

**Letters from the Boiler House:
Conflict and Communication in a Second World War Canadian Internment Camp**

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

In March of 1941, two members of the Veterans Guard of Canada were court martialled for conduct “to the prejudice of good order and Military Discipline.” Their crime: passing letters, “illicit correspondence,” between a small group of “enemy alien” internees, known as the Musketeers, in an internment camp in rural Quebec, and a teenage girl named Winkie in Montreal.

The case of Winkie Henson and the Musketeers shows the Canadian internment camp during the Second World War was a complex, often liminal, space of connection and conflict. It illuminates the conflict inherent between official regulation and human action, pitting the needs of civilians, Canadian or otherwise, against governing powers. It highlights the role of correspondence in a pre-internet world and shows how relationships could begin and end by pen and paper. In later reflections and representations of the case, it also shows the selective nature of memory and how our relationship with the past is shaped by both time and emotion. Most importantly, the story of illicit correspondence presents the internment camp and, more widely, the Canadian home front, as a space in which strict social boundaries became fluid and malleable in a wartime context, to both the benefit and cost of young romantic prospects, hopeful fathers, social elites, and supposed “enemy aliens.” In this, the case, told as a microhistory, adds further complexity to the debate over the humane nature of Canadian internment camps.

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Finally, to Ross Evans: thank you for providing me with love, chicken alfredo, and a working computer in my hour of need. Your support has meant the world to me. I am so very lucky to have you in my life: never forget that you are the best.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Winkie Henson and the Musketeers, and to all the stories yet to tell.

Omnium rerum principia parva sunt

The beginnings of all things are small.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION -----	II
ABSTRACT -----	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS -----	IV
DEDICATION -----	V
INTRODUCTION -----	1
CHAPTER I: GENESIS OF THE RESEARCH -----	8
1.1 A BRIEF HISTORIOGRAPHY OF CANADIAN INTERNMENT-----	8
1.2 DIMENSIONS OF THE CAMPS-----	15
1.3 WHY MICROHISTORY?-----	18
1.4 SOURCES-----	19
CHAPTER II: A STORY OF ILLICIT CORRESPONDENCE -----	27
2.1 MOBILIZING A NATION-----	27
2.2 LIFE BEHIND BARBED WIRE-----	32
2.3 A WARM RECEPTION-----	37
2.4 THE BOILER HOUSE-----	41
2.5 THE MOVE TO SHERBROOKE-----	52
2.6 THE GIRL IN THE PHOTOGRAPH-----	61
2.7 A FAVOUR IN THE NEW YEAR-----	68
CHAPTER III: THE COURTS MARTIAL OF HENSON AND HALL -----	71
3.1 PREPARING FOR THE COURTS MARTIAL-----	74
3.2 THE TRIALS OF CORPORAL HENSON AND PRIVATE HALL-----	76
3.3 FOOTNOTE TO INTERNMENT-----	82
CHAPTER IV: MEMORY AND MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES -----	83
4.1 HISTORIOGRAPHY OF AN ILLICIT CORRESPONDENCE-----	83
4.2 REMEMBERING THE STORY OF ILLICIT CORRESPONDENCE-----	86
CONCLUSION -----	90
BIBLIOGRAPHY -----	95
APPENDIX A -----	101

INTRODUCTION

In 1978 or 1979, Frederick “Fred” Kutter—formerly Lycett—sat for an interview with Eric Koch to discuss his experiences as a civilian internee in wartime Canada almost forty years prior.¹ The two met at Kutter’s home in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec, south-east of Montreal, where he had lived with his family since 1951.² Koch, a journalist with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and former internee, was gathering materials for his forthcoming book, *Deemed Suspect: A Wartime Blunder*. Part history, part autobiography, the work would combine the shared internment experiences of a disparate group of ninety former internees from across Canada and elsewhere in the world. An article published in the February 10, 1962 edition of *Maclean’s* magazine referred to these former internees as “Welcome Enemies” or “inadvertent immigrants.”³ Just over two thousand strong, they were a cohort of German and Austrian nationals who, living in the United Kingdom at the height of the panic over a Nazi invasion during the Second World War, were arrested in their adopted country as “enemy aliens” and eventually sent to Canada as prisoners of war. After their release, many—like both Koch and Kutter—chose to return to or remain in Canada.

In his interview, Koch asks Kutter about his arrest at his mother’s home in Wimbledon in the spring of 1940 and expresses special interest in the fact that Kutter, unlike so many of the men

¹ Fred is referred to as “Fred Kutter” in the context of his interview, but “Fred Lycett” in the context of internment. Lycett was the surname of his step-father who, though married to his mother, Elisabeth, never officially adopted her son. Fred went by both names at different times in his life, but in the 1940s was known to Canadian officials by Lycett.

² Frederick Kutter, Resume, [1970-1980]. I received a copy of Fred’s resume from his daughter, Elisabeth Kutter, in November 2022. Undated, the latest entry is from September 1970. Here, his address is listed as 94 Rue Cousins Nord, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu.

³ Barbara Moon, “The Welcome Enemies,” *Maclean’s*, February 10, 1962.

<https://archive.macleans.ca/article/1962/2/10/the-story-of-the-happy-accident-by-which-972-interned-aliens-became-some-of-the-liveliest-immigrants>.

interned in Canada during the war, lacked any specific religious or political identity to prompt his time in the camps:

Koch: There you were, suddenly at Kempton Park, eighty percent of other inmates were Jewish or political, and you were neither Jewish nor political.

Kutter: It was a very normal experience. I was very flexible. It didn't hurt me. For me, it was an adventure. ... You couldn't possibly feel any different.⁴

Koch brings up the friends Kutter made in internment—a group of young men known as the Musketeers—as well as a pipeline of letters they helped secret out of the camps for their fellow internees. A woman, presumably Kutter's wife, Katarina, stifles laughter in the background while Kutter attributes the success of the letter campaign to the aid of a few friendly camp guards. Hearing this, Koch pushes further:

Koch: But what about Miss Henson?

Kutter: Oh, I don't know anything about Miss Henson. That's a *remote* thing I can't even *remember*. She certainly was not involved in the letter episode—

Koch: Yes, she was.

Kutter: Not to my knowledge, she wasn't, except that she probably took them from her father and mailed them.

Koch: That's right.

Kutter: Yes, but *I* didn't know that. And I'm quite sure nobody else did.⁵

⁴ Eric Koch and Fred Kutter, "Interview with Fred Lycett," Library and Archives Canada, [1978-1979], audio recording, 10:09.

⁵ "Interview with Fred Lycett," 19:48. A note on formatting: throughout this thesis, I use quotes from both written and recorded works. Quotes drawn from sources like Fred Kutter's interview and trial transcripts—in a sense, "spoken" records—are written like audio transcriptions and include the speaker's name. Quotes from written texts, including memoirs, diaries, and letters, appear in italics.

The “letter episode” in question took place in the five months between the fall of 1940 and the winter of 1941 when Kutter, then twenty-one years old, began and maintained a correspondence with a teenage girl from Montreal named Winnifred “Winkie” Henson.⁶ Winkie’s father, Corporal Bernard Cyril Henson, was a member of the Veterans Guard of Canada and had met Kutter and the Musketeers while stationed at Internment Camp “L” on the Plains of Abraham at the edge of Quebec City. Henson acted as an intermediary for his daughter and the young men, delivering letters to the boiler house of the camp in the dead of night and ferrying replies back to his home in Montreal whenever possible; when the internees moved to Internment Camp “N” in Sherbrooke without Henson later that year, Winkie kept up the exchange against her father’s wishes. The content of the letters ranged from shy exchanges between acquaintances to topics that skirted the overtly sexual: as the relationship between Winkie and the Musketeers evolved, so did the nature of their conversation. The correspondence ended in January of 1941 when a guard intercepted Kutter’s final letter to Winkie and brought it to one of the camp’s commanding officers. The Musketeers were searched and placed in solitary confinement, while the guards involved—Corporal Henson and later Private J.W. Hall—were court-martialed, charged with violating Section 40 of the Army Act, for their demonstration of “conduct to the prejudice of good order and Military Discipline.” In the end, the letters were confiscated, and both guards imprisoned; Hall for 120 days and Henson for one year.⁷

The “illicit” correspondence between Winkie Henson and the Musketeers acts as an ideal study through which to explore the liminal and isolating nature of Canadian internment camps as

⁶ Throughout this thesis, I refer to Winnifred “Winkie” Henson by her nickname, Winkie. All other individuals are referred to by their contemporary surnames.

⁷ Burrell M. Singer and R.J.S. Langford, *Handbook of Canadian Military Law* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Company Limited, 1941), 208. <http://www.lareau-legal.ca/Singer.pdf>.

transitory spaces at the beginning of the Second World War, the fluidity of camp boundaries, and the nature of memory and storytelling in the aftermath of internment. War begets liminality, and Canadian internment camps were microcosms of this state. Dominique Moran, a geographer and specialist in carceral spaces, defines the liminal as an area in which “social rules are suspended because the subject no longer belongs in their old world, or to their new one—they [individuals within the space] are temporarily in ‘nowhere land’.”⁸ The “Nowhere Land” of the Canadian internment camp, similarly described by cultural historian Nicole M.T. Brunnhuber as the “unreal” Canadian world, was both physical and temporal.⁹ These carceral sites, typically located in remote or rural areas to discourage escape and public interactions, were constructed with a focus on the “control and supervision” of the internees.¹⁰ Guard towers and machine guns dominated the landscape of camp life, while barbed wire fences defined their physical limits. Internees’ interactions with the outside world were also heavily regulated, censored, and often conditional on the personalities in power. Time lost meaning as internees and guards alike spent years within the camps: for some, life there became “the only reality, displacing all else.”¹¹ From the moment of their arrest—placed, as Patrick Farges described, between “no longer” and “not yet—to their arrival in an unfamiliar country, liminality was all-encompassing.¹² Individuals, far

⁸ Dominique Moran, “Between Outside and inside? Prison Visiting Rooms as Liminal Carceral Spaces,” *GeoJournal* 78, no. 2 (2013), 342. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42006323>. Moran defines liminality within her own work into prison visiting areas; she draws her understanding of the concept from the work of folklorist Arnold van Gennep and anthropologist Victor Turner.

⁹ Nicole M.T. Brunnhuber, “After the Prison Ships: Internment Narratives in Canada,” in *Totally un-English: Britain's Internment of Enemy Aliens in Two World Wars*, edited by Richard Dove (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 170.

¹⁰ Iain Banks, “Control or Repression: Contrasting a Prisoner of War Camp and a Work Camp from World War Two,” in *Archaeologies of Internment*, eds. A. Myers and G. Moshenska (New York: Spring, 2011), 125.

¹¹ Erwin Schild, *The Very Narrow Bridge: A Memoir of an Uncertain Passage* (New York, Adath Israel Congregation: 2001), 222. <https://archive.org/details/verynarrowbridge0000schi/page/n5/mode/2up>.

¹² Patrick Farges, “Masculinity and Confinement: German-Speaking Refugees in Canadian Internment Camps (1940-1943),” *Culture, Society and Masculinities* 4, no. 1 (2012), 36. <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/10.3149/CSM.0401.33>.

from home, left to endure lengthy periods of waiting and uncertainty were stripped of their autonomy and pre-war identities to fill new, assigned roles: as “enemy aliens,” as civilians turned into soldiers, and as prisoners of war.

Despite their isolation—or perhaps because of it—the liminal space of the internment camp can also be considered a social “contact zone.” Here, I adapt literary theorist Mary Louise Pratt’s conceptualization of the colonial contact zone and expand upon it to understand conflicts and connections within and beyond the camp space. Internment camps were contact zones, defined by Pratt as “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of power,” between German and Austrian internees and Canadians—both civilians and soldiers—on the Canadian home front.¹³ They brought a diverse set of individuals together in an unexpected and lamentable situation which, on the surface, appeared to favour the captors over the captives. Due to the fluidity of camp boundaries, both real and imagined, these hierarchies and prescribed roles were often subverted, intentionally or otherwise. As Eric Koch wrote in *Deemed Suspect*, the camp provided “an opportunity to meet men [who] probably would not have met outside,” with divisions drawn between age, religion, cultural background, social class, military experience, and education, among others.¹⁴ The rigid borders put in place through official regulations became porous, the perceptions and identities of prisoners, guards, and Canadian civilians changed and overlapped with time, and the “contact zone” of the camp evolved into a short-lived social crossroads.

¹³ Pratt, Mary Louise, “Arts of the Contact Zone.” *Profession* (1991), 34.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25595469>.

¹⁴ Eric Koch, *Deemed Suspect: A Wartime Blunder* (Toronto: Methuen, 1980), 168.

The case of the illicit correspondence between Winkie Henson and the Musketeers explores not only the liminality and cross-connections of internment spaces but also their inherent individuality. As Kirk W. Goodlet argues in his study of Camp 22 in Mimico, Ontario, Canadian internment operations “were not monolithic endeavours...[and] differed immensely depending on the personalities who administered and oversaw operations, and what types of prisoners were held.”¹⁵ The connections and conflicts that make up the story of Winkie and the Musketeers are unique, an occurrence at the edge of the norm in an already marginal carceral space.

Chapter I of this thesis is a historiography of Canadian internment during the Second World War. Here, I demonstrate that the individual has always been at the heart of scholarship on this particular cohort of interned civilians due to the close relationship between its historians and former internees—in many cases, they are the same. This chapter also outlines the content and character of my sources and the narrative framework around which my work is based. Chapter II explores the context behind the Canadian internment camp system in 1940 and the events that brought Corporal Henson, his daughter Winkie, and the interned Musketeers together in their “illicit” correspondence. This chapter demonstrates the liminal nature of the camp space and the variety of connections that formed within and beyond the barbed wire bounds. Special focus is placed upon excerpts from the letters sent between Winkie and the Musketeers as primary sources and windows, previously unknown, into the individual contours of camp life. Chapter III then moves to the court martial cases of Corporal Henson and Private Hall and the dismantling of these connections—their processes, key players, the arguments made for and against the defendants, and their outcomes. Finally, Chapter IV explores the impact of the illicit

¹⁵ Kirk W. Goodlet, “Number 22 Internment Camp: German Prisoners of War and Canadian Internment Operations in Mimico, Ontario, 1940-1944,” *Ontario History* 104, no. 2 (2012), 115. 90-115. DOI:10.7202/1065439ar.

correspondence on those involved, either directly or indirectly, and the value of multiple perspectives in the retelling of a historical moment. Here, I also present a brief overview of how the courts martial cases of Corporal Henson and Private Hall appear in both popular and scholarly works from the past fifty years.

Delving deeper into the legal cases of Henson and Hall, as well as the correspondence between Winkie and the Musketeers, reveals a narrative that other sources have often obscured or neglected. The unique relationship between Fred and Winkie offers a view into the porous nature of the internment camps as contact zones and the interconnectedness of the lives spent within their confines. It underscores the notion that even in the most restrictive and regimented environments, human connections and emotions can flourish. The case of Winkie Henson and the Musketeers shows the Canadian internment camp during the Second World War was a complex space of connection and conflict. Telling the story of illicit correspondence also reveals a number of larger truths about human experience on the wartime home front. It illuminates the conflict inherent between official regulation and human action, pitting the needs of civilians, Canadian or otherwise, against governing powers. It highlights the role of correspondence in a pre-internet world and shows how relationships could begin and end by pen and paper.

Most importantly, the story of illicit correspondence presents the internment camp and, more widely, the home front, as a space in which strict social boundaries became fluid and malleable in a wartime context, to both the benefit and cost of young romantic prospects, hopeful fathers, social elites, and supposed “enemy aliens.”

CHAPTER I: GENESIS OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 A Brief Historiography of Canadian Internment

The historiography of Canadian internment during the Second World War, and specifically that of the civilians sent from the United Kingdom to Canada in the summer of 1940, follows closely with the literature on British internment from which it originated. According to cultural historian Panikos Panayi, scholars devoted “relatively little attention” to the internee experience and the policy of wartime incarceration in the United Kingdom, as in Canada, until the final decades of the twentieth century.¹⁶

The first book written on the internment of enemy aliens in the United Kingdom, with brief reference to their passage to Canada and Australia, was François Lafitte’s *The Internment of Aliens*, first released as a Penguin paperback in November of 1940.¹⁷ Lafitte, twenty-seven, was the son of French anarchists, an Oxford graduate, and a research assistant for the Political Economic Planning (PEP) group in Whitehall, founded in 1931 as a British policy think-tank. In May of 1940, Lafitte was approached by PEP’s chairman, agronomist Leonard Elmhirst of Dartington Hall in Devon, to investigate and write a book on the internment of refugees from Nazi persecution in the United Kingdom. Elmhirst was enraged at the internment of several “talented dancers and musicians of the Dartington Arts Centre” that he patronized who, due to the coastal location of the estate where they lived and worked, had been arrested earlier that

¹⁶ Panikos Panayi, “A Marginalized Subject? The Historiography of Enemy Alien Internment in Britain,” in *Totally un-English: Britain’s Internment of Enemy Aliens in Two World Wars*, ed. Richard Dove (New York: Rodopi, 2005), 17.

¹⁷ The next British-focused study to follow Lafitte’s work was *‘Collar the Lot!’ How Britain Interned and Expelled Its Wartime Refugees* (1980) by journalists Peter and Leni Gilman which, through access to government files inaccessible to Lafitte at the time, identified Prime Minister Winston Churchill as the key architect behind the internment scheme. Eric Koch is also thanked in the acknowledgements.

month as suspected “enemy aliens” and interned in English transit camps for an undetermined period of time.¹⁸

The aims of the book were to present the public a clear, factual picture of who the “enemy aliens” were, give an account of what was being done to them and why, and set the British problem against the wider context of Hitlerism and the war against it. Completed in six weeks using information gathered through several covert networks at Lafitte’s disposal, the book was released in November of 1940.¹⁹ 50,000 copies were printed, and *The Internment of Aliens* was widely read and met with praise for its “common sense” attitude over “panic and arbitrary arrest.”²⁰ Lafitte began the book with an introduction of its intent: mainly, that of critiquing the British government’s reaction to the influx of wartime refugees from mainland Europe:

As a history this book tells a lamentable story of muddle and stupidity; as a critique it attempts to show that the ‘refugee problem’ now facing us in wartime is really a British problem, a problem of justice and personal freedom in which the reputation of Britain is involved.”²¹

Early references to Canadian internment in the historiography of the Second World War are brief and superficial, a reflection of pre-war practices that emphasize the marginality of internment as a whole. C.P. Stacey, for example, official historian for the Canadian Army, focused more on the application of manpower to the camp systems than the reasons for and behind internment in his *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War* (1955):

¹⁸ François Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens* (London: Penguin Books, 1940), xix.

¹⁹ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, xxi-xxii. Lafitte notes the aid of Eva Schmidt-Kolmer, future physician and social psychologist, then a refugee from political persecution living in London.

²⁰ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, 10. Copies of *The Internment of Aliens* were even smuggled into internment camps on the Isle of Man and to Onchan Camp in Australia.

²¹ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, 9.

After the disaster in France in 1940, when a German attempt at invading Britain seemed likely, the British Government asked Canada to accept custody of 4000 internees and 3000 prisoners of war, whose presence in the United Kingdom might be dangerous in the event of invasion. On 10 June 1940 the War Committee of the Cabinet agreed. Subsequently the numbers increased until at the peak, in October 1944, Canada was holding for the United Kingdom 34,193 prisoners, of whom 254 were civilian internees. Canada held 853 other prisoners on her own responsibility. A total of 5524 all ranks of the Army were employed at this time as staff and guards. A Directorate of Prisoners of War had been set up at the beginning of 1943 to supervise the work. Guarding the camps was at first the responsibility of the Canadian Provost Corps, but in May 1941 full responsibility for them was transferred to the Veterans Guard of Canada.²²

For the bulk of internment historiography, the making and remaking of histories has been the task of former internees themselves. As discussed by David Cesarani and Tony Kushner in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, in the immediate aftermath of the war, those who had experienced internment did not dwell on the episode for a number of reasons: as many were refugees from Nazi persecution, they did not want to appear ungrateful for the asylum initially offered to them by the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth nations; their social and political positions in the postwar years remained vulnerable; and, for the most part, their wartime internment was a “short-lived experience,” especially in contrast to other, more defining events of the Second World War.²³ After the publication of Raul Hilburg’s *The Destruction of the European Jews* in 1961 and the birth of Holocaust studies soon after, the “romantic memory of the War began to fade,” and new stories began to emerge.²⁴

²² C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain, and the Pacific*, Volume 1 (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1956), 151.

²³ Tony Kushner and David Cesarani, “Alien Internment in Britain During the Twentieth Century: An Introduction,” in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, eds. David Cesarani and Tony Kushner (London: Routledge, 1993). 5-6.

²⁴ Panayi, “A Marginalized Subject? The Historiography of Enemy Alien Internment in Britain,” 21.

Holocaust historian Richard Libowitz notes in his 1990 historiographical study of Holocaust literature that, during the 1970s and 1980s, alongside the simultaneous growth of social and cultural histories, “many long silent survivors felt the inevitable hand of time and decided their experiences should be preserved for another generation.”²⁵ While the internment experience of so-called “enemy aliens” in Canada was not exclusively Jewish, nor did it fit into the narrative of European Jews left on the continent, many, including three of the Musketeers, had Jewish ancestry and considered themselves “orphaned” by the Holocaust.²⁶

Eric Koch’s *Deemed Suspect: A Wartime Blunder*, became the best-known account of Canadian internment at this time. Published in 1980, the autobiographical history follows Koch’s own experiences with internment in both Canada and the United Kingdom in tandem with the personal anecdotes and written records of ninety of his fellow internees. Koch’s overall message is a positive one: though internment was difficult at the time, the benefits of the uprooting outweighed the hardships.²⁷ By describing the episode of internment as a “blunder” on the part of both the British and Canadian governments, the result of official ineptitudes and both anti-German and anti-Semitic sentiments, Koch minimizes the contemporary realities of the wartime episode while attempting to balance the positives and negatives of the internment experience. Koch’s work, heavy in hindsight, was the first of its kind to explore the shared experience of the internees during this peculiar chapter in Canadian wartime history and has subsequently been referenced in every text on the subject since.

²⁵ Richard Libowitz, “Holocaust Studies,” *Modern Judaism* 10, no. 3 (1990), 277.

