INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI®

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

RE-CIVILIZING THE LAND: CONSERVATION AND POSTWAR RECONSTRUCTION IN ONTARIO, 1939-1961

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ARTS
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY
STEVE JOBBITT ©

THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO
OCTOBER, 2001

Contents

Acknowledgments ii

List of Illustrations v

Introduction 1

Chapter One
Cultivating Anxiety: The Decline of Civilization and the Fall of Nature in Canada, 1914-1939 13

Chapter Two
Eden Revisited: The Role of Conservation in Reconstruction Planning, 1939-1945 48

Chapter Three
Paving the Way for Progress: The Emergence of Conservation Authorities in Postwar Ontario, 1946-1961 84

Chapter Four
Citizen Farmers and Monogamous Geese: Conservation and the Socio-Cultural Reconstruction of Postwar Ontario, 1946-1961 126

Chapter Five
"We Stand Shoulder to Shoulder With Our Menfolk": Women and Conservation in Postwar Ontario 162

Conclusion 175

Bibliography 179

Acknowledgements

This thesis has been a long time in the making, and over the course of three years I have incurred a large number of debts to many people, perhaps too many to thank here. First, I would like to express my gratitude to my friends, both new and old, who have extended much kindness and encouragement to me, and who have never doubted for a moment that I would see this thesis through to its completion. To my new friends in Toronto, Tatjana, Chris, Andrea, Wilson, Martha, Marta, Ryan, Phillippa, Alana and Phil, thanks so much for the support, and for putting up with my anxiety and my occasional descent into the nether regions of philosophy. And to my old friends, to Andy, Rae, and the entire Hills family, I thank you for the music and for all your help. Thesis Eleven will never die! Long live rock'n'roll (or some corrupted form thereof)! To Cathy, Joey-Joe-Joe, Leanne and Milan, and to everyone in Chaban, many thanks. The dancing kept me alive on those numerous occasions when I felt intellectually dead inside. To Julia, my Snow Queen, and to her mom and dad, thanks for the pirouettes and costumes. To Jane and Kim, my academic confidants, your advice and compassion sustained me through some really bad times, and your devotion to gender history was, and remains, an inspiration for me. To Jamie and his Norwegian and Scottish-Slovakian progenitors, I can only ask "hausta napa?", because mine's "pretty-goddamned-good" right now. To Richard, whose friendship and free lunches kept me both sane and well-nourished, thanks for the chit-chat, both idle and intellectual. To Rob, Bingo, Arlys, Nicole (and the entire Burleigh clan), Sluggo (splitter!), Jenn, Darryl, and the rest of Team Doobie, thanks for the beer and hockey (a reluctant thanks also to members of Tina Yothers Armada United – cheaters – and the rest of the BHL). Thanks

also to the Rubber Duck and the entire convoy gang, and to anyone else I may have missed. It really is difficult to put into words how much all of your friendship means to me.

To my entire family, my deepest apologies for all the anxious moments I have caused, and my eternal gratitude for all your love, support and inspiration. Thanks to Mitch and Paul, who are to be married in the basement of a bus depot in Scotland sometime soon. Michelle's work as a surrogate researcher for me at the National Archives in Ottawa provided the basis for much of Chapter Two, and Paul's generous donation of an old laptop meant that I could work on this thesis wherever (and whenever) I happened to find myself. To Warren, Shannon and Sierra (the newest member of the family), thanks for the laughs and the good times in Canmore and at Loon Lake (thanks also to Ken and Heather for their friendship and the unlimited use of their beer fridge). Warren, I *will* send you a copy of the thesis, but if you only read this section of it, or if Sierra uses it as a colouring book, I won't be mad. To Rafaela, who is a half-inch taller and a few months older than me, I can't begin to thank you enough. Your love and devotion were crucial to me while I painfully navigated this thesis through the last stages of its completion. I thought it would never end, but you were always there to reassure me that it would. And you were right. To Dad and Donna, thanks for everything, for the elaborate dinners, the extra money when I was "a bit short", and a place to stay when I needed it. Now that I am finished the thesis, you can send me the graduation gifts that I'm certain you have been hiding somewhere in your spacious bedroom closet. And finally to my Mom, who I have perhaps caused the most grief. Despite my frustration and the occasional angry retort, I really have appreciated your undying love and assistance. But if I have caused you despair, it is mostly your fault. It was from you that I acquired my love of books and scholarship, so in a way you kind of brought this on yourself. I thank you for it, and am more appreciative than you may ever know.

I would also like to thank Dr. Ronald Harpelle. Were it not for his encouragement I may never have decided to do graduate work in history. Ron was my first advisor, and did his best to be patient with me through the first two years of my program. My delinquency, and his sabbatical, meant that he was unable to act as my advisor to the end. I thank Ron for doing his best to beat the philosopher out of me. He wasn't entirely successful, but his efforts have made me a better historian. I would like to express my appreciation also to my second reader, Dr. Ernie Epp, and to my external reader, Dr. Chad Gaffield of the University of Ottawa. I can assure both readers that their comments and valuable insight have not fallen on deaf ears. Thanks also to Lynn Gollat at Graduate Studies for all her help. Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank Dr. Patricia Jasen, who acted as my advisor while I struggled to get my ideas into writing. Pat dealt with more excuses and anxious phone calls than any one person should ever be forced to endure. Without her help and encouragement, it is hard to imagine how I would ever have finished.

Graduate work, of course, requires financing that would stretch the pocketbooks and understanding of even the most generous parents. In addition to thanking both my mother and father for their monetary generosity, I would like to acknowledge the funding I received from Lakehead University in the form of teaching and research assistanceships. While researching and writing this thesis, I received additional funding through "A Vast and Magnificent Land" Historical Research Grant, the Elizabeth Arthur Memorial Scholarship, and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship.

Illustrations

Figure		Page
1.1	Desiccation in Ontario's Ganaraska Valley	35
1.2	Editorial cartoon illustrating the effects of poor land use in Ontario	38
2.1	Soil erosion in postwar rural Ontario	70
2.2	Photographs of flooding on three Ontario rivers	71
3.1	A rustic scene on the Don River, near Toronto, c. 1946	114
3.2	Boys fishing on the upper reaches of the Humber River c.1946	115
4.1	An indication that "poor land makes poor people"	133
4.2	A diagram illustrating the benefits of watershed conservation	134
4.3	The farm pond as fishing hole	139
4.4	The farm pond as an integral component of the idealized rural landscape	140
4.5	A farmer and his son survey the fields of a traditional family farm	145
4.6	A young lad learns to farm	146
4.7	A farmer and his son are shown the "proper" way to cultivate a field	148

Introduction

In 1946, the Ontario government, under the auspices of the Department of Planning and Development, passed the Conservation Authorities Act. Based largely on similar legislation enacted in the United States in the 1930s, the Conservation Authorities Act was intended to provide a solid legislative foundation upon which a comprehensive conservation strategy could be developed for Ontario's heavily-populated river basins in the postwar period. In keeping with the ambitious aims of postwar reconstruction in general, the legislation itself was truly broad in scope, dealing equally (at least in theory) with issues pertaining to flood control, reforestation, woodlot management, underground water supplies, wildlife and recreation. At the heart of the legislation was the conviction that effective conservation measures were desperately needed to reverse the ecological degradation that had swept through the province in the interwar period. Such measures, it was thought, would be essential to the future welfare of the province and its citizens. Fueled by interwar memories of a province in decline, the Conservation Authorities Act, which would eventually give rise to thirty-eight individual conservation authorities across the province, was a fundamental expression of the wartime assumption that a truly comprehensive conservation strategy was required for the successful rehabilitation of Ontario in the postwar era.

The passing of the Conservation Authorities Act was significant within the broader context of Canadian environmental history, in that it marked a revival of state-sponsored conservation in Canada. The original conservation movement, which had flourished not only in Ontario but also across Canada between the mid-1880s and 1914, fell into decline after World War I as a direct result of the combined social, political and economic upheaval that

paralyzed the nation throughout the interwar period. Virtually every aspect of state-sponsored conservation was drastically affected by the problems that faced the nation in the years leading up to World War II. In some cases, conservation measures disappeared altogether after being written-off by governments as being simply too costly for a nation already strained to the breaking point. During the war, however, many amongst Ontario's educated ruling elite were quick to point out that the multiple crises of the interwar period were in fact directly connected to the lack of effective resource-management strategies. The decline of conservation after World War I, they argued, was one of the causes of the perceived decline of civilization itself. This conservation-minded elite, a group which formed the core of the postwar reconstruction process between 1939 and 1945, would ensure that conservation maintained a high profile within reconstruction discourse on both the provincial and the federal level.

The dominant presence of conservation within reconstruction discourse during and immediately following the war was indicative of the belief that conservation itself would play an important role in the "re-civilizing" of Ontario in the postwar era.[1] Like its Progressive Era predecessor, the revitalized conservation movement was regarded as being a key to the physical or material re-building of the province. Conservation, it was thought, would counter the "extravagance and wastefulness" that had characterized the use of the province's natural resources in the interwar period.[2] By advocating sustained-use conservation strategies loosely based on ecological principles popularized in the 1930s, conservationists promised to implement programs that would complement the fundamental physical province-building aims of postwar reconstruction. Conservation would go a long way towards building a province in which resources were used in an efficient and increasingly profitable way. Moreover, conservation measures - especially the implementation of flood-control programs - would

facilitate the much-needed development of Ontario's infrastructure. Postwar planners guaranteed Ontarians that a comprehensive program of resource management would contribute to urban growth and industrial development, and thus also to the overall prosperity of the province in the postwar era.

However, as a fundamental project of re-civilization, the reconstruction process - and thus conservation - was not restricted merely to the physical rebuilding of the province. In fact, postwar reconstruction was as much about the revival and preservation of traditional moral and cultural values as it was about the rehabilitation of the province's natural and material resources.[3] For Ontario's reconstructionists, the benefits of conservation therefore went well beyond its merits as an indispensable tool for the physical rebuilding of the province. Indeed, it was not just the resources of the province that were in an "unhealthy state."[4] Echoing the sentiments of many of Canada's Progressive Era conservationists, the proponents of conservation in the postwar period argued that the citizens of Ontario were also in need of rehabilitation. Nearly two decades of social, political and economic unrest, it was thought, had had a detrimental impact on the collective moral character of the people. As Harold Innis stated in a speech on conservation and reconstruction given to the Royal Society of Canada in 1941, "the cultural heritage of the Anglo-Saxon race [both in Ontario and indeed across Canada] is endangered far more from within than from without."[5] Though he recognized the fact that conservation would be vital to the material rebuilding of the country in the postwar era, Innis nevertheless insisted that the primary "task of conservation" must be one "of culture."[6]

The history of Ontario's conservation authorities provides an excellent avenue for exploring the conservation movement's postwar re-civilizing mission. Conceived in 1941 at a

conference held at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph, Ontario, the conservation authority idea was solidified in 1946 with the passing of the Conservation Authorities Act. Fueled by the reconstruction process in general, the first conservation authorities came into existence that same year. By 1956, sixteen authorities had been created, with that number doubling by 1966. In the mid-1970s, the last of a total of thirty-eight conservation authorities was finally established. Throughout the postwar period Ontario's conservation authorities contributed greatly to the rehabilitation of the province. The implementation of extensive flood-control projects in many of the province's heavily populated watersheds was particularly significant and helped to foster urban and industrial growth throughout Ontario. Though primarily concerned with the physical rebuilding of the province in the postwar era, the leaders of the conservation authority movement did not neglect their moral province-building duties. In keeping with the spirit of Harold Innis' speech noted above, the leaders saw their role as being inherently cultural. The priority given to recreation within the conservation authority program, coupled with a distinct desire to recreate an idealized rural aesthetic, was indicative of their commitment to the moral and cultural rehabilitation of the province in the postwar era.

