

WE REMEMBER...

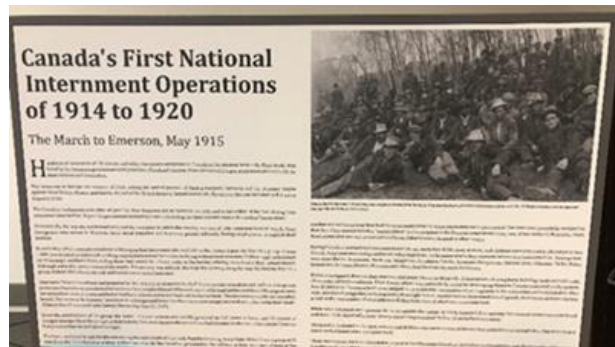
History begs to come in the dreams of descendants.

Lina Kostenko. Philosophy of life.

THE MARCH TO EMERSON

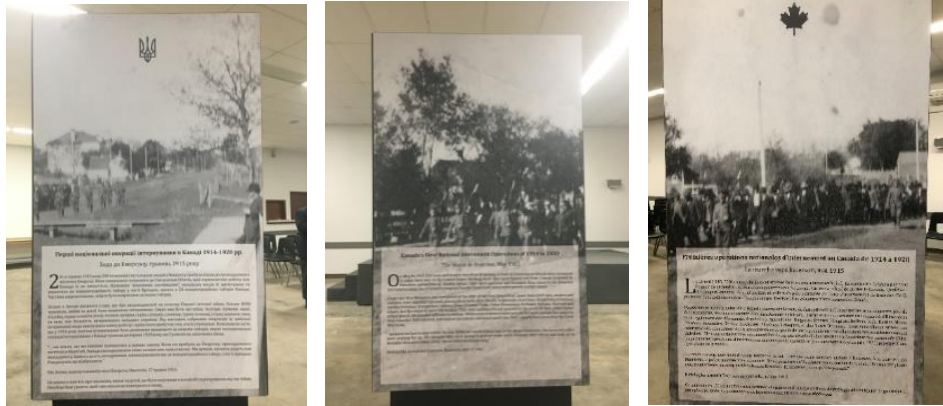
Emerson, Manitoba... Only six Ukrainian families live in this small Canadian town on the border with the USA. Despite this, the town became the site of an event of great historical importance in the life of Ukrainians in Canada. On September 17, 2022, a new permanent exhibit *March to Emerson* was unveiled and consecrated in the *Emerson Complex* to honour interned immigrants from Europe who, in May 1915, set off on foot from Winnipeg to USA in search of employment. Most of these men were Ukrainian. Out of over a thousand unemployed men, about 200 walked more than a hundred kilometers and reached Emerson.

Emerson's Mayor Casselmen sympathies were aroused by the deplorable conditions of the hungry and exhausted marchers. On his initiative they were fed and given a place to sleep. After a couple of days, all of them were arrested as "enemy aliens" by soldiers sent by the Canadian government and then taken to the Brandon internment camp. From there, some were relocated to other internment camps, others were sent out to work at local farms.



March to Emerson memorial and the interpretive panel (photos by the author, September 17, 2022).

An interpretive panel showing detained marchers photographed against the background of the CN Bridge is an integral part of the memorial to the internees. This picture is one of the preserved archival pictures taken in Emerson in May, 1915.



Panels of the three-sided informative photographic monument in Ukrainian, English and French (photos by the author, September 17, 2022).

A three-sided photographic monument and interpretive panel is a vivid manifestation of honouring the memory of Ukrainian internees. Covid-19 pandemic prevented the painstaking work of this project which began seven years ago. The monument is a collaborative project of the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Foundation (UCCLF) and the Municipality of Emerson-Franklin. Funds for the construction of the monument were allocated from the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund through which has funded numerous projects commemorating Canada's first national internment operations of 1914 to 1920.

The unveiling and consecration of the monument was organized by the UCCLF and the Municipality of Emerson-Franklin Tourism Committee in cooperation with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress - Manitoba Provincial Council (UCC-MPC). The event was planned to take place at Emerson Corner Park, but due to inclement weather, it took place indoors at the Emerson Complex. The consecration of the monument was carried out by clergy Dr. Roman Bozyk and Fr. Mykhaylo Khomitsky with the help of Larissa Klymkiw and Katherine Basarab.

Wayne Arseny, Emerson-Franklin Municipality Tourism Coordinator, in his introductory remarks, noted that despite the fact that the marchers stayed in Emerson for a short time and their names are unknown, this event remains a part of Canadian history that we should be aware of and «learn from our mistakes».

Remarks regarding the significance of the unveiling of the monument to internees in Emerson and the internment during the World War I were also presented by Jo-Anne Drewniak, Municipality of Emerson-Franklin Tourism Committee, Carola Lange, Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund, Joan Lewandowsky, Ukrainian Canadian Congress - Manitoba Provincial Council, David

Carlson, Reeve of the Municipality of Emerson-Franklin, Ted Falk, MP for Provencher, and Josh Guenter, MLA for Borderland.

Among the interned were family members of the Honourable James Bezan, a Canadian politician of Ukrainian origin, and member of the House of Commons. In his remarks at the opening ceremony and consecration of the monument he shared the memories left by his relatives and mentioned that they were forced to carry identity papers and had to travel twenty or more kilometers to report regularly to the police.



Consecration of the monument (photo by the author, September 17, 2022).

A monument to internees in a city's park (photo by Jo-Anne Drewniak, 2022).

The attention of those present, especially the newcomers from Ukraine, was drawn to the words of Borys Sydoruk, Chair of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress National Internment Committee and Chair of the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Foundation. He noted in his remarks:

«I was born and raised in Calgary, grew up seeing mountains, and have come here many times in my life. Until 1989, I had no idea, nor do most Canadians to this day, of what happened to the thousands of Ukrainians and other Europeans who were branded “enemy aliens” during the World War I. I never knew that there were Internment camps in our national parks in the Rocky Mountains where millions of people come every year to enjoy the beautiful scenery».

