CONRAD EYMANN: A MICROHISTORY OF CHANGING GERMAN-CANADIAN
IDENTITY DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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ABSTRACT

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How did the turbulent years of the First World War and the violently anti-German sentiments that developed during that time influence and change German-Canadian identity?

While Canada was at war in Europe with Germany and her allies from 1914 to 1918, the treatment of domestic German immigrants deteriorated in some cases to the point of public hostility by native-Canadians. The reactions to this crisis by the German-born immigrant and Editor-in-chief Conrad Eymann of the German-language newspaper Der Courier from Regina, Saskatchewan, can offer valuable insight into the lives and culture of German-Canadians during these years. Eymann's correspondence with the Chief Press Censor Ernest Chambers, Police Commissioner A.B. Perry, and Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden – as well as Eymann's file recorded by the Royal North-West Mounted Police and the articles he published in Der Courier – are among the more valuable primary sources examined in this work.

In this thesis, I analyze these sources and others through a microhistorical approach in an effort to develop an understanding of German-Canadian identity that both complements and challenges the accepted grand narrative view of Canadian history. That is, the research and discoveries presented in this thesis is hoped to both complement and challenge the widely accepted grand narrative perceptions of identity development during the First World War.
This work is dedicated to Evelyn Hyder, for her constant support and commitment as well as our engaging scholarly conversations that helped shape and refine this project.
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INTRODUCTION

In 1910, German immigrant Conrad Eymann stepped into what was to be his home for the next ten years, the western prairie provinces of Canada. Whether he knew right away how intimately he would begin to identify with this country or whether this was to take place gradually over the beginning years he lived there, we can only surmise – but regardless, he was to become a prominent figure and dedicated leader in the German-Canadian community on the prairie. In a country mixed with a colorful variety of immigrants and “native” English Canadians and in a turbulent time characterized by re-evaluating and changing national identities, this soon-to-be German-Canadian newspaper editor would also be caught up in the flux of personal, national, and ethnic identity development over the course of the following years. Furthermore, and important to this study, this particular individual would additionally have a venue to convey and pass on his convictions and fervor to other members of his community – *Der Courier*, his German-language newspaper – thereby enabling researchers today to access these beliefs and messages.

Using Conrad Eymann, we will be able to more effectively glimpse the social conflicts and issues that arose during the First World War from the perspective of one German. Eymann presents us an excellent subject for this purpose; as an outspoken newspaper editor, he participated in many of the discourses debated in the period and acted as a mouthpiece for the German community to voice concerns to the government in Ottawa. Thus, through the same person, we can investigate many different issues ranging from the right to teach German in the classroom to the right to vote in national elections. Through his correspondence with various government officials and the articles he published in his newspaper, I hope to gain a better
understanding of the German immigrant community of the Canadian Prairie Provinces and in specific the nature and development of their dual identity as German-Canadians.

In this thesis, I will investigate the situations, controversies, and issues surrounding some German-Canadian communities and their influences on the German-Canadian identities of these people. To prepare the way for this examination, I will begin first by explaining the unique and specific methodology that I will be using to analyze this subject, and will explore the benefits and characteristics of the microhistorical approach which make it ideal for this study. After this, to help facilitate a better understanding of what it means to have a German-Canadian identity in the years preceding and following the First World War, I will incorporate, review, and weigh the relevant discussions and arguments contributed by prominent scholars in the field of German-Canadian studies. In my last chapter, the analyses from the first two chapters and my material on Conrad Eymann will be combined by taking what we learned about Canadian identity and placing it in the context of the subject of this study, the German-Canadian newspaper editor Conrad Eymann. This final chapter will investigate and interpret the actions and reactions of my subject through a microhistorical approach to gain a more complex understanding of the surrounding German-Canadian culture.
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION TO THE MICROHISTORICAL APPROACH

Defining Microhistory

In his famous letter to his fiancée Wilhelmine von Zenge, Heinrich von Kleist pointed out that the problem with truth – or reality for that matter – is that it is based on our human perception, which may easily be tricked. In this letter, Kleist posed the question that if all people had green spectacles instead of eyes, then how would they be able to know what was not green? In other words, seeing through green glasses, who could decide whether their eyes were representing colors the way they truly are, or whether their eyes were altering their perception of the world around them? In a similar way, grand narratives of history – like green glasses – shade the way in which we perceive the past. After all, writing history does require interpretation, a shade of glasses, if you will. Even if someone could read all of the archival records related to any person or event, he or she would still require a method to attack all this data – to help choose and organize which data is important, which is crucial. The question is: if the approach alters the perception of the facts around us, how do we choose our glasses?

To draw an analogy, the way in which the grand narrative view of history creates a unified narrative is by figuratively zooming out our lens in order that we may see history as a complete, intelligible whole. However, as many historians and critics of history have demonstrated, as we “zoom out,” we lose sight of the everyday events and individuals that history consists of. With a grand narrative view of history in mind, when we zoom back in to a particular event or experience in history, it may seem very different from what we expected. As historian George Iggers explains the problem posed by interpretations of a grand narrative is that: “Social scientists have made generalizations that do not hold up when tested against the concrete
reality of the small-scale life they claim to explain.”¹ To borrow the historian Richard Brown’s metaphor of the grand narrative, historians are like the ancients spotting “factual” constellations of stars in the sky. While the shapes perceived in the sky may be grounded on such truths as ‘the stars connect to each other so accurately,’ the shapes that are perceived are little more than the projection of “prevailing myths” of the viewers into the sky.² In other words, this approach focuses on drawing connections between stars, but at the same time loses sight of the individual and solitary importance of each star. In the same way, the grand narrative approach perceives history from a far-away and therefore distanced perspective, losing site of the individual experiences, to build a perspective of history.

In response to this perceived dilemma, some historians have chosen to examine historical phenomena using a more individualized, small-scale approach – commonly referred to as microhistory. But microhistory can be a bit difficult to define, because many historians have different interpretations and definitions of what microhistory is. While many of these definitions of microhistory can – and do – work independently of each other, these do not necessarily function in resistance to each other. That is to say, because one historian defines microhistory in terms of x, and another historian defines microhistory in terms of y, this is not necessarily a competing definition. That said, one should not acquire the false impression that microhistory has no definition or that historians are unsure of how to define microhistory. It is just the opposite; in all of my readings, I never came across a historian who was unsure of how he or she defines microhistory.

While there is a plenitude of books and scholarly works in the field that fall in the genre of microhistory, it has been noted, in particular by the historian Jill Lepore, that very few of these pieces claim outright to be microhistorical works.\textsuperscript{3} Seeing this complexity, a clear definition of microhistory is important in order to detect and determine useful examples of the microhistorical method in books and scholarly works, which may be otherwise ambiguous in their historical approaches.

The first step to gaining a good understanding of the definition of microhistory is to differentiate between microhistory and macrohistory. To use Richard Brown’s metaphor once again: whereas macrohistory attempts to analyze large constellations, microhistory seeks to investigate a single, factual star – one that is usually overlooked by star gazers visually sweeping the midnight sky. Oftentimes these “factual stars” are little more than an in-depth investigation of a single person or event that may not fit the mold of macrohistory. Thus, microhistory can be defined as a type of personalized history, one that chooses to begin with the subjects of its study and then proceed with an analysis outward to society at large. In other words, instead of viewing constellations of history or moving in and out between constellations and anecdotal stars, microhistory keeps its sight on the star and views constellations from the perspective of the star.

As a leading historian in the field of microhistory, Richard D. Brown is also a self-proclaimed convert to the microhistorical approach. Brown sees microhistory as an attempt to integrate such postmodern theorists as Foucault, Derrida, and Bakhtin into historical methodology.\textsuperscript{4} Over the course of his five-decade-long career, Brown has seen the arrival and departure of a number of historical “fashions,” including the national narrative, modernization


\textsuperscript{4} Brown, “Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge,” 1–2.
theory, neo-positivist quantification, and the “return to narrative.” Although Brown expects that microhistory too will eventually be displaced by another methodology, he holds the conviction that the microhistorical approach will have a lasting impact on historical thought. This impact of microhistory will endure, as it is a response to postmodernist critics who accuse history of being a “subjective construct derived from ‘facts’ that were selectively recorded to serve a wide range of purposes, and which often survive by chance.” Microhistory acknowledges that the views of its authors may be skewed or slanted in various social and political directions, but emphasizes that this subjective standpoint is considered in the interpretation of the texts. In other words, like many other forms of historical analysis, microhistory does not take the words provided in a primary document at face value.

Even with careful consideration of primary documents, if history is based on incomplete sources, potentially even distorted by subjective interpretation, what separates history from fiction? In his response to this issue, Richard Brown shifts the attention from the subjectivity of the authors to the notwithstanding potential for truthful content. Brown postulates that history is an interpretation of evidence that, while it is indeed subject to human error, nevertheless does have a reliable amount of accuracy and is therefore not completely fictional. After all, unlike writers of fiction, historians and their interpretations are restricted by certain “truths” of history, not to mention their peers in the field. Richard Brown responds to the postmodern critique of historical truth by explaining that what historians are after is not the type of truth that equates with mathematical proof, but rather a heavily qualified truth claim. Truth claims come in many

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5 Brown, “Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge,” 2.
6 Ibid., 3.
7 Ibid., 6.
forms; some are almost universally agreed upon events, such as the Constitutional Convention of 1787 in Philadelphia, while others truth claims remain in the realm of interpretation.

When historical analysis extends beyond these nearly universally agreed-upon facts, this is where history becomes difficult, contested, and above all, interesting. Interpretations of the event – whether or not it is based on additional documentation – that reach beyond simple statements of fact are difficult to qualify. As these interpretations become more abstract and synthesize an ever-increasing amount of sources, the more the interpretation relates to the perspectively determined patterns of stars in the vast night sky in Brown’s star metaphor. One begins to wonder if the historian is doing much more than pointing out vague constellations in the midnight sky of history.

Precisely this point, where an interpretation outgrows its evidence, is where microhistory can become a useful methodology to historians. One might extrapolate on the star metaphor: rather than viewing constellations of history or moving in and out between constellations and anecdotal stars, microhistory keeps its view on the star and views constellations from the perspective of the star.

This type of microhistorical interpretation appears to avoid such pitfalls of analysis as those criticized by Richard Brown in Gordon Wood’s The Radicalism of the American Revolution. This grand narrative of the American Revolution by Gordon Wood dissects the period of pre- and post-revolutionary America into three distinct periods termed: monarchy, republicanism, and democracy. According to the 369-paged narrative, the first era directly prior to the American Revolution was marked by social hierarchy and patronage. The second era would take place during the period of the revolution, when an essentially aristocratic group of founding fathers would attempt to found a republic that would distance the people “out of doors”
from political power. The ensuing third era would be characterized by the entrance of non-gentry elites into the government, who would help found a democracy and more egalitarian society. While this interpretation of sources connected with the American Revolution may be justifiable, Brown disagrees with major points of Wood’s interpretation. Based on his own investigations into the time period, Brown does not believe that the pre-revolution period was fundamentally “aristocratic” or that the period post-revolution is “accurately characterized as ‘republican.’” In other words, Brown points out that the problematic issue with Wood’s approach is how abstractly Wood has to view the historical period in order to mold it within a grand narrative. A closer look into the one of these three “eras” would most likely yield examples, singled out by location or time period, which are not appropriately represented by Wood’s classification.

These apparent inadequacies in some macrohistorical investigations open the door to discussion of the advantages of the microhistorical approach. The Icelandic historian Sigurdur Magnússon provides an interesting explanation of microhistory in relation to this topic, where the definition of microhistory approaches an antithesis to macrohistory. Whereas macrohistory has been mainly interested in the “average individual,” microhistory focuses more on historical “outliers” in order to promote a more intricate understanding of the past. As Magnússon quotes the Italian microhistorian Giovanni Levi, “[M]icrohistorians have concentrated on the contradictions of normative systems and therefore on the fragmentation, contradictions and plurality of viewpoints which make all systems fluid and open.” Since microhistory is unconcerned with suiting history to falling into one basic framework, it would seem that it

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8 Brown, “Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge,” 7.
9 Magnússon, “What is Microhistory,” George Mason University’s History News Network, online article at http://hnn.us/articles/23720.html (accessed December 18, 2009). The italicized text was original to Magnússon’s online article.
10 Ibid., “What is Microhistory.” As this is article was published online, it lacks page numbers for citation.
possesses a sort of methodological advantage in that it allows the microhistorian to concentrate his or her research on individuals regardless of their place in current macrohistorical interpretations. A microhistory can provide the reader with the personal experiences of people long lost to history as something more than just anecdotal digressions from the narrative, while at the same time making relative connections to macrohistory.

