the American men volunteering for the Canadian military epitomized exactly what this type of system was intended to produce.

While the early twentieth century United States was increasingly moving ahead of Britain as an economic and financial world leader, the American people, particularly the upper and middle classes, continued to emulate many aspects of British culture. Britain represented the cultural foundations upon which the United States operated. For example throughout her long nineteenth-century reign, Queen Victoria represented a beloved figure to many Americans, not as a ruler but as a cultural icon. The queen, in turn, maintained an amicable relationship with the United States, even during times when others in her government felt otherwise. Her many gestures of friendship and respect toward the United States were influential in maintaining the close relationship between the two nations. The Queen even ensured that her heir, Edward, the Prince of Wales made a state visit to both Canada and the United States in 1860, and during the Civil War, her sympathies were clearly with the Union and not the Confederacy, seemingly in conflict with her own government. All of these actions contributed to fostering a close affiliation between the two nations, even if that seemed somewhat illogical considering two past wars, and sporadic issues with trade and North American land and water borders. Although for the most part unrecognized, Queen Victoria, made significant contributions to repairing and ensuring a solid relationship between the United States and Britain. Victoria was a shrewd

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8 Darwin, 398.
9 Campbell, 254.
10 Campbell, 255.
monarch who understood politics and international diplomacy rather well. Moreover, she appears to have had a soft spot for the United States.

Given these conditions, it is not surprising that Britain’s declaration of war against Germany on August 4, 1914 brought an expected outpouring of support in Canada, but also among many in the United States. The border between Canada and the United States remained open and permeable as families moved back and forth easily to live and work. The demographics of the United States and Canada looked more alike than different in 1914. In the early twentieth century, Canadians and Americans, with their shared affiliation with Britain, did not think of each other as citizens of foreign nations. As a relatively new country only given dominion status in 1867, Canada had not yet developed its own strong national identity and culture. The First World War dramatically changed that. For Canada, the war propelled it onto the world stage where it evolved during the twentieth century, and particularly after the Second World War, into a respected middle power nation, while leaving its colonial status behind.

However, until the Statute of Westminster in 1931, Britain continued to handle all matters of international concern for Canada, which brought frequent interactions with the United States. The United States and Canada, and by extension Britain, certainly experienced disagreements and issues periodically, particularly on matters related to boundary lines, fishing, and water rights. However, in most matters, the three functioned quite well together. The phrase “across the pond” in reference to the Atlantic Ocean implied that symbolically, the distance between Britain and North America was not all that great. Therefore, given these close ties, it is understandable that a number of Americans felt a strong need to aid Britain in its war effort, even at great personal risk. The Canadian Expeditionary Force provided the means to do so.

The American Volunteers – Citizenship Issues or Not?
Many of the young American men volunteering with the CEF likely did not realize that enlisting in a foreign army and, in this case, attesting to fight for the British monarch, meant forfeiting their American citizenship. In instructions provided to diplomatic and consular offices by Secretary of State Elihu Root on April 19, 1907, the definition of expatriation contained two parts, the first if “an American citizen has secured naturalization in a foreign state,” and the second, if an American citizen “has taken an oath of allegiance to a foreign state.” The volunteers did not think of Britain and Canada as foreign states. Under these circumstances, many either never considered the risks to their American citizenship or willingly chanced the consequences. The possibility of negative ramifications did not deter them from volunteering. As it turned out, the United States government did nothing to stop these men, as long as the enlistments remained a low-key endeavor. Although the United States was officially neutral for the first three years of the war, the federal government’s tacit acceptance of these enlistments provides some indication of where American loyalties really fell.

Once the United States entered the war in April 1917, legislation passed on October 5, 1917 designated a quick and simple administrative procedure as the means for quietly reaffirming the American citizenship of any American-born men fighting in the Canadian, British, or French forces who wished to transfer to the United States military. For example, Joseph Shuter Smith, who served in both the Canadian Expeditionary Force and the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), wished to resign his BEF commission to enlist in the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) after the United States entered the war. To obtain permission to do

13 See chapter four for further information on Joseph Shuter Smith.
so, Smith received instructions from his BEF superior officers to produce a letter from the American Consulate General in London verifying his United States citizenship along with supplying a notarized copy of his American birth certificate. These records are present in Smith’s BEF file. In fact, according to a letter in his British service record, the United States military anxiously awaited his arrival so he could serve as a member of General Leonard Wood’s staff. Other American-born soldiers serving with the CEF and other allied forces who wished to transfer to the American military completed a simple form, referred to as a “3904” based on the form number, in either a naturalization court, a United States consular office, or at their American enlistment site, attesting to their loyalty as American citizens. This instantly reaffirmed their citizenship and kept these men from running afoul of the March 2, 1907 Expatriation Act. Prior signed declarations of loyalty to the British monarch from their CEF enlistment paperwork no longer mattered. Other American-born soldiers who served with the Canadians, the British, or the French likely just returned home to the United States once their service ended, quietly resuming their former lives with no questions asked.

Canada, for its part, did not ask a citizenship question on its Canadian Expeditionary Force enlistment form. The Canadian form merely requested the enlistee’s place of birth. British enlistment forms specifically asked if the enlistee was a British subject by birth or naturalization, and it requested the nationality of the enlistee’s father. In the case of Joseph Shuter Smith, he stretched the truth by listing his place of birth on his CEF enlistment form as Port Hope, Ontario. A review of Canadian records indicated the birth in 1835 of another Joseph Shuter Smith, possibly his grandfather. In fact, the younger Smith was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1893, as the notarized birth certificate in his BEF service file attested. He also declared himself a British subject on his BEF paperwork, likely by virtue of his family’s earlier Canadian ties. This
creative, but somewhat accurate, interpretation of his background did not cause Smith any issues, as is evident in his BEF service file. It also demonstrates that Smith gave this considerable thought prior to filling out the paperwork for both the CEF and the BEF. He equally had no serious issue or fear about requesting a release to return to the United States. In fact, the British military readily granted his request upon receiving proof of his American citizenship. Smith assumed his American citizenship remained in effect, and apparently, the British and American governments did as well. The United States, Canada, and Britain displayed no interest in taking negative actions against Smith or any of the other American-born men who served in each other’s militaries. Once the United States entered the war, there was little reason to ask questions about the citizenship of those serving with the various allied nations. The three nations were eager for their service.

**The World in 1914 – Britain’s Past and Present Empire**

Paradoxical perhaps best describes the relationship between Britain and its settler colonies, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. During various periods in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Britain viewed its North American settler colonies as convenient, yet distant places to encourage the relocation of malcontents, landless sons, dissenting religious groups, and others deemed troublesome. From the standpoint of those who emigrated, economics, repression, and dreams of success unavailable to them in Britain drove many to take the risk. In discussing the Atlantic region and North America, Bernard Bailyn writes that “from England, Scotland, and Ireland some 700,000 people migrated to the Atlantic colonies before the Revolutionary era.”¹⁴ These are significant figures for this period. At the time, the Atlantic journey alone was certainly not for the faint of heart. Still somewhat

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ironically, these seemingly readily dispensed with migrants proved to have the mettle to survive and prosper in North America and other parts of the Western Hemisphere, such as the Caribbean. However, while serving as convenient safety valves for Britain, a nation small in land mass, these colonies also brought responsibilities for the mother country. For example, defense of the North American colonies from the designs of rival European empires often strained Britain’s finances.

The British were late to empire building in the Western Hemisphere with the French, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese well ahead. Seventeenth-century North America initially seemed a risky venture at the outset, with few in Britain predicting any real chance of long-term success. However, by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, those early predictions were long since debunked by the growth of the United States, in particular, and Canada as well. The United States managed to pull itself out of the destructive four-year Civil War (1861-1865), emerging even stronger by the late nineteenth century. This rise of a former colony rightfully gave Britain cause for worry about maintaining its global superiority. In North America, Canada was a young dominion and well within the orbit of the United States, both geographically and economically. Even though concerns that the United States would try to invade and take over Canada had faded by the late nineteenth century, the two nations remained deeply intertwined, particularly as trade partners. As with those earlier periods of strong migration from Britain, the late nineteenth and early twentieth century brought continued robust migration to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States as well. In the early years of the twentieth century, a bonus system for British shipping agents and Canadian government agents existed, with some evidence that it likely influenced the strong migration to Canada, as the numbers imply.15 From 1900-1901, the

United States surpassed Canada in its receipt of immigrants from the British Isles by more than four times, however, by 1906-1907, the United States received fewer immigrants from the British Isles than Canada.\textsuperscript{16} However, in some instances, the initial move to Canada was temporary, with a subsequent move to the United States.

By the late Victorian era, debate in some intellectual and political circles in Britain emerged over the idea of forming a union of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, a concept referred to as Greater Britain. Even the possibility of drawing the United States into this framework in some form, while highly unlikely, garnered consideration as potentially representing the global union of the Anglo Saxon race.\textsuperscript{17} Ultimately, the idea of Greater Britain never became more than a concept. However, in reality, Britain faced a number of challengers for world supremacy in the late Victorian era in Germany, Russia, France, and undoubtedly, the United States, which would pursue its own imperialistic interests with the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War from 1899-1902. Many in Britain also looked at the spread of democracy as inevitable after over a century of advance marked by the American and French Revolutions, but nonetheless still posing a threat to the old order. At the approach of the twentieth century, social issues, among them increased worker agitation, expanded male enfranchisement, and the press for women’s rights added to these fears of a changing world order. As Duncan Bell notes about the late Victorian era, it “was saturated by a sense of faltering confidence, sometimes bordering on crisis, about the role of Britain in the world,” while visions of the formation of a Greater Britain stood out for some as one of the

\textsuperscript{16} Knowles, 115.
optimum solutions to this problem. Many also saw the formation of such a union as the key to a peaceful world order, promoting global benefits.

By the end of the nineteenth century, a number of British leaders suspected that “the huge scale of their empire was turning it into an albatross,” making it increasingly more difficult to sustain and defend it. As Britain experienced concerns about its place in the global order, other empires more aggressively pursued their own interests. To counter this trend, Britain entered into several agreements to settle issues with some of its competitors, including the Entente Cordiale with France in 1904 and the Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907, which led to the Triple Entente of Britain, France, and Russia later in 1907. However, Britain was not able to achieve any accords with Germany. Britain also embarked on a significant naval build-up, with spending increasing in 1905 by more 50 percent over the 1899 level, while Germany similarly commenced with an equally extensive naval build-up of its own. None of these events happened in a vacuum. Press reporting of the day was extensive. Britain’s far-flung settler colonies, as well as the United States were well informed and followed each move closely. German militarism struck fear in many in the United States and Canada.

The existence of settler colonies, past and present, had enabled the spread of the Anglo-Saxon race, as it was referred to at the time, across the globe, with the United States standing out as the most successful example. This created deep and lasting ties with Britain, presenting both a blessing and a curse. Britain found itself in this position at the start of the First World War. It desperately needed the assistance of its settler and other colonies to help it achieve victory. As it turned out, even considering legal obligations to Britain, the settler colonies still felt a strong

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18 Bell, 238, 2.
19 Bell, 247.
20 Darwin, 328.
sense of duty and a keen willingness to help. Additionally, many in Britain’s biggest rival and former colony, the United States, also shared this view. The American men who traveled to Canada to volunteer with the CEF provide evidence of the strength of these bonds between the United States and Britain.

**Who Enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force?**

Youth is a hallmark of war and statistics demonstrate that a high percentage of the Americans (66%) enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force fell into the 18-24 year old age demographic. Many of the Americans who sought to enlist with the Canadian Expeditionary Force articulated reasons both noble and practical, with some intentions perhaps related more to the youth of the enlistees. A number, like Edwin Austin Abbey, were idealists driven by a strong desire to protect British democracy from the threat of German militarism. Others like Joseph Shuter Smith reacted to persuasion and encouragement from peers to join the fight. Often, as Smith recalled in his case, these group enlistments resulted from intense political discussions, and certainly did not represent any lightly made decisions. Most of these young American men knew little of the realities of war. In 1914, the United States had not experienced a major all-encompassing conflict since the Civil War, a period of almost fifty years. The two short wars, the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, had not involved large-scale troop mobilizations. As was true in many cultures, in the United States military service represented an important rite of passage to manhood. Service on the battlefield symbolized the ultimate badge of adulthood for young men. Many had grown up hearing stories of their grandfathers and great uncles service in the American Civil War. Those stories from days long ago could not compete with a real war raging across the Atlantic at that very moment. Many young men worried about missing the war in Europe because of the United States’ neutrality policy or the possibility that it
might end too quickly. Seeking an expedient means to get to the battlefield in France, Canada represented a ready option. Travel to Britain to enlist was lengthy and costly, but a trip across the United States border to Canada was not. For a young man laboring on a farm or in another occupation with limited chances for advancement, fighting in the war represented an opportunity to defend democracy and protect his way of life. This work will explore the closeness of the relationship between the United States and Britain, a closeness that propelled such men to enlist in a foreign army and allowed for a temporary lapse in the strict enforcement of the rules of citizenship for Americans serving with the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

**Organization and Chapters**

Chapter 1 examines the general history of North America, specifically the impact of European wars on the North American colonies and border relations, tracing the importance of British influence from 1640 to 1914. The early seventeenth- and eighteenth-century wars affected the shifting positions in upper North America between several European colonial powers, leaving Britain, after its success against the French in the Seven Years (or French and Indian) War, as the ultimate victor in possession of the territories that eventually became the United States and Canada. The chapter traces the relationship between the United States, Britain, and Canada through the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the American Civil War. By the last quarter of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the United States and Britain had become adept at solving their differences through treaties and diplomacy instead of war. This chapter demonstrates how the bonds between the United States, Canada, and Britain remained close, even after changes in colonial status. These enduring ties contributed to the willingness of many Americans to assist Britain in 1914.
Chapter 2 explores Canada’s enthusiastic response to the British declaration of war, which automatically drew the young nation into the conflict by virtue of its dominion status. The Canadian troops first sent to Europe had little professional military training, so they were not ready for deployment to France until undergoing extensive remedial training in England. The chapter traces the professionalization of the CEF into a crack fighting force of its own, eventually under Canadian leadership. It also explores the plan to form an official “American Legion” within the CEF, an enterprise that was quietly squashed as too serious an affront to American neutrality, although those involved continued it on an “unofficial” ad hoc basis anyway. The chapter also discusses the impact of Irish nationalism and the Easter Rising of April 1916, a critical domestic issue for Britain, in addition to dealing with a war that had produced little to no success to this point in time. Irish nationalism was an issue for Canada and the United States as well, given the large numbers of Irish immigrants in each of those nations.

Chapter 3 discusses the neutrality of the United States, both its official representations and its practical applications. Also explored are the real and perceived impacts of German activities in North America, as well as how Britain benefited from U.S. neutrality. In addition, the chapter looks at Canada’s reaction to the United States’ declaration of neutrality, and American reactions and actions during the three years of neutrality.

Chapter 4 examines several American-born men who served with the Canadians, analyzing their Canadian military service files, as well as books, letters, and journals they wrote. Edwin Austin Abbey and Joseph Shuter Smith are among the six case studies discussed in the chapter. There is also a short section on Black American volunteers. These men could not serve in Canadian fighting units; rather they were required to serve only in the No. 2 Construction Battalion. The chapter also contains an extensive demographic analysis of 1,000 American-born
men who served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. This figure represents a statistically valid sampling of the almost 40,000 American-born men who served in the CEF.

Chapter 5 explores another group serving as official members of the military in officer’s ranks for the first time, the Nursing Sisters. The chapter explores the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century professionalization of nursing from a home-based, self-taught practice to one served by accredited programs with high standards of excellence. It marked one of the first professional careers, in addition to teaching, that were available to women at that time. The chapter discusses the service records of fifteen American-born nursing sisters and performs a brief demographic analysis. Chapter 6 examines two pivotal events that occurred within days of each other in 1917, the entry of the United States into the war on April 6, 1917, and the Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge during Easter 1917. This marked the first time all four Canadian divisions served together. While a success, Vimy Ridge was only a small victory for the overall war effort but it served as a major turning point for the development of Canadian nationalism. Finally, Chapter 7 examines what happened at the conclusion of the war and the impact this had on the soldiers returning home. The chapter also reviews the Canadian government’s provision of post war services for their veterans, something never done before, reflecting both the newness of Canada as a nation, and changing expectations for state welfare in the twentieth century.

The First World War changed Britain, the United States, and Canada in lasting ways, but it also strengthened the bonds of the three allies, bonds that remain firm to the present day. The three had a closer relationship in the early twentieth-century than previously realized, and the personal stories explored here of American-born men enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force represent that larger story. The personal writings, service records, and demographics of these men provide a window into the reasons why they wanted to serve, and those reasons
connect us back to the close bonds between Great Britain and its two North American
descendent societies.
Chapter One

The United States and Canada: Border Relations and British Influence, 1688 -1914

* Nation, nationality, nationalism – all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyze. – Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*22 *

Prologue

Prior to European settlement, no defined border existed in upper North America. The land was marked by territorial divides among the various indigenous populations. Even after European settlement, the border between the United States and Canada remained open and permeable, with considerable cross border movement over most of the last almost four hundred years for purposes of immigration and emigration, as well as for work and family. Two wars, the American Revolution and the War of 1812, briefly affected the ease with which this took place, however, it continued nonetheless. Canada provided a safe haven for Loyalists fleeing the lower colonies following the defeat of the British in the American Revolution. The American Civil War brought an estimated 40,000 Canadians south of the border, where most volunteered with the Union Army. Simultaneously, a number of Americans derisively referred to as “scallywags” fled north to Canada to avoid serving in the same war. The early years of the First World War brought another element of border crossing as American citizens eager to become part of the war effort in Europe crossed from the United States to Canada to join the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). Canada, badly in need of additional troops, gladly accepted these volunteers. Americans desiring to fight in a European war was a new phenomenon, and they defied the declared neutrality of the United States to do so. To understand how this came about, it is important to look back at European settlement in North American and ask some questions. How did the history between the United States and Canada contribute to creating an environment

where American men joining the CEF proved acceptable to both and to Britain as well? Was this the first time that Americans or Canadians crossed the border to serve in each other’s military? How did Britain influence Canada and the United States?

**European Affairs Affect North America**

Several factors influenced the historical relationship between the United States and Canada, including the consequences of earlier European wars, which managed in varying degrees, to end up on North American shores. North American colonies, both French and English, could not escape the impact of the seemingly endless series of conflicts and territorial disputes routinely taking place among the European powers. Eventually, this produced a deep-rooted desire, particularly evident in the colonies that became the United States, to maintain a clear separation from Europe, sustained by not engaging in any diplomatic entanglements. As noted by Jay Sexton, “The objective of steering clear of European alliances was rooted in perceptions of threat, not in some dogma of isolationism.”23 The fledgling United States fought a long war to end British control over the former thirteen colonies, and its leaders did not intend to destroy those efforts by falling back into the orbit of Britain, or any other European power. The United States wanted the freedom to control its own affairs and destiny. However, as a new union, the United States was a fragile entity, while the British Empire grew increasingly stronger in the early nineteenth century. Desiring to maintain at least part of North America, it would take about eighty years after the American Revolution for Canada to achieve some measure of independence from Britain, although it was a peaceful transition. Even with Canada assuming dominion status, Britain was still not completely out of the picture.

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Avoiding entanglements did not mean that the United States would never do business with a European power. Engagement was fine when it suited American purposes. This particularly applied to the area of commerce. The early leaders of the United States worried about the continuing threat posed by European powers and, to an even greater degree, about dangers to the union itself stemming from internal divisiveness. Looking ahead, fears about disunity within proved true, culminating in the American Civil War. George Washington’s 1796 Farewell Address and Thomas Jefferson’s 1801 First Inaugural Address both stressed the need for avoiding political entanglements with foreign powers as a means to maintain internal unity. In the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, the United States appointed itself as the controlling power in the Western Hemisphere, whether the young nation really had the ability to do so or not. It was a warning to European powers against any further thoughts of colonial expansion in the region. However, the United States never stopped interacting with Britain. Rather, the terms and conditions of those interactions evolved over the course of the nineteenth century. As the British Empire spread settler nations across both sides of the globe, it also spread a common language, religious beliefs, and culture. For the United States, its economic ties to the empire also continued to stay strong. In fact, the two remained closely intertwined. In the political and intellectual sphere, the relationship between the two was often one of mutual admiration and disdain at the same time. The United States had a youthful vitality and seemingly boundless energy. Britain felt the weight of its empire, and the constrictions of its social hierarchy and long-standing institutions. Still, the United States also modelled itself after Britain, and applied some of the less savory aspects of British rule in a new American form of imperialism,

24 Sexton, 29.
particularly targeting Indigenous Americans in the way of territorial expansion, and most importantly, establishing unquestioned economic control within the Western Hemisphere.\textsuperscript{25}

**Part I**

**Indigenous North Americans and British and French Imperialism**

The colonists who settled North America waged their own territorial disputes involving rival colonies and the various European powers. Indigenous North Americans attempted to fight against efforts to take more of their lands and to co-exist as best as possible with European settlers. These territorial disputes sharply escalated as colonial populations grew, fueling the need for more land to the west. Prior to the conclusion of the Seven Years’ War in 1763, France, Britain, and Spain continually jockeyed for position in all of North America, and each administered its colonies quite differently.\textsuperscript{26} This section briefly examines some of the differences in the styles of British and French imperialism, as practiced in North America.

France and Britain each formed alliances with various indigenous populations as part of an on-going competition to control upper North America, frequently using indigenous allies in fights against one another. The two European powers also used gift giving in different ways with the indigenous populations, who viewed the gifts “as their just deserts for helping the colonists,” while the British tended to think the gifts obligated the indigenous populations to obedience.\textsuperscript{27} The French had used gift giving to help control the fur trade and make allies of the indigenous populations. The French and Algonquians maintained an alliance that was, as noted by Richard White, “an odd imperialism where mediation succeeded and force failed, where colonizers gave

\textsuperscript{25} Sexton, 7.

\textsuperscript{26} North Americans refer to the Seven Years War as the French and Indian War.

gifts to the colonized and patriarchal metaphors were the heart of politics.”

The French learned early on that they had little choice but to accept the concepts of alliance and mediation, as practiced by the indigenous populations. Most importantly, they learned the necessity of gift giving, a practice essential to maintaining Algonquin loyalty, particularly when the English offered the Algonquin more favorable trade terms. By 1696 the French Crown spent 25,000 livres a year on gifts for upper North American indigenous populations, and in spite of attempts over the years to reduce the amount, the French budget for 1716 still had a 20,000 livres allotment for this practice. As a countermeasure during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, whenever war erupted, the British resorted to blockades, which prevented the French from bringing in the gifts necessary to maintain the loyalty of North American’s original inhabitants. Over the course of almost two hundred years, the French paternalistic approach and gift-giving system had become their major source of support. The French loss in 1763 marked the end of France as a force in upper North America, negatively affecting the indigenous populations on a permanent basis. The British did not favor working with them in any way resembling the French paternalistic approach. The British expected obedience and cooperation from those they conquered and felt no need to pay for it. British General Sir Jeffrey Amherst, known to possess an “exaggerated notion of British power,” took a far harsher approach with the indigenous populations than the French had. He viewed the practice of gift giving as the source of all problems, deliberately choosing to ignore Algonquian and Iroquois resistance to changes ending the long-standing policy. These original inhabitants of North America now experienced

29 White, p. 113.
31 White, 258-259.
a serious diminishment of their influence, quickly finding themselves clearly in the role of the
conquered without even the veneer of French gifts to lessen this hard reality.

**European Wars Land on North American Shores**

The spillover of European wars onto North American soil is not surprising considering
what was at stake for Britain and France. Both sought sole control of upper North America,
making the elimination of one or the other as a competitor essential. The Seven Years’ War
represented the culmination of these clashes, with British victory resulting in the removal of
French territorial claims and any control in the area eventually forming Canada. However, a
number of previous wars also had an effect on the upper North American colonies. These wars
helped shape colonial views of the various European powers and the place of each in the
territories of upper North America. The colonists had an ocean between them and Europe, but
they still needed to keep abreast of European affairs. It was in their best interest to do so.

The Seven Years’ War is often viewed as the first true global war, but several of these
earlier wars were significant enough that English colonists took notice, giving each one a local
name, usually that of the reigning British sovereign.32 The first of these wars, the War of the
Grand Alliance, also known as the War of the League of Augsburg and as King William’s War
in the English colonies, lasted from 1688 to 1697.33 The conflict brought unwelcome activity to
the shores of upper North America, including French raids in Schenectady, New York and New
England frontier settlements, the capture of Port Royal in Nova Scotia by New England
colonists, a British attempt to take over Quebec, and the capture of the French governor,

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33 The main purpose of the League of Augsburg, formed in 1686, was to fight the expansion plans of Louis XIV of France. The League consisted of Austria, Sweden, Spain, Bavaria, Saxony, and the Palatinate (Rhineland).
subsequently sent on to Boston.\textsuperscript{34} The French raids, led by Count Louis de Buade Frontenac, sent shock waves throughout the colonies, including Boston, with particular concern over the severe nature of the attack at Schenectady.\textsuperscript{35} These raids and skirmishes only served to stoke the interest of English colonists in attempting to take over French Canada. King William’s War was a long war of attrition, which by most accounts accomplished little. The war concluded with the Treaty of Ryswick, restoring all territory to its former ownership in a peace formally proclaimed in Boston on December 10, 1697. However, peace did not last very long in Europe. In North America, the colonies continued to be dangerous frontiers where indigenous peoples found themselves pushed from their lands by Europeans, leaving them few viable options to fight back, except to form alignments with either the French or the British in an attempt to survive.

The next conflict, the War of the Spanish Succession, known as Queen Anne’s War in the colonies, was another protracted conflict, running from 1702 to 1713. Centered on who would succeed the childless Charles II to the Spanish throne, English concerns were ignited when Charles named Louis XIV of France’s grandson as heir in his will, in effect uniting France and Spain.\textsuperscript{36} In upper North America, the war caused conflicts affecting several of the English colonies, resulting in the burning of Deerfield, Massachusetts, the capture of Port Royal in Nova Scotia once again, and it fostered another plan by Britain to invade Quebec, which never reached fruition.\textsuperscript{37} The Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 brought an end to this war and the cessation of almost twenty straight years of warfare, some of which directly involved the colonies. However, the conclusion of this European inspired war did not halt raids and disputes with indigenous peoples.

\textsuperscript{34} Borneman, 6.
\textsuperscript{36} Borneman, p 6-7.
\textsuperscript{37} Borneman, p 7.
These continued regularly, as both colonists and the colonial powers relentlessly pressed forward with more settlements, seriously reducing the traditional landholdings of the indigenous populations. However, because of the Treaty of Utrecht, the French and New France lost significant territory at the peace table, giving up Newfoundland, holdings on Hudson Bay, and Nova Scotia. Britain received trading rights in parts of the west and the Mississippi Valley, a joint commission was called for to draw formal boundaries for the French and English North American colonies, and both France and Britain undertook a number of fort building and renovation projects along the Montreal to Albany corridor and further west along the Niagara and Mississippi Rivers. Their goal was to provide better protection for both their colonists and their holdings from the frequent incursions orchestrated by each other with assistance from their indigenous allies. While no large-scale formal state of war existed for the next two plus decades, disputes and wrangling over colonial territory continued, and the North American colonies remained dangerous places to live.

Almost inevitably, a formal state of war broke out in Europe once again. The War of the Austrian Succession, known as King George’s War in the colonies, began with the Prussian invasion of Silesia in December 1740 and ended with the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle in October 1748. The participants, which included most European powers, had each seriously drained their finances and simply could not afford to continue fighting, although that did not mean all of their disputes were resolved and would likely lead to hostilities in the future. In Europe, the War of the Austrian Succession was a series of smaller wars, while the North American version, King

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39 Larimie, p 137-141.
George’s War, involved a continuation of the non-stop conflict between France and Britain over their colonial possessions in North America and India. In Europe “Britain’s policy was to cajole and subsidize its allies…to keep the French occupied in Europe while the Royal Navy and the cream of the British army picked the plums of France’s overseas empire.”

In North America, William Shirley, royal governor of Massachusetts, commissioned a “ragtag collection of New England militia” led by a Kittery, Maine merchant named William Pepperell to capture a key French asset, Fort Louisbourg in Nova Scotia. Seemingly, against the odds, this operation succeeded in 1745, and French efforts to retaliate and reclaim the fort subsequently failed to materialize. The loss of Fort Louisbourg did not bode well for France’s future as a colonial power in North America. Even though the fortress went back to the French as part of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, it was not destined to remain in their hands for much longer.

French efforts to increase the size of their colonial populations never met with much success either. By the mid-eighteenth century, the population of English settlers far exceeded the French. In the census of 1754, there were only 55,000 white inhabitants in Canada, with several thousand more in Acadia while by contrast, the English colonies had 1,160,000 white inhabitants and 300,000 enslaved black inhabitants. French and British immigration policies for the colonies differed significantly, with the British taking a far less restrictive view, which allowed a wide range of settlers, while the French imposed much tighter regulations. For example, the French would only allow Roman Catholics in their North American colonies, while Protestant Huguenots in exile from France could not settle in French Canada. Instead, they chose to immigrate to the English colonies, including New York near what is now the city of New Paltz.
While both the British and the French had economic ambitions for their colonies, viewing them as prime sources of raw materials, the French also harbored strong desires to convert the indigenous populations to Roman Catholicism. Franciscan missionaries arrived in Canada in 1615 and the Jesuits in Quebec in 1635, with conversion as their primary goal to ensure a Roman Catholic colony. Britain favored its official Anglican Church with the exception of the 1660 to 1688 period of Stuart rule, when the Crown was sympathetic to Catholicism. The British government always allowed a wide range of other denominations to settle in its North American colonies, often viewing the colonies as a safe and distant place to allow dissenting groups from Britain to relocate. France reacted badly to the Stuart fall, which brought the return of Protestant rule in Britain under William of Orange and ignited continuous conflict between the French and the British in North America, which lasted through to the defeat of the French in 1763. The French would find a way to exact some measure of revenge against the British by assisting the American colonists during the Revolution.

Although the French possessed a huge expanse of territory, the significantly larger British colonial population in North America proved crucial as colonists pushed across the Appalachians westward to the Ohio River. It seemed inevitable that the two colonial powers would clash over this expansion, as each vied for control in North America. As for the Ohio indigenous populations, their goal was to get both the British and the French out of the Ohio River area altogether. As noted by Richard White, the indigenous populations “had come to regard the British and the French as a single Christian threat,” making the indigenous groups feel as though they were “the objects of a general Christian conspiracy.” Indigenous Americans in the region

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45 White, p. 240.
46 White, p. 237.
wondered if the two nations would eventually unite to push them from their lands forever. They correctly questioned how the British and French could consider the land as theirs when, in fact, the European powers frequently asked permission of the indigenous populations to occupy the land. This conflicting logic did not escape their notice. One hundred and sixty years later, many of the Americans crossing over to Canada to volunteer with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in defense of Britain and France, came from the very same geographic area the two powers fought over in 1754.

The French and Indian War – A Pivotal North American Event

Prior to the start of the French and Indian War in 1754, the British and the French used a system of commissioners over a period of forty years in an attempt to reach boundary agreements in North America, but both sides consistently made untenable territorial demands, so little was ever accomplished.47 The French centered their claims on water areas, requesting all lands drained by the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes to the north, as well as the Mississippi River, which would have also given them the lands surrounding the Ohio River.48 This area was the traditional French fur trader’s territory, known to them as the pays d’en haut or upper country.49 The British took a different approach by claiming all lands the Iroquois had ever occupied. One of the provisions of the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht established British suzerainty over the Iroquois, which, in effect, gave the British claims on most of the lands that comprised Canada.50 These conflicting viewpoints made a collision between the two empires inevitable, and by the mid-1750s, the time was drawing near.

47 Wrong, p. 151.
48 Wrong, p. 151.
49 White, p. x.
50 Wrong, p. 151-152.
The disputes between the British and the French affected the colonies of Pennsylvania and Virginia in particular, as the two needed more land for their steadily increasing numbers of colonists and both sought to push their boundaries westward. At the end of October 1753 a young surveyor named George Washington traveled to see the French in Ohio to negotiate for more land for settlements. When Virginia Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie sent Washington on this mission, the future Revolutionary War general and first president of the United States was twenty-one years old and a major in the Virginia militia. Charged with getting the French to agree to vacate Ohio and winning the allegiance of the indigenous populations in favor of British land claims, these tasks were far more difficult to accomplish than anything the bad weather and difficult terrain could throw his way.51 The French representative in the Ohio region, Legardeur de Saint-Pierre, politely declined to meet British demands to leave Ohio. Saint-Pierre deferred to General Duquesne, governor-general of New France, for a final determination on the formal request from Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie. Washington noted about the French in his report to Dinwiddie, “They pretend to have an undoubted right to the River, from a discovery made by one LaSalle 60 years ago,” and Saint-Pierre told him “that no Englishman had a right to trade upon those waters.”52 No one realized it at the time, but Washington’s trip would loom large in the upcoming struggle between the French and the British for control of upper North America. These disagreements eventually led to the French and Indian War (1754-1763), and consequently led to the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763) in Europe. The report Washington provided to Dinwiddie concerning his trip was widely read in Virginia, but it generated little support from most of the other colonies, which rarely thought of anything except

51 Borneman, 20.
their own local needs. The Ohio country was too far away for their concern – for now. However, the actions of the French in other parts of upper North America had not escaped the notice of the northern colonies.

The previous wars discussed here had all originated in Europe over European affairs and then spilled over in one form or another to the North American colonies. The French and Indian War was the opposite. Affairs in North America, namely French and British land rivalries, caused the conflict to begin in North America, which then intersected with diplomatic realignments in Europe that triggered the Seven Years’ War on the continent. For the next three years after Washington’s trip, both the French and the British sent large armies to North America in preparation for an eventual confrontation. However, the British had the advantage of a superior navy and routinely used naval blockades during periods of war to keep the French in check in North America. By the summer of 1758 Washington, who was now a colonel, served as part of a group of seven thousand British troops who gained possession of the Ohio area. On November 25, 1758 the British took over the ruins of the French Fort Duquesne and renamed it Pitts-Bourgh to honor British minister William Pitt. Eventually, this became the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Simultaneously on the Atlantic coast, a battle that July in Cape Breton, known as the Siege of Fort Louisbourg, forced the French to surrender and the British then used this area as a jumping off place in their continued push to move the French out of upper North America.

As noted previously, by 1754 Virginia was not the only British colony growing concerned about the French. At this time, other northern British colonies had also begun to express alarm about the French, but there was almost no sense of unity among the colonies. Each operated with only its own narrow interests in mind. In an attempt to foster greater unity and
establish a common defensive approach, a colonial conference took place in Albany, New York. Albany was a frequent location for meetings between the British and the indigenous populations, served as a strategic military location, and was a key commercial hub and center for the British fur trade. 53 Today Albany, although the state capital, is dwarfed in size by other western New York cities and New York City, but it was an important North American settlement in the mid-eighteenth century. The city, seen as the “linchpin that anchored New England’s frontier running eastward to the Atlantic and the fulcrum that leveraged New York’s expansion westward toward the Great Lakes,” hosted a meeting of delegates from many of the colonies in the summer of 1754.54 The goals of the conference were to establish a clear Iroquois relations policy with the colonists, discuss how to handle the French, and from the colonists’ standpoint, endeavor to find ways to have Britain pay for protection of the colonies. In initially ordering the conference, the British government sought to renew the Covenant Chain with the Iroquois and develop a more centralized plan of governance for its North American colonies. London and the colonies had mostly conflicting goals for the conference, with London seeing economies in having a centralized colonial government generating better control over colonial activities, while the colonists only wanted help with matters of defense and other matters of common interest to them.55 There was no interest in gaining independence from Great Britain; rather it was quite the opposite. The colonies looked to the king and Britain to protect them. Benjamin Franklin attended the conference, and he was a strong proponent of unity among the colonies; however, his ambitions for such unity would need to wait for a couple of decades and the American Revolution. This conference helped Franklin frame his thinking on the issue of unity.

53 Borneman, 26-27.
54 Borneman, 25.
The conference produced the Albany Plan of Union, a design ahead of its time. Massachusetts, the only colony to actually vote on it, rejected the plan, while none of the other colonies seriously considered it, and Parliament chose to ignore the plan altogether rather than respond. In 1754, the North American colonies and their colonists were still too self-focused and individualistic to accept such a plan. But it does seem that the British missed their opening to establish a firmer hold on the North American colonies, and that lost opportunity would haunt them two decades later. Benjamin Franklin no doubt remembered the Albany conference when the colonies declared independence in 1776.

**Ruling the North American Colonies**

After eliminating the French as competitors in 1763, the next question for Britain revolved around how it would exercise rule over upper North America. While Britain may have had grand ambitions, the results proved that the challenges presented exceeded its ability to rule effectively. The history of the following century showed that Britain lost the major part of its territory to revolution and ultimately ceded domestic authority to the remaining part, Canada, in order to keep it within the British Empire. Maintaining control of such a diverse and expanding group of colonies, accustomed to operating both autonomously from Britain and individually from one another, presented a new experience for the British government. As noted by Alan Taylor, “During the eighteenth century, the population grew faster in British America than in the mother country,” in fact, “the number of colonists doubled every twenty five years.”  

While some was through immigration, favorable living conditions in North America led to significant natural population growth. At home, Britain faced severe economic issues caused by poor harvests, limited wage increases, and rising costs, all of which helped push its population to

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leave in pursuit of better opportunities in the more prosperous colonies. These complicating factors worried British leaders and undoubtedly influenced many of the decisions made by the government regarding the North American colonies.

Britain did not seriously pursue a more centralized governmental structure for its North American colonies but did have designs on Quebec from its earliest days and tried to seize it a number of times. Britain captured the settlement in 1629, but it went back to France by treaty, and other attempts took place without success in 1690, 1711, and 1746. Finally, the British succeeded in September 1759; however, the British troops stationed there over the winter of 1759-1760 faced extreme hardship in an unfamiliar and severe northern climate with few supplies. The results of the French and Indian War in North America saw James Wolfe defeat the Marquis de Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham outside the walls of Quebec City, securing British control of Quebec and the Ohio area in addition to their existing colonies. In addition, Spain, a British ally, received New Orleans and the lands west of the Mississippi, which effectively pushed the French permanently out of North America. This war made the British Empire, as Britain not only gained territory in North America, but it also secured India and significant territory in the Caribbean as well. As Gordon S. Wood notes, “In 1763, Great Britain straddled the world with the greatest and richest empire since the fall of Rome.” The French lost key land areas in North America and left their former colonists feeling abandoned by the metropole, which was true.

How is this relevant to the relationships among the North American colonies, the same colonies that would eventually form the United States, and Canada? The most critical action

approved by the British was to grant religious liberty to the French Catholic population in Canada, an act that would guarantee the loyalty of this population to Britain. The significance of this action for its time cannot be understated. The impact would continue to be felt in French Canada well into the twentieth century and was a factor in French Canada’s willingness (or some would say lack of willingness) to serve during the First World War. The exact language as outlined in Article IV of the 1763 Treaty of Paris stated, “His Britannick Majesty, on his side, agrees to grant the liberty of the Catholick religion to the inhabitants of Canada: he will, in consequence, give the most precise and most effectual orders, that his new Roman Catholic subjects may profess the worship of their religion according to the rites of the Romish church, as far as the laws of Great Britain permit.”

French Canadians felt a sense of abandonment, in particular by their king, Louis XV, and by the French government, which would permanently affect their attitude toward France. They were suddenly a people without a country, and the willingness of the British to allow them to continue to practice their religion and maintain their language astounded them. Parliament passed the Quebec Act in 1774 to formalize the governance of the colony. French Canada had always operated under a feudal system. The Quebec Act preserved the feudal tenure of land, ensuring the loyalty of the seigneurial class, and it confirmed in law the right of the Church to collect tithes. In addition, British Governor Murray appointed a bishop to the vacant see of Quebec, allowed French Canadians to serve on juries although Roman Catholics were technically not eligible, and he refused to call the Assembly into session because only the Protestant minority, namely the merchants of Montreal and Quebec City, could serve.62 There

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was a motive to the governor’s actions. He primarily sought to assure the loyalty of the French Canadians to the British king, a loyalty that remained strong even as their neighbors to the south sought to break ties with him during the American Revolution. By the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, French Canadians had developed a unique and insulated place for themselves in North America, and they saw little reason to get too involved in European affairs. Differences in language and religion set Québécois apart from the rest of Canada. An agrarian society in the early twentieth-century, their interests remained primarily local, with little concern for British or Canadian politics. By 1914, the British had left the province alone for over a century, and French Canadians wished that to continue.

To the south, because of the French and Indian War, the colonies that eventually became the United States learned for the first time how to work together for a common purpose. Following the war, Britain found itself forced to pay closer attention to the inhabitants of its colonies, something previously considered secondary. Until this point, the primary interest and concern was the abundance of valuable natural resources in North America and the need to protect them from encroachment. British leaders still considered the colonies experimental in terms of serving as a place for civilized society. Given this view, Britain practiced benign neglect and mostly let the colonists run their own affairs, even with royal governors technically in place to do that. This led the colonies to develop a very independent populace in the process. For decades, officials in London knew this required change, with various reforms proposed from time to time, but none ever advanced any further than discussion.63 Provincial Assemblies “laid

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down the rules for daily life” in the colonies, and “these same bodies had been the ones accustomed to tax” without British interference.64

The war placed enormous financial strains on both France and Britain. It was difficult to anticipate at the time, but these financial strains helped lead to actions that set some of the groundwork for both the American and the French Revolutions. Britain faced a war debt of £137 million, which in 1763 was a phenomenal amount of money, and for the first time in colonial history Britain decided to leave a large standing army in North America for protection at a cost of £300,000 a year.65 The ensuing arguments about who would pay for all of this helped pave the way for the American Revolution. The presence of the army and the changes in taxation policies necessary to finance it posed a threat to “a way of life that had been familiar in some places for a century or more.”66

Britain faced other significant changes after the war. The colonies experienced an even more rapid population growth and with it a need for more land. During the 1760-1776 period, 264 new towns sprang up in northern New England, and “land fever infected all levels of society,” resulting in increasing pressures on the indigenous populations, which led to more violence in the backcountry.67 The British now faced taking on responsibility of overseeing all of the indigenous populations who, because of the French defeat, had now lost their ability to pit the two powers against each other. The combined presence had previously served as a control mechanism of sorts, helping to maintain a measure of peace between colonists and indigenous populations. These long-standing power balances among the three entities were now in disarray.

64 Bailyn, 204.
66 Bailyn, 204.
67 Wood, 8-9.
Britain alone had to deal with all of the indigenous groups, instead of just a select few, as well as its own colonists with whom it had maintained a distant relationship until this point.

The colonists proved the most challenging to manage. Acting with little to no official authority, based on the precedent established to date, many colonists pushed further west to claim more land. Their successful flaunting of authority made many of them exceedingly independent in spirit and difficult to oversee, weakening any real governmental authority. Europeans viewed the colonies as violent and treacherous backwater areas, with the colonists generally seen as rough and crude people lacking sophistication, proper manners, and any real ties to European culture. On the other hand, the colonists viewed themselves as a vibrant people who were building a better world than that in Europe. The colonists at once felt close ties to their Old World British heritage, yet they felt equally close to the unique culture they were creating in the New World. Under these circumstances, the peace brought about by the 1763 Treaty of Paris was not destined to last very long. The treaty did settle things for a time between Britain and France, and it clearly established the global supremacy of the British Empire. However, the treaty did little to promote any real understanding between Britain and most of its North American colonies.

**The American Revolution - Diminishing British North America**

At home, Britain faced numerous issues after the French and Indian War. It faced a daunting war debt, the need to pay for a standing army in North America for the first time, crushing taxes on its own landowners including the new English cider tax of 1763, and a clear perception among those returning to England after colonial service that there was greater prosperity in the colonies than at home. It seemed logical, then, that the colonies could afford to pay their fair share. Britain had its own problems at home to deal with during the years
immediately following the war. Among them and adding to the instability, it took the new monarch, George III almost ten years to find an acceptable prime minister in Lord North, who received appointment in 1770. Lord North would gain infamy in the North American colonies, with Thomas Jefferson noting that, “the new ministry finding all the foes of Britain subdued took up the unfortunate idea of subduing her friends also.”  

On the other side of the Atlantic, the passage of the Quebec Act in 1774 may have allayed the fears of Roman Catholic French Canadians, but it created worry among the Protestant colonies. They could not understand why Britain would create a strong Catholic colony and wondered about its significance. It had only been eighty-six years since the 1688 Glorious Revolution, which brought the abdication of James II, a converted Roman Catholic. He had tried unsuccessfully to promote Catholicism once again in Britain. Therefore, it is understandable why the colonists were concerned about the religious liberties legislated for French Canada. Many British colonists felt a sense of betrayal in George III’s support of the Quebec Act, given the king’s role as “the Protestant champion against Catholicism,” leading to concerns and conspiracy theories that the French Catholics might be turned against them. In fact, Britain was justifiably worried and realized it had little control over the independent-minded colonies to the south, so it was vital to do whatever was necessary to obtain the loyalty of Canada. The Quebec Act also changed land boundaries, which raised even more concerns among the colonists, who wanted maximum freedom to settle wherever they wished. The Act enlarged the boundaries of Quebec to the Ohio River and the Mississippi River to the west. Even Thomas

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Jefferson commented on the impact of the Quebec Act, making note about Britain, “extending the boundaries, and changing the Government and Religion of Quebeck…”\textsuperscript{70}

While most British colonists reacted negatively to the protections afforded to Catholics by the Quebec Act, this did not stop the Continental Congress from appealing to French Canadian Catholics for assistance with their planned invasion of Canada. Notably, “the appeal rang hollow because the Protestant Anglophones of the rebelling colonies had for so long insulted and attacked Canadians.”\textsuperscript{71} Fearing a British attack from the north with their indigenous allies, Congress believed invading Canada would serve as an effective means to cut-off this threat and protect their colonies. Things appeared to go well in the beginning as General Richard Montgomery captured Montreal in November 1775. However, the December 30, 1775 attempt to capture the walled city of Quebec proved devastating. Montgomery suffered a mortal gunshot wound in the raid, and Benedict Arnold, there with troops sent by George Washington, suffered a serious leg wound. By May 7, 1776, any hope of besieging Quebec ended as General Burgoyne arrived as part of a Royal Navy squadron with 7,000 fresh troops.\textsuperscript{72} From this point on, any threats about invading Canada never produced any concrete results, including in 1812 when American war hawks threatened to do so once again. The British had firmly secured this part of upper North America.

Other acts intended to raise revenue and control the colonists helped to stoke revolution. Immediately following the French and Indian War, the passage of the Sugar Act of 1764 sought to regulate shipping, or more specifically, it attempted to stop the colonists’ penchant for smuggling. Trying to restrict the colonists even further, the British specified certain products for


\textsuperscript{71} Taylor, \textit{American Revolutions: A Continental History, 1750-1804}, 151.

\textsuperscript{72} Taylor, \textit{American Revolutions: A Continental History, 1750-1804}, 153.
shipment to Britain exclusively. These new additions included hides, iron, and timber, joining sugar and tobacco, which had always been restricted. American shippers soon “found themselves enmeshed in a bureaucratic web of bonds, certificates, and regulations.”⁷³ Key products imported into the colonies, including sugar, wine, coffee, indigo, and cloth had duties added as well.

The passage of the Stamp Act by Parliament in 1765 was nothing new for Britain, which had used such taxes since the end of the seventeenth century, but it was a first for the North American colonies. The Act imposed a tax on virtually every piece of paper used in the colonies, ranging from legal documents to playing cards, pamphlets, and newspapers, to name just a few examples. The Act itself outlined over fifty examples of forms of paper for taxation. In addition, to add insult to injury, payment was required in British sterling, not colonial currency. This ignited a storm of protest in the colonies, leading to its repeal a year later, but the damage was lasting at that point. The colonists felt justified in refusing to pay such taxes when they had not done so previously. In retrospect, the British should have extended such taxes to the colonies each time one took effect in Britain. By treating the colonies as separate entities, the Crown established a perception within the colonies that they were different and so, exempt from such taxes. By this point, in the minds of colonists, taxes applied to Britain but not to them. However, loyalty to Britain and the king remained. In 1775, after a decade of disputes over British efforts to regulate and tax the colonies, Thomas Jefferson wrote, “we mean not in any wise to affect that union with them in which we have so long & so happily lived and which we wish so much to see again restored.”⁷⁴ Seeking to maintain long-standing ties with Britain, Jefferson only wanted representation and fair treatment for the colonies. Jefferson understood that the colonies had to pay a share of taxes but thought Britain was being greedy.

⁷³ Wood, 23.
Where did Britain think a North American war was most likely to start? New England earned that distinction. Widely viewed both in Britain and within the colonies as the “most disliked and least trusted section of British North America,” for many, New England “invited comparisons with troublesome Scotland.”75 Both areas were rugged and rural, with inhabitants referred to in highly negative terms by other colonists and British officers alike. Most believed New Englanders to be the best equipped of the North American colonists to take on a war. Britain initially assumed it could confine the war there, but soon abandoned this sectional approach, instead opting to take a more comprehensive view by pitting Loyalists against Patriots.

One of the primary mistakes the British made was to underestimate the sheer land size of the colonies, meaning even more military resources were required to achieve success. Moreover, to add to the sheer size, much of the land was a combination of wilderness and mountainous areas, which the colonists knew far better than the British Army. Additionally, the strong separatism of the individual colonies meant there was no central capital like London to focus on capturing. The major colonial cities of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia were much smaller in comparison and regionally focused. Southern cities such as Richmond and Charleston were even more insular in nature.

Maneuvering in the background were the French, who were still smarting from their defeat in the French and Indian War. The geographic footprint of the conflict expanded as Britain faced problems in the Caribbean with the French and the Spanish, both Bourbon monarchies at the time. This stretched British resources even further. Early on, the French secretly provided arms and financial support for the colonial struggle. Following the humiliating

British defeat at Saratoga in 1777, viewed as a major turning point in the war, France very openly joined the conflict, providing critical financial support and a great confidence boost for the revolutionaries. The American Revolution could not have succeeded without this French assistance. For the British, this was another instance in a steady stream of conflicts with the French. These clashes continued throughout the “long nineteenth century,” ending with the start of the First World War when Britain and France became allies.76

What drew the thirteen strongly independent colonies together enough for the revolt to succeed? As noted earlier, the colonists believed they were “a young and vibrant people” of the New World, “not yet dissipated by the aristocratic luxuries and indolent pleasures of the Old World.”77 The concept of republicanism fit well with their simple agrarian society. They did not need a monarchy, with its rituals and trappings. Republicanism challenged its citizens to work together for the common good. It is ironic that the same society, which fought so hard to leave British rule behind and forge an independent nation in 1776 found some of its citizens helping to defend Britain in 1914 to preserve democracy in the face of German militarism. It is even more ironic that the British used contract German troops during the American Revolution against the colonists. However, Americans in 1914 remained close to their republican roots, so it is not altogether surprising that a number of them found the fight against a strong militaristic Germany a cause they could embrace.

