

GEORGE DOES NOT EXIST: STRATEGIC SILENCING AND METHODICAL COLONIALISM

by

Deanne Nicole Beier

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Abstract

In this thesis, I investigate the silenced histories of Indigenous peoples who have been written out of collective memory, official documents and, in some cases, their own family histories. I show how the actions of colonists can be explained through a colonial-Marxist lens of historical materialism and how this methodologically creates space for colonialism which, consequently, strategically silences and erases Indigenous lives. I focus my research on a family who has searched for answers for over sixty years, the Beier family, to aid them in the search for the life story of George Ralph McKenzie, an Indigenous man who served in the Canadian military and who was erased from his family's history. I gathered data, including but not limited to, birth and death certificates, photographs and documents to compile a probable or possible record of McKenzie's existence. I exhausted available archival, historical, religious, genealogical, public, private, professional and governmental databases and resources. Knowledge and interactions of Indigenous presences in areas coveted by European governments, during first-contact, provoked a need to design strategies to be used during interactions with Indigenous peoples. The Church has also been an integral part of many European governments and the alterations of interpretations and editing of religious texts have been used as a tool for maintaining public control for millenniums. Silencing Indigenous peoples through education was a deliberate and methodical form of colonization used to dominate Indigenous societies. During the wars in which Canada participated Indigenous peoples were, often, not accurately recorded. This is due to a systemic and structural type of diversion and Indigenous peoples were still considered to be dispensable at the time. Erasure cultivates within families, due to systemic and systematic racism and oppression of cultures and heritages. In 2017, Canada is oppressing and silencing Indigenous voices. Canada is using terms such as multiculturalism and diversity to boast about its acceptance and compassion for others while ignoring the needs of Indigenous peoples. Reconciliation will involve the decolonization or dismantling of an entire system of colonialism that is entrenched in the relationships, personal lives, politics, laws, and governments in Canada.

Lay Summary

Due to oppression and the purposeful erasing of Indigenous histories from the collective histories of Canada, searching for information about individual indigenous heritages and identities is either extremely difficult or impossible. George Ralph McKenzie was an Indigenous man who fought for Canada during World War II and his contribution was not documented. McKenzie was my Great Grandfather and I searched through every available resource to find proof that he once existed. I did not find anything concrete. What I found was a series of moments in McKenzie's life where he should have been documented. McKenzie should have been documented at birth, through education, when he joined the military, in the communities he resided in and within his own family. I have found overwhelming evidence that colonialism is not over. It has only changed forms and continues to manipulate Canadians into being ignorant of the gaping hole in Indigenous histories.

Preface

This thesis is original, unpublished work by the author, Deanne Beier. Dr. Mark Turin is the supervisory author and contributed greatly to the thesis and editing. Dr. Patrick Moore is a member of the advisory committee and was involved in editing and approval throughout the research. The field work reported throughout the thesis was covered by the University of British Columbia, Research Information Services, Human Ethics Board [ID# H16-01812]. Alana Dueck, Elmer Beier, Janice Beier and Karlene Beier contributed original, unpublished testimony to the thesis and were part of the editing processes. The photos used in Appendix A do not have a known photographer and permission to use them was given directly by the Beier family. The newspaper clippings were taken from *The Chilliwack Progress* public archives: <https://www.theprogress.newspapers.com/>.

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To George; I tried my best

1 Introduction

Disassociation, assimilation, oppression, systemic and systematic erasure and violence are fundamental issues that affect many cultures and peoples in Canada today. In this thesis, I investigate the silenced histories of Indigenous peoples¹ who have been written out of collective memory, official documents and, in some cases, their own family histories. Erasure implies that there is something to erase. I show how the actions of colonists can be explained through a colonial-Marxist lens of historical materialism and how this methodologically creates agentive space for colonization which, in turn, strategically silences and erases Indigenous lives.

I focus my research on a family who has been searching for answers for over sixty years, the Beier family in British Columbia, to aid them in the search for the life story of George Ralph McKenzie, an Indigenous man who served in the Canadian military and who was erased from history. This individual story is but one of tens of thousands of stories of erasure in the record. Throughout this thesis, I outline some of the difficulties and obstacles for Indigenous peoples who strive to learn more about their heritage and senses of belonging.

Canadians have been recently reminded, thanks to the findings and Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, that many Indigenous peoples are disconnected from their heritages due to subjugation and other forms of estrangements. Individuals, like McKenzie, were at once forced into residential schools, and then “trained in cadet corps, thereafter transitioning directly into active service in the [military]” (T.R.C.C. Part I, 2015: 197). “Colonialism is based on a form of primary and elemental violence: taking what is not one’s to take and giving what is not one’s to give”. Many Indigenous peoples “find themselves asking, where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? These questions and the difficult answers they generate can no longer silence Indigenous voices” (Rodgers, S. et al, 2012: 5). Indigenous peoples find themselves burdened with vacant associations of place and questions about their individual and group identities. My research

¹ Of the many terms that are currently in use, we chose the term 'Indigenous' for this report, with the exceptions of names of specific Nations, communities and organizations, such as the First Nations Technology Summit, First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centre and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, or specific titles such as The Indian Act. Name changes from 'Aboriginal' to 'Indigenous' at Canadian post-secondary institutions (including at UBC) and in other Canadian contexts, such as at CBC News, reflect this wider discussion. For an exploration of these terms and their historical origins, see UBC Indigenous Foundations (http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/aboriginal_identity_terminology/). I use the term 'peoples' purposefully, to step away from the colonial practice of categorizing Indigenous communities into one people.

is a form of truth and reconciliation, where I suggest that there needs to be truth and acknowledgment before there can be reconciliation. I hope for my work to assist Indigenous individuals who are looking for answers to complex questions of background, heritage, and identity and for this project to serve as a possible outline for other individuals exploring their Indigenous histories.

1.1 Methods: Theory

Throughout this thesis, I take a specific approach to structuring my argument and ideas. Using a method of explaining and analyzing, the theories that I discuss are in order of causes and effects, in which, cause can be explained in the frame of historical materialism, and effect can be understood through theories of colonization and silence. In each section, I first discuss in what ways erasure affected the life and documentation of George McKenzie and how this erasure has affected my research. I then demonstrate my research techniques and field work to outline problematic findings regarding accessing information of Indigenous histories. Second, I discuss how historical materialism can be used to explain the basis for colonization and silencing. I then explore how colonization, religion, silencing, and racism are tools that are strategically utilized to maintain a historical materialistic society. I do not assume that colonizers, nor their leaders, purposefully or knowingly implemented Marxist concepts of historical materialism or capitalist modes of production. Rather, I intend to use such theories to explain how Indigenous peoples have been and continue to be strategically and methodically erased and silenced. Third, I discuss how colonization is used as a tool to maintain society's status quo while at the same time aiding in producing the needs of subsistence for the colonizers. I then discuss how Indigenous resistance is met with forms of silencing and how this silencing contributes to the power balances within society. Finally, I shed light on the broader implications of erasure and how this might affect others engaged in a similar search. Historical materialism is an ongoing cycle in Canadian society that makes use of concepts such as religion, race, colonization, silencing and Indigenous lives to fulfill the subsistence needs of the dominant society. This void, this not knowing, whilst also knowing that this was done purposefully, is and forever will be a void in my being, in who I am and how I see myself. He is my Great Grandfather and it is as if he never existed.

“How can there be nothing? Nothing? With all the research and time and energy you spent on this. All those hours? How? I just don’t get it. I Just...with all those resources and connections available to you...Who is he? ...I guess we’ll never know.”

(Alana Dueck, August 15th, 2017, Abbotsford B.C.)

1.2 Methods: Literature Review

Throughout my research I found many books that aided and shaped my understanding of Indigenous histories. The complexity of researching the various possible life paths that George McKenzie may have lived, caused me to rely on many fields of study for information. Due to the void in information regarding Indigenous involvement in World War II, I relied heavily on texts written by Janice Summersby, Ken Tingley, R. Scott Sheffield and Alison Bernstein. Summersby’s 2002 book, *Native Soldiers: Foreign Battlefields*, provided me with integral information regarding Indigenous involvement in World War II from an Indigenous point of view and understanding. Tingley’s 1995 book, *For King and Country: Alberta in the Second World War* was an exciting second-hand bookstore find that provided me with specific information regarding Alberta. This book also contains a section specific to Indigenous peoples of Alberta’s involvement in World War II. Sheffield’s, 2004 book, *The Red Man’s on the Warpath: The Image of the “Indian” and the Second World War* gave me a more in-depth understanding of the portrayal of Indigenous peoples during World War II and how the media used Indigenous people as a tool to influence public involvement and opinion. Bernstein’s 1991 book, *Toward a New Era in Indian Affairs: American Indians and World War II* focused on the United States of America and contained many references that compared and contrasted to Indigenous Canadians with regards to policies, rights and motivations for joining the war efforts. There was a plethora of books and articles discussing the realities of residential schools and survivors. I thoroughly enjoyed reading, *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America*, written by Thomas King. I found his book to be bursting with quotable gems and insights into Indigenous perspectives on the true history of Canada. His writing style and unforgiving statements are both entertaining and educational. Bev Sellar’s 2013 book, *They Called Me Number One: Secrets and Survival at an Indian Residential School* has been one I have re-read many times. The straightforward truths

and self-reflections are not only engaging, but also informationally valuable towards understanding the climate and life of a residential school survivor. I had the pleasure of reading many insightful books in search of information that would aid in my research and every book in the references section was vital to the information provided throughout this thesis.

1.3 Methods: Process

I begin this thesis with a modest outline of the means and processes of my data collection. I follow this with an elucidation of my use of specific terminology. I then narrate four moments in the conceivable life-story of McKenzie whilst analyzing, and making sense of the enigmas of erasure of Indigenous peoples of Canada through the lens of the obligatory documentation of lives. By this I mean that peoples that live in Canada are documented extensively and in many cases many points of intersection with the Canadian government are enforced and mandatory. Life events such as birth, education, sickness, occupation and death legally require governmental involvement. Indigenous lives were predominantly documented for purposes of a numbering tabulation for societal control. Finally, I bring to the fore the implications of forms of erasure and oppression on current and future generations with a focus on identity and belonging. Throughout this discussion, draw and depend on information that does not exist. By this I mean that my thesis focuses on a void of information rather than the presence of information.

To achieve my goal, I gathered data, including but not limited to, birth and death certificates, photographs, and documents to compile a probable or possible record of McKenzie's existence for reasons which I will explain later in this thesis. I conducted interviews with members of the Beier family, librarians working in, both community and university libraries, a Metis-Status-Cree World War Two enthusiast and many others who self-identify as Indigenous. I contacted the National Library and Archives of Canada and asked to access their restricted records for McKenzie's official military information.² I exhausted available archival, historical, religious, genealogical, public, private, professional and governmental databases and resources. I estimate that I

² The National Library and Archives of Canada confirmed my inquiry on December 28, 2016. I have not received information regarding McKenzie as of October 2017.

spent approximately 532 hours searching through approximately 47³ online databases and resources using approximately 42⁴ variations of name combinations and possible spellings of names. Lastly, I stayed up-to-date with current Indigenous issues within Canada in the media, such as the celebrations for Canada 150 and the request, from Premier Justin Trudeau to Pope Francis, for an apology from the Catholic Church. In this thesis, I show how systems of oppression have adapted, as residential schools no longer exist as a tool for assimilation and oppression. Terms such as ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘diversity’ now serve to distract Canadians from the realities of what such terms mean for Indigenous peoples.

As someone who self-identifies as Indigenous, and is a member of the Beier family, the effects of erasure are evident in many aspects of my life. My personal passion and desire drove this research. With the data collected from this thesis, I draw out broader issues that may offer avenues of inquiry for individuals and improvement within the systems that I explored and exhausted in my search. Through this specific and individual exploration, I shed light on the wider institutional, sociocultural or political processes that make it difficult for peoples of Indigenous heritage to have a recognized history in Canada.

