

Brandon Internment Camp - Research Report

March 2017

Joe Dauphinais



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## *Historical Context*

After a series of events beginning with the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand ignited the powder keg of Europe, Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914. As a Dominion within the British Empire, Canada was instantly at war as well. To stop the movement of enemy nationals a royal proclamation of 15 September 1914 stated that actions would be taken against any reservists of the Central Powers who attempted to leave Canada.<sup>1</sup> An Order in Council issued on 28 October 1914 allowed authorities to detain and intern any enemy aliens who fail to register themselves regularly with a government-appointed registration agent. This Order in Council also provided for the use of those interned as labourers.<sup>2</sup> Eventually power was granted to the authorities to intern unemployed enemy aliens. These decisions led to the internment of large numbers of people who had immigrated from the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires, regardless of their ethnicity. To house all of these people, internment camps were created across Canada. Brandon, Manitoba was home to one such camp, located in its newly renovated Winter Fair Building.

## *Camp Overview*<sup>3</sup>

Brandon's First World War internment camp began its life as a motion passed by the City Council to ask the area MP, Sir JAM Aikins, to request that a detention centre for prisoners of war be created in the area, as reported by the *Brandon Daily Sun* on 3 November 1914. In early November, it was unsure if the camp would be located in the summer or winter fair grounds; ultimately, the winter fair grounds would win out. By 25 November 1914, local contractor JE Yates had nearly completed work updating the heating and plumbing so the Winter Fair Building could accommodate internees.

By 1 December 1914, Alderman W Bourke was appointed as Brandon's registration agent for people of enemy nationality in the region. By this time, there were already 80 internees. These men were German and Austrian nationals who had been sent to Brandon from further west in the Prairies.<sup>4</sup> The *Brandon Daily Sun* does not talk of a camp commandant until 25 January 1915 when one Lieutenant-Colonel FJ Clark is appointed to that position. In early February, General Hughes inspects the camp and is impressed with the state of affairs there.

15 February 1915 saw Otto Geiler, an interned German, released under guard to visit his sick daughter in Winnipeg. Otto was interned for his apparent role in helping aliens cross into the United States so that they could reach Germany. He was ultimately released only a few days later so that he could take care of his ill family as long as he promised good behaviour.

General Otter, the commander of the national internment operation, inspected the Brandon camp in early March and was very impressed. In his opinion, it had the best quarters for the

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1 Bohdan S. Kordan and Craig Mahovsky, *A Bare and Impolitic Right: Internment and Ukrainian-Canadian Redress* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 204) p. 20.

2 Order in Council 2721, in Lubomyr Luciuk, *In Fear of the Barbed Wire Fence: Canada's First National Internment Operations and the Ukrainian Canadians, 1914-1920* (Kashtan Press, 2001) 3-4.

3 The majority of information in this section has been found in *Brandon Daily Sun* articles found on [www.manitobia.ca](http://www.manitobia.ca). Information found elsewhere will be cited.

4 G.F. Barker, *Brandon: A City 1881-1961*, [Manitobia.ca](http://www.manitobia.ca) ([http://www.manitobia.ca/resources/books/local\\_histories/003.pdf](http://www.manitobia.ca/resources/books/local_histories/003.pdf)), 190/159. (First number PDF page number, second number book page number)

interned of any camp in Canada and was happy with the 45<sup>th</sup> Battalion, who were acting as camp guards while waiting to be sent to Sewell (Camp Hughes) and eventually Europe.

May 1915 was a busy time for the Brandon camp. 18 May of that year saw 175 people arrive at the camp from Emerson. This large influx of people forced the camp administration to use the south end of the building as housing for the internees. Nick Lypka, one of the 175 detained in Emerson, said that he and 500 other people heard of work in the United States and began the walk towards the border before being caught in Emerson and sent to the Brandon camp.<sup>5</sup>

May and June saw the guards change from the 45<sup>th</sup> Battalion, which was leaving to train at Camp Hughes and eventually to the front, to the 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment, which would take over guard duty for the duration of the camps existence. This period also saw a rash of escape attempts, presumably due to the arrival of new guards.

