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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Materiality of Mental Health at the Morrissey World War I Internment Camp

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Abstract To date, very little is known archaeologically about First World War–era internment camps, especially in Canada, where this history was actively erased through the destruction of the federal internment records in the 1950s. This research focuses on the Morrissey Internment Camp, one of Canada's 24 World War I internment camps, with the aim of using the material culture record at the camp as a point of access to examine the coping strategies prisoners of war adopted to help mitigate mental-health issues triggered by confinement. Fieldwork involved surveying, mapping, the deployment of ground-penetrating radar, and excavation within the grounds of the internment camp. A formal walking traverse of the site was conducted to map the surface collections of archaeological material. In addition, archival materials that included government reports, maps, and photographs complemented interviews conducted with the descendant community. The findings indicate that arts and handicrafts, religion, communication, resistance, tobacco, alcohol, and purchased comforts may have helped prisoners of war stave off depression and sustain a degree of mental health.

Resumen Hasta la fecha, se sabe muy poco en términos de arqueología sobre los campos de internamiento de la era de la Primera Guerra Mundial, especialmente en Canadá, donde esta historia fue borrada activamente mediante la destrucción de los registros federales de internamiento en la década de 1950. Esta investigación se centra en el Campo de Internamiento de Morrissey, uno de los 24 campos de internamiento de la Primera Guerra Mundial de Canadá, con el objetivo de utilizar el registro de cultura material en el campo como un punto de acceso para examinar las estrategias de afrontamiento de los prisioneros de guerra adoptadas para ayudar a mitigar los problemas de salud mental provocados por el confinamiento. El trabajo de campo involucró la topografía, el mapeo, el despliegue de un radar de penetración terrestre y la excavación dentro de los terrenos del campo de internamiento. Se realizó un recorrido formal a pie del sitio para mapear las colecciones superficiales de material arqueológico. Además, los materiales de archivo, que incluyeron informes gubernamentales, mapas y fotografías, complementaron las entrevistas realizadas con la comunidad descendiente. Los hallazgos indican que las artes y artesanías, la religión, la comunicación, la resistencia, el tabaco, el alcohol y las comodidades compradas pueden haber ayudado a los prisioneros de guerra a evitar la depresión y mantener un grado de salud mental.

Résumé À ce jour, on dispose de très peu de connaissances archéologiques sur les camps d'internement datant de la Première guerre mondiale, en particulier au Canada, où cette histoire a été effacée de manière active par la destruction des dossiers d'internement fédéral pendant les années 1950. Cette recherche s'intéresse au camp d'internement de Morrissey, l'un des 24 camps d'internement de la

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Première guerre mondiale au Canada. Elle a pour but d'utiliser les éléments de culture matérielle du camp comme un point d'accès afin d'examiner les stratégies d'adaptation mises en œuvre par les prisonniers de guerre pour atténuer les problèmes de santé mentale déclenchés par la détention. Le travail de terrain a impliqué des relevés, une cartographie, le déploiement d'un géoradar et des fouilles des sols du camp d'internement. Une traversée à pied formelle du site a été conduite pour cartographier les collectes de surface des matériaux archéologiques. De plus, les supports d'archives comprenant les rapports, cartes et photographies du gouvernement sont venus compléter des entretiens menés avec des membres de la communauté des descendants. Les constatations indiquent que les arts et l'artisanat, la religion, la communication, la résistance, le tabac, l'alcool et l'achat de sources de réconfort ont pu aider les prisonniers de guerre a surmonter la dépression et a préserver une certaine santé mentale.

Keywords Austro-Hungary · Canada · First World War · Germany · internment archaeology · modern conflict archaeology · Morrissey · Ottoman Empire · POWs · Ukrainian Canadians · war · WWI

Introduction

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Austria on 28 July 1914 began the chain of events leading to World War I (WWI), pitting the Central Powers of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire against the Allied or Entente Powers of Great Britain and its empire, France, Russia, Italy, Romania, Japan, and the United States. Until the armistice of 11 November 1918, Europe became the primary theater of war, resulting in mass causalities, both military and civilian, along with the destruction of land and infrastructure. Although separated from Great Britain by the Atlantic, the Dominion of Canada was deeply affected by the war, as high demands for goods, services, and people to support the war effort strained the country's economy and social fabric. At the start of the war, Canada began the enforced registration of individuals originating from any of the Central Powers. In some instances, people were arrested and interned to prevent them from joining the war effort (Luciuk 2001). In total, 8,579 immigrants from the multinational Austro-Hungarian, German, and Ottoman empires were interned as prisoners of war (POWs) across 24 internment camps on Canadian soil and for almost two years after the end of WWI. Another 80,000 immigrants were forced to register as "enemy aliens" (Luciuk 2001).

Unique to the Canadian experience was the federal government's classification of civilians as POWs (Kordan 2002; Proctor 2010). Extracting labor from the POWs was a means to fund Canada's first national internment operations, since civilians could not be forced to labor. POW labor also contributed to the expansion of remote areas in the West, such as Canada's national parks, through land clearing, logging, and the building of roads and other infrastructure. Although not considered criminals, they were still regarded as enemy aliens by the Canadian government (Luciuk 2001) and consequently were both spatially and psychologically displaced from the routines of daily life (Proctor 2010). The process of internment forcibly severed the civilian POWs' ties with their past, their contact with family and free society, and, importantly, their knowledge of the war's progress (Becker 2004).

Due to the blurred boundary between civilian and military POWs, it is important to examine the effects of institutional confinement as applied to different types of prisoners. Institutional confinement is a broad term covering numerous categories of imprisonment, of which prisons, civilian or military internment camps, refugee camps, and staging camps are just a few. The imprisoned in each of these institutions develop coping mechanisms under stress and thus offer a distinctive lens through which to examine mental health, shedding light on the effects of internment, especially for the mental health of this unique group of civilians. This study uses the material culture excavated from the Morrissey WWI internment camp, in the province of British Columbia, as a point of access to examine the coping strategies adopted by civilian POWs to help mitigate mental-health issues triggered by confinement.

Canada's First National Internment Operations

The large majority of the prisoners in the Canadian internment camps were civilians, and a few were even Canadian born or naturalized British subjects, a fact that "exposed the problems of the civil/military divide, creating categories of people who did not fit neatly into either" (Proctor 2010:205). Canada required a means to fund its internment operations, and extracting labor from

the prisoners became a method for doing this (Morton 1974; Waiser 1994; Francis 2008). The government of the Dominion of Canada was a signatory to the 1907 Hague Convention, a set of international rules established to ensure the proper treatment of military prisoners in times of war that stipulated that military personnel could labor for the country of their capture if the work did not benefit the war effort. Notably, the War Measures Act of 1914 provided the Canadian government with extensive power to maintain security during times of war (Kordan 2002:53,54; Minenko 2018). For example, orders-in-council, pursuant to section 6, provided the government with unlimited authority as long as was considered necessary for the nation's security, defense, peace, order, and welfare during a real or anticipated war, invasion, or insurrection (Minenko 2018; Mark Minenko 2019, pers. comm.). The order-in-council of 28 October 1914 provided the government with the authority to intern civilians and classify them as POWs, pursuant to P.C. 2721 (Department of Justice 1914)—thereby making them eligible for forced labor. Labeling civilians as POWs appears to have been unique to the Canadian experience and caused much upheaval within the civilian prisoner population (Library and Archives Canada 1915). Many protested the POW label and instead self-identified as "civil" prisoners of war, as noted on headstones in the Morrissey internee cemetery.

At the start of the internment operations, POWs were divided into first- and second-class groups based on nationality. Germans were considered first-class prisoners and were held in close confinement, while Ukrainians and other Europeans from the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires were considered second-class prisoners and placed in labor camps. The first internees at the camp in Morrissey were coal miners from the latter category.

The Morrissey Internment Camp

The stirrings of resentment initially began in and around the town of Fernie, where unemployment rates were high. The Coal Creek miners, who were of British, Belgian, Russian, Italian, and Montenegrin descent, went on strike on 8 June 1915, refusing to work with the enemy aliens of the Central Powers (Norton and Miller 1998:66). The strike continued on 9 June, and a telegram was sent to William Bowser, British Columbia's acting premier while Premier Richard McBride was visiting Britain. Bowser responded by announcing that the provincial government would begin interning all unmarried German and Austro-Hungarian miners, as well as married men whose families remained in Europe. The provincial government's stated dual purpose for interning these miners was to increase employment opportunities for "deserving" men and to return the communities to their earlier peaceful ways (Norton and Miller 1998:69). Fernie's ice rink became the temporary location of the internment camp.