The fledgling United States produced a number of great minds and strong leaders at a critical point in time, including Benjamin Franklin, John and Abigail Adams, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Alexander Hamilton to name but a few. Far from being rustic country


77 Wood, 95.
folk with little sophistication, they were every bit a match for the British establishment. On November 25, 1783, the British sailed from New York City for the final time, and the new nation celebrated it as Evacuation Day with General George Washington observing. However, while they were leaving the thirteen colonies permanently, the British were not leaving North America altogether. The amount of British-controlled territory had diminished, and there was a sharp decrease in the size of the population in their remaining lands, but British influence continued.

Part II

The New British North America - Canada

Britain maintained a strong presence in Canada, and that continued to have ripple effects to the south. The American Revolution might have worn down the British and forced them from their southern colonies, but there was no guarantee that was the end of things. No one knew if the United States would succeed or not. However, one strong bond that kept Britain and the United States intertwined was through the English language, “as language itself ensured that it would share with Britain a connection that no other major foreign power could match.”

78 The end of the war and the final British evacuation left many of those who remained loyal to Britain with few options except to leave the United States for other parts of the British Empire, with many deciding to move north to British-held Canada. Estimates are that some sixty thousand loyalists, along with fifteen thousand enslaved blacks, left the United States at the end of the war.79 The American Revolution formed the new United States, but loyalists from the former colonies to the south and British authorities were also transforming Canada into its own “imperial America in

79 Jasanoff, 6.
the north,” marked by a more paternalistic form of government with loyalty to the king and the
British Empire as key elements.80

By the turn of the nineteenth century, Canada had to worry about the Americans to the
south as well as whether Britain would abandon them as the French had in 1763. Britain still held
some hopes of regaining its southern colonies, but the War of 1812 also piqued American
interest in territorial conquest to the north. On February 22, 1810, Henry Clay, Speaker of the
House of Representatives and leader of the war hawks, stated to the United States Senate, “The
conquest of Canada is in our power. I trust I shall not be deemed presumptive when I state that I
verily believe that the militia of Kentucky are alone competent to place Montreal and Upper
Canada at your feet.”81 This statement demonstrates the dubious middle ground position Canada
found itself in as two ambitious imperial powers, Britain and the young United States, fought
over it. The American military’s lack of effective leadership and British distractions with
European matters led to a stalemate more than an actual victory for either side, but the war
solidified the concept of Canada as a separate nation and reaffirmed the status of the United
States as a separate nation. Still, the War of 1812 brought up issues of blurred loyalties in Upper
Canada when many Americans born on the Canadian side of the border ended up fighting on the
American side.82 At this time, people crossed the border freely to live and work, but the War of
1812 temporarily disrupted these customary patterns.

Thomas Jefferson reflected on the coming of war in a letter to James Maury, a British
former classmate and friend, dated April 25, 1812: “Never before has there been an instance of a
nation’s bearing so much as we have borne. Two items alone in our catalogue of wrongs will

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80 Jasanoff, 180.
82 Richard V. Barbuto, *Niagara 1814* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2000), xii.
forever acquit us of being the aggressor: the impressment of our seamen and the excluding us from the ocean.”\textsuperscript{83} Jefferson went on to note that the United States would be breaking its social compact if it did not protect its citizens. He traced the reason for the war to Britain’s desire to rule the seas and collect as many taxes as possible in the process. He predicted that the war would be long, noting, “The object of England, long obvious, is to claim the ocean as her domain, and to exact transit duties from every vessel traversing it.”\textsuperscript{84} The citizens of the newly formed United States viewed the free and unfettered ability to conduct trade as they wished as a vital construct to the success of their nation.

In the young republic, the farmer reigned supreme, and property ownership, although primarily confined to white males, was valued and encouraged. This desire to own property, along with strong population growth that produced crowding, fostered expansionist ideas, which Americans believed were within their rights to pursue. In another key difference between Britain and the United States, the British practice of naval impressment traced to their belief that if born a British subject, one was always a British subject, meaning it lasted forever, even if one went through a legal naturalization process.\textsuperscript{85} This ran counter to the republican model of the United States, which allowed for freedom of choice. The British model argued that there was, in fact, no free choice in the matter. Where you were born marked your destiny. The subject of impressment incited anger and is to the present time consistently noted as a primary cause of the war. The reasons for the War of 1812 were more complex than impressment. The conclusion of the American Revolution left a forced border in North America with two different systems of

\textsuperscript{84} Jefferson, vol. 9, 348-349.
government facing each other, one a republic and the other a mixed constitution.\textsuperscript{86} The war resulted in a military stalemate, so neither side succeeded in eliminating the other. Subsequently, each side strengthened its commitment to its respective form of government, and “the war led to a sharper distinction between Upper Canada and the United States.”\textsuperscript{87}

The War of 1812 marked the last time the United States and Britain would fight a war against each other, but that did not mean that each side completely trusted the other. However, as noted by historian Alan Taylor, “No longer did the survival of the republic seem to hinge on driving the empire from the continent,” and he further noted that “the leaders of the two nations now talked through issues and sought compromises, rather than resorting to war, with British-controlled Canada often caught in the middle.”\textsuperscript{88} This lasted for half a century until the American Civil War threatened to tear the United States apart.

**The American Civil War - Canadians Serve**

Canadians, known as British North Americans in the mid-nineteenth century, also served in the Civil War, with estimates ranging from 20,000 to 50,000 enlistees and 5,000 casualties.\textsuperscript{89} However, there are few concrete figures as neither the Canadians nor the Union or Confederate militaries kept particularly good records. After Abraham Lincoln signed the Enrollment Act of 1863, states and towns now had quotas to meet. Wealthy Northerners could pay a substitute to take their place, causing anger and riots among those unable to afford to do so. Desperate to meet the quotas, many northern border areas sent recruiters into Canada to offer bounties to entice young Canadian men to volunteer. The recruiters frequently tricked gullible young men into signing up after a long night of heavy drinking, and then took them across the border to the

\textsuperscript{89} Hoy, vi.
United States. The fact that Americans crossed the border into Canada to conduct unofficial recruitment efforts that frequently took place under dubious circumstances, created tensions between Canada and the United States. However, not all of the recruitments took place this way. In spite of British neutrality, a number of Canadian men voluntarily crossed the border to the United States to enlist, particularly with the Union Army, as a number of American men crossed to Canada to serve in the CEF some fifty years later. One well-known Canadian who served with the Union Army was Calixa Lavallée, composer of the Canadian national anthem, “O Canada.”90 Two men who achieved the rank of general were also born in British North America, John D. Farnsworth, who moved to the United States in his youth, and John McNeil, born in Halifax and known for his involvement in alleged atrocities including the Palmyra Massacre.91 Canadian born men volunteering to serve in the American military during the Civil War, primarily with the Union Army, provided a precedent for the First World War. Union forces did not turn down these volunteers, and the Canadian government did not stop them, even if the methods used by American recruiters raised alarm. During the First World War, Canadian recruitment efforts had to use discretion and respect the neutrality of the United States. Americans seeking to serve in the Canadian military had to cross the border to sign-up at recruitment centers in Canadian cities. Later in the war, the United States allowed Canada to establish recruitment stations in the United States and advertise to attract Canadians living in the United States, but they could not enlist American citizens. However, Americans were not immune to the Canadian recruitment efforts.

**Moving Toward a More Cooperative Future**

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91 Gaffen, 4.
The American Civil War tested the relationship between Britain, the United States, and Canada, and that relationship survived the war, growing increasingly calmer and friendlier from the post-Civil War period to the First World War. While Britain may have flirted with the idea of supporting the Confederacy, this was not a truly serious possibility. As noted, a number of Canadians crossed the border during the war to enlist, mostly with Union forces. The Civil War also helped Canada as it pushed Britain to grant it dominion status shortly after the war ended, giving Canada a voice in its own affairs of state and the ability to protect its own interests. It was only seventy-eight years since the British had sailed from New York City for the last time following the American Revolution and barely fifty years since the War of 1812. The continued westward expansion of the United States made Canada continually wary of possible American incursions to gain additional land, and Britain shared Canada’s concern in this area.

Europeans generally paid minimal attention to the Civil War, instead viewing it as an internal problem for the United States to deal with. In Britain, Queen Victoria formally declared British neutrality on April 13, 1861, just one day after the start of the Civil War. By doing so, the most powerful empire in the world was declaring the North and the South to be equal belligerents, although the general belief was that the British favored the South for economic reasons. Perhaps Britain saw this as an opportunity for the United States to self-destruct, which would allow the British to step back in, although that was only a distant hope. The South was disappointed with the neutrality declaration, having wanted more support from Britain from the start of the war. Lincoln was also unhappy with the neutrality development as it hurt his position that the South had no legal basis on which to leave the Union. Lincoln’s response was to impose a naval blockade on Southern ports three days later, which angered British and Canadian

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93 Hoy, 156-157.
business interests as both traded extensively with the South. Canadians once again feared the possibility of an American invasion, and the British did as well, forcing them to send additional troop to bolster the meager Canadian militia forces.\textsuperscript{94} However, even with British neutrality, a number of factors could have tipped the scales to war between Britain and the Union. Most renowned was the \textit{Trent} affair involving American interference with a British mail ship, which occurred early in the war.\textsuperscript{95} In addition, the seemingly anti-British attitude of the very bellicose United States Secretary of State, William Seward, added to the tensions and engendered little sympathy for the Union cause.

The British, in general, viewed the South as better mannered and courtly, while they continued to consider the North as a rough and uncultured land teeming with uneducated farmers and woodsmen, and immigrants from less desirable parts of Europe. Canadians thought much the same, as wealthy Southern families frequently summered in Canada to escape the heat. Many Southerners had second homes in Canada for this reason. Disputes between Canadians and Americans over fishing and water rights occurred frequently along the northern border of the United States and southern Canada, most often playing out at the local level. Such disputes made Canadians wary of their American neighbors to their immediate south. The genteel Southern families who visited in the summer left a much better impression on most Canadians. With the exception of French Canadians in Quebec, most Canadians remained very closely tied to British manners and customs. They felt a closer kinship with those from the southern United States who shared a similar sense of decorum. We can only conjecture that these views likely would have changed had either the British or the Canadians been familiar with the inner workings of a Southern planation or had seen the many slave markets common to most southern cities at this time.

\textsuperscript{94} Hoy, 157-158.
\textsuperscript{95} Discussion of the \textit{Trent} incident in detail later occurs later in this chapter.
time. Even in the middle of the nineteenth century, the sight of selling men, women, and children on an auction block would have raised concerns for the British, and would have outright shocked the Canadians. Britain had completed its abolition of slavery with the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, freeing approximately 800,000 enslaved people throughout the British Empire, particularly in the Caribbean, South Africa, and a small number in Canada.\textsuperscript{96} Although Britain outlawed the international slave trade in 1807 and the United States followed suit in 1808, a flourishing and highly profitable interstate slave trade flourished in the southern United States. It has been estimated that approximately two million such transactions took place in these markets in the half century period leading up to the Civil War, and this interstate trade was central to the “transformation of the South from a declining tobacco economy stretched along the eastern seaboard to a thriving cotton economy that reached westward as far as Texas.”\textsuperscript{97} The courtly and genteel exteriors of the Southern gentlemen and gentlewomen visitors the Canadians encountered masked the ugly realities of black enslavement upon which the Southern economic structure rested. Once enough Union soldiers had actually seen the impact of slavery firsthand in the South, the sentiments of the troops were that preservation of the Union was dependent on the abolition of slavery. Union troops did not have abolitionist fervor, and in fact, most did not think blacks and whites were equals. However, enslaving human beings and the horrors that entailed, including indiscriminate whippings and destruction of the sanctity of the family by forced separations due to sale, was contrary to the moral beliefs of most Union soldiers. “Lincoln enjoyed overwhelming support from the men in the ranks”, and as a number of Union troops saw

it, his re-election was necessary to end the war and end slavery.\footnote{Chandra Manning, \textit{What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War}, (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 183-184.} In the election of 1864, Lincoln ran on a platform that called for the abolition of slavery constitutionally, and he received almost 80 percent of his troops’ vote, affirming their position on the subject of slavery.\footnote{James M. McPherson, \textit{For Causes and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War}, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 129.}

The Confederacy, on the other hand, eagerly sought acceptance as a sovereign nation soon after secession and sent diplomats to Europe in the hope of garnering this official recognition. However, the Union naval blockade meant the Confederacy often needed to use unconventional means to get their diplomats to Europe. One such instance involved the \textit{Trent}, an unarmed British mail ship that sailed from Havana, Cuba to England in November 1861 with two Confederate diplomats aboard. The two, James M. Mason and John Slidell, were trying to evade the Union blockade in hopes of making their way to England and France to lobby for recognition of the Confederate States of America.\footnote{Hoy, 154.} It is debatable just how neutral the British actually were if they allowed two known Confederate diplomats to sail on one of their ships. However, Captain Charles Wilkes of the USS \textit{San Jacinto} created an international incident when he fired two shots at the \textit{Trent}, a neutral vessel, in violation of international law, and while acting against direct orders from Washington.\footnote{Hoy, 154.} Wilkes removed Mason and Slidell, who both had diplomatic status, allowing the \textit{Trent} to continue for England with their families still onboard. The two diplomats went on to Boston, and the incident came close to provoking Britain into declaring war. However, despite initial anger expressed on both sides of the Atlantic, diplomacy ultimately settled a potentially explosive incident. Since the War of 1812, Britain and the United States had continued to improve their relationship and ability to resolve differences without going to war.
In fact, British and American relations were strong in 1861 and improved in 1862-1863. Even Secretary of State Seward heeded Lincoln’s request that he be cooperative. A month before the Trent affair Seward had fired Henry Sanford, who was the aggressive head of Union spying in Europe, for planning to interfere with a British ship that was likely carrying contraband.\(^{102}\) The British also preferred to avoid war and maintain neutrality. Queen Victoria, who enjoyed immense popularity in both Canada and the United States at the time, provided assistance as well. Commenting on this popularity and the apparent contradiction it presented, Jay Sexton notes, “Britain served as an important negative self-reference, yet many Americans admired and reproduced British practices and culture.”\(^{103}\) The New York Times noted about the ultimate resolution, “A portion of our people will be disappointed at the result arrived at by our Government, in the affair of the Trent. But that feeling will have no deeper basis than a temporary and impulsive chagrin, that two such rebels as Mason and Slidell should have slipped through our fingers, in consequence of the interposition of the English Government on their behalf. And even this feeling will promptly yield to the profound satisfaction of the whole country, that we have honorably escaped the fearful perils of a war with England, which, whatever might have been its ultimate issue, would have given a certain triumph to the Southern rebellion.”\(^{104}\)

While the relationship between the South and Britain was strong economically, particularly due to the cotton trade, the more experienced British also hedged their bets as the war began by stockpiling a two-year supply of cotton so they could wait things out.\(^{105}\) The

\[^{102}\text{Phillip E. Myers, Caution and Cooperation: The American Civil War in British-American Relations, (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2008), 67.}\]
\[^{103}\text{Sexton, 25.}\]
\[^{105}\text{Hoy, 161-162.}\]
British looked the other way on the issue of slavery when it benefited them economically, but most British politicians recognized that slavery was a volatile issue with the British public. In particular, British textile workers were anti-slavery and pro-Union. At the time of the Civil War, these workers were pushing for an expansion of the franchise, with the government conceding in 1867 with the passage of the Second Reform Act. The government was not willing to provoke the working class by recognizing the Confederacy, no matter what some of its members may have felt about the southern United States. It is unlikely that the British wanted to get in the middle of the American Civil War, preferring instead to remain on relatively good terms with both sides, quietly helping the South, in areas such as such as shipbuilding, and making loans to the Union. During the Trent affair, British banking houses, among them Barings, refused to make much-needed loans to the Union government until it was clear that war not likely between Britain and the Union. However, until the Union forces had proven they actually had a real chance to defeat the Confederacy with their performance at Antietam in 1862, Britain and France both at least considered backing the Confederacy in the war.

**Ignoring the Sovereignty of the Canadian Border**

The Confederacy also thought it could use Canada as a base to provoke discontent and turmoil across the border in the northern states. There were some thoughts among Confederates that these disruptions along the border would require moving federal troops from the South to deal with it. As noted by historian C.P. Stacey, tensions between the United States and Canada “heightened when the Confederates made attempts to use Canada as a base against the North in 1864,” although most of these attempts were of little consequence. The most famous incident

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105 Myers, 65.
107 Stacey, 9.
was the St. Albans, Vermont raid in October 1864 to rob several banks. Twenty-one Confederate soldiers, most dressed in their uniforms, descended on the town’s three banks and robbed them of $208,000.\textsuperscript{109} Canada found itself unwittingly drawn into the situation after the Confederate operatives who conducted the raid fled over the border into Canada. John A. MacDonald, the first Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada, noted in a letter to attorney Thomas Swinyard, “I quite agree with you as to the importance of satisfying our American neighbours that Canada is in earnest in vindicating the majesty of the law, and in suppressing with all promptness and vigour, any attempts to infringe it.”\textsuperscript{110} Following the raid, American officials claimed they were common criminals subject to extradition, and the United States assumed Canada would agree with their assessment. The raiders counter-claimed that they were Confederate belligerents who were carrying out a legitimate act of war against the Union. Sent to Montreal for a hearing, the captured raiders secured an inexplicable release from Canadian officials, collected back their weapons, and received permission to leave for other parts of Canada. There were no official reasons to explain why the raiders obtained their release so easily. Did other Confederate operatives in Canada bribe Canadian officials? Alternatively, did Canadian sympathy for the Confederacy prevail? There were a number of repercussions as a result. In Canada, those involved in facilitating the raiders’ release faced investigation, and in the United States, Congress voted to rescind the Reciprocity Treaty, a trade agreement between Britain and the United States.\textsuperscript{111} Most of the Confederates’ plans and actions were far-fetched and ineffective at best. However, by crossing into Canada to escape, this turned the matter into an international

\textsuperscript{109} Hoy, 318.
\textsuperscript{111} Hoy, 333.
incident. Further complicating matters, documentation indicates that John Wilkes Booth spent time in Canada just before he assassinated Abraham Lincoln. There is speculation that the planning for the assassination actually took place in Canada. Even so, Lincoln’s death horrified British North America, and most Canadian towns quickly passed official promulgations of sympathy for the United States.\textsuperscript{112} Canadians may have favored the South for social and economic reasons, but the assassination of Lincoln was an event they found morally reprehensible.

One positive aspect of the American Civil War for Canadians is that it helped to draw the disparate regions of British North America together enough to form a union. Canadian leadership viewed the actions of the individual American states as a type of dysfunction worth avoiding in Canada. After seeing the devastation that strong states’ rights caused in the United States, Canadian Prime Minister John Macdonald worked to ensure that Canada would have a strong central government with weak provinces.

**Building a Lasting Relationship by Through Treaties**

As the United States sought to rebuild itself from within following the Civil War, it also sought to improve British-American-Canadian relations by participating in a Joint High Commission to work out the terms of an agreement defining that relationship. The resulting Treaty of Washington of 1871 was “the most comprehensive treaty in the history of British-American-Canadian diplomacy” providing the mechanisms for the resolution of virtually any issue arising between the three nations.\textsuperscript{113} A July 8, 1871 letter to the editor of the *New York Times* noted that the various key steps involved in putting the treaty in place occurred on the

\textsuperscript{112} Hoy, 356-357.
anniversaries of a number of significant events. The ratification of the Treaty of Washington by the United States occurred on May 24, 1871, Queen Victoria’s fifty-second birthday; the British monarch signed it on June 17, 1871, the anniversary date of the battle of Bunker Hill, and President Ulysses S. Grant promulgated it on July 4, 1871, the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. While we do not know if this reflected coincidence or really was by design, the treaty and the manner in which each side accepted it illustrate the long relationship between the United States and Britain. The preservation of this relationship was the intent of the treaty. This relationship had been growing since American Independence, with the United States and Britain linked closely both economically and culturally. Given this close relationship, at the outbreak of the First World War, it is not surprising that a number of Americans volunteered to serve in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

This was not the first treaty executed by the United States and Britain in the post-revolution period. A number of earlier treaties exist that clarified a range of matters between British North America and the United States. Examples include Jay’s Treaty of 1794, the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842, the Oregon Treaty of 1846, the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, the Fisheries-Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901, and the 1925 treaty adjusting the boundary line of Lake of the Woods and the 49th parallel. The Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 achieved a variety of important objectives including, final suppression of the slave trade on the high seas, establishment of circumstances for extradition, agreement on the Maine-New Brunswick border, and agreement on the shared use of Lake

Superior and Lake of the Woods. The Oregon Treaty of 1846 settled the Oregon boundary dispute, an area that both the United States and Britain occupied since the Treaty of 1818. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850 was a tool for managing British and American interests in Central America, particularly in Panama in anticipation of building a canal across the Isthmus. The case for a totally American-controlled canal grew at the end of the nineteenth century following delays moving an American ship from the west coast of the United States to the Caribbean during the war with Spain, and as economic interest in trade with China grew. After a failed first attempt at a Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, a second version allowing the United States to not only build but also fortify a canal at the Isthmus of Panama passed in 1901. This new treaty forced Britain to negate the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, and after fifty years, “the experiment in joint Anglo-American control of an isthmian canal officially ended.” It was a sign of British acceptance of American paramountcy in the Western Hemisphere, and demonstrated that Britain’s priorities and concerns lay elsewhere, specifically in its economic and naval rivalry with Germany. The Fisheries-Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, also known as the Elgin-Marcy Treaty called for the United States and the British North American colonies (Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland) to end the duties on several products. These included such items as grain, flour, animals, fruits, meats, fish, poultry, coal, and lumber. The treaties demonstrate the continuing cooperation between the United States and Britain using diplomacy instead of war. During the late nineteenth century, many in the United States government sought to imitate the British Empire, giving its methods

117 Sexton, 220.
118 Sexton, 221.
an American style for use within the United States.\footnote{Sexton, 177.} A number of Americans also identified as part of the Anglo Saxon race, standing in their view “alongside their former colonial master atop a global racial hierarchy.”\footnote{Sexton, 25.} For its part, some in Victorian Britain mused over the concept of a Greater Britain with the United States forming a part of this union. While the concept never progressed very far, those considering it played “a significant role in laying the intellectual foundation of the ‘special relationship’ that was to shape so much of the political landscape of the twentieth century and beyond” between Britain and the United States with Canada ever close by.\footnote{Bell, 259.}

Achieving dominion status in 1867 gave Canada autonomy over its internal affairs. However, Britain retained oversight and control of any international matters, including boundaries and water rights with the United States. Building on the important series of treaties from the second half of the nineteenth century, a number of early twentieth century treaties established the framework for the management of both land and water boundaries between the two nations. Disputes occurred from time to time between the United States and Canada over land, water, and natural resources, but Britain continued to represent Canadian interests until the 1931 Statute of Westminster, which established Canada as a sovereign nation.

The Treaty of 1908 established the group responsible for managing the border between the United States and Canada, and the Treaty of 1910 further defined the actual border. The International Boundary Commission (IBC) formed in 1908 as the result of a treaty between the United States and the United Kingdom, encouraging a more collaborative approach to the maintenance of the United States-Canada border. The formation of the IBC also marked the

\footnote{Sexton, 177.} \footnote{Sexton, 25.} \footnote{Bell, 259.}
hand-off of day-to-day management of the border relationship by Britain to Canada, which was a significant step in the establishment of Canada as a truly independent country. The IBC is still operating to the present day. In addition to land boundaries, the United States and Canada share a number of water boundaries as well. The International Joint Commission (IJC) first met in 1912 to manage water boundary issues, the result of the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty between the United States and Britain. The boundary waters managed include those of the five Great Lakes, Niagara Falls, and the St. Lawrence River. The IJC has resolved over 100 matters since its inception and is still operating to the present day.123

The International Boundary Commission, charged since 1908 with physical oversight responsibilities for the boundary, estimates the border between the United States and Canada as approximately 3,987 miles wide and running from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Including the 1,538-mile border between Alaska and Canada, the total United States and Canada border stretches for 5,525 miles.124 Frequently, references to the border call it the longest undefended border in the world. Although both nations remain continually on alert to defend their border from perceived threats, the sheer size and diversity of the topography make a complete defense of the border virtually impossible. The motto of the International Boundary Commission notes the achievement of “maintaining a peaceful boundary for more than a century.”125 The International Joint Commission notes “more than a century of cooperation protecting shared

124 The International Boundary Commission formed as the result of a 1908 treaty between the United States of America and the United Kingdom with a goal to “provide a more complete demarcation of the boundary from the Atlantic to the Pacific” and prepare modern charting. The Commission consists of a joint administration with two commissioners, one appointed in the United States and one in Canada, each with their own staff and budget. At the time of the treaty, the International Waterways Commission (now defunct) had as its charge the establishment of water boundaries in the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes. http://www.internationalboundarycommission.org
waters.” 126 The long-term shared goal of cooperation appears in both mottos. It took the British until just before the First World War to relinquish control of North American land and water boundaries to Canada to handle on its own with the United States.

For Canada, the execution of the Treaty of Washington of 1871 made the young country a real part of “British-American relations for the first formal time.” 127 Canada was a background player in the series of previously issued treaties. The Treaty of Washington also planted the seed for the twentieth-century concept of the North Atlantic Triangle. Canada began active promotion of the concept of a power triangle between the United States, Britain, and Canada following the 1926 Imperial Conference. 128 Canadians felt emboldened by their role in the First World War. The triangle, often perceived as more myth than reality, served as a means for a smaller nation like Canada to deal with the more powerful Britain and the United States. This was particularly helpful on matters involving trade as well as with military and diplomatic issues. Canada wanted to remain part of the British Empire, but with the autonomy necessary to run its own affairs without interference. Canada also had to remain vigilant about maintaining its sovereignty from its pushy southern neighbor.

**Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrates that the relationship between Britain, the United States, and Canada experienced its share of strains and difficulties at times, but through dedicated diplomacy, the three nations maintained a close alliance. The many treaties executed by Britain and the United States over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries demonstrated a firm commitment to doing so. The United States at the time of the First World

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127 Myers, Dissolving Tensions, 173.
War was an unquestionably Anglo-centric nation, and its shared cultural bonds with Canada (French Canada excluded) traced directly to Britain. The First World War marked the first time since the initial settlement of North America that both Americans and Canadians voluntarily went to Europe to defend Britain and France. A sharp role reversal, it is very significant as it reflects the close ties between the United States, Canada, and Britain.
Chapter Two

The First World War: North American Perceptions, British Demands on Canada, and Defining Who was a British Subject

“Canadians and Australians were not just expatriated Britons, though their parents and grandparents might have been. They had developed a relationship to the land, a sense of national destiny wrapped up in imperial destiny, a sense of having cut loose from Britain as well as recreating it.” - Charles Emerson, 1913: In Search of the World before the Great War

An Unprepared Canada Joins the War Effort

Even though it was under obligation as a member of the British Empire to participate in the First World War following Great Britain’s declaration of war on August 4, 1914, this chapter examines how completely unprepared Canada was for the enormity of the war effort it was about to engage in. The chapter traces how Canada successfully transformed its regionally based militia into a unified professional fighting force, while also meeting the British command’s continual demands for additional troops. To do so meant welcoming the much-needed American volunteers crossing the border to enlist. The data shown here also substantiates that the Canadians needed every available enlistee and did not have the luxury of worrying about the citizenship of these men.

Like each of the other Dominions, “Canada reserved the right of deciding what form her participation should take.” Almost immediately, Canada offered to raise a contingent of 25,000 troops and promised another 25,000 more in the fall of 1914. These were significant numbers for a young nation, which according to the 1911 census had a population of just over seven million people. Initially, the Canadian military expressed hesitancy over accepting

131 The actual population of Canada in 1911 was 7,204,838. See Library and Archives Canada: http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1911
American volunteers. The reason was twofold. First, there were already far more volunteers from within Canada than could be reasonably accommodated and prepared. Second, at this early point in the war, the Canadian government assumed there would be sufficient Canadian volunteers to meet their needs for a war expected to be of short duration. However, as the requests for more troops grew at an unexpectedly rapid rate, these views changed, and Canada soon welcomed volunteers from their southern neighbor to the ranks of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). There was little choice if Canada hoped to meet Britain’s ever-increasing troop demands. The 50,000 soldiers Canada had already committed to send to Europe in 1914 turned out to be just the beginning. The expectations put upon Canada to produce sufficient numbers of recruits, officers, medical staff, and other technically skilled personnel such as engineers were substantial. Canada went on to exceed all expectations in its support of Britain’s war effort.

**An Overview of Canadian Expeditionary Force Statistics**

It is relevant to review a comprehensive picture of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and the American-born enlistees over the course of the war to understand the scope of the effort undertaken by Canada. In late summer 1914, the prevailing thought about the war in both Europe and North America was that it would be of short duration, with many believing the popular refrain that “the war would be over by Christmas.” The reality turned out to be quite different. For the first two years of the war, Canada was able to attract enough volunteer enlistees to replenish the ranks, including some from the United States. However, enthusiasm for the war began to wane as casualty figures grew, and there were few victories to provide the inspiration needed to help attract more volunteers. After considerable and at times extremely acrimonious debate, Canada finally enacted compulsory service in late August 1917. Nevertheless, even with the draft, Canada continued to focus its efforts on enlisting volunteers, including Americans.
Ultimately, the majority of those who served in the CEF were volunteers. The Canada Department of Public Information notes that of 595,441 men enlisted from the start of the war in August 1914 to November 15, 1918, a total of 465,984 or 78% were volunteers.\textsuperscript{132} Beginning in 1916, limited numbers of minorities could also enlist. Estimates state that approximately 3,500 First Nation, 1,000 Blacks, and less than 500 Canadians of Asian descent enlisted.\textsuperscript{133} Even with the relatively small population of early twentieth century Canada, the Canadian Expeditionary Force ultimately consisted of 619,636 men and women with 424,589 of them serving overseas.\textsuperscript{134} Many of those serving in the CEF were not Canadian-born, with significant numbers born in Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, the United States, and even some from Russia, Norway, and India.\textsuperscript{135} Figures vary slightly by source, although the higher figure for overseas service noted above includes doctors and nursing sisters not included in the Public Information figures below.

According to the Canada Department of Public Information, by November 15, 1918, some 418,052 men had gone overseas in the Canadian Expeditionary Force as follows by year:\textsuperscript{136}

- By December 31, 1914: 30,999 (7%)
- 1915: 84,334 (20%)
- 1916: 165,553 (40%)
- 1917: 63,536 (15%)
- By November 15, 1918: 73,630 (18%)

418,052 (100%)

Analyzing approximately 1,000 American-born enlistees in the CEF shows similar percentage patterns as follows: 1914 (5%), 1915 (19%), 1916 (40%), 1917 (15%), and 1918 (21%). The

\textsuperscript{132} Canada Department of Public Information: Canada’s Part in the Great War: Issued by the Department of Public Information, (Ottawa: The Department, 1919), 2.
\textsuperscript{133} Canadian War Museum/Musée Canadien De La Guerre. http://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/history/life-at-home-during-the-war/recruitment-and-conscription/voluntary-recruitment/
\textsuperscript{134} Library and Archives Canada: http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/
\textsuperscript{136} Canada Department of Public Information, 3.
lower percentage in 1914 is both a result of the CEF’s hesitance to accept American volunteers at the beginning of the war, as well as the fact that it represents just five months of activity, not a full year. Also noteworthy, even though the United States entered the war in April 1917, it still took considerable time to ramp up its army and actually send troops to France. Significant numbers of American troops did not arrive in Europe until mid-1918. The effort by the United States to mobilize, characterized as “frustratingly slow,” meant it took until the summer of 1918 for American troops to start making an impact in the field.\footnote{137} In the meantime, Americans continued to volunteer with the CEF, which provided an immediate opportunity to get to France and the fighting. Based on the analysis cited above, over 35% of the enlistments of American-born men in the CEF occurred in 1917 and 1918.

As of September 30, 1918, the CEF had an estimated 276,000 troops in Europe, with approximately 160,000 stationed in France and about 116,000 still in England.\footnote{138} In addition, there were doctors, nursing sisters, and others in the Canadian Army Medical Corps who, for the most part, remained overseas at their posts for the duration, with most not returning to Canada until well into 1919. Statistics on the number of killed and wounded vary some by source, with Veterans Affairs Canada citing over 66,000 killed and over 172,000 wounded.\footnote{139} Statistics Canada cites somewhat lower, although still quite significant figures and breaks them down as follows:\footnote{140}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Veterans Affairs Canada:}\texttt{http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remebrance/history/first-world-war; retrieved 1/16/2016.}
\item \textit{Statistics Canada:}\texttt{http://www65.statcan.gc.ca/acyb02/1947/acyb02_19471126002-eng.htm; Source: The Canada Year Book 1947. Retrieved 1/16/2016.}
\end{itemize}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Battle Casualties</th>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Other Ranks</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Killed in action</td>
<td>1,776</td>
<td>32,720</td>
<td>34,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died of wounds</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>16,363</td>
<td>17,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presumed dead</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>4,663</td>
<td>4,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wounded</td>
<td>5,528</td>
<td>127,022</td>
<td>132,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing in action</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4,343</td>
<td>4,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prisoners of war</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>4,113</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Casualties</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,832</strong></td>
<td><strong>189,224</strong></td>
<td><strong>198,056</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Canada – A Young Nation**

Canada had just achieved Dominion status in 1867, and with that domestic independence. However, Canada did not yet have any real voice in international affairs. Section 91 of the British North America Act of 1867 did not cover matters outside of Canada, “simply because in 1867 those affairs were universally regarded, in both Canada and Britain, as the business of the British government.”\(^\text{141}\) As a demonstration of continuing British influence in North America, this section of the Act meant that the British Foreign Office in London regulated the relationship between Canada and the United States, so any matters requiring review first went to the British delegation in Washington, D.C. for action.\(^\text{142}\) This was the status quo in 1914 when the war began. Accordingly, Britain’s declaration of war instantly obligated Canada’s participation. On August 20, 1914, the Canadian Parliament enthusiastically endorsed Canadian participation. As reported in the *New York Times*, “Sir Wilfred Laurier, opposition leader of the lower house, the

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\(^{142}\) Stacey, 3.
first to rise after formalities had been completed, opened with a declaration that for the present session party lines had been abolished.”143 The Canadian public was equally exuberant in its support, although no one at the time could anticipate the extent of the test this endorsement would face throughout the long war. At the beginning of the war, the Canadian economy was experiencing difficulties resulting in a period of high unemployment. This factor also served as a motivator for a portion of the high numbers of early voluntary enlistments.

Canada’s participation in the war effort was somewhat symbolic at first, as its military primarily existed to provide regionalized security activities within Canada. The militia structure did not meet the needs of international modern warfare. Britain did not have particularly high expectations and anticipated blending any Canadian troops in with British units rather than having them serve as an independent Canadian force. Nevertheless, with hard work, drive, and significant British assistance, the former Canadian militia eventually transformed itself into the Canadian Army Corps. Ultimately, the Canadian Corps consisted of four divisions and a cavalry brigade. The First Division left Gaspé Bay for England and another three months of training on October 3, 1914, landing at St. Nazaire, France on February 11, 1915.144 The turnaround was impressive for a country with a permanent force of only 3,000 for a war that had just begun some six months earlier. Three more divisions left Canada: the Second Division landed in France on September 14, 1915, the Third Division in early 1916, and the Fourth Division in mid-August 1916. The Cavalry Brigade had arrived in France in 1915, and the Canadian Army Corps received official designation after the Second Division landed in 1915.

144 Canada Department of Public Information, 1.
The early years of the war brought significant growing pains for the Canadian military as Britain realized its war needs were substantially greater than originally anticipated. Britain was still smarting from the disaster at Gallipoli, having evacuated in December 1915, and the Battle of Verdun was raging on the Western Front. British resources were also in demand in other areas of the war outside the Western and Eastern fronts. Almost simultaneous to the Easter Rising in Dublin, the British were involved in a siege at Kut al-Amara, south of Baghdad in present day Iraq. Kut had to surrender on April 29, 1916, and “10,000 survivors of the Expeditionary Force went into captivity, harsh for the common soldiers, 4,000 of whom died in enemy hands.”\textsuperscript{145} The captured troops, who were already malnourished from the siege, endured a forced march under brutal conditions from Kut to Baghdad, a distance of about one hundred miles. This was another major blow to the British so soon after Gallipoli. The defeat at Kut forced the government of Prime Minister Asquith to “convene not one but two commissions of enquiry – one on the Dardanelles and the other on Mesopotamia.”\textsuperscript{146} By the end of 1916, the British had used 200,000 of their own and Indian troops to retake Kut.\textsuperscript{147} Most of their efforts in Mesopotamia consumed serious levels of resources with few positive results. The point of these examples is to demonstrate that Britain was dealing with a series of defeats in the war, and trouble at home with issues in Ireland compounded matters considerably. The British needed all of the help their Dominion members, including the Canadians, could supply.

**New World Troops Become a Professional Fighting Force**

The British mentored the Canadian forces, but the Canadians also soundly rejected many of the old rules of leadership practiced by the British military. The British military system was

\textsuperscript{147} Keegan, 301.
deeply rooted in Britain’s highly regimented class system, a system the war changed forever. However, the Canadians had little experience dealing with such constraints, and even less respect for such things. This class system was part of the Old World, while Canadians viewed themselves as part of the New World and a new, and better order. Britons and Canadians viewed each other with some wariness. Most of the early CEF troops had not been born in Canada, with many born in Britain. Nevertheless, these men clearly felt a stronger allegiance to their adopted country. Many in the British military felt “the British race had slipped a bit in Canada” as proven by “notorious discipline problems” requiring considerable work to return them to “British standards.”148 The Canadians felt the opposite, taking every opportunity to “argue the superiority of the Canadian way over the British.”149 The Canadian troops also enjoyed their reputation as fearless, hard-fighting, rule-breaking, rabble-rousers. Some of this was the result of pre-existing stereotypes of Canadians held by British soldiers, which portrayed them as either lumberjacks or trappers. In reality, most were farmers and laborers from small towns and villages. A majority of the Americans who volunteered with the CEF were also farmers and laborers in civilian life. By the Battle of Vimy Ridge in April 1917, the CEF was an experienced and well-organized fighting force. Canadian participation in the war resulted in the development of a professional military for the young nation, and the development of a greater sense of national pride and confidence.

The Canadian troops initially sent to Britain in 1914 were all volunteers, and many were current Canadian militia members. At the start of the war, the militia had 43,000 members and the Permanent Force numbered only 3,100.150 With no substantial regular Canadian Army prior

148 Vance, Maple Leaf Empire: Canada, Britain, and Two World Wars, 59.
149 Vance, Maple Leaf Empire: Canada, Britain, and Two World Wars, 59.
150 Vance, Maple Leaf Empire: Canada, Britain, and the World Wars, 43.
to this point, their training was not that of professional soldiers; rather it focused more on handling local security issues. A training camp at Valcartier, Quebec, located sixteen miles northwest of Quebec City, was quickly opened on August 24, 1914 under the direction of Sam Hughes (1853-1921), Canadian Minister of Militia and Defense, to respond to Britain’s very immediate war needs. Building of the camp took place in little more than a month and was a testament to the strong will of Sam Hughes. Still, building a camp facility is one thing, but having it operational took some time. As noted by Pierre Berton, “this wretched piece of bush land, bisected by the Jacques Cartier River, had been transformed into a bustling military camp, complete with roads, water mains, railway sidings, stores, showers and movies for the troops, three miles of rifle range, and twenty-eight thousand feet of drain pipe.”¹⁵¹ However, as Berton also noted, “there was little time for training, and the organization of the troops was chaotic…” which could be expected with almost two hundred different militia units throughout Canada sending men to the camp.¹⁵² At the early stages of the war, Canada was not prepared to participate in a global conflict, but the Canadians quickly ramped up. It was a huge undertaking for a country that is large in land mass but, at that time, was relatively small in population. The initial days of the training camp illustrated Canadian inexperience with military matters. However, by 1917, the Valcartier, Quebec training base had achieved substantially greater levels of competence and systemization. Moreover, with British assistance and experience gained in the field, the leadership of Canada’s military vastly improved its level of expertise and professionalism as the war progressed. The road to get there was somewhat rocky as the

¹⁵² Berton, 38.
Canadians progressed from a well-intentioned but old school militia leader in Sam Hughes to professional military leadership.

Sam Hughes served as Canada’s Minister of Militia and Defense from October 1911 to November 1916, and he championed the place of Canadian forces early in the war effort. His efforts at the start of the war were instrumental in organizing Canada’s various regionally based militias into a consolidated military unit. Well known for his bombastic style, Hughes infuriated the officers who served under him and scared the politicians who dealt with him. Canadian Prime Minister Robert Borden, in particular, found Hughes intimidating. In spite of his many faults, Hughes was a loyal Canadian to the core. His national passions ran deep, and he had little use for the British military. Hughes characterized the British army as “a bunch of barroom loafers,” and he publicly declared these feelings with no hesitation. Such public statements from the person in charge of Canada’s military caused anxiety for his Canadian superiors and at times infuriated the British up to the highest levels.

However, Hughes was not the one to help the Canadian Expeditionary Corps achieve greater levels of professionalism. Promotions in the militia had generally occurred under an archaic system of cronyism. He was not inclined to accept any input, particularly related to the type of equipment the troops used, and he discouraged formal education for his officers. At the outbreak of war in 1914, only twelve Canadians had attended the British Staff College. The troops in Europe used the less effective Canadian made Ross rifle because Hughes wanted only Canadian-made products used by the CEF. While this was laudable and spoke to Hughes’s fierce devotion to Canada, the troops needed the best equipment available to ensure both their own

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153 Berton, 41.
safety and maximum results in battle. Hughes stubbornly refused to make any changes, which became one of a number of issues with his command, in addition to regularly infuriating British and Canadian officials. By the summer of 1916, with Hughes’s influence slipping and his replacement imminent, Canadian troops finally made the switch to the technologically better British Lee-Enfield rifle. “The withdrawal of the Ross rifle from the Canadian Corps followed a decision by the British Army Council based on a recommendation from the Commander-in-Chief.” This came about after much legitimate complaining by the troops in the trenches who, at one point, were taking the Lee-Enfield rifles from British casualties, and over the strenuous objections of Minister of Militia Hughes. Estimates held that over a third of the 5,000 troops who survived the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915 had switched out their Ross rifles in the field for Lee-Enfield rifles, without any formal authorization to do so, and over 3,000 from the First Division did so by the time of the May 1915 Battle of Festubert. In the heat of battle, commanding officers could not take any action to prevent it, and they already knew of the rifle issues anyway.

Sam Hughes may have fleetingly entertained the notion that he could also lead the Canadian Corps. Once substantial numbers were in England that was not destined to occur.

E.A.H. Alderson, the British general who had led the Canadian troops during the Boer War, took command of the First Division from its arrival in October 1914. Alderson served as commander of the Canadian Corps until May 1916. Lieutenant-General Julian Byng, a British officer, then assumed command of the Canadian Corps with a Canadian, Major-General Arthur Currie, as his second in command. Byng played a major role in improving the training and preparation of all ranks, achieving great success at the battle of Vimy Ridge in April 1917. The preparations for

155 Nicholson, Canadian Expeditionary Force, 156.
156 Nicholson, Canadian Expeditionary Force, 156.
that battle were meticulous as “Canadian sergeants and brigadiers rubbed shoulders as they clustered around a plasticine model of the Vimy section,” with Byng continually exhorting them to make sure every single soldier, up and down the ranks, understood his tasks thoroughly.\textsuperscript{157}

This was a significant change from the British class-driven model where officers never directly dealt with the soldiers under their command, instead going through their sergeants to pass along orders. All of these careful preparations paid dividends during the battle. Following the success of the Canadians at Vimy Ridge, Byng received a promotion and a new command within the British army, while Currie also received a promotion, one that put him in charge of the Canadian Corps. Currie was the first example of a Canadian soldier who had started with the militia and rose through the ranks to lead the entire Canadian army.

As for Hughes, eventually Prime Minister Robert Borden had no choice but to remove him. His lack of restraint, refusal to accept the use of better technology, and unwillingness to work with the British led to his dismissal and replacement on November 13, 1916. Following a series of charges and counter-charges, Hughes “acceded to Premier Borden’s request that his resignation be tendered” as part of the “culmination of long continued and steadily increasing friction between the Minister of Militia and Defense and his cabinet colleagues over questions of appointments, patronage, political expediency, and joint ministerial responsibility.”\textsuperscript{158} The \textit{New York Times} reported on November 14, 1916 that General Hughes criticized “action taken by British authorities both in regard to the handling of Canadian army supplies and of the Canadian forces…” all of which was deeply resented by the British.\textsuperscript{159} The British saw Hughes as a serious

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{157} Berton, 162.
\end{flushright}
impediment as they dealt with the inexperienced Canadian military in the midst of a huge war effort. Hughes had also developed a plan to establish a Canadian War Council in England. He proposed to establish the position of Deputy Minister of Militia, which would report to him. Seeking to control Hughes, and in deference to the 200,000 Canadian troops currently serving in France and England, the Canadian government opposed his plan. Instead, they preferred an Overseas Minister of Militia which would have been a position equal to the post Hughes held in Canada. The Canadian government also refused the recommendation by Hughes to appoint Sir Max Aitken as the new Overseas Minister. Instead, Sir George Perley received the appointment to the position. Hughes did not get along well with Perley, and he had disagreements with the Canadian Governor General, the Duke of Connaught, as well as the Surgeon General of the Canadian Medical Corps, Guy Carleton Jones, whom Hughes tried to relieve of his duties until the Canadian government intervened.160

Canada had never participated in an international war until the 1899-1902 South African or Boer War. During the South African War, Canada sent over 7,000 troops, starting in units of 125 men each, as well as 12 nursing sisters, all of whom who served under British control.161 This war gave Canada some experience in an international setting and paved the way for its involvement in the two world wars. However, the First World War represented the first time Canada would send such large numbers of troops, almost 425,000 overseas for service in actual Canadian units, rather than having them blended in with the British army. The CEF soldiers sent overseas early in the war had only rudimentary skills. Once in England they underwent another three to four months training in camps at Salisbury Plains and Aldershot to ensure they were

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properly prepared to fight in the trenches before shipping out to France. All of this hard work paid dividends. Even early in the war, the Canadians received praise from the British for their fighting skills. Field Marshal Sir John French noted about the Princess Patricia’s Regiment, “They are a magnificent set of men and have done excellent work in the trenches.”

**Americans Answer the Call to Arms from Canada**

The British were thankful to have the support of Canada and the Canadian troops, regardless of how and from which side of the North American border these troops came to the CEF. Some of the Americans who joined the CEF also brought much needed military experience. *The Washington Post* reported on March 5, 1915 that the Canadian parliament had received information that day concerning enlistments in the CEF by several American regular army officers and a number of officers from the state militias, all of whom were eager to serve with the Canadian forces in Europe. Among the officers noted was Captain Harold Claypoole Eustis, who joined in January 1915. A stockbroker from Cincinnati, Ohio, Eustis had been a lieutenant in the Ohio National Guard’s First Cavalry Regiment and was now serving as a captain with the CEF Fifth Regiment Mounted Rifles. Also noted in the article was Captain Herbert W. McBride, who was formerly in the Indiana National Guard, appointed as a captain in the Canadian militia. Detailed to the CEF’s Thirty-Eighth Battalion as a musketry instructor serving in Kingston, Ontario, McBride went on to lead a machine gun unit in France. One additional American noted in the article was Major Charles W. Stewart, who had been a first lieutenant in the Fifth Regiment of the United States cavalry. Once in the CEF, Stewart received


164 Library and Archives Canada, RG150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2937-35; item number 380635.

165 Further discussion of Captain Herbert W. McBride takes place in chapter four.
temporary appointment as captain and worked in St. John, New Brunswick on transports to
England. Stewart could not be located in the official CEF database of those who served, so
perhaps his position remained temporary and never became official. Not everyone who
volunteered worked out in military service.\textsuperscript{166} An August 9, 1914 \textit{Los Angeles Times} article
spoke of several thousand applications received by the Canadians from American volunteers
hoping to be accepted into the CEF.\textsuperscript{167} The article conjectured that given a prolonged war, the
Canadians would need to raise two more divisions and would then need to consider American
volunteers.

As it became apparent that the war would not be over quickly, the Canadians were soon
eager for any help they could get, and there were even rumors from Ottawa in 1915 that former
President Theodore Roosevelt might be convinced to join as a volunteer with the Canadian
forces or accept a commission in the British army.\textsuperscript{168} A \textit{New York Times} article posited that if the
United States continued its policy of neutrality, Roosevelt should stand by his publicly stated
pro-war convictions and head to the front with a special division of Canadian and American
volunteers. Adam Tooze notes that Roosevelt believed, “…if America was to vindicate its
emergence as a legitimate great power, it must prove itself in the same struggle, by throwing its
weight behind the Entente.”\textsuperscript{169} Much of the speculation came from Roosevelt himself, who made
a number of statements during a hunting trip in Canada about wanting to be at the front fighting

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Further exploration of the service histories of a number of individuals in the CEF and the Canadian Army
Medical Corps take place in chapters four and five. Not all volunteers were able to withstand the rigors of service in
France.
\item “MANY AMERICANS SEEK TO ENLIST,” \textit{Los Angeles Times} (1886-1922), Aug 09, 1914.
\item Special to the \textit{New York Times}, “WOULD LIKE ROOSEVELT TO LEAD CANADIANS,” \textit{The New York
11/25/2015.
\item Adam Tooze, \textit{The Deluge: The Great War, America and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916-1931}, (New
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
with the Canadians. This was part conviction and part posturing on Roosevelt’s part. The real intent of the article was to promote the war effort, and Roosevelt was always a popular subject. Considering his celebrity status at the time, anything he had to say about the war became news. Roosevelt’s secretary reportedly dismissed the possibility out of hand, laughing all the while. In the end, bringing Roosevelt’s name into the mix was good publicity for the Canadians and their recruitment efforts among Americans.

The Detroit Free Press reported on November 14, 1915 that a special battalion of American-born soldiers was forming within the CEF. Known as the Ninety-Seventh Battalion, the group had a distinctive shoulder badge containing a maple leaf for Canada and a shield with George Washington in it and the words “American Legion.” Both the officers and the enlisted men had to be American-born, but no recruiting efforts could occur in the United States. According to the Detroit Free Press article, the paymaster was a retired American army officer, and the battalion surgeon was from Chicago; however, it was anticipated that the men forming the battalion would be American-born but living in Canada. Two of the officers forming the unit were American-born residents of Ottawa. Recruitment efforts began in western Canada in Calgary, Alberta and in eastern Canada in Hamilton, Ontario. The enlistees took an oath of allegiance to King George for the length of the war and six months after. This implies a temporary situation, not one intended to make the recruits either Canadians or British subjects in any long-term sense. It reflects both the Canadian need to recruit to fill British demands and a new willingness on the part of the British to forego their long-standing concept of once a British subject, always a British subject. According to the Canadian War Museum, “Canadian recruiters worked actively in the United States to solicit men for so-called ‘American’ battalions in the

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Canadian Expeditionary Force…“171 However, no one actually enlisted in the United States. Instead, advertising directed volunteers to recruiting stations at Ferry Dock Sarnia (Ontario), Bridgeburg (Ontario), Winnipeg, Calgary, and Windsor.