The camp reached its highest capacity by 28 August 1915 when 942 internees were detained there. Of these, 820 and were Ukrainian.<sup>6</sup> However, it was expected that many would be sent to Banff to work on expanding and updating the national park there. It is unclear in the *Brandon Daily Sun* if internees were sent there in September but by 21 December 1915, at least 200 people were sent from Brandon to Banff. This still left approximately 700 internees in Brandon. December also saw a Christmas celebration in the camp, complete with music and parcels containing gifts. These parcels were mostly full of tobacco and food, likely the fruit and candy mentioned by Peter Melnycky and Orest Martynowych. The music was provided by internees who played or taught music before being interned.

1916 saw the number of people interned in Brandon steadily decline. By 28 January 1916, there were 675 internees, down from the 942 of the previous August. February saw 200 internees sent to Jasper to work infrastructure there. Brandon council wanted the internees to work on a road to Camp Hughes. This never came to fruition and instead many internees were released to work on area farms. Indeed, many of the internees were farmers prior to being interned and were only interned as few employers would hire them because of their nationality. This program was in full effect by April 1916. By this point, the camp was housing 500 internees.

June saw 454 internees within the wall of the Winter Fair Building with 100 out working on farms. In addition, 70 internees went east to work on railway construction projects. July 1916 was the last month that Brandon was home to an internment camp. Around 19 July 1916 100 internees were sent to Morrissey, BC, and ten days later the camp was closed. 104 of the remaining internees were sent to Castel, AB (probably Castle Mountain; likely a typo on the *Brandon Daily Sun's* part) with the last 70 being sent to B.C.

### *Ukrainian-Canadian Prairie Life*<sup>7</sup>

The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw thousands of Ukrainian immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian crownlands of Galicia and Bukovina arrive in Canada as part of the project to populate the west. The majority of these immigrants were barely one generation removed from serfdom and the obligations of the manorial system. The feudal realities of life in the Austro-

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5 George Buri, "Enemies Within Our Gates:" Brandon's Alien Detention Centre During the Great War," *Manitoba History* Vol. 56 (Oct. 2007) Manitoba Historical Society.  
[http://www.mhs.ca/docs/mb\\_history/56/aliendetention.shtml](http://www.mhs.ca/docs/mb_history/56/aliendetention.shtml).

6 Orest T. Martynowych, *Ukrainians in Canada: The Formative Period, 1891-1924* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1991) 328.

7 The majority of this information is from Martynowych, *Ukrainians in Canada*. If not, will be cited.

Hungarian crownlands made Canada an attractive place to move one's family to, as the new country offered cheap land and jobs. In general, those who came to Canada for the land intended to become permanent homesteaders on the Prairies whereas those who came for work tended to be more mobile labourers who had no intention of making Canada their permanent home. These people tended to gravitate towards Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia where there were more job opportunities than elsewhere.

## **Homesteaders**

Ukrainian immigrants who came to farm on the Prairies expected to continue living as subsistence farmers, as they had done back in Galicia and Bukovina. To facilitate this type of agriculture, Ukrainian immigrants tended to choose land that had ready access to forests (the wood was used for fuel, building material, and habitat of berries, fruits, and mushrooms used to supplement their diet) and marshland (for watering their livestock and creating the clay, sand, and stones needed for buildings). These requirements caused many of the Ukrainians to purchase land in the Parkland region, which handily satisfied these requirements. In addition, the Parkland is geographically similar to the Carpathian foothills and so was chosen for nostalgic reasons as well. Since it looked like home, one would potentially feel less homesick here.