The federal government considered the Fernie internment camp illegal, since the local German and Austro-Hungarian coal miners were not regarded as a threat to national security. However, the miners at Hillcrest, Alberta, followed with similar actions, beginning to strike on 15 June. Fearful of any disruption to wartime coal production, the federal government took over the Fernie internment camp and brought it under the umbrella of Canada's first national internment operations.

Morrissey, located in the Elk Valley of southeastern British Columbia (Fig. 1), was an abandoned coal-mining town on 60 ac. of land, 14 km outside of Fernie. It proved an ideal location, since the unoccupied buildings could be leased from the Crows Nest Pass Coal Company at a reasonable rate. Hence, on 28 September 1915, the internees initially housed in the ice rink were transferred to the permanent internment camp in Morrissey (Beaulieu 2015). The camp was in operation until 21 October 1918, interning 520 prisoners during those three years and averaging one guard to every three prisoners (Beaulieu 2020).

In 1916, Canada was experiencing a labor shortage due to a dire need for soldiers overseas. This led to the parole of many prisoners, who were then permitted to work for private businesses, railway companies, and all levels of government at a fixed rate of pay comparable to a soldier's wage. General William Dillon Otter noted that this benefited "organizations short on labour," especially since the newly paroled internees' wages were significantly less than what they would have been able to earn as private citizens. In addition, any insubordination or work refusal could result in re-internment (Luciuk 2001). As a result, numerous internment camps across Canada began closing in 1916, and the unparoled internees were amalgamated into the remaining camps. The German prisoner population thereby increased at Morrissey, and it reverted from a labor to a confinement camp. Despite this reclassification, Morrissey staff were

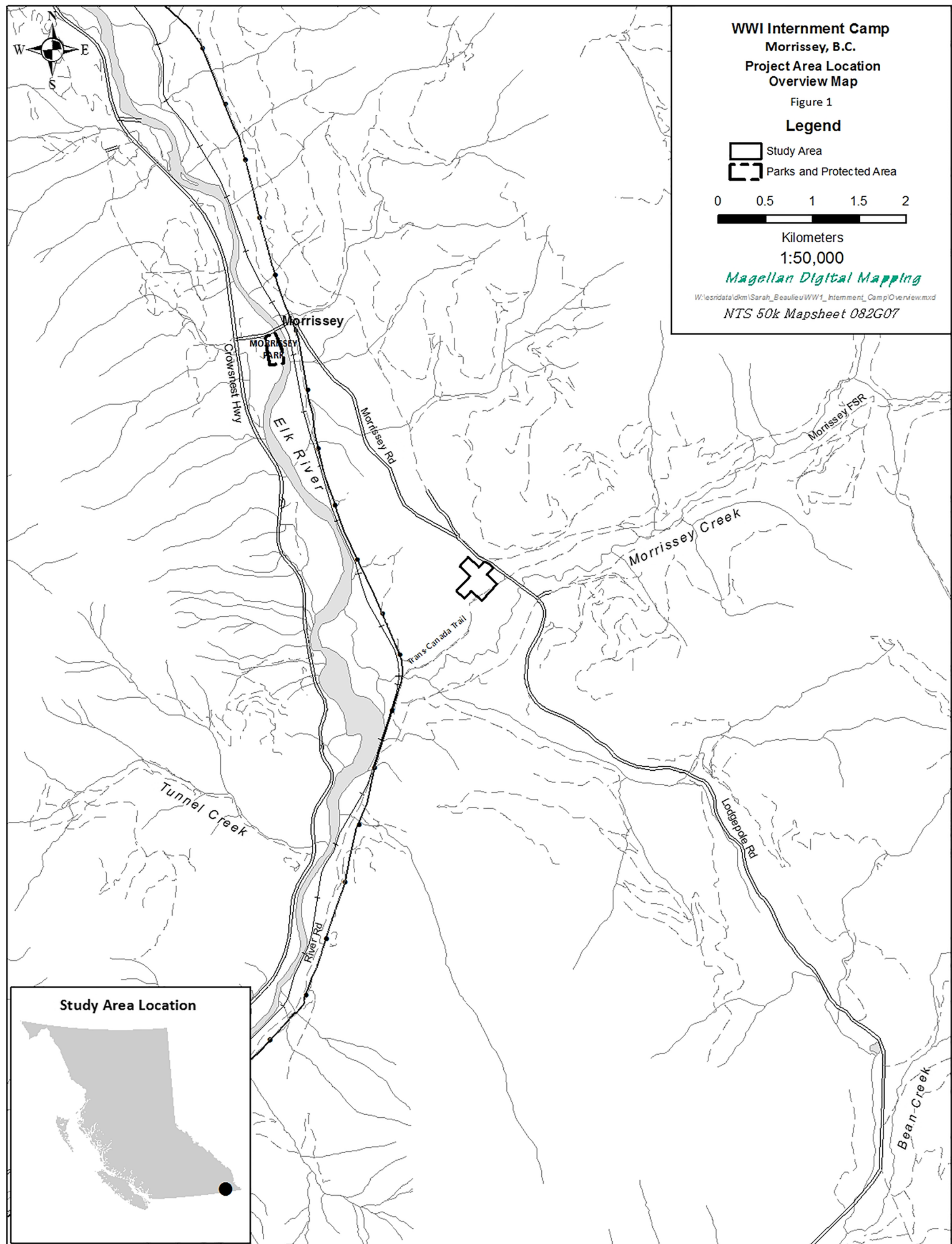

Fig. 1 The Morrissey Internment Camp site location within British Columbia. (Map courtesy of Magellan Digital Mapping, 2019.)

notorious for their mistreatment of the internees. The consul of Switzerland, Samuel Gintzburger, who was responsible for overseeing the treatment of POWs in Morrissey, submitted an inspection report directly to

his government, noting the internees were provided with food of lesser quality than those served in criminal institutions. He also addressed the question of forced labor in the camp as well as the poorly heated rooms, in what was known as the "Big House," during the harsh winter months (Gintzburger 1917). In fact, Canada received several *notes verbales* from Germany, reminding the Canadian government that retaliation would be swift toward Canadian and British POWs in Germany should conditions at Morrissey not improve (Norton and Miller 1998; Luciuk 2001).

As the war progressed, internees' morale declined, as evidenced by government documentation noting Morrissey prisoners sent to the provincial psychiatric institution Essondale Hospital, later known as Riverview Hospital, beginning in 1917 and 1918 (Auditor General [Canada] 1917, 1918). In response, the nonprofit Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) began providing aid to help boost prisoners' spirits. This included establishing a schoolhouse in which POWs taught courses in arithmetic, bookkeeping, carpentry, English, French, Spanish, freehand drawing, higher accountancy, and motor engineering. In December 1917, 119 out of approximately 200 POWs had signed up to partake in these courses. The YMCA also provided reading materials for the prisoners, which arrived late in 1917, less than a year before the camp's closure (Auditor General [Canada] 1917, 1918; Shepard 1917). Prior to this, between 1915 and 1918, prisoners busied themselves with camp labor, entertainment through the POW orchestra, gardening, and collecting and creating arts and crafts (Norton and Miller 1998).

Research Methods

In 1954, Canada authorized the destruction of numerous documents, including individual files and ledgers, connected to Canada's first national internment operations (Luciuk 2006:48), leaving limited documentation behind. The Morrissey camp met a similar fate and was completely dismantled upon its closure (Morton 1974). Hence, at the start of the excavation that forms the basis of this study, there were no surviving structures on the forested landscape, apart from the visible footprint of the second-class POW building.

Fieldwork involved surveying, mapping, the deployment of ground-penetrating radar (GPR), and excavation within the grounds of the internment camp. A formal walking traverse of the site was conducted with members of the archaeology team each positioned 1 m apart to map the surface collection of archaeological material. In addition, archival materials that included government reports, maps, and photographs complemented interviews conducted with the descendant community. Shovel and auger tests were conducted at 5 m intervals, and subsurface anomalies were recorded, with excavations taking place where concentrations of anomalies were noted. This led to the location of the first- and second-class prisoner compounds, the prisoners' living quarters, the exercise yard, and the privies (latrines), as well as the camp canteen and several building footprints of the guards' quarters. Once these were located, 1 and 2 m excavation units were placed at the locations of the living quarters of the German first-class prisoners and the camp canteen, on the guards' side of the camp. Units were also placed inside the second-class compound, in the living quarters known as "Big Building," as well as in an escape tunnel and two privies. Screening was conducted through ¼ in. mesh, and the artifacts from each unit confirmed the identification of each location in the camp. Soil samples from both privies in the second-class compound were also analyzed (Figs. 2, 3).