1.4 Terminology: Probable and Possible Life-Story

Since I was not able to retrieve substantial documentation or specific information regarding McKenzie, I created a life-story that, based on the plethora of unconnected and incomplete facts and information I found and connected during my research, led me to recreate a possible life that he may have lived. I use the terms ‘possible’ and ‘probable’ to be mindful of the vast variabilities and complexities of Indigenous histories that intertwined throughout the scope of McKenzie’s life. Thus, the life-story that I compile is inevitably probable or possible as opposed to precise. To build a life path for McKenzie, it is necessary to address the events of systemic and systematic erasure that occurred in the Canadian province of Alberta that led to his story being silenced.

³ Please see Appendix C for list of archives/genealogical databases searched.

⁴Please see Appendix D for list of name variations.

1.5 Issues with Resources

Due to the undocumented history of Indigenous peoples of Canada, specifically in Alberta, during the span of McKenzie's life, specific resources have been difficult to uncover. Most texts and documents exoticify Indigenous peoples and offer ethnocentric views of Indigenous lifestyles and cultures. Accurate documentation with which to properly understand Indigenous lives, in a respectful manner, is limited. I rely on several texts to discuss the histories of Indigenous Albertans and the histories of Indigenous involvement in World War II, as much of the history has been erased or undocumented. There are, however, a variety of texts on Indigenous peoples and land issues, although these texts did not provide me with information on my chosen research topic. Many of the texts on which I rely were found by spending approximately 95 hours in used bookstores between Vancouver Island and Kamloops, as well as approximately 140 hours browsing websites such as Amazon and several smaller online bookstores. Public libraries, bookstores, university libraries and Xwi7xwa, an Indigenous library on the Vancouver campus of the University of British Columbia, did not provide me with many essential resources. The dedicated librarians at Xwi7xwa expressed to me on several occasions the great effort to which they go to locate texts on Indigenous involvement in the World Wars as well as texts on all aspects of Indigenous histories and lives. The erasure of Indigenous peoples from the collective history of Canada has caused a large void in the history and documentation of Indigenous peoples of Canada.

1.6 Terminology: Systemic, Systematic, Erasure and Evidence

This thesis relies heavily on four loaded words, systemic, systematic, erasure and evidence. As these are important terms that I use throughout and discuss often, it is necessary to clearly explain how I use these terms. I use the terms systemic and systematic to refer to the neglect of the state and by the Canadian government to keep obligatory records of baseline records of Indigenous populations in Canada. I use the term systemic to refer to a broader mode of oppression by the government, state and their enduring influences on society. When using the term systematic, I refer to the methodical discrimination by society and its institutions of Indigenous peoples in Canada. I use these terms not only to specify, but also to show, how oppression and colonization actively saturate and cultivate all spheres of Canadian society. I use the term evidence when discussing the possible life paths of

McKenzie because true information regarding the life path of McKenzie is unattainable. Thus, the term evidence is used as a means of providing indications and support towards a testimony. The term erasure, simplified, refers to the collective conscious of the silencing, removal, and obliteration of all traces of information regarding the lives of Indigenous peoples in Canada. It is important to note that to erase something, there needs to be something present to erase. Thus, erasure is used in conjunction to suggest an overwriting of information and knowledge.

To set the possible scene into which McKenzie was born, it is essential to understand the social, political and economic context of Indigenous peoples at the time of his birth. In this thesis, I will not rehearse the well-documented and well-written information of the colonial histories of Indigenous peoples and Canada. Having said that, these studies and others indicate beyond any doubt that Indigenous peoples have been systemically and systematically erased from the collective history of Canada through assimilation, oppression, colonization, and silencing. Because of the contextual evidence and reading that I have done, I firmly believe that it is likely that McKenzie's life-story will never be fully realized due to the history of discrimination in Canada.

2 The Beginning: Before George Ralph McKenzie

The erasure of McKenzie's story and those of tens of thousands of other Indigenous stories started during the beginnings of settler contact in the early 1400s when explorers and colonizers evaluated and compared themselves to the Indigenous peoples of what is now known as Canada and the United States of America. Many settlers moving to Canada; anticipated improved futures and increased well being. The oppressive and relatively definite class systems in Europe, specifically in France and Britain, forced many people into lower class labour and/or poverty. The seductive notions of a more prosperous future in the 'New World' were hard to ignore. Ethnocentric views of society, however, persisted in Canada and new social classes were formed. Indigenous peoples resisted the advancement of settlers into their territories; which they had inhabited for millennia. This resistance caused the settlers and colonizers to perceive Indigenous peoples as inconvenient obstacles in their pursuit of prosperous futures (King, 2012). From a historical materialistic perspective, Indigenous peoples, by resisting settler occupation, were preventing the production of settler needs of subsistence. Thus, settlers attempted to eliminate Indigenous populations and eventually decided to utilize Indigenous peoples as lower-class labourers to produce their desired means of subsistence. I use the word 'desire' when discussing the 'needs of subsistence' as I believe that the needs of subsistence were not always merely for obtaining the means necessary to exist. Rather, the 'needs' were often inflated with the desire for prestige and elitism which was gained through material possessions and wealth.

2.1 The Beginning: Alberta, Colonization and Disease

In Alberta, oppression, violence and disease spread, almost instantly, and decimated and displaced hundreds of thousands of peoples. Due to limited documented information and an estimation of McKenzie's date of birth, I assume that his biological parents would have been born during the mid-1800s in the Edmonton, Alberta area. At the beginning of the 1870s, the Indigenous peoples "of future Alberta were amid several serious problems that placed them in a much weaker position due to a smallpox epidemic, several previous plagues in 1781-82, 1801, and 1837-38, tuberculosis, scarlet fever, measles, and influenza" (Hall, 2015: 24-25). Thus, while

the while the majority of Indigenous populations decreased, the orphan-Indigenous populations grew each year (Lackenbauer, 2007:135).

2.2 The Beginning: McKenzie and Probabilities

It is probable that McKenzie was orphaned as there is evidence that he either purposefully did not state or did not know the names of his birth parents to put on file for his death certificate. McKenzie used the maiden name of Marion Harriet Swartzfigger (McKenzie's spouse⁵) on his potential death certificate⁶ and his recorded birth dates are inconsistent. By 'potential' death certificate, I mean that this death certificate heavily correlates with what we know of McKenzie's life and the information recorded on Shirley May McKenzie's birth certificate, (which is recorded in his own handwriting as 1910, Lac Ste. Anne, Alberta). Although, there are inconsistencies such as his date and place of birth recorded on the 'potential' death certificate as 1899, Ardrossan Alberta. This information suggests that McKenzie, having been born between 1899-1910, at Lac Ste. Anne would have the highest probability of being either Cree or Stoney descent and his birth may not have been recorded. Generally, reserves such as the Alexis on Lac Ste. Anne did not have schools nearby and children were sent to boarding schools approximately 70-150 kilometers away. Thus, McKenzie would have been sent to the St. Albert Youville school and orphanage near Edmonton, as it was the closest school to the Lac Ste. Anne area as well as the only orphanage at the time.

| PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (Canada) | | REGISTRATION OF DEATH | | Registration No. (Department use only) |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Division of Vital Statistics | | | | 84-09-017901 |
| 1. Surname of deceased (print or type) NAME OF DECEASED SMARTZFIGGER (also known as FANE) | | 3. SEX Male | | |
| 2. All given names in full (print or type) George | | 5. Name of hospital or institution (otherwise give exact location where death occurred) #509 - 451 Front St. Fraser Village | | |
| PLACE OF DEATH City, town or other place (by name) Quesnel | | Postal Code | Inside municipal limits? (State Yes or No) Yes | |
| 4. Complete street address: If rural give exact location (not Post Office or Rural Route address) 451 - #509 Front Street | | Postal Code | Inside municipal limits? (State Yes or No) Yes | Province (or country) B.C. |
| USUAL RESIDENCE City, town or other place (by name) Quesnel | | Postal Code | Inside municipal limits? (State Yes or No) Yes | Province (or country) B.C. |
| MARITAL STATUS 8. Single, married, widowed, or divorced (Specify) Single | | 9. If married, widowed, or divorced, give full name of husband or full maiden name of wife (Specify) | | |
| 7. Kind of work done during most of working life Trapper | | 6. Kind of business or industry in which worked Self employed | | |
| OCCUPATION Trapper | | Self employed | | |
| 9. Month (by name), day, year of birth December 20, 1899 | | 10. AGE (years) (Months) (Days) 8 1/2 | | |
| BIRTHDATE December 20, 1899 | | 11. City or place Province (or country) of birth Strathcona Alberta | | |
| BIRTHPLACE Strathcona Alberta | | 12. Native Indian? Yes No If "yes" state name of band <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | |
| 13. Surname and given names of father (print or type) Swartzfigger Amos | | 14. BIRTHPLACE - City or place, Province (or country) Not known | | |
| PATHER Swartzfigger Amos | | 15. BIRTHPLACE - City or place, Province (or country) Not known | | |
| 17. Maiden surname and given names of mother (print or type) Fane Rose | | 16. BIRTHPLACE - City or place, Province (or country) Not known | | |
| MOTHER Fane Rose | | 16. BIRTHPLACE - City or place, Province (or country) Not known | | |

Figure 2.1 George McKenzie Death Certificate

⁵ Legally this is her name. She went by: Nellie McKenzie. It is important to note that I found significant information regarding Marion Swartzfigger's family, this included marriage certificates, births and censuses.

⁶ Amos and Rose Swartzfigger, Marion Harriet Swartzfigger's parents, did not have a son named George. Figure 2.1.

3 Moment One: Education: George

“[Shirley and the boys] were lucky they didn’t have to go to a residential school, but I don’t think George was so lucky”. (Alana Dueck, November 13th, 2016, Aldergrove B.C.)

Evidence gleaned from Shirley McKenzie’s birth certificate⁷ and the historical narrative for Indigenous children that were born in the area, at the time George McKenzie was born,⁸ suggests that the silencing of McKenzie’s life probably began through an education at a residential school and orphanage operated by the Grey Nuns in St. Albert, Alberta.⁹ Throughout European and Canadian society, racism, religion, and ethnocentrism were used as tools to maintain societal control and further the production of desired subsistence. These tools often presented themselves specifically through education and more generally throughout society. McKenzie was probably raised in an environment that would have fostered negative self-identity and a desire to deny and overwrite his ‘inferior’ heritage.

There are no records of the names of the children at the St. Albert Youville school, that I could find, apart from a few noted students who showed exemplary ‘Canadian’ attitudes and achievements.¹⁰ I contacted the University of British Columbia (UBC) Rare Books and Special Collections and the Provincial Archives of Alberta to gain access to diaries or documents of Oblates, missionaries and the Grey Nuns¹¹ who were present at the time that McKenzie would have attended school. These institutions did not have such records and the general answer tended to refer me to other resources which did not prove useful. I also contacted local public libraries and was shocked by the sparse selection of Indigenous books. I found a two-book adaptation of the Grey Nun’s diaries during a seemingly hopeless, complex search and found that the set contained notes on the Nun’s voyage in the West of Canada, with notes specific to Lac Ste. Anne and St. Albert. Though the book contained specific

⁷ George McKenzie recorded his place of birth on the certificate as: Lac Ste. Anne Alberta.

⁸ Shirley McKenzie’s birth certificate: 1910. The possible death certificate of George McKenzie: 1989.

⁹ For more information about the Grey Nuns please see: (Castonguay, 1999), (McKeon, 2013) and (Borgstein, 1991) in the Bibliography. This thesis does not have space to discuss the Grey Nuns at length.

¹⁰The author of the book, *Leap of Faith*, where these names were found stated: “No attempt will be made in this volume to describe the accomplishments of all the individual teachers and students... Some of the more obvious happenings, however, will find their place henceforth” (Castonguay, 1999: 41).

¹¹ Bishop Alexandre Tache, Sister Zoe Leblanc, Sister Adele Lamy, Sister Marie Jacques and Father Albert Lacombe. The specific names of the Nuns during the span of 1900-1930 were not mentioned.

information for the areas with which McKenzie possibly lived, the details focused on the Nuns themselves and their personal ‘sacrifices’ and successes during the endeavor. Throughout my research, I found that the majority of the histories of the lives, traditions, and cultures of Indigenous peoples were written, interpreted and criticized by colonizers. I searched through online archives and databases, as well as through residential school specific archives and I was unable to locate any documented record of the children that attended St. Albert Youville residential school.