Ukrainian immigrants tended to settle in areas where other Ukrainians had already found land. In fact, many followed friends, family, or old neighbours to Canada and bought property near them. Entire families tended to come to Canada as well, as well as several families from the same village settling in one area together. The farms they settled on were 160-acre plots bought from the CPR. Most of the Ukrainian settlers did not bother to expand their farms, either because they could not afford to or did not need to. A 160 acre was much larger than the more modest "seven or eight a very few" would have owned in Ukraine.

To supplement their livelihood, many rural settlers would search for summer employment. This was usually work on the railroad, in mines, in lumber camps, or on other farms. This would leave the farm to be taken care of by the women and children. They would walk to town to buy potatoes and flour and other necessities. Women and children would clear, plough, and cultivate land in the summers when their fathers and husbands were away working. They would help with harvest, which was often done by hand. As well, women and children would tend to a vegetable garden, apparently a uniquely Ukrainian trend that helped them succeed on land on which other settlers had failed to survive. Essentially, Ukrainians in Canada tended not to strictly observe a gendered division of labour. Everyone worked as much as everyone else did on the farm to make it work.

While the Interlake region was not conducive to farming and saw most Ukrainian settlers either leave or work extensively away from the farm to make ends meet, the Parkland region was quite successful. Regardless, until World War I, most Ukrainians continued to subsistence farm. Some of these settlers would open businesses to serve their neighbours as the nearest towns were usually quite far.

Despite all of this, life was not always perfect for Ukrainian homesteaders. Certain negative aspects of peasant life in the old country carried over into life in the New World. Although marriages were often arranged, they were not entirely done against anyone's will. Jealousy was common; neighbours who appeared to getting ahead of their peers would be regarded suspiciously and could often find their equipment sabotaged. Crowded living conditions and too many young, single men could often lead to violence or infidelity. Ukrainians of the time were eager to sue and many, in both Canada and Galicia, were tied up in court cases. In addition,

alcohol was imbibed in great quantities. Superstition was common and Old World proverbs taught Ukrainian peasants to be fatalistic and accepting of whatever fate befell them; after all, “misery was universal (*Bes lykha v sviti ne buvaie*), pain a natural attribute of life (*De nema boliu, tam nema i zhyttia*).”<sup>8</sup>

### **Frontier Labourers**

Those Ukrainians who came to Canada to find work were typically younger than those who came to homestead. They were also essentially homeless migrant workers. They tended to travel wherever they needed to go to find work as they did not have a 160 acre farm to retreat to when laid off. These men would generally work all summer and then deplete their savings trying to survive in the cities for the winter. Only a minority of Ukrainian migrant labourers found winter work and even fewer still found full-time work.

Many of these labourers worked for the railroad, either repairing already laid track or preparing the roadbed that track would eventually be laid on. Some found work with the forestry industry, usually clearing roads for lumber crews where prior experience and knowledge of English were not as important. Others found work as unskilled labourers in mines. These men were sometimes able to work their way up to better-paid, skilled labour positions.

All three industries that Ukrainian migrant labourers found work in were dangerous, and accidents that could maim or kill were common. Living conditions were also generally terrible. Lumber and railroad camps, as well as mining towns, were crowded, dirty, and smelly places with little in the way of entertainment. Many of these men spent their leisure time drinking, gambling, and visiting brothels.

The terrible living conditions and dangerous work resulted in varied responses from the Ukrainian immigrants. Those who worked on the railroad and in forestry tended to accept these conditions as they were often better than what could be found in the old country. That is not to say that they did not strike and resist unfair conditions or demands. Typically, though, it was the miners who were more unionist and fought for better treatment.

### **Urban Labourers**

Prior to World War I, the cities with the largest Ukrainian communities were Winnipeg, Montreal, and Fort William. Initially it was single men and women who settled in the cities. Indeed, cities were a particularly good place for women to settle as they had more employment opportunities here than in rural areas. Cities also provided for more stability for families, especially if the whole family was working. That is not to say that finding work was easy or that exploitation of recent immigrants did not happen.