The majority of the surface-collected artifacts were in the area delineated as the second-class compound, which also held most of the excavated material culture from two privies located at the back of the second-class compound. Lesser amounts were excavated from the escape tunnel and Big Building (Figs. 2, 3). Beverage bottles, intact and broken, along with tobacco tins (pipe, chewing, and cigarette) were common artifacts in each of these locations. Privy 1 contained the largest amount of intact beverage bottles and shards (17 kg), while Privy 2 contained little (3 kg), followed by Big Building (218 g) and the escape tunnel (191 g). Both intact and broken pharmaceutical bottles were excavated from Privies 1 and 2 (458 g), along with the escape tunnel (146 g), but none were excavated from Big Building. Pipe and cigarette tobacco were noted in the privies and Big Building, while the escape tunnel included cigarette and chewing tobacco, but none for pipes. The privies also produced a range of faunal material along with several notable artifacts: woodworking files, inkwells, German-language newspaper fragments, a barbed-wire cross, a Colgate shaving-tin lid and moustache comb, an Irish clay pipe and miniature Irish flag belonging to a toy soldier, a

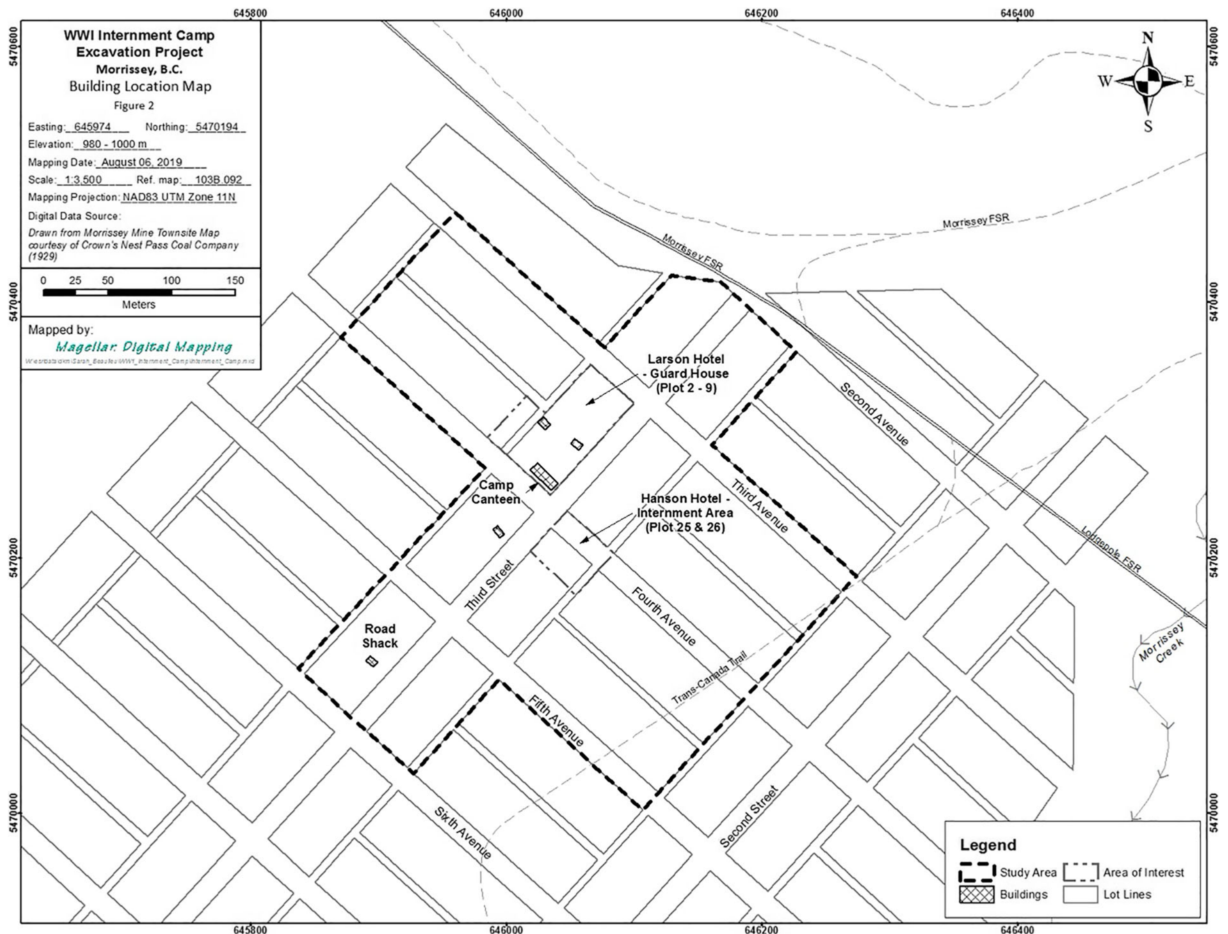

Fig. 2 The Morrissey Internment Camp site location within the context of Morrissey's abandoned mining town. (Map courtesy of Magellan Digital Mapping, 2019.)

cartridge casing modified into a shank, the remnants of a shoe, and black cloth. The escape tunnel produced additional artifacts exclusive to this location and discussed by Beaulieu (2019): paint cans and jars; chocolate, cocoa, coffee, and syrup tins; shovels; and buckets. Excavated from the first-class compound were 324 g of beverage-related glass and 503 g of pharmaceutical-bottle glass, while the camp canteen, on the guards' side of the camp, yielded beverage bottles (484 g) along with woodworking files. The first-class compound held very few POWs (20–30) in relation to the second-class compound (130–140) and was only built in 1916, offering a likely explanation for the dearth of artifacts in this location. Below, I will discuss various artifacts as they relate to mental health and coping mechanisms, applying relevant categories to the material record of the Morrissey WWI internment camp.

Material Culture and Institutional Confinement

Studies examining the material culture of mental health in WWI internment camps are few (Mytum 2013), but the knowledge and skills gained from studies related to institutional confinement more generally and WWII internment sites specifically can be applied to WWI era sites. Casella (2007), for example, examines the material culture of institutional confinement to demonstrate that, even under the most austere of conditions, individuals maintain a level of agency so they can continue to act under their own will. Grabowski et al. (2014) challenged the well-defined boundary between prisoner and guard in the WWII POW camp in Finnmark, Arctic Norway, demonstrating that the shared experience of enduring challenging winter environmental conditions may have "included some measure of sympathy" from authority figures.