From census records¹² and residential school information I learned that people of Indigenous descent were rarely given a name¹³ and that when a name was given, it was generally a European one. This silencing of identity has created a major void in historical and archival information regarding Indigenous peoples. This form of forceful silencing has ultimately erased the histories of hundreds of thousands of individual lives throughout the history of Canada. I searched through hundreds of records such as photographs, community events, local newspapers and historical memoirs and they either rarely knew the names of the individuals of Indigenous descent that they highlighted or did not mention Indigenous peoples at all. The record of McKenzie’s childhood as well as approximately 200 students that attended the St. Albert Youville school, including census information, between 1899 and 1930 is either kept in an archive with limited access or were systematically deemed unnecessary to either document or archive. Thus, I can only state that it is possible that McKenzie attended St. Albert Youville school due to the location of his self-stated birth¹⁴ in Lac Ste. Anne. There are many things that should have been recorded during these years that I will never know, either due to a lack of documentation or restricted access to such files, such as: his Band, accurate birth date, parent’s names, years of attendance, residence, grades, whether he was orphaned, if he was adopted and hundreds of other intersections within Canadian society that a life leaves in its wake.

¹² From eighteen archival census records specifically from the Edmonton Alberta areas and general searches in Canada (1901, 1906, 1911, 1916, 1921- all other census material is not available due to the Act to Amend the Statistics Act).

¹³ Simply referred to as Cree or Metis; consequently, yet another form of collective stereotyping and silencing.

¹⁴ Recorded on Shirley May McKenzie’s birth certificate in 1942 as 1910.

3.1 Religion as a Tool

Knowledge and interactions of Indigenous peoples living in areas coveted by European governments during first contact provoked a need to design strategies to be used during interactions with these Indigenous peoples. Scholars such as Andrew Armitage and Albert Memmi, suggest that globally, governments organized and implemented assimilationist policies to kill Indigenous cultures and traditions from the Americas, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and in India.¹⁵ These processes were intended to eliminate the resistance to European confiscation of land and resources from the original inhabitants. By the 1400's Europe had been influenced by religion and racism for generations. Using religion, people in power positions¹⁶ could curb public opinions for their or their associate's benefits.

The Church has been and continues to be an integral part of many European governments and the alterations of interpretations and editing of religious texts has been used as a tool for maintaining public control for centuries. The Christian Bible has been translated and copied many times since its creation. Chapters have been edited, disposed of and manipulated by governments, denominations and, in the case of North America by British monarchs. Between 1240 and 1494 Pope Innocent IV, Pope Nicholas V and Pope Alexander VI created several bulls which ultimately lead to the Doctrine of Discovery (Reid, 2010: 335). It is important to note that these bulls were not directly applied to Canada. The bull justified wars, slave trades, invasions and oppressive attitudes and actions towards Indigenous peoples. The doctrine was influenced by governments and royal leaders throughout Europe for the purposes of collecting land, resources, and power in the name of God.

“Intellectuals...scrutinized the bulls and other Church law in order to find justification for new claims to title in the New World that would not undermine the original papal regulations” (Reid, 2010: 339). Several Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars believe that the Doctrine of Discovery was used to influence the creation of The Royal Proclamation (Reid, 2010: 339). This is problematic since The Royal Proclamation was implemented to protect Indigenous lands. The reason for the belief of the Doctrine of Discovery's influence is the continued unequal power balance and discrimination that remained between British and Indigenous peoples. To this day,

¹⁵ There is no space in this thesis to address the specific histories of each of these areas.

¹⁶ Whom were considered to be appointed by God as representatives of God's will.

many argue that the Doctrine of Discovery continues to influence laws throughout the world and affect Indigenous relationships.

Schooling was intended “to fit Indigenous peoples into the lower echelons of the new economic order” (Hall, 2015: 231). Indigenous children and youth of Canada were prepared for assimilation by being separated from their communities and were raised in institutions which manipulated religious teachings and forced Indigenous peoples into definite roles in the lower classes of Canadian society.

3.2 Methods of Silencing: Theory of Colonization

Silencing Indigenous peoples through education was a deliberate and methodical form of colonization used to dominate Indigenous societies. This method of colonization was meant to assimilate Indigenous children whilst silencing opposing ontologies and religions. Silencing is an oral form of colonization through erasing languages, erasing histories, erasing lives and overwriting them to contribute to a cycle that benefits those in power. Colonialism is interpreted as “a struggle that constantly renegotiates the balance of domination and resistance” (Pels, 1997: 164). This systemic and systematic assimilation, and in many cases decimation, of Indigenous cultures, traditions, languages, and peoples followed a strategic plan decided upon and implemented by government officials and missionaries in Canada. Thus, I argue that colonialism in the form of education was used as one of many tools to silence Indigenous peoples and to maintain power and domination throughout Canada and the colonized world.

3.3 Removal and Immersion

The first step in this plan was to take away Indigenous children “when they were young and malleable” (Hall, 2015: 211). The removal of children in Canada was not an isolated occurrence. Similar policies and systems were in place in Australia, the United States of America (USA) and New Zealand (Armitage, 1995). In this thesis, I do not have the space to adequately discuss and contrast the unique experiences of the areas previously stated. I will, however, reference similarities. I believe it is important to note, as someone who is writing about unwritten histories, that I am aware of my position as an actor in the process of unwritten histories by referencing entire communities and, in some cases, continents to draw parallels to my research and that it may

seem antithetical. It is not my intention to do to global Indigenous communities what Canada has done to Indigenous peoples by merely utilizing components of their struggles to benefit my cause. It is necessary for me to do so to situate this thesis in a broader system of strategic colonization and silencing.

Parents and communities were not always given the choice whether to send their children to school, many were simply forced to do so. In some communities, there were day schools while, in others, schools operated on a voluntary basis. However, many schools were long a distance from Indigenous communities and thousands of parents were forced to send their children away to go to school. Governments in Canada, Australia, and the USA believed that taking children and placing them in schools, far away from their homes, would not only physically remove the children from the influences of their peoples, but also allow for constant supervision by missionaries and/or educators to create an environment that would best support transformational results. If parents or communities did not comply with the rules, they were sent to prison and/or fined and physically abused. Even though some children had no choice but to attend the schools, “many parents felt guilty because they knew the abuses their children would have to endure. As the parents, they were powerless to do anything about it” (Sellars, 2013: 31). Removing the children from the source of their identities was a key factor in the silencing process.

Removing Indigenous children from their communities not only enabled the governments to transform Indigenous populations into Euro-Canadian categories, it also took the children off of the land that the governments wanted to occupy, thus, effectively stopping generations of occupation, tradition, cultural significance and rites of knowledge. Britain and other colonizing nations strived for power and a desired means of subsistence.¹⁷ Forced education of Indigenous peoples had yet another ulterior motive: to break the relationships between people and their land, thus granting access and control of Indigenous occupied areas to the colonial governments.

3.3.2 Cultural and Religious Cleansing

The second step of the removal and immersion process of residential schools was to cleanse children of all remnants of their peoples and homes. The initial introduction to residential schools would have been, for many

¹⁷ Euro-Canadians gained social status and prestige through the accumulation of wealth and expensive material possessions.

peoples, traumatic. For fear of misguided uncleanliness, children had their hair cut and they were washed with the harmful pesticide dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT). In many Indigenous cultures, hair is spiritual and to have one's hair cut is likened to having part of one's soul cut away. Some Indigenous communities believe that hair is an essential part of a harmonious body and spirit. In other cases, hair is understood to be sacred or powerful. Many Indigenous personal stories discuss the taking away of personal clothing, toys, and other belongings. Indigenous children were made to wear uniforms, further stripping children of their personal identities and physical self-expression. This form of cleansing was strategic in two ways: to 'purify' the children and to homogenize and disconnect them from their personal identities.

Residential school 'achievements,' such as transforming Indigenous children into Euro-Canadian ideals, were used as a tool to boast about the intellectual superiority and compassion of Canada. Essentially, residential schools were used as a tool utilized to gain political allies, public support, and influential domination; all of these are components to benefit the higher classes and continue to meet a desired means of subsistence and control. "Carlisle Indigenous Industrial School, an early residential school, took photographs of Indigenous children when they first came to that institution and then photographed them after they had been cleaned up, so that the world could see the civilizing effects of Christianity" (King, 2012: 62). The purpose of the "photographs was to track the change in the children's skin colour, from dark to light, from savagism to civilization" (King, 2012: 62-63). Sellars articulates possible feelings and attitudes of Indigenous children towards homogenization processes: "We were more like robots than normal children. Our lives were decided for us twenty-four hours a day" (Sellars, 2013: 38). The act of silencing all remaining traces of Indigenous children's physical identities was purposeful and meant to further the stereotypes of collective Indigenous identities and to strip Indigenous children of their well-being. This caused some children to be more vulnerable and thus more dependent on their educators. Ultimately, this form of manipulating was preparing the children to participate in society as lower-class laborers.

3.3.3 Names, Identity, and Kinship

Children were further stripped of their identities by overwriting the names they had been given or handed down, at birth, by their parents, families or communities. "Soon after [children] arrived at residential school

[they] were given a number that would become [their] identity throughout [their] years at the schools”...Bev Sellars became Number 1... her grandmother number- 27- and 28- the number assigned to her grandmother’s sister Annie... Sellars Mom... 71 (Sellars, 2013: 32). A number as a name or identity suggests that the children at residential schools in Canada were not treated as humans but as statistical inconveniences. Eventually, children might have been given a European name to fit into society and renounce their heritage. “In a general way, one can say that personal identity refers to the aspects that make us unique and distinguishable from others (biological givens, significant identifications, meaningful social roles)” (Watzlawik, 2016: 1).

Without a name as a personal identifier, many survivors recalled confusing feelings regarding belonging. Having been removed from their homes, then stripped of physical identities and cultural affiliation or significance, children were steered into a life of uncertainty. By stating ones’ Indigenous name, a plethora of information can be conveyed. In March of 2017, Jacinda Mack spoke to an audience of undergraduate anthropology students at the University of British Columbia. Mack touched on the importance of a name and how it can identify tribal belongings, ancestral lands, rites, status, associations, allies, kinships and more. Generally, names can be inherited through complex lineages of ancestors. In some cases, names are earned or modified, chosen to resemble one’s character, spirituality and they are always purposeful and meaningful. Names are integral to many Indigenous communities and identities. By overwriting a child’s name, the authorities were overwriting and erasing complex histories and kinship systems passed down through generations.

It is likely that McKenzie was given a number as his identity whilst attending St. Albert Youville residential school and that the name George Ralph McKenzie was not his birth name, but rather, a European name given to him by the missionaries. “Personal identity can be defined and assessed in several ways. Self-representation, self-recognition, self-descriptions, self-esteem, self-awareness, self-knowledge, and so on are often all subsumed under the same construct: identity” (Watzlawik et al. 2016: 1). Giving an individual, especially a child, a number as a name was a strategy used to dehumanize, homogenize, disconnect and remind the children, daily, of their cultural ‘inferiority’.

3.3.4 Erasing Language: Silencing

Possibly the most damaging step in educational silencing was the ban on the use of Indigenous languages. Punishments for speaking Indigenous languages were generally physical and many students recall being traumatized the first few times they were struck. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada discusses common punishments such as the use of leather whips, isolating children in small, dark closets, washing mouths with soap and forcing children to kneel for extended periods of time. Indigenous scholars, such as Thomas King and Bev Sellars, state that punishments were used to teach Indigenous peoples that their languages and cultures were evil and sinful. In many cases, children were conditioned to associate their language with pain and feelings of inferiority. Language loss has “wide-ranging social and political repercussions for the language communities... it is heavily intertwined with cultural knowledge and political identity that speech forms often serve as meaningful indicators of a community’s vitality and social well-being” (Pine & Turin, 2017: 1). Colonizers may not have understood the complexity of Indigenous languages, as anthropologists such as Franz Boas and his student Edward Sapir would later research and discuss. “To this day, Indigenous communities around the world make use of traditional place names to ascribe current or historical meaning to places and spaces that are locally resonate and historically important” (Pine & Turin, 2017: 2). The motives for language homogenization was similar to other forms of colonization. This was meant to silence resistance, eliminate opposing cultures, gain resources and create a lower-class labour force.