How does the prominent microhistorian Richard Brown define the term? While Brown is in no way unclear in his discussion, he nevertheless displays some hesitance about defining microhistory in terms that are too limiting. Brown notes that there are many different kinds of microhistory. Some microhistories have exhaustively studied individual communities while others have chosen individual people. Focus is the unifying factor. In a microhistory, the focus is usually on one individual person, place, or event. In other words, the focus of the microhistory remains on the small scale. Whenever the scope expands to consider macrohistorical events, the focus nevertheless remains on the perspective of the subject of the microhistory. While some histories may invoke examples of how macrohistorical trends are reflected on the small scale, Brown notes that these “detailed anecdotal devices” do not constitute a microhistory, because these histories would synthesize their sources from a macrohistorical perspective.

More concisely, Richard Brown distills his definition of a microhistory to the following: Microhistory is a historical analysis that is “tightly focused in time and place, and… rel[ies] heavily on thorough, multi-dimensional contextualization.” In other words, microhistory concentrates strictly on an individual or place and exhaustively analyzes the social and economic surroundings of this individual or place. This also works in reverse; that is, a microhistory can be

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1 Brown, “Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge,” 10.
2 Ibid., 9.
3 Ibid., 12.
thoroughly exhaustive precisely because it is tightly focused in time and place. Furthermore, Brown notes that this definition combines both the Americanist and Europeanist approaches to microhistory. While the Europeanists have tended to prefer people of “exceptional-normal”14 quality (such as in Natalie Zemon Davis’ *The Return of Martin Guerre*), Americanists tend to shy away from both the “exceptional-normal” and from the label of microhistorian.15 So it would seem that the microhistorical approach, like many other approaches, is one that historians utilize, but do not necessarily use as a label for themselves or their work.

On the other hand, Richard Brown cautions that when writing a microhistory, one should be wary about overreaching the boundaries of reasonable historical synthesis that can be drawn from any microcosm. A microhistory needs to be balanced. Simply because something happens in one instance does not mean that it may have happened in many instances or that it is indicative of society at large. Each situation needs to be considered individually. For example, when the historian Carlo Ginzburg demonstrated that a community of peasants in Italy during the middle ages were avidly literate, owned and traded books, and understood the content reasonably well, it would be appropriate to re-examine a widely held notion that peasants during the middle ages were uneducated, illiterate rabble that for the most part reacted to the whims of the aristocracy and clergy with humble deference.16 After all, it is difficult not only to believe that a skill such as literacy would not spread to other peasant communities (especially if peasant book-networks encompassed multiple villages), but also additionally difficult to believe that the skill of literacy would suddenly materialize in an Italian village disassociated from any external influence.

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14 By the term “exceptional-normal,” historians mean those people who would usually seem rather normal, but who have stood out in history in some exceptional way.

15 Brown, “Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge,” 12.

The Grand Narrative and Biography: Challenging and Complementing

According to Richard Brown, microhistory can and does present a formidable challenger to the Grand Narrative, but additionally notes that the microhistorian must clearly understand the macrocosm and the microcosm in order to make a convincing argument that the latter can “stand-in” for the former. If properly balanced, the microhistory may be able to give such a convincing glimpse into the past that it may call our preconceived, macrohistorical notions into question. An example where a microhistory challenges the grand narrative, Brown presents Patricia Cohen’s *The Murder of Helen Jewett*, which demonstrates that our understanding of nineteenth-century Victorian gender relations and sexuality is actually quite skewed from reality. According to Cohen, there existed a rather large sexual “counter-culture” in New York City during the Victorian Era. While Cohen’s conclusion contradicts the current, macrohistorical perspective, it is demonstrated and balanced so well that it begs the reconsideration of the emergence of Victorian culture not only in New York, but also in the entire American Northeast.

While some microhistories may propose interpretations that directly conflict with a grand narrative view of history, it must not be overlooked that one of the more important functions of microhistory – and possibly a reason for Brown to presuppose its continuing longevity – is that microhistory provides for alternate interpretations of history. So while microhistory indeed may challenge certain macrohistorical interpretations, this approach nevertheless does not eliminate a macrohistorical perspective from consideration entirely. In other words, rather than being characterized exclusively as an antithesis to the grand narrative, the microhistorical approach

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17 Brown, “Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge,” 15.
18 Ibid., 15.
may also be seen as complementing macrohistory, in that it offers supplemental information, procured through its individualized focus, to help expand on an existing macrohistorical theory.

The following example helps demonstrate this concept. The historian Natalie Zemon Davis seems to challenge the macrohistorical view in her microhistory *The Return of Martin Guerre*, by presenting evidence that goes counter to macrohistorical theories regarding the spread of Protestantism in southern France at this time. But this may instead be recognized as a broadening of collected knowledge, rather than a conflict with prior interpretations. That is, the microhistorical findings reveal a specific region whose culture presents an exception to the macrohistorical explanation. In other words, this microhistorical view may both support the macrohistorical theory and provide it with additional information by revealing an exception. In this way, Natalie Zemon Davis helps both the macrohistorical and the microhistorical approaches by providing both of them with precise information about French peasant culture during the sixteenth century.

Carlo Ginzburg’s example of literate medieval peasants in Italy may also be viewed as more than simply a challenge to the macrohistorical perspective. Even if many peasants were increasingly literate, it is clear that those who were literate likely comprised only a small percentage of the population. Additionally, even if these peasants were literate, what effect would it have on Italian society? For the most part, even these literate peasants – with a few exceptions – were still forced to show deference and fealty to the dominant social classes. Thus, while some peasants may have been actively literate and not completely subservient, understanding their literacy helps us comprehend the increasing frustration that the peasant classes expressed with the aristocracy and clergy due to their decreased social capital.
So, to quickly review the point, although microhistory oftentimes challenges the macrohistorical perspective of history, the alternative view of microhistory can provide a more differentiated interpretation of history. A microhistory functions as a reexamination of certain macrohistorical perspectives and adds a new layer of complication and understanding to history, which is in any case an important objective for much of academia.

With such an interpretation of microhistory, however, there would seem to be potential for confusion between microhistory and biography. The present working definition of a microhistory is a historical analysis that focuses on one person, place, or event may seem to overlap with “biography” when the microhistory examines one person. After all, by definition, a biography does focus on telling the stories of one specific person. So what makes a microhistory different from biography?

One way of distinguishing microhistory from biography is found in the type of people that a microhistorian or biographer chooses to examine. While a biographer tends to focus on the people who changed history, a microhistorian tends to focus on those people who were more average or “exceptionally-normal,” who are usually avoided in traditional, grand narratives of history. But this difference has only to do with content, and therefore does not draw a complete distinction between the two terms.

In her 2001 journal article “Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography,” historian Jill Lepore takes up exactly this dilemma and considers the methodological differences that make her a historian and not a biographer. Aside from microhistory’s and biography’s tendency to investigate different types of people, microhistorians have a specific approach to their subjects and their subject’s culture that is altogether different
from biography. In her article, Jill Lepore suggests the two following propositions to define
the difference between microhistory and biography.

If biography is largely founded on a belief in the singularity and significance of an
individual’s life and his contribution to history, microhistory is founded upon almost the
opposite assumption: however singular a person’s life may be, the value of examining it
lies not in its uniqueness, but in its exemplariness, in how that individual’s life serves as
an allegory for broader issues affecting the culture as a whole. [Secondly,] traditional
biographers seek to profile an individual and recapitulate a life story, but microhistorians,
tracing their elusive subjects through slender records, tend to address themselves to
solving small mysteries, in the process of which a microhistorian may recapitulate the
subject’s entire life story, though that is not his primary purpose. The life story, like the
mystery, is merely the means to an end—and that end is always explaining the culture.19

Here, Lepore explains that while the subject of a biography is the individual it is chronicling, in a
microhistory the emphasis is shifted away from the individual herself and more towards the
surrounding culture. So although the microhistory may seem like a biography in that it retells a
“life story,” the two approaches have distinctly different goals. The biography values the person
for the very uniqueness of her individual life, while the microhistory values the person for the
culture which the person reflects. In other words, the individual is not the subject of a
microhistory; rather, the role of the individual is to function as a tool or means towards
understanding a culture. In a parallel way, Richard Brown notes that the subject of a
microhistory can be conceived of as a figurative “peephole,” one that grants the reader access to

19 Jill Lepore, “Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography,” The Journal of
a “wide expanse of culture and society.” Brown’s observation and metaphor are both useful and constructive ways of understanding what a microhistory is, how it is constructed, and where its purpose is.

This is also true of the microhistory I set out to create. The process of finding and choosing primary and secondary sources to incorporate into my research, I kept the focus of the study strict: my subject was the German immigrant population in Canada during the First World War, and not necessarily the Conrad Eymann himself. Just as Carlo Ginzburg and Natalie Zemon David reconstructed the cultures surrounding Domenico Scandella and Martin Guerre, I set out to reconstruct the German immigrant culture surrounding Conrad Eymann, and Eymann himself is my means of accessing and examining their culture. While following him through history, what he says, where he travels, how and with whom he communicates are all specific points that can provide answers to questions regarding German immigrants and their identity as Canadians.

Considering the Difficulties of Microhistory

While I have thus far only considered the benefits of the microhistorical perspective, I would like to quickly take a moment to explore some of the inherent methodological problems that microhistory faces. Specifically problematic is that microhistorians assume to have mostly resolved the problems faced by the macro-perception by assuming a micro-perception. The problem, however, remains that this is still an approach, a method for understanding the past, which is also connected to us and our own inherent perceptions. The historian Richard Brown assumes to resolve the problematic of perception, for

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20 Brown, “Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge,” 15.
example, when he explains that the subject of a microhistory is similar to a keyhole that allows
the historian to peer into a room. 21 Here it is assumed is that what the historian views through
the keyhole on the other side of the figurative door is history as it actually happened. But this is
not really the case. What the historian views is not really history at all, but rather the individual
historian’s perception of history. This means that the problem of perception is not
methodologically resolved by undertaking a microhistorical investigation, it may only seem to
have been resolved.

However, simply because the problematic of perception is not eliminated by the
microhistorical approach, this does not mean that it should be completely discarded.
Microhistory still remains a valuable methodological tool to historians, who would like to
conduct a more in-depth investigation into one specific time and place. Besides, one of the
advantages of reading and writing history is in understanding how it relates to our own times,
that is, how it relates to our own perspectives of the past. Therefore it would seem to reason that
the goal of any approach would not be that modern perception is completely removed from the
methodology. Another argument that would seem to support the usefulness of microhistory
despite some problems remaining is the need for context. One of the earlier points in this paper
was that microhistory requires a context in order to exist. But context is not only found in the
past, because its point of reference is found in the present, the time in which the microhistory
was written. In a sense, then, our perception is in many ways vital to the function of microhistory
and not simply detrimental to it.

21 Brown, “Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge,” 15.
Defining Microhistory: Conclusion

The micro perspective not only tells the story of the small scale, it also analyzes macrohistorical trends from the point of view of the individual. To refer again to Richard Brown’s star metaphor, this new perspective views the constellations of history from the point of view of a star in that constellation. The resulting approach has come to be known – albeit sometimes loosely – as microhistory.

When one combines Richard Brown’s definition and Jill Lepore’s two propositions of microhistory, the result is a more intricate and – for the purpose of this paper – useful definition of microhistory. I combine the definitions as follows: a microhistory is an historical analysis which is tightly restricted in both time and place, and that thoroughly contextualizes its subject culture. The advantage to this new definition is that it not only defines the methodology (Brown’s definition), but it also clearly defines the subject as culture (Lepore’s definition). And finally, to add my own findings to the definition of microhistory formed by Brown and Lepore, microhistory relates to the Grand Narrative approach in that it can provide an additional perspective to a macrohistorical view of history. While challenging the macrohistorical approach, microhistory does not necessarily conflict with the Grand Narrative, nor is microhistory completely independent from it. After all, without macrohistory, a microhistory has very little means of contextualizing its subject culture in one time and place, and no means at all of contextualizing its subject culture across an expanse of time and place. Without any connections to macrohistory, a microhistory tends to lose its power as a useful historical methodology. While the method of a microhistory is valuable independent of macrohistory, it
becomes more valuable and many times more interesting when connections to a macrohistorical view of history can be established. In a way similar to light needing the darkness, a microhistory needs a macrohistory in order to exist.