To date only two full-length monographs have been devoted to the history of the conservation authorities movement in Ontario. The first, A.H. Richardson's Conservation by the People: A History of the Conservation Movement in Ontario to 1970, was published in 1974, and the second, Bruce Mitchell and Daniel Shrubsole's Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, was published in 1992. As one might suspect, both studies have strengths that can be built upon and also shortcomings that need to be addressed.

A.H. Richardson's work is useful to historians of the conservation movement in Ontario in that it provides an almost endless supply of minute and personal details concerning the inner

workings of the conservation authorities in the postwar era. His work is nonetheless problematic, primarily because of his personal association with the development of the conservation authority program. Between 1946 and 1961, Richardson served as Ontario's Chief Conservation Engineer, and it was during his simultaneous tenure as the head of the Department of Planning and Development's Conservation Branch that the Conservation Authorities Act was passed and the conservation authority program developed. Under Richardson's leadership a total of twenty-seven conservation authorities were created, and numerous dams, parks and conservation forests established. Richardson received much praise throughout his career for the conservation work being done on Ontario's watersheds, while the conservation authorities themselves served as models for river-basin development throughout the rest of Canada. The conservation authority program even attracted some international attention and acclaim. Dr. Luna Leopold of the United States Geological Survey, for instance, hailed Ontario's conservation authorities as "one of the most advanced approaches to conservation anywhere."[7]

Richardson, therefore, was obviously proud of his achievements - perhaps justifiably so. However, this pride tends to dominate his highly partisan history of the conservation authority movement in Ontario in the postwar era. He fails, moreover, to fully acknowledge the influence that similar watershed agencies in the United States had on the development of the conservation authorities in Ontario. Richardson's work is further complicated by the conviction that the postwar development of the conservation authority program was fundamentally an expression of "the will of the people." Though he recognizes that the Conservation Authorities Act represented the work of a relatively small group of Ontario's "conservation faithful," Richardson nevertheless argues throughout his book that the conservation authorities

themselves were a manifestation of a grassroots environmental movement, one which motivated municipalities across Ontario to petition the provincial government for the creation of authorities in their watersheds.[8]

Bruce Mitchell and Daniel Shrubsole effectively debunk this "grassroots" myth in their work on Ontario's conservation authorities. Their study shows that, rather than soliciting input from the residents of a particular watershed, the conservation authority structure actually served to limit the debate on conservation policy. Far from representing the "bottom-up" approach that Richardson claims, Mitchell and Shrubsole show that the conservation authorities were ruled from the top down. The conservation authority program, therefore, was very much an expression of the political and economic thinking of Ontario's ruling elite. However, even though their work offers an effective critique of Richardson's study, Mitchell and Shrubsole limit their analysis primarily to the administrative structure of the conservation authorities. They demonstrate the impact that the American example had on the development of conservation policy in postwar Ontario, but they do not explore the social or cultural aspects of the conservation authority program.

What both works fail to do adequately is to situate the conservation authority program within the broader context of postwar reconstruction in Ontario. This, of course, may be understandable given the scope of such a task. It is, however, necessary to attempt just such a study if a fuller - and perhaps more critical - account of the conservation movement itself is to be rendered. In limiting their studies to fairly narrow analyses of the conservation authority program, both books fail to fully appreciate the resurgence of the conservation movement itself as an integral component of Ontario's postwar re-civilizing mission. Using the existing historiography as a point of departure, this thesis attempts to broaden the analysis of the

conservation authority program by consciously situating the resurgence of conservation in Ontario within the provincial government's plans for the postwar reconstruction of the province. Using this approach it becomes evident that the history of conservation itself is much more than a mere account of the way in which a particular society has used their natural resources. Viewed within the context of postwar reconstruction, it becomes clear that conservation was fundamentally a moral force. Beyond striving to rehabilitate the province materially, the postwar conservation movement in Ontario sought to restore a moral order rooted in a distinctly conservative set of social and cultural values.[9]

Though the ultimate focus of the thesis is the resurgence of conservation in postwar Ontario, the first two chapters are devoted primarily to the broader context of postwar reconstruction, not just in Ontario in particular, but also in Canada in general. Chapter One focuses upon the collective sense of anxiety that was cultivated in Canada during the two and a half decades leading up to World War II. The overwhelming concern generated by the multiple social, political, economic and environmental crises of the interwar period had a profound impact on the collective memory of an entire generation of Canadians, and would eventually serve as the basis of the postwar reconstruction process. Particular attention will be paid to the perceived fall of nature in Canada in the 1930s. Indeed, the severe drought, uncontrollable forest fires, and destructive floods that ravaged the nation in the interwar period only served to reinforce the growing anxiety of many Canadians. The crisis in nature, in fact, served as a poignant metaphor for the perceived collapse of civilization in Canada between 1914 and 1939. This metaphor ultimately proved to be a pervasive cultural force in Canada, not only during the interwar years, but also throughout World War II and beyond into the postwar era.

Chapter Two builds on the ideas presented in the first chapter, and demonstrates how the anxiety generated in the interwar period literally fueled the reconstruction process in Canada between 1939 and 1945. Planning for the postwar period, in fact, began in earnest as early as December of 1939. Focusing on mistakes that had been made in the wake of World War I, Canada's leaders were intent on having a detailed program for reconstruction in place to ensure a smooth transition from wartime to peacetime conditions. Failure to do so, they feared, would be devastating for all Canadians. It was within this context that conservation was reborn. Indeed, by 1945 a vast majority took it for granted that conservation would play a major role in Canada's struggle to "win the peace" once the war ended.

Ontario was the first province in Canada to develop a comprehensive conservation strategy in the postwar era. Chapter Three, therefore, explores the genesis of the conservation authority movement in Ontario within the context of reconstruction planning, and then traces its growth throughout the postwar period up to the early 1960s. Of particular importance was the influence that the American example had on the development of the conservation authorities in Ontario throughout the postwar period. The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) in Ohio was fundamental in this respect. Visits to the MWCD between 1948 and 1957 helped to solidify the conservation authority program in the postwar period, especially where flood control and recreation were concerned. Though flood control would remain the core enterprise of the conservation authorities, recreation became increasingly important to the conservation authority program as the postwar era progressed. Beyond helping to provide the province with the necessary infrastructure upon which prosperous and thriving communities could be built, conservationists were also intent on constructing aesthetically pleasing green spaces in which a predominantly urban, middle class population could escape

from the confines of the city to seek solace in more "natural" surroundings. The ultimate goal was to create space where people could commune with nature, relax, and be revitalized.

Chapter Four focuses on the role that conservation played in the socio-cultural reconstruction of Ontario. Arguing that the conservation authorities were intimately engaged in the moral rehabilitation of the province in the postwar era, this chapter explores the way in which the conservative moral values of Ontario's ruling elite were packaged by conservationists as cultural ideals. The landscape itself proves to be the key to understanding the moral agenda inherent within the conservation authority program.[10] The carefully constructed physical landscape, in fact, ultimately provided a moral backdrop upon which particular social and cultural values could be reinforced. Throughout the postwar era, the conservation authorities promoted programs which actively sought to rehabilitate an idealized agrarian landscape in the province. Authority publications, in turn, were full of romanticized images of farms and farmers. This landscape that conservationists helped to shape in the postwar era (whether it was an actual landscape or merely a rhetorical one) tells us much about the underlying social and cultural values which fueled the postwar conservation movement.

The final chapter examines the role that women played within the conservation movement in postwar Ontario. Perhaps not surprisingly, the role of women in conservation was highly conservative, restricted as it was by the traditional notions of femininity and domesticity promoted by the province's postwar planners. Assessing the impact of women on conservation between 1945 and 1961, however, is a difficult task. Women were, in fact, largely peripheral to the postwar conservation movement, while groups representing the views of women were practically non-existent. Despite these problems, enough primary evidence exists to provide a rough indication of the rather traditional role that women assumed in the

conservation movement. Though the voice of women was limited, they nevertheless helped to reassert the underlying socio-cultural agenda of postwar reconstruction.

By focusing on the role of conservation in the moral rehabilitation of the province in the postwar era, the true scope of conservation's re-civilizing mission becomes clear. Conservation itself was not limited merely to issues such as flood control and forestry. It was also intimately connected to the highly conservative aims of Ontario's ruling elite. In the end, conservationists were as concerned with the management of Ontario's human resources as they were with the management of the province's natural resources.

Notes

[1] The similarities between the Progressive Era conservation movement and its reincarnation in the context of postwar reconstruction are fascinating, and certainly deserve more attention than is given in this thesis. It is important to note, however, that in spite of the similarities, there was at least one important difference. In the Progressive Era (roughly 1896-1914), conservation was very much a part of the ruling elite's *civilizing* mission. To appropriate a phrase used by Ramsay Cook, it was an attempt to create "a garden [i.e. civilization] out of the wilderness." In the postwar era, the role that conservation played was slightly different. Indeed, after the war, conservation played an integral role in the *re-civilizing* of the country. If much of the civilizing or nation-building mission in Canada prior to World War I had been devoted to forging a garden out of the wilderness, then the resurgence of the conservation movement in the postwar era can be seen as an attempt to rehabilitate or reclaim that garden. See Ramsay Cook, "Canada: An Environment Without a History?" in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998 (Toronto: n.p., 1998), 3. See also Cook, "1492 and All That" Making a Garden Out of Wilderness," in Consuming Canada: Readings in Environmental History, ed. Chad Gaffield and Pam Gaffield (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1995), 62-80.

[2] AO (Archives of Ontario) RG 49-123, "Briefs and Reports of the Select Committee on Conservation," from a brief presented by the Ontario Agricultural College, (1950), 1.