Orest T. Martynowych, in *Ukrainians in Canada*, breaks down the employment trends for Ukrainians in Winnipeg in 1911, just prior to the outbreak of World War I. The vast majority of men worked for the City of Winnipeg (44%). The next largest employer was the CPR, CNR, and GTP railways (31%). Next, it was contract iron shops at 6.5%. The majority of these jobs were unskilled labour positions. Women in Winnipeg in 1911 worked predominantly as hotel maids (30%) with the rest being spread relatively evenly between restaurants, cafés, department stores, meat-packers, and garment factories.

Although stability was easier to maintain in the cities, work could be just as dangerous

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8 Martynowych, *Ukrainians in Canada*, 95.

here as that done by the frontier labourers, especially those who worked for the various railway companies. Accidents on the railway were common and frequently resulted in deaths. Much like in mining towns, housing for Ukrainian immigrants to the cities was often crowded and located in slums presided over by unscrupulous landlords. Regardless of where a Ukrainian immigrated to in Canada, life was a tough affair.

### *Life Inside the Brandon Camp*

For those inside the Brandon internment camp, life appears to have been unbearably boring and dreary with the occasional energetic hiccup, such as during an escape attempt. The sources seem to agree that out of all the internment camps in Canada, the Brandon camp was among the best. However, being locked inside the best terrible place would not be much of a consolation to those on the inside.

The camp itself was located on the second floor of the Winter Fair Building, used in the pre-war period as a stable (first floor and parts of second) and rooms for meetings, conventions, and other gatherings related to the Provincial Winter Fair. During its time as an internment camp the building was separated into parallel rooms for exercise, dining, recreation, bathrooms, a sleeping room, and a hospital. Internees slept together in one room. Bedding for the majority of internees was extremely spartan; wooden cots with straw-filled mattresses were all the internees got for beds. However, 14 Germans within the camp were given special treatment. Their living quarters were roomier and their beds much nicer; 4" cotton/wool mattresses on iron cots with springs.<sup>9</sup>

Outside of routine roll calls and inspections, the internees at the Brandon internment camp were given outdoor exercise sessions twice daily. They were also occasionally taken for walks around Brandon under guard. Playing cards and telling stories were common ways to pass the time. A reading club was established by a Ukrainian socialist interned at the camp, which saw 75 Ukrainians and 34 Polish internees as members.<sup>10</sup> This reading club was called *V poslidnim iarmi*, or In Our Last Captivity. This group would regularly ask the local Ukrainian community for books and hosted social events for their fellow internees. Such events included Sunday night dances and mock weddings, with men dressed as women and Austrian and Canadian soldiers.<sup>11</sup> In addition, Ukrainian language and literacy lessons were offered by those internees who could read and write.

Singing was a popular pastime; so much so, in fact, that concerned residents of Brandon wrote in to the *Brandon Daily Sun* complaining of the volume at which the internees would sing. Colonel Clark, the camp commandant at the time, brushed off these complaints, saying there was little else for the men to do. According to reports in the *Brandon Daily Sun* about visits from various inspectors, the food in the camp was more than satisfactory.

Interned craftsmen spent their free time carving trinkets, necklaces, picture frames, and 50 violins. One such violin is on display at the Daly House Museum on 18<sup>th</sup> Street in Brandon. Internee #457, John Melnick, created this particular violin in 1915. Melnick carved the body of the violin out of the seat of a chair and the neck out of the leg of a bed.

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9 Peter Melnycky, *The Internment of Ukrainians in Canada*, in *Loyalties in Conflict: Ukrainians in Canada During the Great War*, eds. Frances Swyripa and John Herd Thompson (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1983) 8.