Because this approach has a unique ability to address specific points in areas where macrohistorical synthesis is unable to explain events at the small scale, microhistory is often viewed as conflicting with macrohistory. However, it may be more constructive to view microhistory not as a confliction to macrohistory, but rather as both complementing and yet challenging. Microhistory complements macrohistory, in that it can provide an additional perspective or a new exceptional case to existing macrohistorical trends. At the same time, microhistory challenges macrohistory, in that it can indeed effect a change in macrohistorical thought. That is to say, microhistory can extrapolate the meaning of an event to a scale where it is clear that it affects the larger currents – but requires a macrohistorical timeline in order to find this context. In a sense then, while microhistory complements and goes so far as to challenge the grand narrative, microhistory is nevertheless dependent on macrohistory, because macrohistory provides the context for the subject and the platform for expanded meaning.
CHAPTER II. AN UNDERSTANDING OF GERMAN-CANADIAN IDENTITY

Microhistory and German-Canadian Ethnic Identity

To narrow the scope of this project to the size of a manageable microhistory, I have chosen to look in depth at the turbulent years of the First World War. This era is so interesting for the study of German-Canadian identities, because the vehemence with which German-Canadians were harassed greatly challenged their notion of being both German and Canadian and brought out a number of issues that would be discussed in great depth within the German community in Canada as well as within the native-Canadian community. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the concept of German-Canadian identity before moving into the specifics of the microhistory in chapter three.

When placed in the context of microhistory and macrohistory, the conceptualization of a historical German-Canadian identity during the First World War is essentially a macrohistorical construct. Movements and trends in German-Canadian identities can be seen most clearly from afar. Not only are these movements and trends the most visible, but historians’ arguments for or against a German-Canadian identity are the most convincing when they incorporate large amounts of data over a larger period of Canadian history. Thus there are significantly more incentives to undertake a macrohistorical study of German-Canadian identity than there are for a microhistorical study. However, the question of how a German-Canadian identity looks when viewed through one person’s experiences nevertheless presents an intriguing issue, and one which I will investigate in the following chapter. But before testing this macrohistory of German-Canadian identity in a microhistorical setting, a firm understanding of what is meant by a German-Canadian identity in and around the First World War is necessary.
In an area that is loaded with competing theories, scholars of German-Canadian identity are able to agree that German-Canadians themselves comprise an extremely diverse ethnic group, which typically shares more differences (religion, politics, country/region of origin, etc.) than similarities. In fact, the most commonly perceived similarity – the shared German mother tongue – is oftentimes included as one of the many differences. After all, the wealth of dialects in Germany are almost as diverse as the geographic origins they represent. From the standpoint of the nation state, German immigrants to Canada have originated from Germany and its component predecessors, the United States, Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Ukraine, Poland, Bulgaria, and Romania, in addition to such regional locations as the Sudeten, Alsace, Rhineland, Silesia, Palatine, Tyrol, Burgenland, and so on.

Given the vast variety of differences within the community, the question may arise: what defines German-Canadian? Is it a feeling of shared geographic origin, or is it a common tongue and culture? In this section of my thesis, I will outline the leading theoretical perspectives and interpretations regarding the historical existence of a German-Canadian identity. Together with the framework of microhistory, this chapter will introduce the main characters and issues necessary to understand the ensuing microhistorical investigation of German-Canadian identity during the First World War.

Before, During, and After the First World War

The prevalence of organized communities of German-speaking immigrants in Canada has historically helped foster a dual identity as being both German and Canadian. Over the course of Canadian history, Germans in Canada developed their own group identity, which
was demonstrated at least as early as 1833 when Ebytown, Ontario was renamed Berlin.\textsuperscript{22} The Germans in this and other settlements developed and maintained their German culture through the establishment of various social and political organizations, such as clubs, churches, newspapers, and festivals.\textsuperscript{23} What made these communities “alive,” however, was that they continued to develop and change. While German-Canadians felt a sense of shared community, at the same time different generations of German-Canadians had different understandings of the meaning of their German-Canadian identity; that is, each overlapping generation defined German and Canadian differently. This resulted in some customs being considered very important in one region, but almost unheard of in a neighboring community.

As generations of German-Canadians thus defined and re-defined their identities and communities, it is not difficult to understand why groups of German immigrants would have different definitions of German identity. Before their arrival in Canada, these people typically only had a sense of regional identity, i.e. “Bavarian,” or “Silesian.” The fact is that many German immigrants were neither German by citizenship (given the diaspora of German communities throughout Europe) nor German by ethnic identity.\textsuperscript{24} It is only through the process of integration into Canadian society that many of these Germanic peoples began to identify themselves as German.


\textsuperscript{23} See Bassler, \textit{The German Canadian mosaic today and yesterday: identities, roots, and heritage}, (Ottawa: German-Canadian Congress, 1991), pages 71–72 for a brief description and discussion of some established German festivals and page 82 for German culture and social clubs in Canada prior to the First World War.

\textsuperscript{24} Bassler, “German-Canadian Identity,” 90–91.
The historian Gerhard Bassler refers to the transfer of pre-Canadian regional identity to German-Canadian identity as the “adjustment-integration process.”\textsuperscript{25} This complex process is facilitated by established, shared German institutions such as newspapers, clubs, and churches. Consider the following fictional example as a demonstration of this process: a group of German-speaking immigrants from Poland arrive in Canada in 1913 with little sense of being “German.” In fact, when they first arrive, they most likely identify first with their city or village of origin, and then with their region or country. Once they arrive in Canada, however, the process of integration begins almost at once. The pre-established German-language clubs and churches seem more familiar than others where a new language (most likely English) would have to be learned. So, this group of German-speaking Poles begins to increasingly associate themselves with the established German community. As time passes, the new immigrants form personal bonds and relationships with the established German community and increasingly the two groups (old and new immigrants) begin to be perceived by established Canadians as a homogenous group of Germans within Canadian society. In fact, because of their interaction with the German community, the Polish immigrants may tend to start thinking of themselves as German-Canadians and not Polish-Canadians. In other words, they “adjusted” to the new, most familiar community of German-Canadians, which facilitated their “integration” into the new country. For German-speaking immigrant groups, an adjustment-integration process resulting in a German-Canadian identity was common, because the connection with the German community eased integration by connecting the new arrivals with a large, existing support network of established German immigrants.

\textsuperscript{25} Bassler, “German-Canadian Identity,” 92.
Prior to the explosion of war in Europe in 1914, the dual identity which resulted as a byproduct of this process was not perceived as necessarily problematic.\textsuperscript{26} To the other Canadian communities, German-Canadians were largely regarded as Canadians, especially after they had lived in Canada for years. To most German-Canadians themselves, it would seem that their first allegiance was to Canada and the British Empire.

There is little likelihood that these people were really the “enemy aliens” that they later would be labeled. The evidence that a good many German immigrant groups were conscientious objectors seems to additionally discredit the idea that they had subterfugal tendencies or posed a serious security threat, but the very stance of being a conscientious objector often led to accusations that German-Canadians were unsupportive of the war effort. Among those groups of conscientious objectors, immigrants of the Mennonite faith fled their native countries (including the United States) to avoid possible conscription, making them also extremely unlikely suspects as potential enemy combatants.\textsuperscript{27} Prior to 1914, a prediction that many German-Canadians would pose a threat to Canada or would in some way cause violent problems would seem therefore to be an exaggeration over anything else. The fact that this exaggeration existed is due to the unusual circumstances surrounding the First World War.

Early in 1914 the process of German-Canadian integration was proceeding much as it had in the past; however, events in Europe later that year would quickly and radically change the cultural environment in Canada. Within months of the declaration of war, Germans and many other ethnic minorities were homogenized and placed under suspicion as “enemy aliens.”\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{26} Rudolf A. Helling, \textit{A Socio-Economic History of German-Canadians}, ed. Bernd Hammm, (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1984),49.

\textsuperscript{27} Bassler, “The German Canadian Mosaic,” 85–86

\textsuperscript{28} Bassler, \textit{The German Canadian mosaic today and yesterday}, 61.
Under the constant eye of their mostly British neighbors, German-Canadians were perceived as an extension of the Kaiser’s reach into Canada. Subsequently, even normal behaviors were misconstrued as acts of sedition, or espionage, or both. German-language clubs were banned from holding meetings and even the language itself was considered suspicious and would eventually invite censorship.

As the beginning weeks of the First World War passed, the dominion government of Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden began to draft changes and outline an increase in overall power of the Governor in Council. These powers were integral for Canada to restructure and adjust to going into war. This unprecedented increase in the power of the dominion government headed by the prime minister was passed during an emergency meeting of Parliament appropriately referred to as the Special War Session. The most important changes in policy introduced during this session were effected by the War Measures Act of August 1914. The act bestowed upon the Canadian Governor in Council a wide range of rather vague powers from censorship to arrest and deportation, including the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.²⁹ As Prime Minister, Borden would retain these rights until the end of the war, which only Borden himself had the right to declare.

A series of Order-in-Councils, based on the powers invested in the Governor in Council by the War Measures Act, established the right of the police to arrest, retain, and deport “enemy aliens.” For the Royal North-West Mounted Police, the first step was to control the movement of enemy aliens by registration with the local police agents and increased border patrols. In total, by 1918 80,000 enemy aliens would be registered with the police.³⁰ Of these, 8,579 would be

³⁰ Bassler, *The German Canadian mosaic today and yesterday*, 62.
interned in internment camps across Canada, of which 6,000 were Austro-Hungarians and 2,000 were Germans.  

To a modern audience, the idea of an internment camp usually brings to mind scenes of barbed-wire fences and the ever-present threat of death at the hands of dispassionate guards. Although this was not the case in Canada, nevertheless the camps were discussed at great length and viewed as a threat by the German-Canadian community. The (albeit possibly biased) German government did raise concerns that these camps were inadequate and posed serious health risks to their occupants. In fact, a “Note Verbale” was transmitted from Berlin to Ottawa via the US ambassador with a request for improved treatment of internees in all of the then twenty-four Canadian internment camps. While this may have been yet another attempt by Germany to denigrate the British by “mud-slinging” at the Canadians, the facts seem to support Berlin, whether advertently or inadvertently. Of the 8,600 internees to enter the camps, 100 would die of malnutrition and unsanitary conditions. This would seem to indicate that, while the internees were not necessarily being treated barbarically, nevertheless not all of them were being provided with adequate food and shelter.

But for Germans and other ethnic minorities often perceived as German, the internment camps were not the only dangerous places in Canada during the war years of 1914 to 1918. Many German-Canadians were fired from their jobs and refused work by native-Canadian employers on basis of discrimination. Even worse, countless German shops were ransacked and many German-Canadians were publicly harassed and abused. It was difficult to sway popular

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34 Ibid., 64.
opinions away from anti-German hostility. In some cases, just having an opinion seems to have been dangerous for many German-Canadians. For example, when the Ontario town of Berlin was renamed to “Kitchener,” many Germans who were opposed to the name Kitchener were in many cases accused of being pro-Kaiser – despite the fact that the objections were against the new name, not against the decision to rename the city.\(^{35}\) When given the opportunity to prove their “Canadianness,” German-Canadians seemed more than happy to affirm their quality as Canadians in public ways. German-Canadians issued various petitions in newspapers and even followed the example of Berlin in Ontario, anglicizing the Germanic names of their towns.\(^{36}\)

Of course, to some extent, the fears of non-German Canadians were not completely imagined. At least one sabotage plot was discovered and thwarted.\(^{37}\) The problem was that single, isolated plots of this kind, together with war propaganda, tended to fuel fears and provoke responses that caused more problems than they produced solutions.\(^{38}\) Gossip was rampant and played a major (but not singular) role in the internment of many individuals, whether or not they were actually the perpetrators of any crimes.\(^{39}\) Toward the end of the First World War, the establishment of an Anti-German League and the general suppression of German elements in Canada only fed the smoldering fire of largely unfounded and irrational fears.\(^{40}\) While many of those accused would later be declared innocent or would simply be allowed to return to their homes, psychologically the blow had been dealt and the message was made clear to German-Canadians: speaking German or taking part in any German organization meant one’s

\(^{36}\) Ibid., 67.
\(^{37}\) Helling, *A Socio-Economic History*, 53.
\(^{39}\) Ibid., 53.
\(^{40}\) Ibid., 55.
allegiance to Canada and one’s support of the Allied war effort in Europe would be seriously questioned. The situation for German-Canadians at this point was not only adverse in terms of the survival of their culture, but also eventually in terms of their basic rights as Canadian citizens, which were essentially withdrawn by the end of the war.

The question of exactly how much political influence German-Canadians and other recently naturalized British subjects should wield was decided when Parliament passed the Wartime Elections Act of 1917. The act rescinded the right to vote from any Canadian citizen naturalized in or after 1903.⁴¹ Considering that many Canadians on the prairie and elsewhere were recent immigrants who had settled in organized communities, this disenfranchisement left entire communities without a right to appoint local representatives who would be friendly or sympathetic to their interests. After all, many immigrants had wanted nothing more than to escape conscription in a war-torn Europe, even before the onset of the most recent war. For many of these people, if the Wartime Elections Act accomplished something, then at least those immigrants who came to Canada to escape conscription in Europe were also not subject to Canadian conscription.