In order to understand Borys Sydoruk's remarks and to understand why and how the lives of Ukrainian Canadians were affected during the World War I, it is necessary to go back down the steep path of history, because it is difficult to pave the road to the future without knowing and honoring the past.

A PATH OF HISTORY INTO THE PAST

More than 130 years ago, the first settlers from the ethnic Ukrainian lands, most of which were under rule of Russia and Austria-Hungary, in search of land, freedom and a better life for themselves and their children, found themselves in a colony of Great Britain – Canada, a foreign, faraway and not very friendly land, which at that time was populated mainly by the British and other “desired” immigrants.

One of the main objectives of the Dominion government of Canada after passing of the *Dominion Lands Act* of 1872, was to transform the Canadian Prairies into an agricultural region. Experiencing a shortage of workers, the Canadian government started in European countries a very active campaign for resettlement, often resorting to deception, and making enticing promises to potential migrants. As a result, non-traditional, “unwanted” immigrants, including thousands of Ukrainians, started to settle in Canada.

As we know, most of the ethnic Ukrainian lands at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries were divided among two empires – Russia and Austria-Hungary. The Ukrainian subjects of Austria-Hungary were officially referred to as Rusyns [from the name **Rus**’] (*Енциклопедія історії України*: <http://resource.history.org.ua/cgi-bin/eiu/history.exe=Rusyny>). Besides the Rusyns, who constituted a significant majority of the population, their homeland was a home to Poles, Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, Jews, Russians, and others.

Most of our immigrants came from Galicia, Bukovyna, Transcarpathia, where foreigners had total control over the local population. Polish nobility dominated in Galicia, Romanian boyars – in Bukovyna, and Hungarian lords in Transcarpathia. As a result of prolonged foreign influence, the local population began to regard themselves as Russians, Poles or Hungarians. Besides that, the unenlightened populace was demoralized by muscophiles (or russophiles), who spread their heresy that there is no Ukrainian nation, never was and never will be, which Putin’s Russia continues to do so even today, in the 21st century!

On examining the passenger lists of ocean liner companies and archival Canadian Immigration lists, we can see that our first settlers were not listed by nationality, but instead by their place or territory of origin. Therefore, in the passenger lists, some were recorded as Galicians, Bukovynians, while others as Austrians, Magyars, Russians, and others as Poles, Romanians, etc. The English language press (*Manitoba Free Press*, *Winnipeg Tribune*, *Daily Nor’Wester*, etc.) lumped all settlers

from Ukrainian lands into one group they called Galicians. The term *Ruthenians* – русини (not to be confused with Russians!) did not come into use in Canada until 1905 (Yuzyk Paul. *The Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada*. – Ottawa, Canada: University of Ottawa Press, 1981. – P.30). Ukrainians became the commonly accepted term just before the First World War.

The beginnings of our “undesired” settlers in a foreign land were not easy. Unlike the “desired”, they were to settle on the worst lands, among bushes and swamps. Over the years, roads and railways will be laid here, fields will be sown... Ukrainians, together with Canadians of other ethnic groups, would transform the prairies into one of the largest granaries in the world and would contribute to the growth and development of Canada, one of the most prosperous countries.

During the first and most difficult decades, Ukrainians managed to put down deep roots in the Canadian soil. They had their church and school, Ukrainian societies and organizations... According to Canadian legislation, those settlers who lived in Canada for three years were “naturalized” (became British subjects; The *Canadian Citizenship Act* came into force in 1947). They received the right to participate in the country’s political and public life, the right to vote, and had their representatives in local councils. This meant that Ukrainian Canadians could boast not only of cultural and religious achievements, but also of political ones: «the Ukrainian ethnic group made itself known, that it exists and must be reckoned with» (В. Верига. *Українці поза межами України...*: <http://www.interklasa.pl>).

At this time they didn’t have yet an organization that would unite and coordinate the work of the entire community and represent it before the Canadian government (such an organization – Ukrainian Canadian Committee – was formed only in 1940; official name since 1989 – Ukrainian Canadian Congress – UCC).

The greatest harm to our settlers was caused by the misleading Russophile propaganda, jealous servants of Russian Orthodoxy, generously funded by Russia, socialists, communists, and even russified Rusyns. They sowed discord in the national and religious life of our people, degrading their faith and persuading them that Rusyns and Russians are one and the same. The Russian Orthodox clergy, natives of Russia and those who came to Canada from the Ukrainian ethnic lands under Russia’s rule, aggressively continued to spread heresy that there is no Ukrainian nation, never was and never will be. Radicals and atheists, as well as Protestants, especially Presbyterians, also caused great damage in the Ukrainian community. All Anglo-Saxon Protestants tried to convert our people to

Protestantism and aimed for the quickest possible Canadianization and assimilation of all foreigners. They did not succeed...