²⁶ Ernest Guter, “Interview with Ernest Guter,” USC Shoah Foundation, August 21, 1996, video, 24:00, <https://vhaonline.usc.edu/viewingPage?testimonyID=57590&returnIndex=2>. As Guter notes, “I’m not a Holocaust survivor...but I’m certainly an orphan of the Holocaust.”

²⁷ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, xv, 258.

The first academic work to examine in detail the lives of the German and Austrian nationals sent to Canada from Great Britain in the summer of 1940 was Paula J. Draper's article "The Accidental Immigrants: Canada and Interned Refugees," published in a 1978 edition of the *Canadian Jewish Historical Society Journal*. A case study of Canada's immigration policy towards Jewish refugees of Nazism as well as the relationship between the Canadian government, voluntary organizations, and internees, the content of Draper's article went on to inform her Ph.D. dissertation of the same name, completed in 1983 at the University of Toronto under the supervision of Harold Troper.²⁸

In 1982, Troper published the seminal *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* with Irving Abella. In this work, the story of the "accidental immigrants" to Canada is a literal footnote—Troper and Abella defer to the earlier works of Draper (1978) and Koch (1980) in the middle of their discussion on the anti-Semitic immigration policies of wartime Canada, but do not delve into the history themselves.²⁹ Draper's work highlights Allied attitudes towards Jewish refugees of the Holocaust (which many of the interned German and Austrian nationals were) as well as life within Canadian internment camps. As Erwin Schild later described it two decades later, the thesis, though unpublished, is viewed as "the best and most comprehensive treatment" of the internment story; "sensitive and empathetic, but also painstakingly researched."³⁰ Between 1977 and 1980, Draper conducted interviews with fifty former internees and volunteers that had been involved with the Canadian internment camps.³¹

²⁸ Paula J. Draper, "The Accidental Immigrants: Canada and the Interned Refugees," PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1983.

²⁹ Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 72.

³⁰ Schild, *The Very Narrow Bridge*, 232.

³¹ Draper's dissertation is partially dedicated to the memory of Heinz Waschauer, a former interned refugee and educator, as well as those she interviewed.

She focused on those who had remained in or returned to Canada following their release, the majority of whom lived in Toronto and Montreal. Draper also drew from the personal papers of multiple former internees, newly available wartime archives of the British and Canadian governments and military organizations, as well as a foundation of secondary sources written on civilian internees in Australia and Jewish refugees in the United Kingdom and North America.³²

In the years following the release of Koch's *Deemed Suspect* and Draper's academic foray into the world of civilian internment in Canada, several notable memoirs and semi-histories were published by former internees.³³ The education of the authors is important: each, including Koch, was pursuing or had completed a degree of higher education at the time of their internment, affording them the means by which to write convincing narratives. Harry Seidler's *Internment: The Diaries of Harry Seidler, May 1940 - October 1941*, published in 1986, was a unique take on internment memory. The volume consists of two parts: the first, an edited three-hour interview with the former internee and Australia-based and Cambridge-trained architect from the early 1980s; the second, a translated transcription of a diary kept by Seidler, the youngest internee in Camps "L" and "N," from May 1940 to October 1941.³⁴ Seidler's account is one of a young man—just sixteen at the time of his internment—swept up in a wholly unique and frustrating situation. The diaries speak to the isolation of the camps, the day-to-day boredoms, and the

³² Draper's source base further includes (but is not limited to) records from the Canadian Jewish Congress Archives in Montreal and Toronto, the Public Archives of Canada in Ottawa, and Parliamentary debates from Canada and the United Kingdom.

³³ For more, see: David J. Carter's *Behind Canadian Barbed Wire: Alien, Refugee and Prisoner of War Camps in Canada 1914-1946* (Calgary: Tumbleweed Press, 1980) and Mario Duliani's semi-biographical account on the experience of Italian refugees in *The City Without Women: A Chronicle of Internment Life in Canada during the Second World War* (Oakville, ON: Mosaic Press, 1994). Erwin Schild's "A Very Narrow Bridge" (New York, Adath Israel Congregation: 2001).

³⁴ Harry Seidler, along with his older brother, Marcell, was interned in 1940, at the age of sixteen, while studying at a technical college in Cambridge.

personalities and interpersonal politics that defined life in the camps. In 1995, Mark Lynton, formerly Max-Otto Ludwig Loewenstein, published *Accidental Journey: A Cambridge Internee's Memoir of World War II*. Though Lynton's brief period in internment is partially overshadowed by his later military experience, his memoir offers valuable insight into the life of a Cambridge undergraduate in the internment system.³⁵ Like Seidler, he provides rich detail of life in the camps—albeit with the hindsight of half a century—and presents his time in internment as an important but brief episode in a much longer life. In 2005, Walter Igersheimer, along with editor Ian Darragh, published *Blatant Injustice: The Story of a Jewish Refugee from Nazi Germany Imprisoned in Britain and Canada during World War II*. Described by Darragh as “a new perspective to the historical record,” Igersheimer's account, though compiled decades later, was initially written only six months after his release from internment.³⁶ At the time of his internment, Igersheimer was a young medical student, plucked from his practice in England. The tone of *Blatant Injustice* is less reflective than that of Koch and Lynton, matching Seidler's resentment towards British and Canadian authorities in the immediate aftermath of the episode rather than the hindsight of later memoirs, an exaggerated perception of lost youth and potential. In the end, though, Igersheimer still recognizes the importance of internment in the course of his life overall—“[the] events that followed were totally unexpected, overwhelming, shocking, and senseless—and they changed my life profoundly.”³⁷

³⁵ Following internment, Lynton joined the British Pioneer Corps, and eventually rose to the rank of major.

³⁶ Walter W. Igersheimer and Ian Darragh, *Blatant Injustice: The Story of a Jewish Refugee from Nazi Germany Imprisoned in Britain and Canada during World War II* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005)

³⁷ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, xxix.

1.2 Dimensions of the Camps

A number of studies in the past several decades reflect both the unique nature of the camps as carceral spaces and the larger groups that inhabited them.³⁸ In 1988, Ted Jones, a high school teacher from New Brunswick, published the localized history *Both Sides of the Wire: The Fredericton Internment Camp*. The work explores Camp “B” (later Camp 70), the only internment camp in Eastern Canada during the Second World War. Jones’ work is notable in its combined use of interviews with former internees and guards to reconstruct the history of the camp as a carceral space for both civilian refugees and prisoners of war.

In 2000, Paula J. Draper’s work appeared again, condensed as a chapter in Franca Iacovetta’s *Enemies Within: Italian and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad*. Draper’s chapter, built upon her dissertation, ushered in a more accessible introduction to the internment of German and Austrian civilians in Canada. Providing the groundwork for later studies and often cited alongside Eric Koch’s *Deemed Suspect* as a key text in understanding the general internment experience, both works grounded Canadian internment literature in the recollections of internees.

In 2005, Martin F. Auger published *Prisoners of the Home Front: German POWs and ‘Enemy Aliens’ in Southern Quebec, 1940-46*, a monograph based on his 2000 Master’s thesis from the University of Ottawa.³⁹ Auger focuses on the internment camps on the southern shores of the St. Lawrence River, at Farnham, Grande Linge, Île-aux-Noix, Sherbrooke, and Sorel, and compares

³⁸ Examples of further reading on the subject of Canadian internment (excluding the Japanese-Canadian experience) include Cecil J. Porter’s *The Guilded Cage: Gravenhurst German Prisoner of War Camp 20 1940-1946* (Gravenhurst, ON: Gravenhurst Book Committee, 2003), and Paul Jackson’s *The Enemy Within: The Canadian Army and Internment Operations during the Second World War* (Toronto: Left History Press, 2004).

³⁹ Martin F. Auger, “Prisoners of the home front: A social study of the German internment camps of southern Quebec, 1940-1946,” MA thesis, University of Ottawa, 2000. <http://dx.doi.org/10.20381/ruor-16043>.

the treatment of their civilian internees with that of the prisoners of war who eventually replaced them later in the war. The work, described as a “benchmark for the future study of Canada’s...history as a captor power during the Second World War,” utilizes both government sources and personal memoirs to paint a picture of life behind barbed wire.⁴⁰ Detailing both the physical and psychological strain that the camps exerted on their prisoners, Auger ultimately concludes that the camps were humane in their treatment and viewed as a success by the Canadian government.

In 2012, Kirk W. Goodlet’s article “Number 22 Internment Camp: German Prisoners of War and Canadian Internment Operations in Mimico, Ontario, 1940-1944,” appeared in *Ontario History*, offering the first in-depth exploration of an Ontario camp—specifically Camp “M”—and, through the systematic use of camp war diaries and intelligence reports, refuted Auger’s assertion that the camps were, as a whole, a successful exercise in carceral discipline under the 1929 Geneva Convention. The same year, Patrick Farges examined the range of masculine identities among Jewish and gentile civilian internees during the first half of the Second World War, as well as the liminality of the internment space in the construction of masculinity. As he argued, the “microcosm of the internment camp” offers a “particularly pertinent space to study such performative interactions.”⁴¹ Farges’ work, which stemmed from a Canadian-German research project conducted between 1999 to 2006, drew largely from self-narratives and ego-documents: memoirs, autobiographies, correspondence, and thirty oral histories.

⁴⁰ Bob Moore, review of *Prisoners of the Home Front: German POWs and ‘Enemy Aliens’ in Southern Quebec, 1940-46*, by Martin F. Auger, *War in History* 14, no. 4 (2007), 346. <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/10.1177/09683445070140040505>.

⁴¹ Farges, “Masculinity and Confinement,” 34.

In 2015, the University of Alberta Press published Ernest Robert Zimmermann's posthumous *The Little Third Reich on Lake Superior: A History of Canadian Internment Camp R*.⁴²

Zimmermann presents the internment of (mostly Jewish) civilian internees alongside Nazi prisoners of war in Red Rock, Ontario, as a "shameful act," and, like Goodlet, argues against Auger's view of internment operations as a "home front victory."⁴³ *The Little Third Reich on Lake Superior* follows a similar approach to Goodlet's article, providing a detailed view of a single camp in the absence of an all-encompassing history of internment through government documents, internee memoirs, and the prior works of Draper and Koch, among others, and emphasizes the ever-present conflict at Camp "R"—fights, beatings, escapes, and prisoner deaths—between camp personnel and the wide range of prisoners within its bounds.

Zimmerman's work, described as "more descriptive than analytical," has been criticized for an overabundance of detail without enough attention paid to the macro-structures at play during the war, including the downplay of justified war hysteria in the United Kingdom in the spring of 1940.⁴⁴ In the narrow focus of microhistory, the potential to lose track of the larger picture looms large: even so, such works are important in providing a framework, as Zimmerman does, to dig deeper into the history.

⁴² Zimmerman, a professor at Lakehead University, passed away in August 2008; his book was eventually completed by his former students, Michel S. Beaulieu and David K. Ratz.

⁴³ Ernest Robert Zimmerman, *The Little Third Reich on Lake Superior: A History of Internment Camp R* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2015), xxvi.

⁴⁴ Jean-Michel Turcotte, review of *The Little Third Reich on Lake Superior* by Ernest Robert Zimmerman, *Canadian Military History* 26, no. 1 (2017), 35. <http://scholars.wlu.ca/cmh/vol26/iss1/10>; Geoffrey Hayes, review of *The Little Third Reich on Lake Superior* by Ernest Robert Zimmerman, *Canadian Journal of History* 52, no. 1 (2017), 163. muse.jhu.edu/article/652889. As Hayes writes, "If ever there was a time for panic and hysteria, this was it."

1.3 Why Microhistory?

To fit myself into the historiography of Canadian internment during the Second World War, and following in the work of Goodlet and Zimmermann, I have chosen to present my work in the form of a microhistory. Microhistory emerged in Italy and France in the 1970s, a partial response to the *longue durée* of the French *Annales* school and a growing interest in social and cultural histories. Focused on history from below rather than far-reaching historical trends and patterns, microhistory works to resurrect the voices of the voiceless, the inarticulate, and the everyday people—everyone from self-fashioning peasants to heretical millers—through historical narrative. Broadly, according to István M. Szijártó, microhistory is the “intensive historical investigation of a relatively well defined smaller object,” with the intent to answer “great historical questions,” through a focus on human agency and lived experience.⁴⁵ Further, microhistory “springs from an encounter between sources...and their interpreters’ own later times.”⁴⁶ As a genre, it is reflexive, adaptive, and bound most importantly in its attention to detail.

The case of “illicit” correspondence between Winkie and the Musketeers, and internment camps more generally, make ideal microhistorical subjects. As Goodlet argues, with no definitive history of internment in Canada during the Second World War, smaller, more focused and nuanced histories are required to fill the space. “The prison environment,” writes Alyson Brown,

⁴⁵ Sigurdur Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Szijártó. *What Is Microhistory? Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2013), 4. Notable early microhistories include Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie’s *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (published in French in 1975), Carlo Ginzburg’s *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1983, originally published in Italian in 1966) and *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth Century Miller* (1980, originally published in Italian in 1976), and Natalie Zemon Davis’ *The Return of Martin Guerre* (1983).

⁴⁶ Thomas V. Cohen, “The Macrohistory of Microhistory,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 1 (2017), 54. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10829636-3716578>.

“magnifies and intensifies the significance of everyday activities,” and provides not only a prescribed limit to the narrative in terms of space, but also a consistent source of records required for the characteristic intensity of microhistory.⁴⁷ In many ways, the emphasis on the individual is also a return to the source base from which internment histories first originated, named the lived experiences, recorded through oral histories and memoirs, of former internees. The case of illicit correspondence between Winkie and the Musketeers, as a microhistory, fits within the arguments of Auger and Goodlet, as well as the recollections of former internees, in muddying the waters of the complicated nature of Canadian internment camps as spaces of humanity and mistreatment. In this case, however, answers to the “great historical questions,” being asked—for example, the role of internment camps in the lives of those involved, or the perspectives of Canadian civilians on those interned—do not come from later records, but rather those rendered inarticulate through hindsight: the contemporary civilian internee. Microhistory, applied to this particular moment in internment history, allows for their perspectives to be captured and explored in their own time.

1.4 Sources

The key records used in the course of my research were the March 1941 courts martial cases of Corporal Henson and Private Hall, digitized and available online through *Heritage Canadiana*. The combined cases equal a total of 338 pages—112 for Henson and 226 for Hall. The prosecuting officer in both cases, Captain M.C. Lalonde, Assistant Judge Advocate General, was commended following the court martial for the “very excellent and painstaking manner” in which evidence was collected and summarized.⁴⁸ Between the two hearings, Lalonde gathered

⁴⁷ Alyson Brown, *Inter-War Penal Policy and Crime in England: The Dartmoor Convict Prison Riot* (London: Palgrave, 2013), 133.

⁴⁸ T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1546.
https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1546.

seventeen witnesses and compiled sixty-two pieces of evidence, the latter of which consisted largely of the letters sent between Winkie and the Musketeers from September 1940 to January 1941. For Corporal Henson and Private Hall, the work of Captain Lalonde led to their respective arrests, trials, and periods of detention. For the historian, his collection of letters and other evidence, in addition to court transcripts and records of legal proceedings, offers valuable insight into the lives of civilian internees and an unusual moment in Canadian wartime history.

One benefit of drawing from the cases of Corporal Henson and Private Hall during my research was the access granted to a rich collection of personal correspondence between internees and the outside world, confiscated as evidence for the guards' respective trials. As Liz Stanley describes, letters share the temporal complexities of photographs, holding memory like "flies in amber."⁴⁹ The letters drawn from the collected evidence were written by Winkie Henson, her father, Bernard, and five internees—Fred Lycett, Ernst Guter, Gerhard Arnhold, John Cargher, and Fritz Bender—and include a mix of responses and replies, spread over more than fifty pieces of correspondence, between September 1940 and January 1941. Erla Hulda Halldórsdóttir notes in her study of private letters as historical sources that letters are not only a mode of communication, "but also a tool for self-understanding and constructing an identity."⁵⁰ The letters passed between Winkie Henson and the Musketeers make up the entirety of their relationship, revealing the character of the individual writers, the writer's perception of their recipient, and the formation of long-distance bonds over time.⁵¹ Though the quality of the

⁴⁹ Liz Stanley, "The Episolarium: On Theorizing Letters and Correspondences," *Auto/Biography* 12, no. 3 (2004), 208. DOI:10.1191/0967550704ab014oa.

⁵⁰ Erla Hulda Halldórsdóttir, "Fragments of Lives: The Use of Private Letters in Historical Research," *Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 15, no. 1 (2007), 41. DOI: 10.1080/08038740701253551.

⁵¹ Stanley, "The Episolarium," 208. "When a relationship is confined to the epistolary, everything that needs to be known is presented within such exchanges."

records available from *Heritage Canadiana* is mixed—the microfilm from which the digitized files originated was created in the 1960s and some of the letters, written in pencil, are illegible due to the quality of the photocopying process—the letters that survive elucidate a relationship that serves not only to tell a story of wartime connection, but reveals the degree to which internment spaces and, by extension, memory, are porous and malleable.

As Jerry W. Knudson describes, the perception of events is just as important as the facts of the events themselves: “To the historian trying to understand public opinion...newspapers become primary rather than secondary sources.”⁵² To provide the larger context of the Canadian home front, I drew from the largest English-language dailies in Quebec, the *Montreal Gazette*, the *Montreal Daily Star*, and the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, accessed through the online databases at Newspapers.com and Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ).⁵³ Though the events of the case take place in Quebec, the majority of its players write or speak in English throughout the records, are centralized in the Anglophone neighbourhoods of Montreal and Sherbrooke, and are inexorably linked to their English or English-Canadian identities.

Another vital source in understanding the day-to-day operations of Canadian internment camps, specifically from the perspective of those in power, were the camp war diaries. War diaries were collections of documents in which active Canadian Forces units made a daily record of their activities. As sources, C.P. Stacey describes them as “unpopular” to create but “essential and

⁵² Jerry W. Knudson, “Late to the Feast: Newspapers as Historical Sources,” *Perspectives on History*, October 1, 1993. <https://www.historians.org/research-and-publications/perspectives-on-history/october-1993/late-to-the-feast>.

⁵³ The *Gazette* is Quebec’s oldest daily newspaper (and Canada’s oldest newspaper still in print) and the *Daily Star* (which stopped printing in 1979) was Canada’s largest newspaper until the 1950s.

indispensable” to the historian.⁵⁴ The diaries were kept as a secondary duty, viewed as a chore and often performed with a “certain lack of enthusiasm” and little understanding of the need “to compile documents for the historical record when there was more immediately important work to be done.”⁵⁵ Other flaws identified by Stacey include an insufficient record of information, likely due to a misunderstanding of the diaries’ classified nature, sections recorded posthoc, long after events had transpired, and entries too focused on “chitchat” and personnel over strategic information.⁵⁶

For my research, I focused mainly on the war diaries of Camp “N” Sherbrooke from October 1940 to May 1941, with some inclusion of the diaries from Camp “A” at Farnham and Camp “I” at Ile aux Noix during the same period. The war diaries for Camp “N” were written by its commandants, Major Griffin and later Major Ellwood. Both wrote detailed descriptions of daily life in the camps, especially in comparison with more formulaic approaches found in other camps.⁵⁷ The diaries were often supplemented by additional sources through their appendices, from maps to newspaper clippings to personal letters.⁵⁸ In the case of the illicit correspondence,

⁵⁴ C.P. Stacey, “War Diaries: Good, Bad and Indifferent,” *Canadian Army Journal* 4, no. 3 (1950). http://www.regimentalrogue.com/misc/1950_Stacey_War_Diaries.htm.

⁵⁵ Carl A. Christie, “News from the Directorate of History,” *Canadian Military History* 2, no. 1 (1993), 128. <https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=cmh>.

⁵⁶ Stacey, “War Diaries.” “Numerous diaries, at home and abroad, are filled with what can only be called chitchat. Now there is no objection to including personal information about officers and men and their activities; this material will often be useful to a regimental historian; but it should not be allowed to crowd out material which is more important from the point of view of the history of the war or improvements in methods of warfare.”

⁵⁷ The war diaries for Camp “I”, for example, are filled with entries that simply read “Routine Day, Camp operations are progressing normally.”

⁵⁸ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 4 (January 1941), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke, 16 January 1941. “Attached as an Appendix are copies of a few typical letters from internees which may be of historical interest.”

Major Ellwood requested a copy of internee Gerhard Arnhold's diary to use for notes on the events of the case.⁵⁹

For the written testimonies of former internees, and specifically those who were at Camp "L" and "N" alongside the Musketeers, I used the memoirs of Eric Koch, Harry Seidler, Mark Lynton, and Walter Igersheimer. The key issues associated with such sources, themselves liminal as neither primary nor secondary sources, are the editorial choices made before publication, the time elapsed between the events described and the actual writing of the text, and the bias of prisoners against their captors. *Internment*, for example, came into being after Seidler's internment story—and, by extension, his diary—were discovered through the Oral Histories Project of the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales in 1981. The original diary is nearly three hundred pages long, made up of 163 typed pages in German and 121 handwritten in English; the published version is one-third of this length. As editor Janis Wilton notes in the introduction, the diary was pared down to "highlight the more dramatic aspects of Seidler's experiences and to remove repetition."⁶⁰ Sections that, when viewed in totality, might exemplify the boredom and monotony of internment, as well as the near-daily struggle to regain contact with friends and family, were removed. This form of editing occurred even as the source was being created. In an entry from September 1, 1940, Seidler recounts giving his diary to a fellow internee and writer named Peter Berg, who gives him advice on things to describe more fully to

⁵⁹ Secretary of Department of National Defence to Brig.-Gen. E. de B. Panet, April 16, 1941, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1543. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1543. "Request is now received [sic] from the Commandant Camp "N" for the return of this diary, as there are many references in it which would be of assistance in the present compilation of the official diary of that Camp."

⁶⁰ Seidler, *Internment*, 9. Judith Winternitz, translator of the German portions of the diary, further notes the necessity of paraphrasing in the translation process, as well as the loss of "Austrianisms" (Seidler was originally from Vienna) from the original text.

make his work more interesting. “This evening he [Berg] gave us a little lecture on how to begin to write a real book. He said that our common fate should provide enough material for countless books.”⁶¹ Memoirs, it must be remembered, are not verbatim records of the past.