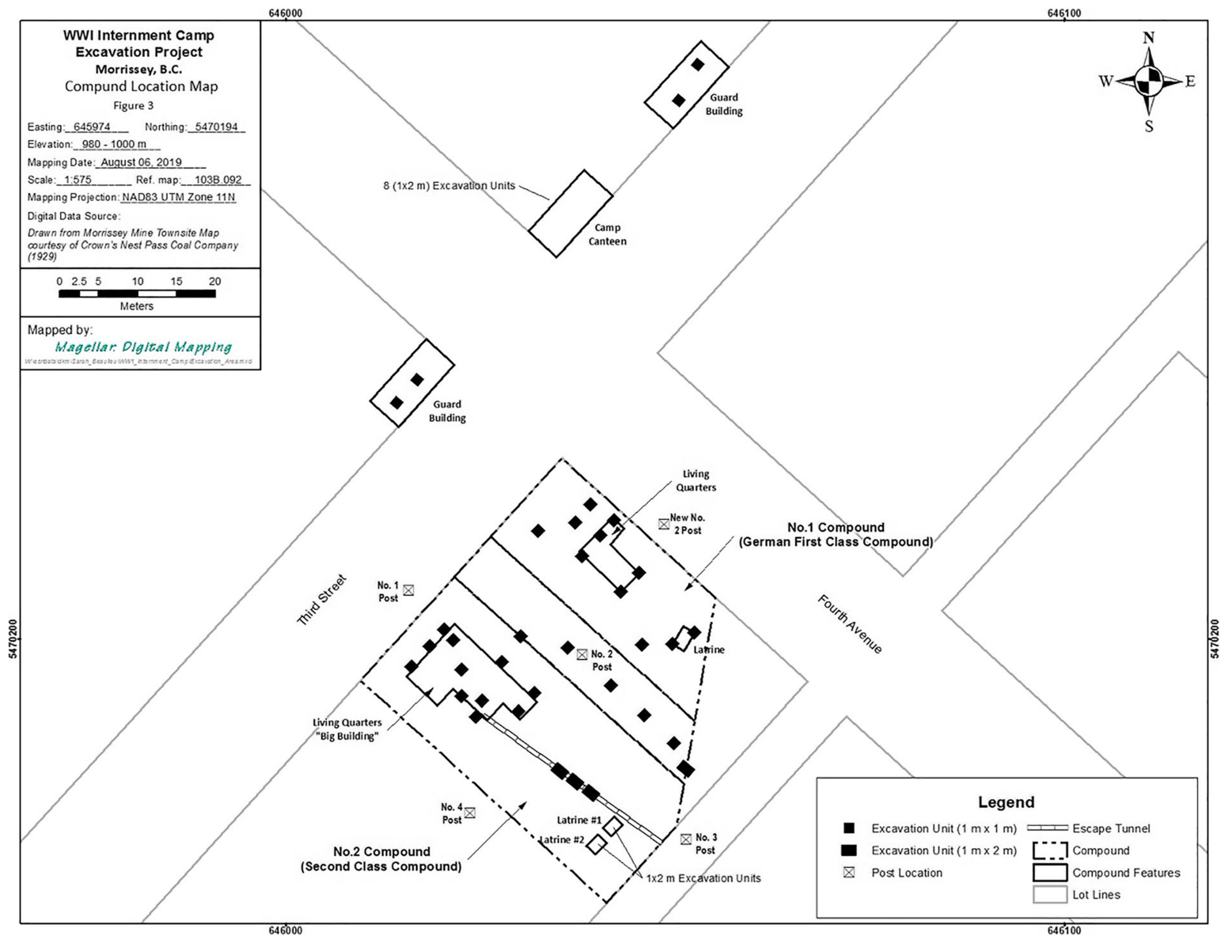

Fig. 3 The Morrissey Internment Camp excavation area. (Map courtesy of Magellan Digital Mapping, 2019.)

Using material culture to make inferences about the mental health of prisoners and, by proxy, their coping strategies can, however, be more challenging. Studies have been undertaken more generally, using the material record to understand the mental health of individuals, in some cases at WWII internment sites specifically. Coleborne (2001) has examined the interpretation and contribution of material culture in studying the social history of insanity and the asylum, and Psota (2011) has used material culture to study the effects of mental illness, not only on the unwell, but also on their families. Myers (2011) examines the relationship between materiality and survival in terms of the need to acquire specific items upon arrival at the Auschwitz concentration camp. For instance, not having mundane paraphernalia, such as a spoon and bowl, would likely lead to imminent death in an institution where the daily allotted ration was provided in liquid form. Resourcefulness through trade, theft, and scavenging became a vital quality. Survival is, though, more than just the physical capacity to endure; it includes a mental component. Dusselier (2008:125) uses the material culture of WWII Japanese American internment camps to discuss how prisoners used arts and crafts to engage their bodies and minds, keep themselves busy, and "remake the emotional, psychic and mental landscapes of survival," while Carr (2011) uses the material culture of crafts, art, and engravings to examine the emotional expressions of homesickness, frustration, boredom, and passive resistance by Channel Islanders interned in Austria and Germany during WWII.

It is challenging to try to discern and interpret emotions from the material record, especially when oral histories and archival documents are lacking and when a general consensus cannot be reached on the scope of "emotion." Tarlow (2012) discusses the spectrum on which the notion of emotion is placed, with psychological emotion as a biological function located at one end

of the spectrum and a constructivist stance where emotion is not regarded as a cultural universal at the other. Harris and Sorensen (2010) attempt to mitigate this issue in archaeology by "challenging the notion of emotion as something exclusively subjective, individual and immaterial" and, in doing so, develop four terms—"emotion," "affective fields," "attunement," and "atmosphere"—to aid in the investigation of emotion through the material record of the henge monument of Mount Pleasant in Dorset, England.

There are additional challenges in uncovering the stories of internees when they have been intentionally erased from the physical landscape and historical record (Myers and Moshenska 2013; Camp 2016); as noted earlier, federal documents relating to the Morrissey WWI internment camp were intentionally destroyed (Luciuk 2006). Further, there are no living survivors from the WWI internment camps to speak to their stories. In such instances, the material culture can counter the historical record where institutions have silenced prisoners, censored outside communication, and manipulated the public's perspective on internment camps through the careful curation of photos and documents. As Camp (2016) notes, the recovery of the material culture from these sites is of paramount importance, since it often is the only record of a prisoner's lived experience.

Coping Strategies and Internment

Since WWI, the fields of medicine and psychology have been used to study the effects of internment on POWs (Bing and Vischer 1919; Speed et al. 1989; Engdahl et al. 1997; Jones and Wessley 2010). Bing and Vischer (1919), who were among a small group of researchers supporting claims that poor mental health resulted from captivity, coined the term "barbed-wire disease." However, the correlation between captivity and mental illness only gained credence after WWII, when repatriated officers with exceptional records were being redeployed and rates of disciplinary incidents began to rise (Jones and Wessley 2010:163). Late 20th-century retrospective studies of veterans held as POWs during WWII further supported the connection between captivity and mental illness, what is now termed post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD (Speed et al. 1989; Engdahl et al. 1997).

Psychiatrists Ursano and Rundell (1995) outline several coping-mechanism categories POWs use to combat mental-health issues and survive internment: "Emphasizing the Greater Good," "Defenses," "Relationship to Captors," "Social," "Conscious Efforts," "Psychological/Fantasy," and "Dissociation" (Table 1). Some of these strategies are more individualistic, relating to thoughts, attitudes, and actions, while other strategies can be regarded as social and collaborative. Mytum (2013) proposes that, with the growing literature related to the coping strategies prisoners use to survive internment, the material culture record can also be further investigated in an effort to gain a more nuanced perspective on these strategies.

Mytum (2013) notes that Ursano and Rundell's categories do not directly relate to material culture, but that the actions resulting from "acting out" the coping strategies have "specific material implications." Mytum first applied Ursano and Rundell's universal coping mechanisms to Cunningham's Camp, a WWI internment camp in Britain, identifying skills, traits, and means, both human and material, applied in an effort to develop and maintain positive outcomes during times of stress (Bandura 1981). To complete the study, Mytum used 800 photographs commissioned from the camp, along with newspapers written and read by the internees, to study the patterns of material culture in the camp. He then applied these to the coping strategies from Ursano and Rundell's study (1995).

Following in this vein, I have assumed that, given the nature of Morrissey as an internment camp, there was a degree of mental illness amongst the prisoners. Hence, I will use the material culture excavated from the Morrissey WWI internment camp, along with archival reports and photographs, to suggest how Ursano and Rundell's coping strategies may have been used by the POWs at the Morrissey internment camp to stave off poor mental health; see Table 2 for a concise summary.

Material Culture and Mental Health at Morrissey

Conscious Efforts: Self-Development Activities

Group and self-development activities at Morrissey can be observed through the archival record, which contains photographs of board games, musical instruments (Fig. 4), and camp orchestras (Fig. 5). Boredom was an extremely common problem in POW camps and could lead to depression and anxiety. Being cut off from the outside world and not

Table 1 Prisoner-of-war coping mechanisms

Emphasizing the Greater Good	Conscious Efforts
• Caring for another	• Acceptance of fate
• Feeling closer to God	• Communication
• Focusing on the good	• Control of panic
• Loyalty to country/family/POW group	• Discipline
• Motivation for life	• Flexibility
• Survival for some purpose	• Maintaining self-respect
Defenses	• Maintaining military social structure
• Denial	• Physical fitness
• Humor	• Realistic expectations
• Intellectualization	• Repetitive behaviors
• Obsessional thinking	• Rituals
• Rationalization	• Self-development activities
Relationship to Captors	• "Talking to family"
• Collaboration	• Well-controlled sensitivity
• Cultivating relationships with captors	• Will to live
• Resistance	**Psychological/Fantasy**
• IStudy guards' habits and use the knowledge to gain favor	• Apathy
• Withdrawal	• Dissociation
Social	• Fantasies of retaliation
• Buddy system	• Fatalism
• Chain of command	• Hope
• Communication	• Idealized expectations of post-release life
• Group activities	• Introversion
• Group affiliation	• Passive dependence
• Military experience	• Personality flexibility
• Peer pressure	•Psychological regression
•Withdrawal	

Note: As outlined by Ursano and Rundell (1995).

knowing how long the war would last or when release would come also created great instability for POWs. Importantly, as the YMCA did not begin providing aid until December 1917, for a long time the prisoners were left to their own devices to occupy themselves and stave off negative emotions. Arts and crafts provided some means of mental escape and could have contributed in many ways, such as by ameliorating and decorating personal space, generating income through sale, trading to acquire other goods, and gifting to show gratitude (Casella 2007; Carr 2011; Myers and Moshenska 2011, 2013).