3.4 Assimilation

The process of maximum supervision, complete control of education, of the children’s daily activities and an attempt to control the very thoughts of the children succeeded, in many cases, to confuse and convert Indigenous children. These are all forms of silencing, and violent silencing at that. Students who went through the residential school system often recalled being “deeply confused” about their spiritualities (Angeconeb, 2012: 18). As a result, most survivors found themselves “caught between two cultures,” feeling alienated in white society, yet estranged from their Indigenous heritages (Meili, 1992: 54). Indigenous children were further silenced, in some cases, in their own communities’ due to their lack of cultural, traditional and linguistic knowledge.

After graduation, students were forced to assimilate into a society that further marginalized them. Ultimately, Indigenous peoples could never fully assimilate due to such view and they were forced to a lifetime of shame and silence. Governments believed that “in successive generations, the ‘Indigenous strain’ would become less prominent until no one would be distinguished (or would want to be distinguished) as being of Indigenous descent. Within a few generations, the former Indigenous peoples would be ‘white people’” (Armitage, 1995: 19).

Survivors like Sellars recall, “We had a saying at the Mission if we did anything stupid. We excused ourselves with the line, “Oh well, I’m just an Indian.” ... being called “Dirty Indians,” “Stupid,” and other derogatory names by the authorities at the mission” (Sellars, 2013: 50). These derogatory names continued throughout the student’s lives. Currently, “survivors are enraged by the psychological and spiritual scars inflicted on them and the other students from the colonialistic and genocidal approach inherent in the residential school system” (Angeconeb, 2012: 21). The combination of religious teaching, massive involvement in colonial education and “relative autonomy from the practice of colonial control gave missionaries a special position at the juncture of colonial technologies of domination and self-control” (Pels, 1997: 172).

This void, this not knowing, whilst also knowing that this was done purposefully, is and forever will be a void in my being, in who I am and how I see myself. He is my Great Grandfather and it is as if he never existed.

“How can there be nothing? Nothing? With all the research and time and energy you spent on this. All those hours? How? I just don’t get it. I Just...with all those resources and connections available to you... Who is he? ...I guess we’ll never know.”

(Alana Dueck, August 15th, 2017, Abbotsford B.C.)

4 Moment Two: Canadian Military: George

“Well we know he was in the military, because he has badges on his uniform. A sergeant, because of the stripes”. (Elmer Beier, November 13th, 2016, Aldergrove B.C.).

Through over 1,150 hours spent searching through archives, military, governmental and community, I have not found a sergeant in the Canadian military with the name George Ralph McKenzie. The evidence regarding McKenzie’s personal involvement in the Canadian military has solely been gleaned from 7 photographs¹⁸. The rest of the information is possible or probable. From what I could visually identify from the photos, McKenzie was a sergeant in the military during World War II, due to the stripes on his arm badge in 2 of the photographs. He was stationed in the Cultus Lake area of B.C., with his family, in 1941. One of the badges on his arm in figure 4.1 seems to resemble the Royal Canadian Engineer’s (R.C.E.) bomb badge in figure 4.2 though, his specific regiment or field could not be ascertained.



Figure 4.1 George McKenzie 1943 Cultus Lake BC.

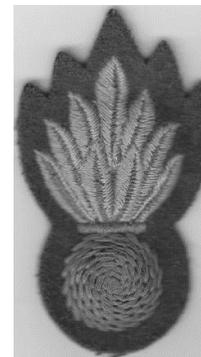


Figure 4.2 R.C.E. bomb badge

I contacted a historian at the Chilliwack Archives and a Metis-Status-Cree World War II enthusiast¹⁹ and spent approximately 500 hours searching online to confirm the badges visible on his uniform.²⁰ When an individual in Canada joined the efforts for World War I and World War II there were obligatory requirements, education requirements and personal fitness requirements. I had assumed that this would result in at least a handful of intersections with the government. Alison Bernstein wrote that many Indigenous volunteers were

¹⁸ Due to limitations I have only included 2 photographs

¹⁹ Name is not specified for the individual’s privacy.

²⁰ This does not include the 8 years previous that I have spent talking to and interacting with historians and Indigenous people regarding the photographs.

rejected from certain positions in the army due to their inadequate education (Bernstein, 2013:34 & 43). Thus, it is fair to assume that most Indigenous soldiers in the Canadian army would have had to undergo tests and fill out mandatory documents. These documents would have had to be signed by certain people within the military and would also have been sent to military headquarters. Soldiers names were recorded in many memorial books,²¹ uniforms had to be measured and ordered, weapons had to be registered and training had to commence. There were ranks, regiments, camps, flights, ship sailings, battles, promotions, wounds, deaths and many other instances where intersections between the state and Indigenous soldiers would have been documented, where papers would be signed, stamped, dated and filed.

McKenzie should have been documented when he volunteered, and his regiment/corps, division, brigade, unit and service number should all have been recorded and processed. McKenzie was also promoted from Lance Corporal to Sergeant, within the span of 10 months,²² and this would have required documentation and ordering patches or badges. Someone would have had to decide to promote McKenzie, after which he would have had people he was responsible for, either in training or combat. When his wife gave birth, to Shirley May McKenzie in 1942, McKenzie would have had to sign documents to be allowed to leave his post and be present for the birth. Yet nothing can be found.

I contacted the Library and Archives of Canada for access McKenzie's military file. I was disheartened by the requirements to access documents:

“For all other military service files (1919-1997), including Second World War (not killed in action), access restrictions apply... the files cannot be made available on the bac-lac website... there is no online database available” (Bac-lac.gc.ca, 2016).

The forms to request access to the protected files require information that one could only obtain either directly from the individual in question or from a successful genealogical or archival record search. This is almost impossible for thousands of Indigenous peoples searching, even if the service files exist. With more than 7,000 Indigenous peoples having served in Canada's major wars between 1914 and 1953 (Some Indigenous groups

²¹ Canada's Books of Remembrance.

²² The estimation of the time span is to be discussed in detail in section 5.2 of this thesis.

estimate 12,000) (Summersby, 2002: 39) the numbers of Indigenous peoples considering their histories for answers, in 2017, would have more than doubled. For Indigenous peoples who have been systematically and systemically erased from the collective history of Canada to be forced to demonstrate proof, and physical documentation, of an individual's existence, is iniquitous.²³ Indigenous peoples are constantly being forced to prove their identity and achievements, while at the same time the Canadian government knows full well that such records are difficult to find or access.

4.1 Canadian Military and Non-Documentation

Photographic evidence of McKenzie in Canadian military regalia confirms that the second moment where McKenzie should have been extensively documented was during his involvement in the Canadian military. Joining the military in Canada would have required several points of intersection with obligatory documentation. There were knowledge tests to determine rank and placement, physical and medical tests to determine health and ability to fight, training and personal information that would have been documented at the beginning of McKenzie's military relationship with Canada. From the lack of information that I have found, despite extensive research, regarding not only Indigenous involvement in Canadian wars, but also the complete lack of information regarding McKenzie as a Canadian soldier, I conclude that this non-documentation was strategic and meant to satisfy a historical materialist society.

I would like to make a bold suggestion: The reason Indigenous peoples of Canada were not obligatorily recorded, except for acknowledging that Indigenous peoples contributed greatly to war efforts, is due to a systemic and structural type of diversion. Indigenous peoples had a long history of being eliminated by the government and were still considered dispensable at the time. Why would the government want to record people who were, considered to be, dispensable? By not recording Indigenous peoples accurately the Canadian government was able to lessen body counts during the World Wars. Canada was losing people that had not been counted or enumerated, thus allowing for inaccurate morale boosts for soldiers and Canadian society in the form of propaganda that Canada was winning, was strong and was superior. It was reported that approximately 200

²³ There is no space in the page limits of this thesis to discuss the debate regarding the use of oral histories and testimonies as proof for legal issues or as authoritative. Please refer to references: Bruce Miller and Julie Cruikshank for more information on the subject.

Indigenous soldiers were killed during the Second World War, but many Indigenous scholars suggest that the number was much higher. With this circumspect information, Canadians would believe that their efforts at home were supporting the safety and victories of their soldiers. Such actions would influence people to either buy war bonds, donate money to the military, fund expeditions or foster attitudes of pride.

Within the press and in comments about Indigenous peoples praised in World War II, Indigenous peoples were generally referred to as “they,” “the Indian” or “the red man” as opposed to individual names.

“The red soldier is tough... lived outdoors all his life... He takes to commando fighting with gusto...His ancestors invented it ... At ambushing, scouting, signaling sniping, they’re peerless.” (Bernstein, 1991: 45).

I expected to find individual names of the many Indigenous soldiers collectively highlighted in propaganda and news articles because Euro-Canadian soldiers were generally individually mentioned along with mini biographies of where in Canada they lived and who was waiting for them at home.

It also appears that the negative image and derogatory stereotypes of Indigenous peoples were recast in positive light because Indigenous peoples were fighting on Canada’s side. “An Indigenous man will risk his life for a white as dauntlessly as his ancestors lifted a palefaces’ scalp,” wrote one journalist (Bernstein, 1991: 54). Statements like these, at the same time, glorified Indigenous peoples’ involvement and silenced the true stories of individual sacrifice and efforts while at the same time perpetuating stereotypes. As a result of general glorification as opposed to individual recognition, official the records were inherently flawed and have never neared completion. Unfortunately, these incomplete summaries are the most accurate and extensive records available.

The use of collective terminology was purposeful and meant to boost Euro-Canadian morale suggesting that ‘even the Indigenous’ were helping the war effort, while at the same time instilling the notion that all Indigenous cultures were in the same cultural category. In some ways, this generalization suggested that even the ‘uncivilized’ Indigenous peoples could understand the importance of fighting in the wars, thus, Euro-Canadians ought to understand as well.

Another possibility for the generalization was to showcase the ways in which Canada has been able ‘to aid’ Indigenous peoples to become ‘civilized’. In later years, showcasing compassion or aid towards Indigenous peoples would prove to be beneficial to Canada not only for political alliances but also for economic profit. Such actions have ulterior motives, and were meant to fulfill the morale needs of the Euro-Canadian classes of society into believing that their ‘efforts’ were proving ‘effective’.

Canada continued its extermination of Indigenous peoples by sending them to the front lines. “Approximately 300 Iroquois soldiers went to the *front*,” out of 300 who joined the military (Summersby, 2002: 7). This does not include the hundreds of other Indigenous soldiers who joined the war effort and were immediately sent to the front lines. German propaganda often taunted Canada, stating that Canada had sent their Indigenous soldiers to fight as cannon fodder. During World War I and World War II, residential schools were open and actively colonizing and silencing Indigenous peoples. At the same time, Indigenous peoples were not considered to be citizens and were often spoken about as being less than civilized.

“Why would Indigenous people of Canada be interested in fighting a war that was on a different continent and against an enemy they never really knew?” (Dempsey, 1995: 40). Scholars such as D.J. Hall and Janice Summersby suggest that Indigenous peoples joined the war efforts due to economic hardships, educationally instilled loyalty or because they felt optimistic about the plight of defending an oppressed people. Many thought that their involvement in the war would help their peoples or families. There is no way to know whether McKenzie joined the military due to economic hardship or loyalty to the Crown, and due to strategic silencing, we will never know. What we do know is that McKenzie and thousands of others fought for a country that oppressed, assimilated and colonized their peoples, and that when they returned home, their lives were met with a continuation of silencing through new obstacles and oppressions.

4.2 Documentation: Structurally Convenient Racism

Information regarding Indigenous peoples’ involvement in both World War I and World War II in Canada is scarce and limited. According to Summersby, one in three Indigenous men of age enlisted during World War I; approximately “4,000 Indigenous people left their homes and families to help fight” (Summersby, 2002: 5).

Duncan Campbell Scott, the Deputy Superintendent General of the Department of Indian Affairs, informed Parliament of the Indigenous response:

“The participation of Great Britain in the wards has occasioned expressions of loyalty from the [Indigenous peoples], and the offer of contributions from their funds toward the general expenses of the war or toward the Patriotic Fund.”