[3] In his seminal work on the history of the Progressive Era conservation movement in the United States, Samuel Hays makes a similar distinction between the material and cultural aims of conservationists, suggesting that the movement was divided between "hard" and "soft" conservationists. See Samuel Hays, Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959). Others have made similar observations. See for example George Altmeyer, "Three Ideas of Nature in Canada, 1893-1914," Journal of Canadian Studies 11/3 (August 1976), 21-36.

[4] Alan Coventry, Conservation and Post-War Rehabilitation: A Report Prepared by the Guelph Conference on the Conservation of the Natural Resources of Ontario (Toronto: n.p., 1942), 3.

[5] Harold Innis, "The Economic Aspect," in Royal Society of Canada, The Wise Use of Our Resources: Papers from the Joint Session of Sections of the Royal Society of Canada, May 21, 1941 (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1942), 14.

[6] Ibid., 15.

[7] Cited in A.S.L. Barnes, "The Story Behind Ontario's 38 Conservation Authorities," Watersheds 5/1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1970), 18. Barnes also notes that Donald Williams, Chief of the United States Soil Conservation Service, praised the authorities as "an outstanding example of community action for conservation."

[8] See A.H. Richardson, Conservation by the People: A History of the Conservation Movement in Ontario to 1970 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974).

[9] There can be no doubt that Ontario's conservationists saw their role as inherently cultural or moral. In fact, the culturally conservative role that the conservationists staked out for themselves in the moral rebuilding of the province was consistent with the role that conservation in general has played in North America since the turn of the century. As American environmental historian Carroll Pursell suggests, since the late nineteenth century, the conservation movement has been as much about the management of resources as it has been an "attempt to preserve values suitable to an older time." See Carroll Pursell, "Conservation, Environmentalism, and the Engineers: The Progressive Era and the Recent Past," in Environmental History: Critical Issues in Comparative Perspective, ed. Kendall E. Bailles (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 184.

[10] As Denis Cosgrove has suggested, the culturally constructed landscape is very much an "ideological concept" in that it "represents a way in which certain classes of people have signified themselves and their world through their imagined relationship with nature." Denis Cosgrove, Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 15.

Chapter 1
Cultivating Anxiety: The Decline of Civilization and The Fall of Nature in Canada, 1914-1939

Introduction

In order to fully appreciate the overwhelming sense of urgency that lay behind Canada's postwar reconstruction efforts, and hence the conservation resurgence of the postwar period, it is first necessary to understand the anxiety which helped to shape the attitudes of an entire generation of Canadians. This chapter focuses on how the collective anxiety that set the tone for postwar reconstruction developed, and pays close attention to the role that the perceived fall of nature had in this process. A full appreciation of the problems that Canadians faced during this period is vital, since the immediate political and economic consequences of Canada's interwar era had long-term social and cultural implications.

Canada in Crisis

Between 1914 and 1939, Canada was a nation in crisis. Numbed by war and divided by social, political and economic strife, Canadians suffered from a seemingly endless barrage of problems in the years leading up to World War II. The people of Canada, of course, had suffered their share of hardships in the past, but there was something particularly tragic in the multiple crises of the interwar period - a sense that the world had been turned upside down, and that the very future of the nation was in jeopardy. For many, the impact of the interwar period was especially pronounced, given that the twentieth century had begun on a very positive note. In fact, in political and economic terms, the turn of the century was a veritable golden age in

Canadian history. Having languished as "a sparsely peopled, poverty stricken colony" that had been "sidetracked in the march of development" throughout much of the 1870s and 1880s, Canada rode a wave of economic prosperity and incurable optimism out of the nineteenth century and into the modern age.[1] During the so-called Progressive Era in Canada, which lasted from 1896 to 1913, cities grew at an impressive rate, while businesses and industry generally flourished. The sense of progress that was generated during this period was heightened by the perception that Western civilization was, at long last, taking a firm hold in Canada.[2] Indeed, by 1914, as the imperial powers of Europe prepared their armies for war, there were very few amongst the ruling and middle classes who would have argued with the claim that Canada had taken significant strides to becoming a truly civilized nation.

At the heart of the optimism was a booming economy recently liberated from a lengthy global recession. In Canada, as is in most Western nations, sustained economic growth rejuvenated domestic markets. Between 1896 and 1913, Canada's resource-based industries boomed as Canadian businessmen rushed to fill the orders for wheat, timber, newsprint and minerals that came pouring in from the revitalized industrial economies of Great Britain, the United States and western Europe. Secondary industries also benefited from the nation's new-found economic success, thus contributing to an overwhelming sense of prosperity that swept across turn-of-the-century Canada.

Sustained economic growth in Canada during the Progressive Era allowed Wilfrid Laurier's ruling Liberal Party to engage in an aggressive program of nation building. Under the auspices of the National Policy, the federal government invested enormous sums in projects aimed at creating the infrastructure required to promote industrial development and economic growth. In particular, the rapid expansion of farming, fishing, lumbering and mining greatly

increased the need for road transportation, railway construction and shipbuilding. The Canadian government was only too happy to oblige the booming business sector. Beyond contributing public funds to facilitate the development of privately-owned corporations, federal and provincial legislators were willing to overlook the creation of business monopolies, especially in the resource sector.[3] Not surprisingly, investors from both Canada and abroad scrambled to stake a claim in the resource-rich regions of the country with the hope of cashing in on Canada's raw potential.[4]

The prosperity of the Progressive Era also hardened the resolve of Canada's social reformers, a privileged elite of primarily Anglo-Saxon descent whose social status was secured by sustained economic growth and political stability.[5] Concerned that prosperity and unprecedented urban growth had led to moral decay, reform-minded Canadians of every stripe devised strategies aimed at eliminating the social ills afflicting Canadian society.[6] Supporters of the Protestant-based Social Gospel movement, for example, stressed the importance of creating an ideal social environment in Canada as a means of realizing the Kingdom of God on Earth.[7] Other reformers, though perhaps less inclined to couch their nation building ambitions in religious terms, nevertheless pursued the goal of civilizing Canada with unabashed missionary zeal. As advocates of social purity, these reformers constituted "a powerful if informal coalition for the moral regeneration of the state, civil society, the family, and the individual."[8] Invested with an overwhelming sense of moral duty to see their plans to fruition, and guided by the vision of Canada as a virtuous nation, the ruling class was more than willing to devote money and energy to the improvement of Canadian society.[9]

Canada's golden age, however, was short-lived, a fact which cut short the moral and material nation building programs undertaken during the Progressive Era. Though the

twentieth century had begun with a great deal of optimism for Canadians, at least for those of the middle and upper classes, the economic growth and sense of security enjoyed by Canada's ruling elite quickly evaporated. Beginning with a recession which lasted from 1913 to 1915, and continuing through the social, political and economic upheaval of the interwar years, Canadians watched as the relative prosperity and stability of the Progressive Era faded dramatically into misery and disorder.

One of the major factors that contributed to the rising anxiety in Canada in the wake of World War I was the apparent failure of Canadian capitalism. Long the cornerstone of Canada's liberal democratic system, traditional laissez-faire economics simply failed to act in accordance with its own "natural" laws. Canadians watched helplessly as the economic stability of the Progressive Era unraveled in dramatic fashion between 1914 and 1939. The economy, which since 1896 had demonstrated a healthy annual growth rate of 2.7 percent, experienced runaway inflation during World War I.[10] In the absence of adequate economic planning on the part of both big business and government across Canada, the estimated real GNP per capita dropped from $3,400 in 1916 to $2,600 in 1921, falling at an average annual rate of 4.9 percent.[11] Inflation, producing price increases far larger than the wage increments of most Canadians, broke as recession returned in 1920.

These economic difficulties were matched by growing labour unrest, a fact which was reflected in the simultaneous increase in union membership across Canada during this period. The war years, in fact, saw union ranks swell from 143,200 in 1915 to 378,000 by 1919.[12] As one might suspect, labour radicalism also escalated. Strikes and riots ensued as workers across the country rose up in protest against dismal economic conditions. 1919 proved to be the most prolific year in terms of strike activity in Canada as "3.5 million working days were lost in 459

strikes" nationwide.[13] The most famous strike of 1919 was the Winnipeg General Strike, in which 300,000 workers participated. The strike, which began on May 18, did not end until a month later after the leaders were arrested and imprisoned for what was then the very new crime of "seditious conspiracy." The new law, passed only days before the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike were arrested, soon became a provision of the Canadian Criminal Code frequently called upon to combat the threat of labour radicalism that had been gaining strength in Canada since the end of the war.[14]

Despite the new legislation, or perhaps in response to it, the most vehement supporters of Canada's political left were drawn to the promise of communism. Founded clandestinely in 1921 in a barn near Guelph, Ontario, the Communist Party of Canada sought to address the plight of the nation's working class.[15] This generated a great deal of concern throughout the country, even amongst those sympathetic to the workers' cause. Though the actual number of active Communist Party members remained quite small, there nevertheless existed a fear in the minds of Canada's political leaders that communism itself posed a distinct threat to the nation's domestic security. Most politicians, viewing the rise of communism with a mix of disgust and fear, adamantly opposed the formation of the Communist Party in Canada, characterizing the upstart political ideology as a "dangerous doctrine taught by dangerous men." In turn, communist supporters were to be regarded as "enemies of the State [who] poison and pollute the air."[16]

A short but dramatic economic recovery in the mid-1920s offered a brief respite to Canada's beleaguered economy and to its nervous politicians and business leaders.[17] However, the heady promise of the roaring twenties was shattered by the stock market crash of 1929 and by the decade of depression and drought which followed. Of all western industrial nations,

only the United States would suffer a worse economic fate during the depression which held much of the world in its grip throughout the 1930s. Canada's Great Depression, which lasted until 1939, was the worst economic crisis that Canada had experienced since 1873.[18] In sharp contrast to the brief economic recovery of the mid-1920s, industrial production decreased by one-third between 1929 and 1932, while at the same time the GNP fell by two-fifths as imports decreased in volume by about 55 percent and exports by roughly 25 percent.[19] In 1930, 11 percent of Canada's potential workforce was without work. By 1933 the number had climbed to an estimated 23 percent.[20] This group, reduced to "helpless want" through unemployment, and disillusioned with the system that had essentially cast them off, presented a distinct threat to the status quo. Marginalized by poverty and hunger, Canada's unemployed constituted a "society within a society that reproached and strained the whole."[21]

The overwhelming sense of frustration and disillusionment sparked protest nationwide during the Depression. At its height, the mounting impatience incited a group of young unemployed relief camp workers from British Columbia to march to Ottawa with a list of demands.[22] The On-to-Ottawa Trekkers, as they became known, were immediately branded as communists and thus regarded as dangerous. In June 1935, 1,000 men set out from Vancouver "riding boxcars and scavenging food and shelter in hospitable towns along the way."[23] Their original numbers grew as they picked up another 2,000 supporters *en route*. Anxious to halt the Trekkers before they arrived in Ottawa, prime minister R.B. Bennett ordered the Mounted Police to stop the protesters in Regina. The interruption of the On-to-Ottawa Trek "was at first peaceful, even conciliatory."[24] On July 1, however, the situation turned decidedly violent. Acting under the auspices of the Seditious Conspiracy Act, Bennett ordered the leaders of the

movement arrested. What followed was a four-hour long battle in which approximately eighty men were injured, and one man was killed.