Some of the prisoners were extremely talented woodworkers, as evidenced by archival photographs of handmade grandfather clocks, furniture, board games, instruments, toys, and swagger sticks (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]e). Forty-two woodworking files were excavated from the second-class compound's privies and the camp canteen, where prisoners could purchase tools for their craft making. Archival photographs also show an entire miniature model farm constructed by POWs out of wood, including a three-story house, farm stores, and barns. Model farms likely depicted homesteads continuous with the creators' past lives. A separate photograph displays a poultry house, an odd choice of building to construct (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]c).

Swagger sticks were common, not only in Morrissey, but in many Canadian WWI internment camps (e.g., the nearby Edgewood, Nanaimo, Mt. Revelstoke, and

Table 2 Morrissey Internment Camp prisoner-of-war coping mechanisms

Categories	Artifact	Source or Location Excavated
Emphasizing the greater good		
Feeling closer to God	Barbed-wire cross	Second-class POW privies
Relationship to captors		
Resistance	Nautical life ring Patchwork quilt Toy soldiers	Archival photographs
	Irish clay pipe	Second-class POW privy
	Irish flag (from a toy soldier)	Second-class POW privy
Relationship to Captors & Conscious Efforts		
Relationship to captors: Resistance	Letterwriting	Archives
Conscious efforts: Communication	Inkwells German reading material	Second-class POW privies
Conscious Efforts		
Maintaining self-respect	Colgate shaving tin Moustache comb	Second-class POW privies
Will to live	Pharmaceutical bottles	First-class compound (503 g), second-class compound privies (458 g), canteen (286 g), escape tunnel (146 g)
	Iron-tonic bottles	Second-class privy
Self-development activities	Woodworking files	Second-class POW privies & canteen
	Swagger sticks Miniature farms Insect collecting Ships in bottles	Archival photographs
Realistic expectations	Chocolate tins Cocoa tins Syrup tins Coffee tins	Escape tunnel
Conscious Efforts & Social		
Conscious efforts: Realistic expectations	Chewing tobacco: Edgeworth, Meerschaum	Escape tunnel
Social: Group activity	Cigarette tobacco: Capstan Navy Cut Pipe/cigarette tobacco: Velvet, Red Cap, Prince Albert, Tuxedo	Second-class POW privies, escape tunnel, Big Building
Conscious effort: Self-development activities Social: Group activities	Orchestra	Archival photographs
Social		
Group activities	Board games Musical instruments	Archival photographs
Social & Psychological		
Social: Group activities Psychological: Dissociation	Beverage bottles (alcohol)	First-class POW compound (324 g) Second-class POW compound yard (815 g) Second-class POW Privy 1 (17,247 g) Second-class POW Privy 2 (3326 g) Basement of second-class living quarters (218 g) Canteen (484 g) Escape tunnel (191 g)
Psychological		
Fantasy/escapism	Paintings	Archival photographs
	Paint cans Paint jars	Escape tunnel

Note: As outlined by Ursano and Rundell (1995).

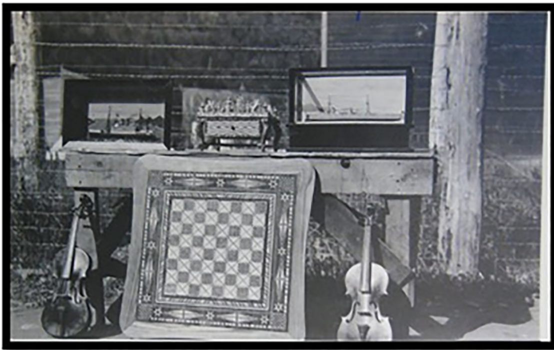

Fig. 4 Items carved by the Morrissey POWs to pass the time. Note the handmade violins (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]a).

Fig. 6 Swagger stick made by POW 189 at the Morrissey Internment Camp (Fernie Museum 2020).

Vernon camps), and several officers in archival photographs can be seen using them (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]e). Swagger sticks carved by POWs are first noted in the historical record of the Boer War concentration camps (Woodruff 2014). Prior to WWI, noncommissioned officers in the British army carried swagger sticks when off duty, and they remained popular with the military until 1939. However, after the start of WWII, British officers ceased wearing uniforms off duty, so the sticks were no longer required (Stein 1974). Carved swagger sticks and war souvenirs were advertised for sale in the *Morrissey Mention* (1916a) newspaper. A single swagger stick (part of a pair) displayed at the Fernie Museum was initially gifted from POW 189 to Mary Cavanaugh and her housekeeper, Beatrice Good (Fig. 6). William Cavanaugh, Mary's husband, was a train engineer for Morrissey and would have either purchased the walking sticks for his wife and housekeeper or received them as a gift. They include the date and place of the carving, along with the intended owner. The displayed stick features a snake that wraps around the length of the cane, with the head and tongue rising toward the handle. A Union Jack flag and a Canadian red ensign are above the snake's head, and a .303 rifle cartridge is below the tail (Fernie Museum 2020). The snake motif was popular in Morrissey and the neighboring internment camps.

Butterfly collecting was also a popular pastime in the camp (Fig. 7), requiring one to two weeks per specimen to relax, pin, and mount (Drees 2017). Archival photographs show six frames containing hundreds of butterflies in each (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]d). A hobby that consumed large amounts of time, it was undertaken in other POW internment camps as well. Letters to family in England document a WWI POW in Switzerland requesting that his butterfly collecting equipment be sent to him in prison (Whitmarsh 2014). Graham Howarth, an entomologist from the London Natural History Museum and a POW in WWII,

Fig. 5 The Morrissey POW orchestra. (Photo by E. Hollinshead, 1918; courtesy of the Fernie Historical Society.)

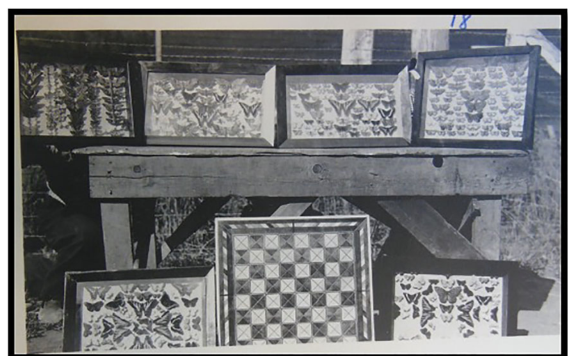

Fig. 7 Morrissey POWs' butterfly collections and handmade chessboard (Library and Archives Canada [1915d–1918]d).

had an extensive insect collection. "Howarth secretly preserved his collection of 1,115 butterflies, 347 moths and 100 other insects in cigarette tins and managed to smuggle it home after liberation in August 1945" (Marren 2015). Bug collecting was also popular with German POWs at Camp Hearne in WWII (Waters and Long 2006:50).

Nautical themes were commonplace in Morrissey arts and crafts and were presented in a variety of media, including intricate model ships encased in special frames, paintings of ships, and a life preserver used to frame a painting of a ship (Fig. 8). A single known intact ship in a bottle survives. However, both photographic evidence and communication with internee descendants indicate that ships in lightbulbs were made as well. Seamen on long voyages initially built ships in bottles to pass the time. The oldest surviving ship encased in glass dates to 1784. The creation of ships in glass by prisoners of war dates to the Napoleonic wars (Stammers 2013). Ships made in "bottles" only began to occur in 1860, after the advent of mass bottle production. Matchboxes, fruit, scissors, decks of cards, padlocks, and rope knots in bottles were equally common during this period (Stammers 2013). Historian Michael O'Hagan notes their great popularity during both WWI and WWII internment in Canada. Their construction required relatively few materials, all of which were fairly easy to acquire. There was significant interest from many of the guards and civilians, so the POWs had a market for selling or trading them. During WWII, the Canadian internment camps initially forbade the construction of ships in bottles, but relaxed the restrictions during the latter part of the war. The internment authorities then allowed the internees to sell their handicrafts at organized arts-and-crafts shows and sales. After the German government cut off the POWs' monthly allowances, these sales became their primary source of income (Michael O'Hagan 2018, pers. comm.). Ships in bottles appear to have been more popular in German internment camps during WWII, and ships in lightbulbs more abundant during WWI. Unique to Canadian WWI internment camps was the use of medicinal bottles instead of beverage bottles, likely due to the need for clear glass, as the majority of the surviving beverage bottles excavated from the camp were dark green or brown, whereas most medicinal bottles were clear (Fig. 9).