10 Martynowych, *Ukrainians in Canada*, 328.

11 Melnycky, *The Internment of Ukrainians*, in *Loyalties in Conflict*, 8.

The internees held a concert for Ukrainian Christmas in January of 1916. Some of the internees had either played music or taught music prior to their internment. Many parcels were sent to the camp, which contained tobacco, paper, pencils, candy, and fruit. The Christmas meal was prepared by Ukrainian women from the Brandon area. One Father Kaluzniatsky, the local parish priest for the Ukrainian Catholic church, visited the camp twice on Christmas Eve and performed a Christmas mass, as well as sang songs with the internees, the following morning. The second day of Christmas saw plays put on by the local Ukrainian community as well as a performance by the internees' choir. On the third day of Christmas, the internees staged their own play.

Father Kaluzniatsky also attended to the spiritual needs of the internees throughout the year. October 1915 saw Bishop Nykyta Budka visit the camp. During this visit, he heard confessions and promised to send books for the camp library and to arrange English language classes for the internees.<sup>12</sup> Bishop Budka was supposed to return later in the month to perform a mass but he was denied entrance to the camp by guards who claimed they had never received notice of his visit.

Due to its location in the middle of an urban centre, the Brandon internment camp was not a work camp. The only internees to work and earn the meagre 25 cents per day were those who were employed as barbers, shoemakers, tailors, cooks, carpenters, orderlies in the hospital wing, and firemen. All other internees were unpaid. Internees were also allowed to send up to eight letters per month per person but mail was of course censored. Friends and family were allowed to visit their interned loved ones once per month. Those internees that were married or had dependents of any kind were forced to leave them at home when interned, unfortunately, as the Brandon internment camp had no room to house anyone outside of the internees.

While the Brandon camp may have had better conditions than some of the other camps, escape attempts were common in the summer of 1915. The loneliness, boredom, and isolation got to many of the internees and by May 1915 some began thinking of escape. Dmytro Kowalchuk was the first person to try to escape. After faking illness, he climbed out a skylight, broke his ankle, and nearly made it to the US border before being recaptured.<sup>13</sup> Peter Dulco and Martin Barozchuk jumped out of a second floor window at the southwest corner of the Winter Fair Building shortly after. Dulco also injured his ankle was quickly found underneath a nearby veranda and re-interned.

The largest escape attempt, which took place on 5 June 1915, involved 15 men and was quite elaborate. A knife was filed into a saw and used to cut a hole in the floor. The men cut the hole into the floor underneath a table at which others were playing cards. With the guards distracted, the men dropped through the hole into the Winter Fair Building's boiler room and ran out the back door. Most of the escaping men were recaptured before they had even left the building, with some hiding in a boiler until they were ordered out. Three men got clear, including Andrew Grapko who was shot and Mike Butryn who was struck in the face. One man escaped entirely. Simon Konrat, one of the men who planned the escape, told police afterwards that he would absolutely try to escape again because if he were to remain the camp much longer he would lose his mind.<sup>14</sup> Grapko, who was only 18 years old at the time, died of his wounds on 18 June 1915. This was the last major escape attempt from the Brandon internment camp.

Abuse from guards was noted by some of the internees. Nick Lypka, who had been sent to

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12 Melnycky, *The Internment of Ukrainians*, in *Loyalties in Conflict*, 11.

13 Barker, *Brandon*, 193/162.

14 *Brandon Daily Sun*, 7 June 1915, Manitoba.ca.

the camp after being detained in Emerson, reported that one time an intoxicated guard shot the floor to frighten the internees. A fellow internee convinced Lypka to pick up the spent cartridges and the officer, enraged, punished Lypka by putting him in solitary confinement for three days. Lights would also be kept on all night long according to Lypka. For the most part, life in the Brandon internment camp was one of loneliness, boredom, and despair punctuated by occasional bouts of excitement. Brandon may not have been as cruel or grueling as some of the other camps but broke men's spirits just the same.