The Allied victory in the First World War did not bring the kind of resolution to the German-Canadian community that it had to other Canadians. The problem for German-Canadians was that the war had set into motion a process of Canadianization, whereby recent immigrants were forced to assimilate into British-Canadian society through the forced removal of their native language and customs.⁴² Both during and after the First World War, Canadians of all types would be obligated to attend compulsory English-language schools and assimilate more quickly into Canadian society. Canadianization would not end with the war but would only

⁴¹ Bassler, The German Canadian mosaic today and yesterday, 63.
⁴² Ibid., 38.
continue to heighten the emotions of many Canadians against German-Canadian immigrants and other ethnic minorities. As for the 85,000 registered enemy aliens, Canada as a whole was unable to quickly decide how to resolve the issue of so many immigrants. Despite pressure from returning war veterans to deport all of the registered enemy aliens, only a few thousand would eventually be deported back to their home countries and the remaining would be allowed to stay and later regained the rights they had lost.43

As for the remaining German-Canadian community, the First World War, Canadianization, war hype, and propaganda were not enough to destroy their German identity. While the older generation of immigrants may have assimilated more quickly after 1914 than they would have in the past, the younger and newer generation of German-Canadians was held together by a shared sense of persecution.44 The effort to preserve German culture in Canada was underway, despite pressure from Anglo-Canadian natives to assimilate completely. The spike in the number of German culture clubs in Canada during the 1920s reflects these efforts and demonstrates one of the ways in which a dual identity was compatible with life in Canada.45 Additionally, these culture clubs rarely organized along national boundaries. Thus membership was Pan-German and included many nationalities, not just immigrants from Germany, Austria-Hungary, or any other specific region.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, this trend of supporting a dual German-Canadian cultural identity through clubs, churches, and German-language newspapers continued to thrive across Canada. It would not be until the Second World War that national shame and the Nazi stigma would cause new and recent German immigrants to leave behind their German

43 Bassler, *The German Canadian mosaic today and yesterday*, 62.
44 Bassler, “German-Canadian Identity,” 93.
45 Bassler, *The German Canadian mosaic today and yesterday*, 34.
identity and assimilate completely. Thus, while the German-Canadians in the First World War underwent and overcame the active efforts to subdue their German identity, the effects of the Second World War produced a different outcome. German immigrants were unable to reconcile a German cultural identity with a nation that had systematically attempted the destruction of so many millions of people in Europe. So it would be that the Second World War ushered in a trend for German-Canadians that steadily still exists today: complete assimilation.

An Overview of German-Canadian Ethnic Identity

A German-Canadian group identity is by definition an ethnic identity, since affiliation is first gained through the assumption of a common cultural heritage. Furthermore, because ethnic identity is membership in an imagined community, it is an especially ambiguous concept and any researcher must be careful not to assume their subjects were members in a group that may not have actually in any way existed. Therefore, it must not be assumed that even in the past all Germanic immigrants developed an especially German-Canadian identity. While some German immigrants may have developed a distinctly German-Canadian identity, others may have assimilated directly into Canadian society.

To add another layer of complexity to the issue of a German-Canadian identity, Matthias Zimmer postulates that in fact one needs to understand the society into which immigrants are being enculturated, because ethnic identity does not develop in a vacuum, but within the context of a much larger community that change with each generation. Zimmer argues that this notion

46 Bassler, “German-Canadian Identity,” 93.
of a culture developing within a culture to explain why a German-Canadian identity no longer exists in Canada today. It is because the aftermath of the Second World War so greatly changed Canadian society that for reasons of German national shame, the German portion of the German-Canadian identity was simply dropped. While Zimmer may argue that a German-Canadian identity had very little chance of developing/sustaining itself post-1945, the notion that identity does not develop in a vacuum, but in a given society remains useful for understanding German-Canadian identity during the First World War. Zimmer is basically highlighting the importance of context. The context under which an ethnic identity develops holds a key to understanding that identity and its development. In the years leading up to the First World War, the context was very different from any time during or after the war. To begin with, before the war Germans were understood as a hearty peasant stock from central and Eastern Europe that would facilitate the organized settlement of many parts of Canada. Increasingly though, eugenicist arguments began to degrade Anglo-Saxon opinions of the quality of their Eastern European immigrants.\footnote{Donald Avery, “Ethnic and Class Relations in Western Canada during the First World War: A Case Study of European Immigrants and Anglo-Canadian Nativism,” in \textit{Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown}, ed. David MacKenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 273.}

These new fears of Anglo-Canadians against non-Anglo immigrants did affect the formation of a German-Canadian ethnic identity. German-Canadian identity formation was affected because as historian Matthias Zimmer has shown, the formation of this ethnic identity took place within the context of two converging cultures, and racial fears stimulated by the war had seriously damaged Anglo-Canadians perception of German-Canadians. Thus the process of cultural negotiation had become imbalanced and increasingly Anglo-Canadians were defining German-Canadian identity through the passage of acts of legislation and within a hostile environment.
But how does cultural negotiation fit into the adjustment-integration process? The two processes are actually quite similar. Simply put, while the adjustment-integration process takes place between an immigrant first being accustomed to a new region and that culture, cultural negotiation is an ongoing process between two cultures sharing the same space that does not need to include new immigrants. So, while the adjustment-integration process includes cultural negotiation, it must also include an immigrant or group of immigrants that are presently integrating into a new society. So, for new immigrants, both processes are in play at the same time.

When a new immigrant or group of immigrants begins to settle in a new society, the process of adjustment-integration begins. If certain customs are not acceptable in the host culture, they are either voluntarily or involuntarily adjusted to the new circumstances. For example, a German who is accustomed to the public consumption of beer must adjust to the more restrictive Anglo-Canadian custom of alcohol consumption within the confines of a bar or tavern. The alternative would be to use cultural negotiation and adjust the new custom and negotiate with the host society to find a middle ground. In the case of public alcohol consumption, cultural negotiation may result in something like a fenced-in beer garden. This process is constantly taking place with the arrival and movement of new immigrants and may have different outcomes in different places.

In conclusion, through a process of adjustment-integration and cultural negotiation, many generations of German immigrants from many different geographic regions have contributed to the development of an historic German-Canadian identity. Thus it was not necessary for German immigrants to have brought a German ethnic identity with them from their native land, since it is entirely plausible that such a German ethnic identity could develop in conjunction with an
equally distinctive Canadian identity. This new ethnic identity, while it is based on aspects of their former culture, is selective in the folkways and customs that it preserves or adapts. Over the course of the turbulent First World War years, Canada, the context into which German immigrants integrated and negotiated, shifted its perception of German immigrants. While pre-1914 German immigrants were considered desirable, hearty peasant folk, post-1914 German immigrants were confronted with open hostility and suspicion. This fear and animosity towards German-Canadians did not, however, deter the existence or further development of their German identity. Rather, some of the now “persecuted” Germans strengthened their communities during and after the First World War, through increased participation in German culture clubs and festivals, as well as with readership in German-language newspapers.49

Research sources which report accounts of this “strengthening” in German ethnic identity, however, often seem (perhaps inadvertently) to imply that through the adverse events of the First World War, the German-Canadians experienced an intensifying and reinforcing period for their German-Canadian identity as a whole: like a beautiful phoenix, rising out of the fire that intended to kill it. Indeed, this rather glorified image is often spread to the rest of Canada in general; popular opinions and even instruction in the classroom often teach that the First World War served finally to bring Canadians together and to effect what was to become the first, defining moment of Canadians feeling as “Canadians.”50 While I am not here to contest the purportedly strengthened German identity in the German-Canadians after the First World War, I nevertheless would like to limit this “identity-building despite repression” to specifically their

49 For more discussion on the role of discrimination in the development of German-Canadian identity during the interwar period, see: Bassler, The German Canadian mosaic today and yesterday, 34.
50 For more information on popular perception of Canadian national unity due to the First World War, see Appendix C: Popular Representation of the First World War.
German identity. Their identity as Canadians, on the other hand, I would suspect endured feelings of betrayal, moments of distinct weakening, and very likely irreversible damage. This is an issue which, unlike the German side of their identities, does not seem to receive as much scholarly attention, being shadowed by the triumphal survival of its counterpart. In other words, the glorifying depiction of the “persecuted” Germans’ triumph seems too eager to spread and envelop both sides of German-Canadian dual identity, which should be analyzed separately, as it always had been up until this point. To address each one separately: while their German identity seems to have responded positively to the oppressive actions of the native-Canadians, the question nevertheless remains open: how did these oppressive events affect their identity as Canadians? Here, is an issue that I seek to gain an understanding about in my microhistorical investigation of Conrad Eymann, the politically active and fervently Canadian German-Canadian.
CHAPTER III. CONRAD EYMANN: LIFE AS A GERMAN-CANADIAN
DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

An Introduction to Conrad Eymann

The medium for this microhistorical study is one immigrant to Canada, Conrad Eymann. Through Conrad Eymann, the modern audience will access a telescope, with which they will be able to observe and consider the myriad of issues, conflicts, and negotiations that affected the relationship between German-Canadian and Canadian society during the war years of 1914 to 1918. Eymann is an ideal candidate for such a role because he was adjusting and integrating in Canada as a German-Canadian precisely during this time period. He immigrated to Canada only a few years before the war and emigrated back to Germany only a few years after the conclusion of the war. In addition, Eymann was socially and politically active as the founder of the Deutsch-Canadischer Provinzialverband von Saskatchewan (the German-Canadian Provincial Alliance of Saskatchewan) and as the editor-in-chief of the largest German-language newspaper on the Prairie, Der Courier. 51 If any immigrant to Canada during this time could help us understand a distinct German-Canadian identity, the politically and socially active leader of a German-Canadian alliance is quite probably one of the better candidates.

As a German-language newspaper, Der Courier is an excellent example of a German cultural newspaper. This newspaper was published on every Wednesday and was usually 16 pages in length. During the years Conrad Eymann was the editor-in-chief, the front page tended to consist of both world and national news, while the local news from more distant provinces or smaller cities was published on the subsequent pages. The larger portion of the second page of

51 Helling, A Socio-Economic History, 55.
the paper was almost always reserved for editorials, which seem to be mostly written by Eymann. In addition to the regular world and local news articles, Der Courier regularly published short novels that could be broken into their chapters for weekly installments. Some of these novels include Judas Ischariot (Judas Iscariot) written by Max Otto and Sonne und Schatten (The Sun and Shadows) by Wilhelm Jensen, two German-Canadian authors. Max Otto in particular states that he had been motivated and supported by the administration of Der Courier to write his novel and that once Sonne und Schatten had run its course, another of his novels, Mutter Monika (Mother Monika), would follow. Two additional sections that ran weekly in Der Courier were Für unsere Hausfrau (For our Housewife) and Für unsere Farmer (For our Farmer), these are further examples of Der Courier reflecting the German-Canadian community. The Für unsere Hausfrau section was usually one-third page in length and typically detailed helpful tips for [German] housewives to help them, for instance, more effectively raise children through discipline and good schooling. The Für unsere Farmer section was a page on its own and detailed various bits of scientific information that could possibly be useful to farmers, such as entomology and the mechanics of various types of farm equipment.

The story of Conrad Eymann provides a modern reader with the chance to consider a wide range of social conflicts and issues that arose during the First World War from an alternative perspective than the Anglo-Native viewpoint. Wartime propaganda and rhetoric greatly damaged the native-Canadian’s perception of German-Canadians, transforming German immigrants from the ideal settler to the target of many native-Canadians, frustrated by the war in

53 NAC, Der Courier, January 24, 1917, page 9, a letter by Max Otto to the readers of the Courier.
54 NAC, Der Courier, January 3, 1917, page 11.
55 NAC, Der Courier, January 17, 1917, page 10.
Europe. Suspicions of German-speaking people led to the German-Canadians’ being lumped together and collectively labeled enemy aliens. Because the German-Canadians were considered “enemy aliens,” it is important to consider the issues of the time from their perspective and not only that of the dominant class. The reason, then, that Conrad Eymann is important, is because he provides us with a relevant and intimate basis from which we can attempt a microhistorical study of these issues. This additional, microhistorical perspective is important to the study of Canadian history, because it helps us understand the German-Canadian experience during the First World War.

