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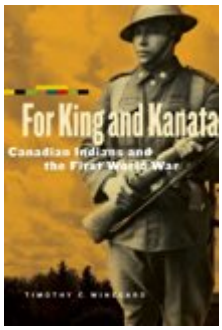
Timothy C. Winegard. *For King and Kanata: Canadian Indians and the First World War.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2012. xviii + 224 pp. $28.95, paper, ISBN 978-0-88755-728-6.



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Commissioned by Jane Nicholas (University of Waterloo/St. Jerome's)

Timothy C. Winegard's *For King and Kanata* examines the often misunderstood role of Canada's Aboriginal peoples during the First World War. Winegard critically reinterprets a number of myths surrounding the question of Aboriginal war service and offers a narrative that highlights the complex relationship between Aboriginal communities and the Canadian government. Employing a wide range of cultural and political sources to frame Aboriginal war service in both national and international contexts, Winegard convincingly argues that the policies that allowed for Aboriginal participation in the war were inexorably linked to the waxing and waning fortunes of the Allied war effort. Because of his extensive use of sources and broad scope of analysis, Winegard has made an important contribution to the history of Canadian Aboriginal peoples in the twentieth century.

In addition to its value to the emerging field of Aboriginal military history, *For King and Kanata* is useful for those studying the First World War, bureaucracy and the Canadian state, and the relationship between late nineteenth-century ideology and governance. The book takes direct aim at the "forgotten warrior" genre, the preceding historiography that has emphasized recuperative methodologies to "promote an agenda of recognition and commemoration akin to that bestowed upon their white comrades" (p. xi). The problem with this model, Winegard observes, is that the forgotten warrior orthodoxy promotes a singular view of Aboriginal war service based on vulgar generalizations and recycled anecdotes. Moving beyond the agenda of recognition, Winegard asks a series of difficult questions that challenge the prevailing orthodoxy. How was the administration of Aboriginal war service connected to earlier policies between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown? Why did policy governing Aboriginal enlistment shift from one of prohibition to promotion? Were there distinct experiences for Aboriginal service members and communities that challenge prevailing narratives on Canada and the First World War? The answers are presented systematically, and with convincing clarity.

For King and Kanata is organized into nine chapters. Informally, the chapters are organized into three parts, as chapters 1 to 3, 4 to 6, and 7 to 9 serve as slightly separate entities. Each part progresses chronologically, and shares themes across each chapter. In the first part, Winegard begins with a survey of Aboriginal history from precontact to the late nineteenth century, focusing on political, cultural, pseudoscientific, and social developments. Chapter 1 specifically addresses the "state settler experience," while chapters 2 and 3 examine predominant racial theories, which were in operation during the First World War. Winegard manages to succinctly cover five hundred years of history, and offers an excellent survey of the contradictory images of the "noble savage" that informed a homogenous image of the colonial other in late Victorian British thinking. Part 1 draws a number of disparate themes and historical events to present a consolidated image of the colonialist state in 1914, presenting an important political and ideological backdrop to his discussion of the war.

The second part of the book addresses the administration of Aboriginal recruitment. Three chronological chapters trace the development of policy from one of prohibition in 1914-15, the reversal of prohibitions against enlistment in 1916, and the conscription question in 1917 and 1918. Chapter 4 explains why Aboriginal enlistment was discouraged in 1914, noting that Department of Indian Affairs Deputy Superintendent General Duncan Campbell Scott "initially promulgated an official exclusionist policy regarding Indian enlistments" (p. 41). With a surplus of recruits for the First Contingent, Aboriginal enlistments were not yet needed. In line with the department's exclusionist policy, Minister of Militia Sam Hughes drafted an unofficial order that prohibited enlistment. Winegard clarifies a number of historiographic misunderstandings about Hughes's order, noting that "many historians have incorrectly applied Hughes's statement to represent an official policy of exclusions, while others inaccurately argue that this passage was not widely disseminated" (p. 45). Unfortunately, Winegard does not expand this thought further to explain precisely how this was not an official policy or how it was widely disseminated. Nonetheless, the general conclusion of the chapter is quite reasonable. Winegard notes, "Aware of these Indian grievances and demands, in 1914 the Canadian government actively resisted, blocking Indian attempts of inclusion in the war effort where possible" (p. 53). Chapter 5 assesses the shift in policy from exclusion to inclusion, focusing on a number of memoranda from the British War Office to governor generals across the British Empire that specifically called for the inclusion of Aboriginal peoples in enlistment processes. This set of correspondence, argues Winegard, compelled the Department of Militia and Defence on December 10, 1915, to reverse their prohibition and call for the enlistment of Aboriginal soldiers. Chapter 6 traces the administration of Indian soldiers in the final two years of the war, focusing on the Military Service Act, the National Registration process, and the recruitment of labor and pioneer battalions. Winegard highlights the immense bureaucratic confusion that followed the Military Service Act, when Aboriginal men first qualified, then were disqualified from the draft. The final section of chapter 6 assesses the high number of Aboriginal recruits in labor and pioneer battalions, correcting the historiographic misinterpretation of this practice as racist. Winegard explains that, after a shift in recruitment priorities toward auxiliary units in 1917, opportunities abounded for Aboriginal men to join labor, forestry, railway, and pioneer battalions. Those who joined these units did so willingly, knowing that these were not combat units. Winegard's correction represents an important step toward reinterpreting the question of race and recruitment in the First World War.