A special report from Toronto featured in The Washington Post on January 30, 1916 also spoke about the West Point men in the Ninety-Seventh Battalion who would soon be leaving for the Western Front.172 Donald M. McRae, a West Point graduate and son of an American Army assistant adjutant general assigned to the War Department in Washington, D.C., received mention for being promoted to captain of his unit. The article expressed no concern about the fact that the son of a high-ranking American military officer had joined the Canadian forces while the United States maintained a position of neutrality. The reporting about the younger McRae’s enlistment with the CEF instead reflected more of a sense of pride at his actions. The unit he joined was composed of 1,200 American-born men and officers, and no one outwardly appeared worried about enlisting a group of Americans to serve with the CEF. The younger McRae had no previous combat experience but had been with his father during the Philippine-American war of 1899-1902, although this scarcely compares to the trench warfare of the Western Front. The leader of the unit was another American, Lieutenant Colonel Wade Lytton Jolly, a veteran of over fourteen years of service in the United States military.173 However, the Ninety-Seventh Battalion never made it out of Canada. Bound for England in May 1916, the group arrived at Aldershot, Nova Scotia and “were told they would be there all summer because of objections on the part of the authorities at Washington to an ‘American Legion’ being sent

173 Library and Archives Canada, RF150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 4916-34, item number 336705.
across the seas. Some officers resigned...a number of men deserted.”

American officials required removal of the designation ‘American Legion’ from the battalion’s name before it left for Europe. In the end, the unit was broken up with 300 men sent to the 4th Pioneer Battalion, 270 to the Royal Canadian Regiment in October 1916, and 428 sent to the Royal Canadian Regiment and the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry in November 1916. 

Ultimately, five American Legion battalions formed: the 97th, 211th, 212th, 218th, and 237th but none of the units actually made it intact to France. Instead, they were broken up for use as reinforcements. These battalions never made up the majority of American volunteers. Instead, the publicity such battalion formations drew provided encouragement for other Americans to volunteer. Most volunteers for the CEF made their way over the border to Canada on an individual basis to enlist in existing Canadian battalions.

While maintaining an official position of neutrality regarding the war, the United States clearly favored the Allies. This extended to the point of allowing the British-Canadian Military Mission to run recruitment operations across the United States to the extent that as of April 1, 1918, recruiting stations were open in most major American cities, although the actual enlistments occurred over the border in Canada. The Canadian government viewed the United States as having “a vast and untapped pool of manpower” given the significantly larger American population and the appeal of the British cause. However, the actual legality of such recruitment efforts was highly suspect and not without controversy as aggressive Canadian and

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178 Pawa, 296.
British recruiters often looked the other way regarding issues such as underage recruits. Reports noted that state and local American politicians received a number of frantic requests from upset parents requesting their help to get their underage sons discharged from the Canadian military and returned home.

**Canada Provides Other Assistance to Britain**

Although by no means the same as risking one’s life by volunteering for military service, as numerous Canadians and Americans were doing, Britain also asked Canada to provide assistance with financial and other non-military matters from the very beginning of the war. The *New York Times* reported on August 12, 1914 that “dispatches from London yesterday announced that the Bank of England had arranged with the Canadian Treasury Department for a special account in the Dominion with the fundamental purpose of amassing as much gold as possible there.” An earlier report from London, which had spread quickly to bankers in the United States, indicated that the Bank of England was considering setting up a branch in Ottawa. The telephone and cable lines were busy as the financial community tried to figure out what was going on and how it might affect them. The foreign exchange was already suffering with the outbreak of war. American bankers had deep concerns, so they informally agreed amongst themselves not to pay any large sums of gold if they suspected it was leaving the country. Nevertheless, even with their concerns, American bankers also resolved not to stop routine transfers from going to Canada or even Europe, as long as it was safe to do so. Grain exports also suffered negative impacts due to the outbreak of war. However, at this early stage of the war, most in the financial community believed the war was a short-term event, so they were more annoyed than panicked at the disruption to business. Over the course of the long war, Canada

provided advances to Britain of $709,000,000 to purchase food and commodities, and Canadian chartered banks advanced another $200,000,000 for the purchase of munitions and wheat.\(^{180}\) These advances worked both ways, as Britain advanced Canada $609,000,000, used primarily for maintaining Canadian troops in England and France.\(^{181}\)

Why did the British want to transfer their gold from the United States? Ultimately, it was to benefit British finances. Because of Canada’s Dominion status within the British Empire, keeping gold in Canada was the same as if the gold was “placed in the vaults of the Bank of England. Gold could be held as reserve of the English Bank, and banknotes could be issued in England, secured by the gold, or it could be used as the basis of credit and payment for commodities shipped from Canada to the mother country.”\(^{182}\) By October 1914, Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925) noted that, “The money center has now been transferred from Wall Street to Washington, and the change came just in time.”\(^{183}\) The move took place to avoid panic and prevent gold hoarding as the war in Europe continued. By 1915, as the war showed no signs of ending quickly, the stock market was “dull and irregular,” but American exporters were now making significant profits filling war orders and selling grains and other items to Great Britain.\(^{184}\) While this allowed the United States to pay down its foreign debt, it also put American neutrality in a questionable position.

On February 17, 1915, Britain ordered the movement of $2,500,000 in gold from Ottawa to New York for a total of $5,000,000 moved so far during the war but still nowhere near normal

\(^{180}\) Canada Department of Public Information, 21.
\(^{181}\) Canada Department of Public Information, 21.
levels. However, American financiers were pleased and hopeful that Britain would send more
gold to New York. This is a good example of Canada’s function as an intermediary between
Britain and the United States. Canada eagerly embraced its role as a “middle” power in the years
between the First and Second World Wars. Canada also worked hard to ensure its relevance
within the British Empire, primarily to keep the ever-expanding United States at bay. In addition,
it was evident from the early stages of the war that Britain viewed North America, both
figuratively and literally, as a safety zone from the ravages of war. Canada naturally remained
closely tied to Britain owing to its Dominion status. In addition, one hundred and thirty-eight
years after declaring independence, the cultural and economic ties between the United States and
Britain remained strong as well. However, sentimentality aside, all three nations primarily
remained concerned with their individual national interests.

Irish Nationalism Causes Border Issues in North America

Immediately following the Civil War and continuing into the 1870s, some unwelcome
Americans attempted to cross the border into Canada. Irish nationalists, known as Fenians,
sought to disrupt peaceful relations between the United States and Canada in an attempt to draw
the attention of the British government to their cause. These unwanted border crossings and
attempted crossings in the 1860s and 1870s were in stark contrast to the welcome Americans
received from Canada during the First World War when arriving there to volunteer with the CEF.
The Fenian manifestation of Irish nationalism briefly disturbed relations between the United
States and Canada, and Britain beyond but did no real lasting damage. Initially, the United States
made little effort to control the incursions, which raised alarms in Canada. The American
government had the aftermath of the Civil War and recovery from the assassination of President
Lincoln to deal with. At the time, the United States was concentrating its efforts on
reconstruction and, at first, just considered the Fenians a nuisance. Additionally, conditions following the war had directly contributed to the upswing in Fenian membership within the United States. However, by the later 1870s, the Fenians ceased to be a problem as the American government eventually took a hard line against their activities. The Irish nationalist movement also quieted down after that until a reappearance in the years just before the war began in 1914.

The Fenians – Disrupting the Border

While many Civil War soldiers returned home to their families and former occupations, the aftermath of war produced scores of disaffected soldiers from both the Union and Confederate armies, a great number of them with Irish family backgrounds. These former soldiers sought a new purpose for their lives, finding that answer in the Fenian Brotherhood, a radical Irish nationalist paramilitary organization. The aim of the Fenians was to free Ireland from British rule, creating an independent Irish state. The Fenian Brotherhood attempted a rising in Ireland in 1865, which the British government firmly crushed. After this defeat, the American Fenians rejected the tactic of creating disturbances within Ireland itself. Fenians in the United States thought that creating distractions for the British in more distant parts of the Empire, where their presence was minimal, would place enormous strain on British resources, making them more likely to agree to Irish independence. In addition, Canada was conveniently right in the American Fenians’ backyard, making the ability to cross on to British territory appear easy. “On to Canada” quickly became their rallying cry, as “thousands of Irishmen were anxious and ready to strike a blow at England in any quarter.”185 The Canadians were preparing for the possibility of Fenian raids from as early as November 1865. The New York Times reported from Toronto that, “there is no alarm as to Fenian rumors. It is thought probable, however, that some sort of

raiding operations might be attempted on the frontier, and the authorities have merely taken the necessary precautions to prevent mischief being done. The prevalent feeling is altogether derisive of the whole business.”\textsuperscript{186} However, while ineffective and with little substance, the attempted raids forced the Canadian government to expend resources by sending its militia to protect fearful border area residents.

Early on, the Fenians even received some quiet assistance from the administration of American President Andrew Johnson, likely because of the Union’s resentment toward Britain and Canada for favoring and assisting the South during the Civil War. President Johnson issued a strong proclamation condemning any potential actions by the Fenians to invade Canada; however, there was a delay in issuing it. As described by Canadian Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, “The tardy proclamation of President Johnson was finally issued on the 6\textsuperscript{th} of June, almost a week after the Fenians under Gen. O’Neil had crossed over the Niagara.”\textsuperscript{187} The group made three attempts to invade Canada from American soil along the northern border in 1866, 1870, and 1871. Many in both the United States and Canada believed that new planning efforts were always underway. During a meeting of the Fenian Brotherhood that occurred in Chicago on March 15, 1867, a Fenian regiment intended to fight in Canada marched openly in the streets of Chicago.\textsuperscript{188} In 1870, reports received by the \textit{New York Times} from Buffalo, Rochester, and Utica, New York noted the flurry of activity to prepare Fenian troops to invade Canada. In 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant expressed his displeasure at Fenian activity as he admonished “all good citizens of the United States, and all persons within the military jurisdiction of the United

\footnotetext{187}{Macdonald, 116.}
States, against aiding, countenancing, abetting or taking part in such unlawful proceedings…by committing such illegal acts they will forfeit all right to the protection of this Government.”

By then the United States had no interest in tolerating Fenian activity any longer and took serious action against them.

The Canadian Parliament that returned to session in 1871 heard a speech from Governor General Lord Lisgar in which he noted about Fenian raids that, “However militarily inept the raids proved, they caused high anxiety in Canada.” That anxiety continued into the late 1870s.

New rumors about plans for raids kept springing up from time to time. In November 1876, reports from Burlington, Vermont speculated about the possibility of another raid due to the strong feelings of the Fenians who “bitterly hate England,” even though there was no firm evidence to substantiate the conjecture. A report from Syracuse, New York in May 1878 indicated that the Fenians were once again ready to invade Canada if war broke out between England and Russia. The article noted that, “in St. Louis and Chicago large forces of men are armed and drilling night and day, awaiting the signal for marching. Should war be declared between England and Russia, the Fenians propose to invade Canada by Ogdensburg, Troute River, and Fort Erie.” The three are border towns in New York, Quebec, and Ontario, respectively. Adding insult to injury, in 1885, the United States made inquiries to its State Department officials based in Ottawa about appointing James Whelan, a former Fenian raid

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organizer to serve as the American Consul at Fort Erie, Ontario. The Canadian government was not amused and vowed to refuse to accept the nomination. Even so, by the late 1870s, Irish nationalism ceased to present security problems between the United States and Canada. The emergence of the Irish Parliamentary Party in the British Parliament following passage of the Second Reform Act in 1867 and William Gladstone’s introduction of the First Home Rule Bill in 1886 (subsequently defeated), and then the Second Home Rule Bill in 1893 demonstrated progress and quieted the Irish issue until the years just prior to 1914. In fact, early in the war, “Irish volunteer rates in the autumn of 1914 were better than in parts of England…,” falling away among Irish Catholics as the war carried on.

The Easter Rising

Nationalist fervor simmered once again in Ireland in the years before the start of the First World War with the hope for Home Rule alive again. However, the war caused a postponement of Home Rule legislation leading to worries about possible armed conflicts in Ulster, and potentially all of Ireland. The tensions culminated in the Easter Rising on Monday, April 24, 1916, leading to an ensuing six years of guerilla warfare with Britain. The result of this conflict was an eventual end to the Home Rule movement for most of Ireland, concluding with the formation of the independent Irish Free State in 1922. This left a small section of Northern Ireland under British control, and another set of issues that would subsequently erupt later in the twentieth century. However, for Britain, Home Rule and the independence movement in Ireland collided with the start of the First World War, and the timing could not have been worse.

In 1913, Dublin tram workers struck, the Irish Citizen army formed to back the strikers, and another Home Rule group, the Irish Volunteers formed, although many of its membership really belonged to the militant Irish Republican Brotherhood who wanted complete independence from Britain.\textsuperscript{195} The situation deteriorated in 1914 as the Ulster Volunteer Force, in concert with the Germans, smuggled arms into Ireland for its defense. On July 26, 1914, members of the British army killed four civilians during Dublin’s Bachelor’s walk, and Britain declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914.\textsuperscript{196} Conditions continued to spiral downward during the remainder of 1914 through early 1916, including having a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, Joseph Plunkett, go to Germany in spring 1915 to seek assistance for a rising.\textsuperscript{197} The British vigorously crushed the Rising with mass arrests and the sentencing of ninety people to death. Britain deployed over 60,000 troops against some 1,100 Irish during the takeover of the General Post Office (GPO) and other municipal buildings in Dublin.\textsuperscript{198} It was an overly extreme response and a major redeployment of a significant number of troops in the middle of a war. Additionally, for many Irish, this ferocious crushing of the Easter Rising rekindled old feelings about the propensity of the British Empire to crush smaller and weaker nations.\textsuperscript{199} Some unintended consequences occurred because of the hard line Britain took against the instigators. The \textit{Boston Daily Globe} reported on May 12, 1916 that Prime Minister Herbert Asquith (1852 – 1928) was heading to Dublin to try to calm the anger over the executions and the imposition of military rule following the Rising. The paper noted that there was fear that “the punishment of the rebels would cause a reaction of sympathy among the warm-hearted and emotional people,”

\textsuperscript{196} Wills, ix. 
\textsuperscript{197} Wills, x. 
\textsuperscript{199} Reynolds, 28.
and that was the case.\textsuperscript{200} Prior to Asquith’s arrival, fourteen had been executed by firing squad, seventy-nine were in prison, and 1,706 had been deported to Britain and were being held for trial. Many received sentences to penal servitude. The Irish people did not view the Easter Rising favorably, but “the execution of Pearse (Patrick) and the others turned the rebels into national martyrs…as the executions helped reinvigorate the nationalist movement.”\textsuperscript{201}

Why did Britain react so harshly to what by all accounts was not a very well organized rebellion? Britain had already discovered the weapons smuggled in by the Germans before the Rising and perhaps felt that it was important to display British military might and intelligence strength to the Germans, at the expense of the Irish rebels. The British had sunk a German ship off the Irish coast and with that had captured Sir Roger Casement, who was traveling with the Germans who were bringing in arms. The war was a costly affair for Britain, which had a war budget of $5,000,000,000 and estimated the cost of war to be $10,500,000 for one day.\textsuperscript{202} The British believed they could not afford to have any more distractions caused by further troubles in Ireland. Given this scenario, they fell back on familiar tactics, harshly crushing the rebellion. During important negotiations, several ministers, including Lord Lansdowne and Walter Long, resigned, with Lord Robert Cecil expected to follow. This posed a potential problem for the negotiations because as “Lloyd George’s proposals had been accepted by both parties, Unionist and Nationalist, alike in Ulster, their withdrawal would wreck the entire credibility of British statesmanship for many a long day, not only in Ireland but to a serious extent in the Dominions.


and the United States.” So in addition to proving their might to the Germans, Britain also needed to present a show of strength and control to its allies during this critical period.

These actions garnered little support for Britain among Irish Catholics in both the United States and Canada. Few Irish Catholics from either country volunteered to serve in the CEF. The disinterest among Irish immigrants in the United States and elsewhere in serving the interests of the British Empire only intensified. Most Irish volunteers from the United States and Canada were Protestants with clearer ties to Britain. However, British demands on Canada for additional troops continually increased as the war showed no signs of ending. This contributed to the Canadians’ willingness and eagerness to welcome American volunteers to the CEF.

**Once a British Subject, Always a British Subject**

Although certainly not enlisted by force as during the naval impressments of the War of 1812, the concept of Britain putting out the call to its North American subjects at the start of the First World War shares similarities. As Reiko Karatani notes in *Defining British Citizenship: Empire, Commonwealth and Modern Britain*, Britain did not formally attempt to define its citizenship until after the Second World War as its empire began to dissolve. Prior to the British Nationality Act of 1981, British citizenship remained undefined in law, with the term British subject serving as a key designation prior to this legislation. In addition, as defined, once a British subject, one was always a British subject regardless of any other national allegiances. A century later, American and British relations had evolved beyond those of the 1812 period, but Britain believed that Canada in more formal terms and the United States by virtue of origin were

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all part of the larger British family. As such, family members had both loyalties and obligations to one another, particularly in times of crisis.

As noted by G.W.L. Nicolson, “Of the 1500 officers who were appointed to the First Canadian Contingent, two-thirds were Canadian-born, while twenty-nine percent gave other parts of the Empire as their place of birth. But the enlistments by the other ranks told a different story.” Notably, according to the Canadian War Museum, of the first group of Canadian troops sent overseas to England in 1914, about seventy percent were not Canadian born, with most born in some part of the United Kingdom, while about seventy-three percent of the first contingent from Australia were born in Australia. This leveled out somewhat by the later years of the war. By then, about fifty-one percent were Canadian born while a comparable figure for Australia was eighty-four percent. The early years of the twentieth century were a period of heavy immigration from the British Isles to Canada, even surpassing immigration to the United States in 1906-1907. During these years, the Canadian government paid bonuses to British booking agents for every immigrant they directed to Canada, particularly those with agricultural backgrounds. This was the case even as Canada had passed immigration acts in 1906 and 1910, which allowed it wide latitude to refuse and deport emigrants from any part of Britain or Europe that it found undesirable, for almost any reason. Immigration to Canada was easier and less costly for travel purposes than to Australia or New Zealand. Britain also wished to stem the flood of immigrants to the United States, preferring instead to direct them to its settler colonies to boost their populations and promote the concept of a Greater Britain, a global entity. For some

208 Knowles, 114-115.
209 Knowles, 114.
in Britain, this solved problems of population density in the British Isles and fears of the appeal of socialism, particularly to the working class, as “the colonial unionists sought to harness and redirect emigration, simultaneously depriving the United States of potential citizens while accelerating the population growth of the outlying provinces of Greater Britain.” While Canada sought to increase its population, particularly in the western provinces, it was also keenly aware that the many of the emigrants it received were often those Britain and other European countries were eager to see leave for economic and social reasons. These concerns and fears led to the harsh Canadian immigration laws of 1906 and 1910.

Canadians and recent British immigrants to Canada were still British subjects, remaining so until revisions in the Canadian Citizenship Act in 1977 formally removed the designation from their passports. All of the Dominions, including Canada, did more than their part to assist Britain with the war effort, and the part they all played was recognized. On December 6, 1916, A. Bonar Law, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, noted that, “We have a right to feel very proud of the part which is being played in the terrible tragedy of this war by the great Dominions of the British Crown. We had no power to compel any one of them to contribute a single penny, or to send a single man, but they have given of their best, not to help us, though I think they would have done that also, but to defend the Empire which is theirs as much as ours.” Those initially volunteering for the Canadian Expeditionary Force joined to assist Britain and its allies, not because of loyalty to Canada or the renown of its military. However, as the war progressed and the Canadian Corps developed into a cohesive fighting group, strong nationalist feelings emerged both in Canada and among the Canadian forces. The First World War took Canada, a

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210 Bell, 54.
colony, and turned it into a nation. For the American volunteers, the CEF was the most convenient means of getting into the fight in light of the neutrality of the United States.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the evolution of the Canadian military from localized militia groups to an efficient modern fighting force. It shows that throughout the war, Canada faced continual pressure from Britain to contribute more troops and resources, and the young nation willingly did so. As part of the effort to meet these demands, Canada accepted American citizens in the CEF, with no questions asked. The United States did nothing to stop these individual enlistments. It only asked quietly behind the scenes that overt affronts to American neutrality, such as efforts to form “American Legions” in the CEF never reach fruition. The Canadian military honored these requests, making sure all such groups were broken up and scattered among Canadian regiments. As described in this chapter, North Americans willingly helped Britain, both outwardly and behind the scenes, demonstrating the close ties between Britain, Canada, and the United States at this time.
Chapter Three

The United States and Neutrality: The Public View and Behind the Scenes Realities

“The people of the United States are drawn from many nations, and chiefly from the nations now at war. It is natural and inevitable that there should be the utmost variety of sympathy and desire among them with regard to the issues and circumstances of the conflict.” –Woodrow Wilson, August 19, 1914212

This chapter explores the neutrality of the United States in the early years of the First World War, including British and Canadian reactions to it. As shown, there were public and behind the scenes versions of American neutrality. The public version, officially symbolized by the many declarations of neutrality issued by the United States as the war spread globally, reflects the strong stance of President Woodrow Wilson. Behind the scenes, individual Americans ignored the declared neutrality of their nation and crossed to Canada to enlist in the CEF. Some American expatriates living in Canada, even sought to form “American Legion” units in the CEF. We do not know if Wilson knew about U.S. citizens enlisting in the CEF. There is no evidence in his published papers to indicate if he did or not. Examining U.S. neutrality is important to understanding both the climate of the times and how much these Americans risked by ignoring the potential legal ramifications of enlisting with the CEF. We also see that the United States did little to stop their activities, although widely reported in the American press. Americans had deep ties to Britain sharing a common language, culture, and religious beliefs. Many Americans still had family members in Britain. As the chapter shows, they felt a strong need to come to the aid of the British Empire, no matter the legalities or personal risks.

Woodrow Wilson, Colonel House and American Neutrality

Woodrow Wilson possessed no substantive background in international politics when he became president in 1913, and he spent most of the first two years of his presidency devoting little attention to matters in Europe.\textsuperscript{213} The President left such concerns to his close advisor, Colonel Edward M. House, who did keep a close watch. What House saw happening across the Atlantic worried him deeply, particularly the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, leading him to propose that he undertake a peace mission to Europe in spring 1914.\textsuperscript{214} This represented a bold initiative for a nation that prided itself on avoiding problems taking place on European soil. Since the post-War of 1812 period, the United States tended to concern itself almost exclusively with working to limit the actions of European powers in the Western Hemisphere. The Monroe Doctrine, actually a small portion of President James Monroe’s December 2, 1823 annual message to Congress, warned Europe “…the United States would not tolerate further colonization or puppet monarchs in the Western Hemisphere.”\textsuperscript{215} Therefore, the United States had a policy for dealing with incursions on its side of the world, but no clear policy for dealing with problems in Europe. Additionally, as the nineteenth century progressed, Americans now felt free to pursue their seemingly conflicting fascination with Britain and its monarchy. The resentments of the American Revolution were now in the past. In addition, by the later part of the nineteenth century, many people in the United States and Britain perceived themselves a part of the “Anglo-Saxon” race, a contrived concept that in their view made them superior to the rest of the world.\textsuperscript{216} On a more rational level, the two also shared a common language, religious beliefs and culture, as well as deep financial ties. While Americans enjoyed not answering to Britain any

\textsuperscript{214} Fromkin, \textit{Europe’s Last Summer: Who Started the Great War in 1914?} 105-106.
\textsuperscript{216} Sexton, 25.
longer, the United States still willingly continued to maintain a close relationship with Britain. Sensing deep problems among the European powers, the Wilson administration sought a nonviolent solution.

Colonel House referred to his European mission as a “great adventure.” He hoped to form a three-nation alliance between the United States, Britain, and Germany as the means to maintain world peace. House spent his time shuttling between Berlin, Paris, and London during the spring and early summer of 1914 promoting his peace plan to no avail. Wilson and House’s attempt to maintain peace was admirable, but perhaps simultaneously both naïve and a bit arrogant. The European landscape was extremely complex at the time for any such plan to work, particularly when adding Russia, France, and Austria-Hungary into the equation with Britain and Germany. Nationalist movements, ongoing territorial disputes, as well as naval and armaments buildups were among the many issues of the time. While House worried about a potential war, the prevailing mood in Europe at the time was more concerned with the upcoming summer. Most there, even in early summer, felt “that no conflict among the great powers was on the horizon.” In 1914 the world had too many empires competing against one another, so a showdown proved unavoidable. Describing the First World War as “a conflict fought by empires to determine the fate of those empires” is to describe a struggle that cascaded rapidly from a war on the European continent to a war of global proportions as the colonies and allies of each empire joined in.

Declarations of War and Neutrality

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217 Fromkin, 106.
Britain declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914, Canada followed suit on August 5, while the United States declared its neutrality on August 4. As nations entered the war, others, mostly in the Western Hemisphere, declared neutrality instead. President Wilson followed up his proclamation with a Message on Neutrality to the American people on August 19, 1914, further clarifying the American position, while requesting the cooperation of all citizens. Each state’s official position was now very clear, at least at the highest level of government. However, as noted by Woodrow Wilson in his Message on Neutrality, the average person frequently had close family ties involving the combatant nations as well as strong feelings about the reasons for the war. These feelings about the war applied to both sides and presented conflicts for many people who were loyal to the United States but held firm views about particular combatants or their form of government. Even Woodrow Wilson, consistently described as high-minded, moralistic, and idealistic, “believed that the German and Austro-Hungarian systems of government required radical change, while declining to attribute sole responsibility for the war to the Germans.”220

Each of the belligerents had representative segments within American society, but the financial and cultural ties between the United States and the British Empire were strongest. Privately, American industrialists also preferred to see German competition diminished.221

Secretary of State Robert Lansing (1864-1928) noted in his war memoirs, “Among other groups of citizens who opposed the entrance of the United States into the war were the bulk of the naturalized citizens of German and Austrian extraction and many Americans of German and Austrian descent, together with the Irish-Americans who sympathized with those who were striving to free Ireland from British domination.”222 Lansing, who served as Secretary of State

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221 Hastings, 435.
from June 23, 1915 to February 20, 1920, also cited the concerns of American business people worried about their profits as the war was upsetting the markets and the British Navy was interfering with shipping. Still, the American public had sympathy for the Allied cause, with German military activities in Belgium and the corresponding negative press coverage tipping sentiments further. Lansing noted in particular the warm feelings the United States had always felt toward France due to the assistance provided to the fledgling American nation during the War of Independence. Conversely, by 1915, French Canadians did not share such feelings for the plight of France. Rather, they believed their priority was their own province of Quebec and not a war an ocean away that did not concern them. Nevertheless, the rest of Canada was engaged in a fever pitch of recruitment and other war efforts. In the United States, the American public may have sympathized with the Allies, but they needed clearer reasons to join a European conflict.

Wilson moved forward with efforts to keep the United States out of the war. On August 5, 1914, he issued Executive Order 2011 – To Enforce Neutrality of Wireless Stations. The order stated, “…that all radio stations within the jurisdiction of the United States of America are hereby prohibited from transmitting or receiving for delivery messages of an unneutral nature, and from in any way rendering to any one of the belligerents any unneutral service, during the continuance of hostilities.” However, a Detroit Free Press article from August 17, 1914 pointedly accused the government of “showing something too much of a disposition to impose rigid restrictions on the Germans while overlooking opportunities for Germany’s adversaries.” According to this report, the United States stopped all uncensored cabling to Germany but

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allowed cables to go freely to anti-German stations; that is to say Britain and France. The article pressed for the importance of maintaining American neutrality.

By September 5, 1914, Wilson issued another Executive Order entitled “Taking over High-Power Radio Stations for Use of the Government.” Order 2042 stated that “…one or more of the highpower radio stations within the jurisdiction of the United States and capable of trans-Atlantic communication shall be taken over by the Government of the United States and used or controlled by it … for the purpose of carrying on communication with land stations in Europe, including code and cipher messages.” This was necessary to ensure that the government had the ability to communicate in a secure manner with its diplomatic offices in Europe, or anyone else, as the need arose. Also issued on August 5, 1914 was order #2012: “For the Relief, Protection and Transportation Home of Americans in Europe at the Outbreak of the European War of 1914.” The Secretary of the Navy supplied the necessary ships that would bring the officers, money, and supplies required for organizing efforts to pick up any American citizens, estimated at some 30,000, stranded throughout Europe and England. Perhaps purposefully adding an element of exigency, the order referred to those in need of transport back to the United States as refugees.

As noted, the United States was not the only country to declare neutrality as war broke out in Europe. The Proclamation of Neutrality issued by the United States on August 4, 1914 noted a state of war existed between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, Germany and Russia, and Germany and France. The proclamation went on to note that “the United States is on terms of friendship and amity with the contending powers, and with the persons inhabiting their several

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dominions…” The United States sought to make it clear it had no quarrels with any of the participants. Britain was not included because the issuance of the proclamation took place on the same day that Britain declared war against Germany. The United States issued additional neutrality proclamations as the war progressed during 1914-1916. An extensive list of countries across the globe declared neutrality. With the exception of Canada, most of North, Central, and South America preferred to stay out of the war, or given the influence of the United States, others in the Western Hemisphere just followed its lead. In addition, protecting the Panama Canal Zone was as essential to the United States as protecting the Suez Canal was for Britain.

Although neutral, throughout the war the United States took steps to protect its interests in the Western Hemisphere. For example, the American government began serious negotiations with Denmark in 1916 to purchase the Danish West Indies, which consisted of the islands of St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix. There were fears that Denmark, even though it was a declared neutral, might fall to Germany anyway. Belgium provided good precedent for these concerns. If Denmark fell, then its Caribbean island colonies could also fall into German hands, leaving the way open for the Germans to establish a naval presence in the Caribbean. The United States, as the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere could not risk giving Germany a foothold there. Given these fears, the United States concluded the purchase of the three islands on March 31, 1917, just days before it declared war on Germany.

228 For a list of these proclamations, see Appendix 1 or the United States Department of State, *Neutrality Proclamations: 1914-1918*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 52.
229 Countries declaring neutrality included: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Columbia, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Italy, Liberia, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Persia, Peru, Salvador, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Panama Canal Zone (by the United States), Uruguay, and Venezuela.
Maintaining Neutrality: The Lusitania Sinking and Submarine Warfare

As the war progressed, events precipitated by Germany continued to unfold which tested American neutrality. On May 7, 1915, the Lusitania, a British luxury ocean liner owned by the Cunard Line suffered torpedoing by a German U-boat off the southern Irish coast and sank within twenty minutes. The death count was 1,198, which included 128 Americans.

Many thought the sinking of the Lusitania would be the impetus to get the United States to declare war on Germany. It did not push the United States to declare war, but it did precipitate a change in Woodrow Wilson’s cabinet. Robert Lansing assumed the position of Acting Secretary of State on June 9, 1915, the same day that William Jennings Bryan resigned as Secretary of State, a position he had held for the prior two years. Bryan resigned because he feared the note to the German government concerning the Lusitania sinking that he was required to sign as Secretary of State would propel America into war. Per Robert Lansing, Bryan “preferred to resign rather than affix his signature to the note.” The United States sent this note and two more like it, but almost two years elapsed before the United States finally declared war against Germany on April 6, 1917. Even Wilson’s advisor, Colonel Edward M. House, in London at the President’s request again promoting peace at the time of the Lusitania’s torpedoing, was mistaken when he stated, “We shall be at war within a month.” A determined Wilson continued to promote his hopes for a negotiated peace.

Early in his tenure as Secretary of State, Robert Lansing prepared a memorandum outlining his thoughts and detailing a list of policies he believed essential. Lansing completed his memorandum on July 11, 1915, just a few days after the issuing of the memorandum to Germany concerning the Lusitania sinking. Lansing expressed his conviction that, “Today German

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230 Lansing, 15.
absolutism is the great menace to democracy.”232 His action list was bold, ambitious, and extensive. The list included: settlement of the submarine controversy, continued vigilance in tracking German activities across North America, promotion of a Pan-American doctrine, maintenance of good relations with Mexico, purchase of the Danish West Indies as a means of ensuring the curtailing of German influence in the Caribbean, and preparing the United States for war if a German victory appeared imminent.233 This final point, indicating that the United States would join the war effort if Germany appeared ready to win, provided a strong indicator that the Wilson administration was, in fact, ready to go to war if it became evident that democracy was in peril. Lansing served as Secretary of State from June 23, 1915 until February 13, 1920. In his memoirs, Lansing describes Wilson as glad when he accepted the appointment as secretary because “he was convinced that we were of the same mind concerning international policies.”234 Wilson and Lansing knew American neutrality would likely prove difficult to maintain if the war did not end quickly. The two hoped to avoid war but planned behind the scenes in case it became inevitable.

At the start of the war, the general feeling was that it would be of short duration, and while this had not proven to be the case, it was still early on in the war in mid-1915 when the Lusitania sinking occurred. It is fair to say that each of the belligerents still felt strongly that their side could prevail in the next big battle and bring about a swift end to hostilities. During this early stage, whatever position the United States elected to take on the war was of little concern to the British Foreign Office, so there was little shock at Wilson’s neutrality declaration.235 The

232 Lansing, 20.
233 Lansing, 20.
234 Lansing, 17.
general feeling was that while Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey “might have surrendered to
the notion that the western hemisphere was an ‘American’ hemisphere after the United States
made short work of the Spanish in their 116-day war in 1898,” by no means did that give the
United States any right to meddle in Europe’s business.236 For Wilson, it was a more prudent
course of action to stay out of the war for as long as possible, and hope it was over before any
commitment of American troops, resources, and arms was necessary.

This plan only worked under the presumption that the Allies would be the victorious
party. Wilson greatly feared the impact a German victory might have on democracy in Europe.
He also believed that Americans had the right to travel by sea and conduct commerce freely
across the Atlantic. These beliefs propelled his efforts during 1915 and 1916 to maintain
American neutrality, although behind the scenes, much changed by the summer of 1915. Notable
among the changes was the quiet willingness of Wilson to allow American bankers to make
loans to Britain. The president was not about to commit this in writing, but he understood the
importance of American and British financial ties to American economic prosperity. Given the
issues on the Atlantic Ocean with German U-boats, “making loans to Britain would assure that it
could continue the war and not worry about a constant flow of material from across the
Atlantic.”237 In early September 1915, Lansing was pressuring Wilson to announce his changed
position on loans, but the president continued to assert that his verbal agreement would need to
suffice. During this period, the United States was also actively engaged in negotiating with
Germany regarding submarine warfare and its impact on American merchant ships. Germany
made a number of concessions to the United States because of Lansing continually applying

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236 Coyne, 44.
pressure to German Ambassador Bernstorff.\textsuperscript{238} American public opinion was moving against Germany on this subject, and by October 1916, a recap by The Washington Post of editorial views from various American newspapers concerning U-boat activities off the coast of the United States confirmed the highly negative feelings toward Germany. The Boston Herald reported that, “The European war has been transferred to our own shores...this raises the whole submarine controversy afresh, and in a much more acute form.”\textsuperscript{239} The New York Times noted, “If the imperial German government is really bent upon arousing again among the American people the dangerous state of feeling that possessed them after the destruction of the Lusitania, it has chosen a method perfectly adapted to that end.”\textsuperscript{240} The Philadelphia Inquirer was highly critical of President Wilson but still noted that, “To bring submarine atrocities to our very door is a bold thing for the Berlin militarists to do – and a dangerous thing, unless they have made up their minds to defy the United States.”\textsuperscript{241} Even with Wilson’s continual plea, the neutrality of the United States was fragile.

\textbf{The 1916 Presidential Election – “He Kept Us Out of War”}

Woodrow Wilson’s devout religious beliefs led him to believe that higher powers than earthly ones had reasons for allowing the war to start, but his more worldly side had a “desire to increase U.S. prestige and economic prosperity.”\textsuperscript{242} His strict concepts of right and wrong likely resulted from his upbringing as the son of a Presbyterian minister. The image he projected to the country and the rest of the world appeared sanctimonious and self-righteous, with little to no

\textsuperscript{238} M. Ryan Floyd, 177.
\textsuperscript{242} M. Ryan Floyd, 9.
interest in compromise. An even more impactful event for Wilson at the beginning of the war was the death on August 6, 1914 of his first wife Ellen after a short illness. Her death was a serious blow to Wilson. Both Ellen and Wilson’s second wife Edith were key confidants and supports for him. However, following Ellen’s death, he quickly immersed himself in the unfolding world events, noting that this left him little time to think of anything else. Wilson biographer A. Scott Berg notes, “With the destruction of his universe, he found strength in the collapse of the world,” and he appreciated the safe distance from Europe provided by the Atlantic Ocean. In addition, in 1916 he faced a difficult re-election campaign, so maintaining American neutrality for as long as possible was imperative for Wilson. Secretary of State Robert Lansing wrote to Wilson on October 2, 1916 to assure him that he understood “that the conduct of our foreign affairs ought to be divorced entirely from the political campaign…” While Lansing found it difficult to remain silent amidst scorching criticisms, he assured the President in deference to Wilson’s wishes “that policy will be rigidly observed…,”

On January 13, 1915, Wilson ignited partisan political fighting as he made his intention to seek re-election evident in a Jackson Day speech in Indianapolis, Indiana. The President, not known for scheduling many speeches before large crowds, was early in the campaign process for doing so. The speech quickly brought forth negative comments from Republican members of Congress, including Senator William E. Borah of Idaho, who hoped to be the Republican presidential nominee. Wilson faced criticism for his policy regarding Mexico, which was at the time in the throes of a civil war. The Los Angeles Times predicted on November 28, 1915,

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“The Democratic outlook for the Presidential and Congressional elections of November, 1916, is gloomy beyond question” and named restoring the protective tariff as the top issue to be resolved. Republican Party nominee Charles Evans Hughes also began attacking President Wilson’s handling of foreign affairs, namely the war in Europe, right from the start of the campaign. This infuriated Wilson’s chief confidant, Colonel Edward M. House, who wanted Wilson to take on the press and respond to these attacks, actions Wilson pointedly refused to take. However, as the campaign progressed, House felt the Democratic Party was handling matters well, and in House’s view, Hughes was not a particularly effective campaigner. Still, House felt strongly that winning this election was critical for worldwide democracy. In the 1916 election, women also played a role for the first time. Women had voting rights in twelve states at that point in time. The national conference of the Woman’s Party, held in Colorado Springs from August 10 to 12, 1916, saw many of the membership favor Charles Evans Hughes over Woodrow Wilson. The Woman’s Party felt they had a legitimate chance at influencing the presidential election because the twelve suffrage states represented one-fifth of the electoral votes and one-third of the popular vote. Wilson did not have an easy road to re-election.

Tabulating and reporting on election results was a slow process in the early twentieth century. In particular, this applied to the process for obtaining results from the West coast. In an excerpt in the New York Times from his 1921 book, Woodrow Wilson as I Know Him, Wilson’s private secretary, Joseph P. Tumulty, describes how he received several telephone calls from

248 Neu, 258.
249 Neu, 258.
someone who appeared to have knowledge of the Republican campaign, warning him that, “The Wilson fight will be won in the West.” California proved to be the deciding factor in this close election. The California Republican Party had issues related to corruption and business dealings within the state, which had nothing to do with Hughes running for president. However, after Hughes was defeated, there were a number of complaints put forth, primarily by Harrison Gray Otis, editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, against the efforts put forth by the California Republican Party to support the Hughes presidential campaign. On February 12, 1917, a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Republican State Central Committee took place, and “charges that the Republican State Central Committee and Governor Hiram W. Johnson had not conducted an adequate campaign for and had not been loyal to Charles Evans Hughes as the Republican candidate for President, were considered and discussed.” The main complaint addressed in their 61-page report revolved around the very successful campaign of Governor Johnson for a United States Senate seat. In essence, there was a perception that much more effort went into the Governor’s campaign than in getting the California vote out for Hughes. Johnson won his senate seat by 112,150 votes, and the California electoral vote went to Wilson by approximately 3,500 votes. The conclusion of their report indicated that the committee believed that the issues had nothing to do with Hughes; rather they were due to problems with the Republican Party in California. However, others believed that women played a pivotal role in swinging the western vote to Wilson. Eleven of the twelve states that permitted women to vote at this time

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were Western states, and ten of these states chose Wilson. Women voters preferred peace to war, with Hughes representing war and Wilson peace.

At the end of the 1916 presidential election, Woodrow Wilson defeated former Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes by almost 600,000 popular votes, but the electoral votes were much closer, with Wilson receiving 277 votes to 254 for Hughes. Charles Evans Hughes, the Republican and Progressive candidate, had an impressive resume of his own, having served as governor of New York and as a Supreme Court justice prior to the presidential campaign. Hughes would later serve as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1930 to 1941. Wilson’s re-election made him the first Democratic president to serve for two consecutive terms of office since the 1829-1837 presidency of Andrew Jackson. In his March 6, 1917 inaugural address before an enthusiastic crowd of 40,000 people, Woodrow Wilson noted that America faced attempts to draw it more and more into world affairs, in spite of vigorous attempts to maintain neutrality, and he took this occasion to warn that it might be drawn in even further. Wilson’s campaign slogan, “He kept us out of war” was not destined to remain true for much longer.

Wilson’s Views on Canada

We know little about what Wilson officially or unofficially thought about Canadian efforts during the war. How much awareness did he have that some Americans were heading over the border to join the Canadian military in order to get into the fight? As noted earlier, Wilson frequently avoided putting his opinions in writing, preferring instead to either pass messages along through intermediaries or let verbal discussions suffice. One such occasion

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256 Berg, 416.
occurred in early 1917, captured in a letter from Sir William Wiseman to Sir Cecil Arthur Spring Rice, British Ambassador to the United States during the war years. Wiseman was a British intelligence officer who frequently served as a Wilson intermediary to the British government. He also interacted frequently with Wilson confidant Colonel House. On March 6, 1917, Wiseman wrote to Spring Rice that he and “Beverly” (House) had discussed the possibility of convincing Wilson to provide something in writing regarding American and British relations. Wilson, as was his custom, was once again not inclined to put anything in writing. Instead, Wiseman and House held a discussion with Wilson in which the President discussed his opinions regarding American and British relations while the two men took notes. Once the notes were written up, House, referred to by the Beverly code name, had Wilson review them for accuracy. Item 8 specifically addressed Canada. Wilson, as captured in the Wiseman and House notes, states, “Canada is feeling her strength, particularly from a military point of view, and every effort should be made to encourage good relations between the United States and Canada. All talk of Canada being absorbed into the United States has ceased, and the Canadian people would bitterly resent any such suggestion now.”260 It does not appear that Wilson had any concerns in 1917 about Canadian activities, particularly their military efforts. The President is complimentary about Canada’s actions, and specifically notes the importance of remaining on good terms with the United States’ northern neighbor. News of Americans enlisting in the Canadian military was widely reported in American newspapers. Wilson and his government had to be aware that this was taking place. His clandestine correspondence with the British would have been the ideal place in which to note any concerns, but he expressed none. Instead, he complimented Canadian military efforts.

German Activities in North America

During the early years of the war, Germany and Austria-Hungary conducted a number of clandestine activities in the United States. Some operations targeted the British, and other disruptions targeted the United States, hoping to keep American officials busy at home and out of the war. Evidence emerged in 1915 and 1916 that clearly showed how these activities were taking place. Robert Lansing outlined a number of these subversive activities. Included were “purchasing or forging of American passports for the use of German and Austrian reservists in the United States”, disruptions to arms production and shipment, creating border problems with Canada which would draw in the British, and “intrigues in Latin American countries to cause quarrels between their governments and the Government of the United States.”

In addition, some journalists deemed willing to write dispatches favorable to Germany and its allies received all-expense paid trips to Germany to facilitate their writing. In August 1915, The Washington Post printed a note from Count Johann von Bernstorff, German Ambassador assigned to Washington, D.C. to Captain Franz von Papen in the German Foreign Office requesting that the Office once again subsidize the costs of American journalist Edward Lyall Fox’s visit to Germany at an estimated cost of 5,000 to 6,000 marks. In January 1916, the Los Angeles Times reported the detaining of Captain von Papen in Falmouth on his way back to Germany Correspondence seized from him revealed that he had “made frequent payments to persons charged with the responsibility to blow up munition works and bridges in the United States.” The article went on to discuss a report from Seattle, Washington in which British

261 Lansing, 71.
secret agents theorized, “the explosion of a barge of high explosives in Seattle harbor at 2
o’clock on the morning of May 30, last, was caused by a German agent, to prevent shipment of
the explosive to Russia.” Russia was a member of the original Entente Alliance of 1907,
which included Britain, France, and Russia. It is worth noting that British secret agents appeared
to have been working rather openly in the neutral United States with British Vice-Consul
Agassiz, based in Tacoma, Washington, also playing a role in the investigation. Given the
amount and variety of the activities, it certainly seems that no matter how strong the American
declarations of neutrality were, the consensus was that the United States would likely have to
enter the war at some point in time. There is also a familiar theme in using the United States-
Canada border as a place to stir up trouble for the British. As discussed earlier, the Fenians used
the same strategy in their post-Civil War raids. However, as the Fenian raids failed to impact
American and British relations in the nineteenth century, these later efforts by Germany did not
succeed either.

Britain Benefits from the Neutrality of the United States

In the first year of the war, it was also Britain’s preference that the United States remains
neutral. Reasons ranged from a practical fear that munitions sales to Britain might halt as the
United States redirected the sales to its own military to ramp up for war to a more emotion-
driven feeling that the United States should stay out of European affairs. A debate in the U.K.
House of Commons on February 18, 1915 complained about direct contracts issued by the War
Office to both Canada and the United States to produce clothing for the British army. Most of

265 See further discussion of the Fenians in chapter two, 19-23.
the debate revolved around what appeared to some members to be the exclusion of Scottish merchants who were not receiving any military clothing orders. In addition, there were concerns expressed that the War Office and its agent, Glanfield and Sons, were sub-contracting to the United States and Canada in addition to the direct contracts. House of Commons Member Baker noted that the prices paid for Canadian and American clothing were higher due to higher labor and materials costs. He assured the members that contractors faced close monitoring, with no sub-contracting allowed.

The United States Ambassador to Germany also assisted Britain with its prisoners of war. At issue was the treatment of British prisoners of war by the Germans in comparison to the treatment of German prisoners in Britain. In a February 24, 1915 debate, Mr. Harry Lawson requested that the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs send each neutral country a comparative statement demonstrating the differences in treatment of the prisoners by Britain and Germany.268 Information on the treatment of German prisoners of war went to the American Embassy in December 1914 and early February 1915 for transmission to the German government. In January 1915 the American Ambassador received a request from Britain to obtain answers from the German government to a series of questions regarding the treatment of British prisoners. The treatment of officers and medical personnel held prisoner were two key areas of concern. During the April 14, 1915 session of the House of Commons, Lord Robert Cecil requested an update from the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs regarding information gathered by the American Ambassador on British doctors held as prisoner.269 The Ambassador was able to obtain official reports on thirty-five doctors and unofficial information

on another fifteen. In early May 1915, negotiations continued through the American Embassies in London and Berlin for the release of the medical personnel.\textsuperscript{270} Undoubtedly, the British valued this information and the role the United States played as a neutral in gathering it. With most of Europe either at war or worried about maintaining neutrality, the United States was the only government able to provide this behind the scenes assistance to Britain.

**Canada Reacts to American Neutrality**

Canada had mixed reactions to the American position on neutrality. The issue was a topic for debate in the Canadian Parliament. In a January 31, 1916 House of Commons debate, the members were determined that Canada should do its part in the war. One member noted that, “The country to the south of us has so far not taken part in the war. I am not here to reflect at all upon the United States, but my opinion is that the issue before the different countries engaged in this war is just as vital to the interests of our friends to the south as it is to us…”\textsuperscript{271} The United States frequently received criticism for its commitment to capitalism over morals and ethics. The Canadian House member went on to note, “whatever this war may be costing this country in men and money, it will be a source of gratification to us afterwards, if justice prevails, that we have done our share as a nation instead of merely making money out of this struggle as the United States has.”\textsuperscript{272} The member went on to complain that the United States, as a neutral nation, did not make any protest at all at the violation of the neutrality of Belgium. He then continued on to express derision for the frequent reports of new millionaires appearing regularly in American newspapers. From this Canadian’s perspective, the only interest of the United States was to make

as much money as possible from the war. He perceived the United States as caught up in the throes of materialism and profit making, and nothing else. This is a harsh view from one individual Canadian legislator. However, it contains some elements of truth, while unfairly portraying all Americans in the same manner. The men volunteering with the Canadian Expeditionary Force did not do so to earn great sums of money. They did so in response to a call from Britain to help it preserve the democracy both the United States and Canada enjoyed.

Canadian members of Parliament also thought that the reluctance of the United States to get involved in European affairs stemmed back to the founding of the nation. There was truth to this assertion. In a debate at the House of Commons on April 19, 1917, approximately two weeks after the United States entered the war, the discussion focused on the warning issued by the founders of the United States to stay far away from European issues. The American founders, in the view of Canadians, wanted more than a just a new nation. Canadians perceived the Founding Fathers as dreamers who sought to establish a new civilization that would live in peace with everyone, and so would serve as an example for the rest of the world. Members of the Canadian Parliament also thought that the high ideals on which the United States originated did not consider future change such as “the discoveries of science, the facilities of locomotion and communication which have brought the nations of the earth very close to one another.”

The speaker then went on to express appreciation for the difficult task President Wilson had in convincing the American people to stand united behind the declaration of war. There were respectful words for Woodrow Wilson’s prudent course of action and strength of character, but not a sense of relief that the United States had entered the war. Rather, the reaction was more as though the United States had finally come to its senses by joining the fight to save democracy.

American Actions and Reactions to the War in Europe

Americans sprang into action with relief efforts soon after the war began. However, these relief efforts had to respect the neutrality of the United States. On September 11, 1914, the New York Times reported that an American Red Cross relief ship had been stuck in port for several days because a number of the original crew assigned to the ship were German, which drew serious objections from Britain and France.274 As reported, the captain selected a new crew of neutrals, consisting of American citizens only from some 500 applications submitted to the office of the United States Shipping Commissioner. Even though it was little more than a month since the war began, Europeans were eagerly awaiting the arrival of the American Red Cross units. The Assistant Secretary of War, Henry Breckinridge, communicated from Paris to Mabel Boardman, Chair of the National Red Cross Committee, by cablegram as follows, “There is a great call here for Red Cross work by America. Situation is one that demands unprecedented generosity. Hundreds of doctors and equal proportion of nurses and supplies must be sent to Europe, if American aid is to be anything more than nominal.”275 This type of highly publicized event so early in the war effort undoubtedly added to the desire by many to participate in the conflict. The Red Cross continued to be an important avenue for the duration of the war for American citizens, mostly women who could not join the military, to contribute to the war effort. However, a number of women went on to play pivotal roles as military nurses. Some American women living in Canada volunteered to serve in the Canadian Army Medical Corps as well.276

Restrictions on the Actions of American Citizens

276 See Chapter 5 for a discussion of American women serving as nursing sisters with the Canadian Army Medical Corps.
The United States Neutrality Proclamation pointed to the provisions of an act, commonly referred to as the Penal Code of the United States, issued on March 4, 1909. The code prohibited several acts within the territory and jurisdiction of the United States and imposed severe penalties for those breaking the code. The types of activities forbidden by the code included:277

- Accepting and exercising a commission to serve either of the said belligerents by land or by sea against the other belligerents.