Due to pressures from an increasingly anti-German, Anglo-Canadian environment, German-Canadians began to re-conceptualize their community within Canadian society. These immigrants would increasingly cement their bonds to their community through the development of culture clubs, churches, newspapers, and festivals. These organizations, while they were German by membership, were also distinctly Canadian. That is, many of the members identified themselves and their loyalties as Canadian before any other nationality. In some locations there developed a mentality that German peoples needed to strengthen their communities because they were being persecuted as Germans. The idea was that only strong community ties would be able to preserve their culture. While this interpretation of German-Canadian communities is based on a wide range of data, its macrohistorical nature seems to lack the important intricacies of a more personal perspective. The question is, are these macrohistorical interpretations observable at the microhistorical level?
Eymann’s Immigration to the United States and Canada

On May 9, 1908, Conrad Eymann arrived in New York, New York, aboard the S.S. La Lorraine.\textsuperscript{56} Whether he chose his destination upon the recommendation of family or friends is unknown. Perhaps some friends or family members were already there to meet him? Regardless, what the manifested passenger list does reveal is that while Eymann was German by nationality and “race,”\textsuperscript{57} his last permanent residence was in Aegeri,\textsuperscript{58} Switzerland, where his mother J. Eymann was still in residence. Because Eymann was at the time a 24-year-old unmarried schoolteacher, he may have been immigrating to the United States in search of economic opportunities that may not have existed at the time in Europe. Another possibility is that Eymann may have had either liberal or liberal-leaning tendencies that put him at odds with the Kaiser in Berlin. This may have been why he was living in Switzerland, but with such little evidence, this speculation will have to remain conjecture.

Only two years after his arrival in New York, Eymann is again recorded in a US federal document, this being the 1910 US Census. In only two short years, Eymann’s life had seen some fairly substantial changes. First, he was no longer a schoolteacher. His level of education and advanced ability to speak, read, and write German and English had found him a job as a


\textsuperscript{57} While the term “race” brings forward a number of current social issues, I have used the term here placed in quotes because it was a category originally used on the above passenger list in which Conrad Eymann was noted.

\textsuperscript{58} Aegeri would seem to have at some point split into the present-day communes of Oberägeri and Unterägeri, Switzerland, both of which are located on the Ägerisee (Lake Ägeri).
journalist for a foreign newspaper. Secondly, according to the census, he was now married. Because his wife, Antonie M. Eymann, is also listed as being of German descent and nationality, it may be that they had first met at home in Europe somewhere. But this supposition may nevertheless appear somewhat dubious, considering that Antonie and Conrad neither cross the Atlantic together, nor originated from similar regions in Germany. Therefore, it would seem that the most likely situation is that Eymann traveled from Switzerland as a schoolteacher and stayed with a friend or family relation that was already in the United States while he began to establish a new life on the new continent. While transitioning from schoolteacher to foreign-language newspaper journalist, Eymann met, fell in love with, and married Antonie M.

But if significant changes had recently occurred in Conrad and Antonie’s life at this time, even more changes were about to transform their lives over the next few years, beginning only a few months after the aforementioned census. On October 12, 1910, Conrad and Antonie Eymann crossed the US-Canadian border at Niagara Falls, headed by train from New York to Winnipeg, Manitoba. Perhaps Conrad had heard of a potential position teaching in a German school in or around Winnipeg; after all, he had registered his profession as “teacher” on the above border-crossing application. As a destination, Winnipeg would seem to have suited the Eymanns. By 1911, Winnipeg had already achieved the level of regional metropolis because the CPR and Northern Pacific rail lines had enabled an economic boom in the region. Not only that, but since the passage of the Dominion Lands Act of 1872, Manitoba had a long-established precedent of settling Germanic immigrants in the region as agriculturalists. Within a year of

Eymann’s arrival in Winnipeg, the city would have a total German population of 8,912 – equal to 6.5% of the city’s total population.62

Although the 1911 Canadian Census seems to support the theory that Eymann had heard of an opening for a teacher in Winnipeg, perhaps the opportunity in Winnipeg had been already filled when he and Antonie arrived, or maybe Winnipeg was not really their end destination after all. In any case, Conrad Eymann did find work as a teacher only a short distance away in Rainy River along the US-Canadian border in Ontario.63 Here, Conrad had found a job as a schoolteacher, perhaps in the fall of 1910 or spring of 1911. Although the census data does not give the date of their arrival in the Rainy River district, it does note that Conrad had worked a total of seven weeks at his profession in 1910, presumably after his arrival in late October or November.64 But Rainy River was a very small, rural community, so why would the local farmers want to secure Conrad Eymann as a schoolteacher? Perhaps here the census data can answer this question, while providing us with an interesting micro-observation of this part of Ontario. Of families 68 through 80 noted on the census page with the Eymanns, the overwhelming majority were German by national origin, only a few of whom had been naturalized as Canadians.65 Not only were they German, but they were almost all farmers, with the exception of one “Labourer” (who was most likely a farm hand). Furthermore, all but one family recorded on the census had immigrated between the years of 1908 and 1911.66 Implying

64 Ibid., 1911 Census of Canada.
65 While it could be that everyone cited on the mentioned page 7 of the 1911 Census of Canada were German by national origin, a few smudges on the document thwart this conclusion.
66 Ibid., 1911 Census of Canada.
that they were all recent immigrants, who had settled in some organized fashion through their own connections, or possibly some associated enterprise.

The *1911 Canadian Census* data would thus seem to imply that there was some form of social network available within the German community that enabled large-scale, organized settlement. After all, we know that Conrad Eymann first had settled in New York in 1908 and then traveled to Winnipeg two years later. This all happened shortly before he and Antonie headed out to Rainy River. Perhaps this German community in Rainy River had been able to send some sort of notice to Winnipeg, or even out to New York, that they needed a schoolteacher. Conrad must have had a distinct interest and preference to remain within the German community; after all, 1910 US Census documents reveal that Eymann was able to speak, read, and write English during the time of this transition. Thus, the English language would not have been the type of barrier to Conrad when looking for a position in the US or Canada that it would have been to many of the uneducated German farmers who were most likely only rudimentarily accustomed to the English language.

With such an intricate community network, it may seem odd that Eymann was not accompanied by other family members besides his wife. What of his family back in Germany, what had happened to them? Upon entry to the United States, Conrad did mention that his mother, “Mrs. J. Eymann,” was living in Switzerland. So we at least know that she was alive in 1908. Did Conrad still have contact with his mother in Switzerland? Even in the absence of preserved private letters or telegrams, we can still know that Conrad did still have contact with his mother and even his brother in Switzerland, because late in 1911 his widowed mother embarked on a transatlantic voyage with her other son, Conrad’s elder brother, Oswald
Eymann. The two sailed out of Le Havre, France, aboard the vessel Corinthian and arrived on September 1, 1911, in Quebec. After that, they would have made their way out west to Eagle River, Ontario, presumably where they were to rendezvous with Conrad and Antonie.

But Oswald and Johanne would not permanently settle in Rainy River, because Conrad and Antonie were to relocate once again, this time to Grayson, Saskatchewan. Conrad seems to have been moving up as an educator. The new position was to be in “charge” of the school, giving him more responsibilities in addition to his teaching work. But whether it was qualms with the district school inspector or simply better economic opportunities, Conrad began to look into other areas of employment. While the years from 1911 to 1913 seem to be the most important in terms of the development of Conrad’s life in Canada – it is during this time that he frequently changed occupations and both of his children were born – yet these years are nevertheless the least documented of the period from his arrival in New York to the end of the First World War. In fact, most of the data collected pertaining to these years has been gleaned from subsequent reports, letters, and even a census, all of which originated in 1914 or after.

From 1911 to 1913, Conrad dabbled in a variety of economic endeavors, while starting a family with Antonie in Canada. After teaching, he first became a real estate agent in Grayson who specialized in and catered to the settlement of German immigrants. He also became a notary public and represented various loan and insurance companies. He additionally worked as an

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68 Ibid., Passenger List, “Eagle River” was listed as Oswald’s and Johanne’s final destination.
69 National Archives Canada (hereafter NAC), Record Group (hereafter RG) 2, Volume (hereafter Vol.) 1777, File 351. This document is a Royal North-West Mounted Police record of various investigations conducted on Conrad Eymann.
auctioneer for several land companies in Manitoba, British Columbia, and western Ontario. While this variety of occupations would seem to signify an individual who was a sort-of wandering jack-of-all-trades, Conrad clearly had an agenda. Through his occupations he was not only helping Germans, but he was also helping German immigrants begin new lives in the Canadian west. In many ways Conrad was filling a niche; he was becoming proficient in making available the most basic necessities to German settlers on the Canadian prairie. That is, as a real estate agent he was assisting Germans to buy land for farming and as an insurance salesman he was providing security for the settler’s homestead.

Presumably, there was at least an amount of money to be made from the large-scale settlement of Germans throughout the Canadian prairie. But if making money was Conrad’s primary concern, then real estate or insurance businesses would have probably sufficed for a career. But Conrad’s decisions early in 1914 hint that he was quite concerned with his fellow German-Canadians and wanted to help create a German community in Canada that was both German and Canadian. In January of 1914, Conrad Eymann founded the Deutsch-Canadischer Provinzialverband von Saskatchewan and defined its objectives as “a union of German-Canadians ‘to obtain rights in Canada which are justly theirs.’” The first convention of the German Alliance was held March 25 and 26, 1914, with 500 delegates present. At the meeting, Eymann announced that the “Germans of the West were Canadians now and forever, that they wanted to keep their own language and learn English—as he had done in the past six years.” This statement is crucial to understanding the transformation that Eymann had undergone since

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73 Hopkins, 277.
his arrival in Canada. Eymann not only adopted a Canadian identity, but he had simultaneously made the conscious decision to retain his German cultural identity.

The next important move came for Eymann in September. Around this time Conrad and his family relocated to 1863 Halifax Street, Regina, Saskatchewan, and he became the editor-in-chief of the *Saskatchewan Courier*. Within a short time after his arrival, the *Saskatchewan Courier* changed its name to simply *Der Courier*. The change was intended to signify that the newspaper was “no longer a modest provincial weekly, but had become a worthy competitor of *Der Nordwesten,*” the largest German-language newspaper on the Canadian prairie at that time.74 Fortunately for Eymann, *Der Courier* quickly gained a large readership due to *Der Nordwesten*’s defecting from Liberal politics.75 For Eymann, his new position as the editor-in-chief would provide him with countless opportunities to become a leader in strengthening the German community as far afield as his newspaper could be delivered.

It was extremely unfortunate timing that this change in direction for both Eymann’s life and *Der Courier* would come precisely during the beginning of the war with Germany. Because of the war, the context under which Eymann was promoting German culture was changing from a Canadian society that was receptive to German cultural institutions in Canada, to one that was openly hostile to Germans in Canada. The most notable challenge to German-Canadians would be to assert their loyalty to Canada at every possible instance where it could be questioned, and it would be questioned all the while Germans tried to be Canadian.

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75 Entz, 57.
At the outbreak of war in 1914, native-Canadian sentiments towards German people living in Canada were not characterized by the type of extremely negative associations with the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires that would define Canadian perceptions in the end of the war. In fact, in a 1914 speech delivered before the Canadian Club of Halifax, Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden mentions that the German people have been both “taught that war is a national duty” and “that the British Empire stands in their way,” of becoming a legitimate world power. In his conclusion of the speech, Borden noted that he believed that “they [the German people] are temporarily misled by the militarism of Prussia.” Taken as a whole, Borden’s speech seems to imply that the German people are not inherently evil, but that their more benevolent intentions have only been commandeered by “an arrogant militarist oligarchy.”

But the attitudes of native-Canadians in western Canada had already begun to taken an anti-immigrant, and thus anti-German stance. An economic slump in Canada in 1912 led to widespread unemployment by 1914 and the hardship was only exacerbated by the 400,000 immigrants that arrived the year before. In times of high agricultural labor demands German’s had enjoyed the benefits of being considered the hearty, stalwart peasants that would continue to push-back the borders of the Canadian frontier. But now that the need for peasant laborers was low, native-Canadians began to see them as a burden, competition for precious jobs. Thus, when many German-Canadians were labeled “enemy aliens,” there suddenly existed a popular reason to relieve them of their jobs and instead hire native-Canadians. As historian Donald Avery notes

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of the situation on the Prairie, the seeds of the native-Canadian campaign to rid Canada of its “foreign” element can be considered an “intensification of pre-war bias.”78 This pre-war conflict between native-Canadians and non-English immigrants created the initial difficulties that Eymann faced and that only intensified as it was fueled by the intense propaganda of the First World War.