Scott would make similar statements in each of the annual reports of Indian Affairs,’ as “his employees across the country noted increases in both the number of Indigenous recruits and the amount of money donated by reserve communities” (Summersby, 2002: 5). Despite these reports, the total number of Indigenous volunteers is unknown. Regional officials in the Department of Indian Affairs were instructed to complete and submit “Return of [Indigenous] Enlistments” forms. However, not all the [Indigenous] recruits had been recorded because his departments’ main concern was Status [Indigenous]. Thus, on paper, the records did not include Inuit, Metis or non-status Indigenous peoples. The reason for the Indian Affairs to be solely interested in Status Indigenous peoples was because the Canadian government had economical relationships and obligations to Status Indigenous peoples, but not to Indigenous peoples who were not recognized or bound by treaties. Diefenbaker outlined some of the financial issues for Indigenous soldiers who did not receive the same treatment as Euro-Canadian soldiers.

I want to speak of the situation concerning the Indigenous in this country...They very seldom receive any mention...The reserves have been depleted of almost all of the physically fit men. The Indigenous in the service ask. “Why are we discriminated against?” Why are the ordinary rights to go to refreshment places and so on which are allowed to other members of the army denied to us? Why is it that dependent’s allowances for wives of other soldiers is \$35.00 while the wife of an [Indigenous person] receives \$10.00 and \$15.00 a month? (from Dempsey, 1995: 46).

By World War II, the Canadian government had forced many Status Indigenous peoples to renounce or give up their status to gain similar benefits and privileges as the other soldiers.

4.3 Remembering Indigenous Achievements

Despite the many obstacles and injustices, Indigenous participation in active service between 1939 and 1945 was remarkable. Indigenous peoples were “represented in every rank from Private to Brigadier,” “participated in every major battle and campaign, including the Dieppe landings and the Normandy invasion” (Dempsey, 1995: 39) (Summersby, 2002: 31). “Throughout the war, the Department of Indian Affairs received scores of letters from the front commending Indigenous marksmen and scouts. As well, at least 37 decorations were awarded to Indigenous peoples for their bravery while sniping and scouting and for performing other feats of valour during the war... Over four years, Indigenous peoples of Canada participated and earned medals for valour in practically every major land battle” (Summersby, 2002: 10 &19). This is what I could find regarding Indigenous achievements in World War II. Summersby and Dempsey did highlight individual Indigenous soldiers along with biographies, theirs is the most extensive military information about Indigenous peoples of Canada’s I was able to find.

Francis Pegahmagabow is the most decorated Indigenous soldier in World War I and World War II and was “one of only thirty-nine soldiers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force to be awarded the Military Medal and Two Bars for valour, yet he is not mentioned even once in the voluminous war diary of the 1st Battalion, the unit he served with for almost the entire duration of World War I” (Hayes, 2009: 124).²⁴ The reasons Pegahmagabow received these awards are still being debated. Pegahmagabow, who was an activist in Indigenous rights during his life after World War I and throughout World War II, was quoted writing the following in a letter to the Canadian government in May of 1914:

The government seems to be quite confident that an [Indigenous person] is not worth a cent, nor a word, not a person, and that only a very good war material. Tell the boy the red man of Canada is about to resign away from the government. I feel sorry for the people and my fellow veterans.

Trouble will now be opened to do its dirty work (Hayes, 2009: 107).

²⁴ World War I. * This is also improperly cited in: Legendary Ojibwa sniper unsung hero of WW I Francis Pegahmagabow: experienced poverty and racism on return to Canada, By Reg Sherren, *CBC News* Posted: Aug 01, 2014 4:39 PM ET.

When the records of Canada's most decorated Indigenous soldier, who participated in both World Wars, are incomplete and controversial, the search for other Indigenous people's military records seems inherently fruitless.

Despite multiple awards, valour and remarkable effort, information regarding Indigenous peoples' involvement in World War II is either non-existent or stated rather generally in short paragraphs in long histories about the war. Silencing individual Indigenous peoples' achievements in historical documents is a strategic method for keeping the Euro-Canadian power balance in tact while at the same time silencing Indigenous peoples who voiced their opinions and concerns about this lack of information. Without accurate documentation, Indigenous peoples did not have 'proof or evidence' to support their statements about their involvement in foreign wars. The Canadian government ignored the needs of Indigenous communities with the least amount of backlash from society, effectively silencing the needs of Indigenous peoples while advancing the needs of Euro-Canadians.

4.4 Veterans Returning Home

The motives that lay behind the Canadian government's recruitment of Indigenous peoples in the World Wars became evident once victory was won and soldiers began to return home. It became obvious, to me, that the Canadian government had used Indigenous soldiers strictly for the benefits of Euro-Canadians. Indigenous soldiers fought in the wars, helped win victories, kept the official body counts low, were not home to aid in their communities' growth and sustainability, and cost the government less than Euro-Canadian soldiers and were an easy tool to manipulate within the media. Indigenous and Canadian soldiers looked forward to their return and reintegration into civilian life. For Euro-Canadian soldiers, that transition had been something the government had been working on for a few years. For Indigenous soldiers, recognition and transition would be ignored by governments and officials. Many Indigenous soldiers thought that the non-discrimination that they enjoyed by the end of the war, within their units, would continue once they came home. They expected to receive the same benefits and treatment as their fellow Euro-Canadian soldiers.

John Dempsey suggests that Indigenous peoples “did not want to look like white men; rather they wanted equality with white men while retaining their Indigenous heritage” (Dempsey, 1979: 49). However, P. Whitney Lackenbauer states that many Indigenous veterans were shocked by the continued discrimination they faced when they returned home (Lackenbauer, 2007: 139). The shock was due to the main purpose for Canadian involvement in World War II; Fighting for freedom and to abolish discrimination and oppression of a culture or religion in Europe. The irony was that Canada was fighting to stop Germany from taking over other countries, taking those citizens as property, killing innocent peoples because they thought differently and imposing rules upon those peoples. For Indigenous individuals who were a part of the war, especially soldiers on the front lines, this mentality must have seemed refreshing and optimistic. Indigenous soldiers, like Joe Cardinal and Francis Pegahmagabow believed that Canada was hypocritical by not recognizing and fighting for the freedom and rights of oppressed and discriminated peoples in ‘its own country’.

Indigenous veterans of Alberta claimed that they were denied war benefits, were racially discriminated against and that they came home to communities that were in poorer conditions than when they had left. This contradiction in Canadian agendas and beliefs confused many Indigenous soldiers who thought that because of their involvement in World War II that their lives, once home, would improve. Joe Cardinal, an Indigenous veteran once stated,

“I joined the army. I got to England, and I was scared. I felt inferior to the white man. I’d been led to believe the white race was a super race, and I guess I kind of believed it. But in Normandy, France, I held lots of guys who were dying. I heard them scream, and I saw their guts spill out. I found myself thinking, ‘These guys all scream and die the same way. I must be the same, too’” (Meili, 1992: 252).

Indigenous communities and a small number of Euro-Canadians thought that Indigenous peoples should not have been expected to endure the sacrifices of fighting in the wars without obtaining privileges or proper recognition.

There were further discriminations against Indigenous veterans in Canada as many people were denied access to veteran clubs or activities. Cardinal stated, “I came back in 1946. I wanted to join the Canadian Legion,

but I wasn't allowed to because I was [Indigenous]" (Meili, 1992: 252). Because of these discriminations, many "veterans found themselves feeling isolated from sharing memories and making sense with other veterans out of what they had just been through" and for some, like Cardinal, "bitter feelings welled up inside" (Meili, 1992: 252-253). The negative impacts of silencing Indigenous peoples from expressing, discussing and understanding their experiences would prove to influence and transfer through future generations.

4.5 National Aboriginal Day, June 21st, 2017: A Story of Insecurity

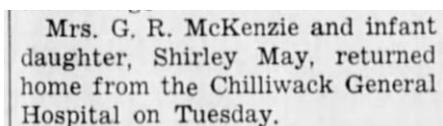
Attending National Aboriginal day at Trout Lake, B.C. was incredible and nerve racking. I have personal insecurities about my visual appearance in comparison to my heritage and this causes me stress regarding acceptance. I fear that my involuntary disconnection to my heritage and band, as well as my visual appearance might offend others; that I might be considered insensitive or unauthentic whilst joining the celebration. There were countless times I wanted to emotionally break down and for the first two hours I caught myself physically shaking. Though I was nervous, every Indigenous person that I spoke to accepted me as Indigenous. Many individuals smiled and welcomed me with warmth when I told them I was Cree. We took turns listening to each other share our lives and stories. We stood in line together to eat the Bannock and we sat in a circle together to watch the dancers in the Pow-wow. I was beginning to feel less insecure. When the host asked, over the sound system, "*Who out there is from the Cree Nation?*" I hollered and hooted.

During one portion of the Pow-wow celebration the host announced that if anyone of Indigenous heritage, who was or had someone that was involved in the World Wars, to please join him and other Indigenous veteran elders in front of the host table. He spoke about injustice, erasure, non-documentation and asked again that we please join them in front of the host table so that we may honour those who fought and were forgotten. Internally I debated for approximately five minutes whether I deserved to join them and honour George. I closed my eyes and breathed deeply saying aloud, "*This is for you George,*" and I stood and crossed the empty circle to join the veteran elders. We danced together around the circle and swear George was dancing beside me.

5 Moment Three: Moving to Chilliwack: *The Chilliwack Progress*

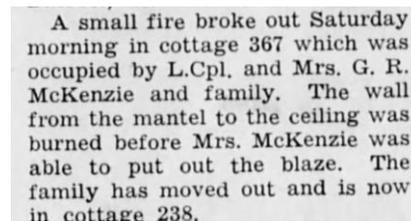
“I’ve driven around Cultus Lake a few times over the years looking for the house they lived in”. (Alana Dueck, November 13th, 2016, Aldergrove B.C.).

Thanks to newly available archival material, as of 2017, on the Chilliwack Museum and Archives website, I discovered small fragments of the existence of the McKenzie family in the Cultus Lake area. These fragments mention the lives of Nellie McKenzie and her children Lawrence McKenzie and Shirley May McKenzie. *The Chilliwack Progress* only mentions George McKenzie, in figure 5.1 when referring to “Mrs. G. R. McKenzie.” I believe that they referred to her in this manner due to their being another Mr. and Mrs. George McKenzie, 19.7km²⁵ north in, Rosedale. Lawrence McKenzie told Alana²⁶ that his father was often away in Edmonton for military business. It is possible that George McKenzie was not mentioned in the newspaper due to his military duties in Edmonton, though military training and stories of military personnel, throughout Canada and specifically at the Chilliwack base, occupied the bulk of the information, in *The Chilliwack Progress*, between 1941 and 1947. It is odd that a soldier who had been promoted twice within the span of eleven months would not be documented for his achievements. McKenzie is referred to as “L/Cpl”, in figure 5.2, in November of 1942. Shirley was born in December of 1942 and in the Fall of 1943, McKenzie, who is pictured with Nellie and an approximately one-year old Shirley, wears the stripes of a Sergeant in figure 5.3. I assume the photos were taken to commemorate the promotion.



Mrs. G. R. McKenzie and infant daughter, Shirley May, returned home from the Chilliwack General Hospital on Tuesday.

Figure 5.1 Birth Newspaper Clipping²⁷



A small fire broke out Saturday morning in cottage 367 which was occupied by L.Cpl. and Mrs. G. R. McKenzie and family. The wall from the mantel to the ceiling was burned before Mrs. McKenzie was able to put out the blaze. The family has moved out and is now in cottage 238.

Figure 5.2 Mrs. G. R. McKenzie Newspaper Clipping²⁸

²⁵ A distance of approximately 19.7KM from Cultus Lake to Rosedale via Google Maps.

²⁶ Alana is my Aunt and I have a personal relationship to her; I will refer to her as Alana due to this relationship.

²⁷ *The Chilliwack Progress* (1942, December 23). Page 5. Retrieved from <https://www.http://theprogress.newspapers.com>

²⁸ *The Chilliwack Progress* (1942, November 4). Page 7. Retrieved from <https://www.http://theprogress.newspapers.com>.



Figure 5.3 George, Nellie and Shirley McKenzie 1943.

This information was discovered through an analysis of *The Chilliwack Progress* newspaper clips and the available photographs of the McKenzie family in Appendix A. The time range was constructed from the visible age of Shirley McKenzie in comparison to the dates of the newspaper clippings and her birth certificate. There was also an effort made to hypothesize the time of year by analyzing the foliage and type of clothing worn in the photos in comparison to estimated average seasonal temperatures. McKenzie was visibly darker skinned and had physical features that may have been perceived as Indigenous by the peoples of Chilliwack. Thus, it is possible that McKenzie, being visibly Indigenous, was purposefully left out of the community papers and archives.