In terms of time, both Koch and Lynton wrote forty and fifty-five years after their respective releases. Darragh, the editor of Walter Igersheimer’s memoir, notes this as a potential space for error in their recollections:

*Both Koch and Lynton were imprisoned in the camp at the same time as Igersheimer, but clearly, due to the passage of time, their memory of the hardships faced by the internees appears to have softened.*⁶²

In his introduction, Lynton acknowledges the dangers of a memoir written half a century after the events it describes but reminds his audience of notes he kept during “very long stretches of just waiting around.”⁶³ The same is true of Koch, who does not rely on his recollections to stand on their own, and instead buttresses them within a larger, collective—almost ritualized—memory of the camps.⁶⁴

For the “unedited” voices of the internees themselves, I used the interviews of Eric Koch, located on cassette tapes at Library and Archives Canada (LAC) in Ottawa and the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive (VHA) testimonial database online. These interviews provide insight into the early lives and internment experiences of a number of men who were interned at Camps “L” and “N” alongside the Musketeers. As Jeremy Munday writes in his

⁶¹ Seidler, *Internment*, 77.

⁶² Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, xxi.

⁶³ Lynton, *Accidental Journey*, Foreword.

⁶⁴ James E. Young, “Interpreting Literary Testimony: A Preface to Rereading Holocaust Diaries and Memoirs,” *New Literary History* 18, no. 2 (1987), 414. <https://doi.org/10.2307/468737>.

microhistory of translation and translators, posthoc accounts may reveal “details of motivations that are irretrievable from more ‘objective’ textual analysis; interviews allow the research to probe matters that a subject may not otherwise think relevant.”⁶⁵ Though rich in detail, the incorporation of these sources into my thesis is limited by the constraints afforded the physical materials.⁶⁶

As much as the subject of the internment camp allows for a narrative structure, so too does the diverse set of sources available to explore. The courts martial records of Corporal Henson and Private Hall provide the study with a chronological backbone, introducing its timeline and key players. The illicit correspondence exchanged between Winkie and the Musketeers breathes life into the story, providing emotional depth and personal perspectives on the internment experience. The war diaries and other official documentation from Camp “N” offer a comprehensive view of life in the camps, largely from the perspective of Canadian military personnel, further enriching the narrative with the broader context of wartime internment; newspaper sources do the same for the situation in Montreal. Finally, the memoirs and interview

⁶⁵ Jeremy Munday, “Using Primary Sources to Produce a Microhistory of Translation and Translators: Theoretical and Methodological Concerns,” *The Translator* 20, no. 1 (2014), 3. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2014.899094>.

⁶⁶ Due to the fragility of the tapes, the interviews recorded by Koch in the late 1970s and early 1980s for *Deemed Suspect* are only accessible through the Special Collections room at LAC. When I visited the archives in January of 2023 to review the Camp “N” War Diaries, I was not able to access any of the tapes in person, but did put in a request for a digitized copy of Kutter’s interview. I did not receive the digital file—one which has since proven most insightful to my research—until a week before the draft of my thesis was due in July. While the testimonies on the VHA website are far more accessible than those at LAC—thousands of video interviews from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s dutifully digitized, transcribed, and indexed—they can only be viewed at sites authorized by the Shoah Foundation. Time and travel limitations meant that I was only able to listen to four out of the twenty-four testimonies linked to Camps “L” and “N”—those of Eric Koch, Ernst “Peter” Guter, Edgar Lion, and Martin Dorenberg. The nearest site to Kitchener-Waterloo is York University, in Toronto. I spent a full day in March of 2022 in the library of Glendon College listening to these testimonies, yet only scratched the surface of what was available. As most, if not all, of the former internees have since passed away, these interviews often represent their “last word” on their early lives and the experiences of internment.

of former internees lend further insight into the lasting impact of internment on the lives of individuals, consistent with the historical record or otherwise. The convergence of these sources, much like the camp space itself, shows the story of internment during the Second World War to a dynamic tapestry of human experience and emotion, of conflict and connection.

CHAPTER II: A STORY OF ILLICIT CORRESPONDENCE

2.1 Mobilizing a Nation

On the evening of May 27, 1940, the public hall at Atwater Market in the south end of Montreal was abuzz with activity. A mass of Montrealers—the *Daily Star* reported at least ten thousand—crowded into the second storey of the market building, seated in neat rows of chairs and standing in the aisles or the rainy streets outside, to hear an anti-Fifth Columnist rally held by the city’s PanCanadian Union, or *L’Union Pancanadienne*.⁶⁷ Speakers at the Atwater rally—a mix of activists, religious leaders, and politicians—called for action by the federal government against the perceived “Fifth Column” threat.⁶⁸ The *Montreal Star* described “unanimous calls” for the arrest, trial, and internment of suspected subversives in Canada.⁶⁹ One speaker in particular, Canon Gilbert Oliver of St. Matthias Anglican Church in the Westmount area of Montreal, “roused the audience to a high pitch of enthusiasm” with his address and the conclusion that “people must be undemocratic in order to preserve democracy.”⁷⁰

The PanCanadian Union, organized a year prior and based in the Windsor Hotel on Peel Street, promoted wartime unity between French and English-speaking citizens and countered the new Nationalist Party in Quebec through tenets of personal freedom, democracy, and a sense of

⁶⁷ “10,000 Ask Ottawa to Intern All Fifth Columnists in Canada,” *The Montreal Daily Star*, May 28, 1940, *Newspapers.com*. The newspaper reported that 3,000 of the 10,000 attendees of the rally stood on the street outside the market building and listened to the various speeches via loudspeakers.

⁶⁸ Several Montreal aldermen were among those on the speakers’ platform that night in May, including Alderman J.A. Edmison. Edmison later took on the position of Camp Intelligence Officer at Camp “N” Sherbrooke.

⁶⁹ “10,000 Ask Ottawa to Intern All Fifth Columnists in Canada,” *The Montreal Daily Star*, May 28, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

⁷⁰ “10,000 Ask Internment of Traitors,” *The Montreal Daily Star*, May 28, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

positive Canadian nationalism.⁷¹ By late May of 1940, the Union had narrowed its focus to the rising fear of Fifth Columnist spies and saboteurs at home and abroad. Newspaper reports of Nazi and fascist elements infiltrating the country had been on the rise for months, exacerbating civilian fears of invasion in the wake of German military success during the Battle of France, described by C.P. Stacey as “the Summer Crisis of 1940,” which resulted in the capture and subjugation of France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.⁷² The Montreal home front, as with the rest of Canada, became a space of conflict between Canadian civilians and the Fifth Column threat.

Historian Robert H. Keyserlingk has argued that, compared to the high level of mistrust and emotional propaganda against Germans and Austro-Hungarians during the First World War, the Canadian government was “remarkably positive” in its attitudes toward German Canadians during the Second World War.⁷³ While the Defence of Canada Regulations (DOCR), which allowed for the arrest and detention, without charge, of persons, both alien and native-born, linked to Germany and Austria and considered threats to national security, were implemented in September of 1939, arrests and internments of “enemy aliens” in Canada were limited in scope.⁷⁴ According to Stacey, the Canadian public was “profoundly moved” by the crisis in Europe, as

⁷¹ “Promoting National Unity,” *The Gazette* (Montreal), November 6, 1939, *Newspapers.com*;
“Pancanada Group Outlines Policies,” *The Gazette* (Montreal), December 11, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

⁷² C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain, and the Pacific*, 76.

⁷³ Robert H. Keyserlingk, “The Canadian Government’s Attitude Towards Germans and German Canadians in World War Two,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies / Etudes Ethniques au Canada* 16, no. 1 (1984), 211. <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/scholarly-journals/canadian-governments-attitude-towards-germans/docview/1293139838/se-2>.

⁷⁴ Daniel Robinson, “Planning for the ‘Most Serious Contingency’: Alien Internment, Arbitrary Detention, and the Canadian State, 1938-39,” *Journal of Canadian Studies / Revue d’Études Canadiennes* 28, no. 2 (1993), 8. <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/scholarly-journals/planning-most-serious-contingency-alien/docview/1300016794/se-2>. In these instances, prisoners were sent to internment camps at Kananaskis, Alberta, and Centre Lake, Ontario.

“spectres of the imminent collapse of France and the probable invasion of England” rose before them.⁷⁵ “The heavens, it seemed, were falling,” he wrote, “and in the emergency the manhood of Canada came forward generously, eager to share the honour and the peril of the moment.”⁷⁶ While grassroots efforts to stamp out alien elements were present in Canada, they were not necessarily the norm for the general populous; nor did their efforts stem solely from honour and generosity.

The most vocal support for mobilization in Canada came from veterans’ groups. Legion rallies were held in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal; Great War veterans regularly spoke out in the media and at public meetings to voice their concerns and recall the dangers of the First World War. On May 16, 1940, alongside reports of “more treachery” committed by Germans overseas, including an apparent spy network operated via the German War Graves Commission, the *Montreal Daily Star* published an article that described the Canadian Legion’s calls to suppress subversive activities in Canada, including requests to ban German-language meetings and publications.⁷⁷ In the following days, two letters to the editor—one for the *Montreal Daily Star*, the other for the *Gazette*—further relayed the concerns of older generations to the masses. In the *Montreal Daily Star* on May 17, 1940:

*Thinking people, especially those who suffered at all during the last war, whether on the battlefield, or by meagre rations and daily air raids from the Huns, are not willing to ‘wait and see,’ but are desperately anxious to be truly prepared.*⁷⁸

In the *Gazette* on May 18, 1940:

⁷⁵ C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain, and the Pacific*, 79.

⁷⁶ C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain, and the Pacific*, 80.

⁷⁷ “Nazi War Graves Body Acted as Spies in Belgium,” *The Montreal Daily Star*, May 16, 1940, *Newspapers.com*; “Legion Urges Fifth Column Safeguards,” *The Montreal Daily Star*, May 16, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

⁷⁸ “Don’t ‘Wait and See,’” *The Montreal Daily Star*, May 17, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

*Get these loathsome enemies behind bars before they start shooting from the housetops. Get out the old Sniders, Lee-Enfields and Ross Rifles and be ready for the Devilish fiends.*⁷⁹

Contrary to Stacy's assertion of a generous and honourable Canadian public, calls for action stemmed instead from a language of fear. In Montreal, support for the anti-Fifth Column movement was further evidenced through regular telephone call accusations made to the RCMP against suspect individuals, as well as widespread attendance at rallies, the consistent support of major newspapers, and high enlistment rates among civilians.⁸⁰

Three days before the Atwater rally, Canadian Defence Minister Norman McLeod Rogers, himself a veteran of the First World War, announced the planned formation of a "Veterans Home Guard" in the House of Commons.⁸¹ The force was to be recruited from "persons who served in the armed forces of Canada or the United Kingdom in the War of 1914-1918...up to the age of fifty years old."⁸² By May 29, five hundred veteran recruits from Montreal had already applied to serve within Military District No. 4, and the Canadian Legion called for the age limit to be raised from fifty to fifty-five.⁸³ On June 13, another statement from the House of Commons, this time from the Honourable C.G. Power, Minister of Air, announced that the organization for the Veterans Home Guard, to be known as the Veterans Guard of Canada, was complete and

⁷⁹ "The Fifth Column," *The Gazette* (Montreal), May 18, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

⁸⁰ C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain, and the Pacific*, 80. Between May and August of 1940, 85,102 men and women joined the Canadian Active Service Force.

⁸¹ "Call Veterans as Home Guard," *The Gazette* (Montreal), May 24, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

⁸² "Call Veterans as Home Guard," *The Gazette* (Montreal), May 24, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

⁸³ "Montreal Veterans Hasten to Enter Home Guard," *The Montreal Star*, May 29, 1940, *Newspapers.com*. Military District No. 4, one of thirteen military districts in Canada as of 1939, included the active service units of the 3rd Cavalry Brigade (Montreal), the 10th Infantry Brigade (Sherbrooke), the 11th Infantry Brigade (Montreal), the 12th Infantry Brigade (Montreal), the 2nd (Montreal) Regiment, RCA, the 6th Field Brigade RCA (Sherbrooke), the 27th Field Brigade, RCA (Coaticook), and the 10th, 11th, and 12th Reserve Infantry Brigades based out of Sherbrooke and Montreal.

recruitment well underway.⁸⁴ “Organization of the Home Guard,” stated an article in *The Montreal Star*, “is the first move on the part of the Government to utilize the experience and *esprit de corps* of war veterans as a body in the nation’s war effort.”⁸⁵ According to a survey by the Legion, over 100,000 veterans were willing to serve the country in any capacity available to them.⁸⁶

In May of 1940, Bernard Cyril Henson lived on Seigneurs Street in St. Cunégonde, about a twenty-minute walk from Atwater Market. The fifty-year-old teamster, chauffeur, and part-time automobile mechanic was an English ex-pat and Great War veteran. Born in 1890 in Nottingham, England, he had first come to Canada in the summer of 1905, shortly after the death of his father, as a British Home Child through the Catholic Emigration Society.⁸⁷ By 1913, Henson had joined a volunteer militia—the 1st Regiment of Canadian Grenadier Guards—at Three Rivers, Quebec.⁸⁸ At the outbreak of the First World War, when he was twenty-four, Henson enlisted again, this time with the 2nd Reserve Park Canadian Army Service Corps (CASC).⁸⁹ The unit, which worked to move supplies for pillbox construction and road repair, saw service in Canada, England, and France for the length of the war. The young man’s service record was spotted with a mix of commendations and disciplinary action: promoted to Lance

⁸⁴ C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain, and the Pacific*, 79. “...in response to suggestions that more use be made of veterans in domestic security duties, it had been reported that a Veterans Home Guard (later redesignated the Veterans Guard of Canada) was being formed. It was to consist in the first instance of twelve companies of 250 men each.”

⁸⁵ “Veterans Given Long-Sought Chance,” *The Montreal Star*, June 14, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

⁸⁶ “Veterans Given Long-Sought Chance,” *The Montreal Star*, June 14, 1940, *Newspapers.com*.

⁸⁷ Judy Noel, email message to author, November 24, 2022. Henson arrived in Montreal on August 5, 1905, aboard the *Bavarian*. Though a British Home Child (BHC), Henson was not an orphan, and retained ties with his family in England.

⁸⁸ LAC, RG-0-II-F-6, (1913), “B.C. Henson in 1st Regiment of Canadian Grenadier Guards,” Nominal Rolls and Paylists for the Volunteer Militia, 1885-1914.

⁸⁹ The 2nd Reserve Park CASC later became the 2nd Canadian Army Auxiliary Horse Transport Company, CASC.

Corporal early on in his service, he was also reported Absent Without Leave (AWL) on at least two occasions and spent a considerable amount of time in hospital for the treatment of venereal disease.⁹⁰

In December of 1918, Henson received permission from his commanding officer to return to England to marry Emily Louisa Sandford, twenty-five, of Kentish Town, London. The following year he was discharged from the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) as unfit for service after receiving a “Ford fracture” to his right wrist in London on August 22, 1919.⁹¹ After his departure, he returned to Canada with his new wife and moved from rental to rental through the working-class neighbourhoods of Montreal.⁹² In the spring of 1940, amidst the calls for mobilization and anti-Fifth Column rallies, Henson re-enlisted, taking advantage of a unique opportunity to reinsert himself into military life and joining up with the newly-formed Veterans Guard of Canada. His first assignment was internment duty and he was soon shipped off to Camp “L” at Cove Fields, Quebec.

2.2 Life Behind Barbed Wire

⁹⁰ T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1552.

https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1552. In a courtroom statement from 1941, Henson self-reported that, on Christmas Day, 1916, he took an ambulance for a “jolly ride” and was sentenced to twenty-eight days’ detention. While he claimed that this was the only disciplinary action taken against him during his service, Henson’s service record notes that in May of 1915, shortly before his unit departed for England, he was reported AWL for six days, after which he spent several days in detention and two weeks in hospital to undergo treatment for gonorrhoea.

⁹¹ A “Ford fracture” was a common injury for drivers in the early twentieth century. Injury occurred when the engine crank of an automobile (most notably the Ford Model T) backfired, causing the crank to spin in the opposite direction at a high speed.

⁹² LAC, RG-113-B, M-4753, (1935), Voter List for Montréal, Québec, Canada. The 1935 Voter Register for Montreal, for example, lists the Henson family’s address as 6724 8th Avenue in Maisonneuve-Rosemont, a neighbourhood known for the Angus factories of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

In the morning heat of July 13, 1940, the *Ettrick*, a decommissioned British ocean liner, sailed down the St. Lawrence River towards the port at Quebec City. Hundreds of men—tired, dirty, and gaunt—stood on deck, blinking in the sunlight and mesmerized by the passing scenery.⁹³ They had spent the past eleven days in the hold of the ship, surrounded by machine guns and barbed wire, on an Atlantic crossing characterized by overcrowding, seasickness, and the threat of U-Boat attacks. The *Ettrick* was the third ship to cross the Atlantic to deliver enemy aliens to Canada and, by all accounts, represented one of the worst crossings.⁹⁴

At the outbreak of the Second World War, more than 74,000 people of German or Austrian origin lived in the United Kingdom; in the rising tide of the Third Reich, almost all claimed either to be anti-Nazi or a refugee from Nazi oppression.⁹⁵ To determine who was a “legitimate refugee” and who was a potential Fifth Column threat, the British Home Office set up a series of tribunals in the fall and winter of 1939 that organized “enemy aliens” into three categories: Category “A” were “deemed suspect” and interned immediately; Category “B” remained at liberty, though with restrictions to travel and property ownership (they had to surrender, for example, all bicycles and cameras); Category “C” were considered exempt from internment.⁹⁶ All German and Austrian nationals were scrutinized by government committees, questioned

⁹³ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 43.

⁹⁴ The first, the *Duchess of York*, left Liverpool on June 20, 1940, followed by the ill-fated *Arandora Star* on July 1. The latter was torpedoed by a German U-Boat off the Irish Coast on the second day of her voyage. A fourth ship, the *Sobieski*, departed from Greenock, Scotland, on July 4, and a fifth, the *Dunera*, sailed for Australia on July 10.

⁹⁵ Barbara Moon, “The Welcome Enemies,” *Maclean's*, February 10, 1962.

<https://archive.macleans.ca/article/1962/2/10/the-story-of-the-happy-accident-by-which-972-interned-aliens-became-some-of-the-liveliest-immigrants>.

⁹⁶ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 9. According to Koch, there were 600 Category “A” internees, 6,800 Category “B” internees, and 64,200 Category “C” internees.

about their life histories, their prospects in the country, and made to prove their innocence or face imprisonment.⁹⁷ As François Lafitte quipped in *The Internment of Aliens*:

Although there may be a dozen or two enemy agents and disguised Nazis among the refugees, the refugee disguise is the last one which an enemy agent would adopt, because it would be a hindrance to any spy worth his salt to have to speak English with a foreign accent and to have so much information about himself lodged with official bodies.

On May 12, 1940, two days after Winston Churchill replaced Neville Chamberlain as Prime Minister of Great Britain, a new policy of internment was announced. A “wide coastal belt, stretching from Inverness to the eastern edge of Dorset” was declared as a protected zone in case of German invasion: all male Germans and Austrians between the ages of sixteen and sixty within this area, excluding the “invalid and infirm,” were rounded up for temporary internment.⁹⁸ Midnight arrests of around 2,200 German and Austrian men took place between May 15 and 16, and the protected areas were extended by the first week of June. Later that month saw the general internment of all Germans and Austrians in the United Kingdom, as well as the start of Italian internment with Mussolini’s entrance into the war.⁹⁹ As Lafitte wrote, the British policy of “intern the lot” (a misquote of Churchill’s declaration to “collar the lot”) was both the cause and the result of a momentary panic following German advances in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, encouraging the growth of “anti-foreign feeling” through the “rather mysterious and definitely wholesale and indiscriminate manner” in which internment round-ups

⁹⁷ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, 63.

⁹⁸ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, 70. This zone included both Cambridge University and the London School of Economics, as well as anyone vacationing on the coast: in total, around 2,000 men. Female “enemy aliens” were also detained during this time in smaller numbers but are not the focus of this study.

⁹⁹ The internment of Italian nationals has been covered by several authors since the Second World War. Most notable in the Canadian context is Franca Iacovetta’s *Enemies Within: Italian and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016).

were organized.¹⁰⁰ What Lafitte’s writing does not appreciate, however, was the very real fear and threat of attack felt by the British public—their neighbours were falling with an unprecedented ease and they soon could be next.

The British Home Office, acting on the same heightened sense of patriotism and growing anti-alien sentiments found in Canada, chose to disperse large portions of the internee population to the British Dominions.¹⁰¹ As in Canada, fears of Nazi invasion in the United Kingdom were at an all-time high.¹⁰² They became especially pronounced after the Dunkirk Evacuation in June of 1940.¹⁰³ Though the initial request for transfer was rejected by Ottawa, an agreement was eventually reached for Canada to accept 7,000 “dangerous” German prisoners—4,000 Category “A” civilians and 3,000 prisoners of war—for internment.¹⁰⁴ As Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King stated in an address to the House of Commons on June 19, 1940:

The wishes of the British government are these: In the matter of preference they are anxious that we should take first of all interned aliens, secondly that we should take German prisoners in Britain, and thirdly that we should then consider the matter of evacuated children. The reasons they give are that the interned aliens in Great Britain may be in a position to help to direct parachutists in the event of a bombardment of the British Isles, which they are expecting hourly. They also feel that the German prisoners they have there require a great deal of

¹⁰⁰ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, 26.

¹⁰¹ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, 75. “The lumping together of Nazis and non-Nazis, of enemies and friends, soon made it clear that measures had been taken which were tinged with panic, and which were so wholesale and so lacking in common sense as to extend far beyond what national security required.”

¹⁰² Jean-Michel Turcotte, “A Truly Ambivalent Collaboration: Canadian-British Wartime Relations and German Prisoners of War, 1940-1945,” *The International History Review* 42, no. 3 (2020), 529. <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/10.1080/07075332.2019.1593219>.

¹⁰³ Robinson, Daniel Robinson, “Planning for the ‘Most Serious Contingency’: Alien Internment, Arbitrary Detention, and the Canadian State 1938-39,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 28, no. 2 (1993), 8. <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/scholarly-journals/planning-most-serious-contingency-alien/docview/1300016794/se-2?accountid=14906>.