- Enlisting or entering into the service of either said belligerent as a soldier, or as a marine, or seaman.

- Hiring or retaining another person to enlist or enter himself in the service of the said belligerents as a soldier, or as a marine or seaman.

- Hiring another person to go beyond the limits or jurisdictions of the United States with the intent of enlistment as previously mentioned.

- Retaining another person to go beyond the limits of the United States with the intent of enlistment as previously mentioned.

Other provisions speak to acts of enlistment, hiring, or retaining which could not be committed on American soil.

While there was some evidence of recruitment activity in the United States, the majority of recruitment activity took place on Canadian soil in larger cities including Calgary, Victoria, Toronto, Vancouver, Halifax, Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Regina among others. A significant number of enlistments, particularly in the early months of the war, also took place at the training camp at Valcartier, near Quebec City. American citizens seeking to enlist in the CEF had to cross into Canada to enlist, relatively easy to do in 1914. In the present day, it is only because of the events of September 11, 2001 that American citizens crossing to Canada now need to have a

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valid passport or enhanced driver’s license. In 1914, crossing the border from the United States to Canada did not require a passport and was common for work and family purposes, particularly along the northern border areas. Estimates state that approximately 36,000 American-born men enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. These enlistments occurred over a period of almost four years and stretched out across Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It is unlikely that these numbers drew much scrutiny by American officials. In fact, at this time, American citizens frequently traveled abroad without a passport. As a rule, passports were not required until legislation passed requiring them on June 21, 1941, just over five months before the United States entered the Second World War. There were a few exceptions when passports were required, including during the early years of the Civil War from August 19, 1861 to March 17, 1862 and from May 22, 1918 until the formal termination of the First World War through treaties in 1921.278 On December 15, 1915, President Wilson issued Executive Order 2285 – Requiring American Citizens Traveling Abroad to Procure Passports. The order required that “All persons leaving the United States for foreign countries should be provided with passports of the Government of which they are citizens.”279 Of note, Wilson’s Order indicated that travelers should use passports, not that passports were required. The offices of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury had responsibility for passport inspections, and the order required the stamping of all passports to show the individual’s locations of travel. However, these requirements did not apply to crossing the border from the United States to Canada. The border between the two countries remained open for travel back and forth relatively unchecked.

The Expatriation Act of 1907 spelled out scenarios in which an American voluntarily gave up his or her American citizenship. The two primary situations leading to loss of citizenship were naturalization in a foreign state and the taking of an oath of allegiance to a foreign state. The Attestation Paper completed by volunteers for the CEF contained an oath of allegiance to Britain’s King George the Fifth, discussed in detail further on in this chapter. Instructions outlined in the act for diplomatic and consular offices indicate that they were responsible for formally reporting any instances of Americans securing naturalization in another country or those taking an oath of allegiance to a foreign state. However, it is unlikely that the consular offices in Canada had specific knowledge of all of the Americans crossing the border to enlist, particularly since there were thousands of volunteers enlisting all across Canada from one coast to the other. Defining expatriation, the Circular of March 27, 1899 stated that, “there being no legislative definition of what constitutes expatriation, it is a fact to be determined by the circumstances of each case that arises.”280 This lack of a clear characterization of expatriation provided wide latitude and appeared to give the benefit of the doubt to the individual. According to the circular, a native born American could reside abroad for a variety of reasons such as health, education, business, or just because he or she wished to with no defined period of time. For legal expatriation, a native-born citizen must formally declare his or her intention not to return to the United States. Most of the volunteers with the CEF intended to return home to the United States after their service, and most of those who survived did so.

Paragraph 144 of the March 2, 1907 Expatriation Act addresses naturalized American citizens. It states, “When any naturalized citizen shall have resided two years in the foreign State from which he came, or for five years in any other foreign State, it shall be presumed that he has

ceased to be an American citizen, and his place of general abode shall be deemed his place of
residence during the said years.”281 One allowable exception was if the person in question
provided satisfactory evidence that he did not intend to relinquish his American citizenship, and
furnished this evidence to a United States diplomatic or consular officer. Examples of
acceptable evidence included residing abroad to conduct trade and commerce for the United
States, for temporary health and educational reasons, and for situations beyond the individual’s
control which are preventing return to the United States.

Section two of the Expatriation Act also clearly states that American citizens cannot
expatriate themselves when the United States is at war. A June 6, 1915 article by The
Washington Post entitled, “Lose Their Citizenship: Americans Fighting in Europe Sever Their
Relationship to United States Government” addressed this issue.282 According to the article, the
Americans fighting not only with the Canadians but also with the British and French had already
expatriated themselves and could possibly face serious consequences when they attempted to
return home. After more than a year at war, the article notes that no determination exists as to
consequences for enlisting while the United States was still a neutral. The article concludes that
while the provisions of the act have drawn mixed opinions to date as to their meaning,
expatriation probably would not exist if the United States entered the war. Of note, the article
only mentions service with Canada, Britain, and France. There is no mention of service with
Germany. The tone of the piece appears slanted toward presenting the plight of Americans
serving with the Canadians, British and French as more of a dilemma to be resolved than a
serious legal issue.

281 “Compilation of Certain Departmental Circulars Relating to Citizenship, Registration of American Citizens,
American Citizens and Neutrality

While high levels of political and diplomatic drama played out, average Americans were horrified at what they read in the newspapers concerning events in the war. A number of them felt compelled to take action. In a May 12, 1915 letter to his parents from Sudbury, England where he was in training with the CEF, one such American citizen, Edwin Abbey, noted, “It was good to hear from you and your feelings about the *Lusitania*. The dishonor to the flag is great, but it seems to me more a dishonor to manhood and humanity.”

Abbey, a CEF lieutenant, felt compelled to join the fighting to defend the larger issue of preserving democracy almost as soon Britain entered the war. Events such as the sinking of the *Lusitania* only reinforced his and other soldiers’ convictions. However, it appeared as though the war continued to take even uglier turns. Only a couple of weeks earlier, on April 22, 1915, Germany had launched a first trial use of lethal gas on the battlefield, killing two thousand Canadian soldiers in the process.

Newspapers speculated about what the next action would entail for the United States. Just two days after the sinking of the ocean liner, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported that while the nation was stunned, the White House was making an evident effort “to suppress sensationalism and popular agitation and to discourage the formation of hasty judgements.”

The *Washington Post* reported that former Representative Richard Bartholdt, after attending the annual meeting of the American Peace Society, described the women and children on board the *Lusitania* as taking the same chances as any other soldier during war, particularly because of the German warning.

Most of the early reports called on Americans to have confidence in the course of action

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283 Abbey, 3. For further information on Lt. Edwin A. Abbey, see chapter four, 14-18.
President Wilson elected to maintain neutrality. Not all Americans agreed. Some felt they needed to support Britain and France. For a number of them, enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force was an expedient way to accomplish this and join the fight.

Late in 1915, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported that John E. Ott, a student at the University of Chicago at Urbana-Champlain and a member of the University’s cadet corps, received a confidential solicitation letter from Major F.C. Greenshields, chief of recruitment for the Sixth Brigade, Second Division of the Canadian Forces located at Windsor, Ontario.287 The article indicates that Mr. Ott did not intend to enlist with the Canadians. In it, Ott raised issues about the legality of the recruitment offer in terms of diplomatic relations between the United States and Canada as well as the use of the American mail system to deliver such an offer. The letter from Major Greenshields indicates that the Canadians were anxious to form a Canadian regiment composed entirely of American-born members. He indicated that all of the American-born officers had already received appointments. Mr. Ott received a solicitation intended to fill one of the many subaltern openings in the regiment. His offer promised a second lieutenant’s commission for joining. Major Greenshields indicated that the correspondence was highly confidential, which shows that the Canadians knew full well that they were likely violating American neutrality by sending such clear-cut recruitment letters to members of an American university-based cadet corps. The conclusion of the article speculates that an inquiry was likely to take place to help discover the extent of the letter campaign. No further evidence could be located to confirm if an official investigation took place or not. If one did take place, likely it remained unofficial, quiet, and stayed out of the press.

From a practical standpoint, it was not possible to track down, repatriate, and then prosecute the thousands who had enlisted in the Canadian military. The news stories about volunteers going to Canada were also positive. No one in the United States was actively telling would-be volunteers to stay home. If anything, many of the news stories subtly promoted the war, encouraging American involvement. The Canadians had no obligation or reason to either refuse or send these volunteers home. In fact, they soon welcomed them as much-needed replacements so they could keep up with Britain’s demands for troops. American citizens were free to cross the border to Canada and enlist in the CEF as Americans and Canadians regularly crossed each other’s borders and had done so since colonial days. The real question was what might happen when these soldiers returned to the United States after completion of their service.

**The Frank Caswell Case – Precedent Setting**

One court case in particular caught the attention of some Americans living in Toronto. The *New York Times* and the *Detroit Free Press* both reported on January 15, 1916 about an arrest warrant the United States Department of Labor issued for Frank Caswell following his discharge from the CEF and subsequent attempt to return to the United States.288 Originally, from Harrison, Maine, Caswell lived in Detroit for a number of years and then in Preston, Ontario for two years before his enlistment in the CEF in September 1914. An older volunteer at thirty-eight years old, he suffered from several health issues and did not do well with the rigors of military life. He was unable to complete his training at Salisbury Plain, England, subsequently receiving a discharge back to Canada. Caswell’s service record gives the reason for his discharge as “not likely to be an efficient soldier,” with his medical report indicating that he suffered from

“pain and stiffness in the joints especially the knees - chronic rheumatism.” A woodworker by trade, he was attempting to return for a job opportunity with the Detroit Cabinet Company after his discharge.

However, three immigration inspectors at Port Huron, Michigan did not allow him to enter the United States, ruling that Caswell was no longer an American citizen, having expatriated himself because of his service with the CEF. The technical charge against him involved a violation of the contract labor law and became a test case designed to “fix definitely the status of hundreds of Americans returning from army service abroad.”

Caswell had to remain in Canada. He quickly appealed the decision to refuse his entry, and his case went to the Commissioner General of Immigration on August 27, 1915 for a decision. Commissioner John H. Clark of the United States Department of Labor, Immigration Services in Montreal had forwarded the case, noting his belief that the issue of expatriation had previously been resolved in the Esther Berryman case. This case involved an American-born couple residing in Canada who married there in 1912. Samuel J. Berryman joined the CEF, and because of that, immigration inspectors at Montreal stopped his wife Ethel on May 15, 1915 when she attempted to return to the United States. She, too, appealed her case, and it went to Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory for a decision.

Under the Expatriation Act of March 2, 1907, Chapter 2534, section 3, a woman now assumed the nationality of her husband at marriage. This act represented a major departure from previous practice. As cited by the Attorney General, under old English common law, marriage

289 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1574-76, item no. 92733; digitized service file B1574-S076 (http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/isme?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B1574-S076)
did not affect a woman’s nationality, an interpretation the United States followed until passage of the 1907 act.\textsuperscript{292} In this case, the immigration inspectors assumed, based on the Expatriation Act provisions, that she was now a Canadian citizen by virtue of her husband’s enlistment in the CEF. Samuel Berryman asserted that a recruiting sergeant told him that the oath he took to the British monarch was only good for the duration of the war and did not make him either a Canadian or a British citizen. In fact, this was true. Military service alone did not confer citizenship. Likely, many of the volunteers did not completely understand the other side of this equation, namely, the question of expatriation of their American citizenship when they enlisted in the CEF. The immigration officials who stopped Mrs. Berryman clearly knew the provisions of the 1907 Act and elected to interpret it in the strictest sense. As determined by these immigration officials, her husband had joined the CEF, and in doing so, had expatriated himself. If Mr. Berryman was now an alien, then according to the 1907 Act, his wife was as well.

The Expatriation Act of 1907 allowed a woman to resume her American citizenship once the marriage ended by either registering as such at an American consul or continuing to reside in the United States. This provided a precedent later used for American men serving with the CEF to resume their American citizenship once their service ended. While the two situations appear quite different, in fact, they are not. The United States government used the provision with wide latitude to avoid any punitive actions for those serving in the CEF and for any family members with them in Canada when they enlisted. Registering at an American consul involved producing a certified copy of one’s American birth certificate. The consul then issued a letter verifying the birth certificate and declaring the holder an American citizen. Use of this method appeared in the case of Joseph Shuter Smith, an American who served in both the CEF and the British

Expeditionary Force (BEF), when he wished to resign his BEF commission and transfer to the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) once the United States had entered the war. The letter and a copy of his birth certificate are part of his BEF service file. His transfer request received approval. Others leaving the CEF simply returned home to live in the United States with no extra paperwork. These actions demonstrate close cooperation between Britain, Canada, and the United States. Smith’s transfer approval took place in 1917 because a precedent already existed as established by the Berryman and Caswell cases in 1915.

On January 21, 1915, Attorney General Gregory ruled that Mrs. Berryman was an American citizen, and so she could enter the United States. Regarding the Frank Caswell case, on October 9, 1915, the Commissioner General of Immigration instructed John Clark at the Immigration Service in Montreal to reconsider Caswell’s appeal and to stop questioning the American citizenship of men returning from service in the CEF. The Commissioner General noted, “Instructions should be issued by you to the end that hereafter the boards will not question the American citizenship of an applicant because he took an oath of allegiance and enlisted in the Canadian forces.” On October 11, 1915, Clark instructed his staff to do so. These instructions are important because they clearly show that the United States quietly supported the war effort and did not want to punish its own citizens who enlisted in the CEF or BEF. The Berryman case and the Caswell case set important precedents that later made it a simple matter for other American men who served with the CEF to reclaim their American citizenship. Having a

293 See chapter 4 for further information on Joseph Shuter Smith.
method, no matter how simple, satisfied the American government’s need to follow its own laws, while affording it maximum flexibility.

Looking the Other Way – Forming an American Legion in the CEF

Planning was taking place by Americans resident in Canada for an American Legion within the CEF. These efforts received approval from Sir Sam Hughes, Minister of Militia, and the American Club in Toronto led the effort. By 1916, Americans had been actively enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force for some time. Chapter 2 discussed the CEF enlistment of Donald McRae, son of Lieutenant Colonel J.M. McRae, a United States War Department assignee. The Washington Post continued to follow the exploits of the younger McRae, reporting on his military life in Toronto on February 6, 1916. As described in letters to his father, the twenty three year old Donald McRae “was accepted first as a sergeant, but was rapidly promoted to be lieutenant and then captain.” The article notes in one section that there were 1,200 former American citizens comprising the Ninety- Seventh Overseas American Legion Battalion, and in another section the article refers to them as former residents of the United States, which implies something different and less serious than giving up one’s citizenship. The article concludes with a discussion of the neutrality issue. It notes, “there has been much discussion since the war began as to the liability to prosecution which citizens of this country who enlist in foreign service rest under” and concludes by stating, “So far, however, no steps have been taken to test the provisions of the act.” Further complicating matters, McRae was the son of an American army officer who was currently serving in the War Department. The senior McRae

297 For further information on the origination of the American Legion, see chapter two, 14-16. The Legion was eventually comprised of 5 battalions, the 97th, 211th, 212th, 218th and the 237th.
was giving interviews to *The Washington Post* about his son’s activities with the Canadian military, and no one else in Washington or the United States Army appeared very concerned. One might surmise that the senior McRae would have quickly received word from his own superiors if there were apprehensions about his son’s activities, as well as his own actions, particularly giving newspaper interviews about his son’s service with the CEF.

Less than a week later, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported on February 11, 1916 about the rush of Americans to Canadian recruitment offices. The article discussed the flight of Americans to Canada during the Civil War to avoid service. It also noted that the Canadians were prouder of the fact that “a good many Canadians moved south and enlisted with the Union army, despite the fact that the sympathy of the mother country leaned strongly toward the south.”300 The United States had done much to repay that debt through the CEF enlistments of American citizens, but the reporter, Mark S. Watson, intentionally declined to discuss any actual numbers due to United States neutrality. Watson noted that many of the recruits claimed to be British so the Canadians would accept them, and others, namely American residents of the Prairie Provinces, decided on temporarily switching allegiances so they could enlist with the Canadians. Significantly, most viewed this as a short-term change and easily reversed. Watson also reported on the American Legion that was under formation in Canada. He indicated that the Canadians who disagreed with the Washington policy of neutrality favorably received the new unit. Watson interviewed a former army chaplain from the Spanish American War now living in Canada, C. Seymour Bullock, who told him to “tell the American pacifists when you go back that we are not violating neutrality laws by recruiting Americans south of the Canadian border.

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We don’t have to. They’re coming across voluntarily as fast as we can train them.”

A number of the Americans long resident in Canada expressed regret that the United States did not enter the war immediately because they felt that would have put a quick end to it. Likely, such thoughts partially trace back to the Spanish American War, a war that lasted just a few months, and resonated at the time as a victory for the United States. Many of the Americans filling officer’s slots in the American Legion Battalion had experience in the Spanish American War, the Philippine-American War, and the border conflicts with Mexico. These localized wars gave the Americans a strong sense of their fighting abilities, whether completely accurate or not. In addition, many men with no fighting experience were anxious for the opportunity to gain some. Watson’s article concluded with high praise for Canada, noting that it was not drifting away from Britain at all, as some had thought. In addressing the war, he noted, “Canada does not feel that this is England’s fight, but that it is the empire’s fight and Canada’s fight.”

As a follow-up on progress with the formation of the Legion, the New York Times reported on May 16, 1916 that the “First of American Legion Off for Flanders” with the subheading, “William H. Taft, Justice Holmes, and Various Members of Congress Approve Enlistment of United States Citizens in Canada.” By this point, the American Legion Ninety-seventh Battalion had grown from an initial group of 1,200 men to almost 5,000 men.

The Attestation Paper completed and signed by those enlisting in the CEF contained the following declaration:

I (name of enlistee) do solemnly declare that the above are answers made by me to the above questions and that they are true, and that I am willing to fulfill the engagements by

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me now made, and I hereby engage and agree to serve in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary force, and to be attached to any arm of the service therein, for the term of one year, or during the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany should that war last longer than one year, and for six months after the termination of that war provided His Majesty should so long require my services, or until legally discharged.

After signing the Declaration, the enlistee then took an oath of allegiance:

I (name of enlistee) do make Oath, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will as in duty bound honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity, against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of all the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

Both the Declaration and the Oath, taken directly from the Attestation Form, appeared in the New York Times article cited above. Their intent was very clear and would certainly appear to be in violation of the United States neutrality laws and the Expatriation Act of 1907 discussed earlier. The article also states that the American Legion was composed of soldiers from forty-five states and territories of the United States. The article presented figures derived from a review of the records of the first 875 enlistees in the American Legion. They show the largest numbers from New York (157), Michigan (140), Illinois (90), Massachusetts (58), Pennsylvania (51), and Ohio (50). These are all states one would expect to find as they are close to the Canadian border. However, although their numbers were small, most southern states as far as Texas and Louisiana appear. In addition, interior states such as Oklahoma show up as well.

Completion of a majority of the Attestation Papers occurred in Canada, so it is not likely that many of the volunteers fully understood before they left the United States about the required oath of allegiance to King George the Fifth. It is also important to note that education levels and literacy skills were lower at that time, and some of the volunteers may not have thoroughly comprehended the legal-like language used in the fine print of the Attestation form. Many most likely completed the paperwork without carefully considering the implications of the oath, or
they may have thought it was just a formality necessary to enlist. The declaration also specifies a
definitive term of service of one year or the duration of the war plus six months postwar, so most
volunteers viewed this as a temporary situation anyway. In addition, as noted earlier, recruiters
presented the oath as a temporary situation as well.

As discussed earlier, some Americans felt the need to help the Canadians due to their
participation in the American Civil War. The New York Times article quotes the founder of the
American Legion, Lieutenant Colonel C. Seymour Bullock. He says this was in response to “the
fact that at the time of the Civil War 48,000 Canadians went over the border to fight in the
Northern armies, and that 18,000 of them were killed in the South,” while to date some 16,000
American citizens were fighting in various Canadian units formed early in the war.304 Bullock
was also a close friend of Sir Sam Hughes, the Minister of Militia for Canada. Bullock had
sought and received permission from his friend Hughes to form the American Legion. The article
specifically notes that recruitment for the unit was not to take place on American soil, for
obvious reasons. All it took was a small article in Canadian newspapers announcing the
formation of the unit. A few newspapers near the American and Canadian border ran the article
too, and there was a huge response, with far more volunteers than originally anticipated. This
result indicates that people had already made up their minds to volunteer, and they just needed an
organized opportunity to present itself. An “American Legion” likely seemed ideal to many. An
initial battalion formed quickly, with numbers soon reaching full brigade strength. A fifth
battalion scheduled for formation in Halifax, aimed at attracting Americans living in both the

Conflicting opinions formed in the United States regarding the impact on American citizenship of service in the CEF’s American Legion. A *New York Times* reporter explored this issue when doing fieldwork and interviews in Toronto. The men enlisting also realized that this could be an issue. Even government officials had different opinions. In Vancouver, the American Consul warned Americans not to join the American Legion because it would cost them their citizenship. The Consul in Vancouver made it very clear that he opposed the entire idea of an American Legion. Conversely, the American Consul in Winnipeg had no issues with American citizens joining the American Legion of the CEF. Each Consul appeared able to make his own interpretation, with no central directive from Washington, D.C. or a common set of instructions to follow. Several prominent American citizens, including former President William Howard Taft, Associate Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Harvard President Emeritus Charles W. Eliot, as well as several United States senators and members of congress sent letters recommending a number of the men for service in the CEF.

Officials in Washington, D.C. ultimately controlled the role played by the American Legion’s Ninety-seventh Overseas Battalion, although not officially. Interestingly, there were no strong concerns expressed regarding Americans joining the unit. This may reflect the fact that its initial advertising presented it as being comprised of American expatriates living in Canada, not citizens crossing the border as turned out to be the case with many of the recruits. Instead, objections from Washington centered on referring to the unit as the “American Legion.” The Canadian government, feeling obliged to maintain positive relations with the United States had the name suppressed in official designations. Clearly, the formation of such a unit and publicly advertising it as an American group, presented a serious threat to American neutrality. To allow the group to use this name might give the impression of granting tacit approval to American
involvement in the war, and risk its neutrality. Battalion reports from January 10, 1917 indicate that the Ninety-seventh Overseas Battalion transferred from Exhibition Camp, Toronto to Quebec on June 4-5, 1916, remained there until June 8, 1916, and then transferred to Aldershot, Nova Scotia where they remained until September 18, 1916.\textsuperscript{305} The battalion remained at Aldershot all summer while Canada and the United States held discussions regarding the name, American Legion. During the long and uncertain wait, a number of its officers found other units to join, and many of the enlisted men deserted. Eventually, with the designation American Legion omitted from their official name, the battalion moved to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where they shipped out and arrived in Liverpool, England on September 25, 1916. The battalion report stated, “Finally, on September 18\textsuperscript{th}, almost a year after its authorization, the 97\textsuperscript{th} almost one thousand strong, with the name American Legion omitted by request, sailed from Canada.”\textsuperscript{306} On November 16, 1916, the unit’s commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Wade S. Jolly replied to a letter from the Canadian War Records office in London stating that “the 97\textsuperscript{th} battalion is not affiliated with any Canadian Militia Unit, or British Unit, but as previously stated was, on the 1\textsuperscript{st} instant absorbed by the R.C.R. & P.P.L.C.I.”\textsuperscript{307}

It is not clear from the battalion reports exactly who in Washington, or from what level of the government the objections were received. We know that the American Consul in Vancouver expressed strong concerns about the formation of the Legion and its potential impact on American citizenship. Did the Consul in Vancouver express his concerns to his superiors in Washington? Alternatively, did the wide newspaper coverage spark concern, perhaps even as far

\textsuperscript{305} Library and Archives Canada. RG 9 Series III-D-1, vol. 4699, Folder 67, file 19, 97\textsuperscript{th} battalion historical records. October 2015.
\textsuperscript{306} Library and Archives Canada. RG 9 Series III-D-1, vol. 4699, Folder 67, file 19, 97th battalion historical records. October 2015.
\textsuperscript{307} Library and Archives Canada. RG 9 Series III-D-1, vol. 4699, Folder 67, file 19, 97th battalion historical records. October 2015.
as the White House? The matter was likely resolved quietly through diplomatic channels. However, those involved in the formation of the unit, including founder Lieutenant-Colonel C. Seymour Bullock, continued to refer to the five battalions as the American Legion, although unofficially. A photograph in the battalion file from the *Canadian Daily Record* dated February 22, 1919 shows Bullock presenting the flag of the American Legion, CEF to Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace. American women living in Winnipeg had provided the flag as a gift. This is another action demonstrating the continuing close ties between Britain, the United States, and Canada in the early twentieth century. Americans continued to cross the border to Canada to volunteer for the Canadian Expeditionary Force, whether there was a unit designated as an American Legion or not.

**Conclusions**

As this chapter demonstrates, after the outbreak of war in 1914, the United States undertook significant efforts to maintain neutrality for as long as it could. However, these efforts did not stop a number of individual Americans from crossing the border to Canada to enlist in the CEF. These one at a time enlistments raised no alarm within the American government, however, it did quietly work with the Canadian government to ensure that no American-named units formed by American expatriates living there would make it across the ocean intact. Many of the men volunteering with the CEF worried that American neutrality might cause them to miss their opportunity to get to the war. As discussed in the chapter, anti-German sentiment also grew in the United States as the war progressed, motivating others to join the Canadian forces in a fight to preserve democracy.

As discussed, Americans also began to work on relief efforts, within the confines of American neutrality, soon after the war began. In addition to men volunteering with the CEF,
some American-born women were volunteering for the Canadian Army Medical Corps as nursing sister. The next two chapters examine these American CEF volunteers, exploring some of their individual stories as a means to understanding who they were and why they volunteered.
Chapter Four:

Adventurers, Patriots, and Loyal British Subjects: American Citizen Enlistees in the Canadian Expeditionary Force

“It is just this ability to assimilate individual instruction that has made the Canadian superior to the native-born Briton. He is better educated, as a rule, has lived a freer and more varied life and, as a result, possesses that initiative and individual ingenuity which are so often necessary at the critical stages of a fight. We have every reason to expect that the American soldier, for these same reasons, will prove to be at least the equal of the Canadian – the finest type of fighting man yet developed by this war.” – Herbert Wes McBride, Canadian Expeditionary Force

The United States was still a relatively young nation in 1914, with country of origin continuing to be an important factor for most Americans. Many families and individuals found nothing conflicting about feeling fierce loyalty to the United States, while also maintaining close ties with their ancestral homelands. In particular, the imprint of the British Empire continued to resonate throughout North America. Although independent, those in control of culture, religion, finance, and government in the United States of the early twentieth century were primarily the descendants of earlier British settlers. Americans often spoke in terms of the “New World” and the “Old World” when referring to the United States and Europe. It is the point that Herbert Wes McBride was making in his statement above. Americans such as McBride believed they embodied, to their way of thinking, the best of both worlds, and were superior because of it.

As war broke out in Europe in August 1914, many in the United States believed it their responsibility to aid the British Empire. The American men examined here willingly risked their citizenship and their lives for the empire by joining the Canadian military, even though the United States had declared neutrality. In the end, their citizenship remained protected by the United States, while Canada and Britain gratefully accepted their service. The chapter begins with an examination of statistics to gain an understanding of the overall composition of the

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enlistees. Following that are case studies of several individuals who served with the CEF, examining the motivations of these American enlisted men and junior officers who volunteered. These motivations varied with many expressing a strong desire to defend democracy and the British Empire. Others saw military service as a societal expectation for young men to advance to adulthood, so many American men wished to get to Europe before it ended. On a very practical level, service in the CEF provided a salary and a support allowance for families. In addition, as is the case in war, some volunteers sought adventure and saw the war as a means to escape their small village or a dead-end job.

A Demographic Analysis of American-born CEF Enlistees

Inquiries about American-born men serving in the Canadian Expeditionary Force drew interest after the war. In a June 7, 1933 letter from Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid, he notes, “…records show that 35,599 men who joined the C.E.F. were born in the United States of America; but there is nothing to indicate whether a man had recently entered Canada to volunteer, or whether he had been in Canada from infancy.”309 Colonel Duguid went on to note that the CEF Attestation form did not ask any citizenship questions. Instead, it only asked enlistees for their place of birth. It appears that the enlistee’s citizenship was not a critical matter to the Canadian government. Based on the lack of information on the forms, Duguid goes on to state, “The number of citizens of the United States of America who joined the C.E.F. cannot therefore be computed.”310 In reviewing Attestation forms, one can assume that those listing next of kin with addresses in the United States, particularly parents or a spouse, did likely travel from the United States to Canada to volunteer. In other cases, the next of kin and the enlistees indicate

309 Library and Archives Canada, RG24, Vol. 1753, Page 1, File DHS 7-25. Letter dated June 7, 1933 from Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid to Dr. A.G. Doughty, C.M.G., Deputy Minister, Department of Public Archives, Ottawa, ON.
310 Library and Archives Canada, RG24, Vol. 1753, Page 1, File DHS 7-25. Letter dated June 7, 1933 from Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid to Dr. A.G. Doughty, C.M.G., Deputy Minister, Department of Public Archives, Ottawa, ON.
Canadian addresses, so one can surmise that the family had relocated to Canada at some prior point in time. Those drafted most likely fell under this latter category. Soon after the United States entered the war, President Woodrow Wilson signed a bill on May 8, 1917 “permitting recruiting, within the U.S.A. for the Canadian and British forces, of men of allied nationalities other than citizens of the United States.” Now the United States needed to undertake its own recruitment efforts. The Canadians and British were both endeavoring to enlist as many men as possible to fill their depleted ranks on the Western Front. Even with this clear requirement to stay away from recruiting American citizens, CEF records still contained men with American birthplaces who volunteered after the United States entered the war. Those who voluntarily joined at this point traveled directly from the United States and were not Canadian residents. Canada initiated its own conscription with the Military Service Act of 1917 and was already drafting all residents, regardless of place of birth. The analysis cited below reviews the split between volunteers and draftees, with volunteers by far the larger part of the group. Volunteers made up the overwhelming majority of all CEF enlistees during the course of the war, regardless of birthplace.

An analysis of 1,000 individual Attestation forms for American-born enlistees in the Canadian Expeditionary Force demonstrates a wide range of ages, occupations, urban and rural backgrounds, as well as a variety of home states. Of the American-born soldiers examined,
there were only twelve enlistees in the 15-17 age groups, technically underage volunteers, while overall enlistment ages broke down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teens (15-19)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20s</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30s</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40s</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50s</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men aged 20 – 24 accounted for slightly over 46% of the group analyzed. Not surprisingly, 85% of the sample listed their marital status as single, while 14% were married and 1% declared as widowers. Most men had no prior military service, with 74% responding in the negative to this question, and the majority of the enlistees were volunteers (781 or 78%). Of the remaining 219 draftees, they were probably already long-term Canadian residents. The birthplace of the soldiers examined here represented 47 different states and the Danish West Indies, which eventually became the Virgin Islands of the United States. As expected, the highest numbers of enlistees were born in eight states near the United States-Canadian border, breaking down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>508 or 51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Still, enlistees indicated diverse states including Louisiana, Georgia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Florida as their place of birth. Two volunteers were born in the Danish West Indies,
which the United States purchased in 1917. The enlistees were born in a large variety of villages, towns and cities, both large and small. Of the 1,000 records studied, the top six large to medium-large cities for birthplace were Chicago (29), Boston (18), Detroit (16), Buffalo (15), New York City (14), and Portland (10). Many were born in other larger cities, including Cleveland, Kansas City, New Orleans, Omaha, Philadelphia, Seattle, and San Francisco. Still, larger cities only account for about 20% of the CEF enlistees analyzed. Many more were born in small cities, towns, and farming communities like Argyle, Minnesota, Woodhawk, Ohio, Biddeford, Maine, Floris, Iowa, Charlotte, Vermont, Chinook, Montana, and Eugene, Oregon.

The sample analyzed demonstrates great variety in background and experience among the enlistees. Two of the volunteers listed hotels in Victoria, British Columbia as their place of residence. Felix Rutkowski, a laborer from North Bergen, New Jersey, who volunteered on September 4, 1916, listed the King Edward Hotel as his Canadian address. He listed next of kin living in Jersey City, New Jersey, so he probably made his way from the United States to volunteer. Fred Rutledge, who listed his occupation as bartender, joined up on February 6, 1916, listing the Empire Hotel in Victoria as his place of residence, and possibly, it was his former place of employment. Volunteers may have received unofficial advice to list a Canadian address on their Attestation form, or perhaps it was simply their actual local address. Rutledge was born in the state of Washington. He listed his mother as next of kin, and she lived in British Columbia as well. It is likely that his family had moved across the border from the United States to Canada at some point in time. Another volunteer, Samuel Tilden Dare, who was born in Albany, New York, enlisted on October 5, 1915 and indicated prior service in South Africa on

313 See information regarding the purchase of the Danish West Indies by the United States on March 31, 1917 in chapter three, 6.
314 Library and Archives Canada, RG150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 8570-1, regimental number 258830.
315 Library and Archives Canada, RG150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 8570-28, regimental number 181069.
his Attestation form. Dare had also volunteered to serve in the Boer War. He listed his marital status as single and next of kin as a cousin in Watervliet, New York. However, the payroll records in Dare’s service file indicate that by 1917 he had a wife, Phyllis Dare, living in Lamphey, Wales, so she was likely a war bride.\textsuperscript{316} Another volunteer, Robert Farrar, was a professional soldier and a Spanish American War veteran who lived with his wife in Seattle, Washington at the time of his enlistment in May 1916.\textsuperscript{317} Robert D. Wilson was a twenty-five year old medical student from Hull, Iowa who volunteered at Montreal in February 1915.

Where did the enlistees go to volunteer or respond to a draft notice? The top ten sites for enlistment among the 1,000 records examined spanned the coasts of Canada and were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Enlistments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calgary, Alberta</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton, Alberta</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver, British Columbia</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina, Saskatchewan</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria, British Columbia</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor, Ontario</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernon, British Columbia</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethbridge, Alberta</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>683</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were a few large training camps, the most well-known of which was Valcartier, located north of Quebec City, which is still operational today as home to the 5 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group. Valcartier, the first training camp, opened in August 1914, with 4,200 volunteers on site by August 21, 1914.\textsuperscript{318} In addition, Vernon Camp in Vernon, British Columbia, and Sarcee Camp in Calgary, Alberta were other major training sites for the CEF. Vernon Camp is

\textsuperscript{316} Library and Archives Canada, RG150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2295-33, regimental number 103071, digitized service record B2295-S033.
\textsuperscript{317} Library and Archives Canada, RG150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 3002-22, regimental number 258240, digitized service record B3002-S022.
still in use today as the Vernon Cadet Training Centre. It served as a central point on the West coast for the mobilization and training of CEF troops during the First World War. According to the Army Cadet Training Centre website, “By 1916, there were more than 7,000 men training at the camp while the city of Vernon had a population of barely 3,000.”

Camp Sarcee in Calgary was operational from 1915 to 1998. The land, leased by the Canadian government from the Sarcee Indian Reserve, had approximately 15,000 men training there in the summer of 1916.

Camp Hughes in Manitoba, named for General Sir Sam Hughes and previously known as Camp Sewell, hosted summer militia activities prior to the outbreak of the war. Winnipeg, Manitoba was another popular enlistment site and the camp had extensive grenade, rifle, and artillery ranges for training. A special feature of the camp was a re-created portion of a trench system as on the Western Front, designed to help get the troops fully prepared for what they would face overseas.

Camp Hughes remained in use until 1933, and today it is a national historic site. The mock First World War trench system is still in place and is unique among North American military training site features.

In reviewing the occupations of the enlistees, farmer was the top line of work at 320 or 32%. The next highest occupations were laborer (6.9%), engineer (3.7%), teamster (3.4%), and clerk (3.2%). Only seven enlistees listed either ‘none’ or left a blank for occupation. Although farmers represented approximately one third of the 1,000 enlistees analyzed, the overall variety of occupations for this sample group was significant, with 130 different types of work noted. Accountants, musicians, plumbers, barbers, machinists, lumbermen, printers, cooks, mechanics,

physicians, miners, bankers, students, ranchers, electricians, loggers, journalists, cowboys, police, firefighters, and lawyers are just some who answered the call to serve in the CEF.

The Attestation form also indicates religion, and, as no surprise, a majority of enlistees (79%) noted a wide variety of Protestant denominations, although good numbers of Roman Catholic enlistees (186 or 19%) and a small number of Jewish enlistees (6) show up as well. The top Protestant denominations were Methodist (20%), Presbyterian (20%), and Church of England (15%). Only 17 of the 1,000 examined indicated ‘none’ for religion, which is indicative of the strong role religion played in the early twentieth century. Many in the United States still had close familial and cultural ties to Britain, including large numbers with Irish roots. At this time, Britain was in the midst of dealing with the issue of Irish Home Rule, and the outbreak of war brought postponement of a pending bill proposing an independent Ireland. The Easter Rising of 1916, an armed rebellion in Ireland, was a direct result of frustration over this postponement. Feelings favoring Irish independence ran strong in the United States as well, but while many American enlistees in the CEF claimed Irish descent, most indicated Protestant denominations, not Roman Catholic. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries experienced periods of high immigration from Britain to both Canada and the United States. This meant that many families in North America had arrived recently and so, continued to retain very close ties to Britain.

Motivations for Enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force

Getting to the war in Europe before it ended became a high priority for a number of American men, mostly young men in their late teens and twenties, but some in their thirties and forties as well. Their letters, journals, and books noted reasons both serious and superficial. The primary reasons identified were a strong desire to defend democracy from the incursions of a
militaristic Germany and a need to answer the call to support and serve the British Empire. Additionally, military service traditionally functioned as a means for young men to prove their manhood and officially enter adulthood. Societal norms of the times indicted that young men had a duty to enlist during wartime. For those already in Canada, one can question how voluntary some of the enlistments actually were when faced with extreme pressure from family, friends, colleagues, fellow church members, and virtually every other part of society. Of the Americans studied here, some already lived in Canada, and so they faced similar pressures to do their duty, but the majority traveled from the United States to enlist and were true volunteers. The cases examined below explore their service histories and reasons for volunteering.

**Joseph Shuter Smith – One War and Service in Three Armies**

The war was a subject for much intense discussion throughout both American and Canadian society. Often, such conversations, along with peer pressure from friends and colleagues, stirred strong emotions that led to volunteering. One such case involved **Lt. Joseph S. Smith**, who was born in Philadelphia and had the distinction of serving in the Canadian, British, and American Expeditionary Forces. He wrote two books about his experiences, *Over There and Back*, the story of his service in three different armies during the First World War, and *Trench Warfare*, a how-to manual for officers and enlisted men written while he was a second lieutenant in the British Expeditionary Force.

When the war broke out in August 1914, Smith was twenty-one years old and working as a cowboy on a ranch located deep in the interior of British Columbia. As he described it, his sole ambition at that point in time was earning enough money so he could attend the Panama
Exposition scheduled to open in San Francisco that autumn.\textsuperscript{322} He was referring to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco during 1915 to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal. Smith notes that even out on the range, word spread quickly about the war in Europe, and it was a frequent topic of dinnertime conversation.\textsuperscript{323} Men frequently made their decision to enlist, not to say on a whim, but often after intense conversations with friends and colleagues. Smith, an American, made his decision to join the Canadian forces in just this way. He recalled riding into Dog Creek, British Columbia, a ranching settlement near the Fraser River on a Saturday afternoon, where he found the place abuzz about the recent British retreat from Mons as the Germans chased them. Smith noted, “I wasn’t English; I wasn’t Canadian. I was from the good old U.S.A. and from all we could understand the States were neutral,” and he reasoned that he should be as well.\textsuperscript{324} So what changed his mind? He recalled an atmosphere of excitement when he went to a local establishment to eat and how his attitude began to shift as he listened and took part in the conversation about the war. Smith noted that few, if any of the men there, could really articulate the reasons for the war, but their decision to enlist hinged on the fact that England was at war. He stated, “She had sent out a call to all the Empire for men; for help. Dog Creek heard and was going to answer that call. Even if I were an alien I had been in that district for more than a year and I owed it to Dog Creek and the district to join up with the rest.”\textsuperscript{325} Smith, an American citizen, felt a sense of responsibility to Canada and by extension, to the British Empire.

\textsuperscript{322} Joseph Shuter Smith, \textit{Over There and Back in Three Uniforms, being the experiences of an American boy in the Canadian, British and American armies at the front and through no man’s land} (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1918), 9.
\textsuperscript{323} Smith, \textit{Over There and Back}, 10-11.
\textsuperscript{324} Smith, \textit{Over There and Back}, 11-12.
\textsuperscript{325} Smith, \textit{Over There and Back}, 12.
Smith’s book, *Over There*, does not completely reflect the actual timeline for his enlistment in the CEF. According to the book, he quit his ranch hand job and headed to Vancouver with several others to enlist within a week of that late summer conversation, while his Attestation form shows him enlisting in Vancouver on November 9, 1914.\(^{326}\) Smith’s place of birth was Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but he listed Port Hope, Ontario as his birthplace on his Canadian enlistment form.\(^{327}\) In fact, he states in his book that he altered his place of birth to make it easier to enlist. His choice of Port Hope, Ontario may not have been completely random. A search of Canadian records for that location indicated that one Joseph Shuter Smith was born there in 1835, perhaps the younger Smith’s grandfather.\(^{328}\) While Smith is a common last name, Shuter is not a common middle name, making the family connection more probable, and Smith’s use of Port Hope as his birthplace based on knowledge of his family history. It also bound Smith closely to the British Empire. Smith notes that “By the simple expedient of moving my birthplace a few hundred miles north I became a Canadian and a member of the expeditionary force…”\(^{329}\) Since he enlisted early in the war, he may have felt it prudent to say he was born in Canada. However, as the war progressed, enlistees plainly indicated their American birthplaces on their Attestation form. Date of birth was another frequently misstated item, often as underage boys sought to join up. This has been the case in most wars and is not unique to the First World War. Based on a review of Smith’s Pennsylvania birth certificate, his year of birth appears correctly as 1893 on his Canadian enlistment paperwork, but his British enlistment form lists 1894. Canadian officials and apparently British officials as well, took the information on the Attestation forms as declared. It did not undergo the level of scrutiny or verification routinely

\(^{326}\) Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession, 1992-93/166, Box 9081-22, item 239253.  
\(^{327}\) Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession, 1992-93/166, Box 9081-22, item 239253.  
\(^{328}\) See https://ancestry.com under “All birth, marriage and death records.” Retrieved on November 18, 2017.  
\(^{329}\) Smith, *Over There and Back*, 14.
undertaken today. Smith, who was single, listed his occupation as cattle rancher and his mother Catherine, who lived in Oakland, California, as his next of kin. His mother’s place of residence also helps explain how Smith wound up working in British Columbia, where he enlisted.

What were Smith’s thoughts on the war? He spoke accurately but without emotion about the realities of trench warfare, and he states that he took part in a number of highly dangerous missions. Smith published a second book, *Over There and Back*, in 1918. He stressed that everyone’s greatest fear was disgracing his battalion and the Canadian military as a whole.330 To prevent this, the men drilled for months to enable them to think as a unit, an essential component of modern military training, while leaving their individuality behind. Smith also noted that the troops in the trenches exhibited extremely negative attitudes toward pacifists. As a result, troops going on leave could not take any form of ammunition with them due to some unfortunate prior incidents between those in uniform and civilians. As the war progressed, there were intense campaigns in both Canada and Britain to encourage enlistment. For example, in Canada, the administration of Robert Borden “chose to treat conscientious objection as a privilege accorded members of religious denominations meeting specific criteria.”331 Therefore, the definition of conscientious objectors or pacifists was officially quite narrow and was even more so according to men already in the military. Based on his service records, Smith avoided such problems.

Joseph Smith was an observant soldier, producing a book of practical instruction for officers and troops called *Trench Warfare*, based on thirty-one months of instruction and service, fifteen of which occurred on the Belgian and French fronts.332 A professional soldier by then,

330 Smith, *Over There and Back*, 81.
Smith offered his book as a means to assist rather than as the work of an expert, recognizing the changing nature of warfare in the trenches as technology was evolving around them continuously. The book contains diagrams and instructions for digging various types of trenches, as well as for constructing listening and observation posts, handling telephone lines, gas warfare, bombs, the health needs of a trench soldier, and an outline of the duties of a platoon commander at the front. Smith notes, “…a platoon commander should know his men and all about them, and keep a record in a book arranged in sections kept up-to-date.” He observes that this was not an easy task given the frequency of changes in the composition of a platoon during battle. The concept of knowing one’s men appears simple and intuitive to us today. However, during that time, it was quite new and speaks to the changing methods of warfare in the First World War. It was now vital that each soldier understood his role and the importance of performing that role as instructed to ensure success. It embodied a more systematic approach to warfare.

Joseph Shuter Smith is a unique example because he served with three different forces during the war with Canada first, then Britain, and finally the United States. Smith joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the fall of 1914 as a private in the 29th Vancouver Battalion. He underwent several months of training and sailed from Halifax, Nova Scotia to England in May 1915. Smith served in France until August 1916 when he received orders to report to the War Office in London. Once there, he received commission as a second lieutenant in the Royal Scots regiment. He went on to serve with the British Expeditionary Force in France until August 1917, when he resigned his commission and returned to the United States. The fact that Smith could make this change so readily illustrates the high level of cooperation among the allies at this time. It also speaks to the willingness of all parties to look the other way in matters of citizenship. Smith had taken an oath of allegiance to King George V when signing his Attestation Paper to
join the Canadian Expeditionary Force. No mention of the oath occurred when he moved to the American Expeditionary Force, as if it never took place. Smith’s move from the British Army to the United States Army occurred quickly and efficiently. His British service file contains a letter from Smith sent in early June 1917 to the commanding officer of the Royal Scots requesting either acceptance of his resignation or the granting of an indefinite leave of absence so he could return to the United States to serve as a lieutenant under General Leonard Wood.\footnote{The National Archives UK; see British Expeditionary Force service file of Joseph Shuter Smith, WO 339/50743, obtained July 13, 2017.} The June 8, 1917 response from the War Office in London informed Smith that he needed a letter from the American Ambassador attesting to his American citizenship for consideration of the request. On July 16, 1917, the American Consulate General submitted a letter to the War Office attesting to Joseph Shuter Smith’s American birth, along with a certified copy of Smith’s Pennsylvania birth certificate. On August 9, 1917, the British War Office granted Smith’s request to resign his commission with the 3rd Battalion, Royal Scots.

One point of contention in Smith’s case revolved around who bore the responsibility to pay for his transportation back to the United States. His British service file contains several documents raising this question. The British Army believed the American Army should pay for his return, and the Americans thought the British should pay. As a compromise, the BEF paid to get Smith, on leave in England at the time, to an American unit in France, with the rest then left up to the Americans to fund. The larger issue, namely Smith’s decision to resign his BEF commission and return to the United States, raised no real questions or issues. Both the British and the Americans viewed that decision as more of an administrative matter. Disagreements over who should pay to return the soldier proved more serious. In the United States, arguments broke out during Congressional hearings in May and June 1917 concerning repatriation of Americans
serving with allied forces over which country had responsibility to pay pensions and disability payments for Americans injured while serving. The United States did not want to take on this financial responsibility. However, these arguments never proved serious enough to stop the passage of a repatriation bill, which passed in October 1917.

Smith received a commission as first lieutenant, serving in the American Army until the end of the war. We do not know where he served with the American Army because many records from this period, including those for Smith, were lost in a 1973 fire. During his time with the Canadian and British armies, he fought in several major battles on the Western front, including St. Eloi, the Somme, the Ancre, and Arras. Smith dedicated his book Trench Warfare to American officers and men “serving their country under alien flags.” Smith clearly viewed his service as patriotic and vital to the United States, regardless of the uniform he wore, and in spite of his country’s declared neutrality. For many American volunteers such as Smith, he was fighting for the larger issue of the preservation of democracy and a way of life that he valued. If the British Empire fell, then global democracy and freedom, even in the United States, were in grave danger. Smith either ignored or was unaware of the risks to his American citizenship when he joined the CEF, and then accepted transfer to the BEF. It turned out to be no risk at all. An Ottawa newspaper reported that Smith died on August 24, 1950 at the age of fifty-seven. The obituary noted that Smith was a former hockey scout for the New York Rangers and the former

334 United States Congress: House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, Repatriation of Certain Former American Citizens: Hearings...On H.R. 3647...May 24, 25, June 14, 29, 1917, p. 27.
335 As confirmed by the National Personnel Records Center of the National Archives, St. Louis, Missouri to the author on July 28, 2017, a major portion of Army personnel records for the period 1912 through 1959 were lost in a fire on July 12, 1973 due to both fire and water damage. There was no microfilm back up for these original records. Due to this event, no service record could be located for Joseph Shuter Smith.
mayor of Coburg, Ontario. Apparently, Smith continued to live back and forth on both sides of the United States-Canada border for the rest of his life.

**Helping Family While Performing One’s Duty to the British Empire**

Many young men chose to volunteer with the Canadians for both practical and patriotic reasons. On the practical side, the Canadian military paid better than the British military and sent a monthly separation allowance to families. Others had deep family ties with Britain, often with close relatives still there, and many enlisted out of loyalty to the British Empire. Some enlisted for all of these reasons, and some achieved success in other fields after their service with the CEF. One such success story after the war is **Raymond Thornton Chandler** (1888-1959) who went on after the war to become a famous Hollywood screenwriter and novelist during the 1940s and 1950s. Chandler specialized in gritty private detective stories starring his classic Philip Marlowe character. He was not an overnight success story, and his first highly rated work was the 1939 novel *The Big Sleep*, published over twenty years after the war. The book became the classic 1946 film of the same name starring a famous Hollywood couple of the time, Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall. He wrote several other well-regarded novels including *Farewell, My Lovely*, *The Little Sister*, and *The Long Goodbye* and notable screenplays including *Double Indemnity* and *The Blue Dahlia*, both part of the *film noir* (dark film) or melodrama style characterized by cynicism and some sort of crime story. One can surmise that some of this cynicism and darkness was the result of Chandler’s wartime experiences. However, on August 4, 1917, Chandler was a young man living in Los Angeles, California. As with Joseph Shuter Smith, he traveled north to British Columbia, Victoria in this case, to enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.338

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Born in Chicago in 1888, Chandler’s mother Florence was born in Waterford, Ireland and immigrated to the United States to be near her sister Grace and her husband Ernest Fitt, who lived in Plattsmouth, Nebraska.339 His father, Maurice Chandler, received a certificate of proficiency in engineering from the Towne Scientific School of the University of Pennsylvania. The senior Chandler was from Philadelphia and was descended from Quaker settlers. As described by Frank MacShane in his biography of Raymond Chandler, the Chandler family moved from England to Ireland during the time of Oliver Cromwell’s rule as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland in the 1650s, and from Ireland, they moved on to Philadelphia.340 Chandler’s father worked for the railway as an engineer and traveled regularly from Chicago westward, including to Nebraska, where he met his wife Florence. As a youth, Raymond Chandler spent summers with his mother at her sister’s home in Nebraska. Chandler’s father had a serious drinking problem, something the younger Chandler also experienced in his life, and the father’s frequent absences from the family led to Maurice’s and Florence’s eventual divorce. After the divorce, Maurice Chandler completely abandoned his wife and son and provided no financial support. Deeply impacted, Chandler never forgave his father for the desperate position his mother was left in.341 In 1895 Chandler’s mother was forced to move to England with her son to live with family members for financial support. The move put his mother in a humiliating position with her mother and sister, both of whom never allowed her to forget the failure of her marriage.342 Divorce was still not the norm at this time, with most families viewing it in a range of negative ways from sinful to a dishonor to the family. In

340 MacShane, 2.
341 MacShane, 4.
342 MacShane, 4-5.
adulthood, Chandler remained very close with his mother and was her sole source of support for the remainder of her life, a responsibility that he took very seriously.