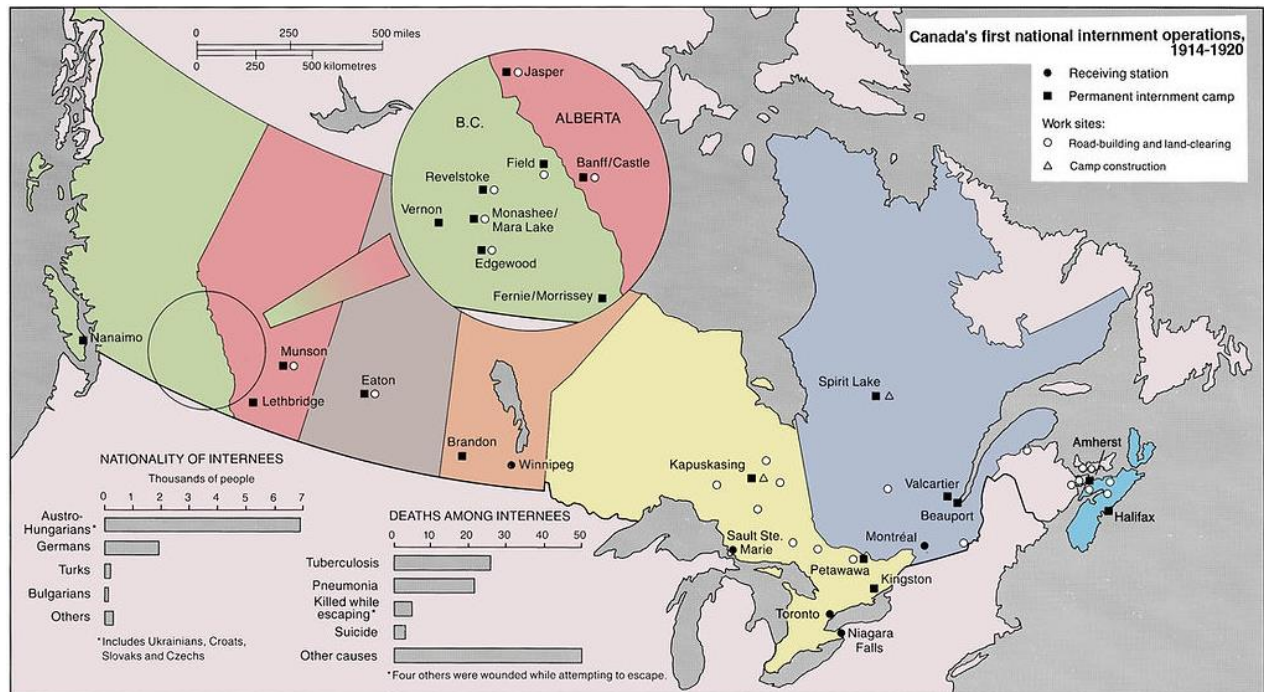
Having made significant progress in the first decades, Ukrainians envisioned their future in Canada. It was disrupted by the First World War in Europe which broke out at the end of July 1914 as a result of the conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. The war would destroy countless human lives. Our native land would become a complete ruin. At the same time Ukrainian Canadians, who called Canada their second homeland, and together with other foreigners have been contributing to Canada's growth and development, became overnight the country's... enemies.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Europe was divided into two hostile military-political blocs, which, without hiding their aggressive intentions, aspired to world domination. The first was the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy), which during the war was joined by the Ottoman Empire and the Bulgarian Kingdom. The second was the Entente (Russian Empire, Great Britain, France), later joined by Italy and such countries as Serbia, Romania, Japan, the USA and a number of others.

Gradually, two-thirds of the world's countries will be engulfed into a deadly war. The events in Europe developed so quickly that it was difficult for Ukrainians in Canada to grasp what was actually happening. It is important to have in mind that almost all Ukrainian Canadians, except for their children who were born in Canada, were immigrants from the lands which were under rule of Russia and Austria-Hungary, which belonged to hostile military-political blocs.

On August 4, 1914, Great Britain entered the war on the side of the Entente, and Canada, a British colony, automatically found itself at war with the countries of Central Europe and their allies. This will have extremely difficult and tragic consequences for Ukrainian Canadians, because immediately after Great Britain's entry into World War I, the Canadian federal government passed the *War Measures Act of 1914*. According to this *Act*, those who arrived from countries hostile to Great Britain and Canada were considered "enemy aliens". The *Act* was in force from August 22, 1914 to January 10, 1920 and gave the federal government broad powers to maintain security and order during «war, invasion or insurrection». Under the *Act*, the government could seize private property, detain and deport people without charges or trials. People could be arrested and interned for their political beliefs (<https://historyofrights.ca/encyclopaedia/main-events/war-measures-act/>).

This led to the arrest of thousands of Ukrainians, Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Poles, Romanians, Bulgarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Italians, Jews, and others. After confiscating all their property, they were sent to internment camps with deprivation of the right to vote without any trial. In more than one case, whole families with small children ended up in the camps.



Locations of internment camps in Canada. 1914-1920: Ukrainian Canadian Internment Map: <https://www.uccla.ca/internment-camps-maps>.

There were 24 internment camps and receiving stations across Canada. 8,579 people, including more than 5,000 Ukrainians, were held in brutal conditions in the internment camps. 80,000 so-called “enemies” of Canada and Great Britain, most of whom were Ukrainians who had still not been naturalized, under the authority of the *War Measures Act* were subjected to endless persecution. They were forced to carry identity papers and to report regularly to the police (А. Василенко. *Інтернування осіб українського походження в Канаді під час Першої світової війни...*: <http://dspace.onua.edu.ua/bitstream/handle/11300/1249/Vasulenko.pdf>; L. Luciuk. *In fear of the barbed wire fence: Canada's first national internment operations and the Ukrainian Canadians, 1914-1920*). Until 1980's, only a few people knew that there were internment camps in Canada.

To show their loyalty to Canada and Great Britain, Ukrainians constantly gathered for meetings. One of the largest public meetings was held in Winnipeg on August 9, 1914, which was attended by more than three thousand Ukrainian

Canadians. They came to prove their loyalty to the crown and the empire and also to assure the Canadian government that they share the affairs of the country that had become their second homeland (Пропам'ятна книга Українського Народного Дому в Винніпегу. 1949. – Р. 291).

Those who ended up behind the barbed wire camps scattered across Canada, were forced to work at logging sites, in mines, on the construction of roads, bridges, and railways. Even a portion of the Banff National Park in Alberta, one of the best known national parks in Canada which is a very popular destination with tourists from all over the world, was developed by their hands. The internees were tortured and humiliated. They endured hunger, and cold weather conditions which had led to the diseases, suicides and graves... Graves, forgotten for decades... Resisting their unjust confinement, the internees tried to escape. There were strikes in some of the mountain internment camps. There was even a riot involving 1,200 internees at Kapuskasing, Ontario, in May 1916. Three hundred armed soldiers were needed to put it down (<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ukrainian-internment-in-canada>).