¹⁰⁴ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 30; “House of Commons Debates, 18th Parliament, 6th Session, 19th Parliament, 1st Session,” Library of Parliament, vol. 1 (1940), 909. https://parl.canadiana.ca/view/oop.debates_HOC1806_01. In reference to the prisoners and refugees from the United Kingdom, Karl Kenneth Homuth (1893-1951), Conservative representative for Waterloo South, said “let them keep them there.”

*protection, and that the men protecting them should be available for the protection of the British Isles themselves. There is great congestion because of the numbers of refugees which have been coming there, and they feel that it would be in the interest of safety and security in every way to have alien internees and German prisoners brought to this country, and placed in different parts of the country, under protective measures here.*¹⁰⁵

Issues arose when the Home Office was unable to provide such a large number of prisoners for transportation: the British government had detained the required 3,000 prisoners of war, but only 2,500 Category “A” civilians.¹⁰⁶ It was decided that Category “B” and “C” aliens would be used to make up the difference and vacant spaces on the prison boats were soon filled by refugees.¹⁰⁷

Among the 1,713 Category “B” and “C” internees from England aboard the *Ettrick* were Ernst “Peter” Guter and Frederick Walter “Fred” Lycett. Guter, a bespectacled twenty-three-year-old, was a Jewish economics and social work student at the University of Southampton. Originally from the German-Polish border town of Torun, he had grown up in Berlin before coming to England in March of 1939 to continue his education and escape the encroaching German army.¹⁰⁸ There he was employed as a gardener and agricultural student by the de Rothschild family at Exbury House while attending university night classes in Southampton.¹⁰⁹ Lycett,

¹⁰⁵ “House of Commons Debates, 18th Parliament, 6th Session, 19th Parliament, 1st Session,” Library of Parliament, vol. 1 (1940), 911-912. https://parl.canadiana.ca/view/oop.debates_HOC1806_01.

¹⁰⁶ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, xv.

¹⁰⁷ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, xv.; Paula J. Draper, “The Camp Boys: Interned Refugees from Nazism,” in *Enemies Within: Italian and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad*, ed. Franca Iacovetta (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2016), 172. Even when the true identities of the internees became known, the internees still faced roadblocks to freedom. Frederick Charles Blair, Director of Immigration in the Department of Mines and Resources, viewed appeals for release as a “Jewish plot to circumvent Canada’s restrictive immigration policies.”

¹⁰⁸ “Interview with Ernest Guter,” August 21, 1996. According to Guter, he left for England the day that Germany invaded Czechoslovakia. His last memory of his home country at that time was a view of his parents standing at the train station as he left by way of the Netherlands. He did not learn that both his parents died at Auschwitz until 1989.

¹⁰⁹ TNA, HO396, no. HO396/109, (1939) “Male Enemy Alien – Exemption from Internment – Refugee card for Ernst Guter,” WWII Internees (Aliens) Index Cards, 1939-1947.

stocky, blond, and twenty-one, was born in the Charlottenburg district of Berlin to Josef Kütter and Elisabeth Ida Stupp.¹¹⁰ After the death of his father in 1923, the young boy and his mother moved to Wiesbaden, in Hesse, to be closer to Elisabeth's father.¹¹¹ In early 1930, Elisabeth remarried an Englishman, Donald Lycett, and the family relocated once more, this time to the neighbourhood of Wimbledon, just outside of London.¹¹² The younger Lycett adopted his stepfather's surname, but not the automatic citizenship granted to his mother through marriage—though he was raised English from the age of ten onwards, the boy retained his German nationality on paper.

As a teenager, Lycett attended Cottingham College in Bexleyheath, Kent, and later a technical studies program through the Royal Society of Production Engineers.¹¹³ By 1940, he was working as a clerk and “management trainee” for Morrisons' Engineering Limited, a manufacturing company of sheet metal and aircraft components based out of Croydon.¹¹⁴ In mid-May of that year, under the new internment policies from the Churchill government, both Lycett and Guter were arrested, detained, and eventually sent to a transit camp at Huyton, near Liverpool, before boarding the *Ettrick*, bound for Canada.¹¹⁵

2.3 A Warm Reception

¹¹⁰ Landesarchiv, no. 81 (1918), “Zurückgeführtes Erstregister for Josef Kütter and Elisabeth Emilie Ida Stupp, Charlottenburg, February 15, 1918,” Heiratsregister der Berliner Standesämter, 1874-1936.

¹¹¹ “Interview with Fred Lycett,” 1:11.

¹¹² “Interview with Fred Lycett,” 2:05.

¹¹³ Frederick Kutter, Resume, [1970-1980].

¹¹⁴ Frederick Kutter, Resume, [1970-1980].

¹¹⁵ “Interview with Fred Lycett,” 8:07. Lycett was arrested at his mother's home in Wimbledon. First taken to a nearby police station, he spent some time at the Kempton Park prisoner of war camp before ultimately ending up in Liverpool.

When the internees aboard the *Ettrick* were finally able to disembark late in the evening of July 13, 1940, they were driven in trucks to the edge of Quebec City along the St. Lawrence, near Battlefields Park on the Plains of Abraham, escorted by a military motorcade. Canadian officers and curious civilian onlookers viewed them with suspicion: they had their meagre belongings stolen by guards of the Régiment de Trois Rivières and were called Nazis.¹¹⁶ Onlookers shook their fists and hurled shouted insults at the trucks as they went by. As sixteen-year-old internee Harry Seidler wrote in his diary:

*Women were standing on a curb and one of them spat at the bus as we drove past. Everyone screamed...it upset me dreadfully...I felt like a criminal. As always, I asked myself: why? What have we done that they spit at us?*¹¹⁷

It soon became clear that the men from the ships were not the dangerous prisoners that the Canadian government had been promised. Among the internees were university students, professors, rabbis, and priests—a far cry from the dangerous Nazi sympathizers and Fifth Columnists the Canadian public and government alike had imagined. Thomas Inskip, 1st Viscount Caldecote and Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, addressed the issue on July 30, 1940:

*The United Kingdom authorities greatly regret that the inclusion of “B” and “C” category internees among those sent to Canada was not explained to [the Canadian government] at an earlier date, but I hope that no serious difficulties will arise in connection with their internment in Canada.*¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 72. A number of internee memoirs deal with the July 1940 thefts by the Régiment de Trois Rivières. Everything from handkerchiefs to typewriters were “pilfered” by guards charged with examining the internees’ luggage for contraband and weapons. Those involved—at least five officers (both commissioned and non-commissioned)—were eventually court-martialled, though not until October of 1940.

¹¹⁷ Harry Seidler, *Internment: The Diaries of Harry Seidler, May 1940-October 1941* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986), 62.

¹¹⁸ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 76.

In preparation for the arrival of the internees, the Department of National Defence's Directorate of Internment Operations set up temporary camps throughout the country while more permanent facilities were constructed in New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec.¹¹⁹ Each camp was supervised by a combination of the Canadian Provost Corps—a military police corps—and the Veterans Guard of Canada.¹²⁰ Camp “L” at Cove Fields was constructed in June of 1940, just weeks before the first cohort of internees was set to arrive in Canada. Hasty construction and bureaucratic delays plagued the construction of camps across the country. Kirk Goodlet's study of the camp in Mimico, Ontario, notes that members of the Veterans Guard of Canada, set to staff the facility, arrived just one day before their internee wards on July 19, 1940.¹²¹ Sketches of the Camp “L” show military-style huts surrounded by barbed wire fences and observation towers overlooking the rolling hills of the Plains of Abraham and the villages dotting the shores of the St. Lawrence.¹²²

Camp “L” was overseen by a commandant, Major Charles William Wiggs, known by the internees as “Piggy Wiggy.”¹²³ Wiggs was a good-natured forty-eight-year-old accountant and later coal merchant who served with the Canadian Army Pay Corps during the First World

¹¹⁹ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 78. Eight camps were used for civilian internees between 1940 and 1943. In New Brunswick, there was Camp “B” at Little River; in Ontario, it was Camp “Q” at Monteith and Camp “R” at Red Rock; in Quebec, it was Camp “A” at Farnham, Camp “I” at Ile aux Noix, Camp “L” at Quebec City, Camp “N” at Sherbrooke, and Camp “T” at Trois Rivières.

¹²⁰ Edgar Lion, “Interview with Edgar Lion,” USC Shoah Foundation, 2009, video, 18:13, <https://vhaonline.usc.edu/viewingPage?testimonyID=59237&returnIndex=0>. s “We were guarded by the Veterans Guard—in other words, old soldiers who had already retired—and they were all carrying guns, and I don’t think they would have known which end to shoot.” Edgar Lion was interred for a time at Camp “N” at Sherbrooke alongside the Musketeers.

¹²¹ Goodlet, “Number 22 Internment Camp,” 97.

¹²² Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 83.

¹²³ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 79. According to Koch, Major Wiggs was the “only camp commandant we ever had who was popular enough to be given a nickname.”

War.¹²⁴ According to Captain G.S. Barrass, who acted as the commandant's second-in-command, "Wiggs was a kind man willing to give the shirt off his back to anybody who needed it."¹²⁵ Draper notes that Major Wiggs was unsure how to treat the civilian internees upon their arrival in the camp. Walter Igersheimer recounted that the men had been "sent to Canada as 'prisoners of war and fifth columnists' and that it [was] the duty of the Canadian military authorities to treat us as such."¹²⁶ As Seidler recorded in a diary entry from July 21, 1940:

I passed by a guard at the barbed wire fence who started a conversation with me. I tried to explain to him that we were England's friends. He didn't want to believe this. He said 'But you're Nazis!' He had seen us arriving with the uniformed soldiers.¹²⁷

For guidance on the matter of prisoner identity, the commandant often "deferred to the wisdom of the British Intelligence Officer," Captain Godfrey Stephen Barrass. Barrass, a young officer at forty years old, was a personal secretary in civilian life. A technical veteran of the First World War, he had served with the Royal Fusiliers for four months and twenty-one days before his father contacted his commanding officer to reveal that his son had enlisted for service with the British Expeditionary Force at the age of fifteen.¹²⁸ Barrass, described by Draper as a humanitarian, referred to the internees as "refugees of German oppression," rather than prisoners of war—for the interned men, a small but significant distinction.¹²⁹ Over the three months that

¹²⁴ LAC, RG-150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 10345-36, item no. 312229, "Personnel Records of the First World War – Personnel Record for Charles William Wiggs," *Library and Archives Canada*. <https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B10345-S036>.

¹²⁵ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 79.

¹²⁶ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 51.

¹²⁷ Seidler, *Internment*, 66.

¹²⁸ TNA, WO364, piece 158 (1915), "Pension Record for Godfrey Stephen Barrass," British Army World War I Pension Records, 1914-1920. "The boy was so keen and so sure about it, that I reluctantly let him go. ... He is a good boy and meant to serve his King and Country."

¹²⁹ Draper, "The Accidental Immigrants," (PhD diss.), 79.

the facility was in operation, Camp “L” became known for a lack of discipline and lax guards, but also as a far more pleasant internment space than experienced by the majority of civilian internees in Canada.¹³⁰

2.4 The Boiler House

From the moment of their arrival, internees were expected to take on the work of day-to-day camp operations. Part of a larger “compulsory employment” scheme developed by the Department of National Defense, these unpaid duties included menial tasks like hauling camp supplies, splitting wood, repairing buildings, and general camp upkeep.¹³¹ Paid employment was available—albeit limited—for skilled labourers and tradesmen. This work helped to keep the camps self-sufficient and allowed the men to structure their lives and, in some ways, reassert their agency and individuality.¹³² Fred Lycett had training as both an engineer and production manager in civilian life: as such, he was placed in charge of the boiler house at Camp “L”.¹³³ Sharing the duties with his friend, Ernst Guter, allowed both men a privileged position within the camp.¹³⁴ They worked the night shift together, taking advantage of the hot stove and available water for laundry and drink, “abstracting” cups of coffee from the camp canteen, and spending long hours in conversation by the light of the fire.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ Draper, “The Accidental Immigrants,” (PhD diss.), 80.

¹³¹ Auger, *Prisoners of the Home Front*, 95.

¹³² Farges, “Masculinity and Confinement,” 40.

¹³³ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, October 3, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1599-1600. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1599.

¹³⁴ “Testimony of Ernst Guter,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1570.

https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1570. According to Guter’s testimony: “At the outset, Mr. Lycett and I took the job at the boiler house alone by ourselves. Later on, Mr. Arnhold joined us on the job.” Both men also operated a small laundry “business” as part of their boiler house work.

¹³⁵ Koch. *Deemed Suspect*, 140. According to Koch, the Musketeers turned the boiler room into a “kind of club where coffee that had been cunningly ‘abstracted’ from the kitchen was served to friends.”

Before long, Lycett and Guter made the acquaintance—and friendship—of Georg Gerhard “Gerry” Arnhold, Fritz Bender, and Fritz Lingen. All were members of the infamous “Cambridge Gang” or “Cambridge Clique,” a group of about thirty university students that had formed in the Huyton transit camp, near Liverpool, during the initial stages of internment in England.¹³⁶ Here, the unique internment space allowed for pre-war connections to remain intact. Arnhold, a tall, dark-haired twenty-two-year-old, was the son of a well-known banker from Dresden and was enrolled at King’s College, Cambridge, at the time of his arrest and initial internment. Dr. Fritz Bender, thirty-four, was a chemical engineer, while Fritz Lingen, twenty-nine, known as Count Lingen—and officially as Prince Frederick of Prussia—was a Cambridge undergraduate and a grandson of the Kaiser. According to Lynton, another member of the Cambridge Gang, he was “very tall, very thin, very blond, and very handsome,” poised, energetic, and not overly bright.¹³⁷ Close-knit but open to additions—Lycett, Guter, and Eric Koch, among others, became associated with the group, though they did not attend the university—the Cambridge Gang was “much disliked by many for their haughtiness and snobbish insistence on speaking English, in order to set themselves apart from the ‘mob’ who spoke German.”¹³⁸ They were equally well-known in their attempts to make connections with

¹³⁶ Mark Lynton, *A Cambridge Internee's Memoir of World War II* (Overlook Press, New York: 1998), 20. “We stayed in Liverpool City Hall for two or three days, just generally milling about, but it was there that the ‘Cambridge Gang’ emerged, a bunch of about a dozen of us, which became widely known, if mostly only by hearsay, among most English and Canadian internment camps.”

¹³⁷ Lynton, *Accidental Journey*, 21. “Fritz was very tall, very thin, very blond, and very handsome, in an almost ludicrously Teutonic way. He was not too bright, had immense presence and poise, boundless energy, an attractive sense of humor, unfailing manners, and not a snobbish bone in him.”

¹³⁸ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 168; Lynton 20. Another leader of the Cambridge Gang, Hans Kahle, was associated by geography alone. “Hans Kahle had little to do with Cambridge and nothing to do with the university, but as an ardent antiNazi [sic], he had fled Germany in the 1930s and was working on a farm near Cambridge. He was a balding, raw-boned Raymond Massey-type of person in his late forties, thus much older than most of us - and not merely in years.”

camp personnel, especially through Lingen’s royal associations. In *Deemed Suspect*, Koch describes an instance in which Captain Barrass personally delivered a letter from Lingen to his godmother, Lady Alice Athlone, wife of the Earl of Athlone, then-Governor General of Canada, and was rewarded with tea and an audience with then-Acting Major-General H.D.G. Crerar, among others.¹³⁹ Walter Igersheimer recalled another case of Cambridge networking with the camp Intelligence Officer who took over after Captain Barrass:

An internee comes up to me with the latest news: ‘Hey, Walter, have you seen the Cambridge clique? They have discovered that the intelligence officer was a Cambridge student and that he has met some of them down there. They are already trying to obtain a clean, easy, comfortable job; you ought to watch them sneaking round the fellow.’¹⁴⁰

Lieutenant A.H. MacKenzie, who replaced Captain G.S. Barrass as Intelligence Officer at Camp “L” and later held the position at Camp “N,” was school friends with internee Arnhold and was known as “Freddie” to a number of the Cambridge students.¹⁴¹ MacKenzie, described as “vastly athletic, exceptionally handsome, and exceptionally stupid Canadian,” was also an undergraduate at the university, just a few years older than most members of the Cambridge Gang.¹⁴²

Fraternization between camp personnel and internees was strictly forbidden and guards were only meant to communicate with prisoners in the execution of their duties.¹⁴³ The isolating space

¹³⁹ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 82-3. After Lingen’s “Aunt Alice” learned of his internment, she sent her godson sporting equipment and other gifts to pass the time.

¹⁴⁰ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 111.

¹⁴¹ Gerhard Arnhold to Winkie Henson, [October 1940], T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1464. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1464. Arnhold later tells Winkie that he is old friends with Lieutenant Mackenzie and that he spent the summer at his family home in France a year earlier.

¹⁴² Lynton, *Accidental Journey*, 37. “He evidently had been commissioned into some fancy Scottish-Canadian regiment and, equally obviously, was as handsome and stupid as ever.”

¹⁴³ Auger, *Prisoners of the Home Front*, 55.

of the camps, however, meant that “friendship had even more value than in normal civilian life.”¹⁴⁴ Even where pre-war connections were lacking, shared experiences often bonded captors and captives together. In many cases, the living and working conditions of the Veterans Guard differed little from that of the prisoners: they ate the same food, suffered the same bad weather, and slept in similar, crowded barracks.¹⁴⁵ In the early fall of 1941, the camp also lacked a guard room—the space made contact unavoidable.¹⁴⁶ The staff at Camp “L” were also cognizant of the initial mistake that had been made with the internment of so many civilians, contrary to their orders and the perception of the internees by the general public. As Igersheimer described:

*[We] have won over the commandant, the intelligence officer, and indeed the whole of the camp staff. They realize clearly that we should never have been interned and certainly not have been sent to Canada...They know through our repeated demonstrations that we are eager to help in the war effort and that we would do whatever tasks presented itself. Friendships have been established between the officers and some of us, and we are working together smoothly in the administration of the camp.*¹⁴⁷

Human connections, however fleeting, were impossible to ignore, and a similar story unfolded when Corporal Bernard Henson was assigned picquet duty in the boiler house at Camp “L” on September 11, 1940.¹⁴⁸ As Arnhold noted in his diary in the fall of 1940:

¹⁴⁴ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 88.

¹⁴⁵ Zimmerman, *The Little Third Reich on Lake Superior*, 95.

¹⁴⁶ “Statement of Corporal B.C. Henson,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1557. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1557. From Henson’s statement: “Being on picquet duty in the compound of Camp “L”, we had no guard room and have known each other in a boiler room or bath room during inclement weather. Naturally, I was thrown very much in the company of the three internees.”

¹⁴⁷ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 88.

¹⁴⁸ “Statement of Major J.A. Warburton,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1564. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1564.

*We also got very friendly with a few soldiers, especially with: Bernard Henson, our Corporal, who often brought us food from his kitchen. He was a special pal of ours...and did a lot for us. So he once brought us a bottle of Rum once a few bottles of beer.*¹⁴⁹

On September 28, 1940, Henson announced that his daughter, Winkie, was coming to visit him from Montreal. Winnifred Emily “Winkie” Henson was born on June 14, 1924, in Montreal, to Bernard Henson and his wife, Emily Louisa Sandford.¹⁵⁰ She was named after aunts on either side of her family—her mother’s younger sister, Winnifred Annie Sandford, of Kentish Town, London, and her father’s older sister, Winnifred Monica Henson, who died a year after Bernard and Emily were married.¹⁵¹ Winkie was the fourth of eight children, and with her younger sister, Ruth, one of only two girls.¹⁵² She grew up in the southwest of Montreal, in the working-class Anglophone neighbourhoods of Verdun and St. Cunégonde, and was raised Anglican, like her mother. Having graduated high school in June of 1939, at the age of fifteen, Winkie began work as a stenographer at the felt manufacturer E.F. Walter Company, at 417 St. Peter Street in Montreal, in the late summer of 1940.

Winkie was known to the internees from stories told by her father and from a photograph of her high school graduation he had proudly shared with the young men.¹⁵³ The conversation evolved

¹⁴⁹ “Extracts from Exhibit No. 2,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1522. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1522.

¹⁵⁰ Judy Noel, email message to author, November 22, 2022.

¹⁵¹ TNA, RG-13, piece 3183, folio 51, page 4, (1901) “Census Return for Henson Family of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, England,” Census Returns of England and Wales, 1901.

¹⁵² Children of the Henson family, in order of birth: Bernard (b. 1920), Francis Richard Cyril (b. 1921), Albert Nelson (b. 1922), Winnifred Emily (b. 1924), Henry (b. 1927), Ruth Jocelyn (b. 1928), John Cyril (b. 1930), and Philip James (b. 1938).

¹⁵³ Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett, Gerry Arnhold, and Ernst Guter, [October 1940], T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1529. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1529. Winkie writes, “O.K. Fred as regards to a picture of me there is some man who has the picture of me that was taken for my graduation picture in camp. I think his name is Albert ----”

from there: after graduation, the girl was considering night classes in economics at McGill University; Ernst Guter was an economics student, armed with a set of textbooks that made up his sparse collection of personal possessions. As Henson described later, in court:

Henson: The way that this correspondence started was when Guter said that he was a student of the University of Southampton, studying social work and economics. I told him that I had a daughter who graduated from High School and was considering continuing studies at McGill night classes. He said that he had some text books that might help her and also some notes of his studies. I then showed him a picture of my daughter and that was the time that the internees expressed a desire to know her.¹⁵⁴

According to a statement given by Guter in February of 1941:

Guter: One day, we were told by Corporal Henson that his daughter was in Quebec. From the Camp we could see outsiders walking by on a wooden gangway. We told Corporal Henson that we would like to see his daughter. That was impossible because there was a very strong rain that day. Corporal Henson told us that he had talked to his daughter about us. He stated he had told her there were three young men in the Camp who were feeling lonely. The suggestion was made by Lycett that we might like to write her a joint letter. Corporal Henson agreed, under the condition that he would read this letter and see that it was entirely harmless.¹⁵⁵

As with fraternization, the exchange of money, gifts, souvenirs, newspapers, magazines and letters between guards and internees was strictly forbidden and punishable, with standard orders issued to camp commandants explicit in their instruction.¹⁵⁶ In letters home to his wife, however, Henson described his anger at camp bureaucracies and irritability over minor rules and

¹⁵⁴ “Testimony of Gerhard Arnhold,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1581. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1581.

