

SOCI 4043: Families in the 21st Century, Fall 2021

PTN Activity (Oct 21-Nov 11): WW1, Families, Race, Class, Gender, & Pedagogy

Data Entry Sheet

Instructions

PTN Example

Slide Show Presentation

Soldier: William Isaac Taylor

Regimental Number: 931266

Paragraph one

William Isaac Taylor born March 15th, 1873, born in Montreal, Quebec was 43 years old when he enlisted. Prior to enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force he was a plasterer/painter and was a widower with no children. He enlisted September 16th, 1916 and was discharged on October 17th, 1917, due to his debility disability, making him serve for one year. We used the soldier's file/record for a lot of our data and then we used census Canada and the website Ancestry to fill in the gaps. Using primary sources allows us to get information on soldiers first hand. The flaw to this is that the writing in these primary sources are very hard to decipher and understand even when you zoom in and enlarge it. Much of the writing is messy and fading which makes it hard to read. The biggest challenge we faced was finding his death information and even census Canada did not have records of it and stated that anyone with the last name "Sip to Z" did not make it. It was interesting that it stopped there. Also we aren't sure if it was a mistake on the document or if our soldier had lied about his age but he served for a year, when he joined it said he was 43 and when he was discharged it said he was 64, which makes no sense that in the span of a year when he served that he aged by 20 something years. Those were some of the issues that we ran into, but overall it was really insightful learning about our soldiers and looking through primary sources even though some of the documents were difficult to read.

Paragraph two

Project "True" North is a collaboration between the Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) and Carleton University students to develop a more thorough and inclusive understanding of Black history by researching the lives and experiences of Black World War 1 soldiers who served in the No. 2 Construction Battalion. Some suggestions for future researchers undergoing this project are to pay close attention to the provided dates and information, to be mindful of the language used in these historical documents, and to make use of the secondary sources and databases that are available. It is important to pay close attention to the dates and information that are provided on your soldier because sometimes the timelines do not add up properly, requiring in depth analysis and interpretation. For example, in my group's research, we

found that our soldier's enlistment age was inconsistent with his departure age – he was 43 at enlistment and 64 at discharge after only serving the war for 1 year. It is crucial to be mindful and aware of the language that is used in the historical documents, specifically regarding the Black soldiers that served in WW1. For example you may come across terms such as “coloured” to describe the complexion of your soldier. Not only is this outdated but it is blatantly racist among today's standards. It does however show the growth, resilience, and positive social change that Black soldiers have endured to overcome racial prejudice and discrimination since before the early 20th century. Finally, it is important to make use of secondary sources and databases that are provided for research. One document will not provide all the available information on your soldier so it is important to make use of the provided resources. One tip for navigating the secondary databases is to incorporate key terms, names, dates, and locations in the search function as well as to ensure that the proper spelling is used. If you find that there is still missing information after navigating the secondary databases, it is important to include in your research what information you are missing and the possible reasons that may be.