To envision the situation of Ukrainian Canadians during World War I, one has to resort to the newspaper archives of that time, such as the *Manitoba Free Press*. From the pages of those newspapers, attacks on Ukrainians were pouring in a continuous dirty stream. They were called enemies and traitors who should leave Canada as soon as possible.

As to the events of 1914, it is worth mentioning that when war broke out between Austria and Serbia, the question arose among Ukrainians as to where they, as former subjects of Austria, stood in this situation. The Ruthenian Catholic Bishop Budka felt it was his duty to clarify the situation to his faithful. The Austro-Hungarian consulates in Canada proceeded with the mobilization of Austrian subjects for military duty. It prompted Bishop Budka to issue, on July 27, 1914, a pastoral letter, addressed to the clergy and all the faithful in Canada. He feared that his native land would be seized by Russia and was urging Ruthenians to support Austria-Hungary and return home to defend their homeland if they had military reservist obligations to the Austro-Hungary Empire. This letter was published in the *Canadian Ruthenian* on August 1, 1914 (*Legislative Library of Manitoba*), after Austria-Hungary announced partial mobilization. At that time, few expected Canada to be involved.

A few days later, Great Britain and Canada, were suddenly at war. Taking into account the current circumstances, on August 6, 1914, Bishop Budka wrote his

second pastoral letter (*Canadian Ruthenian*, August 8, 1914: *Legislative Library of Manitoba*), asking to disregard his previous letter. He emphasized that in the last few days the political situation has completely changed and called on all the faithful, living under the British flag, to be loyal to the British Crown, stressing that it is now their sacred duty to defend Canada, the country that gave them shelter and freedom (M. H. Marunchak. *The Ukrainian Canadians*. – Winnipeg, Ottawa: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences (UVAN) in Canada. 1982. – P. 325). But by then, it was too late to undo the damage...

There was no shortage of gatherings where Bishop Budka's enemies denounced him as treasonous. Ukrainians and their bishop were constantly criticized, humiliated and even cursed. *The Manitoba Free Press* (newspaperarchive.com), ignoring his second letter, continued to accuse him of calling on people to join the Austrian army to fight against Great Britain and its Allies.

Life of our people in Canada became even worse in the following years. All Ukrainian bilingual schools were closed. Training schools in Manitoba and Saskatchewan that prepared teachers for Ukrainian bilingual schools were also closed. R. S. Thornton, Minister of education of that time, acting on the orders of Manitoba Premier T. C. Norris, ordered to burn parcels with Ukrainian bilingual textbooks that arrived from England. It happened on the grounds of Manitoba Legislature building (М. Г. Марунчак. *Історія українців Канади*. Т. I. – Вінніпег, Канада: Українська Вільна Академія Наук в Канаді. – P. 142-144; 148-149; А. Господин. *Початки українських шкіл в Канаді*. – Вінніпег, 1990. – P. 11).

In addition to racial discrimination, significant material damage was inflicted on Ukrainians. Dissatisfied with their situation, they constantly gathered for meetings to discuss the situation in which they found themselves and tried to find some solutions. Ukrainians expressed their indignation at the government, which invited and persuaded them to come to Canada and to which they entrusted their lives. They were hurt and saddened by the fact that the government was conscripting their husbands and sons into their army and at the same time considered them enemies of Canada.

In order to explain and clarify the state and national position of the Ukrainian Canadians, Ukrainian press editors also held councils and public meetings. Press editors and publishers of the war time were the most competent authorities. Ukrainian press editors not only provided information and repelled the attacks of the Russophile press, they also led the people and stood up for them. Their words were highly respected. As a result of such councils and public meetings, in June 1916, a

national *Appeal* was published. The *Appeal* was signed by six of the following editors: O. Hykawy – «Canadian Farmer», A. Dziola – «Working People», I. Glowa – «Morning», P. Krat – «Kadylo», all from Winnipeg, M. Belegay – «Canadian», Edmonton, and I. Stefanicky – «Robitnyche Slovo», Toronto. The reaction of the English press, including the *Free Press*, toward this national announcement was «very positive». It helped to dissipate the ill opinion held against Ukrainians «and shortly after this publicity the government began to release the internees from the concentration camps. A positive opinion about the Ukrainians began to shape up...» (M. H. Marunchak. *The Ukrainian Canadians*. – P. 318-319). Despite this, Ukrainians continued to face constant challenges.

To prove their loyalty to the crown and the empire those Ukrainians who came from Austria-Hungary and were naturalized (possessed Canadian citizenship) signed up for military service. Even those who had not been naturalized were enlisting in the Canadian army. Dr. Lubomyr Luciuk, a professor at the Royal Military College of Canada, affirms: «They joined the Canadian army in record numbers, doing so by misrepresenting where they had been born or reportedly even changing their surnames to “Smith” in order to enlist» (A Time for Atonement. Canada's First National Internment Operations and the Ukrainian Canadians 1914-1920. The Limestone Press, 1988: <http://www.infoukes.com/history/internment/booklet01/>). They were fighting for their new homeland with real courage and self-sacrifice.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning the name of Filip Konowal, a corporal of the 47th Infantry Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, who volunteered to join the Canadian army. A native of ethnic Ukrainian lands (village Kutkivtsi, Podilsk province, which was under the control of the Russian Empire at the time, today – Khmelnytska province, Ukraine) F. Konowal was one of six Canadian soldiers who was awarded the Victoria Cross for his heroism at the Battle of Hill 70, France (near Vimy Ridge). He is the only Ukrainian in the world awarded Victoria Cross. The award was personally presented to F. Konowal by King George V in October 1917 (<https://peaceinukraine.livejournal.com/3708968.html>). Isn't it ironic that the Canadian government arrested and imprisoned Ukrainians while thousands of their compatriots were fighting in the Canadian army?

The wrongful actions of the Canadian Government towards Ukrainian Canadians made it necessary to clarify the problems before the federal authorities in Ottawa. Two delegations of Ukrainian community's representatives were sent to Ottawa in order to find a fair solution to the Ukrainian issue.