### *Other Camps*

Many of those interned in Brandon were later sent to camps in Alberta and British Columbia, especially the labour camps in the Banff and Jasper regions. World War One diverted funds from the construction of national parks and so internees were used as a cheap source of labour to complete these endeavours. The internees were used to clear bush from rail lines to prevent fires and give tourists a clear view of the mountains. Internee labour was also used to build many of the roads into and within the national parks.

Conditions in the Alberta camps were generally terrible. The food was low quality, and, in Castle Mountain camp, the men were given a single Army-issue blanket and a rubber mat to sleep on. Punishments were severe for those who refused to work. Nick Lypka, one of the men who walked from Winnipeg to Emerson before being interned in Brandon, was one of those sent to Castle Mountain. He tells a story in Yuriy Luhovy's documentary *Freedom Had a Price* of the men in Castle Mountain going on strike on Ukrainian Christmas. In retaliation, the guards forced the men to carry logs into the camp. One man in particular refused to do this and was rewarded with a bayonet poked into his rear end by a guard. Punishment for recalcitrant internees in these camps was severe. Obstinate prisoners could find themselves "crucified," which was when they were tied spread-eagled to a cannon or wagon wheel. Other times the internees would be shackled or tied to trees. Disobedience in Castle Mountain was dealt with harshly and the attitude inside the camp was subsequently poor.

Many internees were sent to Cave and Basin, just outside of Banff. Banff was quite isolated at the time and the internees were used to develop and connect the area. During their 10-hour workdays, the internees here would haul rock to be crushed into gravel, which was then used to build roads. They also built sidewalks in Banff, built a bridge over the Spray River, supplied the material to reconstruct a hotel, expanded a 9-hole golf course into an 18-hole course, and built tennis courts. Internees also cut ice that was used to build an ice palace in town. Although they were not allowed to speak to the internees, local girls would often walk by work sites to look at and smile at the internees being used as cheap labour. Any Canadian who has enjoyed the national parks at Banff and Jasper owe it to the underpaid labour (25¢ per day) of Eastern European internees.

The camps at Spirit Lake in Quebec and Kapuskasing in Ontario were among the worst. Spirit Lake saw an organized strike against the working conditions by the internees. In retaliation, their bedding and food was taken away to break their spirit. These two camps were intertwined; Spirit Lake was severely lacking in facilities, especially medical facilities. Internees that were quite ill would be sent to Kapuskasing since that camp was equipped with a hospital.<sup>15</sup> This was

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15 Interview with Frank Jankac, "100 Years Since First Death in Kapuskasing Internment Camp," <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/100-years-since-first-death-in-kapuskasing-internment-camp-1.3095314>, CBC (1 June 2015) 6:00.

the series of events that Fredko Prokop experienced just prior to his death. Falling ill in Spirit Lake internment camp, Prokop was transferred to the Kapuskasing camp due to the lack of proper facilities in Spirit Lake. Once reaching Kapuskasing, Prokop was diagnosed by that camp's doctor with cerebrospinal meningitis. He lasted another three weeks before passing away on 1 June 1915.

Despite having a doctor and infirmary in the camp, Kapuskasing was still a miserable place; both the internees and the guards did not want to be there. In an interesting subversion of the prevailing prejudices of the era, the German internees/prisoners of war in the Kapuskasing camp were more obstinate than the Ukrainians. Most of the Germans, of which there were many, were white-collar workers and officers and had little to no valuable work experience. The guards found these men much harder to deal with than their Eastern European co-prisoners.

### ***Women and Children***

Life could be difficult for the women and children left behind after the internment of their husbands and fathers. Even in the cases where the man of the household was not interned, which was the majority, fear and uncertainty could constantly hang over the family. A fictional diary entry, written by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch and found on The Critical Thinking Consortium website, indicates that internment was a constant threat for many families. As they watched their neighbours and friends get taken one by one and interned, families could begin to feel nervous and afraid that maybe their father would be next.<sup>16</sup> Although many Ukrainian-Canadians were not interned, the threat of it was a reality of life between late 1914 and 1920.