The erasure of an individual can also occur within an individual's community and, in some cases, one's family. The evidence that I have gathered about McKenzie has generally been hypothetical, whilst the information regarding three of the members of his immediate family has been more concrete. McKenzie, his wife Nellie, and their three children moved to Chilliwack B.C. between 1940 and 1941. I established this date range through an analysis and amalgamation of fragments of information. Shirley May McKenzie, their daughter, was born in 1942 at the Chilliwack Regional Hospital.²⁹ Lawrence McKenzie, the eldest son, told Alana Dueck³⁰ that he remembered the family moving to Chilliwack from Alberta with his two brothers; Ralph McKenzie, the youngest, was born in 1940. I assume McKenzie and his family moved to Chilliwack during the beginning of Canada's involvement in World War II because McKenzie would be near the Chilliwack Military Base.³¹ From the photos, an unfortunate family story, a few fragments from *The Chilliwack Progress*, and information provided to Alana via Lawrence McKenzie, I can confidently state that they lived at Cultus Lake in a cottage on the North-East side of the Lake between 1942 and 1946.³²

²⁹ I have a copy of the Birth Certificate and a newspaper clipping from *The Chilliwack Progress* (Wednesday December 23rd 1942). Newspaper Clipping Figure 5.1.

³⁰ Shirley May McKenzie's daughter. Lawrence McKenzie passed away in 2012 and the information and stories were told to his Niece, Alana Dueck before he passed. This information was then relayed to me in an interview in November of 2016.

³¹ Originally Camp Chilliwack in 1942 and renamed to the Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering in 1970.

³² I will not share the exact address of the cottage as it still exists and it is currently occupied. I wish to respect the resident's privacy.

In the summer of 2017 I found the exact location of the house that the McKenzie's occupied for the duration of 5 years. The cottage has since been torn down and a modern house stands in its place. I stood in the locations the McKenzie's posed, I planted my right foot on the tree trunk George posed on and I knelt on the pavement where George had knelt. Though they occupied this area for a short time, I felt more connected than I had before. Standing where they had stood made George McKenzie more physically real.

"This is where they lived?... I think he stood right there, right there, that's the same tree as in the photo! ...Aaliyah, this is where your Great-Great Grandparents lived". (Jessica Beier speaking to her daughter Aaliyah, July 27th, 2017, Cultus Lake B.C.). "It's incredible to be standing here and seeing the photos line up with the mountains and the trees. It's changed so much, but you can still tell this is where they were. All those years not knowing. This is pretty cool". (Janice Beier, July 27th, 2017, Cultus Lake B.C.).

Because of these findings, we know more about the lives of the McKenzie children and Nellie, during their stay at Cultus Lake, but we are no closer to learning about the existence of George McKenzie.

5.1 My Research and the Need for Archival Education

Finding the fragments regarding the McKenzies was bittersweet. I had been to the archives of Chilliwack in 2015 and spoke with an archivist and a historian, Peter Ferguson, during my visit. I spent 5 hours going through microfiches of almanacs and newspapers and was ultimately unsuccessful at finding anything. In 2016, I attempted to visit the Chilliwack Military Base and instead found the newly renovated homes of Garrison Crossing. I searched the town of Chilliwack for the Military Museum and later found that it had closed a few years before, but promised to be open at a new location 'soon.' As of April 2017, the Military Museum has not reopened. I started to realize that finding information regarding the military base would be difficult and I felt discouraged. I combed through the new and used book stores in the areas as well as throughout the Fraser Valley. I searched the internet for books and articles and I asked military enthusiasts if they knew anything about the Chilliwack Military Base. All that I uncovered, at the time, was basic introductory information.

In 2017, I took an First Nations and Endangered Languages Program course³³ at UBC with Professor Daisy Rosenblum and it was during the course that I realized that my hours of research into finding information about the Chilliwack Military Base, as well as about the McKenzie family, were inherently flawed. Archival databases are complex resources with intricate categories and points of access which, I found, are not necessarily apparent and understood by people who are searching. They are composed of many forms of metadata which are extracted from the physical resources, data donors and researchers. This extraction is heavily dependent on the accuracy of the information present³⁴ or included.³⁵ There are several methods of metadata collection, archival presentation and ontological organization which can further complicate matters. With these intricate and complex components inherent in archival navigation, I found myself wondering how Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples could accurately or successfully utilize archival databases without having some form of archival education. Thus, with this revelation, I decided to completely re-examine every archival site and location I had visited during the previous year.

Fortunately, my efforts were successful as I found a plethora of information regarding the Chilliwack Military Base through online archives. Then, equipped with an educated knowledge of the mechanism and varieties of archival material, I visited the Chilliwack archives and the Cultus Lake area in the summer of 2017. I talked to the Cultus Lake Park Office and it was during this meeting that I confirmed the McKenzies had rented the cottage as well, I learned that the fire that occurred, in cottage 367³⁶, was due to a defective fireplace. I visited the Cultus Lake Memorial Church and looked through the two archival books available. On many occasions, I went from business to business, within Cultus Lake, asking if anyone knew information about the history of the area. Unfortunately, most of the people I spoke with either did not know the history or were new to the area. I spent 3 hours at the archives of Chilliwack, on one of the visits, sifting through military base information compiled by Peter Ferguson as well as Chilliwack Military base books and elementary school logs. I was

³³ First Nations and Endangered Languages: FNEL 481 Heritage Resources in Endangered First Nations Language Revitalization, Winter 2017, Buchanan B, Room 318.

³⁴ On an old photo, document, etc., without contexts.

³⁵ Researcher metadata and other forms of available contexts and information.

³⁶ Please see Appendix E

successful in finding a singular log of the elementary school attendance of Lawrence McKenzie.³⁷ It was also on this attendance sheet that Lawrence McKenzie was logged as having moved to New Westminster on October 30th, 1945. This date and time of year correspond with the approximate time in which Nellie McKenzie abandoned the children. Finding this information was emotional to uncover as well as exciting.

I have the privilege of attending a University and, thus, having access to courses and resources that can greatly aid my research. For most Indigenous peoples, these resources are not as readily available. The inability to easily access these resources plays a significant role in the ability for Indigenous peoples to discover their heritages and fill in the voids caused by colonization. Many Indigenous peoples in Canada do not know where to look or who to ask when it comes to searching for their histories. However, with the plethora of resources and courses available to me, I have still not been able to find information regarding George McKenzie.

5.2 Roots in Civic Silencing

Systematic erasure and exoticification of Indigenous peoples within Canadian towns was common during the span of McKenzie's life and benefitted Canada's Euro-Canadian classes in several ways. Indigenous peoples were believed to be lower-class and uncivilized throughout Canada, by the crown, the government, the media, higher-class or affluent individuals and much of society. Simultaneously erasing and exoticifying Indigenous peoples suggested to the public that the 'old ways' of Indigenous peoples were being 'civilized,' that the Euro-Canadians were helping, and that together Indigenous peoples and Euro-Canadians could look back at the 'old ways' and be entertained.

In the early 1940s Chilliwack, Indigenous peoples were often exoticified in the local newspaper. An individual, by the name of J. W. Burns, had a section in *The Chilliwack Progress* titled: *Chehalis Lake*, where he wrote "stories about the Chehalis lake district". January 15th, 1941, page five, Burns quotes an Indigenous person, (not given a specific name), "We were true children in the wild. We dispensed with our clothing and roamed about unencumbered". The idea of roaming the wild naked would have been a scandalous notion during the 1940s, because nakedness was associated with children or 'primitiveness'. The Indigenous person, being quoted,

³⁷ Division 2, Sardis Elementary School. Grades 4, 5 and 6. Teacher: Dorothy H. Leary. September and October 1945.

likens nakedness to being childlike as well. Ironically, to be roaming naked in Chilliwack, or anywhere in Canada at the time, would have been brave and progressive due to the conservative nature of society. Even today, nakedness, when referring to Indigenous peoples, is portrayed as uncivilized. This is juxtaposed to nude beaches, nude communities and nude protests portrayed as being liberating and, in some cases, revolutionary. This column ended with a comment made by an individual whom, I assume, had been taught to overwrite his ‘inferior and uncivilized’ heritage and assimilate into Canadian society.

“I suppose you know the government took over the burden of the spirits several years ago. I have no doubt at all but a great many spirits which we catered to were of a very low order or intelligence and had neither wisdom nor knowledge of life’s business affairs and could neither cure the sick nor contribute in any way to the welfare and enlightenment of our people”. The Vision- (The Chilliwack Progress, Jan 15, 1941: 5).

This individual seemingly renounced and denied his heritage whilst praising the aid and the wisdom of the government for the enlightenment of his people. The rest of the *Chehalis Lake* columns by Burns follow a similar pattern of exotifying Indigenous peoples as historical and showcasing the success of Euro-Canadian society’s role in the improving the lives of Indigenous peoples. Ethnocentric publications such as these were common and aided in the continuation of racism and stereotyping of Indigenous peoples which helped to situate Indigenous peoples in lower social classes.

The erasure and exotification strategically benefitted Euro-Canadians, not only for entertainment purposes, but also to maintain the desired needs of subsistence. Forcing Indigenous peoples into lower social classes and lower labour positions continued to foster the notion that Euro-Canadian society was helping Indigenous peoples. Canadians received satisfaction in believing that their ways of life were superior whilst also benefitting from cheaper labour. By suggesting that Indigenous peoples were inferior, and needed to be saved by Euro-Canadian peoples, the Canadian government seized land in the name of progress and controlled Indigenous peoples and their bodies for the needs of ‘superior’ society.

6 Moment Four: The Moment of Generational Erasure

Erasure develops within families, due to systemic and systematic racism and the oppression of cultures and heritages. I utilize the term develop to suggest that this form of erasure is acquired and agentive, as opposed to being intrinsically present. The story of the life of McKenzie sustained an unexpected disengagement when the wife of his four children became pregnant, by another man, and for reasons unknown, to Nellie's decedents,³⁸ abandoned her children and left with the father of her unborn child. Lawrence McKenzie recalled that he and his brothers and sister were abandoned in approximately October 1945, whilst McKenzie was in Edmonton for military business. The children were then separated by sex and placed in foster care; never to reunite with either parent. The age of the children at the time of separation from their parents and the socio-political time in which they knew their military father, (World War II), is a key factor in the erasure of McKenzie from their collective memories. Two major issues arose from this disengagement: The imperceptibly documented life of McKenzie ceased entirely, and the systemic and systematic notions of inferiority and racism persuaded the children to simultaneously deny and resent their Indigenous heritage.

6.1 Resentment and Denial

Though the McKenzie children did not attend a residential school, they did endure a Eurocentric and ethnocentric education, which succeeded in influencing them to resent and deny their Indigenous heritage. This denial and resentment continued through to the next generation and, in some ways, to the ensuing generation. Therefore, I utilize the term 'ensue' to suggest a negative aspect that the term, if used correctly, can imply: to follow as a consequence. I would like to further suggest that the ensuing denial and resentment caused individuals, in the Beier family, to feel isolated, ashamed and afraid to be proud of their Indigenous heritage. Canadian education regarding Indigenous peoples has changed and varied over time. Lawrence McKenzie told Alana that he and his siblings, as well as other Indigenous students, were teased in school. They were referred to by derogatory stereotypes³⁹ and often called "half-breeds". Children teased them for the nature in which they

³⁸ Both from the McKenzie side and the other man's side as we have contacted them and have established a relationship.

³⁹ I refuse to continue the derogatory nature of the stereotypes, as my immediate family, as well as myself, have endured them. Thus, by not repeating them I do not give them power.

were abandoned and suggested, in a derogatory nature, that their father was not coming to get them because he was Indigenous. The sadness and helplessness the three boys experienced throughout their youth transformed into anger and resentment. They were mad at their father for being Indigenous and their anger mutated into a denial of their Indigenous heritage.