Early efforts to discourage German-Canadian immigrants were reflected in Der Courier as early as July, 1914. In an article titled “Da ist irgendwo eine Schraube los” (There is a screw loose somewhere), Fritz Bringmann, the editor of Der Courier before Conrad Eymann, criticized the conservative Borden administration for their strict immigration policy that resulted in the deportation of many jobless immigrants aboard the steamer Mount Temple.79 To Bringmann, the Canadian government was breaking its heilige pflicht (holy duty) and was sending the message that, “You [immigrants] need to clear out, the times are hard and we don’t need you anymore.”80 A political cartoon eight pages after the article depicts an immigrant tending to his black eye labeled “Immigration;” Borden is standing in the background, messaging his bicep and flexing his arm to loosen up after his recent altercation with “Immigration.”81 While Bringmann was relieved from his editorship for anti-English sentiments and replaced with Conrad Eymann less than one month after he published this editorial, the concerns he vented against the Borden administration did continue to be similar concerns raised by Conrad Eymann,

78 Donald Avery, “Ethnic and Class Relations,” 288.
79 NAC, Der Saskatchewan Courier, July 29, 1914, page 2.
80 Ibid., July 29, 1914, page 2. In the original German: “Ihr müßt verschwinden, die Zeiten sind schlecht und wir brauchen Euch nicht.”
if only in a more diplomatic fashion. Conrad Eymann’s editorial titled “Wer schüßt die Deutsch-Canadier im Ausland?” (Who is shooing German-Canadians abroad?) still criticizes Borden, but takes a more diplomatic stance by demonstrating the good works of German-Canadians – they have done the work of pioneers, made the land flourish, and provided for the prosperity of Canada – as evidence that German-Canadians deserve the rights as Canadian citizens that they have earned and for these rights, they are more than ready to demonstrated their support for Canada.

Even with German-Canadians such as Conrad Eymann expressing their loyalty to Canada, Prime Minister Borden nevertheless saw the need in making the changes in government that were – according to him – necessary to providing support to Britain in their war against the Central powers. The most important change that had been made to the Dominion of Canada was enacted under the provisions of the War Measures Act of August 1914. This act worked in tandem with the War Appropriations Act and “confirmed all acts and things done or omitted to be done after the outbreak of war and prior to the passing of [the War Measures] Act.” This power was conferred on the Governor-in-Council (the Governor General or the Queen’s representative in Canada, with the federal cabinet) and would greatly increase the cabinet’s authority. Formally, resolutions would still have to be passed by Order-in-Councils (a type of legislation passed by the Governor-in-Council) and would only be able to be issued so long as they were based on an Act of Parliament. The War Measures Act, then, was that act of Parliament upon which so many of the Orders-in-Council to emerge from the Borden

82 Entz, 59. Here, Entz cites a letter from Chief Censor Ernest Chambers to Captain Kenny of the War Office in London that states the reasons for Fritz Bringmann’s removal from Der Courier’s editorship.
83 NAC, Der Courier, August 29, 1914, page 2.
administration were based. As an example, one of the Orders-in-Council (hereafter PC) that I will be more closely examining states that the empowerment of the Privy Council has been granted “under and in virtue of the Provisions of the War Measures Act.”

The importance of the War Measures Act to Canadian officials trying to silence the German element in Canada can be traced back to Eymann and Der Courier as early as September 4, 1914. In a letter to Prime Minister Borden, the Comptroller Laurence Fortescue recognizes that commissioner of police A.P. Sherwood was wrong in suggesting that Der Courier could be censored under the existing section 74 of the criminal code. Instead, Fortescue recommended that the newspaper be silenced under section 6 of the new War Measures Act. Furthermore, in the case of Der Courier, Fortescue suggested that the example of this newspaper could help draft legislation that would aid in the suppression of such treasonous foreign language newspapers. The concern that Fortescue conveys in this letter regarding Der Courier is most likely based on a letter sent to him just four days earlier by Sherwood. This letter dated August 31, 1914, is the earliest letter that refers to Conrad Eymann, although it mistakenly refers to him as “E.E. Exmann, Manager & Editor” of the Saskatchewan Courier. The letter notes that Der Courier is “decidedly anti-British” and that it has been “publishing false news calculated to inflame the minds of German and Austrian subjects.” However, for one who reads this newspaper at the time of Sherwood’s letter, they may also interpret Der Courier’s sentiment as decidedly liberal and anti-Borden, instead of anti-British.

But to assume that Conrad Eymann was doing nothing to protect Der Courier from deteriorating anti-German sentiment would be a false assumption. Conrad Eymann clearly

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85 NAC, RG 2, Vol. 1116, Privy Council (hereafter PC) 1330, June 10, 1915, Microfilm Reel T-5025.
86 NAC, Sir Robert Borden Fonds (hereafter Borden Fonds), Reel C-4388, Document 105993.
87 Ibid., Borden Fonds, Reel C-4388, Document 105963.
88 Ibid., Borden Fonds, Reel C-4388, Document 105963.
understood the gravity of the situation fast approaching. By September 21, 1914, Eymann, through his influence with the German-Canadian Provincial Alliance of Saskatchewan (hereafter the German Alliance), had drafted a petition meant to convey the plight of German-Canadians on the prairie to Prime Minister Borden and his Executive Council. In the petition, the German Alliance calls Borden’s attention to the fact that the large population of Germans in Western Canada has been naturalized and has always shown loyalty to Canada.89 Because of this, they request that the German people be allowed to continue to exist as they have in the past, unmolested by these native-Canadians, who had recently taken to discharging all employees of German and Austrian decent. Because of these and other transgressions against German-Canadians, the German Alliance felt that it was necessary to publicly send a petition to Borden assuring him of their “unshakable loyalty towards Canada.”90

But at this early stage of the war, there is not much evidence that Prime Minister Borden perceived German or Austrian-Canadians as any kind of real threat to Canada. During a meeting with the British Government early during the First World War, the British Government questioned Canada’s relationship to the German and Austrian reservists living in Canada and pressured Canada to arrest them. But as Borden mentioned in his Memoirs, at least during the beginning of the war, Canada “had no reason to believe that they were animated by the militarist tendencies which influenced the German and Austrian Governments, or doubt that they would be loyal to the country of their adoption.”91 Indeed, even Borden’s speech as late as December 18, 1914, demonstrates that it was not so much the German people as it was a military oligarchy that was Canada’s enemy during the First World War. But this didn’t mean that Borden would fail to

89 NAC, Borden Fonds, Reel C-4388, Document 106104 to 106107.
90 Ibid., Borden Fonds, Reel C-4388, Document 106107.
see the importance of securing the power to act or that he would completely resist pressure from
the general populace and some cabinet members who wanted to silence those Canadians of
German descent.

Although in his speech to the Halifax Club Borden did not seem to harbor misgivings
toward German culture, the propaganda issued by his cabinet and imported from Britain would
seem to speak differently. British and Canadian wartime propaganda did not differentiate
between the German culture and the “evil” German state the way Borden did. The propaganda
machine functioned quite the opposite; it identified the German culture as the problem causing
the evil. The effect was that many native-Canadians also associated German-Canadians with the
same Germans they saw in propaganda posters and the propaganda posters were soon becoming
aggressively anti-German. In fact, there was even a new term coined for the purposes of
propaganda that would at once associate both German and culture: *kultur* (or, “culture” in
German). It was *kultur*, German culture, that was responsible for the mentality that drove the
German people to war. Additionally, traditional Prussian symbols, such as the spiked helmet,
soon became associated with all Germans, who were now derogatorily referred to as “the huns.”

The irony is that in the eyes of Conrad Eymann, *kultur* was one of the more positive
elements of being German. For this reason, Conrad Eymann is a good example of the
counterarguments to the “evils” of *kultur* that were being proposed by the Allied propaganda
machine. In an article entitled, “A task that motivates us,” Eymann details a recent trip of his to
see a Christmas performance over put on by the schoolchildren of a local Catholic parish in the
*Hochdeutsch* (High German).\(^\text{92}\) But for Eymann, the meaning of this event was not simply that
some children performed in German, but that they were learning German culture. As Eymann
reports, the opportunity that these children have by learning High German is irreplaceable. These

children now have access to the many positive characteristics of the German culture that must be experienced in the original language. Specifically, Eymann spoke of the many German fairy tales, the literature, and songs, some of which were performed by these children. He argues that while these children learn these German stories, they were also learning of the *Gemütsleben* (the life of the mind), the *Waldstimmung* (the spirit of being in the forest), and the *Märchenstimmung* (the spirit of fairy tales), which would, as these children mature, shape and influence their character and personality. So at the same time as Conrad Eymann and *Der Courier* were postulating German culture as a cornerstone of a child’s moral upbringing, the propaganda of the First World War was condemning it as the primary cause of German.

Even as early as 1915, the propaganda that was supposed to stimulate support for the war took on a violently anti-German nature. The Canadian War Museum’s website is an excellent resource to view some of this early wartime propaganda. On their website are two pieces of propaganda that are especially useful to understanding this shift in Canadian perceptions of Germans. One of these pieces of propaganda is an advertisement designed to prompt young men to enlist, and is appropriately labeled “Kultur’s Crest.” The advertisement features an obviously Prussian military officer sitting on a horse ready for battle, flying a banner with “Lusitania” printed clearly in the middle and “Murder by Gas,” “Poisoned Wells,” “Piracy,” and “Baby Killing” printed one in each of the four corners. To a modern observer, the symbolism would strike one almost immediately as blatantly extreme. It is difficult to believe that anyone

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could be convinced that Germany only started the war because of its insatiable need to kill babies. Yet, that this was acceptable to print in a newspaper and was, thus, largely accepted by society demonstrates how far Canadians’ respect for Germans had declined since before the war.

The second bit of propaganda under discussion was printed in 1918 by the British Empire Union and is clearly pertinent to understanding the difficulties faced by Conrad Eymann, and other Germans in Canada.97 This bit of propaganda boasts the slogan “Once a German – Always a German!” as the heading of a well illustrated collage.98 This propaganda poster depicts many German stereotypes developed during the First World War. The purpose of this piece of propaganda was to discourage British subjects from purchasing German goods or employing German citizens: “Every German employed means a British Worker idle. Every German article sold means a British article unsold.”99 In the center of the poster is a dual picture of the same German standing in the same position. The left German is a soldier burning cities, the right is a businessman, neatly dressed, and welcomingly tipping his hat. Although the intricate detail and implied messages of this poster suggest many different negative German stereotypes, the intention of the poster is to reinforce the belief that all Germans, even well-dressed businessmen, are jingoistic “huns.”

The problem for German-Canadians is almost immediately evident: if kultur drives a people to warmongering and all Germans are basically warmongers, then why is kultur allowed, even encouraged, among the German population in Canada? Should it not be the duty of all loyal Canadians to stamp out kultur at home as well as abroad? Many Canadians, even on the prairie,

97 Although it is printed near the end of the war, it remains pertinent to the discussion of early attitudes toward Germans, because it demonstrates the direction in which Canadian and British mentalities are developing.
99 Ibid., CWM 19720121-086.
did follow their resentful feelings with physical action, and became openly destructive towards
Germans. Germans were fired from their jobs and attacked in the streets, and some shops were
smashed and looted.\textsuperscript{100} Even in remote Regina, Saskatchewan, Eymann and \textit{Der Courier} would
not be immune. In May 1917, soldiers returning from the war smashed the windows of \textit{Der Courier}’s publishing house during two demonstrations.\textsuperscript{101}

But for Eymann, frustrated native-Canadians had been causing problems since the
beginning of the war by spreading rumors and having German-Canadians arrested by the police
under the War Measures Act. By March 1915, arrests of German-speaking Canadians in Regina
were quite frequent, which prompted Eymann to act. When two of his close associates, John
Schumacher and John Devigneux, were arrested, Eymann initiated correspondence between
himself and the RNWMP Commissioner A.B. Perry. He hoped that in doing so, he could be of
assistance in rescuing the two men from internment and additionally initiate a case for better
treatment of the German people.\textsuperscript{102} Only two days after Eymann sent a letter explaining how
reliable and trustworthy these two men were, Perry had both released.

Eymann’s two associates who risked being sent to internment camps are not an
unusual case for German-Canadians during this time period. The threat and actual cases of
internment of German-Canadians contributed to the unease and polarization between native-
Canadians and the German-Canadian peoples. The tempers of native-Canadians are evident in
Eymann’s correspondence with Commissioner Perry. According to Eymann, Germans are
frequently arrested because of “a number of hot-headed fools who provoke and report the

\textsuperscript{100} Helling, \textit{A Socio-Economic History}, 50.\textsuperscript{101} Entz, 61–62.
\textsuperscript{102} NAC, Sir Robert Borden Fonds (hereafter Borden Fonds), Reel C-4388, Documents 106449 and 106450.
Germans, [without which fools] there would be no trouble at all.”¹⁰³ For native-Canadians, the mere existence of Germans in Canada became increasingly a threat.