Most camps did not have the available space to house the families of the internees and so their care ostensibly fell to the government. However, practice often differs from theory and this particular situation was no different. Of the thousands of women and children left at home with no breadwinner, the government of Canada only supported approximately 40 women and 81 children.<sup>17</sup> Some women, like Maria Marchuk, would write to the authorities requesting that her husband, Philip Marchuk, be released so he could provide for her and their family. Her letters were accompanied by statements from Anglo-Canadians from their area vouching for Philip's character. They were ignored and Philip was not released for another three years.

Some women and children were interned with their husbands and fathers. Only two camps had the space for this, though: Spirit Lake in Quebec and Vernon in British Columbia. Between the two of these internment camps, 81 women and 156 children were interned with their male family members.<sup>18</sup> As it was for the men, life inside Spirit Lake and Vernon camps was a brutal experience for the women and children. Quite isolated, and with little in the way of luxury, the freezing temperatures of winter took their toll. At least one little girl, interned along with her mother and father, died of pneumonia while there. Her family built a casket for her themselves and staged a funeral for her.

Since more than 8,500 men were interned during World War I in Canada, this left many

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16 Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch, excerpt from "Prisoners in the Promised Land,"

[https://tc2.ca/sourcedocs/uploads/images/HD%20Sources%20\(text%20thumbs\)/WWI%20internment/Effects%20of%20WWI%20internment%20for%20Ukrainians/Effects-of-wwi-internment-for-Ukrainians%2011.jpg](https://tc2.ca/sourcedocs/uploads/images/HD%20Sources%20(text%20thumbs)/WWI%20internment/Effects%20of%20WWI%20internment%20for%20Ukrainians/Effects-of-wwi-internment-for-Ukrainians%2011.jpg), The Critical Thinking Consortium.

17 Melnycky, *The Internment of Ukrainians*, in *Loyalties in Conflict*, 4.

18 "Report on Internment Operations," General Sir William Otter, in *Ukrainian Canadians in Canada's Wars: Materials for Ukrainian Canadian History, Volume 1*, J. B. Gregorovich, ed. (Toronto: Ukrainian Canadian Research Foundation, 1983) 83.

thousands more women and children without any financial or material assistance to fend for themselves for the duration of their husbands and fathers' internment. If a woman had no friends or family nearby or her own source of income, her situation could quickly become desperate. One such woman, Catherine Boychuk, was arrested and jailed for one month for theft. Her eight-month-old daughter was taken from her and put in an orphanage where she died eight days later.<sup>19</sup> Although this may be an extreme case, Catherine Boychuk's situation speaks to the desperation and dire consequences that could occur when a household's primary earner is removed from the equation.

Indeed, this is alluded to in a letter written by 9-year-old Katie Domytryk to her father, himself arrested in Edmonton and subsequently interned in 1916. Katie tells her father that with him gone they have no food and no one will give them wood. She says that her mother has to go get food four times a day. Katie did not attend school in the winter and says things were better when her father was still there. Finally, Katie signs off the letter by saying she and her siblings “kiss your hand... dear father” and wish for him to return soon.<sup>20</sup> Clearly, internment disrupted family life for those Ukrainian-Canadians unfortunate enough to be affected by it. Mothers would have had to work even harder to make ends meet and children likely would not understand why their fathers had disappeared. In cases where their father was arrested by the authorities and taken to an internment camp, such confusion and disruption would likely be even more severe. Life for Ukrainian-Canadian families, already difficult enough, was made even more tenuous with the internment of their breadwinners.

### ***Methodology***

Upon receiving confirmation that I was able to start working, I contacted retired Brandon University Archivist Tom Mitchell and the XXVI Field Artillery/12<sup>th</sup> Manitoba Dragoons Museum based in the Brandon Armoury. That same day I bookmarked George Buri's article “Enemies Within Our Gates” from the Manitoba Historical Society's webpage. Before I read Buri's article, I noted his sources and recorded the titles of any books he used in his own research to see if Brandon University's Library had them in their own collection.