Throughout the years of education that the McKenzie children experienced, Indigenous peoples were regarded as primitive and used as an example of a people enlightened by progress and European constructs. School books most often portrayed European children, lifestyles, dress, religion, language, and attitudes; there was sparse information Indigenous children could relate to. Marie Battiste states in her book *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the learning spirit*:

“I am on my own path toward understanding the collective struggles of Indigenous peoples framed within a patriarchal, bureaucratic enterprise of government, with education used as the manipulative agent of various intended outcomes, some well-intentioned, some not, but all strategic” (Battiste, 2013: 17).

This approach to education was meant to assimilate Indigenous children into Canadian society, whilst erasing Indigenous peoples from the history of Canada.

“Indigenous history in North America has never really been about Indigenous peoples. It has been about [Euro-Canadians] and their needs and desires. What Indigenous peoples wanted has never been a vital concern, has never been a political or social priority” (King, 2012: 216). This ethnocentric erasure silenced Indigenous voices and forced them into the fringes of Canadian society.

Elmer Beier, Shirley May McKenzie’s former husband, said that Shirley occasionally visited her brothers and that two of her brothers, Ralph and Donald, had a difficult time coping with the loss and resentment. Shirley often worried about Ralph and Donald’s self-deprecating attitudes. Elmer⁴⁰ recalled that Lawrence and Ralph often intensely denied and sporadically admitted their Indigenous heritage. Shirley, who was approximately three at the time of her parent’s departure, did not remember her parents. This loss turned into curiosity and Shirley spent some of her time searching for her biological parents, her heritage and ultimately her identity. She was

⁴⁰ Elmer Beier is my grandfather and we have had a close relationship since I was a child. Thus, I will refer to him as Elmer out of respect for our relationship.

denied access to information regarding her biological parents. Whether her siblings were also denied access remains unknown as all four children have passed.

“She wasn’t allowed to have the information... We tried, phoned around we tried. We contacted the government and military. No nothing. No information and she was over 21! But it was different... we couldn’t do nothing, we tried. They just said no; Zip” (Elmer, November 13th 2016, Aldergrove B.C.).

Upon her death in 1973, Elmer inherited a small box that contained the photographs in Appendix A, as well as Shirley’s birth certificate.⁴¹ Due to several tragedies that spanned five months during the year Shirley died, the responsibility of taking care of three children, expenses and work, Elmer was not able to continue Shirley’s journey of discovery and the box was put away and forgotten.

6.2 Intergenerational Trauma

The next generation of the McKenzie family, on the Beier side, were told they were Indigenous. Due to erasure, that was all they were told. Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the Beier family, within the generation born between 1960 and 1980, recall an absence of Indigenous histories during their educations.

Karlene,⁴² a non-Indigenous family member, recalled having a serious interest in Indigenous cultures.

“We weren’t educated about Indigenous cultures...I was always very interested and never knew where to look for information...there were no resources when I was in school... nobody talked about it” (Karlene, March 15th, 2017, Langley B.C.)

Karlene recalled the shock and horror she felt when she first learned about residential schools and Indigenous oppression.

“I was horrified! It made me sick! All that time and we had no idea what was going on...I didn’t even know schools like that existed. My heart broke, those poor children...I was so mad... How could they not have taught us about that!?...It should be mandatory... Everyone should know, everyone needs to know” (Karlene, March 15th, 2017, Langley B.C.)

⁴¹ These were given to Elmer by a member of the foster family Shirley grew up with.

⁴² Karlene is my mother.

Alana, Shirley's daughter, remembered feeling proud and confused growing up. She was proud that she was Indigenous, but doubt always lingered in the back of her mind.

"I always thought, this could be pictures of some random man. How do I know if it's my Grandfather?"

(Alana, November 13th, 2016, Aldergrove B.C.)

Alana did not remember talking about her heritage as a youth, but recalled being teased by her friends.

"They teased me, yea, but I just didn't let it bug me. They weren't doing it to be mean.

It was kind of an endearment" (Alana, November 13th, 2016, Aldergrove, B.C.)

Over the years, Shirley's three children have expressed a desire to know more about their Indigenous heritage and what happened to their grandparents. Alana took it upon herself to start searching.

"I started searching for you two.⁴³ I wanted you to know where you came from." (Alana, November 13th,

2016, Aldergrove, B.C.)

Alana joined online databases, like Ancestry, and contacted Nellie's second family in Ontario. This connection was a pivotal moment in her years of searching and she recalled feeling excited and nervous. Nellie's family never knew about her first family and were shocked and troubled by the news. Later Alana connected with Lawrence McKenzie, introduced him to Shawn and other members of the family and intended to build a relationship with him. Unfortunately, he passed away shortly thereafter. Through all her searching, Alana was unable to uncover information about McKenzie.

The next generation grew up knowing they were Indigenous. They often heard their parents discussing their status and the possibility of living on a reservation, but nothing ever came of it. The two children were fortunate to attend an elementary school, Fort Langley Elementary, which had a strong connection with the Kwantlen First Nation. They learned about Indigenous peoples and participated in many Indigenous events whilst at the school. Though both children were proud of their Indigenous heritage, racism and stereotypes caused one of the children to disregard her heritage until she was in her early twenties. The other child decided to search for information, but struggled with acceptance and identity because she is visibly white. Both children have

⁴³ Referring to my sister and me.

witnessed racism, hate, and ethnocentrism regarding Indigenous cultures. It has caused the children to feel many confusing emotions: Sadness, doubt, pride, fear, but mostly anger towards the history of Canada and the continued discrimination of Indigenous peoples. Due to the perseverance of a few individuals in the Beier family, the negative associations with identity, within the family, are currently being eradicated.

6.3 Silencing in 2017: Canada 150

As of 2017 Canada is still oppressing and silencing Indigenous voices. Canada is currently engaged in the 150th anniversary of Canada or as Indigenous peoples have stated, the 150th anniversary of colonization. The way to combat the day of celebrating Indigenous control and genocide varies throughout Canada. Some people suggest resisting the celebration with protests, whilst others suggest for the push for changes that reflect the true history of Canada. Lillian Howard, the co-chair of the Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee, stated in *The Current* with Anna Maria Tremonti, “150 reflects the colonial history of Canada and the historical trauma that Indigenous peoples face”. Christi Belcourt, a Metis Visual artist stated in the online transcription, “I find it really insulting that there are 10,000 or 20,000 years of history on this continent... Yet Canadians are going to celebrate their 150 completely erasing and ignoring the thousands of years of Indigenous experiences”. There has even been an alternate logo created for Canada 150 by Eric Ritskes which says, “Colonialism 150”.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation Research Series states:

“No other population group in Canada’s history has endured such a deliberate, comprehensive, and prolonged assault on their human rights as that of Indigenous peoples. Yet despite many growing recognition of past wrongs, many Canadians remain unaware of the full scope of these injustices or their impacts” (Rogers,2012: 8).

With the majority of Indigenous voices, throughout Canada, speaking out against a celebration of the colonization of Indigenous peoples why are non-Indigenous Canadians turning a blind eye?

6.4 Historical Materialism to a Capitalist Mode of Production

Canada 150 is a major economic opportunity where non-Indigenous Canadians are expected to spend a greater amount of money on Canada 150 merchandise and celebration paraphernalia than in previous years. The desired subsistence and profit of non-Indigenous Canadians surpasses the well-being, needs, and recognition of the colonization and genocide of Indigenous peoples. The system of class division in Canada depends on the dominant class, which is non-Indigenous, thus, the needs and desires of the non-Indigenous class will ultimately come before the needs and desires of the non-dominant classes. Canada's productive forces have bonded society together in a system of production and exchange. The majority of Canadian companies are privately owned (Hasselback, 2016) and a large portion of Canada's population is dependent on wage-labour to meet their needs of subsistence. More Canadians are renting properties and are unable to farm and grow their own food. This causes many Canadians to be completely dependent on privately owned companies, who benefit greatly from the profitable cycle of supply and demand (Hasselback, 2016). However, most Canadians desires of subsistence greatly surpass the needs of existing. Thus, Canada has become a society dominated by acquisitiveness.

6.5 Multicultural and Diversity

Canada is using terms such as multiculturalism and diversity to boast about its acceptance and compassion for others while ignoring the needs of Indigenous peoples. By focusing the public attention on these terms, Canada is strategically avoiding its commitments to Indigenous peoples without widespread scrutiny. The Canadian Broadcast Corporation's (CBC) main, online website generally showcases headlines from around the world. Major clickable tabs for the page include things such as music, life, arts, Canada 2017, local and 'more'. It is in the 'more' tab that Canadians can access Indigenous news, which is rarely covered in the local pages or the front page of the site.⁴⁴ Instead, CBC news focuses its attention on musicals, whether children should wear sunscreen, the weather and minor issues for non-Indigenous Canadians. The site does, however, discuss immigrant and minority issues often. Indigenous peoples are generally not a focal point in the minority issues. This suggests that immigrant issues, multiculturalism, and diversity more important than Indigenous issues or

⁴⁴ Last checked June 10th, 2017. As of October 2017, CBC news has been making major changes to their website.

rights. Multiculturalism and diversity suggest to the world that Canada is somewhere they should visit, move to and buy from. Promoting multiculturalism, and diversity generates profit and social capital for Canada, rather than listening and acting on the issues and needs of Indigenous peoples.

6.6 Personal Trauma: Emotions in the Field and Blood Quantum

I knew pursuing this thesis inquiry, due to the personal aspect, would be emotional and at times difficult mentally. I cannot count the number of moments I became emotional whilst searching or writing for this thesis. There were many times I had to step away from writing to allow the pain to subside and the healing to begin. At times I harshly criticized myself and my identity, constantly asking myself if I deserve a voice in the fight for Indigenous justice and recognition.

I am acutely aware of the issues surrounding blood quantum, status and membership requirements. I allowed my insecurities about my visual whiteness to intimidate me into believing I was unauthentic and that my inquiries into my heritage and history were somehow not justified. Several times, I have found myself being jealous of my sister, due to her visual Indigenousness, and the few times she has, genuinely,⁴⁵ been asked which band or tribe she belongs to. Imposing requirements to be considered Indigenous are colonial constructs that were originally meant for tabulation and are now used to disconnect Indigenous peoples from their communities. Blood quantum and status are tools used to divide what could be a unified body of peoples. These tools are being used to cause people to deny their heritages or be too insecure to claim their identities. The cause and effects of the silencing and colonialization of Indigenous peoples of Canada is complex, layered and endless. These effects attempt to attack every aspect of an individual and peoples.

“I am me, I know what you see. Like it or not. I am still Cree”. (Deanne Beier, August 30th, 2017, Langley B.C.).

⁴⁵ I use the term “genuinely” because the manner in which she was asked was not malicious or negative, rather, she was asked, on occasion, by Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals in respectful manners.

7 **Indigenous Resources to Combat Erasure**

Searching for information that does not exist is not pointless. The act of searching for information can be a source of healing and reconciliation. By actively searching, as Indigenous peoples, we bring attention to our histories. Creating a need for information might cause scholars, archivists, and historians to become more active in the re-documentation of Indigenous lives. The more active the issue becomes, the more attention it could provoke. Thus, Indigenous peoples need to be proactive and demanding in order to be heard. We can no longer be silent inconveniences. We need to be active agents in the process of decolonization.

To be successful in a society with a historical materialistic and capitalist mode of production, it is important to understand the ways in which society operates. Canada is dominated by a society that demands more than it can supply, consumes more than it needs and generally engages in endeavors from which it can benefit. The dominant class is non-Indigenous and is dependant on wage-labourers to consume products that they produce or manufacture. The wage-labourers are dependant on the dominant class, which privately owns the majority of production, for jobs and paychecks, thus, each is dependant on the other. Marx suggests that the less dominant social classes of society need to overthrow the dominant society, usually in the form of a revolution, before there can be a significant change in the cycle.

A revolution may seem drastic, but it does not need to involve violence and civil war. Education is the first step. Demanding that the Government of Canada enforce the true history of Canada in schools and education is essential. Instituting a public acknowledgment of the colonization of Indigenous peoples, similar to days of remembrance for other horrific events or genocides, could spread awareness and educate older generations that were not educated about the history of Indigenous peoples. Working together as unified peoples, without stipulations on blood quantum and status, may reunite many Indigenous peoples with their heritages. People who might not have known of their heritage before or felt discouraged because of talks of blood quantum or proof of Indigeneity, in order to be accepted into Indigenous communities, might begin to feel connected or accepted. The more that people become passionate about their Indigenous heritages, the stronger a voice they become.