Despite the dramatic impact that the radical left had on Canada's ruling elite, it was the formation of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) in 1932 that posed the most serious political opposition and hence warranted the greatest concern. Though the government had been able to suppress radicalism by arresting militant labour leaders and seizing the property of suspected Bolsheviks, they were not able to prevent the formation of a populist political party which sought to represent the interests of Canada's underprivileged. In 1933, with J.S. Woodsworth, a former clergyman and longtime pacifist at its helm, the CCF held its first convention in Regina at which the party's program, otherwise known as the Regina Manifesto, was adopted. The conclusion of the Manifesto summed up the overriding aims of the new party by boldly proclaiming that "no CCF government will rest content until it has eradicated capitalism and put into operation [a] full program of socialized planning."[25] The rise of the CCF, which was regarded by the ruling elite as a party based on a fundamental "class hatred," was extremely worrisome to the leaders of the old guard political parties.[26] Both the Liberals and the Conservatives were quick to blame the growing popularity of Woodsworth and the CCF on the economic problems of the nation. The overwhelming prevalence of "want and the fear of want," they maintained, which was widespread during the Depression, had added to a growing working class consciousness in Canada.[27]

The CCF, however, was not the only non-traditional party that arose to challenge the political ascendancy of Canada's ruling class. Nor were the political attacks confined to the left alone. In fact, despite the alarm that had been raised over the threat of socialism, the most successful of the populist parties were actually representative of the opposite end of the

political spectrum.[28] The United Farmers, for example, formed governments in Ontario (1919), Alberta (1921), and Manitoba (1922).[29] (The Ontario government lasted for one term, but the others were much more successful.) In Alberta, William Aberhart's Social Credit party displaced the United Farmers in 1935, while in the same year Duplessis formed the government in Quebec with his Union Nationale. Though no party other than the Liberals or Conservatives was able to form a majority federal government in the interwar years, the presence of new parties made minority governments a possibility. In 1921, the national Progressive Party, a federal manifestation of the United Farmers movement, won the second largest block of seats in the legislature and brought about the first minority government in Canadian political history under the leadership of Mackenzie King's Liberals, a feat it repeated in 1925.[30]

The rise of alternative parties in Canada had a significant impact on both the Liberals and the Conservatives, who together were forced to confront the insurgent political threat. Their collective response was to attempt to dissuade Canadians from the novel attraction provided by the new political parties. Mackenzie King, for example, though somewhat sympathetic to the radical impulse of Canada's reform-minded populist parties, consistently urged Canadians to exercise restraint in their support of the "revolutionary tendency" that the nation's "third parties" represented.[31] In response to the problems which faced the nation throughout the interwar years, King argued that cautious rather than radical solutions were needed. He admonished Canadians for getting too caught up in the euphoria that typically surrounded the creation of a new political movement or party. "There is," he argued late in World War II, "an awful lot to be said for the wisdom of belonging to a party that has an enviable record over many years."[32]

The Conservative party, which witnessed a significant reduction of partisan support between 1921 and 1939, shared King's concern regarding the growing popularity of populist political parties. Like King, the Conservatives lamented the demise of a political system anchored in the traditions of Canada's two main political parties. In a speech on the nature of democracy given in 1944, J.R. MacNicol, a Conservative M.P. from Toronto, reflected on the demise of the "Grand Old Conservative Party" during the interwar period. Arguing that Canadians, as "Britishers," should consider themselves fortunate "to live under the sunshine of British democratic institutions" which have their "roots in the Christian doctrine," MacNicol stressed that "democracy thrives best under the two-party system of government."[33] Economic instability, he claimed, was the paramount motivation for the creation of undesirable populist parties. "The depression," suggested MacNicol, "resulted in the rise in Canada of several parties based upon...platforms of more or less freak ideas. Many voters, having suffered grievously in the depression, were ready to vote for will-o'-the-wisp ideas, such as 13 eggs to be a dozen or some other freak plank." These "freak" parties, he claimed, based on short-sighted appeals to both "race" and "class," represented a distinct threat to democracy. In offering alternative solutions to existing problems, the populist parties challenged the basic social and economic principles out of which the traditional political fabric in Canada was woven.[34]

Whereas the despair of the interwar period was parlayed into a political opportunity by previously disenfranchised sectors of Canadian society, for many of Canada's ruling class the economic and political chaos represented nothing less than the complete collapse of civilization itself. The unnerving sense of personal loss within the broader scope of social disorder cannot be underestimated as a fundamental cultural phenomenon generated during the

interwar years. Indeed, it was the seemingly pervasive awareness of a civilization in crisis and decline that defined this period in Canadian history. Compounded by numerous environmental problems, the collective anxiety that developed during the interwar years would come to fuel reconstruction efforts during World War II, and would ultimately sustain Canada's postwar rehabilitation programs well into the 1950s and 1960s.

Drought, Pestilence, Fire, and Flood

One Progressive Era institution whose fate was intimately linked to the fortunes of the Canadian economy was the conservation movement. Founded in the 1880s, the conservation movement, which had experienced considerable growth in the years leading up to World War I, quickly faltered in the interwar period. Faced with a lack of political and financial support, the impressive achievements of Canada's Progressive Era conservationists in forest management, wilderness preservation and urban development were soon compromised.[35] As a result, Canada's natural resources were vulnerable to increased degradation, and in some instances were devastated outright by environmental disasters. Forest fires, flooding, soil erosion and desiccation increased in severity after World War I, and became especially pronounced in the 1930s. In fact, the lack of adequate resource management, coupled with the onset of a severe drought, contributed to a perceived "fall of nature" in Canada in the decade preceding World War II. The seriousness of this fall was appreciated by every Canadian, and would form an integral component of the collective memory of an entire generation.

Every aspect of the conservation movement was affected by the political and economic turmoil of the interwar period. Forest conservation, for example, which had been the flagship of the broader conservation movement throughout the Progressive Era, suffered a particularly

dismal fate as the forest industry, along with the rest of the Canadian economy, fell on hard times. Commitment to forest conservation programs across Canada began to falter during the recession of 1920-1923. Government and business interests alike, as they watched profits plummet, soon found it difficult to justify costly conservation expenditures. Though the brief economic recovery in the mid-1920s again brought the question of conservation to the forefront, most of the decision-makers involved in the forest industry (including the government) were content to maximize profits and to ignore the tenets of sustained-yield forest management.[36] The situation in Canada's forests only got worse after 1929, and within a few years it was altogether desperate.[37] "Never in the history of the great forest products industry," indicated a government report in 1931, "has there been more wide-spread discontent and uncertainty." By the mid-1930s all aspects of sustained-yield forestry came to a veritable standstill as "research work was halted, reforestation delayed and fire protection cut to the bare bone."[38]

As was the case with forest conservation, Canada's much celebrated public parks system also fell into noticeable decline after the war as a result of insufficient funding and the lack of initiative on the part of government. Parks had played an important role in the rising popularity of the conservation movement during the Progressive Era. Fueled by the increasing romanticization of nature as a welcoming, healing place rather than as an imposing foe, national, provincial and municipal parks were representative of a protectionist impulse to preserve culturally valuable tracts of land.[39] Canada's first national park was established in 1885 with the designation of twenty-six square kilometres of wilderness near Banff, Alberta. Although the initial area was very limited, Banff National Park grew rapidly. Provincial governments were quick to respond to the federal example. The province of Ontario, for

example, established three parks of its own within a decade of the founding of Banff National Park. Similarly, the province of Quebec set aside two blocks of land for park development during the same period.[40] By the end of World War I, the total area of Canada's national and provincial parks had jumped from twenty-six square kilometres in 1885 to roughly 52,000 square kilometres in 1918.[41] However, in the face of economic insecurity and a deflated political will during the interwar years, the parks movement was temporarily abandoned as a luxury that could be ill-afforded.[42]

Another of Canada's Progressive Era conservation institutions to fall into decline after World War I was the Commission of Conservation. Established by Laurier in 1909 at the behest of United States President Theodor Roosevelt, the Commission was in some respects the crowning achievement of the conservation movement in the Progressive Era.[43] Created as a non-partisan body with no legislative power, the Commission was intended to serve the Canadian government in an advisory capacity. Headed by Clifford Sifton, a former Minister of the Interior who served in Laurier's cabinet from 1896 to 1905, and composed of high ranking officials from federal and provincial governments, the Commission's initial mandate was to investigate all questions pertaining to the conservation and better utilization of Canada's natural resources. As Neil Forkey suggests, the Commission of Conservation was a veritable "clearing house for conservation thought."[44] Beyond its importance as a research body, the Commission was an attempt to unite diverse and otherwise unrelated elements of resource planning. Thus, in addition to questions related to the management of forests, water, soil and wildlife, the Commission also examined the growing issue of urban development. In particular, the Commission studied ways in which conservation strategies could be employed to improve the quality of the urban environment in Canada's larger cities. Inspired by both the

City Beautiful movement, which was introduced to North American planners at the Chicago Exposition in 1893, and the Garden City movement, organized in England at roughly the same time by Ebenezer Howard, Canada's Commission of Conservation entertained schemes aimed at effecting "a miraculous disappearance of the pressing urban problems of slums, poverty and poor health."[45]

Ultimately, the Commission was a manifestation of the dual impulse of Canada's nation builders to develop the country both materially and morally. A healthy nation, they contended, was a moral nation. As one Commission member wrote, "national prosperity depends on the character, stability, freedom and efficiency of the human resources of a nation."[46] Mariana Valverde suggests that the Commission tended to place a greater emphasis "on conserving human bodies and less on trees and fur-bearing animals." She continues by stating that the creation of the Commission "was part of an ongoing if not always successful attempt to unify all social problems into one macro-problem – conserving 'life' – for which a macro-solution could be found."[47] As with the social purity movement in general, one of the main goals of the Commission was "to raise the moral tone of Canadian society."[48] In order to promote their ideas, the Commission began publishing an official organ entitled Conservation of Life in 1914. As a catalogue of the concerns of upper- and middle-class Canadians, the periodical remains a written testament to the role that conservation played in Canada's moral nation-building enterprise at the turn of the century.[49] More significantly, it openly betrays the social biases of Canada's Progressive Era moral majority.