The following day I met with Tom Mitchell to discuss what he knew about Brandon's internment camp. I then went to the S. J. McKee Archives and explored the records there in search of any information relevant to the internment camp or to find pictures of the Winter Fair Building. Before leaving Brandon University, I withdrew the books from George Buri's bibliography from the BU Library.

For the next several days, I took notes on those books and from George Buri's article. In between note-taking sessions, I visited the XXVI Field Artillery Museum to look at their collections and listen to what the staff and volunteers knew about the camp. I also returned to the McKee Archives to search for additional photos of the Winter Fair Building and immediate streetscape. At the end of the second week of my research, which ended on February 3, I had found [www.manitobia.ca](http://www.manitobia.ca) and had begun to search this fantastic website's digital newspaper archives for any references to “aliens” in the *Brandon Daily Sun*.

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19 Melnycky, *The Internment of Ukrainians*, in *Loyalties in Conflict*, 5.

20 Katie Domytryk, letter to her father,

[https://tc2.ca/sourcedocs/uploads/images/HD%20Sources%20\(text%20thumbs\)/WWI%20internment/Effects%20of%20WWI%20internment%20for%20Ukrainians/Effects-of-wwi-internment-for-Ukrainians%201.jpg](https://tc2.ca/sourcedocs/uploads/images/HD%20Sources%20(text%20thumbs)/WWI%20internment/Effects%20of%20WWI%20internment%20for%20Ukrainians/Effects-of-wwi-internment-for-Ukrainians%201.jpg), The Critical Thinking Consortium.

The week that began on February 6 was another week of note taking, from both [www.manitobia.ca](http://www.manitobia.ca) and the books I had withdrawn from the BU Library. Early in this week, I contacted the City Hall Records Department, the Daly House Museum, and performed web searches for the Brandon internment camp. The Daly House museum replied to me and informed me that they have in their collections (although not in Brandon at the time) a violin handcrafted by an internee of the Brandon camp, one John Melnick. The Brandon City Hall Records Department replied to me and we set up an appointment for me to peruse their redress collection.

Throughout this process, I uploaded any photos I found to a Google Drive folder shared between Dr. Rhonda Hinthier, Mr. Derek Ford, and myself. On the week that began on February 13<sup>th</sup> I returned to City Hall to make copies of the photographs included in the book "*In My Charge: The Canadian Internment Camp Photographs of Sergeant William Buck*", edited by Lubomyr Luciuk, which is thankfully included in Brandon City Hall's redress collection. While at City Hall, I also took notes on a photocopy of General Otter's internment report that was originally included in *Ukrainian Canadians in Canada's Wars*, edited by J. B. Gregorovich. I returned to City Hall two days later to make one final look at the redress records and then went to Brandon University to watch and take notes on the documentary *Freedom Had a Price*.

After this, during the week that began on February 20, I corresponded with Peter Melnycky, mostly in regards to photos of the camp, and continued to take notes on his chapter in *Loyalties in Conflict: Ukrainians in Canada During the Great War*. I found this book during a web search and Peter Melnycky's chapter proved invaluable. I also uploaded more photographs and created an anecdote page in the shared Drive folder. The anecdote page was created to assist with the narrative process that will be necessary in the game development phase of the project.

For the final few days of research, which ended on February 28, I continued to search the web and take notes from any books or websites that I felt needed a second look. During one such web search I found the website The Critical Thinking Consortium, [www.tc2.ca](http://www.tc2.ca), which contained some very useful information and insights into the lives of the women and children left behind during the internment period. I then added this very relevant information to my final research report and to the anecdote page. By this time, my work was essentially over and I finalized my research report to submit to the project manager, Dr. Rhonda Hinthier.

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