7.1 Current Efforts to Close the Gap

Currently, Indigenous peoples of Canada are focusing their efforts toward writing unwritten histories of Indigenous peoples that were forced to attend residential schools. The efforts and courage of thousands of Indigenous peoples that came together to tell their stories have inspired thousands of others to tell theirs. As a result, many non-Indigenous Canadians have noticed and are acknowledging these stories. Schools and teachers are actively looking for ways to integrate and discuss the history of residential schools in their classrooms. Powerfully, survivors are finding their voices after being silenced for so long.

Series such as the volumes of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation Research Publications: *Speaking My Truth*,⁴⁶ and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada are creating a respectfully educated and united front. These series are bringing people together and are creating spaces for healing. People are beginning to talk about their experiences in safe and accepting environments. These movements are inspiring new generations to be proud of their heritage and more Indigenous peoples are venturing into job fields with Indigenous awareness and needs in mind.

Many local Indigenous communities, such as Kwantlen First Nation, *x^wməθk^wəyəm*,⁴⁷ and Stó:lō Nation are or have been actively working with archivists to create archivable and educational materials to cultivate Indigenous and non-Indigenous children, youth and adults.

Indigenous nations around the world, that have been impacted by colonization, are also actively working towards rewriting their histories. The Aborigines of Australia have been vocal about their rights and recently spoke out against the use of inaccurate terms such as, “settled” and “discovered” to refer to the colonial invasion of Australia. The University of New South Wales (UNSW) has recently,⁴⁸ and publicly, corrected their terminology, referring to the “settling of Australia” as the invasion of Australia. The Maori people of New Zealand have recently defended the sacred volcano, Mount Taranaki, from the disrespectful photograph and comments of a nude tourist atop one of the peaks. They are bringing awareness to the public and government of

⁴⁶ This series can be order for free via speakingmytruth.ca.

⁴⁷ Respectfully, the Musqueam Indian Band.

⁴⁸ March 2016.

New Zealand to educate themselves about the histories of the Maori.⁴⁹ Ten students, at the North-West University in Africa, recently graduated with degrees in Indigenous Knowledge Systems.⁵⁰ Students believe that their degrees will help with not only their personal identities, but also to set into motion the streamlining of African Indigenous knowledge. Recently, Premier Justin Trudeau publicly announced the changing of National Aboriginal Day to National Indigenous Day, to show his intentions of solidarity (Maloney, 2017). Although this was met with generally a positive response from Indigenous communities across Canada, many Indigenous peoples responded in comments online and stated that they felt that the notion was merely a public performance for votes. National Indigenous Day has yet to be made into a statutory holiday throughout Canada. Indigenous voices throughout the world are speaking against colonialism and correcting or rewriting history.

7.2 Decolonization

The first step towards decolonization is public and governmental acknowledgments and confessions of colonization. In 2008, Steven Harper offered Canada's apology for the abuses inflicted on Indigenous peoples in residential schools (Glese, 2015) and later, "at the G20 Summit in Philadelphia, announced to the world that, as Canadians, "We have no history of colonialism" (King, 2012: 124). Apologies like these are not acceptable. In 2017, Justin Trudeau, asked Pope Francis to issue an apology from the Catholic Church for its participation in the exploitive residential schools (Hughes, 2017). Pope Francis recently stated that he would like to work with Justin Trudeau, and his office, to issue an appropriate apology. Though controversial, many Indigenous peoples are optimistic about the future of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples. There cannot be reconciliation without an apology.

The second step is reconciliation, though, many Indigenous communities have bypassed these stubborn beginning steps and are moving towards decolonization, regardless.

⁴⁹ May 2017.

⁵⁰ April 2017.

8 Conclusion

Due to disassociation, assimilation, oppression, systemic and systematic erasure and violence, Indigenous peoples have been purposefully silenced at almost every moment of interaction with Canada.

Many Indigenous peoples have been strategically silenced since birth. Their names were changed for number tabulations, cultures were suppressed, and languages were stolen from Indigenous children and their future generations. These actions were sanctioned by the Catholic Church, manipulated by political leaders and, ultimately, enforced by the government of Canada. The consequences of these actions rippled through the institutions and became rooted in the consciousness of settler and colonial populations. Indigenous children were subjected to an education which stripped them of their identities and forced them into lower-class, lower-labour positions. Indigenous education was created solely to meet the desired needs of subsistence of Euro-Canadian peoples.

During the wars in which Canada participated, Indigenous peoples were rarely recognized for their achievements or efforts and many deaths were purposefully not recorded. There were also hundreds of obligatory points of access and interactions between each Indigenous soldier and the government that went undocumented. The media tended to use Indigenous peoples as morale boosters for Euro-Canadians. Thus, throughout the wars, certain negative stereotypes of Indigenous peoples were suddenly perceived as positive attributes. Once Indigenous soldiers returned home, they were met with continued discrimination and, in many cases, isolated and prohibited from veteran aid and activities. The non-documentation of Indigenous soldiers was strategic and meant to meet the desired needs of subsistence for Euro-Canadians.

The Euro-Canadian populace was manipulated into believing in non-Indigenous superiority. This belief simultaneously oppressed and exotified Indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples were forced to assimilate into a society that never intended to embrace them. National and local newspapers generally ignored the lives of Indigenous peoples. Instead, they only discussed issues of Canada 'helping' Indigenous peoples or discussed cultural differences that seemed exotic and entertaining. The exotification of Indigenous cultures and traditions further discriminated Indigenous peoples by creating a divide between what was considered socially acceptable

and what was not. Indigenous peoples were strategically ignored and erased from the Euro-Canadian populace to dehumanize and thus ‘justify’ the oppression and assimilation forced upon them.

Ultimately, this history of non-documentation and erasure has drastically affected current and future generations of Indigenous peoples. Currently, searching for information about personal Indigenous heritages and identities is arduous. Many generations have spent their lives wondering who they are and where they are from. Well-being and identity are inherently related and therefore they are in constant dispute. Thousands of Indigenous peoples find themselves caught in paradoxes of self-discovery and major voids in heritage information. But due to the perseverance of a few individuals within Indigenous communities, negative associations with identity are currently being eradicated.

Colonialism is not over. It adapts to alternate forms and continues to manipulate the Canadian populace into a state of an ignorance of the gaping void in Indigenous histories. “Within the public sphere, within the collective consciousness of the global populace, most of the history of Indigenous peoples in North America has been forgotten, and what we are left with is a series of historical artifacts and, more importantly, a series of entertainments” (King, 2012: 20).

Reconciliation will involve the decolonization or dismantling of an entire system of colonialism that is entrenched in the relationships, personal lives, politics, laws, and governments of Canada. There are many Indigenous efforts, currently, increasing momentum and attempting to break through the colonial oubliette. Canada has been focusing its efforts on residential school issues whilst largely ignoring everything else that affects Indigenous lives. There needs to be recognition and acknowledgment of all the injustices in countless variations inflicted upon Indigenous peoples since the invasion of European settlers.

George Ralph McKenzie was supposed to be erased from my family and, in many ways, he has been. We will never know the truth, but, like many Indigenous families, that will not stop us from searching.

Dear George,

I tried.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Photographs: P1 Edmonton, 1943. P2-P5 Cultus Lake, 1943.



P1 George Ralph McKenzie.

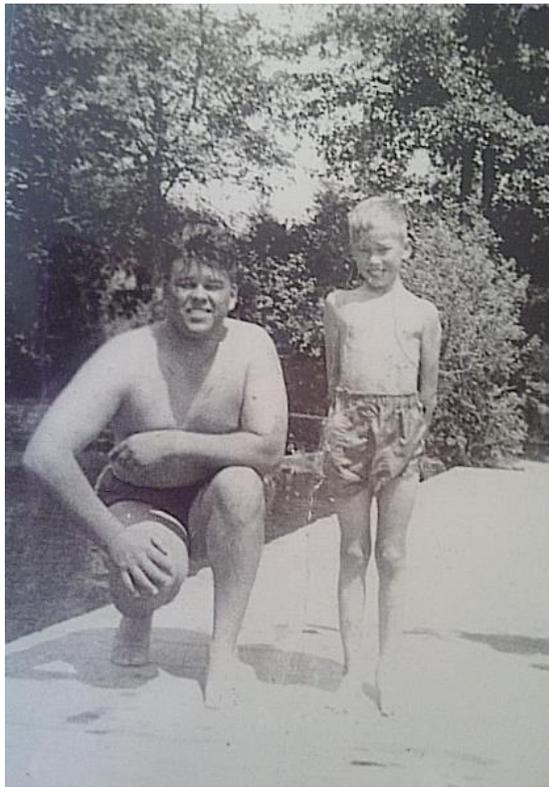
P2 George Ralph McKenzie



P3 George & Nellie McKenzie



P4 George Ralph McKenzie



P5 George & Lawrence McKenzie

Appendix B: Lawrence McKenzie Newspaper Clipping

25 yards free style, 12 yrs. and under, boys—Bob Geldart, Chilliwack; Willie Montgomery, Cultus Lake; Lawrence McKenzie, Cultus Lake.

The Chilliwack Progress (1945, August 22). Page 3. Retrieved from <https://www.http://theprogress.newspapers.com>.

Appendix C: Archives Searched

1. Accessgenealogy.com
2. Albertaonrecord.ca
3. Ancestry.ca
4. Archives.library.ubc.ca/first-nations-historical-resources
5. Archives.newwestcity.ca
6. Bac-lac.gc.ca
7. Canadiangenealogy.net
8. Cangenealogy.com
9. Catalogue.warmuseum.ca
10. Cmemuseum.ca
11. Collections.museum.tol.ca
12. Cyndislist.com/Canada
13. Discoverarchives.library.ualberta.ca
14. Doingourbit.wordpress.com
15. Familysearch.org
16. FindAGrave.com
17. Geni.com
18. Harchives.algomau.ca
19. History.alberta.ca
20. Historymuseum.ca
21. Isap.ca
22. Memorybc.ca
23. Moa.ubc.ca/library-archives
24. Missionarchives.com
25. Nanations.com
26. Olivetreegenealogy.com
27. Ourroots.ca
28. Pgnewspapers.pgpl.ca
29. Provincialarchives.alberta.ca
30. Quesnelmuseum.ca
31. Rbsc.library.ubc.ca
32. Royalbcmuseum.bc.ca
33. Royalhotelchilliwack.com
34. Search.nbca.unbc.ca
35. Sfu.ca/archives
36. Snpl.ca
37. Stalberthistoricalsociety.ca
38. Surrey.minisisinc.com
39. Thechildrenremembered.ca
40. Theprogress.newspapers.com
41. Thereach.ca
42. United-church.ca
43. Unlockthepast.ca
44. Ww2talk.com
45. Wwii-army.mooseroots.com
46. Wayback.archive-it.org
47. Wartimememoriesproject.com

Appendix D: Names: Variations for Archival Searches

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------|--|
| 1. George | | | |
| 2. George McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 3. George Ralph McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 4. G. McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 5. Ralph McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 6. McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 7. R. McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 8. Nellie & Harriet | & Harriot | McKenzie & MacKenzie | |
| 9. Nellie & Harriet | & Harriot | Swartzfegger & | |
| a. Swartzfigger | | | |
| b. Swertzfegger | | | |
| c. Swertzfigger | | | |
| d. Swerdfeger | | | |
| e. Swartzfeger | | | |
| f. Swertzfeger | | | |
| g. Swerdfegger | | | |
| h. Swerdfigger | | | |
| 10. Lawrence McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 11. Shirley May McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 12. Shirley McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 13. Donald McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 14. Terrance McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |
| 15. Terrence McKenzie | & MacKenzie | | |

October 31st 1942

Mr. T. H. Cannock,
1095 Cypress St.,
VANCOUVER, B. C..

Dear Sir:

re Lot 367

We regret to advise that a small fire occurred at your house this morning, due to a defective fireplace.

As far as we can tell at present the damage was in the neighborhood of \$50.00. If you have insurance perhaps you can arrange to recover this amount, although before any adjustment is made it might be advisable to have a further examination in case there is some damage which was not revealed at the time.

Yours faithfully,

SLB/CK

Secretary