The first delegation consisted of A. Shandro, MLA for West Lake, Alberta, I. Petrushevych, secretary of the Ruthenian Farmers' Elevator, Winnipeg, P. Zvarych of Vegreville, Alberta, and H. Slipchenko of Saskatoon. On February 22, 1918, the delegation was received by Sir Robert Borden, Prime Minister of Canada, Hon. A. L. Sifton, and Hon. C. J. Doherty. The delegation protested the withholding of citizenship and the unjust internment of thousands of peaceful immigrants, who «had been ... kept for years in idleness at the expense of the country while the shortage of labor is keenly felt». The delegates also raised the need for changes to the Naturalization Act (Ukrainians Ask Government to Protect Slavs, *Saskatoon Daily Star*, Mon_Feb_25_1918_page 13.pdf>; M. H. Marunchak. *The Ukrainian Canadians*. – P. 331).

The Ukrainian community was encouraged by the positive reception of the first delegation. In May 1918, they sent the second delegation to Ottawa for consultation with the government. It consisted of J. Arsenych, T. Stefanyk and Popovych (М. І. Мандрика. *Півстоліття діяльності українського товариства Читальні Провіситу у Вінніпегу*. – Вінніпег, 1958. – P. 21, 93).

«Among other things, the delegates discussed the question of Ukrainian Canadian soldiers at the war fronts, particularly those who had no citizenship rights in Canada, suggesting that they be utilized in auxiliary capacity. These two delegations succeeded in clarifying the atmosphere surrounding the Ukrainians in Canada and identifying the position of their compatriots. In addition to this, the possibility was created for further organizational activity in aid of Ukraine's liberation» (M. H. Marunchak. *The Ukrainian Canadians*. – P. 331).

Shortly before the end of the war, the federal government banned all the newspapers published by those ethnic groups in Canada that came from the countries hostile to Britain and Canada. It was another hard blow for the Ukrainians. The delegates from the Ukrainian newspapers went to Ottawa to again clarify the political situation of the Ukrainians in Canada and their former homeland. The government authorities altered their decision and allowed the publishing of papers on the condition that these be printed bilingually. In addition, every paper had to have a special permission from Ottawa which had to be printed on the first page under the paper's name. It lasted from November 1918 to May 1919, and brought additional complications for the editors and raised the publishing cost (M. H. Marunchak. *The Ukrainian Canadians*. – P. 319). In order to control the press, even after the bilingualism of the newspapers was lifted, publishers of ethnic newspapers «were

required to send copies of their publications to the censors in Ottawa» (М. Г. Марунчак. *Історія українців Канади*. Т. I. – Р. 330).

Unemployment was another great misfortune faced by non-traditional, “undesired” immigrants. Workers were needed everywhere, but who would want to employ “enemies”? Unemployment was the reason for the May 1915 march to USA, where people hoped to find at least some work, but, without even crossing the border, they were detained in Emerson, Manitoba.

To learn more about the situation in which the Ukrainian community found itself during the First World War follow the link: Links|Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund.: <https://www.internmentcanada.ca/>.

World War I, which led to the collapse of three European empires, ended on November 11, 1918 with the signing of an armistice between the Entente and Germany, according to which Germany recognized itself as defeated.

HURT BY HUMILIATION AND INSULT...

The war ended, but the persecution of Ukrainians in Canada continued. They continued to be treated as enemies and traitors. Falsification of facts and provocations wouldn't stop for a while yet. Our people were humiliated, mocked. Their homes, hard-earned property, and their institutions were destroyed. No proof of loyalty to the Crown and Canada helped. (Some historians unfairly and baselessly accused Bishop Budka of being the cause not only of all the troubles that befell Canadian Ukrainians during the First World War, but also of their internment. Dr. Stella Hryniuk, a History professor at the University of Manitoba, disagrees with this suggestion. She said, that the internment was the result of general xenophobia, suspicion of aliens and fears of social unrest, and the bishop's letter had «little or nothing» to do with the shaping of government policy (After 80 years bishop Budka earns respect: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/after-80-years-bishop-budka-earns-respect/article4149169/>).

As for the internees, some of them stayed in the internment camps after 1918 – it was difficult for the Canadian government to renounce free labor. The last two camps (Vernon, in British Columbia, and Kapuskasing, in Ontario), were closed on February 20 and 24, 1920, respectively. Canada's first national internment operations officially ended on June 20, 1920 (Canada's Internment Camps: <https://canadaehx.com/2022/03/08/canadas-internment-camps/>).

Ukrainian Canadians were hurt by humiliation and insult... Throughout the years, they manifested a sincere devotion to Canada, strong and undeniable desire to live its life in Canada according to the cultural acquirement of its own people and yet feel themselves to be an indivisible part of their new homeland. Despite this, the suspicion of hostility to Canada weighed heavily upon them and was haunting the Ukrainian community for the years to come.

Ukrainians demanded justice. They needed to hear words of apology from the government of Canada and a public acknowledgment of its injustice towards the Ukrainian people. They needed some kind of guarantee, an assurance that in the future Canadians, no matter what ethnic group they belong to, will not be exposed to discrimination, violation of their human rights and freedoms. (But history will repeat itself: the *War Measures Act* was revoked during World War II and was used to intern Canadian citizens of Japanese, Italian and German origin. The same *Act* was used against the French in the province of Quebec during the 1970 October Crisis. In 1988, the *Act* was replaced by the *Emergencies Act* and was enforced during the so-called “Freedom Convoy” in early 2022).

PERSISTENCE AND UNWAVERING WINS

It would take the Ukrainian Canadians many decades to recover. World War I changed them. Gradually, they became engaged in all the aspects of Canadian life, and became equals in the multi-ethnic family of Canadians.