Crafting could occupy many hours; ideally, POWs would conceive of designs that would extend the life of the art piece beyond creation and display. Essential to this endeavor was the crafting of items that not only took a significant amount of time to build, but also would further occupy time once they were created, such as games and musical instruments (Carr 2011:140). Archival photographs show chess sets made of wood, including boards inlaid with various types of wood. Some of the chessboards had elaborately carved chess pieces and sat atop tables with drawers and legs covered in equally ornate designs (Figs. 4, 7). These activities would have provided escape, not only while the prisoners were creating the intricate pieces, but also when they were playing the games. Musical instruments were also carved out and built in the camp. Photographs note long-necked mandolin/guitar hybrids and violins. Guitars, snare drums, and stand-up bass instruments were ordered from a catalog and purchased through the camp canteen (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]e). Musical instruments were made at other WWI internment camps across Canada, too. The Canadian Museum

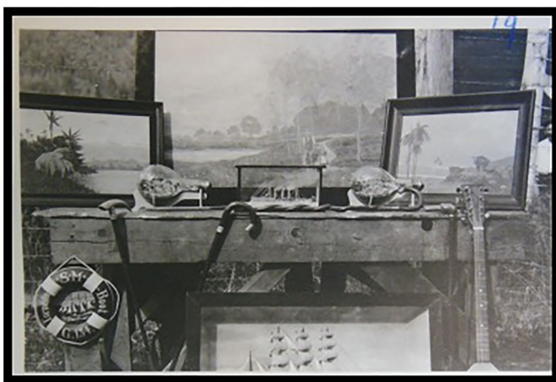

Fig. 8 Items made by the Morrissey POWs to pass the time. Note the ships in lightbulbs, swagger sticks, and ship paintings (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]b).

Fig. 9 Ship in a bottle made by a civilian POW for an individual's great-great-grandfather, whose homestead was near Morrissey. (Photo by author, 2014; courtesy of a private collection.)

of History (exhibit no. CHH 3.1.1.4-AR01) has on display a handmade violin, carved by POW John Melnick, who was interned at the Brandon Internment Camp. Making instruments passed the time, with some prisoners perhaps learning to play an instrument and others continuing to play one they already knew. Mastering the technical skills to play an instrument would require daily practice, while joining the camp's orchestra would further one's repertoire, bring musical enjoyment, and contribute to a sense of camaraderie. In addition, the orchestra would then conduct performances for fellow prisoners, boosting camp morale. All of these undertakings constitute conscious efforts at self-development.

Fantasy/Escapism

Paint cans and glass jars still containing paint were excavated from the second-class compound privies and the escape tunnel. POWs painted to improve the bleak surroundings of their living quarters. The paintings documented in the Morrissey military records (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]b) depict commonalities within the scenery that were polar opposites of the realities of daily life, including sailing vessels, water, footpaths, and nonnative plants, such as palm trees. The largest archived painting shows a man and child walking on a path next to a river (Fig. 8). These art pieces may have been an outlet used to portray thoughts of freedom and far-off places—the longing for release and the liberty to walk freely, as depicted in the artwork.

Conscious Efforts: Communication and Relationship to Captors: Resistance

Inkwells were excavated from the escape tunnel and privies. Ink was used for letter writing and as part of the curriculum at the YMCA POW school. Prisoners received and wrote letters to family and sent letters of complaint to the Swiss and American consuls. For the letters to be censored prior to being mailed, those not written in English required translation through the camp's designated interpreter, Constantino Baby. This often caused long delays, so prisoners anxious to have their letters mailed quickly would write in English to avoid waiting in the long translation queue (Oughton 1917).

Reading materials were permitted in the camp, providing they were in English (Woodward 1914). Nonetheless, a German-language newspaper was excavated from the lowest level of the second-class POW privy (Fig. 10). Little remains of the print, but these words can still be distinguished: "Oesterreich" (Austria), "Nordwesten" (northwest), "Bulgaren" (Bulgarians), "Deutsch" (German), "Züge" (trains), "melden" (to report), and "in die Häuser" (into the houses). The limited wording appears to discuss the current events of the war, and, given that POW letters were rigidly censored (Gintzburger 1917), it seems rather improbable that information pertaining to the war, especially not in English, was able to enter the camp legally.

Symbolic and cultural resistance were just as important in the camp, staving off depression and boosting camp morale while avoiding solitary confinement (Carr 2011; Myers and Moshenska 2013). For example, POWs openly made art expressing their support of the German cause (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]e). An art piece using a life preserver as a frame for a painting of a sailboat (Fig. 8) reads: ·S·M·\Boot\G.134\ Torpedo (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]b). The G134 was a German S90-class large-torpedo boat built in 1906, repurposed and relabeled T134 on 27 September 1916 (Gardiner and Gray 1984). It was fitted with both torpedoes and cannons to contribute to the German war effort. Whether the POW was a mariner who had served on this ship or made it for someone who had, there is a definite link to this class of German warship, making it likely that this particular prisoner was a combatant rather than a civilian POW. Framing the painting with this specifically labeled life preserver was probably a way for the POW to create something

Fig. 10 Scraps of a German-language newspaper excavated from the second-class privy. (Photo by author, 2018.)

tangible that was continuous with his life prior to internment and clearly demonstrated support for Germany and the Central Powers.

Support for the German cause is also notable in a patchwork quilt made by POWs and patterned with international flags (Fig. 11). The majority of the flags represent either the Entente Powers or neutral countries: Belgium, Chile, Denmark, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, and the United States. Of the Central Powers, 15 of the flags represent Austro-Hungary, a single flag is for the Ottoman Empire, and two are for Germany. Given that at one point most prisoners in Morrissey were from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the quilt likely was regarded by the guards as a symbol of national pride or cultural representation rather than a threat, confirmed by the guard's documentation on the photograph: "POW leisure activity." However, both German flags are placed in one of the center rows—the smaller flag at the top of a row and the largest flag on the quilt, an iron cross, at the bottom of the quilt, spanning most of two rows. It is also interesting to note the absence of Canadian and British flags.

Fig. 11 Patchwork quilt decorated with flags, the majority being of Entente or neutral powers. Note the large iron cross at the bottom (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]e).

Two artifacts excavated from the second-class compound relate to Irish nationalism and require further discussion (Figs. 12, 13). The Irish clay pipe mentioned earlier reads: IRELAND\A NATION on one side and WHO FEARS\'98\TO SPEAK OF on the other. The insignia commemorates the 100th anniversary of the 1798 rebellion. Additional excavated artifacts and fauna date this privy to 1917–1918. Further investigation into the pipe reveals that it may have been made in Knockcroghery, a small village in County Roscommon, Ireland, renowned for 300 years for its clay pipes, or possibly in Waterford, another Irish center also known for its pipe making (Claypipe Visitor Centre 2018, pers. comm.). In Ireland, clay pipes became a medium to express political thought, either through subtle symbolic imagery—the round tower, Irish wolfhound, or shamrock—or more directly with inscriptions such as those on this clay pipe. "Through the act of smoking it was possible to support the Irish nationalist movement without uttering a single word; it was only necessary to raise a pipe and puff" (Hartnett 2004:140–141). These political pipes were symbolic of the smokers' antihegemonic principles and were subtle enough to be appreciated only by those in the know.

The second artifact is a small Bakelite Irish flag bearing an Irish harp insignia, excavated from a privy dated to 1916–1917. The flag is likely from a toy soldier. As Kenneth Brown notes: "Toy soldiers were toys meant to be played with, a reality which served to

Fig. 12 The Irish clay pipe reads: IRELAND\A NATION on one side and WHO FEARS\'98\TO SPEAK OF on other. The insignia commemorates the 100th anniversary of the 1798 rebellion. (Photo by Brett Beaulieu, 2019.)

