

The Great War and Identity

The Royal Family and Kitchener, ON

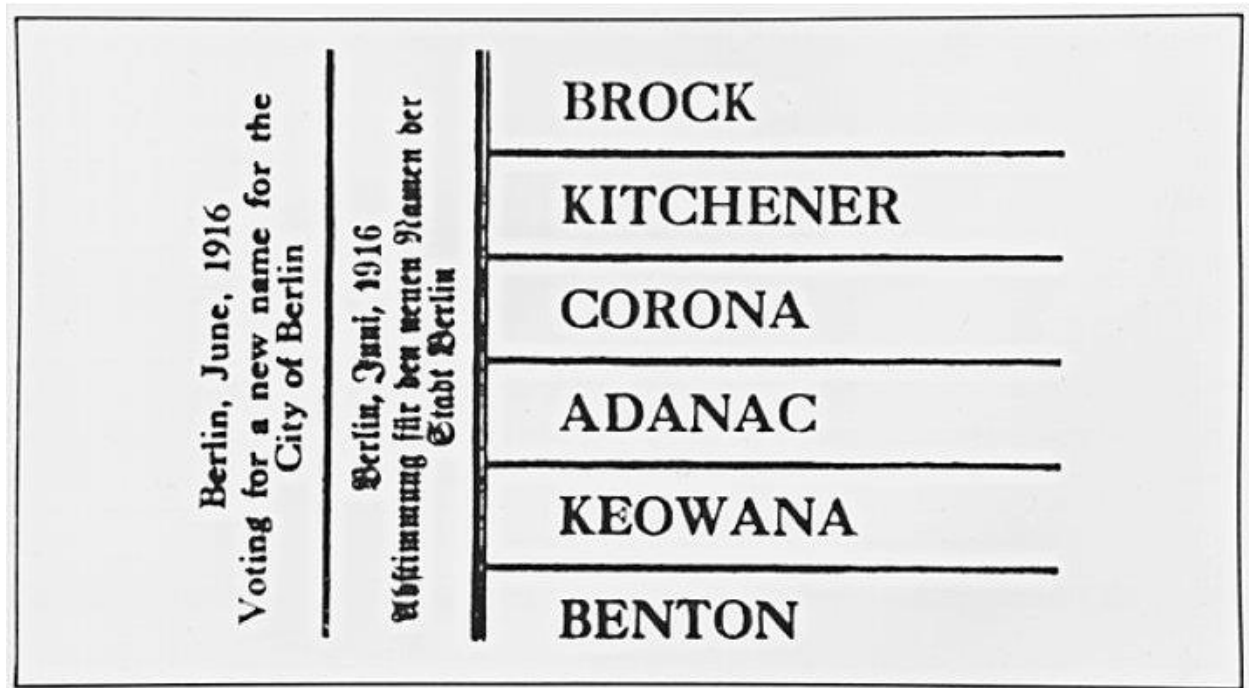
- When Britain declared war on the German empire in 1914 Canada, as an integral part of the Empire, was at war – no questions asked.
- Anti-German sentiment swept across the British Empire at this time with many different effects.
- The British Royal Family, known as the House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (a German name), is originally from Germany. His Majesty King George V changed the family name to the ultra-British “Windsor” on July 17th, 1917. The Royal Family renounced all German titles, and abandoned their German relatives.



- In Canada, the city of Berlin renamed itself Kitchener, after Lord Kitchener (of recruiting posters fame), the British Secretary of State for War. A bust of the German Kaiser located in the city was thrown into a nearby pond by a mob of residents.



Ballot, New Name for the City of Berlin



"Perhaps I should enjoy a performance of Shakespeare's classic 'The Merry Wives of Saxe-Coburg Gotha'."

- *Attributed to Kaiser Wilhelm II (upon hearing of King George V's decision to change the Royal House's name)*