After the move to England, Chandler spent summers in Waterford, Ireland with his uncle. He graduated from Dulwich College in London in 1904. Chandler valued his time at Dulwich, especially his classics training which greatly influenced his later career as a novelist. As noted by Frank MacShane, “Chandler’s Irish experience marked him for life,” and he did not welcome any references to being Irish-American because that implied he was Roman Catholic, which his family was not. For Chandler this was less about religion and more about class and the social position of his family, and he admitted growing up with “a terrible contempt for Catholics.” Chandler still had American roots, and his childhood days in the Midwest had given him a strong sense of freedom, while his Irish roots made him question the strict manners and rigid social norms of the English. He returned to the United States in 1912 after mostly unremarkable stints working briefly as a clerk for the Admiralty in London, his uncle’s career plan for him, and then as a journalist, Chandler’s career choice from his days at Dulwich. While disappointed that he never achieved success writing in England, his return to the United States was a great adventure and allowed Chandler the freedom to develop into a successful writer free from the stifling social expectations that marked his life in England. However, when Chandler returned to the United States, he “had no feeling of identity with the United States,” but he also did not identify as English or Irish, choosing instead to declare his nationality as American when he landed in New York. He soon made his way to California after brief stops to see family in the Midwest. By

343 MacShane, 9.
344 MacShane, 6.
345 MacShane, 6.
347 MacShane, 25.
1916, he was living in Los Angeles, which at this time was a young, rough and tumble city. It was several thousand miles and culturally, a world away from London.

What motivated Chandler decide to choose the Canadian Expeditionary Force instead of the British or American forces? Some of his reasons involved his remaining strong feelings of Britishness, and others were purely practical. He claimed after the war that he was rejected by the American army for bad eyesight (something Ernest Hemingway would claim as well), but he was a dual citizen and claimed, “It was still natural for me to prefer a British uniform.”

However, the separation allowance which the Canadian military paid to his mother (the American military did not pay one) had to be a major consideration in his decision since he was now his mother’s sole source of financial support. In addition, many of Chandler’s friends and classmates from Dulwich had already been in the fighting from the beginning of the war with the records showing that a number of former Dulwich students returned from outside Europe to join up. Chandler likely was aware of this. As with many young men who volunteered, Chandler felt a sense of duty and obligation to the British Empire, but he also sought adventure and excitement as his career as a writer had stalled, and he was working in Los Angeles as an accountant at the time to support himself and his mother. Chandler enlisted with his friend Gordon Pascal in Victoria, British Columbia and joined the 50th Regiment, the Gordon Highlanders of Canada, a Scottish-inspired regiment, and there are pictures of Chandler wearing his uniform kilt.

At the time of his enlistment, Chandler named his mother, Mrs. Florence Dart Chandler, as his next of kin and her residence as Vendome Street in Los Angeles. This is where he returned

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348 MacShane, 27.
350 Hiney, 41.
after his discharge from the CEF, and he spent the rest of his life in California, dying in La Jolla in 1959. His Attestation Paper listed his occupation as journalist and that he was not married. Chandler’s pay records also indicate that he was his mother’s sole support. Chandler’s service record noted that he was a naturalized British subject at the time of his enlistment, something he had to do for his work in the Admiralty in London in 1907. He did not formally regain his American citizenship until 1955 after a dispute in England over taxes due for staying too long in London that year forced him to do so.\footnote{MacShane, 253-54.} Prior to that, his dual citizenship had presented some annoyances with immigration officials when he traveled but did not affect him otherwise, and he actually registered as an alien in the United States during the Second World War, where he felt a sense of pride in his association with the British. However, in 1955, Chandler had to sue the Attorney General of the United States for the successful return of his citizenship based on his American birth.\footnote{MacShane, 254.}

Chandler trained for approximately three months in Victoria, British Columbia, and then he received orders to head to Halifax for assignment overseas. On March 18, 1918, he received assignment to the 7th Battalion, which had already been part of some of the worst fighting of the war. Deployed to the trenches near Arras, Chandler served with men who were veterans of both Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele.\footnote{Hiney, 42.} The battalion carried 1,200 men, and it had suffered some 14,000 casualties since 1915, so Chandler went to France as part of a continual stream of reinforcements.\footnote{Hiney, 42.} While his battalion was in a reserve position, they still were part of some heavy fighting that spring. In June 1918, he was one of a few survivors after an artillery barrage decimated his unit. With the high casualty rates, Chandler quickly received a promotion to

\footnote{MacShane, 253-54.}
\footnote{MacShane, 254.}
\footnote{Hiney, 42.}
\footnote{Hiney, 42.}
sergeant and platoon commander. His war experience marked him to the point where he rarely spoke of it later in life, noting that “courage is a strange thing: one can never be sure of it.”

Chandler may have suffered from “shell-shock”, what we refer to in the present day as PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder, and he also took up heavy drinking while learning to fly, a problem that plagued him for the rest of his life. Later, Chandler tried to write a short story called “Trench Raid” about his experiences, but he never completed it or tried to publish it.

Noted below is the partially completed text:

The strafe started a lot heavier than usual. The candle stuck on the top of his tin hat guttered from something more than draught. The rats behind the dugout lining were still. But a tired man could sleep through it. He began to loosen the puttee on his left leg. Someone yelled down the dugout entrance and the beam of an electric torch groped about on the slimy chalk steps. He swore, retied his puttee, and slithered up the steps. As he pushed aside the dirty blanket that served for a gas curtain the force of the bombardment hit him like the blow of a club at the base of the brain. He groveled against the wall of the trench, nauseated by the din. He seemed to be alone in a universe of incredibly brutal noise. The sky, in which the calendar called for a full moon, was white and blind with innumerable (sic) Very lights, white and blind and diseased like a world gone leprous. The edge of the parados, lumpy with dirt from a recent housekeeping, cut this whiteness like a line of crazy camels in a nightmare against an idiotic moonrise. Against the emptiness of the night, a nose cap whined down nearby with a slow, intimate sound, like a mosquito. He began to concentrate on the shells. If you heard them they never hit you. With meticulous care, he set himself to picking out the ones that would come close enough to be reckoned on as a possible introduction to immortality. To these he listened with a sort of cold exhausted passion until a flattening screech told him that they had gone over to the support lines. Time to move on. Mustn’t stay too long in one place. He crawled around the corner of the bay to the Lewis gun post. On the firing step the Number one of the gun crew was standing to with half of his body silhouetted above the parapet, motionless against the glare of the light except that his hand was playing scales on the butt of his gun.

After returning to England following the demise of his unit, he transferred to the Royal Air Force at the rank of cadet on August 16, 1918 in the 50th Regiment Reinforcements still a part of the CEF. However, the war ended before Chandler saw any action as a flyer. Upon

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355 MacShane, 29.
356 Hiney, 43.
357 MacShane, 29.
demobilization, Chandler embarked on the S.S. *Carmania* from Liverpool and arrived in Halifax on February 9, 1919. His medical examination in Victoria, British Columbia indicated that he was in good health. Discharged on February 20, 1919 in Vancouver, Chandler listed his mother’s address in Los Angeles as his intended place of residence. It turned out to be his city of residence for many years to follow.

**A Thirst for Adventure – Looking for a Fight**

Many young men were anxious to get into battle. For them, the war was a grand adventure full of danger and excitement. They were fearless and did not truly understand what they were about to face. *Arthur Hunt Chute* (1889 – 1929) declared, “The first time we advanced the guns of our battery in the Somme last fall was the happiest moment of all my eighteen months’ fighting in France.” 359 He further stated, “That was what we all went to France for, and at last, after ceaseless and apparently ineffective sacrifice, we began to realize the end of our existence.” 360 Fortunately, Chute survived to write these words, which express the idealism and fearlessness of many of the young men who enlisted in the CEF. Arthur H. Chute was born in Stillman Valley, Illinois on April 19, 1889, and he enlisted in the CEF early in the war on September 2, 1914 at Valcartier, Quebec.361 Chute was unmarried and listed his occupation as journalist. Chute indicated on his Attestation form that he had previous militia service with the 75th Regiment and that his next of kin, his father A.C. Chute, resided in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. He and his family represent another example of Americans who relocated to reside in Canada. Chute embarked for England on September 30, 1914, and after training there, left for France on February 10, 1915. A lieutenant, his service file indicates that he received an assignment to be

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360 Chute, 137.
361 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-92/166, Box 1713-10.
the paymaster in a temporary captain’s position at the Canadian Clearing Hospital, and he
received a transfer to the 17th Battalion in December 1914. Hunt returned to England on
December 22, 1915 and spent a good deal of time in training during early 1916, completing a
course at Woolwich in April and returning to France on May 6, 1916. A notice in the London
Gazette on January 11, 1916 indicates that “Paymaster and Honorary Captain A. H. Chute, from
Canadian Army Medical Corps., to be temporary Lieutenant…” dated December 20, 1915 as part
of the listing for the Overseas Contingents under Canadian Artillery.362

Arthur Chute experienced a number of health problems, with his service record indicating
his admittance to the No. 10 Station Hospital in St. Omer on July 4, 1916 after his recent
attachment to the Officer’s Training School for the 2nd Artillery Brigade in June 1916. In a
“Proceedings of a Medical Board” report dated November 16, 1916, found Chute disabled due to
otitis media, which is an inflammatory condition in the middle ear, and vertigo, which causes
dizziness and associated problems with balance, causing nausea and vomiting. The report of the
Medical Board found that, “This officer who has been in France over eighteen months is now
suffering from an otitis media which to a slight extent existed prior to enlistment but has come
on in the right ear and been greatly exaggerated in the left. Also suffers from vertigo and
insomnia due to the strain of service. He will require considerable treatment, a prolonged rest
and should be for some time in a drier climate.” The conditions of the trenches, especially in
spring and fall with widespread mud and water, undoubtedly contributed to the otitis media
Chute suffered. He received an unfit for “General Service” declaration for a period of three
months and unfit for home service back in Canada for two months. Also noted in his medical
report was “concussion and strain of general service conditions” as the causes of his condition,

including making his pre-existing minor left ear otitis media much worse. Chute received treatment at the West Cliff Canadian Eye and Ear Hospital in Folkestone, England.

In spite of his subsequent health issues, Chute served at the front for almost eighteen months. Frequent artillery barrages and heavy explosions often caused concussions for Chute and many other soldiers. A good percentage of those suffering from concussions during the war went undiagnosed. In Chute’s case, his concussion diagnosis came about because he was also dealing with other health issues. The long-term negative health ramifications associated with concussions, particularly multiple concussions, is a recent discovery. No doubt, many First World War soldiers suffered multiple concussions given the intensity and ferocity of the bombardments. Chute’s service record also shows that he contracted influenza in November 1915, which probably aggravated his ear inflammations as well. Arthur Hunt Chute received an “S.O.S.” (Stricken off Strength) designation as part of the Canadian Field Artillery (CFA) on January 5, 1917 in Ottawa, and he listed 110 East 30th St., New York, New York as his intended address upon his discharge from the CEF.

Following his early discharge from the Canadian military for health reasons, Chute published a book in 1918 about his experiences, *The Real Front*. The book is primarily a propaganda piece, intended as both a display of pride for Canada’s efforts in the war and as an encouragement for the United States, which had recently entered the war. It may have been a means for the author to continue to “do his bit” for the war effort since he could no longer serve himself. In the book, Chute writes, “Britain, the Old Gray Mother of the English-speaking race, beholds with teams of gladness a long-lost daughter joining hands again.”

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363 Chute, 234.
Chute, who was American-born and Canadian raised, thought of both countries more as a unit, namely North America, declaring that the New and Old Worlds were now in battle together. Additionally, at this time, the concept of race encompassed more than just skin color. A journalist, Chute frequently used his skills to fill in details, carefully building each chapter into a self-contained story designed to promote the necessity of the war effort. Publishing books in serial form was common for the time, with parts of the book appearing as articles in *Harper’s Magazine*. The first article, entitled “The Real Front” appeared in the December 1917 issue and listed Captain Arthur Hunt Chute as author. The editor noted that Captain Chute “previously had a varied experience as a war correspondent, in the Balkans, with the Turkish and Greek armies, and in Mexico with General Funston,” remarking that “his articles on the present war are among the most brilliant first-hand descriptions that have been written.”

Chute concluded this article by declaring, “…a man at the front who starts out to take it seriously will be in the madhouse in less than a month,” while “the light-hearted ones, escaping Minnies and Lizzies, may go on indefinitely.” By the time of his January 1918 article entitled “With the Guns”, he no longer carried the title of captain, referred to instead as “Late of the Canadian Field Artillery.” The article is an endorsement of the artillery as one of the last bastions of battlefield glory. Chute, as observed earlier, was working to encourage Americans to support the war effort. This article deviates from the previous one, as it does not promote the light-heartedness of war rather it stresses the thrills. As described by the author, “the artillery still thrills with high adventure – in the precarious and shell-swept observation post, by the roaring, reeking mouths of the guns, or

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with the ammunition limbers thundering around Suicide Corner or tearing down Death Valley – in all its phases it still presents the colors of romance, against the otherwise somber background of modern war.” Arthur Hunt Chute was masterful at keeping the horrors of war compartmentalized as his way of dealing with its horrors by emphasizing its excitement and potential for glory. This was sure to appeal to many young men.

**A Survivor but still a Casualty of War and Life**

**Herbert Wes McBride** led a machine gun group during his service in France, rising to the rank of lieutenant in the Twenty-first Canadian Battalion. However, his military career ended badly. On February 19, 1917, he faced discharge from the service following a General Court Martial for being absent without leave on two occasions and drunkenness while on active duty. Issues with alcoholism, confirmed in medical reports within his service file, plagued him throughout his war service. Likely, this problem pre-dated his time with the CEF. Yet, in spite of his court martial and documented alcohol problems, McBride had stretches when he performed his military duties extremely well. His service file indicates he received a medal on June 3, 1916, awarded for courage and devotion to duty related to his scouting and patrol work. In carrying out this work, McBride successfully obtained valuable information from German troops by overhearing their conversations after moving in close to their trenches under cover of darkness.

How did Herbert McBride come to serve in a machine gun section? He was born in Waterloo, Indiana and enlisted at Kingston, Ontario on March 4, 1915. Older than the usual

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368 Library and Archives Canada, RG, 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6593-61, Service Record of Herbert Wes McBride.
369 Library and Archives Canada: RG, 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6593-61.
volunteer at forty-one, McBride was a lawyer in civilian life. He also had twenty-one years of
previous service with the Indiana National Guard, achieving the rank of captain. McBride did
not start his CEF service as a machine gunner. His service record contains a letter dated February
4, 1915 requesting McBride’s immediate appointment as a captain in the 38th Battalion of the
CEF and assignment to duties as a musketry instructor. Given his significant experience in the
United States in the National Guard, the Canadians were probably most pleased to have him in
their service. It is also possible that McBride’s father, a prominent Indiana judge and Civil War
veteran, may have encouraged his son’s volunteer enlistment, and he may have also been
working behind the scenes to ensure that his son received what the father perceived to be an
appropriate rank in the CEF. Subsequent correspondence in McBride’s file appears to
corroborate his father’s inclination to speak on behalf of his son.

A 1931 letter in McBride’s file sent to the Historical Bureau of the Indiana State House
indicates that “Officers served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in commissioned rank by
virtue of commissions which they held in the Canadian Militia. The 42nd Duke of Cornwall’s
Rifles was such a unit and Mr. McBride was recommended for a commission therein with the
rank of Lieutenant effective 1st February 1915.”370 Other letters in his file indicate that he was
actually commissioned as a Captain in the 42nd Duke of Cornwall Rifles and quickly thereafter as
a Captain in the 38th Battalion of the CEF.371 It was generally a quick path from the militia to the
CEF, but McBride only lasted for two months before resigning his commission. Quickly
following, he volunteered at the rank of private in the machine gun section, which was part of the
Twenty-first Battalion of the Canadian Infantry. McBride’s father sent a letter to General Sam

370 Library and Archives Canada, RG, 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6593-61, Service Record of Herbert Wes
McBride, 45.
371 Library and Archives Canada, RG, 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6593-61, Service Record of Herbert Wes
McBride, 39.
Hughes in July 1915, which expressed dismay over this change in his son’s circumstances. It appears that Herbert McBride’s father exercised considerable influence over his son’s life. The elder McBride began his letter with an attempt to impress Hughes a bit, declaring that he was a Civil War veteran, himself a retired Colonel in the Indiana National Guard, as well as a lawyer with forty-eight years’ experience who presently served as a Circuit Court Judge and on the Indiana Supreme Court. It is clear that the father understood his son’s issues with alcohol use, as he wondered to Hughes if someone had in fact, “either intentionally or through lack of knowledge taken advantage of his one weakness and that some indiscretion committed by him while in his cups was responsible for this action.”372 The father’s appeal did not sway Hughes. However, he did follow up on the elder McBride’s request for further information concerning his son’s circumstances, providing a very straightforward account. A July 23, 1915 letter to the elder McBride, prepared by General Hughes’s secretary, indicated that McBride had behaved “in a very improper manner, whilst under the influence of liquor and to avoid a Court Martial he was asked to resign his commission, which he did.”373 The letter closes by reassuring the father that his son will likely make up for his loss of rank by bravely performing in his new unit. In fact, McBride did perform bravely. As happened frequently during the war, McBride rose up the ranks quickly from his beginnings as a private in the Twenty-first Battalion to Lance Corporal (September 19, 1915), Corporal (October 15, 1915), Sergeant, First Lieutenant (May 31, 1916) and eventually Captain, when he left the service in February 1917 following the General Court Martial related to his drinking. No doubt, his previous service, education, maturity, and leadership abilities helped him advance, but his problems with alcohol and the stress of war

373 Library and Archives Canada, RG, 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6593-61, Service Record of Herbert Wes McBride, 89.
continued to plague him, eventually catching up with him. A later medical report from November 6, 1916 indicated that McBride had an “alcoholic outbreak” and went under orders to Miss Pollock’s Hospital to recover.\textsuperscript{374}

McBride wrote a book, *The Emma Gees*, detailing his experiences with the machine gun group, as well as his impressions of the war and the Canadian military. The name “Emma Gees” derives from the shorthand used by signalers. As explained, it was necessary when reading messages to have one person concentrate intently on the sender while a second person wrote down the letters as called out by the observer.\textsuperscript{375} The system adopted names for most letters to distinguish the ones with similar sounds. Based on this system, “M” became Emma and “G” was as pronounced, “Gee” to denote the machine gunner. McBride dedicated his book to the memory of William Emmanuel Bouchard, an eighteen year-old Canadian born lance corporal killed in action on September 15, 1916, after two years of service. He had taken the young soldier under his wing. According to McBride, he was trying to guide Bouchard on future educational choices before his death. We will never know the exact nature of their relationship, but clearly, the young man’s death affected McBride very deeply and likely triggered further drinking episodes. In his book, McBride writes about Bouchard’s death, “Yes; a boy in years, but he worked like a man, fought like a man and, thank God, he died like a man – out in front, fighting.”\textsuperscript{376} McBride is clear that he did not enlist for any patriotic or particularly noble reasons. Perhaps his father, a Civil War veteran, pushed him to do so. He notes that he was curious to experience a “regular war,” no doubt his many years of service in the Indiana National Guard had not provided such an

\textsuperscript{374} Library and Archives Canada, RG, 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6593-61, Service Record of Herbert Wes McBride, 13.
\textsuperscript{375} McBride, introduction.
\textsuperscript{376} McBride, 208.
There had not been any real opportunities for American men to serve in a theater of war since the American Civil War, with the brief exception of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Philippine-American War (1899-1902). At forty-one years of age, the outbreak of war in 1914 represented the last chance McBride likely would have to serve in a real theater of war. Perhaps he saw the war as his own opportunity to prove his manhood, as he noted about the young Bouchard after his death.

After volunteering, McBride sailed for England on May 5, 1915 and underwent four months of training in England before shipping out to France. He was proud to serve in the machine gun section, as it was a new war tactic, which he strongly favored. To McBride, “the evolution of machine-gun tactics is, perhaps, the most outstanding feature of the whole war.” He assessment of Canadian soldiers was that they took greater risks than their more careful and tradition-bound British counterparts. McBride believed American soldiers would do the same once they entered the war, implying in 1915 that he thought it inevitable that the United States would eventually enter the war. McBride also commented on the fact that most British officers were “old school” and did not care for the Canadian’s apparent disdain for rules and established procedures. He notes that the British were “carefully trained to rely on and obey implicitly the orders of any superior officer” while the Canadian “looks only for initial direction, depending upon his own initiative and ingenuity to see him through any trouble that might arise.” In the end, McBride did believe that the British and the Canadians learned from each other, despite their differing philosophies.

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377 McBride, 2.
378 McBride, 94-95.
379 McBride, 80.
380 McBride, 42.
Of note, McBride also speaks very positively about the contributions of women to the war effort. He traveled from Canada to England on the Metagama with about one hundred and fifty nurses aboard. The Nursing Sisters, nicknamed Bluebirds, carried the official rank of First Lieutenant, noted by McBride as well deserved. Later in his book, McBride again speaks highly of the work done by women with the British Red Cross as well as those driving ambulances. His book ends in 1916 with a brief hospital stay in England and an eventual return to France. McBride does not specify in his book the reason for his hospitalization, but his service record does. He received a suspension from duty from August 31 to September 26, 1916, while awaiting Court Martial, subsequently leaving the service in early 1917. He was a decorated war veteran despite his personal issues, and his General Court Martial did not appear to be much of a well-known fact in his home state of Indiana. His service record contains several pieces of correspondence from the Historical Bureau of the Indiana State House from 1929 through 1931 seeking information on his service history. The Canadian military sent one final piece of correspondence to his mother upon McBride’s death in August 1933, expressing condolences. Enclosed with the letter was a copy of McBride’s Last Will and Testament from his service days, which left all of his property to his mother, Mrs. Ida McBride. The Canadian military kept track of its First World War veterans long after the war ended, and no matter the circumstances that ended their military service. The state of Indiana also showed pride in the service of their native son, discreetly ignoring how it ended.

An Idealist Fighting for Democracy

Edwin Austin Abbey’s Attestation Paper indicated he was born in Kilmacolm, Scotland in 1888, but he was an American citizen, and his parents resided in Philadelphia when he enlisted

381 McBride, 3.
in the Canadian Expeditionary Force on October 2, 1915. Abbey and his family are an example of the continuing close ties between immigrant families and Great Britain. He was a recently graduated civil engineer when he enlisted in the 2nd Canadian Pioneer Battalion at the Toronto Recruiting Depot. Abbey died on April 10, 1917 at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, part of the larger Battle of Arras. The Battle of Vimy Ridge was a defining moment for Canada as a fledgling nation, sparking intense patriotic fervor and national pride at Canada’s successful lead role in the battle. Edwin Abbey’s grave is located in the Thelus Military Cemetery at Pas de Calais, France, which is about 6.5 kilometers north of Arras. At the time of his death, he was only twenty-eight years old serving as a lieutenant with the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles. The Toronto Star reported Abbey’s death in an article on May 2, 1917, and he received a commemorative memorial panel in the St. Thomas Church Baptistry in Toronto, Ontario.

As was the custom of the time, Abbey wrote regularly to both of his parents, generally individually. After his death, his mother, Katharine Eleanor Abbey, gathered his many letters as well as those they received from his superior officers and had them published in May 1918. Both of his parents note in the Foreword that Abbey never expected to have his letters published but they felt the need to do so because they provide both “illumination and inspiration”. The letters also furnish significant insight into the thoughts and feelings of a young officer serving on the Western Front. These letters were written for private reading only, with no consideration that they might be published someday. That makes them an especially valuable window into the mind of a young American and his thoughts concerning the place of the United States in both the war

382 Library and Archives Canada: RG 150, Volume 02-3, item 42.
and the world order. As Abbey noted on May 22, 1915, “I want the young manhood of America to be given a chance to prove themselves as willing to give themselves for a just cause as they were in 1861, and as they are now in the other nations of the world. Of course, we know they would, but the call seems to have come already.”  

Abbey expressed his extreme upset over the May 1915 sinking of the Lusitania by a German submarine. He was not alone in that view. Over one hundred Americans were among the dead, and this was a key event in turning American opinion in favor of entry into the war. Even Woodrow Wilson, a proponent of neutrality, was compelled to express a strong protest to the Germans. Abbey noted in a letter dated May 12, 1915 that the “dishonor to the flag is great, but it seems to me more a dishonor to manhood and humanity.” In the same letter, he expressed strong concerns over Germany, noting, “Germany has shown herself a terrible menace, and she is beginning to feel confidence in her own resources to defy the world.”

Abbey sustained a serious shoulder wound on Easter morning, April 23, 1916. Ironically, he died in battle a year later on April 10, 1917, just two days after Easter. Abbey’s service record notes that he was wounded while on duty in the trenches at St. Eloi, and on April 26, he had surgery to remove the bullet/shrapnel and was confined to bed for ten days. Abbey received a transfer to King George Hospital in London to recuperate and then went on to the Canadian Convalescing Hospital in Bromley, England on May 31, 1916. He recovered and returned to duty later in the year. On December 2, 1916, he wrote to his mother from the British Officer’s Club in France that he anticipated joining his new unit, the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles in a day or two. He downplayed the seriousness of his wound in letters to each of his parents, no doubt an attempt

385 Abbey, 8.
386 Abbey, 3.
387 Abbey, 3.
388 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Volume 02-3, digitized service record: V002-S003.
to ease their worries. While in London, he went with his aunt to have his uniforms fitted at the tailor, as was common practice for officers at this time. Abbey had family on both sides of the Atlantic. He had clear ties to both the United States and Britain.

Lieutenant Abbey’s service record contained conflicting information in one section about his place of birth. While his Attestation Paper, which is part of the service record, indicates he was born in Kilmacolm, Scotland, a further note in his service record indicates that he was born in Mount Holly, New Jersey. His Medical Records Section indicates Kilmacolm, Scotland as his place of birth. Throughout his letters, Abbey steadfastly refers to himself as completely American. Abbey’s mother was evidently American-born because he noted to her in a letter dated January 1, 1917 “How little you thought, when you were a child, with the echo of the terrible Civil War in your heart, that you would some day have a son in the battle line!”

Abbey was deeply religious, as was prevalent for the times, and his return to the front after suffering a serious wound found him expressing thoughts of entering religious service if he survived the war. The experience had so changed him that he felt it unlikely that he wanted to return to his engineering career once the war ended. Abbey noted, “Life, here, is such a feeble little thing, so uncertain from hour to hour, that one cannot help knowing that it is a gift and entirely in God’s hands.”

The Rev. Neville S. Talbot, Assistant Chaplain-General in the BEF wrote in 1919 of religion and its impact on the war, “I am eager to acclaim the wonderful quality of spirit which men of our race display in this war, and to claim it as Christian and God-inspired.”

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389 Abbey, 96.
390 Abbey, 92.
belief that God ultimately controlled the outcome of the war. For both men, the presence of God provided the ethical underpinning to characterize this as a just war.

On December 29, 1916, Abbey wrote to his mother “there can be no doubt that we must fight on until Germany is willing to make full reparation,” and he noted, “…we are all willing to pay the necessary price.”\textsuperscript{392} He prayed that he would be a good enough officer to lead his troops. After the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917, Abbey wrote to his father that he was “more glad than ever that I am here,” (France) and he referred to himself as an “American soldier” even though he was serving with the CEF.\textsuperscript{393} He expressed his wish to transfer to the American forces if it should happen, noting in a letter to his mother on February 7, 1917 that “If by any chance we do have an army here, and it is possible for me to transfer to it, I surely will.”\textsuperscript{394} Edwin Abbey wanted to fight under the American flag.

On April 6, 1917, Lieutenant Edwin Austin Abbey prepared his last will and testament, no doubt in preparation for the battle anticipated to occur at Vimy Ridge within the next few days. The one page document says,

\texttt{The Last Will and Testament of Edwin Austin Abbey, Lieutenant I, Edwin Austin Abbey, do bequeath To my mother, Katharine Eleanor Abbey, all personal effects and possessions, to all monies to my credit in the Bank of Montreal, London England, and all monies due to me from the Canadian Government.}\textsuperscript{395}

\textsuperscript{392} Abbey, 95.
\textsuperscript{393} Abbey, 161-162.
\textsuperscript{394} Abbey, 125.
\textsuperscript{395} Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Volume 02-3, digitized service record: V002-S003.
The will, witnessed by another lieutenant, Gregory Cluske, proved prophetic and on a practical basis, necessary. From the service record, the preparation of a last will and testament was standard procedure. The next entry in the service record lists Abbey’s death, April 10, 1917 and his next of kin as his father, William B. Abbey. Edwin Austin Abbey was only twenty-eight years old when he died in battle.

**A Young and Cynical Soldier**

Not every soldier was an idealist, a patriot, or particularly loyal to the British Empire but still, many wanted to fight. In 1928, **Charles Yale Harrison** (1898-1954) published the story of his time in the trenches, *Generals Die in Bed: A Story from the Trenches*, in serial form, and released it as a book in 1930. Harrison was born in Philadelphia and enlisted as a private in the CEF at Montreal on January 24, 1917, when he was eighteen years old, listing his occupation as student. He had spent much of his life to this point living in Montreal, which helps to explain his choice of enlistment location. Although Harrison listed his occupation as student, he had in fact, been working for the *Montreal Star* at the time of his enlistment, and after the war he continued his career as a journalist and novelist, moving to New York City in 1931, where he lived until his death in 1954.

Writing his memoir ten years after the war provides a much different perspective than the reflections of Joseph Shuter Smith, published in 1918 while he was still serving, and the private letters of Edwin Austin Abbey, written during the war and published posthumously in 1918. Harrison’s memoir contains little to none of the patriotic fervor of Abbey or the desire to serve and provide technical knowledge displayed by Smith in his book, *Trench Warfare*. Harrison’s

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396 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 4101-44.
point of view is unvarnished and cynical, more reflective of the jaded tone depicted in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novels. His book likely took strong influence from this postwar genre of writing. Harrison’s dedication at the beginning of his book speaks to the disillusionment of his generation when he states, “To the bewildered youths – British, Australian, Canadian, and German – who were killed in that wood a few miles beyond Amiens on August 8, 1918, I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.” He was referring to the Battle of Amiens, which began on August 8, 1918 and dealt a crushing blow to the Germans. The Canadians and Australians led the charge as shock troops, and the battle plan incorporated an all-mechanized approach with tanks, artillery, aircraft, and well-armed infantry. Often soldiers need to wait for several years before being able to open up and speak or write about their experiences in battle. As noted in the Introduction to Harrison’s book written by Robert F. Nielsen in 2001, by the late 1920’s several authors, including Ernest Hemingway with *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) and Erich Maria Remarque with *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929) and Harrison had published realistic portrayals of the war. The works of Hemingway and Remarque became films in 1932 and 1930 respectively. Harrison’s work, while widely read in the United States at the time of its publication, did not achieve the same status as the works of Hemingway and Remarque. The book remains quite well known in Canada, likely due to Harrison’s service with the CEF.

Harrison describes the soldier’s list of enemies as “the lice, some of our officers, and Death,” and he notes with irony “strangely, we never refer to the Germans as our enemy.” Harrison views the German soldiers as suffering the same indignities as the Canadians and the British soldiers. For Harrison, a soldier is a soldier, regardless of what army he serves. He

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399 Harrison, 6.
400 Harrison, 36.
describes the purpose of life in the trenches as a constant fight to survive and get as much food as possible. Harrison summarily dismisses the concept of the troops bonding as a band of brothers, declaring it something made up by journalists for the public’s consumption, and perhaps comfort. There is probably some truth to his assertion, in spite of its negative tone. High casualty rates in battle along with the practice of regularly cycling soldiers in and out of the trenches for rest breaks may not have afforded soldiers with as many opportunities to form close attachments. In addition, many may not have wanted to form close attachments to avoid the pain that the loss of friends would bring. This is in contrast to the more idealistic Edwin Abbey, who worried that he would not be good enough to lead his men, who spoke reverently about his religion upon which he clearly depended, and whose letters to his parents speak regularly of the higher purpose of the war as a fight to save democracy. While Harrison notes they have all prayed during bombardments, he questions how anyone who has been through what the troops serving in the trenches have endured will be able to return to peacetime religion. The three men examined here, Smith, Abbey, and Harrison approached the war in very different ways. Smith took a more pragmatic approach to the war, concentrating on how to do his job efficiently. Abbey, an idealist, seemed almost resigned to making the ultimate sacrifice with his life. Harrison appears angry and bitter in his memoir, someone who fought to stay alive while endeavoring to exhibit little concern, at least outwardly, for either side.

That is not to say that Harrison did not feel anguish and pain at what he saw and experienced. At times, the death of a particular man would hit him in unexpected ways. He questioned the death of Cleary, who was an office clerk in civilian life, asking why tears choked him at the sight of Cleary’s fatal head wounds, even though, as he noted, he had already seen
hundreds, perhaps thousands of other men die.\textsuperscript{401} The intent of Harrison’s book is to present a candid portrait of the life and viewpoint of the soldier in the trenches, rather than a glamorized depiction of battles and brave deeds. The title of the book, \textit{Generals Die in Bed}, was part of a conversation that Harrison recollects following a company inspection by their remote and seemingly out of touch commanding general.\textsuperscript{402}

Harrison also recounts a final indignity to the enlisted men that occurred after he suffered a foot wound and awaited transport to a hospital in England. A young German officer, a prisoner of war, was loaded onto a train car full of enlisted men, including Harrison. This German officer, who spoke perfect English, indignantly requested that the orderly retrieve the commanding officer. The German requested that he receive placement in a car with officers only, and to the astonishment of the men present, their commanding officer granted the request.\textsuperscript{403} Therefore, as Harrison describes, even prisoners of war could make demands, as long as they were officers. For Harrison, this demonstrated that in the end, there really was no difference between the Canadians, British, or Germans. Each army had enlisted men, officers, and generals, and each understood his place in the military hierarchy and the class system.

\textbf{Non-white Men in a White Man’s Army}

\textbf{Canadian First Nation Troops}

When Canada entered the First World War, the Canadian Militia proudly stated that it routinely “embraced a variety of races, creeds and classes from coast to coast” with an average of close to 50,000 men training with their various local militias each year.\textsuperscript{404} However, the force Canada prepared to send to Europe represented a much more exclusive, all-white design. Immediately,

\textsuperscript{401} Harrison, 88-89.
\textsuperscript{402} Harrison, 96.
\textsuperscript{403} Harrison, 173-174.
\textsuperscript{404} Duguid, 46 & 49.
concerns arose about enlisting First Nation men, “on the ground that the Germans might not observe the usages of war towards them.”\textsuperscript{405} This may have reflected outrage in Canada, the United States, and Britain over the stories of German atrocities against civilians in Belgium, or more likely, it served as the rationale to maintain a white only military. Because of such concerns, First Nation volunteers initially faced exclusion from the CEF. However, this changed out of necessity as troop requirements increased dramatically throughout 1915. Mounting casualties suffered at Ypres, Festubert, and Givenchy drove the need, and by 1916, Canada faced the task of doubling the size of the CEF from 250,000 to 500,000 men.\textsuperscript{406} It could no longer afford to exclude any able-bodied volunteers, regardless of their race or ethnicity. First Nation communities and their leadership viewed the war as an excellent opportunity to prove their loyalty and value to Britain and Canada in the hopes of achieving greater equality for their people.\textsuperscript{407} Both Ottawa and London received requests from several band councils and individuals pointing to military service as a means to attain enfranchisement and other rights.\textsuperscript{408}

The majority of interactions and treaties generally took place directly between First Nation peoples and Britain, not Canada. The two had close and longstanding bonds dating back to the earliest settlement days, so indigenes Canadians wanted to volunteer to help Britain. Not a coincidence, by October 1915, the British War Office began inquiries about the ability and need to raise troops among the indigenes peoples throughout the Empire, and in December 1915, First Nation peoples gained official acceptance in the CEF.\textsuperscript{409} Ultimately, First Nation hopes for greater equality through war service never came to fruition. While the Canadian military

\textsuperscript{405} Duguid, 49.
\textsuperscript{407} Winegard, 7-8.
\textsuperscript{408} Winegard, 132.
\textsuperscript{409} Winegard, 54.
accorded indigenes veterans with the same benefits as its white soldiers, the Department of
Indian Affairs, rather than the Soldier Settlement Board, maintained responsibility for
administering their benefits. This placed First Nation veterans in an unequal position with
white veterans. Additionally, the goal of the Canadian government for its indigenes population
was always assimilation. Deputy Minister of the Department of Indian Affairs, Duncan Campbell
Scott, believed the war would accelerate this process, with the returning indigenes veterans
leading the change. This never occurred.

**African Americans who served with the CEF**

As with First Nation men, black volunteers faced mostly outright refusal at the start of the
war, although there was no specific order precluding their acceptance in the CEF. For the first
two years of the war, a few scattered black volunteers received permission to enlist based on the
preference of local commanders. While black leaders in Canada pressed for the formation of a
black combat unit, and scattered groups of volunteers continued to make attempts to enlist,
Ottawa tried to avoid the issue for as long as possible. Minister of Militia General Sam Hughes
reportedly favored a black only regiment as a last resort, and he had no objections to individual
enlistments. In late 1915, Hughes issued orders declaring approval of black enlistments, and he
initiated an investigation after the 104th Battalion had refused to accept twenty black volunteers.
Nevertheless, dismissal of the Militia Minister’s orders frequently occurred at the local level. A
number of commanders made it clear that they did not want black and white soldiers serving
together in the same unit. In the early twentieth century, racism was as prevalent and systemic in
Canada as it was in the United States. As with many Canadian First Nation councils, some

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410 Winegard, 153.
African American race leaders thought the war presented opportunities. In particular, African American activist W.E.B. Du Bois expressed in his writings at this time optimism that as a result of the war, justice would prevail with a new world order emerging based on greater equality for all people.\textsuperscript{412} Undoubtedly, some of the African Americans who crossed the border to Canada in an attempt to enlist with the CEF had heard his message.

The Canadian government’s initial refusal to enlist black soldiers also wavered as the war progressed, with additional troops desperately needed both for fighting, as well as for other support units. The CEF’s No. 2 Construction Battalion based in Pictou, Nova Scotia eventually received authorization on July 5, 1916 to take these black volunteers out of necessity as military requirements reached critical levels in 1916 and 1917.\textsuperscript{413} These black Canadians, along with some African Americans headed to France, but they would not see combat. The battalion, containing 624 men comprised of nineteen white officers and 605 enlisted ranks, sailed from Halifax, Nova Scotia on March 28, 1917 and landed in Liverpool, England ten days later after a perilous Atlantic crossing.\textsuperscript{414} The No. 2 Construction Battalion received assignment to the Jura Mountains on the French and Swiss border in early May, joining the Canadian Forestry Corps. It was a calculated move on the part of the Canadian Ministry of Overseas Military Forces to place the company in a French location without strict racial policies.\textsuperscript{415} This lack of racial policies traced back to the French Revolution of 1789 and the advent of “a republican culture that demanded respect for basic human freedom and rights.”\textsuperscript{416} While these ideals and the reality of

\textsuperscript{414} Ruck, 20.
\textsuperscript{415} Winegard, 81.

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life for French indigenous subjects often differed, placing the battalion here provided Canadian military leaders with some reassurance that fewer racially motivated incidents would take place. As the war dragged on, some of the men in the battalion “were eventually assigned to line units and participated in trench combat.” Prejudice towards blacks proved to be as strong in the CEF as in the American Expeditionary Force. Any attempts to discuss assimilating black troops into white units continued to face stiff resistance from officers worried about the reactions of the almost exclusively white troops. There were small numbers of Asian and First Nation troops interspersed in the CEF, but not significant enough to counter the white-only culture of the corps.

While the No. 2 Construction Battalion may not have been what these volunteers initially had in mind, they enthusiastically enlisted nonetheless. Most of the nineteen African Americans identified in the sample enlisted in Toronto (13), with others enlisting in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Nova Scotia. How did the Canadian military identify American-born black volunteers since the Attestation form does not contain a line specifically labeled as Race? Instead, the official completing the form indicated his own interpretation of the volunteer’s race on the line for Complexion. Various words appear on this line indicating that these were black volunteers. Of nineteen individuals identified from the 1,000-enlistee sample, two received notations as ‘dark’ with seventeen labeled as ‘colored’. Many of the Attestation forms had the designation ‘No. 2 Construction Battalion” stamped on them, which served as code that these were black recruits. It was not standard practice to put the name of the battalion or unit the enlistee would serve in on this form. It happened occasionally, but not as systematically as for the No. 2 Construction Battalion. The designation of their battalion on the forms served as an indirect form of racial identification and discrimination, as it was common knowledge that only black soldiers served

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417 Ruck, 20.
here. Most of the men (12 of 19) analyzed came directly from the United States to Canada to volunteer. Detroit had the most volunteers at ten. Also identified were Chicago (1) and Newburgh, New York (1). One volunteer listed no local address, and six listed Canadian addresses. The nineteen men were born in states as diverse as New York, Alabama, Texas, Maryland, Nebraska, and Missouri. Many had likely fled the Jim Crow laws of the South in hopes of greater freedom. Hundreds of thousands of African Americans moved North during the early years of the war, with the black population of Chicago more than doubling between 1910 and 1920. Other northern cities, such as Detroit, experienced similar growth.

**Detroit to Windsor in Ten Minutes**

**Charles Battle** lived in Detroit, Michigan at the time of his enlistment at Windsor, Ontario on January 27, 1917, a few months before the United States entered the war. Detroit and Windsor are less than a ten-minute drive and a few miles apart from each other. Battle was born in Richmond, Ray County, Missouri in 1877 making him thirty-nine years old at the time of his enlistment, somewhat older than the age of the average volunteer. Battle listed his mother, Mrs. May Webster, also of Missouri as his next of kin. He indicated his occupation as laborer and his marital status as single. The second page of Battle’s Attestation Form lists his complexion as colored, implying that he was African-American, and he passed the fitness examination. He arrived in England on the S.S. *Southland* on April 7, 1917, subsequently transferring to France on May 17, 1917, serving in the No. 2 Construction Battalion.

Battle had trouble soon after arriving in France. His service record indicates that he forfeited five days’ pay on May 21, 1917 for a problem with rations and another twenty days’

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418 See Appendix 3 for further details.
420 Library and Archives Canada, RG150, Accession 1992-93, Box 511-18.
pay on June 6, 1917 for being drunk in camp. It seems questionable as to why Battle had two incidents in such a short period. This punishment leaves open the question if his race was an issue with the all-white officers, and whether discipline in the battalion was particularly strict in the hope of avoiding any racial incidents. It is noteworthy that five Windsor, Ontario First Nation recruits lodged complaints about excessive drinking and gambling taking place in the No. 2 Construction Battalion, and the men asked for an immediate transfer. No other First Nation volunteers ever joined the battalion. Often, idleness and boredom led to activities like drinking and gambling among the troops to pass the time. Even if work during the daytime was plentiful and arduous, this still left time at night for the troops to seek diversions.

Battle had no further issues noted in his record until August 2, 1917, when he forfeited four days’ pay for striking a cannonade with an axe. By early 1918, the notations in his record indicate no further issues, and he received fourteen days of leave on August 24, 1918. Battle may have experienced issues initially with his officers due to his race, which then lessened once they saw him work and got to know him better. The early disciplinary actions may have been the result of officers seeking to establish and maintain strict order in the battalion based on their own racial fears. However, Charles Battle left no written records to tell his side of the story. Battle passed his health examination upon his return to Canada and received his discharge at London, Ontario on January 31, 1919, after serving for two years.

**Baltimore and Saskatoon – A World Apart**

Born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1890, Charles Elmer Brown noted his residence as Saskatoon, Saskatchewan at the time of his enlistment there on September 13, 1916. Brown declared his grandmother, Mrs. Elizabeth Richardson of Baltimore, Maryland as his next of kin.

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421 Winegard, 80.
422 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1128-23.
He listed his occupation as sailor and rigger, which was common around the Baltimore harbor area. However, sailor and rigger is not an occupation found in an inland city like Saskatoon, indicating that Brown had only recently arrived to volunteer. In addition, Brown noted he was the sole support of his grandmother on his Particulars of Family form H.Q. 54-21-23-53. He notes on the form that his grandmother raised him, a somewhat unusual notation in a service file, and that his father was living in Baltimore as well. Mrs. Richardson received a $20.00 per month allotment from her grandson’s pay. Given these circumstances, it is likely that Brown listed Saskatoon as his place of residence because he believed having a Canadian address was necessary to enlist in the CEF.

As with Charles Battle, Charles Elmer Brown received assignment to the No. 2 Construction Battalion. The second page of Brown’s Attestation Paper lists his complexion as ‘Dark’, indicating that he was African American. Again, the form does not specifically ask for race or ethnicity. Early twentieth century Canada contained a predominately-white population, so Canadian officials probably did not see a need to ask this question. Additionally, black immigration to Canada was discouraged at the time. For example, in 1910, a group of black farmers in Oklahoma made inquiries about relocating to Canada because of the impact of extreme racism in the United States. The Edmonton Municipal Council even requested that the central government in Ottawa put a stop to any black immigration to Canada. Although unable to get any legislation passed formally stopping this immigration, the government of Canada resorted to using informal means instead. It sent agents to Oklahoma to hold public meetings with the black farmers to dissuade them from wanting to immigrate. Those who ventured to immigrate dealt with daunting medical and character examinations, which served as the basis for

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frequent denials. As indicated by the Canadian Council for Refugees, “Of more than 1 million Americans estimated to have immigrated to Canada between 1896 and 1911, fewer than 1,000 were African Americans.” The population of black Canadians was not substantial either. The Canadian military did not anticipate any black volunteers to the CEF, either Canadian or American, but with the country’s small population and significant on-going troop needs, the military could ill afford to turn any willing men away. However, those black Americans and Canadians who volunteered only received assignment to the non-combat No. 2 Construction Battalion.

Brown also experienced some problems similar to the ones experienced by Charles Battle. Brown sailed from Halifax on March 25, 1917 and transferred from England to France on May 17, 1917. On July 18, 1917, he received a sentence of seven days for drunkenness. No further issues appeared for almost exactly one year, with Brown forfeiting one-day’s pay on July 4, 1918. On October 10, 1918, he forfeited another two-day’s pay. No reasons appear in his service file for these forfeitures. In addition, Brown spent thirty-two days in the hospital from June 11, 1918 to July 12, 1918; however, his service file does not disclose the reason for his hospitalization, but he obviously recovered. His demobilization health examination found him to be “physically fit having received no impairment or disability in service”. Charles Elmer Brown received his discharge in London, Ontario on February 7, 1919 when the No. 2 Construction Battalion returned to Canada. He indicated his return place of residence as Baltimore, Maryland. Brown’s service file also indicated he received a war service gratuity.

Volunteering and Family Obligations

Percy Dabney also joined the No. 2 Construction Battalion, and page two of his Attestation Paper lists his complexion as Colored, an indication that he was African American. Born in Chicago in 1891, Dabney resided in Detroit with his wife, Martha Dabney, when he enlisted in Windsor, Ontario on January 29, 1917. The couple had no children, as per the enlistment forms. It was somewhat unusual for a married man to enlist; however, not having children made the choice to volunteer less complicated. Dabney listed his occupation as Chauffeur. His Form of Will contained in his service file dated March 5, 1917 bequeathed all of his real estate to his wife Martha. His wife’s address appeared as Windsor, Ontario, indicating that she joined her husband there, as it is only a few miles from Detroit. Also indicated as family are his father, Henry Dabney, who resided at the Old Soldiers Home in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and his mother Minnie Stephens, who resided in Detroit. Dabney also noted a life insurance policy he had with Metropolitan Life on his Particulars of Family form. Percy Dabney went Absent without Leave (AWL) on March 19, 1917, less than two weeks after he completed his Form of Will. The service file indicates that his pay ceased, but there is no further indication of what happened next. Percy was close to finishing his training and may have been about to ship overseas. He may have experienced second thoughts about the commitment he made and decided instead to return to the United States with his wife.

A Thorough Process

Even as the war proceeded for a second, third, and fourth year, the CEF maintained high standards regarding the health of enlistees and kept careful records of each volunteer with few exceptions. The second page of the Attestation form provided a detailed description of each enlistee, including complexion, eye and hair color, height, girth, distinctive marks and religious

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425 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2255-46.
denomination. Enlistees answered many of the questions on the form, such as religious denomination. However, other questions primarily reflected the observations of the medical officer who completed that section of the form. The analysis of the 1,000 Attestation forms revealed that these medical reviews were extensive and precise for all volunteers. Carefully noted on the enlistee’s paperwork were all scars, tattoos, and even the smallest distinguishing marks. Moreover, as discussed previously, notations about race occurred in a roundabout way. The Canadian Expeditionary Force was a white man’s army by design, with others allowed in on an exception basis only with separate assignments.

The Canadian military maintained consistently strict physical requirements for CEF enlistees, including both soldiers and nursing sisters. These standards do not appear to have changed even as the war continued and the need for additional troops grew as well. Apparently, some questions existed about the Canadians maintaining lower standards for acceptance in the CEF. A 1933 inquiry from Eleanor Herrington, Secretary for the British Library of Information in New York, requested to know if the acceptance standards regarding physical requirements were the same for the Canadian Expeditionary Force and the American Expeditionary Force.426 In response to this inquiry, Colonel A. F. Duguid assured Dr. A.G. Doughty, Deputy Minister in the Department of Public Archives in Ottawa, recipient of the inquiry, that indeed the standards were the same for both even though considerable variation existed in the application forms used by the two countries. In reviewing the sample set of CEF Attestation forms, it was apparent that this was an accurate assessment. The physical examinations detailed on the forms appear to have been extremely thorough, with even the smallest scars categorized, as well as a myriad of

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426 Duguid, Library and Archives Canada, RG24, Vol. 1753, Page 1, File DHS 7-25. Letter dated June 7, 1933 from Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid to Dr. A.G. Doughty, C.M.G., Deputy Minister, Department of Public Archives, Ottawa, ON.
physical characteristics, and any surgeries and vaccinations. Additionally, the CEF service files often contained extremely detailed medical records for any soldiers or nursing sisters suffering a wound or illness during their service.