We also should keep in mind that, apart from those, who survived the internment and their relatives, this tragic page in Canadian history has been forgotten for decades. In 1954 the archival documents were destroyed... Only in the 1980’s efforts were made to shed light on this one of the darkest facts in the history of Canada and the history of Ukrainians in Canada (Visnyk. Ukrainian Canadian Congress – Saskatchewan Provincial Council. Fall, 2018. – P. 4). For years, letters from the Ukrainian organizations and institutions, as well as from individual citizens, were sent to party leaders and high-ranking government officials with a pressing demand to resolve the Ukrainian issue, as well as to include the topic «Internment of Ukrainians in Canada» in the curriculum of Canada’s educational institutions. The answer – silence.

But Ukrainians, persistent and unwavering in their determination and resilience to call this historic fact by its name, got their way. They believed that their experience in Canada during World War I was worth attention and deserved to be

recognized as part of the Canadian history and history of Ukrainians in Canada, so that future generations of Ukrainians in Canada, and in Ukraine, would know about it and remember it. This would help them understand the tragic situation of our first settlers, their struggles and sacrifices in order to put bread on the table, and help their relatives in Ukraine, sending them hard earned money. They were helping their families, despite the fact that they themselves were barely making ends meet.

One of the most important driving forces in the complex and long process of recognizing by the Canadian government the fact of internment were the volunteers of the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association (UCCLA). They set themselves the goal of getting the Canadian government to recognize the internment that took place in the country's history, to recognize the injustice that was done to persons of Ukrainian descent and other Europeans, who were interned during World War I. The UCCLA also made concerted efforts to raise public awareness.

In 2005, Bill – C-331, *Internment of Persons of Ukrainian Origin Recognition Act* was adopted by the Canadian government. The Bill was proposed by a Canadian politician of Chinese origin, member of the House of Commons, the Hon. Inky Mark.

On May 9, 2008 an agreement was signed to establish a 10 million dollar *Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund*. It exists to support commemorative and educational projects and represents all communities affected by the internment operations. On behalf of the Government of Canada, the document was signed by the Honourable Jason T. Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism (Річний звіт Конгресу Українців Канади від 20 червня 2009: <http://www.ukrainianworldcongress.org/UserFiles/File/AnnualMeetings2009/Canada.pdf>). This was achieved thanks to the campaign started in 1986 by volunteers of the Civil Liberties Commission and then the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association, which was then chaired by John B. Gregorovich, and hundreds of people, who supported the idea of creating a fund. Their names are listed in the first annual report of the Canadian World War I Internment Recognition Fund (Recalling Canada's First National Internment Operations: Annual Report of the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund. 2009: <https://www.internmentcanada.ca/about-annual-reports.cfm>).

HONOURING THEIR MEMORY

To honour the memory of those interned during World War I, exhibitions are organized, scientific symposia are held, historical markers and monuments are installed, and museums are opening their doors, etc. In the places of former concentration camps commemorative plaques are installed, forgotten graves of interned Ukrainians are restored, cemeteries are consecrated...

Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the start of internment, on Aug. 22, 2014, 100 plaques were unveiled across Canada in Ukrainian, Croatian, Serbian, German, and Hungarian churches and cultural centres to honour all those who had been interned (One Hundred Plaques: <https://www.ucclf.ca/one-hundred-plaques>).

The story of Canada's first national internment operations is revealed in the documentary films such as *Freedom Had a Price* (1995), directed and edited by Yuriy Luhovy, and *That Never Happened: Canada's First National Internment Operations* (2017), directed by Ryan Boyko.

For decades, the topic «Internment of Ukrainians in Canada» was not included in the curriculum of educational institutions. This topic, in 2011, (for the first time in North America!) was used as the basis for a two-week course entitled «Social justice: how to teach about the internment of Ukrainians in Canada and the Ukrainian Holodomor». Its organizers and instructors were the University of Manitoba professors Dr. Denis Hlynka and Dr. Orest Cap (J. Black, O. Cap. *Human Rights, Information, and Communication Technology (ICT): A Case Study of Art Education Teacher candidates*. The International Journal of Civic, Political and Community Studies, 2014. Vol. 11, Issue 2, 31).

The course was partially sponsored by the University of Manitoba Innovations Fund, Taras Shevchenko Foundation and the Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies at the University of Manitoba. More information on the topic «Internment of Ukrainians in Canada» can be found following the links: Інтернування українців в Канаді...: <http://stattitablohy.ezreklama.com/Prava-liudini/3942-intiervannia-ukrayintsiv-v-kanadi-ta-ukrayins-kii-golodomor-iak-prikladi-novogho-pidkhodu-do-vivchiennia-tragichnikh-istorichnikh-podii.html>; Summer Institute on Ukrainian Internment...: <http://umanitoba.a/news/blogs/blog/2011/04/13/summer-institute-on-ukrainian-internment-and-holodomor>.

One of the main forces, that continues to support educational and cognitive projects and events with the aim of honoring the memory of the victims of internment, as well as honouring those Ukrainian Canadians who volunteered for service with the Canadian armed forces, is the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties

Foundation (UCCLF) chaired by Borys Sydoruk. On October 26, 2022, UCCLF announced that the Government of Alberta had approved its proposal to place a statue on the grounds of Alberta's provincial Legislature commemorating the unjust internment of Ukrainians and others during and after World War I. It will be installed in 2023. This will be the second memorial to WWI internment operations to be located on provincial legislative grounds in Canada (the first monument was unveiled in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 2015).

The president of the UCCLF applauds the Alberta government for its decision. He is confident that this monument will help inform today's generation and generations to come to the fate that befell thousands of Ukrainians and other Europeans who, having been invited to settle in Canada, found themselves arrested and interned (UCCLF newsletterbroadcast.net. Calgary. Oct. 26, 2022).



A monument honoring the memory of the victims of internment on the grounds of Manitoba Legislature building (photo: Norbert K. Iwan).

Unveiling of the commemorative plaque dedicated to internees in Toronto. November 19, 2022 (UCCLF unveils plaque commemorating “enemy aliens” in Toronto’s Bloor West Village: <https://www.uccla.ca/post/ucclf-unveils-plaque-commemorating-enemy-aliens-in-toronto-s-bloor-west-village>).