Like all other aspects of the Progressive Era conservation movement, however, Canada's Commission of Conservation was doomed. The sudden dissolution of the Commission after World War I was indicative of the overwhelming crisis facing the country at

the time. Confronted with growing social unrest, fiscal uncertainty and political divisions within the government, the Commission had no hope of surviving in the interwar period. In 1921, Prime Minister Arthur Meighen introduced a Bill to dissolve the Commission of Conservation, stating that, amongst other pressing problems, the Commission was simply "far too expensive."[50]

The demise of the conservation movement in general after World War I meant that the state of the nation's natural resources was placed in a precarious balance throughout the 1920s. Yet, in the absence of natural disasters such as floods and drought, the environment, though threatened, managed to sustain itself. However, the lack of effective conservation measures in the 1930s, coupled with a renewed tendency toward the unrestrained exploitation of Canada's natural resources, proved to be devastating. In fact, the decline of the conservation movement could not have occurred at a more inopportune time. In 1929, the same year that the Great Depression began, a severe drought settled in across the country. Though the one event did not cause the other, the drought and the Depression were intimately connected.[51] Like the Depression itself, the drought at first was hardly expected to last more than a few years. Indeed, history had taught such lessons. Historian Donald Worster draws some important comparisons between the two events, arguing that "in each situation die-hard optimists were sure that it could not happen, then were equally sure that it would not last long."[52] In both cases, he points out, the optimists were wrong.[53]

Despite the fact that the decade of dry hot weather affected Canadians nationwide, it is to the prairies that we often look for the most gruesome tales of the infamous drought of the 1930s. Indeed, nowhere else was the devastating ecological impact of this ten-year lack of rain more keenly felt than in the Canadian west. What makes the story of the drought on the

prairies particularly compelling is that the people there not only had to deal with a lack of water and miserable heat, but they also had to face the relentless dust storms that blew across the western plains throughout the decade, a fact which rendered the terms "Dust Bowl" and "the Dirty Thirties" synonymous with the prairie drought. Of course, minor dust storms were not necessarily out of place on the prairies. Dust, in fact, was as commonplace as the soil itself, and was an inevitable consequence of the intensive agricultural practices that dominated the region.[54] Nothing, however, could have possibly prepared the people of North America's massive plains region for the storms that began blowing in the early 1930s. As Donald Worster writes, "the story of the...plains in the 1930s is essentially about dust storms," a time when "the earth ran amok...not once or twice, but over and over for the better part of a decade: day after day, year after year."[55]

The first dust storms invaded the Canadian west in 1931 as unseasonably hot weather forced itself upon the region, and as dry winds blew steadily throughout the entire month of June. The dust storms continued through the summers of 1932 and 1933, contributing to the "utter failure" of agriculture in the region. Though severe, the sporadic dust storms of 1931 to 1933 were outdone by the storms of 1934, the year that the dust storms began blowing in mid-June and quickly became a pervasive phenomenon throughout the western provinces. A letter written in the early 1930s by A.L. Stewart, Minister of Highways for Saskatchewan, to Prime Minister R.B. Bennett, characterizes the "desperate circumstances" of life on the prairies at the time. Stewart wrote that "the air in this city [Regina] and throughout the [drought stricken areas]...is permeated with absolute dust, requiring lights on the cars even in the day time." In some instances, he stated, "the soil has drifted completely over fences to a depth of two feet."[56] This was not mere hyperbole. Throughout the Dust Bowl soil did in fact drift like snow across

the prairie landscape, submerging not only fences and farm machinery, but also any gardens and crops that had somehow managed to take root in the parched prairie earth. In vain the residents of the vast plains region sought refuge from the dust indoors, yet no matter what precautions were taken to make dwellings impervious to the airborne soil, there was simply no escaping the dust. Somehow it managed to find a way in, making life inside no less wretched than it was out of doors.[57]

Though 1935 was not as severe as 1934, the summer of 1936 was a complete "disaster," despite the promise that the winter had provided. The winter of 1935-6 had been the coldest on record, and the large amount of snow that had accumulated as a result of numerous blizzards offered a "slight ray of hope" that the snow would provide much needed moisture in the spring.[58] All hopes were crushed, however, by "the longest hottest summer yet," as the record cold of the winter was matched by unprecedented summer heat. Temperatures climbed to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and the dust continued to blow. In fact, the dust and heat prevailed through the summer of 1936 and into the summer of 1937, and did not finally relent until July of 1938 when "the baleful blue and brown of the drought-burned skies gave way to the low clouds of the fabled three-day rain."[59] With the rain the drought finally began to lift, and the dust clouds that had deeply scarred both the land and its people passed from bitter reality into a modern North American legend.[60]

But dust was only one menace to the which the prairies were subjected throughout this period. During the 1930s, the prairies were visited by a host of calamities, each as severe as the next, and each contributing to the untold misery of those who desperately fought to scrape together a meagre existence from the desiccated land.[61] In addition to the dust, the prairies were also inundated with plant disease, a factor which, as if the lack of rain alone was not

enough for farmers to face, thoroughly decimated the prairie crop. In turn, gophers tended to flourish in the dry and dusty conditions that the drought had created, magnifying the overall destruction of arable land on the prairies. Infestations of sawfly, army worm and cutworm also wrought havoc on an already devastated prairie landscape. Moreover, drought conditions invited swarms of grasshoppers to ravage the land, an event which rapidly "proliferated into a plague of biblical proportions." The so-called Rocky Mountain locusts delivered the final blow to an already defeated prairie ecosystem as many of the crops and gardens that managed to survive the drought fell victim to the overwhelming presence of the insect which, like the dust, had descended upon the land like an ominous cloud that "darkened the sky and hummed like squadrons of alien invaders."[62]

Though the Dust Bowl itself was obviously a dramatic and significant historical event, it is important to keep in mind that the drought which devastated the prairies was not restricted merely to the Canadian west. It did, in fact, affect Canadians nationwide. Ontario, in particular, was severely affected by the drought (as we shall see in Chapter Two). In some areas of Southern Ontario where intensive agriculture was practiced, conditions prevailed which approached the devastation of the Dust Bowl itself. It was not, however, just farms that were targeted by the drought. Beyond inflicting untold damage on agriculture across the country, the drought proved to be the scourge of Canada's forest reserves as well. Throughout the 1930s, the clouds of dust and locust that plagued the western plains were rivaled in intensity by the thick smoke of fires that choked the skies above Canada's northern forests. With forest fire prevention measures reduced significantly as a result of economic considerations, the situation in Canadian forests was nothing short of desperate. Ontario was perhaps the province worst hit. As a direct result of reduced fire prevention measures, 2,073

fires broke out across Ontario in 1933, making it the worst year on record. This mark was topped three years later after the province's forest conservation budget was halved in 1935.[63]

Canada's decade of drought, however, was not the only natural disaster visited upon Canadians in the interwar period. Ironically, flooding also became a serious problem. As if to add insult to injury, streams and rivers that virtually disappeared during the hot summer months had the occasional violent tendency to overflow their banks in response to even modest periods of prolonged rainfall.[64] Across the country, many Canadians "suffered grievously on many occasions" during the interwar period as they "experienced both destruction of property and loss of life through rampaging flood waters."[65] With the lack of comprehensive conservation schemes in place, the number of destructive floods increased significantly. Owing to the intensive development of Canada's populated river valleys, many of the country's urban centres were particularly susceptible to flooding. As one conservationist explained, "flooding is a natural phenomenon. As long as rain has fallen there have been floods." However, as a result of intensive resource exploitation and ever-increasing urban encroachment on river banks and flood plains, floods in the first half of the twentieth century had become "more frequent, more violent, and more destructive," increasing in intensity and severity, it seemed, as "civilization extended."[66]

One of the worst floods of the interwar period occurred in London, Ontario, in April of 1937. Over a period of two days, both the north and the south branches of the Thames River overflowed their banks. Situated at the point where the two rivers meet, the city of London was the epicentre of the flood. Property damage was staggering, while hundreds of farms along the river were submerged completely. Even more devastating was the fact that several lives were lost. It was fortunate, however, that the flood crest on the south branch of the Thames had

passed by London a day before the crest of the flood on the north branch reached the city. Though the residents of London had reason to be at least partially grateful, observers speculated on the damage that would have been caused had the flood waters been synchronized.[67]

Floods like the one on the Thames River led some Canadians to conclude that Canada "may be reaching that cycle in our national life when exceptionally disastrous floods could occur."[68] Recent events in the United States provided Canadians with vivid examples of what might happen if all the factors which contribute to flooding simultaneously "clicked." The first was the Miami River flood in Ohio in 1913, where unusual conditions resulted in unprecedented water levels (it was reported that water flowed 12 feet deep over a large area of the city of Dayton during the flood). By the time the flood waters had finally subsided, 416 people were dead and property damage was estimated at over $100,000,000. The worst flooding in the United States in the interwar period, however, happened in the Ohio and Mississippi River Valleys in 1927 and again in 1937. In 1937, flooding on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers killed 466 people, left close to one million people homeless and caused damages estimated at close to one billion dollars.[69] Stories of flooding in the United States only served to heighten the interwar anxiety of many Canadians, and in particular of the nation's ruling elite. For many Canadians, the question was not "if" but rather "when" similar floods would occur in Canada.

Collective Anxiety, Collective Memory

In 1934 Toronto-based poet W.W.E. Ross proclaimed: "There's a fire in the forest/The whole woods are burning/The whole world is burning!" Written at a time when forest fires

ravaged Northern Ontario, Ross's poem vividly describes animals desperately "labouring" and "straining" to "escape the fierce burning," to flee from the surging fire which consumes the forest with relentless, indiscriminate and almost savage force. For many of Ross's contemporaries, the bleak and terrifying account of the forest fire would have served as an apt metaphor for the severity of the environmental crisis that held much of Canada in its grip throughout the 1930s. Indeed, for an entire generation that had witnessed the multiple disasters of the 1930s, the natural world was not a friendly place. As fires raged in the forests, as streams and rivers threatened to flood, and as prairie dust darkened the skies over the dried-up farms and river beds of the countryside, it would have seemed to many Canadians like Ross that nature had somehow turned against them, and in many instances had become aggressive, violent, and deadly. Though perhaps extreme, such perceptions played a significant role in forging the collective anxiety, and thus also the collective memory, of an entire generation.[70]

Of course, one might question the extent to which a writer, and in this case a minor Canadian poet, can be said to represent the environmental consciousness of a whole generation of Canadians. After all, it is the job of the poet to exercise his or her creative license, to employ dramatic, colourful, and perhaps even exaggerated language in order to paint - at least in the case of nature poetry - a vivid mental picture of a particular scene or event. As Northrop Frye has argued, "what the poet sees in Canada... is very different from what the politician or businessman sees."[71] However, while there is much that rings intuitively true in this observation, the supposed gulf between the poet and the literary layperson with respect to nature in the interwar period was not nearly as wide as Frye suggests. When publicly discussing the fall of nature, in fact, politicians and businessmen consciously chose to express themselves using language as dramatic as the language used by Ross. By 1939, as Canada

prepared for yet another military conflict, dystopian images of nature had become commonplace in the political discourse of Canada's ruling class, and would only grow more vivid during the war. Even though the wartime escalation of dystopian imagery could be viewed as a rhetorical strategy - a clever political tactic employed to generate support for ambitious postwar reconstruction schemes by playing on the collective anxiety of the Canadian people - it would be a mistake to dismiss the rhetoric used by Canada's wartime leaders as mere fear-mongering. Underneath the surface of the images employed by the ruling elite was a distinct sense that the environment, and indeed civilization, hung in a precarious balance. It was widely believed, therefore, that a failure to correct the mistakes of the interwar period would have disastrous consequences for the entire nation.