¹⁵⁵ “Testimony of Ernst Guter,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1570. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1570. See Fig. IV.

¹⁵⁶ Zimmerman, *The Little Third Reich on Lake Superior*, 95.

inconveniences.¹⁵⁷ When he told Winkie that the three young internees were “feeling lonely,” he likely recognized in them a familiar feeling, a symptom of what Eric Koch called “internitis.”¹⁵⁸ Characterized by a combination of “despondency, touchiness, and worst of all, self-absorption and self-pity,” the stresses associated with internment were well-known to the Canadian soldiers working in the camps.¹⁵⁹ According to historian Rachel Pistol, whose work focuses on English and American internment during the Second World War, a large number of internees suffered from depression as a result of the “injustice and stupidity” of their situation, as well as their struggle to make sense of the situation as one of both safety in the relative isolation of the Canadian camps and frustration at their lack of autonomy.¹⁶⁰ At Camp “L,” the proximity to Quebec City only exacerbated poor morale among internees: freedom was painfully close. On August 4, 1940, Harry Seidler wrote:

*The nights are quite wonderful—from the hill in front of the huts the St. Lawrence Stream can be seen with the lights of Quebec. I stand outside for a long time and stare at those lights.*¹⁶¹

Writing was one means of combating “internitis.” Internees wrote diaries, camp newspapers, and appeals for their release. As an intellectual pursuit, it served as a means of boosting morale and

¹⁵⁷ Bernard Cyril Henson to “Mum” [Emily Henson], September 24, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1590. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1590. Henson gives a specific example of an angry outburst he had over his suspicions that the camp post office had stolen a delivery of tobacco from him. As it turned out, the package—mailed from home—had not been sent that week. Henson was forced to apologize for his behaviour.

¹⁵⁸ Koch. *Deemed Suspect*, 143.

¹⁵⁹ Koch. *Deemed Suspect*, 143.

¹⁶⁰ Rachel Pistol, “I can’t remember a more depressing time but I don’t blame anyone for that’: Remembering and Commemorating the Wartime Internment of Enemy Aliens in Britain,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 53, no. 1 (2019), 39. <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/10.1080/0031322X.2018.1539288>.

¹⁶¹ Seidler, *Internment*, 69.

regaining a sense of normalcy.¹⁶² Letters were particularly important as part of the wider camp experience. Article 36 of the 1929 Geneva Convention qualified prisoners of war—and by extension, internees—to send a limited number of letters and postcards each month.¹⁶³ The content of this correspondence, however, was heavily censored and often took weeks to be delivered.¹⁶⁴ For those who went through official channels, the censors often left internees with mail that “looked like Swiss cheese” from the amount of content that was cut out, and the prisoners had to sacrifice their status as refugees in order to comply with postal regulations.¹⁶⁵ In his diary, Seidler complained of the indignity of having to write on official Prisoner of War stationery: “We are compelled to write on paper with a POW caption! I’ll never forget this about the Canadians!”¹⁶⁶

Despite the knowledge that what he was doing was in direct violation of the rules of the camp, Henson agreed to carry out the correspondence. He rationalized the decision through his own sense of propriety:

Henson: They asked me if they could write a note to my daughter. I said I did not see any harm providing I read the correspondence and handled it personally.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶² Draper, “The Camp Boys,” 181.

¹⁶³ “Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Geneva, 27 July 1929,” International Committee of the Red Cross, July 27, 1929, Article 36, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/INTRO/305>.

¹⁶⁴ Camp “N War Diary from February 1941, example of standing orders regarding mail. “Internees will be permitted to send not more than two letters or postcards each week, which privilege cannot be assigned to any other internee. Letters must be limited to 24 lines. ... No reference is to be made to the number of internees interned, nor any information given regarding the identities of other internees. ... On no account will mail or correspondence of any kind be delivered through members of the camp staff or guard. Any attempt to do so will result in severe disciplinary action.”

¹⁶⁵ “Interview with Edgar Lion,” 45:34.

¹⁶⁶ Seidler, *Internment*, 68.

¹⁶⁷ “Testimony of Corporal B.C. Henson,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1557. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1557.

For the internees, it was an opportunity to assert some control over the internment situation. “Just breaking camp rules,” writes Draper, “no matter how minor the infraction, could give an internee some feeling of autonomy.”¹⁶⁸ Even Winkie, at the start of her letter of October 1, 1940, had to balance the potential danger with the allure of newfound friends:

I received your letter this morning and what a delightful surprise they were. I am very sorry to say that I have not answered your letters officially. It's not that I don't want to but the truth is that I can't. My Dad say's not to. If I sent any letters to Ottawa they would want to know where I met you & you met me etc. It might get you into trouble & also my Dad and myself. I wouldn't want that to happen. I will write to you the way I am doing now if it's O.K. with you and if it can be arranged.¹⁶⁹

The next response from the internees, addressed to “Miss Henson” at 734 Seigneur Street, Montreal, was sent from Camp “L” on October 3, 1940, and contained three letters written by Arnhold, Guter, and Lycett. Lycett explained the nickname the group had earned in the camp, “Three Musketeers”—Arnhold as Aramis, Guter as Athos, and Lycett as D’Artagnan.¹⁷⁰ Guter described himself and his friends as the “three lonely bachelors” and emphasized their gratitude for the opportunity for written escape alongside an offer to help Winkie with her economics course:

¹⁶⁸ Draper, “The Camp Boys,” 184.

¹⁶⁹ Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett, Gerry Arnhold, and Ernst Guter, [October 1940],” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1526. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1526.

¹⁷⁰ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, October 3, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1599-1600. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1599. “In the Camp we are nicknamed “The 3 Musketeers.” Gerry is considered to be “Aramis,” Ernst as “Athos,” and I as D’Artagnan. I am afraid that this is none of our doing - it just happened.”

*I forgot to thank you for the nice letters you sent us and the cigarettes. That was marvellous of you. Please do write about yourself. We are strangers in this country and the people are foreign to us.*¹⁷¹

Similarly, Arnhold thanked Winkie for the supply of cigarettes she had sent and noted the pleasant break from the “monastic lifestyle” of internment provided by her letters.¹⁷² According to Koch, “the absence of women had a very predictable influence on the lives of many inmates”—many were young, single men plucked from the highly social environments of work and school and used to interactions with women before their internment.¹⁷³ Fantasy became a common coping mechanism used in the “hypermasculine” context of homosocial camp life. Mario Duliani described barracks plastered with scraps of newspapers and magazines that showed “naked, or almost naked women” that had been cut from magazines by internees “bursting with sexual urges.”¹⁷⁴ Similarly, interned artists drew pictures of nude women and exhibited them at art shows for prisoners and guards alike, and crude cartoons depicting relations between internees and civilian women appeared in camp newspapers. As Guter wrote to Winkie, sixteen years old at the time, on October 3:

*I only have your photo and your letter yet and there will be a long time before we shall meet - if we ever shall meet. Your dad told us a lot about you and as his descriptions are very favourable our imagination, of course, runs away with us. Everybody, I think, carries with him the image of his dream girl and it is so nice to build all these dreams about a girl still unknown to us.*¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Ernst Guter to Winkie Henson, October 3, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1602-1603. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1602.

¹⁷² Gerhard Arnhold to Winkie Henson, October 3, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1596. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1596.

¹⁷³ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 157.

¹⁷⁴ Duliani, *The City Without Women*, 108.

¹⁷⁵ Ernst Guter to Winkie Henson, October 3, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1601. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1601.

For many Canadian civilians, the internees—both civilians and prisoners of war—exuded a similar sense of mystery and romance from the other side of the barbed wire. As Matthias Reiss describes in his examination of the masculinity of German prisoners of war in the United States during the Second World War, “POW camps became tourist sites and lured large numbers of civilians on weekends who wanted to have a look at the enemy.”¹⁷⁶ American authorities were amazed by the “uncontrollable desire” exhibited by civilians and unauthorized military personnel to watch and attempt to communicate with the prisoners”—everything from casual conversation to the exchange of gifts and love letters.¹⁷⁷ In 1942, five girls from Espanola, Ontario, aged fifteen and sixteen, were charged with breaches of the Defense of Canada Regulations after sending love letters and a camera to German prisoners of war at a Northern Ontario internment camp.¹⁷⁸ As an article published on the case in *The Globe and Mail* noted, their intentions were in “the spirit of romance” but were ultimately deemed dangerous and a threat to national security. Similarly, Holocaust historian Bob Moore notes that relationships between young women and internees, both soldiers and civilians, were “strongly resented by the public,” but were often encouraged by what the British Home Office referred to as “irresponsible girls”.¹⁷⁹ In his study of civilian fraternization” with Axis prisoners of war in the United Kingdom, Moore

¹⁷⁶ Matthias Reiss, “Bronzed Bodies behind Barbed Wire: Masculinity and the Treatment of German Prisoners of War in the United States during World War II,” *The Journal of Military History* 69, no. 2 (2005), 478. doi:10.1353/jmh.2005.0122.

¹⁷⁷ Reiss, “Bronzed Bodies behind Barbed Wire,” 493.

¹⁷⁸ “Sent Prisoners Camera, Love Notes, Girls Admit,” *The Globe and Mail*, March 20, 1942. <https://collections.warmuseum.ca/warclip/objects/common/webmedia.php?irn=5065198>. This incident leads to a point of further research; one of the girls involved in the case testified that her relationship with the prisoners began when her father, a member of the Veterans Guard of Canada, passed along a note to the prisoners.

¹⁷⁹ Bob Moore, “Illicit Encounters: Female Civilian Fraternization with Axis Prisoners of War in Second World War Britain,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 48 no. 4 (2013), 751. doi:10.1177/0022009413493945.

asserts that these illicit relationships had more to do with “youthful rebellion” than sinister political motivations—just as the internees within the camp look for a means of escape, so too did the teenage girl on the other side of the barbed wire.¹⁸⁰

Rumours persisted throughout the camps as a steady source of information and intrigue, their veracity doubtful at best. As Walter Igersheimer recounted, tales passed between internees of how “letters [were] smuggled out to tell our relatives where we [were] and the true nature of our living conditions,” shared by huddled men around the hut stoves.¹⁸¹ The letters sent by the Musketeers were known to some but only hinted at by others. Before the end of their stay at Camp “L”, they sent a total of four sets of letters—with individual notes from each—to Winkie Henson in Montreal. She responded in kind each time.

2.5 The Move to Sherbrooke

On October 15, 1940, the Musketeers—along with 615 other men from Camp “L”—were transferred to a newly-constructed and permanent detention facility outside of Sherbrooke, Quebec.¹⁸² Rumours of the move had taken hold in the camp weeks earlier. “[We’re] leaving this camp on 8 October,” wrote Seidler in a diary entry from September 27. “We are to be separated according to our religions.”¹⁸³ The transfer was first intended to separate “Jews and Gentiles” within the internment system, with each internee meant to register under one label or the other and then be transferred as a cohort to a corresponding camp. The plan was met with impassioned protest from the internees, many of whom had only just escaped similar divisions under Nazi

¹⁸⁰ Moore, “Illicit Encounters,” 759.

¹⁸¹ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 87

¹⁸² Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 124.

¹⁸³ Seidler, *Internment*, 83.

oppression in Europe.¹⁸⁴ Fritz Lingen, internee camp supervisor and friend to the Musketeers, wrote to Major Wiggs against the separation:

*[We] would like to express our most earnest wish that the majority of refugees should not be torn apart. They have now lived together in internment for several months and would consider a separation from their friends a severe hardship. Above all, however, we should like to protest with all emphasis against a separation based on racial grounds.*¹⁸⁵

Without the cooperation of the internees, camp authorities were unable to divide the internees, and the groups split between Camp “A” and Camp “N” were formed by cliques over identities. Here, the unique space of the internment camp shaped the makeup of its prisoners.

Two days before their departure, Major Wiggs gave a farewell address to the internees, describing their division into two groups—half to Camp “A” at Farnham, half to Camp “N” Newington at Sherbrooke.¹⁸⁶ The commandant spoke to the friendship and work ethic of the interned civilians, expressing his gratitude and betraying, through tears, the blurred lines between captor and captive. “May your new commander be as fond of you as I am,” Igersheimer quoted Wiggs as saying, “and may you like him as much as I hope you like me. God bless you.”¹⁸⁷

Camp “N” Newington was still under construction when the first transport of internees arrived in the pouring rain. Lycett described the site in a letter to Winkie written four days later:

Now to the new Camp. Ooh! What a place. We got there on Tuesday afternoon and it was raining like hell (Oo! sorry). No sooner out of the train than we were headed into one of 3 disused Engine repair sheds. It was really terrible. Dust

¹⁸⁴ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 123. Internees wrote letters of protest to the commandant, made up information about themselves to avoid separation from friends, and one man was shot while trying to escape to avoid transfer.

¹⁸⁵ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 124-5.

¹⁸⁶ Seidler, *Internment*, 88.

¹⁸⁷ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 99.

inches thick, Repair pits and rails scattered all over the floor. No water, no light, and inadequate heating! It was a shock, which the self-discipline of 600 internees could not stand. A very light search was made for machine guns and similar weapons which we might have smuggled through previous camps, and this was the prelude to an impromptu medical examination which entailed stripping to the waist and sticking one's tongue out underneath a 2000 WATT lamp, saying Ah- and stretching our arms above the head. The reward was a little disk numbered 222. Cute - isn't it?¹⁸⁸

The camp property, acquired by the Department of National Defence in September of 1940 from the Quebec Central Railway, had been rejected once as an HQ site for the Sherbrooke Fusiliers due to the lack of sanitation and infrastructure. The location consisted of two large locomotive repair sheds, a machine shop, a boiler house, an oil house, and an administration building.¹⁸⁹ The oldest buildings on the site were constructed in 1874, and the property had been abandoned since April of 1939.¹⁹⁰ It had no beds, poor lighting, and inadequate bathroom facilities for the hundreds of men newly interned at the site.¹⁹¹ As Seidler recorded in his diary, “So, this is how Britons treat their prisoners of war. Nothing like this would happen in Germany. In concentration camps you are given sleeping quarters fit for human habitation, and clean, sanitary surroundings.”¹⁹² At the time, Seidler’s experience with German concentration camps would likely have come from the few of his fellow internees that had spent time in Dachau, then a

¹⁸⁸ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, October 19, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1605-1606. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1605.

¹⁸⁹ Auger, *Prisoners of the Home Front*, 28.

¹⁹⁰ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 1 (October 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

¹⁹¹ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 190. “We sit down at the edge of one of the pits. Water drips down on us from the leaky roof. We can smell the toilets, installed at the far end of this hall, which have backed up with shit. Nobody feels like speaking. Our illusions, beliefs, and hope have been shattered.”

¹⁹² Seidler, *Internment*, 90.

Polish-based prison labour camp: the full reality of their earlier experience in the camp, traumatic as it was, would not be realized until after the war had ended.¹⁹³

The structural and sanitary issues within the camp were already well known to its new commandant, Major Sydney Herbert “Paddy” Griffin, when the transport of internees arrived that dreary day in mid-October. An Irishman and an “original” of the Great War, Griffin gained a reputation as a stern but fair leader in his time at Camp “N.” Wounded in combat twice between 1916 and 1917, he was promoted to the rank of major in 1917 at the age of twenty-two, and mentioned in the London Gazette for “conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty,” in 1918.¹⁹⁴ At the beginning of the early enlistment campaigns for veterans during the Second World War, Griffin, then a department store manager and caterer in Montreal, wrote personally to Colonel J.L. Ralston, Minister of Defense, in late July of 1940 to request a place in the Canadian army. His letter detailed his qualifications as a soldier and bemoaned the lack of direct action taken by the government in recruiting directly from veterans’ ranks.

*I am 45—physically fit—willing to drop to rank of Captain—ready in five minutes to report for duty or for a personal interview.*¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ Seidler, *Internment*, 41. Seidler references Dachau as early as May 23, 1940, while still at a transit camp in the United Kingdom.

¹⁹⁴ *Supplement to The London Gazette*, 2 December 1918, issue 31043 (2 December 1918), p. 14276, col. 1, “War Office ... awards in recognition of gallant and distinguished services in Europe ... Capt. (A./Maj.) Sydney Herbert Griffin, 4th Can. Bn., 1st Cent. Ont. R.”; PDF image, *The Gazette: Official Public Record* (<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/36180/supplement/4216/data.pdf>). “For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When the attack was pinned down by enemy machine-gun fire this officer organised a platoon from headquarters personnel armed with three Lewis guns. By quick rushes he and two men got up one of the Lewis guns, which he mounted and fired himself, silencing the enemy fire, and enabling the battalion to move forward to its objective. The commanding officer having become a casualty he carried out the work of consolidation. His coolness and energy inspired all ranks.”

¹⁹⁵ S.H. Griffin to J.L. Ralston, July 23, 1940, LAC, R-112, vol. 30537, item no. “Second World War Service Files – War Dead, 1939-1947 – Personnel Record for Sydney Herbert Griffin,” *Library and Archives Canada*. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/record?app=kia&IdNumber=40232>.

Not long after the letter was received by Ralston's personal secretary, Griffin was re-enlisted and assigned, thanks to his "special qualifications" as a military officer and manager in civilian life, as the commanding officer at Camp "S," and eventually commandant of Camp "N" at Sherbrooke.

The camp site was first deemed suitable for occupation on September 24, 1940, by Major D.J. O'Donahoe, DSO, who believed that, with work, it could be made ready for occupation by October 4.¹⁹⁶ By September 30, O'Donahoe was forced to contact Brigadier-General E.B. de Panet, Director of Internment Operations, as work had not yet begun at the Sherbrooke camp due to administrative delays in Ottawa regarding payment for requested materials, including barbed wire fencing.¹⁹⁷ The funds were not confirmed until October 7, and Griffin and his men were forced to work day and night in their attempts to secure the site, with haphazard plans and an eye to the temporary.

Today (and the same is planned for succeeding days) was spent in doing everything possible to prepare for the arrival of the internees, in order to give the place some semblance of habitability.¹⁹⁸

When the internees arrived amidst a torrential downpour, torn from the relative comfort of Camp "L" and thrust into a new and unpleasant landscape, objections were a natural result. "As soon as we were lined up," wrote Seidler, "some officers started to shout at us, ordering us to do this and that. The atmosphere was extremely unpleasant. Camp 'L' was heaven in comparison."¹⁹⁹ As Griffin wrote in the war diary for October 15:

¹⁹⁶ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 1 (October 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

¹⁹⁷ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 1 (October 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

¹⁹⁸ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 1 (October 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

¹⁹⁹ Seidler, *Internment*, 90.

*Owing to the appalling conditions at this Camp, a considerable amount of severe trouble is being encountered in the form of a passive resistance strike. The internees refuse to prepare their supper and unload their bedding, fixtures etc.*²⁰⁰

To protest the conditions, a large portion of the internees took a stance of passive resistance in an attempt to assert a degree of agency over their miserable situation. They were civilian internees, not soldiers, and the majority felt no ownership over the hastily built camp or its upkeep. “At first, as we stand around in groups, we are filled with pride at having defended our point of view that the camp is unfit for human habitation,” wrote Igersheimer. “Never before have we been so united in the defence of a common cause.”²⁰¹ A written list of demands, signed by 118 of the internees, was soon submitted to Major Griffin, and the majority of internees refused to work until the requested improvements were met.²⁰²

Lycett’s recollection of the protest, conversely, came from a place of co-operation. In his interview four decades later, the former internee admitted that the transfer to Camp “N” was the only time he remembered crying, as broken as the rest of the internees by the hopelessness of their situation.²⁰³ Unlike those who participated in the hunger strike, however, Lycett, the Musketeers, and about forty other men chose to work, either as a distraction or as a means to ingratiate themselves with the new camp staff, just as they had done at Camp “L,” in the first few days following their arrival at Sherbrooke.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁰ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 1 (October 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

²⁰¹ Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 112.

²⁰² LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 1 (October 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

²⁰³ “Interview with Fred Lycett.”

²⁰⁴ Gerhard Arnhold to Winkie Henson, [October 1940], T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1464. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1464. “I gather that Fred has already given you an account of the events of the last few days - so you’ll realize that a lot has to be done to make the camp we’ve been put in reasonably inhabitable. And as our Intelligence Officer (Lieut. Mackenzie) is an old personal friend of mine - I spent a while at his place in the South of France last year - I want to make

The Radicals...started a hunger-strike which was soon followed by the whole camp excepting a small group of about 40 led by the "Three Musketeers." [The] Camp has passed a resolution of passive resistance. That is - no work unless forced. Ernst and I were nearly lynched because we worked of our own freewill and because they knew that we were leaders of the opposition.²⁰⁵

While a momentary boost to internee morale by way of bodily autonomy, the hunger strike did not last for long. Lieutenant J.A. Edmison, a young lawyer and former alderman from Montreal, as well as Assistant Adjutant of the Canadian Provost Corps at Camp "N," soon convinced the internees that their conduct would only add to anti-alien (and more specifically anti-Semitic) sentiments in Canada.²⁰⁶ The protests ceased almost immediately. As Lycett wrote to Winkie after the fact: "I drew from this the conclusion that after [two] days without food they might be hungry."²⁰⁷

November in Sherbrooke saw a shift in both the nature of the Musketeers' correspondence and in the general atmosphere of the camp. Large scale improvements were completed early on in the month, including drainage ditches, an operational mess hall, and an internee canteen furnished with a piano and reading material.²⁰⁸ On the first of the month, an article from the *Manchester Guardian* was posted up in the camp. According to Seidler:

The article was about us, the refugees sent to Canada. It said that they are 'sorry' and that everything possible will be done...Our situation was

things easier for him and get the place going despite all of the difficulties. And I think we (I and quite a group of my friends) will succeed, though Camp N will never come up to Camp L standards!"

²⁰⁵ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, October 19, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1607. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1607.

²⁰⁶ Auger, *Prisoners of the Home Front*, 29.

²⁰⁷ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, October 19, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1609. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1609.

²⁰⁸ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 2 (November 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

*reported truthfully. Also, correctly, it said that the Canadian government had no idea that refugees had been sent here as well as Nazi prisoners of war. And so it had not been prepared for us and treated us as dangerous. The blame for our situation is said to lie with the Home and War Offices.*²⁰⁹

Any news of the outside world was a welcome distraction from the isolation of the new camp, especially when it presented a positive view of the internees. In the first week at Sherbrooke, Seidler recorded instances of curious travellers—the camp was only about a hundred metres from a major road—stopping at the barbed wire fences to look inside. The internees, now dressed in a common blue uniform with a large red target on the back, stood out as a symbol of the war so far removed from the Canadian home front.