The final three chapters address thematic issues pertaining to Aboriginal war service, the home front, and veteranship. These chapters are less organized around chronology, and highlight a

number of key themes pertaining to Aboriginal soldiers' and communities' experiences during and after the war. Chapter 7 examines the experiences of Aboriginal soldiers at the front, emphasizing that many excelled as snipers and scouts. While the previous historiography has downplayed the contributions of Aboriginal snipers, Winegard argues that the hunting and trapping skills acquired in the bush made many soldiers particularly adept when sniping. The chapter also addresses questions pertaining to alcohol consumption, desertion, and the difficult integration of Aboriginal men into the military because of language and cultural differences. Chapter 9 discusses the home front, particularly the contributions of women and children to patriotic societies, and the campaigns to raise donations to charitable funds. Winegard argues that many band investments in victory loans and war bonds were refused because they were already invested in a trust fund that generated the same interest, but this assertion is incorrect. War bonds promised an extra percentage point, and many of the investments were rejected because of the notion that war profiteering was unbecoming to the loyal disposition of Aboriginal bands, an issue explicitly discussed in an October 1918 telegram from Scott to the Indian agent in Prince Rupert.[1] The final chapter traces the administration of Aboriginal veterans from armistice to the Second World War. Aboriginal veterans were given the opportunity to apply to the Soldier Settlement program, though Aboriginal soldier settlers were administered by the Department of Indian Affairs, rather than the Soldier Settlement Board. Because the program was run by colonialist officials, the "application of the SSA [Soldier Settlement Act] to Indians was another means of assimilation" (p. 154). Pensions, estates, and war funds were similarly run through Department of Indian Affairs channels, though Winegard overstates the claim that "any pension or disability relief to Indian veterans residing on reserve was administered by local agents" (p. 157). Rather, the agents were given the opportunity to manage pension funds, but did so rarely. In fact, Department of Indian Affairs' pension records indicate that less than twenty accounts were being managed by agents as of 1925. [2] Because of the stringent requirements when applying for Soldier Settler loans, and the oversight of pension funds, Winegard concludes that Aboriginal returned soldiers "did not receive equitable treatment as veterans" and that "Indians accrued little direct benefit from service" (p. 166).

Winegard's assertion that Aboriginal peoples were not better off having participated loyally in the war effort clashes with his conclusion that "the honours now bestowed upon Indian veterans are worthy representations of the sacrifices they made in service of king and Kanata" (p. 171). Because of the legacy of mistreatment and neglect, later representations of Aboriginal military service warrant further discussion. In a brief epilogue, Winegard discusses the role of Aboriginal soldiers in the Second World War. This too needed a broader discussion, as the studies of Aboriginal peoples and the First World War and Second World War remain separate subjects, and could benefit greatly from an extended comment.

For King and Kanata offers an excellent survey of Aboriginal participation in the First World War. The second part of the book, in which Winegard surveys the oscillating policy regarding Aboriginal recruitment, provides an excellent overview for students of military history, Canadian colonialist policy, and the British Empire. Because of his concise prose, the book bridges the gap between academic and popular history, and is a great source for the academy as well as a broad audiences. Correcting a number of historiographic misinterpretations, *For King and Kanata* will likely become a primary reference point for further study of Aboriginal peoples in the twentieth century. The questions posed by Winegard regarding race, recruitment, and colonialist administration are exciting. These questions form a foundation for further scholars to ask new questions of

Canada and the First World War and reconceptualize the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state.

Notes

[1]. Duncan Campbell Scott to Indian agent in Prince Rupert, DIA Headquarters telegram, November 18, 1918, Record Group 10, volume 6770, file 452-23, Library and Archives of Canada.

[2]. W. C. Mariott to J. D. McLean, March 7, 1925, Record Group 10, volume 3181, file 452-124-1A, Library and Archives of Canada.

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Library and Archives of Canada,

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DIA Headquarters telegram, 18 November 1918

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Letter from W.C. Mariott to J.D. McLean, 7 March 1925.

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