Fig. 13 Bakelite Irish flag bearing an Irish harp insignia. (Photo by Brett Beaulieu, 2019.)

Fig. 14 Fritz Cohn, POW 409, a German first-class prisoner, with toy soldiers on the table. (Photo by E. Hollinshead, 1918; courtesy of the Fernie Historical Society.)

reinforce the view that games and war were two sides of the same coin ... and Churchill's opinion was that the Great War was merely an extension of the game" (Brown 1990:248). Pouring lead into toy-soldier molds was a popular pastime of German internees during WWI. In Fort McPherson, Georgia, German POWs created lead toy soldiers that were sold at the camp canteen; the prisoners then used the canteen receipts to purchase tobacco and other camp goods (Wikimedia Commons 1918). Italian WWII POWs in Mombasa, Kenya, would trade carved-wood toy soldiers, stamps, and other handicrafts for a pound of butter or sugar (Munawar Sabir 2017, pers. comm.). No documentation in Morrissey indicates that prisoners made toy soldiers. However, a single photograph remains of German prisoner Fritz Cohn in black tie at a dinner table with two miniature soldiers in front of him (Fig. 14).

During WWI, Germany created alliances with widely diverse nationalist movements in India and Ireland to weaken Britain's position on the war front (Plowman 2003). On 9 April 1916, Germany shipped 20,000 captured Russian rifles along with 1 million rounds of ammunition and explosives to support the Irish rebellion. However, the plan was thwarted when the ship was intercepted by the British, later impacting the success of Ireland's Easter Rising (Barton 2010). In Ireland, support for independence grew from the aftermath of the Easter Rising. Increasing hostility toward the British and sympathy for the rebels ensued as the execution of the Irish ringleaders continued into May 1916 (Connolly 2004). Given the nature of the relationship between the Morrissey internees and the country of their capture, it is not surprising that some internees used the material culture of Irish liberation and independence to define their own acts of resistance against the British Empire.

Emphasizing the Greater Good: Feeling Closer to God

Seeking comfort in religious observance is a coping strategy that Ursano and Rundell (1995) propose is reached through emphasizing the greater good. Holding familiar items continuous with prisoners' past lives can provide strength and comfort during times of stress. Mundane objects can become tools for coping that remind prisoners of their sense of self and help distinguish them from their captors (King 2010:xi). Sometimes, prisoners turn to religion and faith in an effort to justify their current hopeless conditions (King 2010).

There remains very little documentary evidence regarding the religious practices of the prisoners in Morrissey. Although priests were permitted to visit the

internment camps, there is no confirmation that they did, nor that church services or routine prayers took place at the Morrissey camp. However, some prisoners quietly observed their faith, as evidenced by a barbed-wire cross (Fig. 15) excavated from Privy 1 in the second-class POW compound. The material chosen to create the cross may have been a means for the prisoner to comment on the injustice and suffering of internment.

Conscious Efforts: Maintaining Self-Respect and Realistic Expectations

Evidence of self-care was observed in the material record through supplemental items not part of the basic provisions provided to the POWs excavated from the second-class internment compound. A Colgate shaving-stick tin excavated from Privy 1 demonstrates an effort to maintain self-respect through grooming and proper hygiene. Comfort foods excavated from the escape tunnel—cocoa, chocolate, syrup, and coffee—were not part of the basic supplies provided to the prisoners and thus were likely purchased through the camp canteen. These luxury items would have added flavor and comfort to offset the daily monotony. According to Article 28 in the Geneva Convention: "[C]anteens shall be installed in all camps, where POWs may procure foodstuffs, soap, tobacco and ordinary articles in daily use. The tariff shall never be in excess of local prices" (International Committee of the Red Cross 1949). This regulation is not explicitly expressed in the 1907 Hague Convention; however, the official Canadian documentation indicates that similar regulations were followed. For prisoners who had earned money through their work, the canteen offered relief; purchased items afforded prisoners choice, improving their quality of life by providing a sense of agency. This may have contributed to a shift in outlook that contrasted with the dreary hardships and repetitions of daily life, which contained little in the way of variety and autonomy. According to the internment records, prisoners in Morrissey could purchase the same goods provided to the guards, except for alcohol (Woodward 1914). For instance, while the camp supplied clothing and basic soap at no additional charge to the prisoners, such items as better-quality soaps could be bought.

Fig. 15 Barbed-wire cross (*right*) excavated from the second-class POW compound, now on exhibit in the Canadian Museum of History. (Photo by Steven Darby, 2017.)

According to the American consul's inspection report, prisoners in Morrissey with personal funds earned from laboring could also purchase tobacco and order items by mail, such as violins, cameras, and guitars, offsetting the dullness and rigors of camp life (Woodward 1914).

Conscious Efforts: Realistic Expectations and Social

Cigarettes and pipe smoking were extremely popular among Canadian troops in WWI. Red Cross packages containing 50 cigarettes were sent to Canadian POWs in Europe weekly (Stibbe 2006). In Morrissey, however, the POWs were required to purchase tobacco from the canteen. Tobacco tins and pipes were excavated from the second-class POW compound privies and escape tunnel. There were diverse brands of chewing tobacco, pipe and cigarette tobacco, and exclusively cigarette tobacco. The combination of pipe and cigarette tobacco brands made up the majority of the assemblage. In addition, the second-class privy yielded a Bakelite mouthpiece attachment for a pipe as well as the Irish clay pipe discussed above. The assemblage clearly indicates tobacco use was an extremely popular coping strategy in the camp, providing a sense of personal comfort and likely offering an opportunity for relaxation and social intercourse.

Social: Group Activities and Psychological: Dissociation

When conscious efforts were no longer enough to prevent depression, anxiety, and ennui behind barbed wire, alcohol offered an illicit way to escape. Its consumption may have been caused by addiction or used as a social outlet. Beverage bottles were excavated from the first- and second-class POW compounds and the canteen, with 22 kg of bottle glass collected in total. The majority of the bottle glass came from the first privy (17 kg), followed by 3 kg in the second privy in the second-class compound. It is interesting to note that only brown bottle glass was excavated from the first-class German side, while most of the glass on the second-class POW side was green. It cannot be determined definitively whether these bottles contained alcohol or were refilled with water, but given that most were disposed of in the privies, a common location to hide contraband, it is more likely they contained alcohol.

Alcohol prohibition in Canada did not take place until 1 October 1917, after the camp had been in operation for two years. As mentioned earlier, military records specifically note that prisoners could not purchase alcohol (Woodward 1914). Hence, one can deduce there was a supply of alcohol in the camp for the guards prior to prohibition, and that it was possible for the prisoners to acquire it through exchange with a guard. Alternatively, it could have been smuggled in as contraband.

Privy 1 contained bottles embossed with brand logos, and a few of the companies brewed beer or other alcohol: Kilner Brothers Ltd., John Lumb and Co., Fernie Fort Steele Brewing Company, WF and S Northern Glassworks (Miller beer), Pabst Blue Ribbon (beer), and Anheuser Busch (Budweiser). There was also an unmarked bottle with a champagne finish. The escape tunnel contained Anheuser Busch (Budweiser) and WF and S Northern Glassworks (Miller beer) bottles. Privy 2 contained very few beverage bottles in comparison to Privy 1. A single bottle from WF and S Northern Glassworks (Miller Beer) was noted, as well as two distinctive bottles: a whiskey bottle and a D. Davias brandy or cognac from France. Dating the privies through an analysis of the faunal assemblage, tobacco tins, and government sessional reports (Auditor General [Canada] 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919) added further insight into the variance in bottle distribution. Dating Privy 1 to 1916/1917 and Privy 2 to 1917/1918 illuminated why there were significantly more bottles in the former, given the advent of prohibition in October 1917. As Privy 2 continued to be used after prohibition, the few bottles excavated from this site were very likely contraband.