*This was probably the first real sign of the war that these Canadians had seen: until now they've probably only read about us in the newspapers. What were they thinking? That we were Nazis behind prison bars where we belong?*²¹⁰

Contact with the outside world, now solely the responsibility of Winkie Henson, continued for the Musketeers. Beyond their correspondence with the girl from Montreal, the internees' outside network had expanded to include others in the city and elsewhere in the world. Notable instances included Gottfried Reinhold Treviranus, an exiled German minister and contact of Bender and Lingen who, at the time, was thought to be living in an apartment in Côte des Neiges, Montreal, and a number of Gerhard Arnhold's "people," located in Montreal, Toronto, and as far away as New York City.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Seidler, *Internment*, 98. I was unable to locate the original article from the *Manchester Guardian*, as its archives have not been digitized.

²¹⁰ Seidler, *Internment*, 94.

²¹¹ Gerhard Arnhold to Winkie Henson, [October 1940], T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1465. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1465. Of the Musketeers, Arnhold appears most engaged in outside correspondence. In a letter to Winkie sent in November 1940, he writes: "Those

On November 12, 1940, the Musketeers were separated for the first time since arriving in Canada when Arnhold was transferred out of Camp “N” to Camp “S,” located in the old fort at Ile Sainte-Hélène, in Montreal. Neither Winkie nor Arnhold’s friends at the camp knew of his final destination, but all took it as a sign of impending release. Rumours persisted in the camp around further transfers and freedom by Easter the following year.²¹² Even with the optimism, aspects of the Musketeers’ lives were growing uneasy. In a letter written to Lycett three days after Arnhold’s departure, Winkie passed along a warning from her father:

He said that both he and my mother thought it would be advisable to discontinue writing. Well not exactly that but not to write so frequent. He says he does not know your liaison and that it looks suspicious to have mail addressed to him at the G.P.O.²¹³

The liaison in question was Private James W. Hall, a forty-two-year-old English-born veteran assigned to the boiler house at Camp “N” who had served as a stoker with the Royal Navy during the First World War.²¹⁴ Like Henson, Hall was involved in the same camp work as Lycett, though he lacked the personal connection that had been built between the older officer and the group of internees at Camp “L.”²¹⁵ The same day that Winkie wrote to the Musketeers, Major

people are Mrs. Vidal-Hall, Mr. Jacobowitz, Mr. Egmont L. Frankel (% Frankel Brothers Ltd., Eastern Avenue, Toronto), and if possible, my people in New York. P.S. Could you, please, also inform Mr. Ray Walters, 46 Wait Street, Walden (N.Y.) of this and Lieut. Mackenzie’s presence and ask him to get in contact with Hans ___ (for address see daddy)? He’s very handsome.”

²¹² T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1331.

https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1331.

²¹³ Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett and Ernst Guter, November 15, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1357-1358. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1357.

²¹⁴ Statement of Lieutenant A.F. Smith,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2022), 1498. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1498.

²¹⁵ In their testimonies during his trial, Lycett and Guter are able to identify Hall as their contact, but only Lycett shows a degree of personal acquaintance with him. Henson expresses concern about Hall’s

Griffin issued orders to the camp that it was necessary for all armed forces “to be strongly cautioned against unguarded expression in both correspondence and conversation regarding movement of troops or any other military information.”²¹⁶ Despite this, Private Hall continued to deliver mail for Lycett and the other internees following his initial recruitment to their cause in mid-October. Each time, he took the letters to the post office at Sherbrooke, but as one of only three other soldiers to do so, suspicions were easily aroused. For a man in military uniform to have mail sent to a civilian post office was unusual—what was he avoiding in bypassing the camp system? Nonetheless, the letters continued: Winkie began addressing the letters to “Mr. Hall,” and advised Lycett and the others to send their letters to the offices of E.F. Walter, where she worked in downtown Montreal, rather than the Henson family home.²¹⁷

2.6 The Girl in the Photograph

If any of the Musketeers had a letter to send, they would give it to Lycett, who in turn passed it to Private Hall—along with the price of postage—either directly or by way of his locker in the boiler house. Correspondence passed through the boundaries of the camp via this method on a regular basis, a continuation of the process at Camp “L.” It was especially important for Lycett to maintain communication with Winkie, as each subsequent letter to the girl in Montreal became more intimate:

reliability in a later letter, confirming the limited contact he had with the core group of friends involved in the letter-writing campaign.

²¹⁶ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 2 (November 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

²¹⁷ Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett and Ernst Guter, November 15, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1357-1358. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1357.

*Please send me a photo of yourself. The 'dreamier-looking' the better. Close up if possible. I've almost fallen in love with the girl in the photo Daddie showed me.*²¹⁸

Sixteen was often the minimum age for courtship in the 1940s, with work marking the beginning of meetings and outings with boys.²¹⁹ Suitors were introduced via family, friends, or neighbours, but also heavily supervised. Winkie may have known young men around the age of the Musketeers from work at E.F. Walter or through her older brothers—her eldest sibling was just a year younger than Lycett—but the war and her own shyness kept her from forming any lasting connection.²²⁰ The internment camp, however, presented a unique opportunity for connection: here was a group of young men, available and interested in corresponding; a literal captive audience. Once Winkie and Lycett broke from Corporal Henson's parental surveillance and the means of communication shifted, so did the intensity of their long-distance "romance." On October 25, 1940, Lycett wrote from the boiler house:

*8-00 PM ----, 9-00 PM ----, 10-00 PM ----, 11-00 PM, 12-00 PM ---- and then it came. If you could only have seen Gerry and me looking anxiously at our watches waiting for the Stoker to come on duty so that we might read your letter before going to bed, and then to have watched me opening the envelope with trembling, excited fingers (No! I am not dramatising) and read to Gerry your opening lines. You would have smiled had you seen us and observed our "childish" pleasure. NOTA BENE:- (Enough of this romancing, Fred. You must be getting pretty weak in your old age to let yourself go like that.)*²²¹

²¹⁸ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, October 19, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1610. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1610.

²¹⁹ Denyse Baillargeon, "Beyond Romance: Courtship and Marriage in Montreal between the Wars," in *Rethinking Canada History: The Promise of Women's History*, eds., Veronica Strong-Boag, Mona Gleason, and Adele Perry (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2002), 48.

²²⁰ Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett, November 26, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1361. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1361. Winkie notes that "[no] gentleman (shall I say) ever had a real true picture of me. I've always ducked [sic] away from cameras as much as I could. That is where boys were concerned."

²²¹ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, October 25, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1612. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1610. This letter is unusual in that it is

Here, the letters take on an explicitly romantic tone. Lycett describes his midnight anticipation of word from Winkie, opening her letter with “trembling, excited fingers,” and references his “childish pleasure” and “romancing” language. Winkie responded on October 28 in a similar, if far simpler, manner:

I wish I could get you out of the Camp for next Saturday Night. It's quite an important night for me. I graduate and receive [sic] my diplomas and then we have a dance after. I'm badly in need of an escort. All the boys that I know are away in the Army & don't get leave again until Christmas. Well I guess I'll have to invite one of my beloved brothers if I go.²²²

Winkie's priorities, unlike the individual intimacy of Lycett's writing, are found in shared social experiences, such as dances. Later letters skirt around more personal topics, betraying further gaps in age and experience. On November 26, Winkie asked Lycett to tell her the “intimate facts”—rumours—that he had learned about her while in the camp. Lycett's response was tentative, uncertain of the exact meaning.

INTIMATE FACTS is a broad expression and can cover so many details that I dare not risk expressing myself untill [sic] you ask for something more explicit. I can assure you that Intimate details give me so much scope that I can easily fil [sic] 12 pages. I mean to say - ie: I dare say that at 17 you have been kissed but I doubt wether [sic] you have been “WELL + TRULY KISSED”. I will copy your request here so that you can see what you asked me and in your next letter you can clarify that request and I will be only too pleased to satisfy you.²²³

typewritten, a fact which Lycett apologies for. A number of other versions of this letter exist in draft form.

²²² Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett, October 28, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1343. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1343.

²²³ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, [November 1940], T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1365. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1365.

While Winkie is concerned with her image in the camp, Lycett interprets the question on an intimate, potentially sexual level. He is flirtatious and complimentary, but is also careful to not be too overt.

On December 16, three days after sending a photograph of herself signed “Yours with love, Winkie,” Winkie wrote about her rivalry with another young woman at work.²²⁴

*Your letter addressed to the office has certainly set the new girl wondering. Her boyfriend was moved to Newfoundland and she received a letter the same time that I received [sic] yours. She is always raving about her boy-friend and I'm non-committal. So when your letter came I rushed off to read it downstairs. She came down after with her letter and said that I had got a boy-friend after all. I said “maybe” and let it go at that.*²²⁵

She also responded to Lycett's question of clarification:

I will explain that so-called mystery in my last letter. I was only kidding. You said that you had woven a net of intimate facts ~~about~~ [sic] around me. I said that you might tell me what they are. Again I quote “There's no telling what I might find out about myself.” Well - let's skip that subject.

Again, the difference in experience and expectation between the two is clear: Winkie, a teenage girl in wartime Montreal, is concerned more with how she is perceived by those around her. She is pleased with the potential status of a “boy-friend,” but does not appear ready for what that may

²²⁴ Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett, November 26, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1363. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1363. Winkie had discussed her with Lycett in the past, noting in particular of the girls' love of the Toronto Maple Leafs in an office of staunch Montreal Canadiens supporters. See *Fig. I and II*.

²²⁵ Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett, December 16, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1373. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1373.

entail. Conversely, Lycett, while polite, is interested in the excitement of intimacy, however fleeting it might be.

December in Sherbrooke brought with it tragedy and the bitter winds of a Canadian winter. On December 3, 1940, a camp guard—forty-two-year-old Scotsman Private Neil Fleming—was hit and killed by the afternoon train from Quebec City to Sherbrooke, unable to see or hear the engine over the high winds and blowing snow.²²⁶ On the day of Private Fleming’s funeral, a list of 156 internees meant to return to England—mostly students and those interested in joining the British Pioneer Corps—was published in the camp.²²⁷ Then, on the afternoon of December 7, Major Griffin suffered a heart attack. In his diary, Harry Seidler noted that while Griffin was “ill,” the Commandant’s Adjutant, Captain Jules Thibaudeau, assumed temporary control over the camp.²²⁸

On December 16, the boiler house was cordoned off to make way for the internees headed for freedom. Those who were to stay behind rushed to pass along the names of friends and relatives in England. There was a bittersweet feeling in the camp, found too in the records of the internees—though camp life was forced upon them, the insular world it had created was new and unique. In some cases, friendships formed there would last a lifetime. As the train pulled out of Sherbrooke camp, the men sang the unofficial camp song, penned by internee Fritz Grundland (later Freddy Grant) in an English transit camp:

You’ll get used to it,

²²⁶ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 3 (December 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

²²⁷ Seidler, *Internment*, 107. Harry records that his name was on the list, but as he hadn’t yet received permission from his parents to return to England, he eventually refused to leave the camp and remained there with his brother for several more months.

²²⁸ Seidler, *Internment*, 107.

*You'll get used to it
The first year is the worst year,
Then you'll get used to it
You can scream and you can shout,
They'll never let you out
It serves you right, you So and So,
Why weren't you naturalized Eskimo?²²⁹*

On Christmas Eve, the internees decorated the shower room in Building No. 1 with blankets and green twigs and served cake, cookies, candies, and coffee. As the War Diary entry for December 25, 1940, noted, “[the] spirit throughout the Camp was excellent.”²³⁰ Fred spent the evening “under the soothing influence of a Box of Cigars” and the classical records played on a friend’s gramophone, and in his letter written December 27, 1940, described to Winkie his plans to return to Canada after his release:

3 months of corresponding with you has made me not only admire your style & charm, but also given me a desire to meet you. Already I am planning to stay in Canada or at least return as soon as I am naturalised.²³¹

Months earlier, Winkie had given Lycett and the Musketeers a “standing invitation” to visit her in Montreal the moment of their release from internment.²³²

²²⁹ Seidler, *Internment*, 109; Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 94. The song was initially written at a camp in Huyton, in England. According to Koch, “Freddy Grant recalls that ‘by October 15 when the camp broke up, everyone was singing it, including the guards, and it remained our camp song throughout internment.’”

²³⁰ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 3 (December 1940), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

²³¹ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, December 27, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1450. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1450.

²³² Winkie Henson to Fred Lycett, Gerhard Arnhold, and Ernst Guter, [September 1940], T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1530. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1530. Months earlier, Winkie had given Lycett and the Musketeers a “standing invitation” to visit her in Montreal the moment of their release from internment: “And don’t forget when your releases come through (I sincerely hope they will) & you get to Montreal come in and see us. I will try to show the highlights of Montreal. That is a standing invitation at anytime (I really mean it.) In the meantime don’t get too down-hearted. Remember “thumbs-up.” We can at least be thankful that we haven’t bombs dropping around us.”

*Canada - to me - presents enormous scope in the industrial field and though the time to achieve is now, I am quite aware that Canada's development after the war is already a foregone conclusion. For one as ambitious as I, coupled with my technical knowledge of Production there will be much scope in this New World. In the meantime I must concentrate on (1) Helping the Empire in its hour of need, and (2) Obtaining my Naturalisation. These are of vital importance to me and when they are achieved I can turn my eyes West and look toward the future. Enough of this! A too serious note is likely to frighten you off altogether.*²³³

Nonetheless, he signed the letter, "Yours with love, Fred." In the initial draft of the letter, Exhibit No. 34, he ended the letter with a post-script: "P.S. I left out 'Sweetheart'—I'll see what I can do about it in my next letter. X."²³⁴ In the final draft, intended for Winkie, this was amended: "So! Now. Damsel sweet and fair, I must close. Au revoir! Sweetheart."²³⁵

Fred Lycett received his last letter from Winkie, as he claimed, at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, 1940. That night, Camp "N" played host to a fancy dress party of cobbled-together costumes and celebrations with ice cream, cakes, and Coca-Cola, though Lycett was still expected to attend to his boiler house duties.²³⁶ On January 1, 1941, he wrote a response, complimenting Winkie on her description of the dress she wore to her office Christmas party—

²³³ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, December 27, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1453. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1453.

²³⁴ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, December 27, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1381. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1381.

²³⁵ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, December 27, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1457. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1457.

²³⁶ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, January 21, 1941, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1394. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1394.

“Sweetheart! You must have looked like an angel in that Powder Blue dress. Oh! What wouldn’t I give to have seen you.”—and signed off, “Yours with Love. F.L.”²³⁷

2.7 A Favour in the New Year

The new year proved a challenge for the Musketeers. Shortly after Christmas, Private Hall was transferred from the camp and the internees were again left without a courier. As he had done upon their initial arrival at Camp “N,” Lycett took it upon himself to make new postal arrangements. Late in the evening of January 24, 1941, Lycett approached Private D.J. Home of the Canadian Provost Corps with a proposition:

Lycett: Would you like to do me a favour?”

Home: Possibly.²³⁸

Lycett knew that Home was planning to travel to Montreal the next day, and it would be simple enough for him to contact Winkie without any questions being raised. The conversation between them lasted less than five minutes. In the end, the internee handed the soldier an envelope containing two letters—his own, written January 21, and that of John Cargher, written January 22—and a nickel for postage. Pinechas Ottfried “John” Cargher was the son of an English rabbi and his German wife. After the death of his mother and his father’s remarriage, Cargher spent an unsettled youth travelling across Europe, living in boarding schools and with relatives until he

²³⁷ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, January 1, 1941, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1388. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1388.

²³⁸ “Testimony of Private D. Home,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1295. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1295.

was sixteen and settled in London.²³⁹ Though he had been trained as a toolmaker, at the time of his internment he was working as the manager of a ballet company, *Les Ballet Trois Arts*, in the city. Lycett described their new acquaintance in a letter to Winkie from November 19, 1940:

The loss of Gerry has necessitated the addition of the fourth Musketeer. There are four really, you know. D'Artagnan, Aramis, Athos, Porthos. The fact that the only name left at our disposal—Porthos—is marred by Johnny being as unlike Porthos as you can possibly imagine. Height: 6'3" slim, almost feminine and remarkably quiet. Age: 22. And wears glasses. He is the manager of his own ballet company in England - "Les Trois Arts" and as such, used to the company of beautiful girls. His verdict, when shown your photo, was more than favourable. Ernst and I guo (Oh Dear! What is wrong with me to-day?) guard you jealously and refuse to "share" you with him.²⁴⁰

Cargher's writing was a far cry from the personal style that had built up between Winkie and the original Musketeers over the past few months. His first letter, written late at night on Christmas Day, hardly touched on his life at all; rather, he spent twelve pages explaining, in vivid detail, the value and mechanics of the ballet.²⁴¹

The content of the letters sent on January 24 was nothing extraordinary: Cargher had devoted two tightly-written pages of theatre recommendations for Winkie after seeing an advertisement that the Russian ballet was to come to Montreal, while Fred described the celebrations of the

²³⁹ "Interview with John Cargher Part 1 of 4," THE HEHR ARCHIVE, November 15, 2018, YouTube Video, 25:43, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGjGkkf4n_Y. Cargher was born in Stoke-Newington, England, but after the death of his mother from tuberculosis, spent much of his childhood in a sanatorium on the island in the North Sea. In his youth he attended boarding school in the mountains between Germany and Czechoslovakia, then moved to Spain to live with his aunt and uncle after his father could no longer afford tuition. He later lived in Berlin, then London.

²⁴⁰ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, November 19, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1427. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1427.

²⁴¹ John Cargher to Winkie Henson, December 25, 1940, T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1438-1449. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1438. Recognizing his obsession, the letter was signed, "Balletomaniacally yours, John Cargher."

New Year at the camp, expressed his concerns over changes in the guard, and promised a long letter once he could secure the permanent aid of another camp guard. He signed off with two post-scripts:

P.S.: Did you get my letter of the 28th?

P.S.2: If you like you can write to me officially so long as you do not mention our illicit correspondence and treat me as an old friend. One other fellow has a girl in Quebec and she has no difficulties.²⁴² There really is no risk.²⁴³

The relationship between Winkie and the Musketeers, and especially with Fred Lycett, was at a turning point. Now was the opportunity for their illicit correspondence to become legitimate through official postal channels. All parties involved recognized the risk of their actions, at least in the short term. They now had a decision to make: carry on with their secret correspondence, make it “official,” or cease communication altogether.

²⁴² Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 136. Here Lycett is likely referencing another internment camp romance, that between internee Peter Field, a twenty-six-year-old bookseller, and Pauline “Blondie” Perrault, the fifteen-year-old granddaughter of former Bellechasse M.P. Charles Alphonse Fournier. Field was also interned at Camps “L” and “N” during 1940 and 1941, and became acquainted with Perrault as occasionally walked by the camp at Cove Fields via the nearby pedestrian walkway. The two exchanged letters throughout Field’s internment, and even arranged for his temporary release. After the war, however, the romance did not last: as Koch put it, “Pauline grew up.”

²⁴³ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, January 21, 1941, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1395. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1395.

CHAPTER III: THE COURTS MARTIAL OF HENSON AND HALL

As Sigurdur Gylfi Magnússon has noted, “nearly all cases which microhistorians deal with have one thing in common; they all caught the attention of the authorities, thus establishing their archival existence.”²⁴⁴ Just before midnight on January 24, 1941, on a cold and cloudy night in Sherbrooke, Camp Sergeant Major W.V. MacIntosh hand-delivered an unsealed envelope addressed to “Miss W. Henson, 417 Peter Street, Montreal” to Lieutenant J.A. Edmison, acting Intelligence Officer for Camp “N.”²⁴⁵ MacIntosh stated that the envelope had been given to him by Private D.J. Home, one of the guards under his command, who in turn had received it from “Internee No. 222.”²⁴⁶

Lieutenant John Alexander Edmison was Assistant Adjutant and had been made Camp Intelligence Officer on January 1, 1941.²⁴⁷ He was a thirty-seven-year-old lawyer and alderman from Montreal, educated at Queen’s and McGill and interested in prison reform.²⁴⁸ As Eric Koch wrote, Edmison was a “singularly decent individual whose sympathies and motives were beyond reproach”²⁴⁹ Well-respected in the camp, Edmison was known for his deft handling of the hunger

²⁴⁴ Scott W. Stern, “Big Questions in Microhistory,” *Journal of Women's History* 32, no. 2 (2020), 129. DOI:10.1353/jowh.2020.0016.

²⁴⁵ “Weather,” *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, January 25, 1941, *BAnQ.qc.ca*. According to the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, the temperature dipped to a low of negative twenty-five degrees that night. Other headlines included stories of escaped Nazi POWs from the internment camp in New Brunswick, reports of the German bombing campaign in England, and continued fears of a Nazi invasion of the British Isles.

²⁴⁶ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 140.

²⁴⁷ After Lieutenant A.H. Mackenzie was transferred to No. 4 District Depot on November 30, 1940, the role of Intelligence Officer at Camp “N” was filled by Captain J.A. Milne of British Intelligence. It is presumed that Edmison took over from Milne.

²⁴⁸ Edmison, then an alderman in Montreal, attended the anti-Fifth Columnist rally at Atwater Market in May of 1940.

²⁴⁹ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 128.

strike months earlier, as well as his presence at disciplinary hearings for both guards and internees alike.²⁵⁰

Sergeant Major William Valentine “Mac” MacIntosh was, in many ways, Edmison’s foil. He was a used-car dealer from Sherbrooke in civilian life, described in an unflattering light by Koch as a tall, stocky man with “pale blue eyes and a moustache which was wrongly conceived.” Since his assignment to Camp “N” in September of 1940, MacIntosh had gained a reputation as a bad-tempered bully.²⁵¹ The unique space of the internment camp worked to his advantage: thrust into a position of power, MacIntosh was able to wield his own form of justice and scrutiny over those in his charge. Walter Igersheimer paints a vivid picture of his introduction to the officer in

Blatant Injustice:

[A] huge soldier, tall and broad, with a round, almost bald, head enters the hall. His face is coarse. Big pouches sag under his eyes; a brutal nose whose nostrils begin to agitate whenever he flies into a temper leads down to a long upper lip on which a thin strand of moustache runs horizontally away to both sides. The hard, cruel mouth draws the lip into a thin bitter line, and it makes one sick to see him bare his foul teeth in a hoarse grin of vicious mockery. This is our new sergeant major.”²⁵²

Born in Scotland in 1892, MacIntosh was the son of an ex-Provost officer.²⁵³ Patriotic to his adopted Canada—he immigrated in 1929 after serving with the Southern Argyles during the Great War—and distinctly anti-English, the sergeant major demanded the respect of those in his charge.²⁵⁴ He treated the internees the same way he commanded his troops; for MacIntosh, there

²⁵⁰ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 127-8.