As trench warfare took its toll on British and Canadian troops alike, in 1917 it became evident that Canada would have to seriously increase its number of troops in the escalating conflict. But as horror stories of the war filtered back to Canada, this not only had the effect of stirring emotions against German-Canadians, this also discouraged army enlistment. Because of low enlistment rates, Prime Minister Borden began seriously pushing conscription as the solution. On May 18, 1917, Borden proclaimed in a speech that “All citizens are liable for the defense of their country” – just shortly before his solicitor general Arthur Meighen began to draft the Military Service Act.¹⁰⁴ Borden had hoped that he would receive support for this new plan from the Liberals in the government, but when Wilfrid Laurier, the leader of the Liberal party, refused either to form a coalition or to support conscription, Borden began to look for other ways to get the support that he needed.

Unfortunately for German-Canadians, Borden chose to strip them of their political rights in order to gain the support he needed for conscription. The Wartime Election Act gave voting rights to mothers, wives, and sisters of soldiers serving in the war, while at the same time it disenfranchised all citizens born in an enemy country and naturalized after 1902.¹⁰⁵ The justification for this move was that the votes for women would stand in for those soldiers at war who were unable to vote across u-boat infested waters. As for the disenfranchisement of those Canadians naturalized after 1902, they would at least be exempt from conscription. For Conrad

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 155.
Eymann and the majority of Der Courier’s readership, the conscription crisis of 1917 cost them their voting rights and no doubt left some feeling a bit betrayed by their new country.

Throughout the war, Eymann was constantly finding ways to support the German-Canadian population. Although he was politically savvy, he was not always successful in his ventures due to growing anti-German sentiments in western Canada. As pressure from the war convinced ever-increasing numbers of Canadians to feel uneasy with the Germans in their community, Eymann hatched a scheme to fight back politically and win for Germans some of the respect that they had lost. The idea was to raise funds that would be used later both to assist individual German-Canadians to afford legal fees and to “enlighten also the English-speaking population on the character of the non-English immigrants.”\(^{106}\) A circular was drafted by Eymann and the German Alliance and mailed in the spring of 1917. But the effect that it had on the political situation was quite the opposite of what Eymann expected. When it became clear that native-Canadians would misrepresent the intent of the new fund and the content of Eymann’s circular beyond what could be publicly repaired, the German Alliance had the whole scheme grounded.\(^{107}\) While it is unclear to what extent this issue caused the end of the German Alliance, mounting pressure from anti-German sentiments eventually brought the activities of the German Alliance to an end sometime in the spring of 1917.

Even with the end of the German Alliance in 1917, Eymann still had Der Courier and was still printing his weekly newspaper in the German language, which had for a long time been threatened. Early in the war, the War Measures Act accorded Prime Minister Borden the right to pass legislation to censor all forms of press. On June 10, 1915, Privy Council 1330 empowered the Secretary of State to appoint a press censor, who would be granted the right

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\(^{106}\) Entz, 60.

\(^{107}\) Ibid., 60.
to “examine, consider, approve or reject any writing.” Accordingly, the Secretary of State appointed multiple Press Censors, among them Lt. Col. Ernest J. Chambers, who would be appointed Chief Press Censor. This position would bring Chambers into direct contact with Conrad Eymann.

For Chambers, the reasons for allowing enemy language newspapers to exist in Canada were few. In fact, in a letter to J.F. Livesay, Chambers noted that the Canadian government should have “seized control of these publications” and “placed them under government editors.” Unfortunately for Chambers, among the rights he received from the Secretary of State as Chief Press Censor, the right to prosecute offenders was not granted. Thus, Chambers had to resign himself to writing up letters of warning to publishers of suspect material and passing information along to the Secretary of State, who for political reasons, refused to censor “enemy language” newspapers. To historian Jeffrey Keshen, Chambers was on a constant lookout for ways to force German-language newspapers to either shut down or print in a dual-language format. Thus, when the Great War Veterans Association (GWVA) turned their sights on Der Courier, Keshen notes that “Chambers obtained a most active ally in his quest to have federal authorities severely restrict the freedoms enjoyed by publications printed in enemy languages.”

Keshen’s interpretation of the evidence is problematic, because it depicts Chambers as a politically static individual who maintains his negative view of the German-language press throughout the war. In actuality, the case of Chambers was more complex than

109 Jeffrey A. Keshen, Propaganda and Censorship During Canada’s Great War, (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1996), 82.
110 Keshen, 83.
this. As time passed and Chambers maintained correspondence with Conrad Eymann, his perception of German-Canadians did show signs of change. Chambers began to understand the plight of men like Conrad Eymann and Gotthard L. Maron (the editor of *Der Nordwestern*, primary competitor to *Der Courier*). Yet at the same time, Chambers recognized that he was responsible for keeping a measure of peace in the west and thus carefully weighed the opinions voiced on both sides of the German-language newspaper debate. Based on correspondence between Eymann and Chambers, author Werner Entz interprets the situation differently from Keshen, and interestingly even seems to bestow on Chambers and the surrounding debates a quality of “nobleness.” According to Entz, Press Censor Chambers acted as the “pilot, duty-bound to keep the [German-language newspaper] ship afloat, even though he thought differently during the first year of the war.”

But Chambers knew that the protest mounted by the GWVA was a bigger leak than he could plug. The only option would be to suggest to his superiors that all enemy language publications must officially be closed. But even before this point, Eymann seems to already suspect that popular support for German-language newspapers was waning and therefore the situation for his newspaper would worsen. Early on, Eymann posted a notice in English at the beginning of the paper to appease those in Canada who could not read his newspaper. The notice, titled “The Aim of the Foreign Language Newspapers of Canada,” stated that newspapers such as *Der Courier* would “help preserve the ideals and sacred traditions of this our adopted country, the Dominion of Canada” and “aid in making this country greater and better.” But even this assurance was not enough to persuade the GWVA.

111 Entz, 66.

112 NAC, *Der Courier*, February 28, 1917, page 2. This clip ran from early in the war until the *Courier* began printing in English in September 1918.
Prompted by the pressure from the GWVA, Eymann made the first move; before Chambers could even notify Eymann that he was going to have to officially recommend that the Secretary of State force all enemy language newspapers to publish solely in English Eymann sent word to Chambers that Der Courier would in fact no longer be printing in German, but had voluntarily switched to an English-only format. Yet again, the politically adept Conrad Eymann knew the right moment to yield and salvage what he could of the situation, in this case the reputation of “Der Courier” – or as it was renamed, “The Courier.” This voluntary switch came at the same time Der Nordwesten determinedly insisted upon its freedom to continue printing in German. Sure enough, this politically diplomatic move worked in Eymann’s favor. Only four days before Prime Minister Borden passed an Order-in-Council to suppress all enemy language newspapers, the GWVA sent Borden a letter praising the Courier for voluntarily suspending publication in German, while at the same time chiding Borden’s government for its inaction due to “political expediency, rather than in the best interest of the State.”

Harsh words from the GWVA were certainly raising concerns that Borden and his cabinet could no longer ignore. As a response, on September 25, 1918, an Order-in-Council banned the publication of all newspapers written in an enemy language. The impact of this historic moment has been noted by historian Rudolf Helling as “the end of the first-generation immigrant press.” Although publication in the German language would resume a few years after the war, irreparable damage must have been dealt to the situation of the German-Canadians. They had been repeatedly attacked and harassed since the beginning of the war, they were

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113 Entz, 62.
114 NAC, Borden Fonds, Reel C-4327, Documents 48144 and 48145.
115 Entz, 63.
116 Helling, 55.
constantly under the surveillance of the Dominion Police, they had lost their rights to vote in elections, and now they had even lost the right to publish newspapers in their native language.

Despite this increasing repression of the German-Canadians by their own country, the activities of Conrad Eymann and his family during this time period reveal their efforts to persistently retain the German-Canadian identities that they had developed, to as great an extent as they were allowed. This loyalty to both their German and Canadian identities reflects not only the extent to which the Eymann family had grown so comfortable and assured in their dual identity, but also to what extent this duality was important to them.

True to their active natures, the Eymann family’s actions and words clearly work towards strengthening and supporting both of their identities. Demonstrating their unshaken loyalty to the German side of their identity, the manner in which the Eymann family ministered to the needs of their fellow German immigrants could be seen as dangerously active politically, given the extremely sensitive pro-German/anti-British suspicions at the time. For example, when the government began seizing Germans to send to internment camps, Antonie Eymann responded by leading a committee of women from the community in raising money to aid these German-Canadians living in the camps. The committee worked to provide the internees with necessities to survive the harsh Canadian winter, and sent friendly letters to keep up their spirits, particularly around Christmas time. The thankful letters that she received in return were subsequently published in the *Courier*. These letters are an excellent avenue for understanding not only the conditions of the camps, but also how seriously the German community took the duty upon themselves to assist those German-Canadians living in the camps.

As for their Canadian identity in this turbulent time, Eymann not only appears to steadfastly cling to the Canadian loyalty he developed over the years, but he even attempts to
strengthen it in others. After years of anti-German conditions during the war, it seems that German farmers started looking south of the border at the United States for a potential solution to escape harassment. To discourage emigration, Eymann takes up the question in an article in the *Courier*, appropriately titled “Should the [German] Farmers of the Canadian West emigrate to the United States?” In this article, Eymann argues against US emigration by citing the militaristic nature of the US, reminding his readers that many of them left Germany specifically with the intent of abandoning such ideals. While praising Canada as an “authentically democratic, anti-militaristic country,” he nevertheless later on in the article betrays tones of apprehension for the welfare of his German newspaper in this time of anti-Germanism. At the end of a call to Canadians to reject emigration, he follows with somewhat of a pointed attestation to the newspaper’s political faithfulness. He justifies the hopeful claim that “such a newspaper as *Der Courier* … can and will no longer suffer misunderstanding” with a long explanation of the newspaper’s unfaltering position that German-Canadians should in times of crisis “hold true to our oaths as citizens” and in interests of national unity “stand behind our government.” Finally, he concludes the article with: “We have in every respect, and every reason upon which to base our conviction, that Canada and especially Western Canada is and remains the best country for us.” Although the tension he felt at this repressive, anti-German time shows through, this article clearly demonstrates how closely Eymann still clings to and even protects the Canadian identity that he developed; indeed, no accounts of his home country of Germany being mentioned as a good place of residence were ever found in any surviving documents of his writings. Even when his very newspaper and livelihood seem to be threatened by the Canadian

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117 NAC, *Der Courier*, February 28, 1917. Page 2. Author’s translation of the original German. For the complete translation of the article, see appendix A.

government, Eymann refuses to give up easily his Canadian loyalties and idealism, and calls to his German comrades to follow suit.

But the problem for Eymann and indeed the entire German community was that no matter how loyal they proved themselves to be, as long as they exhibited even just a fondness for the German culture, they were to continue to be oppressed. This continued into the years following the First World War. Also during this time, veterans returning home from the First World War were becoming increasingly aggravated by the mere presence of Germans in Canada. As more veterans returned, they petitioned the government through the Great War Veterans Association to expel the 85,000 registered “enemy aliens,” which included the German immigrant population.119 In response, the government actually considered deporting all registered aliens, but only the lack of funds and the risk of serious international repercussions kept them from carrying this out. As it was, the Canadian government still managed to forcibly deport 1,800 “enemy aliens” to Europe between 1919 and 1920.120

Although thus far any existing research on Conrad Eymann concludes with Eymann’s editorship at the Courier press, a discovery of the rest of the Eymann story reveals a dramatic turn, crucial for the argument presented in this paper. In 1920, the Courier begins reporting a different editor to the Saskatchewan dominion authorities.121 In the same year we find a government document reporting Eymann’s departure from the United States to England, presumably followed by his family.122 Eventually, according to phone book records123 and

119 Bassler, The German Canadian mosaic today and yesterday, 63.
120 Ibid., 63.
121 SAB, R-348, newspaper file R-1 Der Courier. This file is a record of the yearly taxed paid by the newspaper while it was publishing in Saskatchewan.
research through the local archivist in Zittau, he returned to Germany to settle down. It was an unannounced departure, without even a notice in the newspaper that he had been editing for the past six years; perhaps he preferred, for the sake of diplomacy, to keep his resignation quiet. This must have been a difficult decision for Eymann, to leave the “best country for us” and ultimately return to the homeland.

This is an important piece of information to consider when analyzing the life of Conrad Eymann. For someone who was not only so personally patriotic, but who also made it his priority to foster Canadian patriotism in as much of the German immigrant population as possible, it seems dramatic and unexpected response to eventually pack up and leave for the home country. Clearly, with the anti-German oppression surrounding the First World War and the feeling of exclusion from the rest of the Canadian population that most likely ensued, Eymann must have experienced an extreme form of disillusionment with his formerly patriotic sentiments. Indeed, for someone who was once “Canadian now and forever,” who was discouraging even thoughts of emigration to the United States, Eymann’s departure back to his homeland most strongly suggests a case of an identity shattered.