**Conclusion**

The young American men who journeyed to Canada to volunteer with the Canadian Expeditionary Force before the United States entered the war in 1917 did so for many reasons, ranging from youthful adventure-seeking to a desire to protect democracy, and as a means of entering adulthood. The close ties at this time between large segments of the population in North America and Great Britain provided all the reason many needed for answering Britain’s call for assistance. Some practical reasons may also have influenced whether a volunteer enlisted with the Canadians or the British. It was inexpensive and much easier for an American to cross the border at one of several points between the United States and Canada to enlist. Among the easiest and as noted earlier, was the ten-minute ride from Detroit to Windsor, Ontario to enlist. Many volunteers traveled from Seattle to Vancouver or Victoria, British Columbia and from areas in New England to Toronto or points in Nova Scotia. One other factor also made the CEF more attractive to some volunteers. The CEF paid better than the British Army, including the provision of a monthly separation allowance to families of enlisted men of $20, moving up to as much as $60 for the family of a colonel. In addition, “permission was given to all ranks to assign not more than four-fifths of their monthly pay to relatives”, so in a sense, this made serving a viable employment option. For someone supporting a parent, as in the case of Raymond Chandler, this allowance could be a deciding factor. As further assurance that the families of soldiers away on duty were properly taken care of, an order was set on April 1, 1915;

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427 Duguid, 54.
428 Duguid, 54.
which stated, “all on whose account separation allowance was to be paid were required to assign one-half of their pay to their dependents.”

Men were not the only volunteers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Women were also eager to do their part serving as nurses in England and on the Western Front. As the war progressed, and the need for skilled nursing escalated, nurses found themselves serving very close to the actual combat. Some of these women volunteers were born in the United States, and an examination of their service records and personal stories follows.

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429 Duguid, 54
Chapter Five:

American-born Women who served with the Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC)

“We had 1400 beds last summer and only 73 nurses, and some ill always. In the operating room sometimes as many as 80 major operations were performed in one day and only four sisters; four tables going all the time.” - From “A Canadian Nurse in France” 

“The raid lasted two hours, more than one aeroplane coming down so low as to be able to employ machine guns upon those engaged in the work of rescuing the wounded from the burning hut. ...The casualties that night at No. 7 Canadian General Hospital amounted to upwards of 50 killed and 50 wounded among the staff – among the killed, was one nursing sister, and among the wounded seven nursing sisters, two of whom subsequently died...” - Report of the Ministry, Overseas Military Forces of Canada, 1918

Women who served – Nursing Sisters

The First World War brought unintended and positive consequences for women serving in the Canadian military. The fact that they were formally trained, professional nurses and officers with ranks and pay equal to that of men marked a significant step forward for women in the early twentieth century. Popular imagery of nurses during the war mostly shows cheerful women in clean uniforms tending wards full of seemingly barely injured soldiers. The reality was far different with nursing sisters taking care of horribly injured men, assisting in field operating rooms, and working for hours on end with no respite. On occasion, their field hospitals suffered air raids with some injured or killed. This was harsh duty for sure. The Canadian military was progressive in accepting nurses as regular members of its military, while in some respects it was still reflective of the times. Calling nurses “sisters” was an attempt to categorize them as safe and proper. It was against the societal norms of the early twentieth century for a woman to have physical contact with a man other than her husband. Before the war, it was unheard of for respectable young women to do things such as replace dressings on all parts of the

430 “A Canadian Nurse in France,” The American Journal of Nursing, June 1, 1917, Volume 17, 790.
body or help a man bath and change clothing. Labeling these women as “nursing sisters” made them appear more family-like and made their role more acceptable to the men they were treating and the people on the home front. As this chapter shows, the work of these nurses, both in the field and at hospitals behind the lines, was highly valued. It is important in a work such as this to show that interest in serving in the war with the Canadian military was not limited to white men alone. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, some African American men also volunteered and some American-born women did as well. For the women, it was limited to white women only, as they were the only ones with access to the training necessary to become nurses.

This chapter examines, for the first time, a sample of American-born women serving as nursing sisters in the Canadian military during the First World War. All of the nurse’s records, regardless of their birthplace, remain mostly buried in the archives. Women did not tend to write memoirs and books about their wartime experiences as many men did. These nurses worked behind the scenes, and reflective of the times, they downplayed the value of their accomplishments. However, some recent works such as Cynthia Toman’s book, *Sister Soldiers of the Great War: The Nurses of the Canadian Army Medical Corps* and Christine E. Hallett’s *Veiled Warrior: Allied Nurses of the First World War* are bringing more of their individual stories and their work to light. The motivations of the American-born women volunteers differed from the more politically and ideologically oriented reasons offered by many of the American-born men who enlisted in the CEF. For these professional nurses, their reasons for enlisting centered more on a strong desire to use their skills to help and support the fighting men.

Nurses were an integral part of the medical corps from the start of the First World War. These women volunteers served in a variety of short-term and longer-term hospital facilities in Canada, England, and France. They traveled across the Atlantic under dangerous conditions and
faced their fair share of the horrors of war once they arrived. The crosses painted on top of the hospitals they served in near the battlefields of France did not guarantee safety from bombs dropped by enemy airplanes. Nurses frequently toiled while wearing heavy masks to protect them from the poisonous gas that drifted to their field hospitals from the battlefield. However, despite these conditions, nurses continued to volunteer, although their numbers were never close to the actual need. There simply were not enough formally trained, professional nurses available to meet the tens of thousands of battlefield casualties. A number of American-born women, graduate nurses, enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force as officers in the Medical Corps, formally referred to as Nursing Sisters. The term “sister” was a reference to earlier times when women in religious orders provided much of the medical care.

Until the latter part of the nineteenth century women providing medical care, whether for their own families or as members of religious orders, generally did so without formal medical training or education. In the United States, Clara Barton raised the profile of nursing during the Civil War. As a volunteer, she served directly in battle zones with the Union Army. Barton worked tirelessly to identify casualties and ensure that hospitals received vital supplies. In the United States, although approximately 2,000 women served as nurses during the Civil War with both Union and Confederate forces, they were not official members of the military and ultimately just dispersed and went home after the war, leaving few written records. Following the war, Barton successfully led the establishment of the American Association of the Red Cross in 1881. Unrelated to Barton’s efforts in the United States, Canada founded its own branch of the

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Red Cross in 1896. The Red Cross played a significant role in relief efforts during the First World War, albeit one geared toward volunteers.

By the First World War, a professional nurse was one who had earned a diploma from a formally recognized nursing school. However, the cadre of professional nurses remained relatively small, with informally trained nurses continuing to provide a significant amount of care. This was the case in Britain, Canada, and the United States in 1914. While the Canadian military only accepted professional, graduate nurses, the other Allied military nursing services were different. These nursing services combined well-trained professional nurses, volunteers with some training, and “confident but largely untrained lady-nurses.”\footnote{Christine E. Hallett, \textit{Veiled Warriors: Allied Nurses of the First World War}, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 18.} The British had formed voluntary aid detachments (VADs) in 1909 to provide nursing services to the military. During the war, women in Britain’s elite classes effectively governed the VADs, providing these women with a significant amount of control over nursing services. The VADs worked side by side with professional nurses performing simple but important duties, including comforting patients, bathing them, keeping the wards clean, emptying bedpans, etc. In the early twentieth century, scientific advances in germ theory made the prevention of infection a key part of nurse’s work, with the volunteers serving a vital role in assisting with this process.\footnote{Hallett, \textit{Veiled Warrior: Allied Nurses of the First World War}, 85.} On the medical front, antibiotics did not yet exist, so nurses served as the first line of defense against infection.

Nursing, whether professional or volunteer, provided women with the chance to play a role in the war effort near the front lines. War zones were previously for men only, so nursing in the First World War gave women an opportunity to break down stereotypes that labeled women as weak by allowing them to demonstrate their competence under extremely harsh situations. In
the Canadian Army Medical Corps, the lieutenant/nursing sister rank was different enough to avoid conflict and maintain clear gender lines, particularly because nursing sisters had no authority over anyone or anything beyond the hospital wards, which “ensured that no woman would have authority over a military man beyond the wards.”436 Still, this represented progress for women. In Canada, war propaganda encouraged both men and women to participate in the war effort, and enlistment in the Canadian Army Nursing Corps provided good pay and status.437 The civilian job opportunities and the pay level could not compete with what the military offered. Social theories had also evolved by the early twentieth century. Citizen soldiers, as opposed to professional ones, fought the First World War. Offering good medical care became a vital component in attracting these volunteers who viewed it as a “form of social wage earned in service to their country.”438 This made nursing services critical to the military. It also followed a global trend toward humanitarianism that began in the late nineteenth century, embodied by the International Red Cross’s goal to “secure neutral aid for wounded soldiers at war…”439

**The Professionalization of Nursing**

In Britain, women proved their ability to serve as nurses during the Crimean War, which ended in 1856.440 The legendary work of Florence Nightingale to professionalize nursing both during the Crimean War and after, as a consultant to the British War Office, was as much a fight to gain recognition for the competence of women in nursing as it was to establish standards for sanitary conditions in military field hospitals in order to reduce hospital deaths. Nightingale’s

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438 Cynthia Toman, 12.
439 Irwin, 14.
440 Nicholson, 33.
fight was not an easy one as she faced strong opposition, particularly from military officials who found that her requirements for maintaining acceptable sanitary conditions in field hospitals and soldier barracks required changing many of their long-standing military practices. Most important to the military, such changes required better building codes, a key part of which was improved waste management processes. Taking such actions meant increased costs. Public enthusiasm for Nightingale’s work led to the establishment of a fund, which enabled the founding of the Nightingale School of Nursing at St. Thomas’s Hospital in England in 1860. Florence Nightingale firmly believed that nursing required special training schools, which should have strict standards for both admittance and the course of study. The intention was to train nurses who were also able to go out and train others in the field. Graduates of the Nightingale School of Nursing became superintendents and staff in British hospitals as well as overseas, including the United States. Nightingale’s school and training techniques contributed significantly to a trend already underway aimed at improving medical services in hospitals, with the availability of well-prepared nurses as one critical component. In 1873, Bellevue Hospital in New York established its own nursing school based on the Nightingale model and intended it to serve as a model for other nursing schools in the United States. The first superintendent for this school was a Nightingale School of Nursing graduate, with two of Canada’s first nursing sisters receiving their training at Bellevue’s nursing school.

During the Spanish-American War in 1898, the need for trained nurses emerged again, with over 1,100 women serving as nurses in the United States Army Nurse Corps Division, even though the division still failed to receive recognition as a formal part of the United States

441 Nickolson, p 15.
442 Toman, 7.
443 Nicholson, p 16.
Army. At the beginning of the war, the surgeon-general expressed concern that volunteers, particularly those from Clara Barton’s Red Cross, might “disrupt battlefield discipline” and prove “an encumbrance” rather than serve a vital role within their operations. This led Barton and the Red Cross to shift its efforts more to noncombatants. Generally, views on the value of humanitarian assistance were changing and becoming more favorable in the civilian world of the late nineteenth century. However, the military establishment generally remained much slower to accept change. From the military’s viewpoint, civilian volunteers often got too close to the battlefield. Moreover, the volunteers frequently were women. This potentially made the military responsible for their safety, a role it did not wish to play. In addition, leaders of these volunteer groups might believe they could challenge military authority or make requests.

For Canada, the outbreak of the South African or Boer War in 1899 meant that Canada would participate as part of the commonwealth of nations of the British Empire. The Canadian Militia established the Army Medical Department in June 1899, but it did not include a branch for nursing. However, as in the Crimean, American Civil, and Spanish-American wars, nurses once again played a vital role in military medical care, which added to the growing belief that a formal military nursing service was necessary. The Canadian Nursing Service came into being on August 1, 1901. Nursing sisters in the Canadian Nursing Service were under military control and held military rank, something that was not the case in Britain. One of four Canadian nursing sisters initially sent to South Africa was Georgina Fane Pope, who graduated from New York’s

444 Nicholson, p 33.
445 Irwin, 27.
446 Irwin, 27.
447 http://thecommonwealth.org/our-history Although the formal establishment of The Commonwealth did not occur until 1949, the term “Commonwealth of Nations” can be traced back to a statement by Lord Rosebery during an 1884 trip to Australia. Rosebery would later become British Prime Minister (1894-1895).
448 Nicholson, p 33.
Bellevue Hospital Training School. In February 1900, Canadian-born Margaret Clotilde Macdonald, who graduated from the New York City Hospital Training School and served with the United States in the Spanish-American War, arrived in South Africa with several additional Canadian nurses. Macdonald would go on to become matron-in-chief of the Canadian Nursing Service during the First World War. For the nursing profession, the impact Florence Nightingale carried to North America strongly influenced the development of nursing schools in the United States and Canada, although the need for professional nurses was already growing in the civilian world. Pope and Macdonald’s decision to attend nursing schools in the United States is another example of the almost transparent nature of the border between the United States and Canada at this time. For these two women, the high quality of formal nursing training in the United States proved the deciding factor, not whether it occurred in the United States or Canada. In 1904, the nursing corps, designated to consist of twenty-five nursing sisters, became part of the Reserves system as a supplement to the regular military if the need arose. The new reserve corps languished somewhat until Georgina Fane Pope became the first matron-in-chief in 1908. A number of nursing sisters discussed in this chapter also served as members of the militia reserves prior to volunteering with the CANC.

**Canada Recruits Nurses for the First World War**

Even by the early twentieth century, the nursing profession remained relatively new, and professional jobs of any type for women were still not widely accepted. However, based on prior experience during the Northwest Rebellion in 1885 and the Boer War (1899-1902), Canadian military officials recognized the need for trained nurses, and formal recruitment efforts began in

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449 Nicholson, p 36.
earnest soon after Canada entered the war in 1914. The Canadian Army Medical Corps, founded in 1904, always intended to include a nursing service, with the performance of Canadian nurses in the Boer War and intense lobbying by nurse Georgina Fane Pope assuring it.\textsuperscript{451} Moreover, nurses were eager to respond. Shortly after Canada entered the war upon Britain’s declaration on August 4, 1914, volunteers from throughout Canada, and some from the United States, flooded the Nursing Service with requests seeking to enlist, and the Nursing Service officially mobilized on September 16, 1914.\textsuperscript{452} As an indication of the importance of recruiting nursing sisters, they received an allowance of $150 toward the expense of their required working and dress uniforms, which was the same amount as that allowed for male Officers in the CEF.\textsuperscript{453} This amount increased in January 1915 by an additional $100 after the discovery that the allowance for the British Army was substantially higher.\textsuperscript{454} CAMC nursing sisters held the rank of lieutenant, matrons in charge of hospitals had the rank of captain, and the matron-in-chief held the rank of major. This was justified, in part, based on the higher level of education of nursing sisters.\textsuperscript{455}

Additionally, class issues played a role. It was a requirement that those accepted for formal nursing studies had to be from impeccable social origins, so prevailing thought felt it necessary for the nursing sisters to have a higher standing than the enlisted men they took care of.\textsuperscript{456} Records indicate that 2,003 women enlisted in the Canadian Army Nursing Corps (CANC) and served overseas in England, on the Western Front in France, and in other theaters of the war, including with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force in places like Alexandria, Salonika, and

\textsuperscript{451} Toman, 15.
\textsuperscript{452} Nicholson, p 51.
\textsuperscript{453} Duguid, 53.
\textsuperscript{454} Duguid, 53.
\textsuperscript{455} Shawna M. Quinn, \textit{Agnes Warner and the Nursing Sisters of the Great War}, (Fredericton, New Brunswick: Goose Lane Editions and New Brunswick Military Heritage Project, 2010), 24.
\textsuperscript{456} Quinn, 24.
the northern Greek island of Lemnos. These nurses tended to soldiers wounded in battle, as well as those suffering the illnesses of the season, ranging from gastro-intestinal illnesses in the warm summer months to frostbite and gangrene during the winter months. Weather produced significant numbers of casualties. Torrential spring rains regularly flooded trenches on the Western Front, while a blizzard and a hurricane in Gallipoli during December 1915, followed by heavy rains that “coated flooded trenches with ice half an inch thick” produced over 12,000 weather-related casualties.

The Performance of Nursing Sisters during the First World War

Sir Andrew MacPhail describes the nursing service as an “integral part of the medical services,” noting of the nursing sisters that during the course of the war, “6 were killed or died of wounds; 6 were wounded; 15 were drowned by enemy action at sea; 18 died of disease while serving.” He noted that a large number of nursing sisters received recognition for their service, including 328 who received decorations, with 50 of these from other countries, 160 mentioned in dispatches, and 76 nursing sisters cited to the Secretary of State for War. It was unprecedented for women to receive recognition by the military. MacPhail also writes favorably about the nursing sister’s aptitude for giving anesthetics, a key task for professional nurses. One example he cited was that of Canadian-born Nursing Sister Margaret Parks, M.D. who gave anesthetics at No. 2 Stationary Hospital, No. 1 General Hospital, and at a casualty clearing station. In this case, as a medical doctor, the skills displayed by Nursing Sister Parks are not that surprising. It is noteworthy that Dr. Parks, who clearly declared her occupation as physician

458 Nicholson, 70-71.
460 MacPhail, p. 229-230.
461 MacPhail, p. 228
on her Attestation Papers, did not serve in the Canadian Army Medical Corps as a doctor, enlisting instead as a nursing sister. There is no record of a rejection of Dr. Parks for service as a doctor, even though physicians were chronically in short supply. However, given the strict gender hierarchy of the military, there was absolutely no precedent for enlisting a woman doctor. Placing a male doctor in a lesser role never would have happened. Undoubtedly, Parks’ superiors appreciated her higher-level medical skills, and she worked administering anesthetics at a field hospital. No records are apparent of Dr. Parks performing any other medical procedures generally reserved only for doctors, rather than nurses.

Again, professional careers for women were a relatively new phenomenon, and not widely accepted. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, the medical profession in general was also undergoing changes to improve the competency of its members and increase its professional status. Many practicing physicians of the time had poor training. Scientific advancements drove much of the need to increase the professionalization of physician training. John Barry notes in The Great Influenza that in December 1916, the United States, through the Council of National Defense asked state medical associations to grade physicians as a way to determine how many might be fit for service, and almost half of the practicing physicians in the United States at the time received a grade of “incompetent to serve”. The call from Canada and the United States for trained medical personnel, both doctors and nurses, continued to be a critical need throughout the war and remained so for a time after the signing of the armistice. While the armistice ending the war went into effect on November 11, 1918, it was well into 1919, and in some cases 1920,

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462 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7603-10.
before all military personnel, particularly medical personnel, returned to Canada for demobilization and discharge from the service. Medical personnel, both doctors and nurses, were among the last for demobilization as their work continued after hostilities ended due to high casualty rates and rampant illnesses such as influenza. Many of the soldiers were either too ill or too severely injured to allow movement to transport ships immediately, with many requiring extensive further medical treatment and rehabilitation once they returned to Canada.

American-born Nursing Sisters with the CANC – Demographic Information

Outlined below is demographic information from a small group of nursing sisters born in the United States who served in the Canadian Army Nursing Corps. A review of twenty American-born nursing sisters represents ten different states of birth (California, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, New York, South Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin). Most of these states are within close proximity to the Canadian border. In addition, the local addresses for the nursing sisters and their next of kin indicated on all but one of the forms are in Canada. This is another demonstration of the easily accessible nature of the border with families frequently moving back and forth. One volunteer nursing sister, Maybelle Mullen, was born in Utica, New York, and her next of kin, her mother, lived in Syracuse, New York. Ages of the twenty examined ranged from 23 to 36 with 60% in their twenties and 40% in their thirties. This tracks closely with the overall figures for all First World War CANC nursing sisters at almost 54% in their twenties and almost 42% in their thirties.

Five nursing sisters volunteered in London, England: Gertrude Baker, Mabel Lulu Bell, Mildred Clinch, Eva Godenrath, and Marguerite Reynolds. The Attestation forms for Baker and Clinch indicate that they served previously with the Harvard Unit, a volunteer American group

465 See appendix 4.
466 Toman, 47.
attached to the American Ambulance Hospital and later to a British military hospital in France. At the outbreak of war in summer 1914, many young men from Harvard University were enjoying leisure travel in Europe. The call to provide assistance to the war effort went out quickly and resonated strongly. A unit of surgeons and nurses organized as the Harvard Unit had arrived in France by spring 1915 serving the American Ambulance Hospital, and another with the British Birmingham Hospital by summer 1915. Over four hundred men from Harvard served during the course of the war. Paperwork for M. L. Bell also states that she served with an American unit in France at the French Soldier’s Hospital for nineteen months prior to enlisting with the CAMC. Godenrath’s paperwork only indicates that she was in the Canadian militia, while Reynold’s form lists her as having served for one year at the Birmingham War Hospital, which likely meant she was also a member of the Harvard Unit. Although nineteen of the twenty nursing sisters examined lived in Canada at the outbreak of war, several of them as noted above, immediately joined American-formed volunteer units first, and eventually enlisted with the CAMC. We do not know why these nurses did not first try to enlist in Canada, as the Canadian nursing service was accepting volunteers by September 1914. We do know that some hesitation existed very early in the war regarding accepting American-born men as volunteers in the CEF, although this ended quickly as British demands for additional troops continually increased. This hesitancy to accept volunteers from the United States may have applied to female nurses early in the war as well. The forming of the Harvard Unit received widespread publicity at the time in both the United States and Canada, and offered a viable alternative if the Canadian

467 Library and Archives Canada. RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 370-34 and Box 1802-39.
469 De Wolfe Howe, vii. The book notes that a number of the Harvard men served with the Canadians, including Lawrence Brokenshire, Henry Augustus Coit, Gerald F. Furlong, A.J. Gallishaw, and E. Birney Stackpole.
Army Medical Corps was not inclined to accept American-born nurses. However, such restrictions quickly changed as the war progressed and casualty figures grew, with the demand for more nurses ever more urgent.

Of the nursing sisters reviewed, one enlisted in Calgary, Alberta, and the rest enlisted at various points in the east (Halifax, Kingston, Toronto, Montreal, and Quebec). The enlistment dates for the group were evenly distributed: 1915 (6), 1916 (3), 1917 (6), and 1918 (5). Total Canadian Army Nursing Corps enlistments track very similarly for these four years, roughly breaking as twenty to twenty-five percent each year.472 Nursing Sister Josephine DeLaunay was a widow, Eva Godenrath was married, and the rest listed single on their enlistment forms. It is not surprising that most of the women volunteering were not married. Most of the men volunteering were not married either.473 At this time, married women, particularly those with children, faced almost automatic exclusion from the service. According to the regulations, enlistment was technically limited to single or widowed women, but some evidence suggests that some women neglected to note they were married or married while serving.474 Societal expectations for women at this time required that they be home taking care of their families. Religion followed closely with that found in the analysis of the male enlistees. Of the twenty sets of records reviewed, sixteen were of various Protestant denominations, three were Catholic, and one listed no religion on her form. Once again, their religious affiliations followed closely with the overall CANC enlistments.475 These women all had one common denominator in that all were well-prepared, highly skilled nurses. They variously listed their occupation as graduate nurse, trained nurse, and professional nurse to emphasize their formal training. In contrast, the

472 Toman, 48.
473 See appendix 2.
474 Toman, 50.
475 Toman, 50.
same strict professional and social background requirements did not apply to the majority of men volunteering for the fighting force within the CEF. The largest occupational group noted for men was farmer, one that did not require any formal school-based training. Other frequently cited occupations by men on their enlistment forms included laborer, teamster, miner, cook, mechanic, and lumberman, among others. None of these lines of work required any specialized training or certification either.

In effect, the nurses received pre-screening by virtue of their having attended and graduated from a formal nursing school prior to enlisting. The designation of nursing sisters as officers was a first for women, making them comparable to men enlisting with professional certifications, such as engineers and doctors. Additionally, while the enlistment form required men to state their marital status upon joining, there was no automatic requirement to reject married men. By contrast, it was highly unusual to accept married nursing sisters. This occurred infrequently and only if the woman had no children and her husband was serving in the military as well. The standard for nurses was quite high. They had to be capable of working under difficult conditions for long periods with great skill, while possessing tremendous people skills enabling them to comfort and treat the many wounded and ill soldiers. These women knew upfront that serving as officers in the Canadian Army was groundbreaking, and as such, they were under close watch for any signs of failure. Discussed below are several of these nurses and their records of service in the CANC within the Canadian Army Medical Corps. While their service records do not reflect much in the way of glamour or glory, analyzing even the most seemingly mundane aspects of the records allows us gain a better understanding of these nurses and the strenuous conditions under which they served. This is particularly the case when

476 See appendix 2 and chapter 4, 6.
477 Toman, 209.
examining their medical histories during service, as most wound up suffering some illness. This is not surprising given their continual exposure to soldiers who also suffered a wide range of illnesses in addition to combat injuries. For most examined here, the length of their service is impressive, with some also having volunteer service prior to enlisting in the CAMC.

**Previous Service with the Harvard Unit**

**Gertrude Baker** served for nine months with the Harvard Unit at the BEF’s No. 22 General Hospital in France prior to her return to England and subsequent enlistment with the CAMC in London in April 1916. Baker, born in Caribou, Maine, listed her next of kin, Reverend S.A. Baker, as living in Fredericton, New Brunswick. As with other nursing sisters, $50.00 of her monthly pay went back to Canada, to her next of kin. However, while Fredericton may have been her address when she volunteered with the Canadians, she indicated an address in Lowell, Massachusetts as her place of residence several months before her discharge from the CAMC. This indicates that Baker maintained close ties to the United States, moving back and forth across the border. She was a bit older than most nurses were at thirty-six years old, and her age may have played a role in her ability to travel freely between the United States and Canada. Baker served with the CAMC in England from her enlistment in April 1916 to February 1917 when she received a transfer to France.

Nursing Sister Baker had a series of health issues dating from early 1917 to just prior to her return to Canada in August 1919. She suffered from acute bronchitis, requiring hospitalization at West Cliff Eye & Ear Hospital in Folkestone, England in January 1917. In April 1917, while serving in France, she contracted influenza that sent her to the No. 24 General Hospital in Étaples and then to LeTouquet for rehabilitation. From this point forward, her general

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478 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 370-34, digitized service record B0370-S034.
health remained weak as her service record indicated that she suffered from frequent headaches, nausea, and anemia. She underwent a number of medical tests with hospitalizations in April and May 1918, and again in June 1919. As with other nursing sisters, she moved frequently between hospitals, following the locations of battles. These frequent moves and poor conditions at the hospitals in all types of weather, along with direct contact with soldiers carrying various illnesses from the trenches, likely contributed to many of the health issues experienced by a number of the nursing sisters discussed here. Baker received a medical discharge to Canada on August 8, 1919 due to her anemic condition. Officially “Stricken off Strength” on November 14, 1919, she died, according to her service records, at the age of fifty-six on January 16, 1936. Nursing Sister Baker served with the Canadian military for over four years.

**Mildred Allene Clinch** was born in Evansville, Wisconsin in 1893. She served with the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in the Harvard Unit at the 22nd General Hospital (France) for one year and nine months before she enlisted as a Nursing Sister with the Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) in London on July 8, 1918. Nursing Sister Clinch came to the CAMC with significant wartime experience and official recognition for her work. We do not know why Mildred Clinch made the change. It may have been the higher Canadian pay level or the officer’s status. Prior to joining the CAMC, Clinch was one of a number of nurses who received praise for their work from the British Commander-in-Chief, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, in a list published in the *London Gazette* in late 1917. On her Officers’ Declaration Paper for the CEF, Clinch listed her religion as Baptist, her profession as nurse, and a sister, Mrs. George F. MacCoubrey, who lived in Chamcook, New Brunswick as her next of kin. A review of her

479 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1802-39, digitized service record B1802-S039.
service file shows no illnesses or injuries over the course of her service. This is significant and fortunate as well, considering the numerous illnesses she regularly encountered during her long tenure, including the influenza epidemic at that time. During her demobilization processing in Brighton, England on March 26, 1919, Nursing Sister Clinch passed her physical, and indicated her intention to return to St. John, New Brunswick to reside. Undoubtedly, civilian life would prove no match for the excitement of military service during the war. The work of the nursing sisters saved countless lives and helped many more.

Nursing Sisters Enlisting in England

As discussed above, three other nursing sisters enlisted in London with two of them serving previously with another volunteer group. **Mabel Lulu Bell**, a thirty-four year old graduate nurse born in Oswego, New York, completed her enlistment paperwork on November 27, 1917. Bell’s family resided in Kingston, Ontario, which is only 116 miles from Oswego. We do not know why she left the American volunteer unit, indicated in the medical section of her service record as the “Fitzgerald unit” which she served with in France, but the process of enlisting with the Canadians in London was quite easy. Bell spent the remainder of the war serving in England. The prospect of moving out of France to a hospital in England may have been the deciding factor in the switch from an American group to the Canadian military. She served first at the No. 5 Canadian General Hospital in Liverpool and then to the No. 12 Canadian General Hospital in Bramshott. Better pay may also have been a factor. Her service file indicates that she did not assign a portion of her pay to family in Canada as several other nurses did.

Bell experienced illness, as did other nurses, during her service. On December 13, 1918, she entered the hospital with influenza, and on January 14, 1919, this had progressed into a case

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481 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 619-30, digitized service record B0619-S030.
of severe bronchitis. Her service file contains an extensive medical history and charting of her illnesses. She recovered well from both illnesses and returned to her duties. Mabel Lulu Bell was “Struck off Strength” on April 3, 1919 due to the general demobilization, and she sailed back to Canada on the S.S. Canada on April 10, 1919.

Marguerite Juanita Reynolds was born in California in 1892 but lived in Victoria, British Columbia with her grandmother. We can infer that Reynolds was not married (marital status was not indicated on her paperwork) because her last name was the same as that of her grandmother. Reynolds listed her profession as Nurse and her religion as Church of England. She enlisted in London, England on April 4, 1918, indicating that she had one year of prior Active Militia service at the 2nd Birmingham War Hospital, so this appears to be a re-enlistment, although no prior enlistment record could be located. Reynolds only served in England. She also suffered illness while serving, as did most of the other nursing sisters. Her service records indicate that in November 1918, she suffered from a bout of influenza, which led to a subsequent diagnosis of debility with some hearing loss. Reynolds demobilized on December 9, 1919 and she returned to Victoria, British Columbia.

Early Volunteers in Canada

Josephine DeLaunay enlisted early in the war and completed the standard Attestation Form designed for male enlistees instead of the Officer’s Declaration Paper used later in the war for all medical service applicants. DeLaunay was born in New York City in 1884, and she indicated widow on her Attestation form for marital status, one of only two statuses officially allowed to enlist. She volunteered on November 8, 1915 in Montreal noting her mother, also a

484 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession1992-93/166, Box 2418-44.
Montreal resident, as her next of kin. Payroll records in her service file indicate that her mother had an assignment of $30.00 per month of her salary, which likely means that DeLaunay was her source of support. Nursing Sister DeLaunay served in numerous hospitals for approximately four years. Her discharge due to demobilization took place on July 14, 1919. She served in England and France at the No. 6 General Hospital (Laval University), the Duchess of Connaught Red Cross Hospital (Taplow), Moore Barracks Canadian Hospital (Shorncliffe), No. 6 Canadian General Hospital (France), and No. 14 Canadian General Hospital (Eastbourne). De Launay’s service file shows that she was in good health at the time of her discharge, and there is no indication of any injuries or illness while in service, a frequent occurrence. The CEF and CAMC maintained extremely detailed health records for each enlistee, so documentation would likely exist for any health problems, if they existed.

Emma Frances Elliot, a Professional Nurse, enlisted in Toronto on April 7, 1915.\textsuperscript{485} Elliot, born in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1882, was single, and listed her religion as Presbyterian and her next of kin as her mother, who lived in Port Hope, Ontario. The payroll records in her service file indicate that she assigned $40.00 of her monthly pay of $111.60 to her mother, a widow, for her support. She served for the duration of the war and returned to Canada aboard the S.S. \textit{Olympic} in July 1919. Upon her discharge in April 1920, her file contained the notation, “Medically unfit for further general service.”

Elliot saw five years of service in England and France, and served considerable time in the Mediterranean, passing through Alexandria to Salonika. She likely saw more sectors of the war than most men did. Elliot was serving in France in September 1915. Her service file indicates that she embarked from Alexandria on November 7, 1915 and disembarked in Salonika.

\textsuperscript{485} Library and Archives Canada. RG 150, Accession1992-93/166, Box 2867 - 64.
on November 11, 1915, returning to England in May 1917. She appeared to have few health concerns during her first two years of service, but her file indicates that she had a septic thumb in May 1917 which left her unfit for service for three weeks. She also suffered two bouts of influenza in December 1918 and February 1919 and suffered from acute bronchitis. She had a tonsillectomy in March 1919 and was ill for seven weeks between this operation and the influenza. Again, the introduction of antibiotics, which would have speeded up her recovery, was almost ten years away. This is not surprising, considering her long service in several hospitals under harsh conditions. However, Emma Elliot lived a long life in Canada after the war. A Death Notification/Avis De Décès in her service file from the Canadian Department of Veterans Affairs/Ministère Des Affaires Des Anciens Combattants shows that she died on May 29, 1970 at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto at the age of eighty-eight.

The Other Dangers of War – Illness and Disease

In addition to wounds inflicted by the armaments of war, service in combat zones brought both soldiers and nurses into frequent contact with disease and unsanitary conditions. As part of their duties, “…nurses also tended to men suffering from epidemic illnesses (pneumonia, dysentery, and trench fever), many which were spread through contact with decaying flesh, vermin, and filth in the trenches.”486 One Nursing Sister who experienced more than one illness during her service was Sara Ellis Calhoun, who was born in Tacoma, Washington in 1893 and worked as a trained nurse while living in St. John, New Brunswick at the time of her enlistment in the Canadian Army Medical Corp (CAMC).487 She enlisted at Halifax, Nova Scotia on March 27, 1917, soon before the United States entered the war, noting on her enlistment form that she

486 Quinn, 57.
487 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1389-11, digitized service record B1389-S011.
was Episcopalian and unmarried. Nursing Sister Calhoun arrived in England in April 1917 and subsequently went to France in December 1917. She did not return to England until March 8, 1919. Part of the standard enlistment paperwork, Calhoun completed a Form of Will indicating to whom she bequeathed her real estate, in this case to Margaret Ellis Lawrence, her mother.

Nursing Sister Calhoun served in several military stations and hospitals in England and France, including the Kitchener Military Hospital in Brighton, England, the 7th Canadian General Hospital, and the #1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station. She arrived in France on December 7, 1917 and had assignments in several military hospitals in Northern France. Calhoun went first to the General Hospital in Étaples, then served for several weeks at the Convalescent Home in Le Touquet, and served at the Convalescent Hospital at Étretat before returning to Étaples.

Her medical examination form prepared before she left the service indicates that she was in good health and “fit” with “no disability”. However, the conditions under which Calhoun and other Nursing Sisters served were harsh, bringing her into contact with many soldiers suffering from serious illnesses as well as battle wounds and unsanitary working and living conditions. During her service in France, she injured her finger, contracted two serious illnesses, and suffered residual effects from both illnesses, which required subsequent stays in convalescent hospitals to complete her recovery. It is important to note that these long hospitalizations reflected the standard medical treatments of the time. Calhoun’s service record notes that early in her tour of duty, she contracted diphtheria and was hospitalized in France on August 23, 1917, recovered and was released to return to duty on October 10, 1917, a hospital and convalescent stay of over six weeks. Late in her tour of duty, she contracted influenza in the well-known epidemic that began toward the end of the war. Admitted to Prince of Wales Hospital for Officers, she remained hospitalized from March 8, 1919 to April 1, 1919. From there she
transferred to Canadian Special Hospital in Derbyshire on April 2, 1919 due to her still weakened condition, noted in her file as “debility,” and received a discharge with a clean bill of health on May 5, 1919 for a total stay of 59 days to recover completely. After two years of serving under extremely stressful, exhausting, unsanitary, and hazardous conditions, it is not surprising that Nursing Sister Calhoun contracted influenza, but it was fortunate for her that she eventually recovered, as many at the time did not. Sara Ellis Calhoun sailed to Canada on the Empress of Britain and was “Struck off the Strength” or discharged on June 7, 1919 in Ottawa, Ontario as part of the general military demobilization.

Most of the nursing sisters examined contracted influenza during their service, often leading to other medical problems. One such nursing sister was Elizabeth May Miller, who was born in Saginaw, Michigan. She listed her address at the time of her enlistment as Toronto, Ontario, also the residence of her mother and next of kin, Mrs. Annie Francis Miller. Families frequently migrated back and forth across the border. In this case, Saginaw and Toronto are only 286 miles apart, so likely Miller’s family is an example of this. Miller, born in 1889, was twenty-nine at time of enlistment at the Base Hospital in Toronto on April 14, 1918. She passed her physical for overseas duty on July 18, 1918, and served until her demobilization on August 31, 1919. During her time in the service, Nursing Sister Miller survived a bout of influenza, after spending ten days recovering in King George Hospital. A notation in her service file indicates that she married after returning home.

Later Volunteers in Canada

Gertrude Ethel Comerford was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1893. At the time of her enlistment on April 17, 1917, she lived in Madco, Ontario, as did her parents, with her father

488 Library and Archives Canada. RG 150, Accession1992-93/166, Box 6178 - 32.
listed as next of kin. Comerford volunteered at Kingston, Ontario, noting her religion as Methodist and her occupation as Professional Nurse. She received a declaration of “fit” to serve in the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force following the required medical examination. The week before her enlistment, the CEF had just served a primary role in the victory at Vimy Ridge (April 9-12, 1917), and Canadian national pride was at a fever pitch. This may have influenced Comerford’s decision to volunteer, particularly since she and her parents were living in Canada at the time. The United States had just entered the war on April 6, 1917, but she may not have viewed traveling to the United States to volunteer as a practical alternative when she was already in Canada and it needed volunteers immediately.

Comerford served in England and France for almost two years. Less than six months into her service, her file records Comerford entering West Cliff Eye & Ear Hospital in Folkstone, England on September 30, 1917 for treatment of Vincent’s angina, more commonly known as trench mouth. The term “trench mouth” is associated with the First World War, as the condition appeared frequently among soldiers serving on the front lines. A 1930 New England Journal of Medicine article noted an increase in diagnosis of the disease following the war.489 Best treated today with penicillin, it is a “painful infection with ulceration, swelling and sloughing off of dead tissue from the mouth and throat due to the spread of infection from the gums.”490 The discovery of penicillin did not occur until well after the war in 1928, and Comerford’s file did not discuss her specific course of treatment. However, she remained hospitalized until October 17, 1917, a significant period, as customs of the times dictated. An October 3, 1917 laboratory report

indicated that she tested negative for the Vincent’s angina microorganism. Nevertheless, her service file listed her as debilitated and in need of a leave following the hospitalization.

As with a number of other nursing sisters, Gertrude Comerford assigned $60.00 of her $124.00 monthly pay to her parents back in Canada. At this time, unmarried adult children often provided support for their parents. Comerford embarked from Liverpool, England on August 26, 1919 and disembarked in New York, rather than Canada, on September 4, 1919 aboard the S.S. Celtic. However, her official discharge took place in Ottawa on September 9, 1919. The Struck off Strength form in her service file indicates she planned to return to Madco, Ontario where her parents lived.

Mary McKay was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1893. She listed as next of kin on her Officers’ Declaration Paper her mother, Mrs. Sarah McKay, who resided in Welland, Ontario, which is located in Southern Ontario and is approximately twenty-five miles from Buffalo, New York. Her service file also indicated that she assigned $30 of her pay to Mrs. Alice Murray (formerly Miss Alice McKay), likely a sister, who resided in Niagara Falls, New York. This is another example of a family living on both sides of the border. McKay enlisted on May 7, 1917, listing her profession as Graduate Nurse and her religion as Presbyterian. McKay received clearance, noted as “fit” for overseas service, at Toronto, Ontario on June 19, 1917, and she went on to serve in four hospitals in Canada and England. However, she never made it to France. As with most of the other nursing sisters reviewed, illness also struck McKay during her time in England. She had tonsillitis requiring surgery in November 1918, and suffered

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491 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession1992-93/166, Box 6934 - 16.
a brief bout of pleurodynia, characterized by chest pain or abdominal pain. She demobilized in August 1919.

**A Volunteer Never Sent Overseas**

*Isabel Mitchell Cartwright* was born in Algonac, Michigan in 1887 and was a Graduate Nurse who enlisted later in the war at the Base Hospital in Toronto on April 22, 1918.\(^{493}\) Cartwright was single, listed her religion as Methodist, and lived in Mount Elgin, Ontario. She listed P.J. Mitchell as her foster father and next of kin. It is not clear how or when Cartwright came to be living in Canada, although it likely resulted from whatever happened to her parents. Algonac, Michigan and Mount Elgin, Ontario are only 122 miles apart. Due to her enlistment late in the war, Isabel Cartwright never went overseas, although she was declared “fit” for overseas duty on July 18, 1918. She took ill during her service, even though she never left Canada. Cartwright spent time hospitalized with pharyngitis, a painful inflammation in the back of the throat, which can also affect the tonsils. She entered the hospital on July 6, 1918, receiving a discharge to return to duty on July 15, 1918. Cartwright, who served in Canada only, demobilized on August 31, 1919.

**A Medal Recipient**

*Helen Elizabeth Hansen* enlisted at Kingston, Ontario on January 11, 1916 and received a “fit” to serve designation on her Officers’ Declaration Paper for the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force.\(^{494}\) She was born in East Boston, Massachusetts in 1891, listing her profession as Nurse and her religion as Presbyterian. She listed her aunt, Mrs. M. C. Reikie of Wiarton, Ontario as her next of kin. We do not know if she actually lived with her aunt in Canada or if she listed her address as a means to enlist in the CAMC; however, Nursing Sister

\(^{493}\) Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1555-6.  
\(^{494}\) Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession1992-93/166, Box 4027 - 6.
Hansen had previous militia training as indicated on her enlistment form. Hansen received the Military Medal for distinguished service in the field. The citation issued by the War Office on January 29, 1919 noted, “For gallantry during an enemy air raid at Etaples, May 19/20th, 1918. She worked devotedly in the operating room throughout the period of the severe bombardment, which lasted for two hours. Sister Hansen was ready for any duty, and exhibited qualities of coolness and courage.” She served as an official member of the military in a front line war zone under extremely hazardous conditions, a first-time experience for women. The battle wounded often arrived soon after suffering their injuries. The nurse’s job was to “sustain life, to triage their patients and to convey them to the operating theatre in a state that would permit survival.” Nurses worked to control shock, hemorrhaging, and pain. The concept of shock, not yet well understood in the early decades of the twentieth century, required nurses to take quick action to counteract it with warm blankets, fluid replacement, and oxygen restoration to tissue.

Hansen’s service file does not indicate any illnesses or injuries during her service, which was extremely fortunate considering the conditions she dealt with. Helen Hansen’s demobilization came a bit later on October 31, 1920, after having sailed to Canada on May 5, 1919 aboard the SS Royal George from Liverpool to Halifax. No doubt, her nursing skills served a vital purpose after the cessation of hostilities in helping prepare the many casualties to be able to return home.

The Youngest Nursing Sisters

Beulah Vernice Philip enlisted in Kingston, Ontario on August 14, 1916. She was born in San Juan, Washington in 1893 but lived in Kamloops, British Columbia and listed her father,
who also lived there, as her next of kin. According to her service file, Mrs. Minnie Philip, presumably her mother received a $40 per month allotment from Beulah Philip’s pay. At twenty-three years old, she is one of the youngest of the nursing sisters discussed here. Listing her profession as Professional Nurse and her religion as Presbyterian, she suffered several health setbacks during the beginning of 1917. Philip had rubella (German measles) in January 1917, bronchitis in February, and influenza in March. By the time of Beulah Philip’s discharge due to the demobilization in February 1919, she had served in six hospitals in England and France. She received a War Service Badge and a War Service Gratuity. The nursing sisters of the CAMC received the same service recognitions as men serving in the CEF, a first time occurrence for any military and extremely significant for women’s equality.

Laurie Kimpton Stinson, born in Chicago, Illinois in 1892, listed King Street, Toronto as her address and her mother, who also lived at the same address, as her next of kin. Stinson listed her occupation as Trained Nurse (Graduate), which indicates that she completed a formal course of study, and her religion as Church of England. She enlisted on December 9, 1915 at the Base Hospital in Toronto. Stinson was also twenty-three years old upon enlistment, so she and Beulah Philip represent the youngest of the volunteer nursing sisters examined here.

A Married Nursing Sister and a Casualty of War

Eva Blanche Godenrath and her husband, Percy Francis Godenrath both enlisted in the CEF early in the war, although he enlisted prior to his wife. The Godenraths were married on November 29, 1906. At the time of Percy Godenrath’s enlistment on November 11, 1914, they were living in Victoria, British Columbia, his enlistment site. He was already serving in the

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499 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 3598A-51 and Box 3598A-52.
militia in the 68th Earl Greys out of Prince Rupert, British Columbia. Eva Godenrath enlisted on May 12, 1915 in London, England. Likely, she had traveled overseas to be nearer to her husband. Eva Godenrath was born in Glendale, Kentucky in 1882, and Percy Godenrath was born in Shanghai, China in 1874, suggesting that his parents may have been missionaries. Both listed each other as next of kin on their individual Attestation Papers, and on another form within her service file, Eva Godenrath also lists her mother, Mrs. Hayes Duncan of Seattle, Washington as next of kin. 500 Percy Godenrath’s service file notes that both of his parents were deceased.

One can only speculate as to the reason for Eva Godenrath’s enlistment as a Nursing Sister, particularly since she had already made her way to London at the time of her enlistment. Did she believe that enlisting would allow her to be even closer to her husband, who was serving in France, or did her own desire to use her training to provide much-needed medical assistance drive her enlistment? Both the British and the Canadians were actively recruiting medical personnel, as the need was proving greater than originally anticipated, so she may have responded to advertising for volunteers. As a rule, women accepted for the nursing services were unmarried, either single or widowed without children. The CAMC likely only accepted Eva Godenrath because her husband was already serving and she had no children to care for. The CAMC would not have accepted her if her husband was a civilian or if she had children. However, a number of nurses enlisted “from a deeply personal need to be physically close to beloved fiancés, friends, and relatives as they struggled in the fight of their lives.”501 Godenrath carefully noted her husband’s military rank (sergeant and eventually he received a commission as captain), regimental number (77134), and his battalion, the 30th, when noting next of kin on

500 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession1992-93/166, Box 3598A-51, digitized service record B3598A S051.
501 Quinn, 23.
her enlistment paperwork. CAMC Matron-in-Chief Margaret Macdonald made every effort to assign nurses in proximity to their loved ones when possible, as a means to maintain good morale. However, Macdonald also had a reputation for maintaining a well-run, highly disciplined organization. She set high standards for all CAMC nursing sisters in both their professional and personal conduct.

A review of Eva Godenrath’s service file indicated that she passed the required physical, but her time in the Canadian Army Medical Corps was not without health difficulties, a subject for discussion further on. She served for a little more than eight months, and her discharge documents, dated February 1, 1916, indicated that she was medically unfit, with the reason for her discharge given as “being no longer fit for War Service” as per K. R. O. 1912, Paragraph 392, Section XVI. Also noteworthy is Section 3 of the discharge form, “conduct and character while in the service,” which was listed as “exemplary”. Discharged in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Goednrath listed her intended place of residence when she returned to Canada as Fredericton, New Brunswick, and she received transportation to Fredericton as part of her discharge. She may have preferred to remain on the eastern side of Canada while her husband continued to serve overseas, to be closer to him. Eva Godenrath did live in Fredericton upon her return, while her husband continued to serve in France.

The discharge form contains one other notable entry. In Section 4 “special qualifications for employment in civilian life”, an entry of “nil” appeared rather than nurse. At this time, nursing was still in its infancy in Canada and the United States. The nursing profession faced a difficult environment in which efforts to gain both acceptance and respect remained challenging. Additionally, careers for women, particularly married women, were not widely accepted in

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502 Quinn, 23.
503 Toman, 209.
society and Godenrath was a married woman. However, in Godenrath’s case, she received a medical discharge. Her service record indicates that her condition started in the service due to the “stress of duty” and would affect her ability to earn a living by 75%; in other words, the doctors caring for her determined that it was unlikely she could withstand the stresses of working in the nursing profession under any conditions. The Godenrath case appears to fit the terminology of the day as suffering from a form of “shell shock”, and she was likely not the only nurse during the war to suffer such a condition. Her service file describes it instead as a nervous breakdown, a diagnosis more commonly be applied to a female patient with such symptoms. At the time, the term “shell shock” likely applied only to male soldiers serving in combat, rather than a female nurse serving in a field hospital. This speaks more to the attitudes of the times towards women.

Hospitals were frequent targets for bombing, so nursing sisters certainly did experience the impacts of war firsthand. G.W.L. Nicholson notes that, “About midnight on May 30/31 (1918), German aircraft bombed the hospital. The main building, despite a large red cross painted on the roof, received a direct hit…All in its path were killed outright or buried in the ruins.”

What happened to Eva Godenrath to cause her to serve for such a short time in the CAMC? After enlisting in London, she received an assignment to the Second Canadian Station Hospital in LeTouquet, France. On September 17, 1915, she entered the hospital with a fractured arm described on her medical forms as an accident, and declared invalided, transferred to a hospital in England on October 5, 1915. The service record of her husband Percy, who was also serving in France, indicates that he received a grant of seven days leave on October 30, 1915, likely to visit his wife. The proceedings of a Medical Board convened on November 16, 1915 declared her “permanently” unfit for service both overseas and back in Canada. The form did not

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504 Nicholson, *Canada’s Nursing Sisters*, 94.
indicate that she could even serve in a light duty capacity; she was instead determined to be totally incapacitated. The record notes the following: “while on service at the Le Touquet France (No. 2 Stat. Hosp. Can.) owing to stress of work she developed mental disorder (delusional) and threw herself from a window fracturing the humerus (head). The mental condition persisted in a marked degree for some time after her removal to England. She is weak, nervous, anxious and depressed. In view of her complete mental collapse during service, your board cannot recommend her return to service”. The doctor who first cared for her beginning October 14, 1915 described her as suffering from insomnia, depression, frequent crying spells, and complaints that she had lost control of herself. She began to have auditory and visual hallucinations, with voices prompting her to do things described by the doctor as having a “suicidal color,” which makes her fall from the window causing a broken arm appear to be more than an accident. He describes her as getting progressively better over the next two weeks, which likely owed much to her being away from the war zone in France and back in England at a convalescent hospital. Eva Godenrath was in her early thirties when she enlisted, so she was not young and inexperienced, but the horrors of what she had to cope with during her time in France prompted a period of serious mental illness which rendered her incapable of continuing to serve. The service file describes her as unable to withstand the “stress of excitement,” which is a euphemistic way to describe the terrible conditions the nursing sisters and other medical personnel faced as wave after wave of seriously injured and maimed soldiers were delivered to the hospital for care. Often there was little opportunity to help the wounded, adding significantly to the stress level of the work. The term “stress of excitement” is also one used frequently when referring to negatively to women and their ability to deal with stressful situations. In reality, there was no experience in either Canada or the United States to prepare any of the nursing sisters for what
they would encounter in a war zone. For that matter, there was no experience to prepare the men serving as well. The records indicate that Eva Godenrath officially resigned her commission on February 2, 1916 and returned to Canada. She died there on June 26, 1928 at the age of forty-six.