Conscious Effort: Will to Live

Physical health is intrinsically linked to mental health and the will to live, and the camp doctor was important for survival. If a prisoner developed physical ailments, these could quickly lead to his demise. Access to treatment and medicine would have provided security to the prisoners and led to positive outlooks that could contribute to their recovery. Generally, POWs were treated in a makeshift hospital located in Big Building in the second-class compound; however, when they were quite ill they were sent to the public hospital in Fernie, 14 km away (Gintzburger 1917). Tuberculosis (TB) was rampant in British Columbia in the early 1900s; photographs of bell tents erected within the confines of the internment camp during a fever epidemic of 1915 suggest a very rudimentary healthcare response to the outbreak. Of the four known deaths in Morrissey, three men died of TB—POWs Mike Katalinick, Harry Smeryczanski, and Tom Ruzich—while Hermann Rellmann passed away from kidney failure (Library and Archives Canada 1918). The *Morrissey Mention* describes "La Grippe" sweeping through Morrissey before Christmas in December of 1916, filling the hospital with no fewer than 27 cases (*Morrissey Mention* 1916b). Another influenza epidemic, probably the Spanish flu, occurred just as guards were closing the camp on 15 October 1918. At the peak of the outbreak, between 25 October and 24 November 1918, 55 Fernie citizens passed away from the flu and were buried in St. Margaret's Cemetery (Fernie City Hall 1899–1948).

Pharmaceutical bottles were excavated from the canteen, the first-class POW compound, and the second-class POW compound. It is interesting to note that the German first-class compound contained almost the same weight of medicinal bottles as the other areas, although that compound interned only 20% of the inmate population. Possibly the Germans received better medical treatment than the second-class prisoners. It is also interesting to note that the German first-class compound had indoor plumbing, as ceramic belonging to a toilet and sink was excavated from the compound. The second-class prisoners were required to use the privy at

the back of the compound, forcing them to leave the warmth of the building during the cold winter months.

A bottle from Privy 1 was embossed with a logo from McLean's Drug and Bookstore in Fernie, but the contents remain unknown. The medicinal contents of only two pharmaceutical bottles out of the total assemblage could be identified. One bottle excavated from Privy 2 contained eucalyptus, judging by the bottle's odor. Eucalyptus oil was used to relieve the symptoms of influenza and colds. Inhaling the oil vapor can act as a decongestant and treatment for bronchitis, as it has antibacterial effects on pathogenic bacteria of the respiratory tract; it can also be applied to wounds to prevent infection (Silva et al. 2003).

A bottle of St. Jacob's oil (St. Jakobs Oel) was excavated from the camp canteen (Fig. 16). The oil was "intended to help relieve muscular pain due to exertion or exposure," and its active ingredients were listed as chloroform, aconite, turpentine, camphor, oil of camphor, and oil of thyme. A German advertisement in the *Essex County Herald*, September 1880, notes that it is a

> remedy for rheumatism, neuralgia, sciatica, lumbago, backache, soreness of the chest, gout, quinsy, sore throat, swelling and sprains, burns and scalds, general body pains, tooth, ear and head ache, frosted feet and ears, and all other pains and aches. Sold by all druggists and dealers in medicine for 50 cents. (*Essex County Herald* 1880)

An iron-tonic bottle excavated from Privy 1 came from the Fernie Fort Steele Brewing Company and retains part of its label. The remaining words read: Iron Ton..\....NGTHENING\most\The ..gredients\most fatigue resisting\properties known to\FERNIE & FORT S….. Iron tonics were believed to be recuperative and strength-building supplements that helped with recovery from illness, especially in counteracting anemia in TB patients (Sabbatani et al. 2017).There remain only three intact bottles with partial labels in the bottle assemblage, but only the iron tonic's is legible. These bottles also belonged to the Fernie Fort Steele Brewing Company.

Fig. 16 St. Jakobs Oel/St. Jacob's Oil bottle, excavated from the camp canteen. (Photo by author, 2018.)

Discussion

Arts and handicrafts are often depicted in the historical record as leisure activities taken up by prisoners. Several of the photographs from Morrissey have accompanying handwritten notes from the camp commanders that state "prisoner pastimes" or "prisoner leisure activities" (Library and Archives Canada [1915–1918]e). This image, often noted in newspapers, would have contributed to the existing ill feelings toward enemy aliens; while the world was at war and lives were being lost, prisoners were portrayed as having time to take part in leisurely, recreational aspects of daily life. However, when reported between governments, the quality of care afforded to POWs was often exaggerated to avoid retaliatory treatment against Canada's POWs in the hands of the Central Powers. With an overreliance on historical documents, it is easy to lose sight of this. Focusing on leisure obscures the fact that prisoners had been rounded up and transported to places of confinement and were held there under duress. Instead, the historical record should shift the lens from leisure activities, such as arts and handicrafts, to an examination of methods used by prisoners to cope behind barbed wire.

In Morrissey, arts and handicrafts were a significant means of improving camp life and keeping depression and ennui at bay. Prisoners applied various coping strategies to their art: conscious effort through self-development, social contact through group activities and affiliations, and passive resistance to their captors. Some of the prisoners were extremely gifted woodworkers, a skill they had either developed prior to internment or learned from others during captivity. Handicrafts were a method to pass the time, keep the mind occupied, develop new skills, build self-esteem, and create social bonds with other prisoners. Crafting was also undertaken to create items that could be used repeatedly once they were complete, such as board games and

instruments. Handicrafts improved the prisoners' living environment by personalizing and enhancing their space. They were also given to others—prisoners, guards, and members of the community—to show gratitude, traded to acquire other goods, or sold to earn money. Resistance could be carved, painted, or sewn into their artwork, boosting morale and camaraderie amongst the POWs. It could also be subtle—for example, sharing and using material culture that symbolized another country's nationalist efforts against a common enemy, the British Empire.

Conscious-effort strategies were also used to sustain outside communication, while the maintenance of self-respect, realistic expectations, and flexibility contributed to POW agency and morale. Retaining contact with the outside world through letters to family and friends, even though these were censored, was a way to preserve continuity with one's past. Receiving outside communication through smuggled newspaper reports would also have provided information about the war that may have helped prisoners gain insight into when freedom might come.

Tonics, liniments, and ointments appear to have been elementary and cheap remedies accessed by prisoners in their efforts to maintain good health and stave off illness. Although treating physical ailments as they arose would have addressed the organic aspect of illness, a positive outlook would have helped prisoners recover more quickly. Hence, being proactive about one's health was critical to survival. Acquiring comfort foods and items that prisoners had consumed or used in daily life prior to their arrest would have been a means of maintaining a connection to their previous identities. Smells, tastes, and sounds brought about by foods, tobacco, musical instruments, and other personal items would have provided a sense of agency while allowing prisoners to retain a sense of their former selves.

Most of the internees, and their guards, were Christians of various denominations, believers for whom the annual cycle of religious dates had real meaning in their lives. For the internees, their faith no doubt provided a source of comfort and hope as they coped with the daily discomforts and enervation of confinement, coupled with their strong sense of being the victims of injustice. While it will never be known who shaped the small Christian cross that this archaeological study uncovered, it is a most evocative artifact made from the very same barbed wire that held these men inside the camp.

Finally, alcohol was likely resorted to for the pleasure of drinking, to feed addiction, or even as a form of defiance, since it would have been contraband. However, it may have also been used as a coping mechanism when mental escape through dissociation was needed. It would have been all too normal to seek distraction and relief from the unpleasant realities of internment life. Maintaining a positive outlook in dire times was challenging for many in the camp, as evidenced by prisoners sent to an asylum.

Upon leaving the camp, few prisoners from Canada's first national internment operations spoke of their time in captivity. It was regarded as a shameful and embarrassing chapter, and a stain on their life histories. Hence, coping after internment without ever discussing that traumatic experience likely caused the wounds to fester, at least in some. Essentially, those whose personalities were conducive to flexibility and adaptability were more likely than their less adaptive co-prisoners to survive internment successfully and recover relatively unscathed.

Conclusion

Evidence shows that captivity and confinement, regardless of the quality of treatment, have dire effects on prisoners' mental health (Vischer 1919). This pertains not only to internment camps, but to all forms of total institutions, including prisons, holding and detention centers, and refugee and staging camps. The impact of stress and difficult situations is rather subjective, and what causes severe mental distress for one individual may have little or no impact on another (Mohino et al. 2004). Leisure and recreation activities provided or supported within institutional confinement can help mitigate anxiety, depression, and physical ailments. These endeavors can restore self-esteem and contribute to a positive outlook necessary for survival within an internment camp. Ursano and Rundell's (1995) proposed list of coping strategies that POWs commonly use to survive was applied to the excavation of items from Morrissey. The findings indicate that arts and handicrafts, religion, communication, resistance, tobacco, alcohol, and purchased comforts may have helped POWs stave off depression and sustain a degree of mental health.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest The author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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