Monuments, memorial plaques, restored and consecrated cemeteries at the sites of former camps have become places of honor and sorrow, places of remembrance of the very difficult beginnings of our ancestors in Canada. This is an eloquent testimony to the fact that we, their descendants, strive to do everything to preserve the memory of the unjustly interned and prevent such inhuman treatment of people in the future. For this purpose, the UCC National Internment Committee passed in

2014 the resolution to have October 28th of every year designated as the National Internment Commemoration Day.

On October 28, 2022, on the National Internment Commemoration Day, Borys Sydoruk, Chair of the UCC National Internment Committee, drew attention to the importance of commemorating the Day of Remembrance of Internees by the Ukrainian community in his address to the delegates of the UCC XXVII Triennial Congress, held in Winnipeg. He emphasized that «outside observers were aware of the damage done» to the Ukrainian Canadians during World War I, leaving them «in fear of the barbed wire fence». They were «still under the handicap resulting from their experiences in the First World War» even during World War II.

HEROES OF THEIR DAY

We remember with gratitude the Ukrainian Canadian men and women who throughout history have always fought courageously on the front lines of conflicts around the world in order to secure a brighter future for generations to follow, and who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty serving Canada during World War II.



The eternal resting place of Canadian servicemen in England, 1945 (о. Ігор Шпитковський. Альманах канадійських українських вояків. 1946.- С. 196).

Members of the UCCLF along with the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain are working on another project named *Heroes of Their Day* (based on World War II veteran Flight Lt. Bohdan Panchuk's memoir of that title).

The first phase of this project was to install a stained-glass window at *St. James's Church* in London in honour of the UK-based Ukrainian Canadian Servicemen's

Association (UCSA) and all Ukrainian Canadian servicemen and servicewomen, who volunteered for military duty and fought for Canada during World War II. The main offices of the UCSA and their London Club at that time were located at *218 Sussex Gardens*, in the building next to *St. James's Church*. D-r L. Luciuk, who spent years researching the Association and the work of UCSA members, initiated the installation of stained-glass window. The honorary patron of the project is Lieutenant-General (Ret'd) Paul Wynnyk.

Flight Lt. Gordon Richard Bohdan Panchuk (1915-1987) was one of the founding members of the UCSA and its President. Initially the Association had 37 members. By the end of the war there were 1,500 active members. The UCSA's executive committee in 1943 was comprised of: Lt. Kupchenko, Lt. Ann Crapleve, F/Lt. B. Panchuk, Sgt. Helen Kozicky, Pte. Choma, Sgt. S. Kalin, F/Lt. Kohut, Lac. A. Kreptul, F/o. A. Pohoreski (Heroes of their day: <https://www.ucclf.ca/heroes-of-their-day-gallery>).

Other prominent members included Anne Cherniawsky, William Kereliuk, Michael Lucyk, Olga Pawluk, Peter Smylski, Walter Weslowski, Anthony Yaremovich and John Yuzyk (Ukrainians in the United Kingdom: <https://www.ukrainiansintheuk.info/eng/03/ucsa-e.htm>).

Bohdan Panchuk, former schoolteacher from Saskatchewan, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force and in 1941 was posted overseas to serve in Northern Ireland and later in England. Serving with the Canadian armed forces in Europe, he also worked in the intelligence Section (Mark Celinscak. *Kingdom of Night*: <https://books.google.ca>). On June 6, 1944 (D-Day) Flight Lt. Bohdan Panchuk took part in the Allied landings in Normandy, and then for two years remained on active duty in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.



G.R. Bohdan Panchuk (photo courtesy Marika Panchuk).

Bohdan Panchuk's daughter Marika Panchuk of Winnipeg, claims that he sent this photo in uniform to his mother Maria after he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force.



Ukrainian Canadian servicemen during the congress in 1944 in England (о. Ігор Шпитковський. *Альманах канадійських українських вояків*. 1946. - Р. 210).

According to the Library and Archives Canada (Ukrainian Canadian Veterans' Association Fonds, 1986-128 03962), the following information is provided under the same photo:

USCA members: *Front Row:* Lt. Kupchenko, F/Lt. J. Kohut, Lt. P. Worobetz, F/Lt. G. Panchuk; *Back Row:* Capt. S. Worotetz, Capt. Michalyshyn, Capt. Nikiforuk, Lt. Ivan Nakony (Nakonechnyj), P/o. Ustick, F/Lt. A. Pohoresky (Heroes of their day: <https://www.ucclf.ca/heroes-of-their-day>).

Almost forgotten London Club has been a unique “home away from home” for Ukrainian Canadian soldiers of Ukrainian heritage. Born in Alberta Anne Cherniawsky (1911-2010), who also served with the Canadian armed forces in Europe, was the Club director. She was one of the main pillars of the organization during the war. The Club provided a place to socialize, learn about Ukraine, Ukrainian culture, etc. Its members kept track of where their soldiers were stationed and recorded the names of those who died, were injured or were taken prisoner (Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Foundation: <https://www.ucclf.ca/heroes-of-their-day-documents>; Ukrainians in the United Kingdom: <https://www.ukrainiansintheuk.info/eng/03/ucsa-e.htm>).



The Ukrainian Canadian Servicemen's Association (UCSA) in London, England. November 10-11, 1945 (Heroes of their day: <https://www.ucclf.ca/heroes-of-their-day-gallery>).

Later building at 218 *Sussex Gardens* also served as the headquarters of the Central Ukrainian Relief Bureau (CURB), created under the auspices of UCC which aided thousands of Ukrainian displaced persons and victims of war.



A commemorative stained-glass window *Heroes of Their Day* at *St James's Church*, Paddington, London (Heroes of their day: <https://www.ucclf.ca/heroes-of-their-day>).

The *Heroes of Their Day* stained-glass window dedicated to UCSA and all Ukrainian Canadian servicemen and servicewomen, was created by Glenn Carter, a stained-glass artist based in the UK. It was planned to be unveiled and blessed on May 8, 2020, the 75th anniversary of V-E (Victory in Europe) Day, but given the lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the ceremony was postponed and a blessing of the stained-glass window was performed by *St. James's Parish* Clergy in July 2022.