The personal papers of Conservative Member of Parliament J.R. MacNicol provide an excellent example of the way in which the perceived fall of nature entered into reconstruction discourse. Employing an idiom used by many Canadian reconstructionists, MacNicol juxtaposed images of environmental devastation against images of an idealized past, one in which resources were plentiful, and in which nature offered itself complacently for human consumption.[72] In his numerous wartime speeches on the need for the development of comprehensive watershed conservation programs, MacNicol drew heavily on the biblical image of Eden, focusing in particular on the vital importance of the river that flowed through the mythical garden. "The biblical river," he wrote, "provided the necessary water, while the rich soil [of the river valley] brought forth grass, herbs, fruit and all manners of good food."[73] Suggesting that there had been an abundance of resources in Canada's not-so-distant past, MacNicol argued that poor land-use strategies, and especially the mismanagement of the rivers, had resulted in widespread destruction and ultimately despair. MacNicol's rhetoric was also

punctuated by the underlying assumption that if drastic measures were not taken, civilization would be destroyed by the unchecked and malevolent forces of nature. Drawing his inspiration from the Bible yet again, MacNicol concluded that "without a vision for the future," Canada as a nation "would perish."[74]

Though MacNicol made ample use of imagery gleaned from the Bible, nothing could compete with the memory of the Dust Bowl itself as a means of expressing the anxiety generated during the interwar period. Indeed, the dramatic drought which struck the prairies in the 1930s proved to be the ultimate symbol of the ecological devastation of the interwar years, not only for MacNicol, but also for most reconstruction planners. Only the destructive force of the atom bomb, deployed by the United States against Japan in 1945, would compete with the Dust Bowl as an adequate metaphor for the natural destruction that occurred between 1929 and 1939.[75] All across the country the memory of the dust storms of the 1930s evoked stark images of the fall of nature in the interwar period. This in itself is not surprising given that dust from the prairies had traveled great distances eastward with Canada's prevailing winds throughout the 1930s. Prairie dust often "darkened the skies of Ontario," for example, and was even carried as far as the Atlantic Ocean where occasionally it was known to fall on ships over a hundred miles from shore.[76] Well into the postwar era, therefore, the Dust Bowl remained an infamous standard against which environmental degradation and ecological catastrophe could be measured.[77]

The photograph shown in Figure 1.1 is a good example of the profound impact that the Dust Bowl had on the collective memory of Canadians. Created by the National Film Board of Canada in the early 1940s, the dramatic depiction of soil erosion was certainly intended to evoke images of the drought that had devastated the Canadian west less than a decade earlier.

Figure 1.1 Desiccation in Ontario's Ganaraska Valley, c.1940. (Reprinted from O.M. McConkey, Conservation in Canada, 60.)

Though the presence of the skull suggests that the photo was carefully staged, the overall impression of severe desiccation would have spoken to the fears that many people must have had concerning the welfare of the environment, and indeed of the entire nation. Of particular interest, however, is that this photograph was not of the prairies. It was, in fact, a picture of the severe impact that drought and erosion had had upon Ontario's Ganaraska Valley during the 1930s. Of course, the environmental destruction wrought by the drought in Ontario was not nearly as severe as it had been on the prairies. In many ways, however, this would not have diminished the overall impact of the photograph, for the image itself was less a depiction of an actual environmental scenario than it was a representation of a pervasive sense of anxiety harboured by many Ontarians, and especially by the ruling elite. Implicit in this photograph was the idea that if adequate conservation schemes were not implemented, nature and ultimately civilization in Canada would collapse entirely.

As a powerful symbol of the numerous hardships suffered by Canadians throughout the 1930s, the Dust Bowl as an ecological event also became synonymous with the economic collapse of the Depression itself, making it difficult, especially for later generations, to separate the popular representations of these two distinct though intimately connected historical events. For many people, the Dust Bowl came to be associated with apocalyptic images of the light of civilization snuffed out by darkness, of hope giving way to misery, and of life being crushed by death and destruction. Reconstruction planners capitalized on these images when they spoke of the pressing need for comprehensive postwar social and economic programs, peppering their wartime rhetoric with allusions to the dust, dark skies and ominous clouds that had long cloaked the Canadian landscape in a "grey drift of misery."[78]

The editorial cartoon shown in Figure 1.2 is perhaps the best illustration of the staying power of the Dust Bowl as a dystopian image within the collective memory of Canadians. Contrasting the state of Pine Creek in 1947 to its more pristine condition in 1872, this drawing from a Bowmanville, Ontario newspaper illustrates the devastation caused by years of poor land-use management. The bounty of the past stands in sharp contrast to the desolate scene of the present - a particularly frightful image in which a once-thriving stream has been reduced to a pathetic trickle, and once-healthy trees to mere stumps. The wildlife present in the first illustration is entirely absent in the second, and the image of the barefooted boy with an armful of fish would have served as a strong suggestion that the carefree youthful days of an entire nation were long past. Even more ominous is the sky, which, clear and full of birds in 1872, has been replaced with the dark and menacing clouds of 1947. By making reference to the desiccation that had scarred the land, and also to the dust clouds that had often darkened the horizon during the Dirty Thirties, the cartoon was a clear reminder of all that had been lost in the interwar period. Drawing on the collective anxiety of an entire generation, the cartoon would have been an effective means of consolidating support for conservation in the postwar era.

Conclusion

The interwar era, and in particular the 1930s, stands as the most sustained period of misery and suffering in Canada's recent past. Indeed, social, political, economic and also environmental forces seemed to have conspired throughout the period to destroy all that had been achieved by Canada's Progressive-Era nation builders. Perhaps Dr. A.G. Huntsman, a marine biologist at the University of Toronto, summed up the situation best when, in a wartime

Figure 1.2 Editorial cartoon illustrating the effects of poor land use in Ontario. (Reprinted from The Canadian Statesman, Bowmanville, Ontario, December, 9, 1948.)

speech on conservation, he proclaimed: "In the 1930s we dropped from the crest of optimism into the trough of pessimism."[79] The lack of effective conservation measures, he insisted, had largely been responsible for the collapse of Canadian civilization in the years leading up to World War II. Huntsman's sentiments were certainly bleak. However, like many of his colleagues, he nevertheless placed a great deal of faith in the role that conservation would ultimately play in the postwar era. Though much had been lost to drought, floods and fires, conservationists yet hoped to coax the phoenix from the ashes of Canada's interwar fall of nature, and to recreate a world in which order, progress and prosperity would once again flourish.

Notes

[1] R. Douglas Francis et al., Destinies: Canadian History Since Confederation 2nd edition (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1992), 162-3. As Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook suggest, Canada was very much a nation "being transformed" during this period. See Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 1.

[2] The civilizing mission that existed amongst the privileged circles of Canada's ruling elite was infused with an overwhelming sense that human energy and intellect could overcome many obstacles. For a discussion of this pervasive Progressive Era spirit see Lawrence S. Fallis, Jr., "The Idea of Progress in the Province of Canada: A Study in the History of Ideas," in The Shield of Achilles: Aspects of Canada in the Victorian Age, ed. W.L. Morton (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968). For studies of the impact that this rather missionary - or perhaps imperialistic - notion of civilization had on the Victorian nation-building consciousness see Carl Berger, The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970); and Doug Owram, Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

[3] The government of Ontario, in fact, went so far as to actively encourage the creation of resource based monopolies. See Francis et. al., Destinies, 163.

[4] There was, quite literally, substantial room for growth in Canada. Unlike the United States, where the frontier was ostensibly closed by the 1890s, Canada's western hinterland was just opening. As the sole domain of fur traders and competing railway interests well into the mid-1800s, the west had long been considered a vast, forbidding, uncivilized region which stood in stark contrast to the "civilized" colonial society that had taken hold in the east. The west remained essentially unopened in Canada until the late nineteenth century, when the arable land in what had been Upper and Lower Canada could no longer support the growing number of Canadian born farmers, let alone the influx of immigrants which began pouring into Canada in the late 1800s. Many Ontarians, for example, left the farms their families had carved out of the forests of Southern Ontario, and moved on to seek better land in the west. In the 1880s the Dominion government took back almost 20 million hectares of land that had been given to the railway companies and opened it for settlement. Instead of being considered "moribund" as it was in the United States, Canada's west was regarded as a region of unlimited opportunity. See Douglas Sprague, Post-Confederation Canada: The Structure of Canadian History Since Confederation (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1990), 88-9; and Jim Lemon, "Limits to Growth: Nature Challenges Human Hubris," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998 (Toronto: n.p., 1998), 9. See also Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation (Toronto: King's Printer, 1950), 26. For a discussion on the closing of the American frontier see Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), 143-7.

[5] As Mariana Valverde writes, "one important aspect of the growth of modern Canada was the development of an urban-industrial working class. The correlate of that was the development of an urban bourgeoisie, certain sectors of which initiated a philanthropic project to reform or 'regenerate' Canadian society." In The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925 (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1991), 15.

[6] See Carol Bacchi, "Race Regeneration and Social Purity: A Study of the Social Attitudes of Canada's English-Speaking Suffragists," Histoire Sociale/Social History XI (November, 1978), 472. For discussions on urban conditions in turn-of-the-century Canada see Terry Copp, The Anatomy of Poverty (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1974); Brown and Cook, Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed; Michael Piva, The Condition of the Working Class in Toronto: 1900-1921 (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979); B. Palmer, The Working Class Experience 2nd edition (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992); and Christina Burr, Spreading the Light: Work and Labour Reform in Late Nineteenth-Century Toronto (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

[7] As Cynthia Comacchio suggests, the Social Gospel movement was "the era's most important progressive reform movement." In Nations Are Built of Babies: Saving Ontario's Mothers and Children, 1900-1940 (Montreal and

Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 9. See also Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

[8] Valverde, The Age of Light, Soap, and Water, 17.