Even the case of Antonie Eymann suggests feelings of disenchantment due to her wartime experience in Canada. After returning to Germany presumably with her husband and staying an ensuing eight years there, Antonie returns in 1928 not to Canada, but rather to the United States with her two teenage children Johanna and Heinrich – the very country her husband once so strongly objected settling in. By 1930, the three were living in Salem, Oregon,  

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124 Kreisarchiv Zittau, Archive Director Jutta Rothmann, November 27, 2009, e-mail message to author. In the e-mail, Rothmann reports that Conrad Eymann is recorded as having lived in Zittau from 1930 to 1938, but was not recorded in any birth, death, or marriage records.

under slightly modified, more Anglophone names.\textsuperscript{126} Antonie became Antonia, Heinrich became Heinz, and Johanna simplified her name to Hanna.\textsuperscript{127} So, after years of hearing the rhetoric from Conrad, that the “Germans of the West were Canadians now and forever,”\textsuperscript{128} and that “Canada is and remains the best country for us,”\textsuperscript{129} Conrad’s entire family leaves and relocates elsewhere: Germany, and for some reason, eventually the United States.

Not even Conrad’s brother Oswald remained in Canada. After graduating from the Rochester Theological Seminary in 1918,\textsuperscript{130} Oswald became a pastor and briefly moved back to Canada, where his first son was born in Medicine Hat in 1919, shortly before he and his family moved to Scotts Bluff, Nebraska.\textsuperscript{131} For whatever reason, life as a pastor in Scotts Bluff either did not seem to agree with Oswald, or perhaps he decided to take early retirement; he again moves with his family and leaves behind his new occupation as a pastor. Instead, he takes up his familiar gardening tools and goes back to work as a gardener in Anaheim, California, by 1934.\textsuperscript{132} With the departure of both of the Eymann brothers and their families, the Eymann era in Canada found its end. Indeed, the only Eymann to still be found in Canada after 1920 was the old grandmother Johanne, who had passed away in 1913 and was buried in Grayson, Saskatchewan.\textsuperscript{133}

\textsuperscript{126} Ancestry.com, \textit{1930 United States Federal Census}, Salem, Marion, Oregon, Roll 1948, Page 5A.
\textsuperscript{127} Interestingly, in the same \textit{1930 US Census} Antonia reports that her marital status is “divorced.”
\textsuperscript{128} Hopkins, 277.
\textsuperscript{129} NAC, \textit{Der Courier}, February 28, 1917, page 2.
The story of Conrad Eymann leaves us with some vital information for our glimpses into the conditions of this culture, which ultimately provides the scholarly field with valuable perspectives on this piece of history. Although many sources trumpet the triumphal survival of German identity in Canada despite repression during the First World War, a closer look through the eyes and in the footsteps of Conrad Eymann reveals at least a shattering of one identity to accompany the victory of another and the establishment of a dominant narrative.
CONCLUSIONS

The life of Conrad Eymann ends very much with the intrigue that began it. He had come first to New York from somewhere in Germany and returned there many years after his sojourn in North America. His arrival home must have seemed strange. After all, his mother and father had passed, his brother had stayed in the United States, and his family left him after just a few short years. What did he have left? At one time, he had been the ideal German-Canadian, but now that and seemingly everything else as well was shattered and gone.

Even though his life may have ended quietly, we are lucky that footprints in the sand that he left behind allowed us to follow his pathways around the world and peer inside the dramatic events of his life. And when we did, we managed to gain a more intricate understanding of the experiences of the German-Canadian community around the years of the First World War. While a macrohistorical approach might have championed the beginning of an era for Canadian identity in Canada, viewing this issue through the eyes of a specific individual reveals an entire culture within Canada that would disagree – beginning with Conrad Eymann himself. The same man who may have been a motivating factor for hundreds, even thousands, of Germans to cling to a German-Canadian identity went through a change of heart himself. It could only be considered unjust that someone who put up such a staunch fight to remain “Canadian now and forever” eventually broke down, gave up, and quietly returned to Germany.

Bringing the three chapters in this study together, the story of Conrad Eymann helps us put into context what is meant by a German-Canadian ethnic identity. We explore not only the German side of his identity – which remains strong, as he ultimately returns to Germany – but also the Canadian counterpart – which seems to have gone through a progression of initial vibrancy and resilience, later disillusionment, and eventual breakdown. This information
provided to us by a microhistorical approach, both challenges and complements the macrohistorical view, by providing an alternative and exceptional perspective to add to our overall understanding of the issue.

Even if one could transport back in time and witness the past first hand, the understanding gained still seems inferior to viewing history through the eyes of a contemporary. Even were one to stand on Conrad Eymann’s street in person during the First World War, our dependence on our limited capacity to only view and understand through a trained, modern perspective would still taint our understanding of the intricacies of the past. In the end, viewing history through the words and actions of someone like Conrad Eymann seems to present one of the most intimate ways to understand a world, even if our modern perspective is not wholly avoided. We need to read his insistent claims of Canadian nationality, his rousing words of encouragement and persuasion to his comrades, and his desperate attempts to ward off suspicion from his beloved newspaper. “Canadian now and forever” he proclaimed prior to the war, to probably linger forever in his mind after his disenchanted return to Germany. “Canadian now and forever.”


National Archives Canada:

———. *Der Courier*. German-language newspaper on microfilm. The rolls for the years 1914 to 1919 are N-16124 through N-16127.


———. *Der Saskatchewan Courier*. German-language newspaper on microfilm roll N-16124. Note that part-way through this reel *Der Saskatchewan Courier* changes its name to *Der Courier*.

———. RG 18, Section B-1, Royal North-West Mounted Police fonds, Office of the Commissioner, Official correspondence, volumes 1776 and 1777.

———. RG 18, Volume 486, Document numbers 232–246, German Newspaper *Der Courier*, Regina, Saskatchewan, Correspondence between Editor of and the Commissioner re: treatment by Police of Alien Enemies.

———. *Sir Robert Borden fonds*, Microfilm Rolls C-4327 and C-4388 (Correspondence).


Saskatchewan Archives Board. R-348, newspaper tax file R-1, “Der Courier.”


Sollen Farmer des canadischen Westens nach den Vereinigten Staaten auswandern?

Im Laufe der vergangenen Monate wurde mehrfach die Ansicht laut, daß es für unsere Farmer ratsam sei, nach den Vereinigten Staaten auszuwandern. Da eine große Menge der Einwanderer im canadischen Westen, die unsere Sprache sprechen, ihre alten heimatländer verlassen haben, um dem Militärzwang zu entgehen; da einer der hauptgründe für ihre Einwanderung nach Canada der war, daß sie in Canada ein echt demokratisches, antimilitarisches Land gefunden zu haben glaubten, so war es nur natürlich, daß Gerüchte über Einführung des Militärzwanges in Canada, besonders zur Zeit der Ausgabe der national-Dienstkarten, Befürchtungen hervorrufen, und in vielen dieser Einwanderer den Gedanken wach werden ließen, daß es gut sein möchte, Canada zu verlassen.

Eine Zeitung wie der „Courier“, die seit Ausbruch des Krieges entschieden den Standpunkt vertreten hat, daß es in der Zeit einer nationalen Krisis für uns als Canadier nur die eine Möglichkeit gibt, unserem Bürgereide treu zu sein, und im Interesse der so dringend wünschenswerten Erlangung nationaler Einheit geschlossen hinter unserer Regierung zu stehen, kann und wird nicht mehr mißverstanden werden. Erklärungen der Regierungskreise Canadas bieten eine sichere Gewähr dafür, das keinerlei Absicht besteht, die Bewölkerung Canadas, die zentral-europäischer Abkunft ist, zum Militärdienst zu zwingen. Vielmehr sind die maßgebenden Kreise der Regierungen unseres Landes vollständig der Ansicht, daß unsere Einwanderer, die ja fast ausschließlich dem Farmerstande angehören, unserem Canada den größten Dienst dadurch

erweisen können, daß sie alle Kräfte einsetzen, um für vermehrte Produktion seitens der
canadischen Landwirtschaft Sorge zu tragen.

Für eine Auswanderung aus Canada käme in jetziger Zeit nur ein Land in Betracht, die
Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika. Wer nun jemals den Gedanken gehegt haben mag, daß die
Vereinigten Staaten ein besseres Land für den europäischen Auswanderer seien als unser
Canada, dem müssen die Entwickelungen der letzten Wochen die Augen geöffnet haben. Wir sind
nach wie vor der Ansicht, daß Canada nicht dazu übergeben wird, zur Deckung der durch den
krieg verursachten Ausgaben eine Grundsteuer zu erheben. Andererseits kann sein Zweifel
bestehen, daß die Steuerlasten in den Vereinigten Staaten viel höher sein werden als in Canada,
 wenn die Vereinigten Staaten die gegenwärtig geplanten Reisenprogramme für Rüstungen des
Heeres und der Flotte zur Durchführung bringen wollen. Die Durchführung dieser Pläne wird
den Vereinigten Staaten Tausende von Millionen kosten. Das Volk der Vereinigten Staaten wird
also in den kommenden Jahren auf jeden Fall schwerere Steuerlasten zu tragen haben als das
Volk Canadas. Außerdem sind die Vereinigten Staaten dabei, allgemeinen Militärzwang
einzuführen.

Wir haben also in jeder Beziehung allen Grund, an unserer Ueberzeugung festzuhalten,
daß Canada und besonders unser Westen das beste Land für uns ist und bleibt.

Author’s translation

Should [German] farmers of the Canadian West emigrate to the United States?

Over the course of the past few Months, the boisterous perspective has grown that it
would be advisable for our [German] farmers to immigrate to the United States. Because a large
number of German-speaking immigrants in the Canadian West have left their homelands in order to escape conscription and because one of the principal reasons for their immigration to Canada was that they believed they had found in Canada an authentically democratic, anti-militaristic country, then it was only natural that when rumors of adopting a draft in Canada (especially at a time of the issuance of national work-cards), in many of the immigrants fears ripened and thoughts awoke that it might be as well to leave Canada.

A newspaper such as Der Courier, which has resolutely since the outbreak of the war maintained the belief that there is only one choice in such a time of national crisis for us as Canadians (namely, to hold true to our oaths as citizens and in the interest of the highly desired national unity to stand as one behind our government), can and will no longer suffer misunderstanding. Declarations by the Canadian Central Government provide an assured guarantee that no intention whatsoever exists to compel those in the population of Canada of central-European heritage into military service. In fact, those in the government of our country with authority are fully committed to the opinion that our immigrants, who almost exclusively belong to the farming community, can do Canada the greatest service by putting all their effort into increasing the production of Canadian agriculture.

At present, as a destination for emigrants from Canada, only one country would come into consideration, the United States of America. Whosoever may have harbored the opinion, however, that the United States is a better land for European immigrants than our Canada, they must have had their eyes opened by the developments of the past few weeks. We are as ever of the mind that Canada will not go over, as the United States has, to levying a property tax in order to cover war expenses. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the tax rates in the United States will be much higher than in Canada once the United States implements the gigantic
programs it has planned for the armament of the Army and Navy. The implementation of these plans will cost the United States thousands of millions of dollars. In any event, the people of the United States are going to have to bear heavier tax loads than the Canadian people. Furthermore, the United States is in the process of imposing a general military draft.

We therefore have in every respect every reason for holding fast to our conviction that Canada and especially our Western Canada is and remains the best land for us.
APPENDIX B. CURRENT VIEW OF 1835 HALIFAX STREET

1835 Halifax Street, Regina, Saskatchewan as it appears today. This was the location of *Der Courier*’s office and printing facility during the First World War.

Photo courtesy the author. ©Andrew Thompson 2010
The First World War is oftentimes represented in Canadian media as a time when Canada became a nation. The Canadian Government’s “Citizenship and Immigration Canada” website notes that “the [first world] war marked the real birth of Canada and its recognition by countries around the world.”\textsuperscript{135} Typically, these types of arguments only include discussion of the Anglophone community that was brought together and exclude consideration of the ethnic minorities excluded. In a recent CTV news article interview “Vimy battle marks birth of Canadian nationalism,” author Ted Barris is quoted “Suddenly there was this chemistry of people coming together … They were immigrants, they had come from empire countries, like Britain, Scotland, Wales, maybe South Africa and Rhodesia and the Caribbean. But on that day and in the campaign leading up to it, they had become Canadians.”\textsuperscript{136} But these proclamations of national unity are sometimes contended. In the case of the CTV news article, historian Jack Granatstein contended that “If there was nationalism formed, it was English-Canadian nationalism.” In other words, the Francophone troops and other non-Anglo minorities had a much different experience from their British counterparts.