The stained-glass window incorporates the Trident (Тризуб) and the sunflower, Ukraine's national flower. Appearing at the bottom of the stained-glass window are words from St. Matthew's Gospel: «I was a stranger and you gave me shelter» (Heroes of their day: <https://www.ucclf.ca/heroes-of-their-day>).

«WE WOULD NOT BE HERE TODAY...»

After World War II was over, some of the veterans remained in Europe and helped rescue thousands of Ukrainian political refugees and displaced persons. Bohdan Panchuk was one of the main organisers of efforts to bring relief to Ukrainian displaced persons and refugees in Europe and to prevent their forced repatriation to the Soviet Union. He was one of the founders and director of the London-based Central Ukrainian Relief Bureau (CURB) and head of the Canadian Relief Mission for Ukrainian Victims of War. He travelled extensively in Europe, visiting displaced persons camps. As a result of his efforts, more than 30,000 Ukrainian displaced persons and refugees came to Canada (Paul Waldie. Veteran who helped bring 30,000 Ukrainian refugees to Canada to be honoured in the U.K.: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-veteran-who-helped-bring-30000-ukrainian-refugees-to-canada-to-be>; May 8, 2020). His daughter Marika in her correspondence with the author, dated February 6, 2023, wrote:

«My parents did not always talk about their experiences, but other people told stories of them as well.

Mr. Ukrainec [former WWII veteran], told me a story of when my Father was negotiating to have people released and not repatriated to the USSR. Often they had no identification – he became in possession of Red Cross Cards that he then proceeded to fill out with their names and details in order for them to have IDs and be released from the DP camps. Loud English, bravado, some bluffing, and fast talking with authority, a RCAF uniform was all put to use».

In August 1950 Bohdan Panchuk was appointed European representative of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, and a year later he became the UK representative of the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee. In 1952, Bohdan and his wife Anne Cherniawsky-Panchuk with their daughters Yaroslawa (Slawka) and Marika returned to Canada. Back in Canada, Bohdan Panchuk was working with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's International Service as a head of the Ukrainian Section (Ukrainians in the United Kingdom: <https://www.ukrainiansintheuk.info/eng/02/panchuk-e.htm>). According to his daughter Yaroslawa of Toronto, after that he taught at Ogilvie Public School and Rosemont High School in Montreal.

Bohdan Panchuk was a prominent leader in the inter-war and post-World War II Ukrainian Canadian Community and received several state decorations and was awarded the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his services during World War II. In 1967 he received the Order of Canada for his community work.

«We would not be here today if it were not for the men and women in uniform...», affirms a Calgary born into a Ukrainian immigrant family Borys Sydoruk (Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Foundation: <https://www.ucclf.ca/heroes-of-their-day>).



Bohdan and Anne Cherniawsky-Panchuk as Mister and Mistress of ceremonies at Ukrainian festival in Dauphin, Manitoba. 1980's (photos courtesy Marika Panchuk).

It is worth mentioning, that back on September 19, 1995, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of V-E (Victory in Europe) Day, a UCCLA sponsored memorial plaque dedicated to the Ukrainian Canadian Soldiers who served their country with distinction overseas during the World War II was unveiled and consecrated at the *St. James's Church* in London. Anne Cherniawsky-Panchuk, a veteran of UCSA and CURB, widow of one of the founding members and president of both organizations, Bohdan Panchuk, unveiled this plaque, following a brief ecumenical service

(Unveiling of Memorial Plaque to Canadian Soldiers in London: <https://www.uccla.ca/post/unveiling-of-memorial-plaque-to-canadian-soldiers-in-london>).



Overwhelmed with memories Anne Cherniawsky-Panchuk with daughter Yaroslawa during and after the ceremony of unveiling of the memorial plaque dedicated to the Ukrainian Canadian Servicemen at *St. James's Church* in London. September 19, 1995 (photos courtesy Marika Panchuk).

The second phase of the *Heroes of Their Day* project is to commemorate the Ukrainian Canadian veterans in a most unique and evocative way: by way of an icon of the Mother of God (Покрова) watching over servicemen and servicewomen. It is especially appropriate, since The Protection of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos, is Ukraine's historic patron of armed services personnel. She spreads Her mantle over all people as a symbolic spiritual protection. Well known Kyiv iconographer Oleksandr Klymenko was commissioned to write this icon. As with all of his icons, the Pokrova icon is written on one of the ammunition boxes from the war zone in Ukraine. It is dedicated to all servicemen and servicewomen, who served and sacrificed for Canada during the World War II – true «Heroes of Their Day», and also offers solace to people impacted by the war in Ukraine.

The icons will be consecrated and installed in the Cathedrals of both the Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox Churches across Canada. Winnipeg's Ukrainian Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral of Sts. Volodymyr and Olha and Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral were the first to formally unveil and consecrate those icons at a Remembrance Day ceremony on November 11, 2022.



The Protection of the Mother of God Icons (Покрова) at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Sts. Volodymyr and Olha (photo by the author, 2022) and Holy Trinity Metropolitan Cathedral in Winnipeg (photo by Marika Panchuk, 2022).

Canadians of Ukrainian heritage, together with Canadians of other ethnic groups, continue to play a pivotal role in political, educational and cultural activities in Canada. Our ancestors have contributed in a significant manner economically, politically, culturally and in public life to the growth and development of Canada, one of the most prosperous countries in the world. This was accomplished despite years of hardships and endless persecution.

Answering the call to duty in WWI and WWII and fighting for our values and our democratic way of life, generations of Ukrainian Canadians ensured that our freedom was protected. It is our solemn duty, to preserve the memory of the unjustly interned and those who fought and died in defense of peace and democracy, and those who have been fighting and dying defending our Ukraine today.

Halyna Kravtchouk, author, researcher on family history, and history of Ukrainian immigration to Canada.