[9] See, for example, Katherine Arnup, Education for Motherhood: Advice for Mothers in Twentieth-Century Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 14-31; and Bacchi, "Race Regeneration and Social Purity: A Study of the Social Attitudes of Canada's English-Speaking Suffragists," 460-74.

[10]Kris Inwood and Thanasis Stengos, "Discontinuities in Canadian Economic Growth, 1870-1985," Explorations in Economic History 28 (1991), 275. Annual growth rates are calculated here in terms of real GNP per capita. The estimation of real GNP per capita is based on Canada's Gross National Product for a given year divided by the total population.
Economic History 28

[11] These figures are based on data provided in M.C. Urquhart, "New Estimates of Gross National Product, Canada, 1870-1926: Some Implications for Canadian Development," in Long-term Factors in American Economic Growth, ed. S. Engerman and R. Gallman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press and the National Bureau of Economic Research, 1986). The calculation of the annual growth rate given here is my own.

[12] Desmond Morton, A Short History of Canada (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1983), 158.

[13] Sprague, Post-Confederation Canada, 164.

[14] As Gregory Kealey suggests, one of the chief obstacles faced by the labour movement in the early part of the twentieth century was "the state's increasing willingness to support capital in its struggles with labour," often by providing "military aid." See Kealey, "Labour and Working Class History in Canada: Prospects in the 1980s," Labour/Le Travailleur 7 (Spring 1981), 73. For a detailed discussion of the Winnipeg General Strike see J.E. Rea, The Winnipeg General Strike (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973). For a more general study of the rise of labour radicalism in Canada see Donald Avery, Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979); and Craig Heron, ed., The Worker's Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998). For an account of the role played by returning servicemen in the labour uprisings of the immediate postwar era, in particular the Winnipeg General Strike, see Jonathan Vance, Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 230.

[15] Morton, A Short History of Canada, 158.

[16] Sprague, Post-Confederation Canada, 177. Here Sprague is citing the words of Arthur Meighen, who served as Prime Minister from 1920 to 1921. See also Irving Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973). Throughout the interwar period suspected communists were persecuted by the Canadian government, and many were deported. The communist party was eventually outlawed in 1940.

[17] Between 1925 and 1928 Canada experienced an economic upswing which rivaled the boom years of the Progressive era. Prosperity encouraged governments across the country to invest in Canadian infrastructure. As an example, approximately 8,000 km of railway tracks were laid during this period, and the total length of surfaced roads nearly doubled from 76,000 km in 1925 to 130,000 by 1929 (accommodating close to one million motor vehicles in Canada). Canada's primary staples industry boomed and manufacturing, in turn, also thrived. However, by 1928 production exceeded demand, which caused a shock to both the staples trade and the transportation system. This event had a direct impact on the economic downturn that precipitated the Great Depression. See Sprague, Post-Confederation Canada, 196.

[18] Ibid., 198.

[19] Francis et al., Destinies, 268.

[20]Morton, A Short History of Canada, 174-177. Another source lists the unemployment rate at 32 percent as of May, 1933. See Francis et al., Destinies, 268.

[21] Joseph Schull, Ontario Since 1867 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1978), 286.

[22] The list included a national work-and-wages program, worker control of relief camp facilities and re-enfranchisement.

[23] Gerald Friesen, The Canadian Prairies: A History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 399.

[24] Sprague, Post-Confederation Canada, 204.

[25]Cited in Morton, A Short History of Canada, 182.

[26]NAC (National Archives of Canada), J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 16, file 28, J.R. MacNicol, "Dictatorship and Democracy," (1944), 3.

[27] Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction (Ottawa: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 1943), 2.

[28] The "reactionary right" enjoyed more success in Canada in the interwar years than the radical left. Doug Sprague offers an explanation for this, arguing that the labour radicalism which had escalated since the end of the First World War actually lost ground in the 1930s as a result of growing paranoia amongst the Canadian public in general. "The dissenters from orthodoxy [i.e. socialists]," he contends, "were a minority without hope of gaining power as long as the paranoid fear that was a function of the hard times held Canadians in its icy grip." This fear, though it hampered the development of the left, worked to the advantage of the right. See Sprague, Post-Confederation Canada, 211.

[29] See Louis Aubrey Wood, A History of Farmer's Movements in Canada: The Origins and Development of Agrarian Protest, 1872-1924 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 273-344.

[30] For a discussion of the origins and achievements of the National Progressive Party see Ibid., 345-364.

[31]William Lyon Mackenzie King, "Election Issues and Social Legislation," in Mackenzie King to the People of Canada (Ottawa: Le Droit Printing, 1945), 40.

[32]Ibid., 41.

[33] MacNicol, "Dictatorship and Democracy," 2. It is of interest to note here that MacNicol was one of the leading political proponents of the conservation movement during World War II. He worked tirelessly during the war to promote the virtues of wise resource management in order to ensure a dominant role for conservation planning in Canada's postwar reconstruction strategy.

[34]Ibid., 3. MacNicol was careful to make the connection between race and class, which in itself is a reflection of the belief that a foreign, and thus less desirable element of Canadian society, was largely responsible for the social unrest.

[35] See, for example, Jennifer Read, "Water Pollution Management in the Great Lakes Basin, 1900-1930," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History, 1 and 16; Bruce W. Hodgins, Janie Benedickson, and Peter Gillis, "The Ontario and Quebec Experiments in Forest Reserves, 1883-1930," Journal of Forest History (January

1982) 21; and Peter Gillis and Thomas Roach, Lost Initiatives: Canada's Forest Industries, Forest Policy and Forest Conservation (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986).

[36] A number of scholars have argued that forest conservation throughout the 1920s gave way to the increased capitalist exploitation of Canada's forest reserves, especially in Ontario. See Richard Lambert and Paul Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth: A Centennial History of the Public Management of Lands, Forests, and Wildlife in Ontario, 1763-1967 (Toronto: Department of Lands and Forests, 1967), 274-276; H.V. Nelles, The Politics of Development: Forests, Mines and Hydro-Electric Power in Ontario, 1849-1941 (Hamdon, CT: Archon Books, 1974), Ch. 10; Donald McKay Heritage Lost: The Crisis in Canada's Forest (Toronto: Mcmillan, 1985), 4; Gillis and Roach, Lost Initiatives, 105; Ian Radforth, Bush Workers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 85-86. This thesis, however, has been recently challenged by Mark Kulberg who argues that the forest industry did not ignore the basic tenets of sustained-yield forest management, at least in the 1920s. Quite the contrary, Kulberg suggests that the forest industry continued to nurture the nascent forest conservation movement until 1929. See Mark Kulberg, "We Have 'Sold' Forestry to the Management of the Company: Abitibi Power and Paper Company's Forest Initiatives in Ontario, 1919-1929," Journal of Canadian Studies 34/3 (Fall 1999), 187-209.

[37] The situation was similar in the United States. As Aldo Leopold observed in the late 1930s, the movement towards comprehensive forest management schemes was "mostly swept away by the depression, with the net result that forty years of 'campaigning' have left us only such actual tree-cropping as is under-written by [greatly reduced] public treasuries. Only a blind man could see in this the beginnings of an orderly and harmonious use of the forest resource." See Aldo Leopold, "The Conservation Ethic," in Readings in Conservation Ecology, ed. George W. Cox (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969), 589.

[38] Schull, Ontario Since 1867, 288. The traditionally profitable lumber and pulpwood industries suffered heavy losses in the interwar years, with timber output falling in some areas by 70%, and with employment reduced by close to 50%. Government revenues generated from the industries were reduced significantly also, falling from roughly four million dollars in 1930 to approximately one million in 1933.

[39] For discussions of the relationship between the protectionist impulse and culture in Canada see, for example, Robert Craig Brown, "The Doctrine of Usefulness: Natural Resources and National Park Policy in Canada, 1887-1914," in Canadian Parks in Perspective, ed. J.G. Nelson (Montreal: Harvest House, 1970); George Altmeyer, "Three Ideas of Nature in Canada, 1893-1914," Journal of Canadian Studies 11/3 (August 1976), 21-36; Robert McDonald, "'Holy Retreat' or 'Practical Breathing Spot'?: Class Perceptions of Vancouver's Stanley Park, 1910-13," Canadian Historical Review 65/2 (1984), 127-153; Leslie Bella, Parks for Profit (Montreal: Harvest House, 1987); Bruce W. Hodgins and Jamie Benedickson, The Temagami Experience: Recreation, Resources and Aboriginal Rights in the Northern Ontario Wilderness (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989); Gerald Killam, Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Parks System (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993); and Jamie Benedickson, Idleness, Water, and a Canoe: Reflections on Paddling for Pleasure (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

[40] Ontario created Queen Victoria Niagra Falls Park (1887), Algonquin Park (1893), and Rondeau Park (1894), while Quebec founded the Laurentides and Mount Tremblay, both in 1894.

[41] F.H. Leacy, ed., Historical Statistics of Canada, 2nd edition (Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Minister of Supply and Services, 1983):Series A2-14. By 1918 approximately 22,500 km2 had been designated as national and historical parks, while nearly 29,500 km2 had been set aside as provincial parks.

[42] Only one national park was created between 1918 and 1939. Prince Albert National Park was created by Mackenzie King on March 24, 1927 as a means of garnering political support in Saskatchewan. See Bill Waiser, "The Political Art of Park Making: Mackenzie King and the Creation of Prince Albert National Park," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History.

[43] For the role of Roosevelt in the creation of the Commission of Conservation, see Peter Gillis and Thomas Roach, "The American Influence on Conservation in Canada: 1899-1911," Journal of Forest History (October 1986), 171-174. Throughout the Progressive Era, the Canadian conservation movement was influenced greatly by developments south of the border. Conservation policies and programs initiated in the United States not only provided examples for Canadians to emulate, but also helped to validate the aims of the movement in general. This was especially true during Roosevelt's reign.

[44] Neil S. Forkey, "Victorian Dreams, Progressive Realities: The Commission of Conservation Critiques Old Ontario's 'Colonization' Policy," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History, 6. For an indication of the broad scope of the Commission's mandate see C. Ray Smith and David Witty, "Conservation, Resources and Environment: An Explanation and Critical Evaluation of the Commission of Conservation," Plan Canada 11/1 (1970), 55-71; and Jennifer Hubbard, "The Commission of Conservation and the Canadian Atlantic Fisheries," Scientia Canadensis 34 (Spring 1988), 22-52.