Eva Godenrath’s husband Percy was forty years old and listed his occupation as a journalist when he enlisted in November 1914. He continued to serve in France until September 28, 1916 and returned on October 5, 1916 to Fredericton, New Brunswick, where his wife had settled once she left the service. His service file shows that he was “finally discharged no commission,” however, he did receive a commission very shortly after he returned to Canada. Percy Godenrath received a lieutenant’s commission on October 7, 1916 and started active duty again in Fredericton. He completed the standard Form of Will assigning all of his real estate to his wife Eva and sailed to London to continue to serve. Percy Godenrath’s certificate of service indicates that he served with the 30th, 16th, 17th, and 236th battalions, the 20th Reserve Battalion, the Canadian War Record Office and Headquarters, and the Overseas Military Forces of Canada. He reached the rank of captain and served in England for almost two years, returning to Canada on May 3, 1919, where he came off the active duty roster as part of the general demobilization in Ottawa on December 31, 1919.

Nursing and the Neutrality of the United States

The story of one Canadian resident nurse born to American parents, Agnes Warner, demonstrates the mobility the nursing profession offered early twentieth century women. Her case is also a window into how one American family came to live in Canada. Warner’s father, Civil War Union Army General Darius Bingham Warner, received an appointment as United States Consul in St. John, New Brunswick in the years immediately following the war.505

505 Quinn, 41-42.
General Warner, an Ohio native, and his Pennsylvania born wife, Nancy Robinson Warner settled in St. John, and by all accounts, the residents quickly accepted the former Union general, not an easy feat. Canada had favored the Confederacy during the war and maintained a wariness of Northern ambitions regarding their country. This watchfulness grew steadily during the American Civil War and increased as the result of three Fenian raids in 1866, 1870, and 1871. Undoubtedly, General Warner must have been a person of high integrity to gain the trust and admiration of the citizens of St. John so quickly. He particularly proved himself invaluable in the aftermath of the Great Saint John Fire of 1877. The fire destroyed over 200 acres of homes and businesses, claimed nineteen dead, and left most of the city’s residents homeless. Almost all public buildings burned down, and the fire destroyed most food supplies. General Warner sent word out to all of his contacts in the United States and set up a temporary office becoming the “general superintendent overseeing the long-term relief committee…” The popular retired general served as United States Consul for twenty-two years and remained in St. John with his family at the conclusion of his career in government service. He and his family had established strong roots in the Saint John community.

The Warners’ daughter, Agnes, was born in St. John in 1872; however, she maintained American citizenship throughout her life. Warner graduated as valedictorian of her McGill University class of 1894, but she then chose to attend the Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing in New York, rather than schools in Saint John or Montreal. It appears that Agnes Warner maintained strong connections in the United States, even though she was born and raised in Canada. When war broke out, she was traveling in Europe with an elderly New York couple,

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506 For further information see chapter one, 19-23 and chapter two, 25-33.
507 Quinn, 42.
508 Quinn, 43.
working as their nurse. After returning to New York with the couple, Warner went back to Europe by herself and served as a volunteer in French military hospitals. She never formally joined any particular group such as the Red Cross, choosing instead to go where she felt the greatest need existed. Warner’s status as a neutral American citizen with no ties to any particular organization provided her with greater freedom to move about to various French locations as she wished. Unbeknownst to Warner, a group of friends in Saint John arranged to publish a book of her letters, entitled *My Beloved Poilus* as a means to raise funds to help pay for medical supplies Warner needed to assist French soldiers and civilians. Warner was in her early forties at the beginning of the war, and, as with many of the nurses discussed here, her health suffered from her wartime experiences. Agnes Warner died in April 1926 at the age of fifty-four. Her burial took place in Saint John, New Brunswick, the city of her birth and youth.

Most of the American-born nurses examined here lived in Canada with their families. The life of Agnes Warner, with her deep Canadian ties while still maintaining her American citizenship, provides another example of the ability to move easily back and forth between the United States and Canada at this time. Warner chose a more unconventional approach than the nurses who enlisted in the Canadian Army Nursing Corps, but they all exhibited a strong need to serve. Their work proved indispensable in this long and devastating war. These nurses made strong impressions on the soldiers they treated. As Christine E. Hallett describes, “Long after the war, men carried with them memories of their times spent in hospital. Nurses were often unaware of how large they had loomed in the lives of their patients.” Simply stated, their work during the war was vital and had a lasting impact.

**Conclusion**

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509 Quinn, 50.
The First World War and the professionalization of nursing both provided women with greater opportunities to expand their experiences and push for greater equality. Class and race played a large role as well, with middle and upper class white women primarily benefiting from these changes. The Canadian military was very progressive for the time, granting nursing sisters officer status and equal pay with men. The individual stories examined in this chapter help us to understand the deep commitment of these women and their need to contribute to the war effort. Women in 1914 had no expectations of going to war, and women did not face conscription as men did in 1917. However, it was quickly apparent that there was a desperate need for nurses and many, including these American-born women, volunteered. A number of these women served for several years due to a chronic shortage of trained nurses. This also chapter shows that a wide range of Americans felt the need to help Britain, including women, and the Canadian military welcomed all of them to its ranks.
Chapter Six

Spring 1917: The United States Enters the War, Vimy Ridge, and the Birth of Canadian Nationalism

“The moral, not less than the material results of this national declaration are incalculable, and civilization itself will owe much to the decision, at which, in the greatest crisis of the world’s history, the people of the great Republic have arrived.” – King George V, April 6, 1917

Canadian Headquarters in France, Friday Evening, April 13 – “The full fruits of the battle of Vimy are ours tonight. The Germans are in full retreat, and the Canadians, advancing as rapidly as the mined and wrecked roads permit, are hard upon their heels.” - Manitoba Free Press, Winnipeg, Saturday, April 14, 1917

The United States Enters the War

This chapter opens with a description of the mood at the “America Day” recognition event at St. Paul’s Cathedral held on April 20, 1917. It serves as a means to demonstrate how relieved Britain was to officially have American assistance. The war was now over three years old with no end immediately in sight. However, April 1917 was already a momentous month as a unified Canadian force had led the successful battle for Vimy Ridge less than two weeks earlier. A Canadian, Sir Arthur Currie, led the Canada Corps for the first time. Some Americans were part of that force and by then, American volunteers had been serving with the Canadian forces for over three years. Also examined is the significance of Vimy Ridge as the trigger event for a strong wave of Canadian nationalism. These two events, the declaration of war by the United States and the Canadian’s success at Vimy Ridge, shifted the power to win the war to the North Americans. The Canadians, a highly efficient and professional fighting force by this point, proved integral in the last 100 days of the war. On the home front in 1917, Canadians faced

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conscription for the first time in the war, and the United States passed a successful repatriation bill to aid Americans already serving with Canada, Britain, and France.

**America Day and a Sigh of Relief by Britain**

All of Britain was abuzz in the early spring of 1917 at news of the United States’ declaration of war on Germany. Demonstrating just how important this new partner was for Britain, a special service recognizing the United States took place at St. Paul’s Cathedral in London on April 20, 1917. There was likely a palpable excitement among the 4,000 plus capacity crowd waiting in the hallowed seventeenth century cathedral for the historic ceremony to begin. King George and Queen Mary had prominent positions among the crowd, and countless other dignitaries including Chancellor of the Exchequer Andrew Bonar Law, American consulate staff, representatives from other British colonies, diplomatic corps members from other British allies, and numerous members of the British royal family also attended.513 The ceremony served as an important public event, and invitations were probably quite coveted. Attendance for many that day was a validation of their social standing, while it provided a public way to display their patriotism and presented a clear statement of everyone’s desire to work collectively to finally win the already long and catastrophic war.

Adding to the significance of the event, a number of elderly veterans of the American Civil War currently living in London attended as symbols of the last all-encompassing war directly experienced by Americans. Many recently injured soldiers also participated in the service to commemorate the entrance of the United States into the war. A number of wounded

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513 Library and Archives Canada, [https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/firstworld-war/025005-3400-e.html](https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/firstworld-war/025005-3400-e.html)
Information retrieved 9/11/1916. Andrew Bonar Law (1858-1923) was born in New Brunswick, Canada. He returned to Scotland at the age of 17 and he has the distinction of being the only Canadian-born Prime Minister of Britain, although his tenure was brief from October 1922 to May 1923. He died shortly after in October 1923. His greater service was as Chancellor of the Exchequer, a position he served in from December 1916 to January 1919. Known as Bonar Law, he was a close friend of Canadian Prime Minister Robert Borden, who served from 1911-1920.
British service members from the Army and the Navy, as well as wounded members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force attended that day. Some of these were Americans serving with the CEF. Most received their wounds in the recent Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge (April 9-12, 1917). One of these wounded American soldiers requested tickets to the ceremony at St. Paul’s for himself and other wounded Americans. The soldier wrote from his hospital bed that, “We are just in from this last big battle of Vimy Ridge, where many Americans were in the front line…Trusting you will grant us the favor of seats in St. Paul’s…,” so clearly this event honoring the United States entrance into the war was important for these American soldiers.\footnote{Special cable to \textit{The New York Times}. “Many Americans at Vimy,” \textit{New York Times} (1857-1922), Apr 18, 1917. http://search.proquest.com/docview/99955531?accountid=14166.}

It did not matter that they were fighting with the Canadians.

One of the highlights that occurred near the end of the service reportedly involved the playing of part of “The Star Spangled Banner” with the attendees singing along, while King George V was observed taking it all in and smiling.\footnote{“England Gives Thanks for U.S.” \textit{Boston Daily Globe} (1872-1922), Apr 21, 1917. http://search.proquest.com/docview/503187448?accountid=14166.} Things had come full circle in British-American relations, considering his ancestor George III’s eighteenth century dealings with the then upstart Americans. Of course, the service in St. Paul’s was an important public relations event aimed at rallying the British people’s spirits, as well as those of Britain’s allies. Accounts in the \textit{New York Times} described the “America Day” recognitions in London as “a great day” with American flags seen flying all over, while enthusiastic crowds filled the street.\footnote{Special Cable to \textit{THE NEW YORK TIMES}, “ALL BRITAIN CELEBRATES OUR ADVENT IN WAR,” \textit{The New York Times} (1857-1922), Apr 21, 1917. http://search.proquest.com/docview/99939610?accountid=14166.} Four airplanes, modern technological wonders at the time, circled overhead. This probably served as a display of war power designed to both inspire the British people and put Germany on notice that the fighting was far from over.
On April 5, 1917, a day before the United States declaration of war, the *Boston Daily Globe* reported that a correspondent from the Reuters news agency transmitting from Amsterdam noted that the German press had harsh words belittling the impact the United States would have on the war effort. The article in the *Rheinische Westfalische Zeitung* stated the German view that the United States was obsessed with gold and nothing else, noting that, “Beyond striving for gold, the Americans have no ideal”, while derisively referring to Americans as “gold-sated Yankees.”  

Undoubtedly, the intention of these strong words was to inspire the German people and quell their fears of a possible defeat with the entry of the United States into the war. The article went on to note that Germany believed it could easily take care of President Wilson and the United States with its military might. However, it should not be surprising that the German press would make light of the entry of the United States into the war. Just as the British press rejoiced at the United States war declaration, it is logical that the German press would downplay its potential impact on their war efforts. In a practical sense, the Germans were not completely wrong, as it would take until much later in 1917 to realize any real impact from the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). However, the positive psychological impact was undeniable.

Throughout Britain, the population’s enthusiasm over America’s entry in the war became clearly visible. As reported in a major American newspaper, “The Stars and Stripes, of the largest battleship size, floated above all British flags from the highest tower of Parliament – the first time a foreign flag was ever displayed on that eminence, and flew over all Government buildings and numerous business houses and private dwellings throughout the United Kingdom.”  

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announced its entry into the war likely represented a mix of sincere appreciation as well as undeniable relief at gaining a strong new partner with fresh resources. The British monarch referred to the United States as a “great Republic,” high praise and likely, a nod to American wealth.\(^{519}\) Also detectable in his words was a bit of encouragement as well for a former colony that struggled for almost three years to maintain its neutrality from another of Europe’s wars. The triangular relationship between Britain, Canada, and the United States experienced a serious transformation and strengthening in April 1917.

**The United States and Canada Help Turn the Tide of War**

Finally, the United States officially entered the war on April 6, 1917, while a first-time unified Canadian force played a primary role on a European battlefield in the successful April 9-12, 1917 battle for Vimy Ridge. With the First World War nearing the three-year mark, these two momentous events helped begin the long process of turning the tide of the war in the Allies’ favor. In the United States, President Woodrow Wilson, despite his extensive efforts to maintain neutrality, finally asked Congress to declare war on Germany. This came after repeated requests by the United States and subsequent refusals by Germany to halt its unrestricted submarine warfare, as well as American fears of actual attacks on its soil fueled by Germany.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Canada was already deeply involved in the war at home and on the battlefields of Europe. In the fighting since the beginning, the Canadian Expeditionary Force was finally assigned a lead fighting force designation, rather than as serving as an assistant force working behind the British. Tasked with taking Vimy Ridge, a strongly fortified elevation in northern France near Arras, the CEF successfully accomplished their objective in a fierce battle that took place from April 9-12, 1917 during that year’s Easter

holiday. These two events not only changed American and Canadian self-perceptions forever, but international perceptions of both countries shifted significantly as well.

Both occurrences represented welcome news for a beleaguered Britain and brought tremendous change to Canada and the United States. Prior to this time, conflicts involving the three countries had all taken place on North American soil. The one exception, the American Civil War, saw Britain successfully managing to maintain its own neutrality, avoiding involvement in another North American-based conflict. The tide had now turned with Canada, a semi-independent dominion, and the United States, a republic, both successfully transforming from subordinates to strong partners with Britain. The former colonized were now working in concert with their former colonizer.

The United States and Canada had stepped forward to help Britain and France preserve democracy. This is not without some irony. A century earlier, the United States was a young struggling nation not that far removed from its own fight with Britain for independence. Canada remained a somewhat disjointed British colony, with Upper Canada forming what eventually became Ontario, and Lower Canada comprising the remainder of the former French colony, Quebec. Rupert’s land formed the remainder of Canada in the early nineteenth century. A hundred years later, North America had made its presence known on the world stage with its contributions and performance in the First World War. Canada was a nation rich in land mass but small in population, yet it made major contributions of both people and resources. The United States entered in the final year and a half of the war, but its contributions of fresh troops and materials were essential to helping the desperate and worn-down British and French make a final definitive push to win the war. We will never know what might have happened if Germany had
been able to engage a new partner who contributed fresh troops and resources. Clearly, it made a crucial difference for Britain and France.

In the preceding two centuries, European wars had often found their way to North American shores. These wars had usually involved Britain, France, and Spain. However, the First World War marked the first time that North Americans had crossed the Atlantic in large numbers, a significant portion of them voluntarily, to help colonial powers past and present fight a war on European soil. For many in both the United States and Canada, there was a sense of a North American spirit, a desire to show the Old World that the New World was strong and capable. The New World armies just needed a chance to gain experience and prove themselves. The dark side of British colonialism remains undeniable. With the on-going release of new records and files, further revelations regularly appear. The strong ties Britain built earlier in North America eventually translated into significant aid for its war effort. From soon after the War of 1812, Britain maintained predominantly favorable relations with its former settler colony, the United States, and it consistently retained the loyalty of its present North American colony, Canada. Australia and New Zealand provided significant contributions as well. Many in the United States who were eager to join the fight before the United States entered the war, found the means to do so with the CEF. Canadians, for their part, had enthusiastically embraced the war effort at the very beginning. In the early twentieth century, Britain epitomized the positive attributes of democracy, while German militarism stoked fear among freedom-loving North Americans. As discussed previously, in addition to American men from states across the nation, women in nursing roles, blacks, and native peoples also volunteered to participate in the war effort. They found the means to do so with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and continued

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520 See chapter one for further discussion on European wars and the North American colonies.
521 See chapters four and five for further discussion of the men and women who volunteered for service in the CEF.
to do so even after the United States formally joined in the war in April 1917. This was likely because it took the United States some time to ramp up its war effort after the declaration.

**The Weapons of War**

The methods guiding the conduct of war in 1914 reflected traditional concepts carried over from the nineteenth century and earlier. However, this war quickly tossed those customs aside, with two events in particular contributing to the cementing of American public opinion against Germany and in favor of the United States entering the war. During 1915, a watershed year for the manner of conduct of the war, the Germans introduced poisonous gas in April to a battlefield manned by Canadian troops, and in May, they torpedoed and sunk the passenger ship *Lusitania*, which had Americans among those aboard. These two events occurring so close together significantly increased hostility toward Germany in the United States.

The early twentieth century brought a dizzying array of new weapons for war, from submarines to extremely long-range guns, machine guns, flamethrowers, tanks, zeppelins, and airplanes. Early uses of these new tools were mostly unregulated by the rules of war, primarily because their potential for destruction was almost incomprehensible at the time. Nevertheless, the impact of this new technology would quickly become apparent. The tremendous troop casualty figures with each battle, as well as the devastating impact on civilians caught within the midst of battleground areas were new elements to warfare in the twentieth century. Additionally, the availability of so many cutting-edge and much more powerful weapons in such a short span of time presented frightening new realities. By 1915-1916, the pace of technological changes had already significantly influenced the conduct of the war, and by 1917-1918, the war barely resembled the 1914 version. Nevertheless, one other new weapon, the use of poison gas on the battlefield, terrorized the troops and caught everyone off guard. The use of this weapon raised a
brand new set of moral and ethical issues, which continue in debate to the present day. On April 22, 1915, “German soldiers opened the valves on six thousand tanks filled with over 160 tons of chlorine gas arrayed along a four mile stretch of the front – the first ever use of lethal gas on a battlefield.”\textsuperscript{522} The Canadian Corps was covering this part of the Allied line at the time, and reports indicate that two thousand Canadian soldiers died from suffocation caused by the gas filling their lungs with fluid.\textsuperscript{523} In his \textit{Official History of the Canadian Forces}, Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid describes the scene witnessed first-hand by General E.A.H. Alderson, British General in charge of the Canadian Corps at this time. The general, who was visiting the 12\textsuperscript{th} Battery located near St. Julien in back of Gravenstafel ridge, reported seeing “two clouds of yellowish green one on either side of Langemarck; these drifted slowly southwards, close to the ground, and spread laterally until they united into one low rolling bank of choking horrible fog.”\textsuperscript{524} French African troops located nearby felt some of the first impacts of the gas as well. Duguid notes that the gas cloud moved “so that the zone of concentration at first was half a mile in depth,” but “at three miles from the cylinders the density was still great enough to induce conjunctivitis, coryza and tachycardia, to hurt the eyes, make noses run and to make men vomit violently.”\textsuperscript{525} Turning on cylinders of gas against enemy troops seemed to throw out the conventional rules of war and is another example of a crime against humanity.

Canadian records maintained in the Circumstances of Death Registers detail to the degree possible, and often in quite graphic detail, the cause of death for each CEF soldier, along with

\textsuperscript{522} Larson, 81-82.
\textsuperscript{523} Larson, 82.
\textsuperscript{525} Duguid, 218. Conjunctivitis is an inflammation of the membranes inside the eye, coryza is inflammation of the mucous membrane inside the nose, and tachycardia is a very fast heart rate.
their religion and burial location. A review of these records indicates a number of deaths from gas during from spring 1915 through 1918. In the later years of the war, the shells contained the gas within, so it released with the explosion of the shell. This made each one doubly lethal. If the shrapnel was not deadly enough, the gas added even more effectiveness as a killing device. The Circumstances of Death Register provides a vivid description of the impact of new technology in warfare, with many deaths listed from machine gun fire, bombs dropped by airplanes over troop emplacements, deaths as prisoners of war, and concussions sustained from the impacts of long-range shellfire. A number of suicides were also noted, many likely from the traumatic effects of combat. Nevertheless, many show up simply as “killed in action”, meaning they died in the heat of fighting, as part of the massive casualties within one or another long-running battle.

**Americans and Canadians Continue to Answer the Call for Volunteers**

A number of wounded soldiers attended at the service held on April 20, 1917 at St. Paul’s Cathedral in London to commemorate the United States’ entrance into the war, some of whom were Americans serving with the Canadians. The *New York Times* reported the names of several Americans wounded in the battle at Vimy covering a wide range of states, including David Clinton Kerr born in Monroe, Indiana, Edwin Olson born in Faribault, Minnesota, Stephen Carpenter born in Des Moines, Iowa, and Harry Lester Trimmer born in Lewiston, Montana. Others listed in the article as Americans were not located in the CEF rolls. One Canadian-born soldier, Cecil B. Hopgood, listed his place of residence as Brockton, Massachusetts. He had actually been born in Canada on Prince Edward Island. Families frequently moved back and forth between southern Canada and the northern United States. This speaks to the almost

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526 Library and Archives Canada, Circumstances of Death Register, First World War; digitized file A-S. Records for Sip through Z have not survived.
informal way that the border between the United States and Canada operated in the later
nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As noted by Randy Widdis, “Canadians in 1900
represented the third-largest ethnic group in the United States after the Irish and the Germans.”
Most Canadians had a tendency to relocate to nearby border areas within the United States, either
assuming they would return to Canada at some point in time or because it would enable them to
more readily visit family members still living in Canada. A confirmation of the likelihood that
many planned or at least hoped to return to Canada at some point in the future is the fact that
most elected to retain their Canadian citizenship. Likewise, American families moved to
Canada to take advantage of opportunities for western land available for farming, with many
choosing to settle in Saskatchewan. American immigration figures to Canada peaked in the
period from 1909 to 1914, ranging from 103,798 in 1909-1910 to 139,009 in 1912-1913 but fell
off sharply once the First World War began, to 59,779 in 1914-1915, and the numbers were
never very significant again. There was much movement back and forth in the prairie areas of
the Dakotas, Wyoming, Nebraska, Manitoba, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, but by the end of the
nineteenth century, most available cheap land on the American side was gone. This likely played
some role in the higher immigration rates from the United States to Canada in the early twentieth
century. Anglo-Canadians and Anglo-Americans had the advantage of sharing a common
language, so they blended in fairly well in each other’s country.

In the review conducted of attestation forms for 1,000 American-born volunteers, all of
the volunteers analyzed were born in the United States, but it seems apparent from the addresses
provided for their next of kin that a number of these families had lived in Canada for some time.\textsuperscript{532} An overwhelming number listed their occupation as farmers, so land availability likely played a part in their relocation to Canada. For other volunteers, it is clear that they crossed the border from the United States to join up, with their next of kin often still residing in the volunteer’s American birthplace or nearby in the same state. A number of volunteers listed hotels, the YMCA, or the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) as their local Canadian address, all of which implies that they had recently crossed the border from the United States to enlist. It is also possible that some listed the addresses of friends or simply supplied false birth or residency information on the attestation form in the hope it would help them gain acceptance to the Canadian military.

The sinking of the \textit{Lusitania} was not the only issue fanning resentment in the United States regarding Germany’s conduct in the war. German warships attacked three towns on the English coast, causing more than five hundred casualties with over one hundred dead, and in January 1915, Germany began zeppelin raids, which in actuality were more frightening than damaging.\textsuperscript{533} However, such attacks brought the war to the British home front, and many Anglo-Canadians and Anglo-Americans took note, as many still had family members in Britain or had only recently left themselves. From the beginning of the war the German military’s treatment of civilians in Belgium, particularly of women and children, received sharp denunciations in Britain, the United States, and Canada as inhumane. Quoting Viscount Bryce in a special report to British Prime Minister H. H. Asquith in the \textit{Chicago Daily Tribune} on May 13, 1915, he noted, “The explanation seems to be that these excesses were committed – in some cases

\textsuperscript{532} See chapter four for a detailed discussion of the demographics of 1,000 of U.S. born CEF volunteers and appendix.
\textsuperscript{533} Larson, 81.
ordered, in others allowed – on a system and in pursuance of a set purpose. That purpose was to strike terror into the civil population and dishearten the Belgian troops, so as to crush down resistance and the spirit of self-defense."  

The terrorizing of civilian populations as a means of exerting control was neither new, nor confined to Germany. Belgium’s late monarch was the subject of international vilification in the years just before the war for similar actions in Africa. From 1885 to 1908, Belgian King Leopold II (1835-1909) operated a colony in the African Congo as a private venture with no government oversight. The African population suffered extreme acts of terrorism and unspeakable atrocities in order to extract forced labor and complete obedience. A number of Belgians working in the colony both inflicted, and impassively witnessed, appalling cruelty to the population, with many indicating that they eventually became numb to it.  

The French, British, and Germans also had African colonies at the time. For the colonized subjects of any of these European powers, it meant that these populations had little agency over their own lives and the resources in their countries. In North America, both the United States and Canada treated the native populations as colonized subjects, moving them off as much desirable land as possible while continually working to force assimilation designed to destroy their cultures. The United States was a little more than fifty years removed from the American Civil War and the legal end of black enslavement, but discrimination and segregation were still very much the order of the day, including in the military. All of the primary nations involved in the war were each actively engaged in deplorable policies and enterprises. It is  

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534 “Reports on German Atrocities in Many Places in Belgium; Civilians, Women and Children are among the Victims.” Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922), May 13, 1915. 
http://search.proquest.com/docview/173917766?accountid=14166. James Bryce, Viscount Bryce was Ambassador to the U.S. from 1907 to 1913. 
difficult to find a clean record, so to speak, for any of the major belligerents. Nevertheless, the American press continued to portray Germany as a runaway militaristic culture operating with little regard for humanity and posing a dire threat to democracy. Such portrayals helped encourage continuing volunteer enlistments. James W. Gerard, American Ambassador to Germany (1913-1917), addressed the Canadian Club of New York at a dinner held on April 9, 1917. Gerard described German atrocities, noting “how the German authorities imprisoned townsfolk for giving food and drink to starving Canadian prisoners of war; how German sheep hounds were trained to bite British soldiers; how small German boys were allowed to shoot arrows tipped with nails into the bodies of prisoners, and how when typhus broke out in a camp of Russian prisoners they sent Frenchmen and Englishmen to live with them.”

Gerard made these assertions just as the United States had entered the war, with his speech clearly intended to praise Canadian efforts to date while encouraging the United States to follow a similar course. Initially more favorably inclined toward the German position, Gerard’s views hardened considerably as the war progressed. He eventually placed blame for the entire war, particularly the sinking of the Lusitania, squarely on the Kaiser, although many in the State Department, including Secretary Robert Lansing, did not agree with him. However, Gerard’s public expressions of his views helped to increase support in the United States and likely helped to influence men to enlist, whether in the Canadian or the United States military. It also speaks to how Euro-centrically focused North America was at this time, due in large part to the significant number of newly arriving or recently settled immigrants from various parts of Britain living in

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both Canada and the United States. As previously discussed, of the early contingents of troops sent by Canada, a majority were not Canadian born. In fact, many who volunteered came from the ranks of these recent immigrants. Eventually, too many of Germany’s actions, including the deployment of gas warfare, the sinking of the *Lusitania* with American citizens onboard, and its decision to resume unrestricted submarine warfare finally gave the United States little option except to declare war.

The United States Senate voted 82 to 6 in favor of declaring war, with eight senators not present to vote. Senators Gronna (North Dakota), LaFollette (Wisconsin), Norris (Nebraska), Stone (Missouri), Vardaman (Mississippi), and Lane (Oregon) voted against American entry into the war. Ironically, many of those who volunteered for the CEF came from these states, particularly from North Dakota and Wisconsin. The *Boston Daily Globe* ran a lengthy article on the 13-hour Senate debate that was described as “a splendid and thrilling exhibition of patriotism,” including photographs of the six opposing senators, presented to look more like an array of criminals than elected government officials.\(^{538}\) Newspapers of the time frequently tended to describe events in dramatic terms, often reflecting the views of the newspaper ownership rather than any attempt at objective journalism. While today’s newspapers and other media still often reflect the views of those in charge, the amount of over-dramatizing and hyperbole has diminished. At any rate, newspaper accounts such as this one likely helped to keep Americans interested in volunteering with the CEF, even with the United States now officially in the war.

**Volunteers and Draftees – Viewpoints on Conscription**

All of the conditions noted above worked together, as the war continued, to make British demands for additional Canadian troops seem never ending. Canadian recruitment efforts had to

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keep up, and against the odds, they proved successful. British-Canadian recruiting stations were also set up in several American cities to call to service British subjects living in the United States. One CEF soldier assigned to the recruiting station at 44 Bromfield Street in Boston was Sergeant Herbert E. Pheeney, who sustained wounds at Vimy Ridge. Sgt. Pheeney is another example of a soldier living in the United States, but he was born in Fredericton, New Brunswick. His attestation form, dated March 21, 1916 in Montreal, lists his mother as next of kin, and she lived in Malden, Massachusetts which is just a little over eight miles from Boston. It does not appear a coincidence that Sgt. Pheeney requested this assignment. His assignment to the recruiting station allowed him to return home, in this case the United States, while still fulfilling his military obligations. Another CEF volunteer, Louis W. Clancy, was born in Downeyville, Ontario, and his next of kin, his mother still lived in Ontario. According to his May 22, 1918 attestation form, Clancy volunteered and passed the fitness examination for the CEF at Buffalo, New York. William McGarry, a forty-year-old teacher, and his wife lived in Baltimore, Maryland, but McGarry was born in Preston, England. His attestation form indicates that he volunteered at Montreal on September 5, 1917. Again, just as Americans crossed the border and lived in Canada, the same was true for Canadians moving to the United States. Likely, these British-Canadian recruiting missions in the United States, while there to recruit British subjects and Canadian citizens to their militaries, also influenced some Americans to join the CEF.

Although volunteer recruitments slowed considerably in the second half of 1916, and Canada eventually passed the Military Service Act of 1917 in late summer after Vimy Ridge, the volunteer numbers far outstripped those of the draft. The figures show that only 24,132 of the

540 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7783-79.
541 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1717-52.
men drafted because of the act actually made it to the battlefields, as compared to more than 400,000 who were volunteers.\textsuperscript{542} In fact, men who did not volunteer for service were frequently harassed, with women as the protagonists more frequently than other men were. Often women called men not in uniform out in public shaming, with no consideration given to whether or not that man might have had a legitimate reason for not enlisting, or perhaps had already been turned down when trying to enlist. By spring 1916, a number of organizations had sprung up in Canada to encourage enlistment.\textsuperscript{543} No self-respecting man wanted notoriety as a “slacker” or “shirker”, the derogatory terms applied to those viewed as not doing their part.

The entire concept of conscription led to bitter divisions between French and English-speaking Canada. French Canada faced frequent criticism for not displaying enough interest in the war effort. However, for the most part it knew little of the problems facing Britain. French Canada was more community-oriented and did not share English-speaking Canada’s interest in international events.\textsuperscript{544} Coincidentally, internal Canadian issues also contributed to strained relations between English and French-speaking Canada in 1915 which negatively affected recruiting efforts in French Canadian areas. The Ontario Department of Education issued regulation Seventeen in 1913, which stressed the teaching of English over French within the province. This immediately provoked the anger of French-speaking areas in Quebec, Manitoba, and New Brunswick. The regulation did not eliminate the teaching of French, as most parents were in favor of teaching both languages as long as it was possible to do so effectively, which was not always possible, particularly considering the number of small rural schools at the


\textsuperscript{543} J.L. Granatstein, \textit{The Greatest Victory: Canada’s One Hundred Days, 1918}, (Don Mills, Ontario, Canada: Oxford University Press, 2014), 62.

\textsuperscript{544} Armstrong, 90.
French Canadians reacted negatively to what they viewed as a serious threat to their culture, remaining strongly unified in their opposition to the regulation. In addition, Henri Bourassa, a leading French Canadian politician and publisher, had argued strongly since the Boer War (1899-1902) for French Canadians to stay out of European wars. To make matters worse and adding to the reluctance in Quebec to enlist, the Canadian military leadership also refused to accommodate requests for French Canadian units with French-speaking officers. Additionally, most of Canada was primarily agrarian-based and so needed labor, namely young men, at home with their families to help with the annual harvests. Even with this pressure from farm families, many farmers did voluntarily enlist, likely those with multi-sibling families. Additionally, in examining the 1,000 sets of attestation papers, most of those who showed as drafted were very young men, with almost all of them listing their occupation as farmers. These young men were either not old enough to enlist early in the war or deliberately held back by their families.

Others favored conscription as an equalizer of sorts. In the early twentieth century, the eugenics movement gained popularity in Britain, France, and Germany, as well as in the United States and Canada. Eugenics, always a controversial subject, was concerned with improving the quality of humans. Proponents of eugenics saw these improvements taking place through selective breeding, or non-breeding in the case of many deemed physically or mentally unfit who suffered forced sterilization. Following the eugenics line of thinking, many felt only the best men volunteered to serve in the military, making the volunteer system seem less fair than conscription, which would spread the work around to everyone, including those deemed less desirable by society and therefore more easily sacrificed. 546 Others believed that the volunteer system utilized both subtle and overt pressure to join, while conscription would evaluate

545 Armstrong, 92-93.
546 Amy J. Shaw, 24.
everyone equally and provide legitimate reasons why some could not serve.547 Military service had always been a strong component of citizenship in both American and Canadian culture, as is evident from the popularity of government-sponsored militia groups in the various states and provinces. At the time of the First World War, the perception of military service in both countries positioned it as a supreme and sacred duty required of all male citizens.548 We have already discussed the fact that the war received extensive reporting in the United States and Canada, with threats to North American security already identified, particularly unrestricted submarine warfare against shipping and passenger lines. Both the United States and Canada viewed German militarism as an urgent threat to democracy that required immediate action to make sure Germany was defeated. It is likely that many of the American citizens who volunteered with the CEF did so because they felt an overwhelming sense of obligation and duty to serve. They could not to wait to see if the United States eventually entered the war. Perhaps even worse for these men to consider was the possibility that either the war would be over before the United States decided to enter, or the neutrality proponents might win the day and keep the country out of the conflict altogether. Undoubtedly, many Americans also felt Canada was not that much different from the United States, so volunteering with the CEF would not appear as unusual as joining the French Foreign Legion might.

**The Battle of Vimy Ridge**

By the later months of 1916, numerous battles had already been fought, among them Ypres, Gallipoli, Verdun, and the Somme. The soldiers of the CEF, known as the Canadian Corps, fought well and learned a great deal from these difficult experiences. However, most in the British government could not deny that the war was not going particularly well for them.

547 Shaw, 24.
548 Shaw, 162-163.
Andrew Bonar Law wrote about this in a private June 1915 letter to his friend, Canadian Prime Minister Robert Borden. Bonar Law was writing just as he was to assume the position of Secretary in the Colonial Office, so he could speak more freely here than in official correspondence. In the letter, he encourages Borden to make a personal visit to Britain so that “you might be as well acquainted as we are ourselves with everything that is going on in connection with the war”, noting that “at the moment things are not going too well for us in any part of the theatre of the war.” However, Bonar Law did not want to discourage his friend, and possibly jeopardize further Canadian assistance, so he ended by adding that while it appeared things would be difficult for some time to come, he believed the situation was already starting to improve for Britain. Borden did visit Europe and the front in 1915, and he remained a strong advocate throughout the war for Canada retaining a voice in the deployment of its troops. In January 1916 Canada’s eighth Prime Minister noted, “It can hardly be expected that we shall put 400,000 or 500,000 men in the field and willingly accept the position of having no more voice and receiving no more consideration than if we were toy automata.”

In and of itself, the taking of Vimy Ridge in April 1917 was just a small part of the much larger war. However, every nation builds its own sense of historic folklore. The Battle of Vimy Ridge served as an important building block for a young nation with few such milestones. Moreover, at the time Britain and Canada were most anxious for any positive news regarding the war effort. The Canadians had been under the command of a British general since the late summer of 1915. In mid-1916, there would be a change in commander for the Canadian forces,

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which ultimately proved to have a significant impact on the Canadian Corps’ success at Vimy Ridge. During the disastrous fighting at St. Eloi, serious disagreements arose between British General E.A.H. Alderson, the Canadian Corps Commander at the time, and Canadian Lt. General R.E.W. Turner. In addition, Alderson prepared a rather damaging report on another Canadian commander, General H.D.B. Ketchen, as part of the assessment of what went wrong at St. Eloi. Field Marshal General Sir Douglas Haig, aware of reports of the Canadians feeling some resentment toward the British, feared an outright dispute between the two. 551 This, of course, was a situation he could ill afford. As a result of discussions between Sir Max Aitken, who served as Canada’s Military Representative at the front, and General Haig, “On May 28, 1916, in an abrupt change of command, General Alderson was appointed Inspector General of Canadian Forces in England.” 552 While the leadership skills of the two Canadian commanders may have been questionable, it proved easier to reassign Alderson, who had served as commander of the Canadian Corps from September 13, 1915 to May 28, 1916, rather than risk all out conflict between the British and Canadian officer corps. Still, Alderson made major contributions to the professionalization of the Canadian Corps from his time with them in Canada to their training in the muddy mess of Salisbury Plain in England to Ypres in Belgium. 553

The Canadians, for their part, wanted to see more of their own filling all levels of officer positions in the Canadian Corps, but this was not about to happen with the top position just yet. No one in the British military hierarchy thought a Canadian was ready to take command. Accordingly, British General Sir Julian Byng received the appointment as the new commander of the Canadian Corps on May 29, 1916. One wonders what he thought of the Canadian troops he

551 Nicholson, 145.
552 Nicholson, 146.
553 Nicholson, 147.
now commanded. They had already seen their share of the fighting, and it seems that Byng saw a great deal of potential. He consistently receives credit for fostering a strong *esprit de corps*, while turning the Canadian troops into a highly efficient crack-fighting machine. Even though he was a British officer, rather than a Canadian, the Canadian troops respected him and responded most favorably to Byng’s methods. His leadership and the introduction of more modern preparations for battle contributed significantly to the success of the Canadian divisions at Vimy Ridge. A 1917 New York Times article described Byng as “a member of the ‘new school’ in the British Army” who was “an apostle of efficiency.” He instilled the necessary discipline in the Canadian troops, who were fearless and eager to fight but needed to harness those qualities to succeed in battle. Byng was a stickler for careful planning as well. By the time of the Vimy Ridge battle, the Canadian Corps was comprised of four divisions, each one to play a vital role in the battle. The four would be fighting together for the first time.

From the top officers on down to the newest enlisted men, the soldiers who fought at Vimy Ridge rehearsed and prepared carefully long before the actual battle even began. Pierre Berton writes, “At 1st Army headquarters, Canadian sergeants and brigadiers (sic) rubbed shoulders as they clustered around a plasticine model of the Vimy sector…” noting the “easiness between the Canadian officers and men that was foreign to both the French and the British forces.” Because of Britain’s strict class system, it was a novel idea for officers to know the men they were commanding. In civilian life, the two would have rarely crossed paths. However, many of the Canadians came from small town farming areas, and frequently, officers and enlisted men already knew each other from back home. This familiarity and ease with each other

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554 Nicholson, 534.
556 Berton, 161-162.
gave the Canadians an advantage with better communications among officers and troops. Putting it in business terms - in this case the business of war, the Canadians created “an organizational climate that fostered and rewarded critical thinking and innovation.”\textsuperscript{557} For the Germans, losing this long contested piece of land was a serious defeat. A captured German officer stated, “The Germans regard the loss of Vimy Ridge as the greatest defeat they have suffered since the war began.”\textsuperscript{558} This might be an extreme statement made by a prisoner of war under some duress, but undoubtedly, the Germans were beginning to feel pressured. The Canadians did their part to cause this, and some of those serving with the Canadians were from the United States.

There were reports in American newspapers concerning American casualties at Vimy Ridge. One discussed previously, Lt. Edwin A. Abbey, died by a sniper’s bullet during the battle.\textsuperscript{559} The \textit{Boston Daily Globe} reported that Private Jeffrey H. Saunders, born in Nova Scotia but a resident of Lynn, Massachusetts died in action at Vimy Ridge on April 13, 1917.\textsuperscript{560} The article noted that Saunders’ mother, Mrs. C. J. Saunders, who also lived in Lynn, had received official notification of his death. A review of Saunders attestation form confirms the information noted in the article with the exception of his occupation, which the form lists as farmer but the newspaper article listed as baker.\textsuperscript{561} Saunders was born in Canada, but had apparently been a resident of the United States for some time, which speaks again to the frequent amount of back and forth across the border of the two countries. The lines of distinction between Canadians and Americans was not so clearly defined in the early twentieth century given both countries.

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[557]{Paul Dickson, “The End of the Beginning: The Canadian Corps in 1917”, Geoffrey Hayes, Andrew Iarocci, and Mike Bechthold, editors; \textit{Vimy Ridge: A Canadian Reassessment}, 31-32.}
\footnotetext[558]{“Loss of Vimy Ridge Worst German Defeat.” \textit{Los Angeles Times} (1886-1922), Apr. 20, 1917. \url{http://search.proquest.com/docview/160447626?accountid=14166}.}
\footnotetext[559]{See chapter four for a detailed discussion of Lt. Edwin A. Abbey, 27-31.}
\footnotetext[560]{“Former Lynn Man Killed in Battle at Vimy Ridge.” \textit{Boston Daily Globe} (1872-1922), May 08, 1917. \url{http://search.proquest.com/docview/503204044?accountid=14166}.}
\footnotetext[561]{Library and Archives Canada, RG150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 8659-56.}
\end{footnotes}
continuing close ties to Britain. We have already seen that a number of the Americans who enlisted in the CEF had clearly been residing in Canada for a significant period prior to their enlistment. Others were long-time residents in the United States, but had not been born there. The April 14, 1917 edition of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported, “In tonight’s official Canadian casualty list Private S. McGarry, 551 South Fifth Avenue, Chicago is recorded to have been wounded during the recent capture of Vimy ridge.”[^562] A review of Private Stephen McGarry’s attestation form indicates that he and his brother Michael, listed as his next of kin, did indeed live in Chicago on Fifth Avenue, but Stephen was born in Ireland.[^563] Still, several newspaper accounts indicate that a number of American-born men fought at Vimy with the Canadians.

The Vimy Ridge battle was a good win, but it by no means totally turned the tide of the war. It was only a beginning in a long process to come. However, it provided a significant spark to Canadian nationalism. It served as a confidence booster for the Allies. Today, Vimy Ridge receives only brief mentions outside of Canada. For most others, it is merely a component of the Battle of Arras, which took place from April 9 to May 16, 1917. In 1922, a grateful France gave Canada land to use for the building of a war memorial. Construction of the monument began in 1922, and after eleven years of work, King Edward VIII dedicated it on July 26, 1936.[^564] Canadian and French ships escorted the king’s yacht across the English Channel, and “more than 6,000 Canadian pilgrims, many of whom are widows, mothers and fathers of fallen soldiers, have arrived in France and Belgium” for the unveiling of the monument for all fallen Canadian


[^563]: Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6826-52.

soldiers. To the present day, Canada staffs the memorial site through a student guide program, which requires students to be bilingual in English and French and spend four months working at the memorial. Tours from Canada to the Vimy Memorial in France remain very popular.

Celebrations of the 2017 centennial anniversary of the Battle took place in both Canada and France, with reports noting that several thousand Canadians traveled to France for the occasion.

The Last 100 Days – The Canadians are Front and Center

By 1917, the Canadian Corps had definitely grown from the disorganized, undisciplined, and inexperienced group that first arrived in England in 1914 to a fine fighting force. Because of Lt. General Sir Julian Byng’s effective work with the Canadians in preparing them for success at Vimy Ridge, he received a promotion on June 8, 1917 to assume command of the British Third Army from General Allenby. The time was now right for a Canadian to take command of the Canadian Corps. Canadian Overseas Minister, Sir George Perley thought so, and Canadian Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden agreed. Perley’s choice was Sir Arthur Currie. He diplomatically insisted, and the British War Office recommended, the promotion of both Currie and Major-General Turner as a means of peacekeeping between the two officers. On June 9, 1917, promotions to Lieutenant General received approval for both men, with Currie assuming command of the Canadian Corps that day. Turner remained as G.O.C. Canadians, which had more administrative duties.

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566 Of note, both France and Canada marked the 100th Anniversary of Vimy Ridge with the issuance of commemorative postage stamps.
567 Nicholson, 283.
568 Nicholson, 284.
569 Nicholson, 558. G.O.C. means General Officer Commanding (-in-Chief).
Even though Byng was a British officer, he had a way of connecting with the men who referred to themselves as “Byng’s Boys”, making him well liked. The men never warmed to Currie in the same manner. Currie did not have a commanding, soldierly appearance. Given “his portly unsoldierly figure…” some privates speculated, “there must be no shortage of good food at Corps headquarters.” However, Arthur Currie proved to be an excellent choice as commander for the Canadian Corps., even if the enlisted soldiers did not think so. Byng had sent Currie and several other officers to study French tactics at Verdun. Currie returned with several ideas that Byng agreed with and approved for implementation. Descriptions of Currie and Sir John Monash, his Australian counterpart, note both as possessing “fierce, inquisitive minds, eagerly devouring military knowledge because they knew the lives of their men depended on it.” Both men are examples of colonials from modest circumstances who achieved far more in their respective Dominion armies than either could have in the British Army. Currie was a former teacher and failed land speculator, while Monash was a civil engineer from a Polish Jewish family that had immigrated to Australia.

Currie had some unfortunate personal business trail him from his days as a land speculator and realtor in Victoria, British Columbia. At the same time as his business failures, Currie took command of the 50th Regiment in Victoria, which was an infantry unit that wore Scottish style uniforms. Faced with creditors and personal disgrace, he used the $10,800 set aside for the unit’s uniforms, “the equivalent of a quarter of a million dollars in 2014, for his own use.” Four years later, the matter was still hanging over his head until some senior officers helped him by paying the debt back. We do not know if the enlisted men knew or heard rumors

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570 Granatstein, 37.
572 Lloyd, 31.
573 Granatstein, 15.
about his problems, but, if so, that may have influenced their negative feelings toward Currie. More likely, the rigors of the battles the Canadians fought in as “shock troops” during the last days of the war made the men feel like Currie did not care about them. In fact, this could not have been further from the truth, with those on his staff recognizing his expertise and deep commitment to the men under his command.

After Vimy Ridge, the Canadians fought at Arieux, Lens, and Passchendaele. A special report to the Detroit Free Press on November 4, 1917 noted, “Testimony from all sources is that the Canadian army corps is at the top of its stride, in discipline, efficiency, adaptability, coordination and ability to get results.” The fighting continued with no let up. Nicholson notes, “The period of rest and refitting that would normally follow in such extensive operations as the Amiens battle was denied the Canadians; for in these last hundred days of the war each major offensive so rapidly succeeded its predecessor that unprecedented demands had to be made on the stamina of the forces employed.” The final advance from October 11 to November 11, 1918 saw a series of defeats for the Germans on all fronts. On October 19, the Canadians advanced 12,000 yards and liberated forty communities – the longest advance the Canadians made in any one day during the entire war. Along the way, these battle-hardened troops got enthusiastic welcomes and cheers, something they were not accustomed to in four years of fighting.

The Impact on Americans Serving with Foreign Forces - Repatriation

Shortly before the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, concerns were beginning to appear in the United States about Americans fighting abroad with Britain,
Canada, France, and Italy. A *Los Angeles Times* article from February 18, 1917 cited a ruling by United States District Judge Ray of the northern district of New York regarding American citizens who had enlisted to serve with any of the warring parties in Europe. Judge Ray’s ruling noted that, “an American citizen taking the oath that is necessary before being allowed to join any branch of the foreign services, expatriates himself and, if after the war he is desirous of again becoming an American citizen, he will be compelled to go through the procedure required of any alien under the United States naturalization laws.”577 This applied to anyone enlisting in any form of service that called for an oath of allegiance to a foreign ruler or nation, including the ambulance or aviation corps. The oath of allegiance taken by those volunteering to serve in the CEF contains the statement, “I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth…”578 There appears to be little doubt that this qualified as an oath of allegiance to a foreign monarch under Judge Ray’s ruling. However, would anyone seriously consider enforcing this judgment once the United States had entered the war as an ally of Britain?

By the summer of 1917, many of the soldiers serving with the Canadians and other foreign nations began to wonder about the status of their citizenship, no doubt, as some contemplated shifting to the American armed services. Others were quite young when they volunteered and so, probably gave little thought to their citizenship status when they signed the CEF attestation form. Some likely thought that giving up their citizenship was only a temporary matter because the declaration section on the attestation form signed by each volunteer stated that they were joining for a term of one year or for the duration of the war, plus six months after

578 Library and Archives Canada, First World War, Attestation Paper, Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force, Oath to be Taken by Man on Attestation. See chapter three for the full text of the oath of allegiance.
the war’s end. This seemed like a short-term commitment, rather than a permanent change. Still, with the United States now entering the war, the questions surfaced, with no definitive answers.

However, men serving in the military were not the only ones seeking repatriation of their American citizenship in 1917. During this time, significant national discussion produced restrictive legislation regarding who should and should not receive American citizenship. It is important to remember that these conversations and subsequent decisions were the purview of American white men only. A number of groups, but most particularly Asians, faced outright exclusion under such legislation. At various points, immigrants encountered exclusion for reasons of physical or mental health, lack of education, and fears they were anarchists. The war brought out strong feelings of patriotism, which helped to further fuel already prevalent suspicions of immigrant groups, with many Americans perceiving them as threats to national security. Fears also developed about the potential for a worker’s revolution brought on by socialist radicals, many of whom were immigrants. The woman’s suffrage movement in Britain and the United States presented another threat to the status quo. Most American women could not vote until 1920, with some notable exceptions, including Montana, which gave women the right to vote in 1914. For married women in the nineteenth century, property title remained with their husbands, and few women worked outside of the home. Therefore, there seemed to be little reason for concern over women’s citizenship. From the mid-nineteenth century on, a woman’s ability to become a naturalized citizen became increasingly dependent on her marital status. In the early twentieth century, this was solidified by the act dated March 2, 1907 which declared that all women automatically assumed their husband’s nationality if married after this date.\footnote{National Archives and Records Administration, http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1998/summer/women-and-naturalization. Retrieved 9/29/16.} Previously, the laws had only affected immigrant women, but this new act covered all women,
thereby affecting American-born women as well. Jeannette Rankin, the only female member of Congress in 1917, representing Montana, enthusiastically took up this issue. She proposed a bill to amend the standing expatriation act so that an American woman who married a non-American would retain her United States citizenship, unless she voluntarily elected to give it up. However, her bill never came to a vote, and it took until the Married Women’s Act of September 1922 to correct this injustice. These examples are relevant to establishing the mood of the country at the time and so, are relevant to the discussion of the citizenship status of men joining foreign militaries. Simultaneous to Representative Rankin’s proposed bill, a number of other bills appeared in Congress addressing possible means of repatriation for American men serving with the Canadians, British, and French. No one in the government wanted to see these men suffer any difficulties with their citizenship or hinder their ability to return to the United States following their service. The House of Representatives Immigration and Naturalization Committee held hearings on one bill, H.R. 3647, on May 24 and 25, as well as on June 14 and 29, 1917. The hearings presented a number of circumstances under which American men had inadvertently lost their citizenship. During the hearings, one member noted to the committee chair, “I happen to know that at one place in London 300 Americans have made application to transfer to the American Army. I know of another case where a man connected with the Pierce-Arrow Automobile Co. over there had to take material to the front, but he was not allowed to do so until he became a member of the British Army and took the oath. Now he is no longer an American citizen and cannot be so unless we pass some law of this kind.” He went on to note, …I live near the Canadian border, and I know personally of at least 25 or 30 boys, between the

ages of 18 and 23 or 24 years of age, who caught war fever and went over there and joined the army, without realizing what kind of oath they were taking.”