²⁵¹ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 136.

²⁵² Igersheimer and Darragh, *Blatant Injustice*, 108.

²⁵³ “Maj. MacIntosh: Brome Resident Saw Service in Two World Wars,” *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, January 7, 1957, *BAnQ.qc.ca*. MacIntosh served as a captain with the Southern Argyles during the war.

²⁵⁴ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 137-8. “Sergeant-Major MacIntosh had another human quality: he was a Canadian patriot. This took the traditional form of being anti-English, a trait possibly due to his Scottish

was no difference between civilians and soldiers, and he would not tolerate insubordination from either. A month before the discovery of Lycett's letters to Winkie, MacIntosh had given a lecture at Sherbrooke on the dangers of internees sending mail through unofficial channels: both Privates Hall and Home had attended.²⁵⁵ Later, MacIntosh would state that he had been "suspicious of Lycett for some time" prior to the discovery of the letters and had him placed under surveillance.²⁵⁶

The discovery of the illicit correspondence was just one more incident at the end of a month rife with interpersonal conflict between camp guards and internees. In internee memoirs, Sergeant Major MacIntosh and his Provost guards were often singled out as the instigators in these instances, threatening the internees, barring pay, and hurling insults when contradictory orders were not followed.²⁵⁷ The war diary for February 1941 included an anonymous statement, left by an internee bound for release in England, that described arbitrarily applied strictness, "rude and appalling language," and anti-Semitic remarks made in the absence of the "strict and exacting" justice of Major Griffin in the weeks leading up to their departure.²⁵⁸ Major Ellwood's entry in the February 1941 war diary is telling of the treatment:

origins...When we got to know the sergeant-major better, we would occasionally take the liberty of answering his questions with a clipped 'Yes, mein Fuehrer,' instead of the obligatory 'Yessir.' He seemed to enjoy that."

²⁵⁵ "Address to the Court by the Accused," T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1499. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1499.

²⁵⁶ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 5 (February 1941), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke, appendix no. 3.

²⁵⁷ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 5 (February 1941), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

²⁵⁸ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 5 (February 1941), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke, appendix no. 2. "CSM [Company Sergeant Major MacIntosh] openly tries to bully the internees by stressing that he and he alone runs the camp, taking or threatening disciplinary action, such as barring internees from doing paid work for ninety days and the like, actions which are, it is believed, entirely outside his province."

In spite of the fact that a certain percentage may be heartily Anti-Nazi, it cannot be forgotten that they are German born Jews. Jews still retain much of the same instincts they had 1940 years ago and these in particular are very apt to try and take advantage of priveleges [sic] which if once given result in demands for more. The combination of this insidious instinct and the well known characteristics of the German habit of breaking every pledge ever made, is not a particularly easy to handle except by maintaining strict discipline and rigid enforcement of Camp rules and regulations.²⁵⁹

3.1 Preparing for the Courts Martial

On the morning of January 25, 1941, Lieutenant J.A. Edmison took possession of the personal effects of Lycett, Guter, Arnhold, and Cargher. The majority of the evidence from the camp came from Fred Lycett who, despite telling Winkie that he destroyed each letter after reading it, was found with over twenty pieces of correspondence, including copies and drafts of letters.²⁶⁰ A week later, on February 3, 1941, Corporal René Jean Bélec of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police arrived at the door of 734 Seigneurs Street, Montreal. He carried with him a warrant, issued by Judge Jules Demarais, to search for any evidence that pertained to the illicit correspondence between Winkie and the Musketeers at Internment Camps “L” and “N”. Bélec uncovered fourteen documents, including letters, envelopes, a canteen ticket, and two hand-drawn portraits of Fred Lycett, kept in the teenage girl’s bedroom and a cabinet in the dining

²⁵⁹ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 5 (February 1941), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

²⁶⁰ Fred Lycett to Winkie Henson, November 19, 1940, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1425. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1425. “As far as Ernst and I are concerned, wild horses would not drag your address from me, and as I destroy all letters from you immediately and have no written record of your address, the authorities would have little chance of finding out who you are, provided you stop using your envelopes.” No evidence was found with Cargher, a single card was found with Guter, and only a personal diary was found with Arnhold.

room of the home.²⁶¹ Two days later, Emily Louisa Henson—Winkie’s mother—handed over an additional three pieces of evidence for her husband’s trial.²⁶²

On February 7, 1941, at Camp “A” Farnham, the case of the correspondence between Winkie and the Musketeers appeared in the camp war diary, written by Major E.D.B. Kippen:

*Capt. Arthur White, Staff Capt. of the A.A. & Q.M.C., telephoned this morning to look out for an illicit letter traffic in the Camp. It is understood that a Corporal and a Private have been caught carrying on such a traffic in one of the other Internment Camps in the district, and that it was suspected that something of this kind was going on in this Camp. A complete investigation however failed to disclose any sign of such a thing. Great precautions are taken in this camp, but this is a difficult matter to control.*²⁶³

Almost a month later, on February 20, 1941, a letter was received by the District Officer Commanding (DOC) of Military District No. 4 from Captain Maurice-Charles Lalonde. Lalonde, a Montreal-based lawyer, veteran of the First World War, and the former chief of provincial police, had requested a district court martial for the case.²⁶⁴

Until the end of the Second World War, the Canadian military justice system was largely the same as that used in the United Kingdom: courts were conducted by military personnel with no right of appeal to civilian tribunals, and offences were defined by the British Army Act of 1881.

²⁶¹ “Testimony of Corporal R.J. Bélec,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1565. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1565. See Fig. III.

²⁶² “Testimony of Miss Winnifred E. Henson,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1566. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1566.

²⁶³ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,397, vol. 15 (February 1941), War Diary of Internment Camp Farnham.

²⁶⁴ Captain M.C. Lalonde to Brigadier R.J. Orde, February 18, 1941, T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1511. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1511.

Courts martial fell under four categories: District, General, Field General, and Militia General.²⁶⁵ The cases of Henson and Hall were district courts martial, which concerned private soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and warrant officers. In a district trial, “the powers of punishment,” in terms of sentencing, were limited to a maximum of two years imprisonment.²⁶⁶ During a district court martial, a panel of three or more officers sat in judgment, while the accused was represented by an officer who may have received some legal training, though many simply relied on manuals like the *Handbook of Canadian Military Law* to guide the proceedings. Some courts martial were quick, others were not; the complexity of the case and the competency of the officers involved often determined the length of a trial.

3.2 The Trials of Corporal Henson and Private Hall

The courts martial trials of Corporal Henson and Private Hall occurred on the same day—March 3, 1941—at the Montreal Rifles Association building on Cathcart Street in Montreal. Both men were charged under Section 40 of the Army Act, a catch-all charge for miscellaneous offences committed by members of the Canadian military. According to the Singer and Langford *Handbook of Canadian Military Law*, published in 1929 and reprinted in 1939, “[an] offence, in order, properly, to come within the scope of the section, therefore, must satisfy the following [three] conditions: (1) The accused must be a person subject to military law; (2) The conduct, complained of, must be to the prejudice of, BOTH, good order and military discipline; (3) The offence must be one, which is not a civil offence, and for which no specific provision has been

²⁶⁵ Singer and Langford, *Handbook of Canadian Military Law*, 75-77. General courts martial tried both officers and soldiers, and were used for improvising more severe forms of punishment; Field General courts martial took place in foreign countries; Militia General courts martial involved those not subject to military law, including civilians and foreigners.

²⁶⁶ Singer and Langford, *Handbook of Canadian Military Law*, 74.

made in any other section of the Army Act.”²⁶⁷ Common offences under Section 40 included the giving of false cheques, sleeping outside of billets, using a government vehicle for personal purposes, and borrowing money from a subordinate.²⁶⁸

According to R. Arthur McDonald, Canadian lawyer, legal historian, and officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force and Canadian Forces, “the procedures for disciplining the military forces of a nation are a direct reflection of the society that the forces were created to defend.”²⁶⁹ As such, the close reading of court records and their evidence provides not only first-hand insight with input from both the prosecutors and prosecuted but also a reflection, if limited, of the society in which they were tried. Three major Canadian works have drawn from the rich source base of military courts martial cases in the past twenty years. Paul Jackson’s *One of the Boys: Homosexuality in the Military during World War II*, for example, published by McGill-Queen’s University Press in 2004, uses courts martial records, as well as interviews with former servicemen, to examine homosexuality within the Canadian armed forces of the Second World War. Jackson argues that court martials were used not only as punishment but also as deterrents through the use of dehumanizing and denigrating language of the same-sex experience. Theresa Iacobelli’s monograph, *Death of Deliverance: Canadian Courts Martial in the Great War*, published by UBC Press in 2014, explores courts martial of the First World War with a specific focus on cases of cowardice and desertion. Iacobelli uses these records to challenge the notion that military law was harsh and inflexible during wartime and works to humanize the sources by giving voice to both the accuser and the accused. In her introduction, she quotes historians

²⁶⁷ Singer and Langford, *Handbook of Canadian Military Law*, 28.

²⁶⁸ Singer and Langford, *Handbook of Canadian Military Law*, 459.

²⁶⁹ R.A. McDonald, “The Trail of Discipline: The Historical Roots of Canadian Military Law,” *Canadian Forces JAG Journal* 1, no. 1 (1985), 1. <https://military-justice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/The-Trail-of-Discipline.pdf>.

Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Mitchinson, stating that courts martial case files “have the power to expose the words of authorities and experts, and to recover the lives of the less powerful.”²⁷⁰

Most recently, Matthew Barrett’s *Scandalous Conduct: Canadian Officer Courts Martial, 1914-45*, published in 2022, examines courts martial records to understand the intersection of class and masculinity in the context of honour and dishonour among officers of the Canadian military.

Notably, Barrett presents the courts martial cases as performances; attempts by the officers charged to be perceived in a specific way, namely as idealized masculine figures in the face of attacks on their reputations.

The trial for Corporal Henson began at 10:00 am, presided over by Lt. Colonel E.L. Caldwell of the Royal Canadian Dragoons; Private Hall’s trial began just twenty minutes later. The brevity of the courts martial trials can be attributed to the absence of both military and civilian witnesses in the courtroom on March 3, 1940: Lieutenant J.A. Edmison was questioned, for example, on February 10; Winkie Henson, on February 11; the Musketeers on February 12. The prosecutor for the cases was Captain M.C. Lalonde, while the defending officers for Henson and Hall were Lieutenants J.C. Klock and A.F. Smith respectively, both of the Veterans’ Guard of Canada.

Caldwell: The accused No. D-110665, Cpl. Bernard Cyril Henson, Veterans’ Guard of Canada, a soldier of the Canadian Army, placed on active service, is charged with conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline [A.A. S. 40) in that he, while serving at Internment Camp “L”, situated in the City of Quebec, P.Q., at diverse times during the months of September and October, 1940, was a party to the exchange of correspondence between No. 222, Fred Lycett, No. 68, George Gerhard Arnhold and No. 223, Ernst Guter, alien enemies interned in said Camp, and one Winifred (“Winks” or otherwise “Winkie”) Henson, of Montreal, P.Q., otherwise than through official channels. How do you plead?

²⁷⁰ Teresa Iacobelli, *Death or Deliverance: Canadian Courts Martial in the Great War* (Victoria: UBC Press, 2013), 6.

Henson: Guilty, sir.²⁷¹

The arguments made for and against the accused in both trials were straightforward. For Corporal Henson, Lalonde argued that his was a case of mismatched authority and attempts at personal gain on either side; for Private Hall, his defence claimed it to be one of “thoughtlessness and neglect” following the “bad example of a superior officer.”²⁷²

Smith: Possibly a man of Henson's mentality was led astray by the hope of obtaining some material gain from these Prisoners upon their release when the War was over, without fully appreciating the serious consequences which might result from his efforts on their behalf.²⁷³

The Musketeers, prisoners in Canada, were described as “men of education” and “persons of substance,” who had taken advantage of Corporal Henson and his daughter, and later Private Hall, using them as “unwitting tools” to communicate with persons outside of the camps.²⁷⁴ Special attention was paid to attempts to obtain the address of “Mr. Treviranus” of Côte des Neiges, Montreal, for internees Lingen and Bender, as well as Arnhold’s extensive contacts with the outside world. Questions asked of Winkie Henson and the Musketeers during the court proceedings did not concern the content of their letters past these connections, at least not beyond references to canteen ticket stubs, photographs, and artists’ sketches of the internees

²⁷¹ “Charge Sheet for Corporal Bernard Cyril Henson,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1550. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1550. Lieutenant Colonel E.L. Caldwell of the Royal Canadian Dragoons was the President presiding over both court martial cases.

²⁷² “Statement of Lieutenant A.F. Smith,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1498. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1498.

²⁷³ “Memorandum to the Adjutant-General,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1545.

²⁷⁴ “Memorandum to the Adjutant-General,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1545.

confiscated from the Henson home. Officials focused rather on the action of the correspondence; *what* was sent mattered less than *how* it was. Rules had been broken, threatening order and discipline, and needed to be rectified.

In their defence, both Henson and Hall argued ignorance. Henson admitted knowledge of the first three letters sent between Winkie and the Musketeers, as well as his self-assigned censorship duties over the illicit correspondence, but emphasized his daughter's disobedience afterwards:

Henson: On my return to Montreal, after having given my daughter personally three letters from said internees, I told my daughter that this correspondence must cease from now on. She received a letter from Sherbrooke about ten days after and I then strictly forbade her to answer that correspondence or have anything more to do with it. Whereupon, she must have written back to Sherbrooke and had her address changed to a place of business so that I would not know that the correspondence was continuing.²⁷⁵

Hall's statement followed a similar trajectory, including his ignorance of the official rules of the camp and his understanding that the letters, at least those sent between Winkie and Lycett, were nothing more than "girl and boy correspondence."²⁷⁶

Hall: I just want to make a statement how this thing occurred. My duties at Camp 'N' Sherbrooke, brought me in continual contact with internee Lycett. When I had been in the Camp about two weeks, he told me he had previously corresponded with Miss Henson in Quebec, and he asked me as a favor, would I mail his letters to her; this, I agreed to do. I asked him who Miss Henson was. He said she was Corporal Henson's daughter. This correspondence went on until 1st January, 1941. I was about the Christmas holiday, I listened to a lecture Sgt. Major MacIntosh gave to his Provost Corps in Sherbrooke, and he stressed the fact in his

²⁷⁵ "Statement of Corporal B.C. Henson," T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1557. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1557.

²⁷⁶ "Address to the Court by the Accused," T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1499. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1499.

lecture about internees sending out letters otherwise than through official channels. I fully realized that what I had been doing was wrong; from the 1st January to the 24th January, when I left the camp, I neither took out nor brought in letters to the internees. I received no bribes, no promises, nor anything relating to this correspondence. It was to be purely girl and boy correspondence. During my stay in Sherbrooke, I never received any instructions about the danger of this sort of thing.²⁷⁷

In the end, both soldiers were found to be guilty; any potential threat to security had been “nipped in the bud.”²⁷⁸ Henson, as the instigator of the correspondence, was sentenced to one year of imprisonment; Hall, guilty of “thoughtlessness and neglect,” to 120 days of detention.²⁷⁹ Back at the camp, internees Arnhold, Guter, and Lycett, united once more, suffered their punishment together.²⁸⁰ According to Koch, the Musketeers spent twenty-eight days in solitary confinement. Under Article 54 Geneva Convention, prisoners of war could not be held in detention for more than thirty days.²⁸¹ Their heads were first shaved, and their shoelaces and watches confiscated by guards.²⁸² The confinement cells, located in the camp luggage room, were regularly described by internees as unfit for human habitation.²⁸³ They were small and hot,

²⁷⁷ “Address to the Court by the Accused,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1499. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1499.

²⁷⁸ “Memorandum to the Adjutant-General,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2023), 1545. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1545.

²⁷⁹ “Memorandum – District Court-Martial,” T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1505. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1505.

²⁸⁰ It is unknown whether John Cargher suffered the same punishment as the other internees following the Henson and Hall trials.

²⁸¹ “Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Geneva, 27 July 1929,” International Committee of the Red Cross, July 27, 1929, Article 54, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/INTRO/305>.

²⁸² Seidler, *Internment*, 116-117. The internees would likely have had their hair shorn off, as Marcell Seidler did when he received three days’ arrest (starting January 22, 1941) for using a fire-extinguishing bucket for his morning wash; Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 142. Koch notes that the shoelaces were taken as a precaution to prevent suicide.

²⁸³ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 139.

stale air left sweltering due to a broken heating unit.²⁸⁴ A bucket with disinfectant served as a toilet, and a wooden plank as a bed.²⁸⁵ “There is no daylight in the cells,” wrote Harry Seidler, whose older brother, Marcel, was placed in detention for three days after using a fire-extinguishing bucket for his morning wash. “The prisoners cannot read or write because not even the electric light in the hallway outside the cells is sufficient for this.”²⁸⁶ Even so, Guter managed to read a copy of *Anthony Adverse*, a gift from Lieutenant Edmison, while imprisoned.²⁸⁷

3.3 Footnote to Internment

On April 15, 1941, a month into the sentences of Corporal Henson and Private Hall, and after the release of the Musketeers from solitary confinement, Captain White of Military District No. 4 telephoned Camp “N” to relay the news of Major Griffin’s death that morning, a result of the attack of coronary thrombosis he had suffered in December of 1940. The next day, orders were issued for a ceremonial parade, and the internee representatives requested to attend. On April 17, a “short but impressive ceremony” was held in Griffin’s memory. As Major Ellwood noted in the camp war diary, “[it] is significant of the respect in which [Griffin] was held by the internees, that without exception they all turned out for the ceremony.”²⁸⁸

²⁸⁴ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 142.

²⁸⁵ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 139.

²⁸⁶ Seidler, *Internment*, 116.

²⁸⁷ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 136. George Brandt, another internee who spent time in solitary confinement, described the experience as “an interesting study in claustrophobia.” Brandt “put [his] eyesight at risk reading by very sparse light a book about the war in China.”

²⁸⁸ LAC, RG-24, Vol. 15,400, vol. 7 (April 1941), War Diary of Internment Camp Sherbrooke.

CHAPTER IV: MEMORY AND MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

4.1 Historiography of an Illicit Correspondence

References to the court martial cases of Corporal Henson and Private Hall, as well as the larger story of illicit correspondence between Winkie Henson and the Musketeers, have appeared in several works in the historiography of Canadian internment, though never as the primary focus. It is one of many stories, its contours unknown or misremembered, recounted in detail or not, that make up the histories of internment. Julius Pfeiffer, a former internee interviewed in the late 1980s, recounted:

At the Sherbrooke camp, the internees befriended a guard, gave him gifts and liquor and persuaded him to bring his daughter to the camp after he boasted how beautiful she was. The guard was sympathetic to the internees' situation, and soon the daughter was carrying letters and gifts smuggled out of the camp. Letters went to influential people, including one to Lionel de Rothschild, a member of the banking family, who had connections in the British Government.²⁸⁹

In Koch's *Deemed Suspect*, the story is recounted through the combined interviews of Ernst Guter, Fred Kutter, and Lieutenant J.A. Edmison, as well as Koch's own research into the camp war diaries.²⁹⁰

The trio [the Musketeers] had made friends with one of the guards, Corporal Bernard Henson, nicknamed Barney, who at one time must have mentioned to them that he had a daughter called Winnifred, nicknamed Winkie. The mention of Winkie must have excited the boys. Would Corporal Henson take a letter to her? Barney, who was a nice guy but not too bright said, 'Why not!'²⁹¹

²⁸⁹ Milly Charon and Julius Pfeiffer, "Enemy Alien," in *Worlds Apart: New Immigrant Voices* ed. Milly Charon (Dunvegan, ON: Cormorant Books, 1989), 219-220.

²⁹⁰ Without access to Fred Kutter's interview, I would not have known that he contributed to Koch's work—he is not mentioned by name as a source, nor can he be found in Koch's internee index at the back of *Deemed Suspect*.

²⁹¹ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 141.

While Koch's contributions to the historiography of Canadian internment are undeniably important, it is worth noting that his work has sometimes been viewed as an authority without thorough reconsideration of all his sources. This early writing does not incorporate the actual courts martial records as sources, instead opting to include war diary summaries and later recollections by internees and camp officials. Koch quotes directly from the war diary summary, as well as his interview with Guter, painting the correspondence as both a period of escape for the internees as well as a means of connecting with influential friends on the outside.²⁹² He does not know the outcome of the cases, nor does he mention the involvement of John Cargher.

For academics, the importance of the case, as in the court martial, has not been the content of the letters—which, until the digitization of the files through *Heritage Canadiana*, remained sight unseen—but rather the action of the correspondence itself. The case, for example, appears in Draper's 1983 Ph.D. dissertation.²⁹³ She discusses the illicit correspondence in the context of Camp "N" at Sherbrooke, where it was eventually discovered, in order to illustrate the strained relationships between internees and camp administration. She notes that friendships between guards and internees did occur, but argues that guards viewed the men under their control as means to an end—ultimately, they were sources of financial and social opportunity. Draper, who had the opportunity to interview Ernst Guter during the course of her research, notes his own recollection of the case:

*Guter recalled that it was no secret; they bragged about the guard's daughter who wrote letters on their behalf to friends, relatives and government officials on two sides of the Atlantic.*²⁹⁴

²⁹² Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 141-2.

²⁹³ Draper, "The Accidental Immigrants," (PhD diss.), 232.

²⁹⁴ Draper, "The Accidental Immigrants," (PhD diss.), 232.