Mr. Richard W. Flournoy, Jr., Chief of the Bureau of Citizenship, United States Department of State responded, “They unquestionably did not realize it, and they had no intention of giving up their citizenship.” To fix this situation, the method proposed was very straightforward. It provided that “any person, formerly an American citizen, who has expatriated himself by taking, since August 1, 1914, an oath of allegiance to any foreign State engaged in war with a country with which the United States is at war,” and with an honorable discharge, met the eligibility criteria. The individual could obtain repatriation at a United States consular office or any American court authorized to confer citizenship, simply by taking an oath of allegiance to the United States. The September 1917 proceedings of the first session of the 65th Congress and its committees showed the repatriation bill was moving forward for consideration. The bill, H.R. 3647, passed on October 5, 1917 and defined the status of citizens who entered military or naval service of “certain countries during the existing war in Europe,” providing the straightforward and quick process described above for repatriation of their American citizenship. The form for this process, collectively known as the “3904 files,” gained that name from its naturalization subject file number, 3904. There is no central file containing these forms. Instead, filing of the forms took place at the local level. Interestingly, newspaper coverage of questions concerning repatriation seemed to cease

586 George A. Finch, the American Journal of International Law, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Jan. 1918), p.188.
after September 1917, once the United States began actively sending troops to Europe. It quietly became a non-issue for those serving with the Canadian, British, or French military.

In fact, no Americans serving with the French Foreign Legion had actually given up their United States citizenship because those enlisting in the Legion only swore to obey the orders of their superior officers. There was no allegiance sworn to France. In effect, joining the French Foreign Legion was more like taking a job in a French company, although definitely not a pleasant one. Lt. Joseph Shuter Smith, an American citizen, moved seamlessly from the Canadian military to his transfer to the British Expeditionary Force in August 1916.\textsuperscript{587} He subsequently resigned in August 1917 to return to the United States to enlist, finally serving with the American Expeditionary Force as a lieutenant until the end of the war.\textsuperscript{588} Smith suffered no ramifications from any of these moves. In his case, his British service file contained a copy of his American birth certificate and a letter from the American Consulate in London attesting to the fact that he was an American citizen.\textsuperscript{589} Once the United States had entered the war, it became a simple process for soldiers to transfer back to their respective country’s military, if they wished. However, some elected to remain where they were. From a practical standpoint, it was easier for each military to maintain the status quo as much as possible, particularly given the high casualty rates, and the need to keep troops engaged on the battlefield. The process of transferring soldiers back and forth between the various militaries, which were fighting for the same purpose, cost valuable time and money. In Smith’s case, his British superiors were more concerned with who was responsible for paying his transportation costs back to the United States than the fact that he wished to return there.

\textsuperscript{587} See chapter four for a detailed discussion of Joseph Shuter Smith, 8-14.
\textsuperscript{588} See chapter four for a detailed discussion of Joseph Shuter Smith, 8-14.
\textsuperscript{589} The National Archives UK; see British Expeditionary Force service file of Joseph Shuter Smith, WO 339/50743 070/071, obtained 7/13/2017.
Many of these same dilemmas surrounding citizenship arose again some twenty years later as Britain entered the Second World War in 1939. The United States did not join until 1941. However, in the early years of the war, Britain was particularly desperate for pilots. The American Neutrality Acts of the 1930s precluded Americans from joining the armed services of any of the belligerents. However, an apparent, although murky, loophole in international law appeared to forbid the active recruiting of a country’s citizens on their own soil, but volunteering was acceptable.\(^{590}\) There was an element of “turn the other cheek” because American naval officers first had to resign their commissions to avoid issues back home. The British sought an opinion from the United States naval attaché, Captain Alan Goodrich Kirk. He believed that the United States Navy would not stop the resignations because the pilots were gaining valuable experience not available to them in the American navy.\(^ {591}\) There also were available American pilots languishing in the Reserves. This was due to military cutbacks because of financial impacts in the 1930s caused by the Depression and isolationist policies. Unofficially, the British Foreign Office found no reason to object. Volunteers traveled to Canada, which did not require passports from American citizens for entry. The volunteers then made their way to England using the Canadian Pacific Railway to get to the east coast to a waiting Cunard White Star Line ship, with the cost refunded to each volunteer.\(^ {592}\) Taking it a step further to ease any concerns, “a further incentive for American volunteers was offered in August 1940 when the Admiralty confirmed that if the United States became involved in hostilities, American citizens serving in any branch of the Royal Navy could be released to join American forces if that was their


\(^{591}\) Dietrich-Berryman, Hammond, and White, 33.

\(^{592}\) Dietrich-Berryman, Hammond, and White, 38.
Most would want to transfer because the Royal Navy pay scale was much lower than that of the United States Navy. British officials also went to great lengths to provide cover for American volunteers once they decided to transfer back to the United States military or when the war ended. Discharge paperwork indicated that “Personnel do not take an Oath of Allegiance on entry or during service with the Royal Navy,” and they included “a clear disclaimer that their service had not violated United States law.” These provisions undoubtedly reflect lessons learned during the First World War.

Conclusion

Who exactly were the American citizens who voluntarily enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War? Why did they volunteer to put their lives in jeopardy when their own country was not at war? In many respects, the demographic profiles and motivations of these Americans did not differ significantly from those of the Canadians. Many on both sides of the border came from families of recent immigrants from Britain. The United States and Canada were both relatively young countries of primarily British origins. As late as the 1870s, some in the United States still harbored thoughts of absorbing Canada into the United States. At the time of the First World War, the two nations still thought of each other as more a part of one geographic unit. These North Americans felt drawn to the war in Europe for the individual and collective reasons described here. The American volunteers did not worry much about suffering a penalty for enlisting with the Canadians. Many likely saw it as a form of patriotic act as they joined the fight to preserve democracy. This was a global fight, something far bigger than one individual or one country. It was also a white man’s war on both sides.

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593 Dietrich-Berryman, Hammond, and White, 36-37.
594 Dietrich-Berryman, Hammond, and White, 37.
Britain, Canada, and the United States protected each other’s white service men, including their citizenship.
Conclusion

“The great drama is ended. For the first time in four years the sound of giant cannons cannot be heard anywhere along the long line from the channel to the Adriatic…” – Chicago Daily Tribune, November 12, 1918

“On behalf of my country I stood firmly upon this solid ground; that is this, the greatest of all wars, in which the world’s liberty, the world’s justice, in short the world’s future destiny were at stake, Canada had led the democracies of both the American continents.” – Sir Robert Laird Borden, Prime Minister of Canada, September 2, 1919

The First World War brought an outpouring of military assistance from North America during an over four-year duration. Canada, one of Great Britain’s colonial Dominions, sent almost 425,000 troops overseas to help the British Empire, of which almost 40,000 were American-born enlistees. This work examined, for the first time, a sample of American-born men, with a variety of their own reasons for serving, who crossed the border and enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. It explored a number of case studies and a demographic analysis of a portion of the enlistees as a means to demonstrate that despite the neutrality of the United States, these American men felt compelled to join the war effort to help Britain, seemingly risking their citizenship in the process. Central to this is the argument that the ties between Britain and the United States were stronger and deeper at the beginning of the twentieth century than previously thought. The two shared a common language, religion, cultural, economic, and political ties. The United States and Canada shared these ties as well, as a former member and a current member of the British Empire.

This work shows that the United States government had little inclination to stop or punish the men who went to Canada to serve with the CEF. In fact, the American government made it

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incredibly easy for them to transfer to the American Expeditionary Force or return to the United States once their service with the CEF ended, with their American citizenship intact. Canada needed to amass troops quickly, and then it needed a steady stream of replacements as the war continued on, so the Canadian military accepted these American-born men with no questions asked about citizenship. As demonstrated in this work, citizenship between the three allied nations was highly fluid during the war.

This conclusion comprises two parts. The first section reviews the aftermath of the war and some of the complexities involved in the return of CEF troops to Canada. It also discusses the benefits and services available to CEF veterans, including the American-born men who served with the Canadians. The second section discusses conclusions about the motivations compelling American-born men to enlist in the CEF, and of some American-born women to enlist in the CANC as nursing sisters. In addition, this section transitions from the motivations of individuals who served to a more global discussion of the fact that North Americans crossed the ocean to help the British fight a war on European soil for the first time. The imprint of Britain on both the United States and Canada was undeniable, making for strong ties between the three. The second section concludes with a brief examination of the growth of Canadian sovereignty in the postwar period and the precedent set by allowing American-born men to enlist in the CEF, one used in other ways during the Second World War.

**Part I – The Aftermath of the War**

**CEF Soldiers Return to Canada**

On November 28, 1918, 4,000 Canadian soldiers returned to Halifax, Nova Scotia on the British liner *Aquitania*. This was the first of many such returns that would take place over the next year. As reported, “The men got a rousing welcome from the thousands who thronged the
dock and the immediate vicinity of the landing pier.” The war had ended, and the task of dismantling a huge military operation and getting the troops home was already underway.

To assist soldiers returning to Canada for discharge, the Minister of Militia issued a Returned Soldiers’ Handbook in May 1918. The book contained two parts, with Part 1 containing information for the returning soldier from his return to England from France to his arrival back in Canada, while Part 2 provided information on resources available to soldiers after discharge. The book also contained several appendices and a pullout chart at the back that was a systematic flowchart of the demobilization process. In reviewing one such actual handbook, a handwritten number appeared at the bottom of the second page of the Table of Contents. The number, 34258, appears to be a CEF regimental number and may have belonged to Joseph Allen Aubin, a native of Windsor, Ontario. Aubin enlisted early in the war with the CAMC 14th Field Ambulance, a part of the No. 2 Canadian Military Hospital, on September 23, 1914. At the beginning of the war, each soldier’s regimental number generally contained only five digits, and this changed to six digit numbers as the war continued. Only eighteen years old upon enlistment, Aubin served in France until July 1917, when he returned to England. He then sailed to Canada for his discharge, dated July 12, 1919, as part of the general demobilization. Soldiers receiving the pocket-sized book were told that, “Every returned soldier will be held responsible that he makes himself fully acquainted with its contents, and ignorance of the instructions will not be accepted as an excuse.” This assumed a high literacy rate among CEF soldiers.

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599 Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992/93/166, Box 299-9, digitized service record B0299-S009.
600 Returned Soldiers’ Handbook, 2.
The *Returned Soldiers’ Handbook* also provided the returning soldier with detailed instructions on where and how to wear Canadian service medals on their uniforms, as well as service medals received from the Allies (Britain, France, and the United States) during war service and from Russia for service during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). This implies that the Canadian military had an awareness that many of their soldiers had previously served for other nations; otherwise, such detailed instructions would not be required. The small book is detailed and quite comprehensive. It also covered conduct, pay and allowances, pensions, and medical treatment. One section of particular interest, “Proceeding to United States on Furlough or Duty” outlines the conditions Canadian soldiers must meet when in the United States.\(^{601}\) CEF soldiers could wear their uniform without arms, needed to have in their possession at all times a valid written permit for furlough or duty, and were required to supply the location of their leave in the United States in advance. In addition, “No soldier of the Canadian Military Forces shall drink any intoxicating liquor in any hotel, restaurant, bar or other public place in the United States while in uniform. Any reported breach of this order will be severely dealt with.”\(^{602}\) This appears to indicate that the drinking habits of CEF soldiers while wearing civilian clothes were not of particular concern for the Canadian government. The final condition required written permission in advance from Militia Headquarters for soldiers to give interviews or conduct lectures while in the United States. It is noteworthy that the Canadian military believed it necessary to devote an entire section in the booklet to regulating a soldier’s activities while on furlough in the United States, but it is perhaps because some ships carrying Canadian soldiers back from Europe docked in New York. This meant sufficient numbers might be on furlough at


once, so a code of conduct was necessary. It was a monumental logistical task to move all of the troops back across the Atlantic to Canada and the United States, so maintaining order was vital.

**Benefits and Services Available for CEF Veterans**

Canadian Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden visited the troops in France just prior to the April 1917 Battle of Vimy Ridge. During that visit, Borden promised that the government and the Canadian people would recognize their service to the country. Borden set the standard for post war veteran’s benefits by promising that the returning men would receive “just and due appreciation of the inestimable value of the services rendered to the country and Empire…”603 He made no distinction about any soldier’s place of birth. He was addressing all of the CEF soldiers who were ready to fight for Canada and the British Empire, and he was grateful for their service.

Borden’s address to those CEF troops in 1917 reflected the situation in that moment. The Canadian government had to operationalize how Canada would demonstrate its gratitude to the soldiers who returned. As a first step, it set the required length of service in the CEF to receive a War Service Badge as three months. This service could occur in Canada or overseas and represented the minimum time in service required to attain eligibility for any military benefits offered such as gratuity pay, medical services, and land grants. All soldiers serving in the CEF who met this length of service requirement were eligible, regardless of place of birth or citizenship. Land grants required Canadian residence, but not citizenship, prior to receiving a grant. In actual practice, most CEF soldiers only received their clothing allowance and gratuity pay upon discharge from service. However, even these one-time benefits were progressive for

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the early twentieth century. While Canada provided pensions, generally only those with visible and permanent injuries such as loss of a limb or eyesight were able to obtain one. Others suffering from shell shock, the effects of poison gas, or other illnesses found convincing the government of the validity of their claims much more challenging. It is important to remember that the granting of pensions was not a common occurrence in the early twentieth century.

The concept of soldier’s benefits for war service was relatively new at the conclusion of the First World War. The infrastructure to administer such benefits did not exist in Canada or the United States. However, given the significant numbers of returning soldiers, including many temporarily or permanently disabled, efforts were necessary to assist these men with reentry into civilian life. In Canada, this led to an increase in the need for federal employees to administer these benefits. By present day standards, the basic package of services available to returning CEF veterans was modest, however, per a 2004 report by Veterans Affairs Canada, in 1918 “the program the government had devised …was ground-breaking and controversial.” The program was controversial because no other Canadian veterans from either the Northwest Campaign of 1885 or the South African/Boer War (1899-1902) had received such considerations, and most notably, the expense for these programs fell to the Canadian people. In prior conflicts, all veterans generally received were medals and some opportunities to acquire land. Land was a plentiful commodity in Canada, so it was relatively easy to offer it to veterans, immigrants, and others interested in farming, particularly in middle and western Canada. Specifically, the program for First World War CEF veterans included the following provisions:

1. Pensions and hospital treatment of service-related disabilities or diseases;

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2. Vocational training for those unable to return to their former occupation;
3. A $35 ($512.75 in 2017 Canadian dollars)\(^{606}\) clothing allowance;
4. A service gratuity for single veterans up to a maximum of $420 ($6,153 in 2017 Canadian dollars)\(^{607}\) and a maximum of $600 ($8,790 in 2017 Canadian dollars)\(^{608}\) for married veterans, calculated per day based on length and location of service;
5. The opportunity to obtain a long-term, low interest loan to purchase farm land;
6. Government sponsored life insurance for purchase;
7. Preference in civil service appointments provided to veterans of overseas service, upon passing the regular examinations.\(^{609}\)

Recognition of the employment and medical needs of returning soldiers occurred almost from the start of the war. As early as late 1915, and perhaps on a hopeful note for a quick end to the war, Canada formed a Military Hospitals Commission charged with developing a proposal for the Canadian government on how to deal with the subject of employment for returning CEF soldiers. In a report to Commission President, Senator J.A. Lougheed, the Commission’s Secretary, E. H. Schammell, wrote that, “At the outset I desire to express the opinion that everything possible should be done by the Government, and by public effort, to insure to those that come back a means of livelihood. This is to apply, not only to those who are disabled, but also to those who are able-bodied.”\(^{610}\) It is noteworthy that the Canadian government took a holistic view of the employment needs of returning veterans. The Commission developed four categories of returning soldiers for employment purposes.\(^{611}\) The first comprised able-bodied men whose employers retained their previous position for them. The second category consisted

\(^{606}\) Inflation Calculator: Keeping Track of Canadian CPI and Inflation; [http://inflationcalculator.ca/](http://inflationcalculator.ca/); retrieved 9/10/2017. The war service gratuity (WSG) rate was $2.00 per day regardless of place of service with an additional $.60 per day for overseas service.


\(^{610}\) Canada Military Hospitals Commission, “The provision of employment for members of the Canadian expeditionary force on their return to Canada and the reduction of those who are unable to follow their previous occupation”, Sessional Paper No. 35A, 1916. Reprinted by the University of Michigan Library, 5.

\(^{611}\) “The provision of employment for members of the Canadian expeditionary force on their return to Canada and the reduction of those who are unable to follow their previous occupation,” 5-8.
of able-bodied men unemployed at time of enlistment, those whose employer did not save their job, and injured soldiers expected to recover. The third category was for injured soldiers who would recover but be unable to assume their former occupation, however, with training could assume a new occupation. The fourth and final category comprised the permanently disabled who would never be able to support themselves under any conditions.

The most frequently paid veterans benefits were the $35 clothing allowance upon discharge and the war service gratuity, a form of bonus paid based on the number of days of service. For example, Joseph Shuter Smith received a net war service gratuity of $171.50, calculated in his service file as 153 days of service overseas at a rate of $2.60 per day for a total of $397.80 minus an amount of $226.30 listed as P.D.P. or post discharge pay, a form of advance payment of the gratuity. Smith did not receive a clothing allowance because he transferred to the British Expeditionary Force. In the case of Arthur Hunt Chute, he received a war service gratuity of $397.80 minus $236.60 in post discharge pay for a net amount of $161.20. The Canadian government paid Black soldiers, who could only serve in the No. 2 Construction Battalion, the war service gratuity and clothing allowance as well. American-born Black CEF soldier Charles Battle, received post discharge pay of $366.89 per his service file, which included the $35 clothing allowance. Phillip Davis, another African American soldier received a war service gratuity of $280.00 plus the $35 clothing allowance.

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612 See service file of Joseph Shuter Smith. Library and Archives Canada, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9081-22, item 239253, 9081-22, p. 27.
The records reviewed indicate that the Canadian government honored its commitments to all CEF soldiers who met the minimum length of service requirement, regardless of their citizenship or race, providing timely payments. This is in contrast with the United States and its bonus for First World War veterans. Initially vetoed by President Warren Harding in 1922 and followed with a veto by President Calvin Coolidge in 1924, Congress overrode the second presidential veto and passed the measure. It provided veterans with $1.25 per day for those who served overseas and $1.00 per day for those who served domestically, with payment delayed until 1945.616 After much lobbying by veterans suffering during the Great Depression to escalate the timetable for payment, the House of Representatives passed a $2.4 billion First World War veteran bonus bill on June 15, 1932 by a vote of 211 to 176 which subsequently met defeat in the Senate.617 This led to violence against the thousands of veterans and their families who came to Washington in what is known as the “Bonus March” in hopes of persuading Congress to pay them for their service. Canada’s process of dealing with the payment of the veteran’s war service gratuity immediately at the end of service represented a more equitable model.

Canada also worked on plans to provide land for former soldiers interested in pursuing farming, passing acts to facilitate this process in 1917 and 1919. Per the terms of the 1919 act, “a veteran with a 10 percent down payment could apply to the Soldier Settlement Board for support to get started in farming or to improve an existing farm.”618 As noted, disabled soldiers could apply for pensions under the 1919 Pension Act based on a schedule of twenty classes divided into various percentages of disability. Early in the war, the Canadian government acknowledged

the need to help returning soldiers with assimilation as they found “that the conditions they left no longer exist.”619 The Canadian government had never previously undertaken an endeavor of the scope of the CEF, but throughout the war, careful planning, forward thinking, and a deep regard for those serving the nation led to the development of what were quite innovative programs at that time.

Part II Conclusion

The Men Who Served - Loyalty, Democracy, Adventure, and Duty

It is easy to believe that the romantic and misguided notion of glory gained by serving on the Western Front was all that captured the imaginations of American men who joined the CEF. Undoubtedly, this happened in some instances. However, many more took a decidedly serious view, worrying about the future of democracy in the world if Britain did not win this fight. Many were concerned that they might arrive too late for the war if American neutrality continued much longer. Even in 1918, after the United States had entered the war, a number of American troops fighting for the American Expeditionary Force in France expressed the wish that their arrival had been sooner. In a lecture to a Saint John audience, Nurse Agnes Warner impressed on them “the strength of the Americans’ courage, their burning hatred for the enemy, and their bitter resentment at having shown up too late for the fight.”620 These harsh words paint a clear picture of the mindset of those fighting. Undoubtedly, for some of the Americans, the war did represent adventure and the chance at an escape from the routine of their daily lives. However, it is unfair to think that these men took the war lightly. Many were very young, and the majority had no

619 “The provision of employment for members of the Canadian expeditionary force on their return to Canada and the reduction of those who are unable to follow their previous occupation,” Foreword.
620 Quinn, 136.
combat experience. They could not comprehend the horrors they would soon face. Most believed they had a duty to “do their bit,” and joining the CEF was a means to do so.

The American-born men who fought in the CEF closely matched the profile of the Canadian-born soldiers. This is not surprising given the common ancestry, physical closeness, and interwoven colonial history between the two countries. The average age of American-born enlistees from the sample analyzed ranged in the 20s (64%) while most of this cohort comprised men 20-24 years of age. Those born in states bordering Canada accounted for slightly over 51% of the sample, and a large portion (32%) listed their occupation as farmer. For religion, 79% indicated a Protestant denomination, while 19% declared as Roman Catholic.

While Europe always seemed to have a succession of conflicts with plenty of opportunity for heroism and valor, the last major war for the United States was the American Civil War. The Spanish-American War that lasted for about sixteen weeks in 1898 was a brief opportunity to have a defining moment for the sons and grandsons of the Civil War generation, but for the young men born late in the nineteenth century, their only choice was to look to Europe. The United States of the early twentieth century had turned inward after its brief and mostly unsatisfactory forays into imperialism with the colonization of Cuba, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, received in the settlement with the Spanish. Theodore Roosevelt, a man both privileged and powerful, was a primary architect of early twentieth century ideals about American manhood, with military service and war representing integral parts of the equation.621 At the end of the nineteenth century, Civil War veterans, often near-deified for the prior thirty plus years as “model citizens and men,” were aging out, and with the western frontier declared

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closed, many looked to war as a “character-building endeavor.” As noted by James M. McPherson, “Patriotic and ideological convictions were an essential part of the sustaining motivation of Civil War soldiers,” and this remained true for the American men enlisting to serve with the Canadians.

For American-born enlistees in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, bonds of common ancestry, culture, language, religious, and political beliefs (with the notable exception of French Canada) among Britain, Canada, and the United States remained particularly strong at this time, propelling both Americans and Canadians alike to rally to the aid of Britain. Americans also had fervent ties to the United States, and most were deeply patriotic. Such feelings were growing in Canada as well. This was a time when many Americans described themselves in hyphenated terms such as Irish-American, German-American, Italian-American, etc. However, Americans with roots in England, Wales, and Scotland did not describe themselves in dual terms. Deep-rooted feelings of loyalty for Britain, as well as the perception that Britain served as the torchbearer for the preservation of democracy in the face of German militarism, appeared as reasons for enlisting in a number of soldier’s accounts. Additionally, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were periods of high immigration from Britain, especially to Canada, but also to the United States, so many families were either recent transplants or within a generation of emigrating from Britain. Families often still had relatives there and in other parts of Europe, so they had a simultaneous stake in what happened in both North America and Europe.

It is almost impossible to put a price on the impact of the First World War on this generation. We can never know what might have been, but we can try to understand those who

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623 James M. McPherson, 114.
served. The sacrifices of these men and women should not be understated. Few probably really understood what lay ahead for them when they enlisted. The reasons for volunteering to fight and serve in such a catastrophic cause were many and varied. For example, Edwin Austin Abbey was the idealist of the group examined, as his letters home spoke of lofty ideals and fighting to save democracy. Others, like Joseph Shuter Smith, joined as the result of intense political discussions with his friends. As evidence of the close relationship between Canada, Britain, and the United States at the time, Smith served with all three forces during the course of the war, experiencing no repercussions concerning his American citizenship. Others who served had a more cynical view of war and authority afterward, as Charles Yale Harrison demonstrated, while others like Arthur Hunt Chute had viewed the war as an opportunity for adventure while fulfilling a duty. Some of the volunteers brought insurmountable issues with them to the military and probably never should have served, as was the case for Herbert Wes McBride and Nursing Sister Eva Godenrath. Moreover, a few went on after the war to have significant literary careers, with Raymond Chandler a primary case in point. In addition, Chandler and Abbey each had extremely strong ties to Britain, with close family still living there.

**The Women Who Served as Nursing Sisters – Duty Bound**

This section reviews how professional values served as a driving force for women to enlist in the Canadian Army Medical Corp. In the instances of American women signing up with the Canadian Army Medical Corps as nurses, a deep sense of duty and a sense of responsibility for taking care of others motivated their desire to enlist. These women believed their nursing skills represented a valuable and necessary addition to support the fighting men. This definitely proved to be the case. Most did not see their work as heroic.
Many of the nurses distinguished themselves as well with Mildred Clinch, a former Harvard Unit volunteer receiving praise from Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig in the *London Gazette*. Nursing Sister Helen Hansen received the Military Medal for distinguished service in the field as the result of her performance during an air raid in 1918 at the hospital where she served. Several had previous volunteer service with the Harvard Unit and the militia. For the American-born women who joined the CANC, it was less about being American or Canadian and more about a duty as nurses to go where their skills could help the most. The Canadian military provided an avenue to do so, and was the first military to recognize nurses as officers.

It is fortunate that a number of American-born men serving with the Canadians wrote memoirs, books and letters describing their experiences and feelings during the war. The preservation of the complete service records of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and the Canadian Army Medical Corps also provides a tremendous collection of invaluable information. However, as a group, Canadian and American-born women serving as nursing sisters did not care to write very much about their experiences. Perhaps many felt they did their duty and it would appear like bragging to write about it. Agnes Warner was initially horrified when she found out that friends back home had her letters compiled into a book, *My Beloved Poilus*, and sold it locally to raise money for her to use for the French soldiers she cared for.\(^{624}\) Warner subsequently expressed gratitude to her friends for their efforts on her behalf, as the money provided the means to purchase much needed medical supplies. A couple of years after the end of the war, former CAMC Nursing Service Matron-in-Charge Margaret Macdonald sent a letter to all of the nursing sisters who served asking them to respond with a story, remembrance or photograph for inclusion in an account of their service in the war. Of over two thousand five

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\(^{624}\) Quinn, 54.
hundred letters sent, Macdonald only received eight replies, so there is no official history of the Canadian Army Nursing Corps (CANC). Generally, at this time, women worked primarily behind the scenes in the home. The public sphere existed almost exclusively for men. Nursing sisters represented a relatively new phenomenon in the military, particularly as official members of the military at officer ranks and serving near the front lines of battle. Many of these women likely held traditional views and felt their work belonged behind the scenes. For women to write about their wartime experiences might appear as boastfulness or unladylike, to use a term of the times. Nursing sisters received some mention in the overall history of the Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) of which they were a part. In contrast, there is an extensive official history of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). As noted, recent research and writing is shedding further light on their exemplary service to the war effort.

The number of nurses available could not compare to the number of casualties they cared for, because the nursing profession was still relatively young at the time of the war. The concept of careers for women was new as well in the early twentieth century, and faced significant societal resistance. Their war service was harsh and demanding, but the CANC nurses served as officers at the official rank of lieutenant, which was unheard of for women in any prior war. A few of the nurses gave their lives, and most suffered some form of illness while serving. However, from the First World War onward, having a nursing corps became a standard requirement in the military. The war also helped encourage the status of nursing as a profession requiring standardized education instead of unregulated on the job training.

A First - North Americans Go to War in Europe

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625 Quinn, 8.
From the beginning in 1914, Britain needed help to fight a European war and its dominions, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, quickly answered the call in the affirmative. Due to their dominion status, the three were automatically at war as well. Even so, Canada entered the war with great enthusiasm. War fever erupted across the country. For Canadians, this meant organizing and sending a fighting force across the Atlantic to Europe for the first time. As a young nation, having just achieved dominion status in 1867, Canada faced a huge task in assembling the Canadian Expeditionary Force. However, from the start of the war, the volunteers quickly poured in to the hastily established training camp at Valcartier in Quebec and as the war continued, to recruitment offices across the breadth of Canada. As shown, a segment of these volunteers, estimated at 35,599 from service records, had been born in the United States. In spite of the neutrality of the United States, numbers of young men crossed the border from the United States to Canada and eagerly enlisted with little worry about any consequences. Others were American-born men who lived in Canada at the time. Until 1917, Canada’s military operated on a volunteer basis, so American men resident in Canada had no obligation to enlist either before then. The overwhelming majority comprised white men, which was reflective of the CEF, but the war brought previously unanticipated opportunities for others. As discussed, a number of African American men crossed the border to enlist as well, although they could not join combat units. Sending a large-scale military force to Europe was certainly a first for Canada.

Previously, any fighting forces had always come to North America from Europe to either protect its colonies or fight a war between competing colonizers. Often viewed as the first truly global conflict, the Seven Years War brought European conflicts to North American soil as the

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626 Library and Archives Canada, RG24, Vol. 1753, Page 1, File DHS 7-25. Letter dated June 7, 1933 from Colonel A. Fortescue Duguid to Dr. A.G. Doughty, C.M.G., Deputy Minister, Department of Public Archives, Ottawa, ON.
French and Indian War. Following the French defeat in 1763, Britain effectively assumed total control of upper North America. However, this was the culmination of many prior conflicts between the British and the French throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which frequently found their way to the North American colonies. British influence in North America remained strong, even following the American Revolution and the War of 1812.

Canada and the United States both developed as the product of settler colonization from Britain. In 1914, the national, state, provincial, and local governments of both countries remained firmly under the control of the descendants of these British settlers. The imprint of Britain on the culture and values of both nations was undeniable and long lasting. Religious, social, and political ties remained strong among the three. Additionally, British proximity to the United States through Canada assured that they could keep a close watch on all North American developments. Canada did not achieve dominion status until 1867, so Britain continued to control all decisions for the colony, and this included border-related issues with the United States. The decision to grant Canada dominion status developed, in part, because of British concerns over the possible impact of the American Civil War and continuing United States interest in taking control of the colony to expand its North American footprint.

The First World War was a white man’s war on both sides. Native populations and Blacks had little agency in either the United States or Canada. When Britain gained control of North America, French Canadians felt a sense of gratitude toward the British for allowing them to continue to practice their Roman Catholic religion and maintain their language and culture following the end of the French and Indian War in 1763. By the start of the First World War, French Canadians, primarily centered in the agriculturally based province of Quebec, preferred to stay out of international conflicts. A good number of French Canadians did not welcome the
introduction of Canadian conscription in 1917, and many believed their enthusiasm for the war lagged behind that of other Canadians. However, the First World War brought unprecedented needs for troops, and with this, opportunities for some not normally considered. French Canadians, First Nation, and African American men served as well. Volunteerism remained strong. Even with conscription, over the course of the war, 78% of Canadian troops were volunteers. Contingents of troops crossed the Atlantic from North America to Europe for the first time. Colonials, both past and present, came to the aid of a colonizer in a stunning turn of events. Britain needed the assistance of the North Americans who willingly raced across the Atlantic to defend democracy in the face of threats from a militaristic Germany.

Enthusiasm aside, Canada’s young and inexperienced military required considerable mentoring and further training once it reached England to prepare these troops for what awaited them in France. However, these New World North Americans pushed against the Old World British military’s orientation as a highly regimented and traditionally class-based organization. Unorthodox Canadian militia leaders like the boisterous Sam Hughes fought in his own way to keep the Canadian Expeditionary Force intact and relevant, rather than have it absorbed piecemeal as reinforcements for various British units. Still, the CEF had to accept a British commander, E.A.H. Alderson, as its initial leader because no Canadian officer met the criteria for such an endeavor. The Canadians later emerged as a superior fighting force under the 1916-1917 leadership of British General Sir Julian Byng. He meticulously prepared the Canadians for their first assignment as the lead force in the successful battle of Vimy Ridge in April 1917. From officers to the lowest enlisted rank, each CEF member understood the objectives of the

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627 Canada. Department of Public Information: Canada’s Part in the Great War: Issued by the Department of Public Information, (Ottawa: The Department, 1919), 2.
assault and his particular role in it. This also marked the first time that all four Canadian divisions fought together. Because of their success, Byng received a promotion that took him back to the BEF, while the CEF finally got its first Canadian commander, General Arthur Currie.

A number of Americans fought with the Canadians at Vimy Ridge as well, while the United States had just entered the war mere days before. In 1914, Canada was a nation with a small population and a large proportion of immigrants, so the military concentrated on enlisting physically capable troops, while not paying much, if any, attention to national affiliations. Undoubtedly, Canadian officials had awareness of the fact that in spite of American neutrality, some of its citizens wanted to join the war effort anyway and did so in Canada. We do not know for sure if President Wilson knew that some Americans were crossing the border to volunteer in Canada, but it is conceivable that he did given coverage in the newspapers. Groups such as the volunteer medical unit organized by Harvard University received widespread publicity at the time. Efforts also took place to organize an “American Legion” unit within the CEF, which were widely publicized as well, although ultimately, it never came to official fruition.

It was entirely reasonable for President Wilson to attempt to maintain the neutrality of the United States for as long as possible. This was particularly true at the beginning of the war when all involved hoped it would be of short duration. If the United States could wait things out, it might avoid involvement. In addition, Wilson had pressing matters at home on the United States-Mexico border, which reached a crisis point in 1916. Many incidents, including Americans deaths, driven by the Mexican Revolution led to rising calls for the United States to invade Mexico. Wilson had no desire to engage, although he had little choice but to divert most American militia troops to the border in 1916. Wilson also had a difficult re-election campaign in 1916, so maintaining the neutrality of the United States for as long as possible loomed large for
him. However, the longer the war dragged on, the less likely it became to remain neutral. The British also had their own issues at home to contend with, as the Irish push for independence escalated with the violent Easter Rising in 1916. This made help from the dominions all the more important to support their war effort. Britain made steep demands, and Canada responded by sending 424,589 troops overseas of 619,636 enlisted. Canada needed to draw as many enlistees as possible from whatever sources were available to meet these ever-escalating demands.

No evidence was uncovered that the United States government objected to reasonable numbers of United States citizens electing to cross the border into Canada to enlist. Actually, quite the opposite was true. Many soldiers serving with the CEF or other Allied forces quietly returned to the United States after their service ended with no questions asked. Those transferring to the AEF completed a short repatriation form, known as a 3904, either with their American enlistment paperwork or at a United States consulate office, which reinstated the individual’s American citizenship. We do not know if this would have held true if several hundred thousand American men had decided to cross the border instead of just under thirty six thousand. In all likelihood, large numbers would have attracted too much negative attention, threatening the neutrality of the United States. Even as a declared neutral nation, average Americans were decidedly in favor of the Allies. Significant amounts of adverse publicity surrounding the German Army’s conduct early in the war in Belgium and the perceived threats posed by German militarism caused wide segments of the United States to feel this way. As the war continued, other controversial events, including the German use of gas warfare on the battlefield and the sinking of the ocean liner Lusitania, intensified negative feelings towards Germany. Ultimately, Wilson had little choice but to ask for a declaration of war with German
refusal to end unrestricted submarine warfare. Nevertheless, as described here, some American men could not wait and were already in the fight with the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

**Canadian Independence Grows after the War**

Canada’s performance during the First World War helped shape its consciousness as an independent nation. For Canada, events such as the April 9-12, 1917 battle of Vimy Ridge, part of the larger Battle of Arras, stoked strong feelings of national pride and represented its first real foray onto the international stage. Australia and New Zealand had similar experiences. Many of the troops serving in the CEF were recent transplants to Canada, often British-born. The battle of Vimy Ridge transformed them from “Old Country immigrants, new to Canada” into an army that believed it represented “the finest troops on the Western Front.”\(^{628}\) Vimy was a watershed moment for Canada, commemorated by many as the day the Canadian nationality was born.

Because of the First World War, Canada saw itself thrust on the world stage for the first time, and with that, thoughts of increased independence from Britain grew. In 1919, the Canadian House of Commons passed the Nickle Resolution, which ended the practice of other governments giving knighthoods and other honorary titles to Canadians. Specifically, the Resolution asked the British government to refrain from bestowing “any title of honour or titular distinction” to residents of Canada, except for vocational and professional titles.\(^{629}\) In recognition of Canada’s participation in the First World War, on January 10, 1920, Canada received an invitation to join the League of Nations as an independent voting member. In addition, as a further demonstration of this desire for greater independence and the development of a strong national consciousness during the war, Canadian Prime Minister W. L. Mackenzie King took a position on foreign policy in 1922 by requiring that the Canadian Parliament had to

\(^{628}\) Berton, 292-293.
approve Canada assisting the British with their occupation in Chanak, Turkey. The issue in Turkey resolved itself without needing any assistance from the Dominions. However, it clearly demonstrated the manner in which Canadian thinking on such matters was evolving.

Canada acted prudently but increasingly independently from Britain during the 1920s and 1930s. Canada and the United States signed the “Convention for the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the Northern Pacific Ocean” treaty on March 2, 1923. The signing was unique because the Canadian Minister of Marine and Fisheries Ernest LaPointe (1876-1941) and United States Secretary of State Charles Evan Hughes (1862-1948) signed, with no one from Britain taking part for the first time. Because of the treaty, the International Fisheries Commission, known today as the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), came into existence between the governments of Canada and the United States. The Commission’s website notes that the IPHC, composed of six commissioners, receives funding from both countries. Each nation appoints three commissioners who serve at the pleasure of their respective nation.

Yet another action in Canada’s slow but steady steps toward complete independence from Britain was the establishment of a Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C. in 1927. Reciprocally, the United States established a legation in Ottawa on June 1, 1927 and upgraded it to embassy status on November 19, 1943. However, it was not until 1931 and the formation of the Commonwealth that Canada achieved a more complete independence from Great Britain with the passage of the Statute of Westminster. The Statute, which passed on December 11, 1931, “granted the colonies full legal freedom except in those areas where they chose to remain subordinate to Britain”, and its passage resulted directly from the service of Canada and other


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Dominion nations during the First World War. Canada and the other dominion nations earned their freedom by making significant sacrifices of their people and resources to assist Britain with the war effort. The war significantly affected Canadians and the populations of the other settler nations, including those at home and serving overseas, precipitating momentous social change. As a result, Canada and the other dominion nations had a better sense of their own identities and felt free to step out from the shadow of Britain. Although still loyal and committed to the Commonwealth, interest in independence only increased postwar, and there was no interest in resuming colonial status. While Britain lost control of its former settler colonies, there remained a strong and lasting relationship between them. Britain continued to maintain a close relationship with the United States, a long ago settler colony, as well. Britain, the United States, and Canada had disputes with one another from time to time. However, the close connections remained.

Canada, as a neighbor of the United States and a British Dominion, often appears as helping to preserve the close relationship between Britain and the United States. It is also a necessity for a smaller country frequently caught between the competing interests of two superpowers. Because of its important role in the war effort, Canada began to assert itself, perhaps leading the young nation to develop a somewhat amplified vision of its role between Britain and the United States. Conversely, it is true that a small, young nation, with no previous international standing, had managed to carve a place for itself among much greater nations. During a speech to the Canadian House of Commons in 1919, Canadian Prime Minister Sir Robert L. Borden expressed pride in Canada’s war effort and he described its increased status in the negotiations of the peace treaty. His statement at the beginning of this concluding chapter indicates that he believed Canada served as the lead nation for the entire western hemisphere, even though

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Canada’s dominion status obligated it to enter the war. Borden’s assumption might seem daring. However, Canada did enthusiastically embrace its role in the war, and gave a maximum effort. The Prime Minister’s address to the Canadian House of Commons included a statement that Canada had “been urgently requested to use every possible expedition in having the Treaty considered by the Parliament of Canada” signified an important change in status for Canada.635 Prior to the war, matters involving foreign affairs resided almost exclusively with Britain. Canada had broken new ground with the fact that it had a role in the peace negotiations, however minor it was in reality.

The Postwar Years

Some twenty years after the end of the First World War, the three nations faced another conflict with Germany that also evolved into a global war, the Second World War. This time, as a result of the 1931 Statute of Westminster, Canada now had the power to declare war on its own, if it so choose. Following Britain’s declaration on September 3, 1939, Canada immediately jumped in to assist Britain, declaring war on September 10, 1939. Once again, Canada was not militarily prepared to go to war again, particularly after the isolationist years of the 1920s and the devastating Great Depression in the 1930s.636 The United States was not ready to declare war, but as in the First World War, some Americans could not wait. Canada again provided an option for some of these American citizens to enlist. Others enlisted directly with Britain. The close relationship between the three nations did not preclude ignoring technical issues of citizenship when it came to wartime. The First World War set a precedent for the Flying Tigers who assisted China against the Japanese in 1941-42, and the Eagle Squadron in 1940, comprised of volunteer

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pilots from the United States. News reports made it known in both the United States and Britain that Americans were serving in the RAF. A few also volunteered with the Royal Navy, with the United States Navy and Naval Air attaché in London looking the other way, while also informally advising Britain to look into enlisting United States Navy pilots laid-off during cutbacks in the 1930s Depression years.637 Men joining the Royal Air Force dodged citizenship issues because no oath of allegiance was required.638

Following the First World War, Canada, the United States, and Britain continued to share strong political and cultural ties with the three occasionally referred to as the North Atlantic Triangle. The concept was viewed as primarily a Canadian construct as this middle power nation sought to balance its place between two much more powerful nations. Canadian historian John Bartlett Brebner wrote the classic work on the North Atlantic Triangle in 1945, examining the relationship between North America and Britain from 1492 to the mid-twentieth century.639 While primarily focusing on the relationship between the two North American nations, Brebner concluded that, “the United States and Canada could not eliminate Great Britain from their courses of action, whether in the realm of ideas, like democracy, or of institutions, or of economic and political processes.”640 Reviewing the concept in the present, historian Tony McCulloch believes Brebner’s North Atlantic Triangle was essentially light on theory, serving more as a history of the relationship between the United States and Canada since colonial times, “with particular reference to the role of Britain and the empire in influencing those relations.”641

637 Dietrich-Berryman, Hammond and White, 33.
638 Dietrich-Berryman, Hammond and White, 34.
640 Brebner, xi.
After the Imperial Conference of 1926, Canada began actively addressing the concept of a North Atlantic Triangle containing Canada, the United States, and Britain. For Canada, the triangle concept served two purposes. First, many in Canada thought it helped maintain its relevance within the British Empire. Secondly, the Canadian government continued to worry about the United States absorbing it, not necessarily in geographic terms, but in terms of control of its economy and trade. As the twentieth century progressed, Canada assumed more of a North American perspective over that of the British Empire.642 Some advantages exist for middle power nations. There are few expectations that a middle power nation would bear too many significant costs, both economically and militarily, and it could count on the larger nations it aligns with for assistance when needed. Canada knew it could depend on the support of Britain and the United States.643 In turn, middle power nations, like Canada, also frequently assist a super power nation.644 For instance, Canada helped mediate the 1956 Suez Canal crisis, with Canadian diplomat Lester Pearson winning the 1957 Nobel Peace prize as a result.

As a concept, does the “North Atlantic Triangle” seem more contrived than real, much like the term “special relationship” as coined by Sir Winston Churchill to apply to Britain and the United States? The concept has its supporters who see it as providing key insights into the relationship between the three nations, while its detractors believe it makes Canada’s role in international affairs appear larger than it actually is, and a few historians doubt it ever existed.

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altogether. Some believe that the triangle does live on, pointing to NATO as the place where the three nations “continue to display a significant degree of military and intelligence cooperation,” including providing most of the fighting troops assigned to Afghanistan. It is fair to say that the three nations still have much in common in the present day.

Asking its dominions and colonies as well as a former colony, the United States, for help during the First World War came at a cost for Britain. Its world dominance began to fade postwar as its latest version of empire started to fray. After the war, Canada slowly but decisively moved toward greater independence. The United States assumed world power status. As New World countries, Canada and the United States approached issues with confidence, ingenuity, and a strong disdain for rigid class-based systems. Canada went so far as to eventually make it illegal in 1919 for its citizens to accept any honorary titles. Conversely, Britain remained primarily a bastion of tradition, with a deeply entrenched class system. Nevertheless, the war brought changing social values and awakened the middle and working classes in Britain as well. Some bemoaned these changes, as a December 1918 article in the Los Angeles Times noted, “It was the university men that rushed into the breach and became the officers of Britain’s eight and a half million army. And today the great majority of them are dead…So many of her public men must necessarily now come from the masses, who, while they may be strong and great, will lack that essential intellectual scholarly training which has marked the history of statesmanship in Great Britain hitherto.” In some ways, this was a unique article for an American newspaper, but perhaps not completely so. While it ran counter to anything Americans or Canadians would worry about within their own countries, clearly its significance for Britain was apparent. The

645 McCulloch, p. 197.
646 McCulloch, 207.
United States and Canada worried about what happened to Britain. In their own ways, both still do. The three nations remain close allies to the present day, tied by a common language, as well as deeply shared political and economic interests.
Appendix 1
Declarations of Neutrality by the United States:

- Proclamation of Neutrality on August 4, 1914 for the war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia and between Germany and Russia and between Germany and France
- Proclamation No. 1272 on August 5, 1914 for the war between Germany and Britain
- Proclamation No. 1273 on August 7, 1914 on the outbreak of war between Austria-Hungary and Russia
- Proclamation No. 1274 on August 13, 1914 for the outbreak of war between Britain and Austria-Hungary
- Proclamation No. 1275 on August 14, 1914 for the state of war between France and Austria-Hungary
- Proclamation No. 1276 on August 18, 1914 in recognition of war between Belgium and Germany
- Proclamation No. 1277 on August 24, 1914 for the state of war between Japan and Germany
- Proclamation No. 1278 on August 27, 1914 for the state of war between Japan and Austria-Hungary
- Proclamation No. 1280 on September 1, 1914 in recognition of war between Belgium and Austria-Hungary
- Proclamation No. 1286 on November 6, 1914 in recognition of war between Britain and Turkey
- May 24, 1915, one was issued for the war between Italy and Austria-Hungary
- August 22, 1915, one was issued for the war between Italy and Turkey
- November 11, 1915, one was issued for the state of war that existed between France, Britain, Italy, and Serbia and Bulgaria
- March 3, 1916, one was issued for the war between Germany and Portugal
- August 30, 1916, one was issued for the war between Germany and Italy

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Appendix 2 – Analysis of 1,000 U.S.-born Canadian Expeditionary Force Enlistees

U.S.-born Enlistees by Age

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<thead>
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Age Groups

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Religion

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<tr>
<td>Total Protestant</td>
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Appendix 2 – Analysis of 1,000 U.S.-born Canadian Expeditionary Force Enlistees

### U.S.-born Enlistees – Occupations

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<td>Electrician</td>
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All Others | 285  | 28.5%|
Total       | 1000 | 100.0%|

### Prior Military Service

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### Composition

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Appendix 2 – Analysis of 1,000 U.S.-born Canadian Expeditionary Force Enlistees

U.S.-born Enlistees – State of Birth

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47 states represented; DWI is Danish West Indies
Appendix 3 - U.S. Born Enlisted in the CEF - African Americans

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<td>Brown</td>
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<td>9/13/1916</td>
<td>Saskatoon</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>Dabney</td>
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<td>1/29/1917</td>
<td>Windsor, ON</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>931815</td>
<td>2/14/1917</td>
<td>Windsor, ON</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>1/5/1917</td>
<td>Windsor, ON</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ducharme</td>
<td>166320</td>
<td>10/4/1915</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
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<td>931695</td>
<td>1/2/1917</td>
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<td>Edmonton</td>
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Note: All were volunteers and none had any prior military service.
### Appendix 3 - U.S. Born Enlistees in the CEF - African Americans

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<td>Lun</td>
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<td>IN</td>
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<td>NY</td>
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<td>C of E</td>
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Note: All were volunteers and none had any prior military service.
### Appendix 4 - U.S. Born Nursing Sisters in the CAMC of the CEF

#### Enlistment Information

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<th>Prior</th>
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<td>Ethel</td>
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<td>4/7/1915</td>
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<td>Isabel M.</td>
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<td>4/22/1918</td>
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<td>Sarah E.</td>
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<td>4/22/1915</td>
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<td>7/8/1918</td>
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<td>4/7/1915</td>
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<td>Ina G.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5/12/1915</td>
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</table>

(1) Gertrude Baker served with the Harvard Unit in France prior to joining the CEF.
(2) Mabel Bell served with an American unit in France for 19 months prior to joining the CEF.
(3) Mildred Clinch served with Harvard Unit in France for 21 months prior to joining the CEF.
(4) Eva Godenrath was a member of the Canadian militia.
(5) Marguerite Reynolds previously served one year in the 2nd Birmingham War Hospital.
### Appendix 4 - U.S. Born Nursing Sisters in the CAMC of the CEF

#### Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>Gertrude E.</td>
<td>Caribou</td>
<td>ME</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Graduate Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>Mabel L.</td>
<td>Oswego</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Graduate Nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berge</td>
<td>Marie C.</td>
<td>Bryant</td>
<td>SD</td>
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<td>Nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brewer</td>
<td>Ethel</td>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>C of E</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calhoun</td>
<td>Sarah E.</td>
<td>Tacoma</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Episcopalian</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartwright</td>
<td>Isabel M.</td>
<td>Algonac</td>
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<td>Single</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chisholm</td>
<td>Sarah E.</td>
<td>Florence</td>
<td>WI</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Single</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinch</td>
<td>Mildred A.</td>
<td>Evansville</td>
<td>WI</td>
<td>Baptist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comerford</td>
<td>Gertrude E.</td>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Prof. Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeLaunay</td>
<td>Josephine</td>
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<td>NY</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliot</td>
<td>Emma F.</td>
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<td>Single</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillan</td>
<td>Ina G.</td>
<td>Woburn</td>
<td>MA</td>
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<td>Single</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Godenrath</td>
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<td>Glendale</td>
<td>KY</td>
<td>C of E</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hansen</td>
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<td>MA</td>
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<td>Single</td>
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<tr>
<td>McKay</td>
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<td>Graduate Nurse</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Saginaw</td>
<td>MI</td>
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<td>Single</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip</td>
<td>Beulah</td>
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<td>Single</td>
<td>Prof. Nurse</td>
</tr>
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<td>Reynolds</td>
<td>Marguerite J.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Single</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stinson</td>
<td>Laurie K.</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>C of E</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- C of E stands for Church of England
- RC stands for Roman Catholic
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