Like Koch, Draper draws in part from the Camp “N” war diary, which includes a summary of the court martial of Corporal Henson. Limited in scope, Draper’s assessment of the case includes a number of minor errors. She claims that the “real absurdity of the case,” aside from the “dubious legal group for a court-martial of civilian internees,” were the charges and punishments doled out to Henson and Hall for violating the Defence of Canada Regulations on the illicit transmission of messages into or out of internment camps.²⁹⁵ The internees involved in the case—Draper only includes Lycett, Guter, and Arnhold, not Cargher—were not court-martialed, at least not according to the cited source, as they were not military personnel. Draper further implies that Corporal Henson was a guard at Camp “N” in Sherbrooke at the time of his arrest—he had already been moved to Montreal by the time of his trial—and that only twenty-eight exhibits of evidence were brought before the court—there were sixty-two.

Similar issues arise with Auger’s inclusion of the illicit correspondence in *Prisoners on the Home Front*. The case, albeit without any identifying features, appears in a chapter on life within the camps of Southern Quebec. He uses the incident to exemplify one of the “rare occasions” in which internees met women. Auger writes that “[the] situation began when a guard gave an internee artist a photograph of his daughter so that the man could draw a sketch of her.”²⁹⁶ In exchange, he continues, the “artist” was given a bottle of rum, food, and the opportunity to write to the guard’s daughter. The situation deteriorated, according to Auger, when other internees started begging the girl to write to friends and relatives in the United States and to other

²⁹⁵ Draper, “The Accidental Immigrants,” (PhD diss.), 232.

²⁹⁶ Auger, *Prisoners of the Home Front*, 55. Here, Auger is likely referring to an interaction between Corporal Henson and at least one camp artist, Oscar Cahen. At different points in his letters home to his wife, Henson notes that he is waiting on a drawing by Cahen. Cahen is also one of the artists behind drawings for Fred Lycett and John Cargher, also included in the court documents as evidence.

Canadian internment camps. His sole source for the information is the January 25, 1941, entry in the Camp “N” War Diary, which contains only an appendix of the courts martial cases.

The most recent appearance of Winkie and the Musketeers is Christine Whitehouse’s 2016 Ph.D. thesis from Carleton University, Ottawa. Whitehouse, focused on issues of class and ethnic discrimination within the modern state, frames her work around the optics of modernity, arguing that the internment camps served as spaces in which Jewish refugees were forced to construct a new, collective identity to manage their lesser status in the eyes of the state.²⁹⁷ In her first chapter, “Place-making in the Canadian Hinterland,” Whitehouse presents the story of the illicit correspondence as an example of collaborative “camp-making”—of making the camp space habitable. Her sources, including letters between Eric Koch and Ernst Guter, as well as Provost Corps files compiled by J.A. Edmison at the time of the court martial cases, provides far more context than previous iterations of the story. Whitehouse does not, however, provide information on the aftermath of the correspondence, or what becomes of “Corporeal [sic] Bernhard Henson,” and the Musketeers, ending her vignette with a reference to Winkie sharing “top secret military information” around the family dinner table and nothing more.²⁹⁸

4.2 Remembering the Story of Illicit Correspondence

On February 1, 1942, almost a year after his court martial in Montreal, Private Hall wrote a letter to the Canadian Legion War Services from his new station at Prisoner of War Camp 23—

²⁹⁷ Christine Whitehouse, “‘You’ll Get Used to It!’: The Internment of Jewish Refugees in Canada, 1940-43.” PhD diss., Carleton University, 2016, 3. https://curve.carleton.ca/system/files/etd/aaba4408-456d-42ce-9e15-bb58f8ce36eb/etd_pdf/1c9b75bb7a9299f29bca6c6f9c4c542b/whitehouse-youllgetusedtoittheinternmentofjewishrefugees.pdf.

²⁹⁸ Whitehouse, “‘You’ll Get Used to It!’,” (PhD diss.), 56. “Gradually, however, their relationship turned more threatening to internment operations as the boys asked Winkie to contact outside help on their behalf and Winkie shared top secret military information learned from her father around the family dinner table.”

formerly Camp “Q”—in Monteith, Ontario. The letter, eventually forwarded to the headquarters for Military District No. 2 in Toronto through “unauthorized channels,” was a plea for forgiveness and reconsideration of the case:

There was camp standing orders at Camp Newington to which I had no access untill [sic] those orders where [sic] read to me I remained in Ignorance of my full dutys [sic]. If you look into my case as is stated and proved in the evidence, that after I knew my full dutys [sic] I promptly discontinued carring [sic] corrispondence [sic] between refugees and outside civilians. I think myself moraly [sic] I did not commit an offence in anyway [sic]. I have proved in my wholfe [sic] lifetime I have allways [sic] been a loyal British Subject and will allways [sic] remain so. I have two sons at present serving in England with the Canadian Overseas army of which I am justly proud. I would not wish any member of my family to be otherwise than Patriotic 100 per cent. I have done my Punishment and Payed my debt according to sentence at Court Marshall. What I am asking you to do for me is out of the hands of my Commanding Officer. My reason for writing to you direct. I would like my case reconsidered on my behalf reading the evidence which you must have carefully, and have this crime if you can call it that whiped [sic] off my papers as long as I am serving this thing will always be hanging over me and in my life afterwards. I am to [sic] proud to feel comfortable as long as it is so. If this cannot be done I would like to be discharged...If you cannot do anything in this matter do not reply. If so please notify me through my O.C..²⁹⁹

Hall ends the letter with a suggestion that he may be better suited serving his country as a farmer providing food for the war effort than as a guard at an internment camp, and signs, “You obedient [sic] servant, Pte. J.W. Hall.” While a letter from Major-General H.F.G. Letson notes that the letter was received on February 12, 1942, and passed along to the headquarters of Military District No. 4, the court file does not contain any record of a response.

The value in Hall’s statement comes in part from the fact that it is the only known record that survives to describe the later impact of the case on either of the guards charged in the March

²⁹⁹ Private J.W. Hall to Canadian Legion War Services, February 1, 1942. T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1287-1511,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, (accessed February 1, 2023), 1485. https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1485.

1941 courts martial. Bernard Henson died in 1947, leaving behind his wife, children, and no legacy of the case beyond a vague recollection of his time in prison.³⁰⁰ Hall's statement is clear and speaks to the shame and guilt associated with the court martial ruling, and how concerns over image and perceived patriotism plagued the veteran in the months after he had served his sentence. He wished for the case to be wiped from the record, discarded as nothing more than an error in judgement in a time of ignorance. Conversely, Eric Koch's interview with Fred Kutter—formerly Lycett—recorded four decades after his internment and eventually acquired by Library and Archives Canada, speaks volumes through silence. It is the former internee's only recorded commentary on the "letter episode."

Koch's initial questioning of Kutter regarding the incident ends before it can begin. In his responses, Kutter is dismissive and at times short, while Koch leads the discussion. By the time of his interview with Koch, Kutter had lived a full life: after internment, he returned to England and joined the British army, married a German widow (and adopted her three children), moved to Canada and had a daughter of his own, and started a series of semi-successful business ventures in Montreal.³⁰¹ His recollection of internment is obscured either by time or by choice: he describes in detail, for example, the sensory memory of the Viennese coffee made in the boiler house, but claims not to remember his time in solitary confinement, at least not well. When asked if he remembers Sergeant Major MacIntosh, he responds: "I do, but I don't, if you know what I mean."³⁰² Then, of course, there is his response to Koch's question about Winkie.

³⁰⁰ Judy Noel, email message to author, November 22, 2022. As Judy, Bernard Henson's granddaughter, wrote, "My grandmother Emily Henson was extremely closed mouth and when I once asked her questions, she told me to leave the past alone because it would just bring heartbreak."

³⁰¹ Frederick Kutter, Resume, [1970-1980].

³⁰² "Interview with Fred Lycett," 13:30.

Fred Kutter was not the only member of the Musketeers to be interviewed about his experiences as a civilian internee. Ernst Guter, who remained in Montreal after internment, sat for interviews with Eric Koch and Paula J. Draper, among others. When asked about Winkie Henson and the letters, he recalled more than did his friend:

*It was a lot of fun. But we also had a serious purpose. We got letters out from many of our friends to MPs and to other influential people in England and the United States who could raise questions in public about why we were sitting in Canada.*³⁰³

In the same year as Guter's interview, John Cargher—the Musketeers' Porthos—published *Luck Was My Lady: Memoirs of a Workaholic*. After his release from the camps in mid-1941, Cargher returned to England and eventually travelled to Australia where he became a noted opera critic and radio personality.³⁰⁴ Unlike his fellow internees, Cargher's memoir does not reference his time in Canada—from July 1940 to May 1941—at all. "I enrolled in the RAF in March 1940," he writes, "and spent three months square-bashing (marching up and down on the parade ground) and getting three proper meals a day for the first time in my life."³⁰⁵ The remainder of the war, he claims, was spent as an engineer and tool-maker in London.³⁰⁶ An interview with Cargher by an Australian community radio production from the late 1990s presents a similar omission.³⁰⁷ For the former internee, his internment experience was best left unwritten.

³⁰³ Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 141.

³⁰⁴ Cargher was even awarded the Order of Australia in 1987.

³⁰⁵ John Cargher, *Luck Was My Lady: Memoirs of a Workaholic* (Melbourne: Brolga Publishing, 1996), 45.

³⁰⁶ Cargher, *Luck Was My Lady*, 46.

³⁰⁷ "Interview with John Cargher Part 1 of 4."

CONCLUSION

The “illicit” correspondence between Winkie Henson and the Musketeers has been an ideal study through which to explore the value of even a marginal study within the Canadian internment experience. I have shown the liminal and isolated space of the internment camp to be far more connected and porous than first assumed; the camps were, in many respects, unique social crossroads for all that inhabited and interacted with them. The story of the correspondence has allowed me to introduce new sources on the history of Canadian internment: previously underrepresented, courts martial cases and their satellite sources offer a rich and diverse base for historians to draw from. Through these sources, the case adds new depth to the historiographical argument between Auger and Goodlet over the humane nature of Canadian internment camps: further complicating questions of treatment and lived experience that muddy representations of the camps. Though connections formed as a result of the camps, Bernard Henson was, in the end, a victim of their complexities: his lack of conclusion, the result of his death in 1947, and the loss of his story to social propriety, purposeful forgetting, and time speak to the subjectivity of the camps, as well as the selectivity of memory and storytelling.

The case of Winkie Henson and the Musketeers shows the Canadian internment camp during the Second World War was a complex space of connection and conflict. Telling the story of illicit correspondence also reveals a number of larger truths about the human experience on the wartime home front. It illuminates the conflict inherent between official regulation and human action, pitting the needs of civilians, Canadian or otherwise, against governing powers. It highlights the role of correspondence in a pre-internet world and shows how relationships could begin and end by pen and paper.

Building from this, another emergent truth in the story of Winkie and the Musketeers is the desire for and persistence of adolescent connection, even during conflict. Though unique in its internment setting, the broad strokes of the story fit a familiar narrative of wartime romance. The young internees, far from home, seek contact with the girl in Montreal, a symbol of normalcy amid conflict and confusion. For Winkie, the Musketeers are mysterious and exciting, and fill a void left by young Canadian men on the home front. Despite the secrecy of the letters, the fear of discovery, and the drama of the courtroom, even the prosecution concludes that, in the end, it was an innocuous case of “boy and girl correspondence,” speaking not only to the nature of the letters as a mode of written social connection but a broader understanding of the relationships that persist against the backdrop of war.

Finally, the story of illicit correspondence reveals the selective nature of memory and how both time and emotion work to shape our relationship with the past. In 1988, François Lafitte released a second edition of *The Internment of Aliens*, revisiting his work—and a long-past chapter in his life—almost fifty years after it was first published. The content of the book was largely unchanged, save for an updated introduction to the text by the author. “[Given] what we now know about the world war,” Lafitte writes, “it might seem that this book is concerned with a trifling and short-lived episode—hardly worth writing about at the time, certainly not worth reissuing nearly half a century later.”³⁰⁸ If “man-made megadeaths” act as the sole measure of importance, the case of illicit correspondence between four internees and a teenage girl from Montreal, and that of Canadian internment as a whole, holds little ground in the grand scheme of the Second World War.³⁰⁹ It was a brief episode; to some, not worth remembering at all. And yet

³⁰⁸ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, vii.

³⁰⁹ Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, viii.

it did matter, not only in the way it shaped the lives of former internees but in the impact it had on them in the historical moment. As Erwin Schild wrote:

*One tenth of one's life is a long time. While—from the perspective of the present—the time I spent in Canadian internment camps shrinks to the proportion of a brief interlude in my past, it was quite different for the twenty-year-old me.*³¹⁰

Forgetting is a natural thing, required so that we might manage our lives effectively with a focus on important tasks and memories.³¹¹ “An experience is much more likely to be remembered,” writes Alistair Thomson, “if it is perceived to be significant and is therefore articulated into a memorializing form, most typically a story.”³¹² Even still, memory, when it remains, runs the risk of distortion by old age, nostalgia, personal biases, and retrospective versions of the past.³¹³ But memory “is frail and by itself seldom a reliable guide to the past,” adds Graham Broad, and though “tremendously valuable,” oral testimonies “do not trump all other historical sources.”³¹⁴ Agency appears once more in our ability to pick and choose the continuation of memories. Did Fred Kutter truly forget Winkie Henson? Can his interview be believed?

As both a story and source, the case of Winkie and the Musketeers remains, even now, a source of conflict and connection—not only between its players but between source and historian. It was

³¹⁰ Schild, *The Very Narrow Bridge*, 222.

³¹¹ Alistair Thomson, “Memory and Remembering in Oral History,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*, ed. D.A. Ritchie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 83. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195339550.001.0001>.

³¹² Thomson, “Memory and Remembering in Oral History,” 84.

³¹³ Thomson, “Memory and Remembering in Oral History,” 91. “Every historical source that recounts human experience—the witness statement at a government inquiry or in a court of law, a newspaper report, the letter or diary, a memoir or interview—is an artificial, partial, and subjective representation and all involve some degree of retrospectivity and thus variability over time.”

³¹⁴ Graham Broad, *One in a Thousand: The Life and Death of Captain Eddie McKay, Royal Flying Corps* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 128.

raining the day I walked down Rue des Seigneurs, once Seigneurs Street, with my mother in late May of 2023. The neighbourhood of Little Burgundy, once St. Cunégonde, was quiet, despite the closeness of the busy Boulevard Ville-Marie, and few people were out in the warming spring weather. The house at 734 Rue des Seigneurs is gone: what was once the Henson family home, even briefly, was torn down in the 1960s as part of a mid-century community housing project. The lot is now a community garden, and across the street is a concrete strip mall painted with a mural of jazz musician Oscar Peterson.³¹⁵

I never met Winnifred Henson. She died in 1979, in the back of a Toronto taxicab, long before I was born.³¹⁶ Emails exchanged with her niece, Judy, reveal the story of a woman far removed from the teenager caught up in a wartime romance. She was reserved and serious, fashionable and well-travelled. She continued to go by Winkie or Winks, within her family and worked as a stenographer in Montreal and Toronto while looking after her widowed mother. A year after her father's court martial, when she had to stand as a witness before a military tribunal, Winkie was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes: as her niece said, she never married because she thought she wouldn't live long enough to have a family.³¹⁷ When I first connected with Judy in 2022, she didn't know the story of the Musketeers, or if Winkie had ever reconnected with them.

According to Fred Kutter's interview, they never did.

The woman that Winkie became was a contradiction to the girl I became familiar with through my research—in that, however, she shows the value in moments of history when attempting to tell

³¹⁵ Peterson grew up in the St. Cunégonde neighbourhood and was a year younger than Winkie.

³¹⁶ "Henson, Winnifred," *The Gazette* (Montreal), January 29, 1979, *Newspapers.com*.

³¹⁷ Judy Noel, email message to author, November 24, 2022. Judy noted that Winkie did have a long-term partner, Bob. They did not live together, but they were a couple: Bob was married, but estranged from his wife and unable to divorce as a Catholic.

a story in its entirety. In addition to stories of her aunt, Judy provided me with a copy of Winkie's picture, originally taken in November of 1940. Compared to the photocopied version I had, pulled from the digitized court martial records on *Heritage Canadiana*, the photograph felt like a revelation. With Judy's photo, it felt as if I could *see* Winkie: the styling of her hair, the pin on her vest, the "dreamy" look on her face that embarrassed her when she described it to Fred. For all its clarity, though, the image lacked context. Missing from Judy's copy was the handwritten note to a young internee:

Yours with Love, Winkie.

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APPENDIX A

Figure 1. Photographic portrait of Winnifred “Winkie” Henson taken from the personal effects of Fred Lycett in February of 1941. On the margins of the image is written: “For Fred. Yours with Love, Winkie. 1940.” (T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2022): 1534. [https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1534.](https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1534))



Figure II. Photographic portrait of Winnifred “Winkie” Henson provided by her niece, Judy. (Portrait of Winkie Henson, 1940.)



Figure III. Pencil sketch portrait of Fred Lycett, drawn by painter, sculptor, and fellow internee René Graetz. This sketch is one of two portraits of Lycett found in the collected trial evidence; the other was drawn by Oscar Cahén, who later became a noted Canadian abstract artist and member of Painters Eleven. (T-15637, “Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627,” Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2022): 1619.) [https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1619.](https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1619))

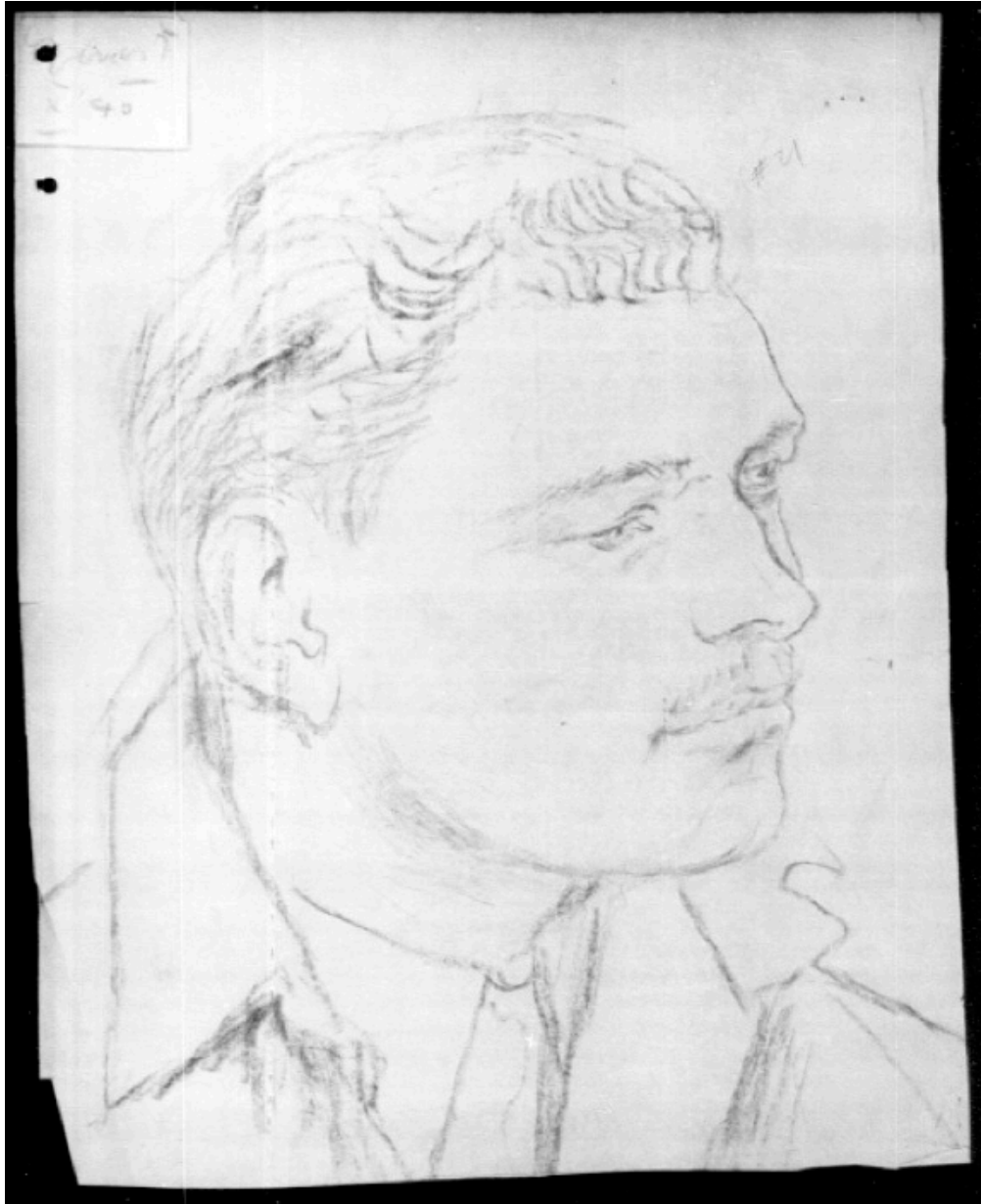


Figure IV. Letter sent from Internment Camp "L" on September 28, 1940 to Winnifred "Winkie" Henson. Written on University of Cambridge letter paper and signed by internees Gerhard "Gerry" Arnhold, Ernst Guter, and Fred Lycett. ((T-15637, "Reel No. 44-H1B Images 1517-1627," Heritage Canadiana, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (accessed February 1, 2022): 1593-1594. [https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1593.](https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_t15637/1593))

FLYCETT. CAMP "L"
% 92ND BASE POST OFF.
OTTAWA.
28.9.40.

Exhibit no. 11 as
Summary of evidence sheet

Dear Winkie! Please forgive the familiarity, but I feel that you are an old friend after all that your Dad has told me about you my friends and I have taken the opportunity of looking after your Dad - coffee in the Boiler-house etc. - but he will tell you all about that. I hope that you will be able to walk past the Camp despite the weather. I shall be waiting on the Balcony of Hut .1.

KIRST-

There are 3 of us. We have seen your
GERHARD + FRED.

plans and life there.

I hope you will enjoy your stay in Quebec and send your Dad back whole. I shall be waiting for him at 5.00 tonight with a good cup of coffee.

There is little more to say except that we would give anything to make your acquaintance personally - However, it can't be done. Perhaps you will be kind enough to send a message instead.

Well - Good luck! We remain ungrateful to you, but none the less, your good friends.

F. Lycett (FLYCETT).
E. Guter (E. GUTER).
G. Arnhold (G. ARNHOLD).