[45] Alan F. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, "Conservation Planning and Urban Planning: The Canadian Commission of Conservation in Historical Perspective," in Consuming Canada: Readings in Environmental History, ed. Chad Gaffield and Pam Gaffield (Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995), 154.

[46] These are the words of Thomas Adams, a renowned British planner who was invited to join the Commission as an advisor on town planning in 1914. Cited in Ibid., 158. For a discussion on Adams role in the Commission of Conservation see Alan H. Armstrong, "Thomas Adams and the Commission of Conservation," in ed. L.O. Gerter, Planning the Canadian Environment (Montreal: Harvest House, 1968).

[47] Valverde, The Age of Light, Soap, and Water, 24.

[48] Ibid., 17.

[49] The following quotation taken from Conservation of Life serves as an apt example of the moral nation-building project that the Commission of Conservation was engaged in. "The Conservation of Life is the newer and broader Public Health - it embraces all of the Sciences of Hygiene. It seeks to minimize and prevent as far as possible disease, disability and waste in human life by the betterment of man's environment and occupation, assuring to all classes of the community those amenities which in their widest sense will produce the highest attainable degree of human efficiency. It is the centre around which we gather and by which all our natural resources are vitalized and without which there can be no truly national vitality." See Commission of Conservation, Conservation of Life 1/1 (August, 1914), 2.

[50] Artibise and Stelter, "Conservation Planning and Urban Planning," 162. See also Michel Girard, L'écologisme retrouvé: Essor et decline de la Commission de la Conservation du Canada (Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1994). Girard argues that the decline of the Commission marked the end of an important ecological experiment.

[51] For a detailed discussion on the connection between the Depression and drought see Donald Worster's excellent study Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). Though Worster's work deals expressly with the United States, much of his analysis on the environmental impact of the drought can be applied to the Dust Bowl in the Canadian West.

[52] Ibid., 44.

[53] This attitude, coupled with the dire economic situation of the time, may account for the slow action taken to deal with the drought. It was not until 1937 that the federal government passed the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act (PFRA). The PFRA was a hastily designed conservation scheme aimed at alleviating some of the affects of poor soil management in the west. But the program's success was limited owing to shortsighted planning and the fact that it was reactive instead of proactive in terms of dealing with land-use problems.

[54] As prairie historian Gerald Friesen explains, farmers commonly left fields lie fallow in two or three year rotation in order to compensate for the lack of moisture in the soil on the semi-arid Canadian prairies. However, to control the growth of weeds on the fields that were left fallow, farmers practiced what was known as 'black' summerfallow , a common agricultural technique which required "deep cultivation followed by careful and repeated surface tilling." Though it proved to be an effective way to control weeds, the excessive tilling of the soil left countless acres of land exposed to the wind. Without any vegetation to hold the dirt in place, there was very little to prevent the dusty soil from taking flight on the ever-present gusts of wind which seemed to blow hotter and drier with every passing year. See Friesen, The Canadian Prairies: A History, 389.

[55] Worster, Dust Bowl, 13. For fascinating accounts of the Dust Bowl years, see James Gray, The Winter Years: The Depression on the Prairies (Toronto: n.p., 1966), and also his book Men Against the Desert (Saskatoon: n.p., 1967).

[56] This letter is reprinted in Michael Horn, ed., The Dirty Thirties: Canadians in the Great Depression (Toronto: n.p., 1972), 96.

[57] Dust was virtually inescapable. As Donald Worster suggests, the story of the Depression on the prairies was one "of sand rattling against the window, " and "of fine powder caking one's lips." Moreover, beyond being a mere nuisance, the dust posed a serious health hazard. Respiratory infections became a common affliction, as did a sickness known as "dust pneumonia," with the elderly and infants most likely to succumb to the airborne menace. See Worster, Dust Bowl, 13. For a gripping fictional account of the psychological affect that the unrelenting dust storms had on Canadian prairie dwellers see Sinclair Ross's powerful short story "The Lamp at Noon," in The Lamp at Noon: and other Stories (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968). Ross's story opens with the lines: "A little before noon she lit the lamp. Demented wind fled keening past the house: a wail through the eaves that died every minute or two. Three days now without respite it had held. The dust was thickening to an impenetrable fog."

[58] Friesen, The Canadian Prairies: A History, 386.

[59] Ibid., 387.

[60] The Dust Bowl certainly was one of the greatest Canadian tragedies of the twentieth century. Beyond ecological considerations, the drought had a severe affect on the prairies economically and demographically. By 1939, roughly two-thirds of the prairie farm population was considered destitute. This in turn forced a mass exodus from western rural areas. An estimated 250,000 people moved out of the drought stricken region during the dirty thirties, thus "reversing the flow of population for the first time since 1870." As Friesen admits, it is difficult to determine the actual number of families who left the prairies during the decade-long drought. However, the sheer number of farms recorded as abandoned in the 1936 census alone is a good indication of the desperate economic and environmental conditions that prevailed. The census reported that nearly 14,000 farms lay abandoned on the prairies, of which 8,200 were in Saskatchewan (by far the province affected most adversely by the drought), and 5,000 were in Alberta. Along with houses, equipment and other material items, close to 3 million acres of once fertile farmland was also abandoned. Ibid., 388.

[61] "Heat, wind, and the absence of moisture," writes Gerald Friesen, "were only part of the prairie tragedy." Ibid., 387.

[62] Ibid., 387.

[63] Schull, Ontario Since 1867, 288.

[64] For a discussion on the problem of stream and river flow during the interwar period see A.G. Huntsman, "Man's Effect on Ontario Streams and Fish," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Conservation in South

Central Ontario: Papers and Proceedings on Conservation in South Central Ontario, November 29th and 30th, 1946 (Toronto: Baptist Johnston, 1948), 67-74.

[65] NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 16, file 31, "Flood Control and Water Conservation for the Thames River," 1.

[66] A.H. Richardson, Conservation by the People: A History of the Conservation Movement in Ontario to 1970 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 29.

[67] MacNicol "Flood Control and Water Conservation for the Thames River," 2; and NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 16, file 31, "A Flood Control and Water Conservation Works Programme – A Sound Means for Big After-the-War Employment," 6-7.

[68] Ibid., 3.

[69] Ibid., 3-5. See also NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 14, file 23, "Canada Should Have a National Flood Control Policy," 1-6; David E. Lilienthal, TVA: Democracy on the March (New York: Harper, 1944), 25; and Ellis L. Armstrong, ed., History of Public Works in the United States, 1776-1976 (Chicago: American Public Works Association, 1976), 248.

[70] W.W.E. Ross, "There's a Fire in the Forest," in Shapes and Sounds: Poems of W.W.E. Ross, ed. Raymond Souster and John Robert Colombo (Toronto: n.p., 1974), 99. Though it goes beyond the bounds of this thesis to explore this idea fully, it should be noted that Ross's poem fits into a broader pattern of Canadian literature, one which has typically portrayed nature as foreboding, sinister, and dangerous. According to Northrop Frye, "the outstanding achievement of Canadian poetry is in its evocation of stark terror," at least as far as nature is concerned. Frye suggests that this "terror" is "not a coward's terror," but rather "a controlled vision of the causes of cowardice. The immediate source of this is obviously the frightening loneliness of a huge and thinly settled country." Indeed, much of the fear that nature inspired in Canadians was psychological, a response not only to the power of nature itself, but also to the immense size of the nation. The frontier in Canada seemed boundless, and nature therefore beyond human control. See Northrop Frye, The Bush Garden (Toronto: Anansi, 1971), 145. For further discussions of this idea see Margaret Atwood, Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature (Toronto: Anansi, 1972); Brian S. Osborne, "The Iconography of Nationhood in Canadian Art," in The Iconography of Landscape, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 162-178; and Branko Gorjup, ed., Northrop Frye: Mythologizing Canada: Essays on the Canadian Literary Imagination (Toronto: Legas, 1997). It is interesting to note that some Canadian historians who came of age during the interwar period have made similar claims. J.M.S. Careless, for example, contended that "Canadian history largely records a struggle to build a nation in the face of stern geographic difficulties." The frontier, he argued, presented a problem which continually had to be overcome in order for civilization to progress in an otherwise inhospitable environment. See J.M Careless, Canada: A Story of Challenge (London: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 3.

[71] Frye, "The Narrative Tradition in English-Canadian Poetry," in Northrop Frye: Mythologizing Canada: Essays on the Canadian Literary Imagination, 38.

[72] For another example of the use of this popular idiom see R.F. Leggett, "Conservation in Eastern Ontario," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Conservation in Eastern Ontario: Papers and Proceedings of the Conference on Conservation in Eastern Ontario Held at Queens's University, Kingston, Ontario, February 2nd and 3rd, 1945 (Toronto: T.E. Bowman, 1946), 16-17. In his speech to the conference, Leggett asked his audience to "consider, briefly, the wonderful state of balance amongst these resources achieved by Nature, witnessed in all its glory by the early explorers of this region." Leggett spoke of "lush river meadows," vibrant swamplands, countless rivers and lakes in which "fish abounded," and healthy forests in which "wild-life roamed at will, maintaining its own dynamic balance." Leggett contrasted this utopian vision of an idealized environmental past with the "present" state of nature, one in which the ecological balance had been disrupted and destroyed by the "defamation of Nature." This destruction, he added, had resulted in "economic and social waste."

[73] NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 14, file 23, "A Ten Year $100,000,000 Water Conservation and Irrigation Reclamation Program for Irrigation, Power and Transportation," 1.

[74] Ibid., 1.

[75] It was not until the 1960s and 70s, with the rise of modern environmentalism, that the connection between radiation and environmental degradation was clearly made. For the conservation-minded people of the immediate postwar era, the metaphor remained one that was connected to the massive physical devastation caused by the explosion of the atom bomb alone. As an example see Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation, 5.

[76] O.M. McConkey, Conservation in Canada (Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1952), 60.

[77] The most striking example of this is the comparison of the Dust Bowl to the depletion of Atlantic fish stocks as a result of over-fishing. See AO (Archives of Ontario) RG 1 K-3, Box 20, "An excerpt from the discussion at the close of the United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources," (1949), 1.

[78] Schull, Ontario Since 1867, 284.

[79] A.G. Huntsman, "Résumé," in Royal Society of Canada, The Wise Use of Our Resources: Papers from the Joint Session of Sections of the Royal Society of Canada, May 21, 1941 (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1942), 36. Huntsman, like many of his colleagues, was greatly influenced by a pervasive sense of philosophical idealism which persisted in Canadian academic circles throughout the interwar era. Natural resources, he argued, needed to be managed in accordance with the "common purpose" of the nation. In keeping with the spirit of idealism, Huntsman insisted that "the desires of the part should be in harmony with the desires of the whole of society." See Huntsman, "Statement by Committee of Council on the Wise Use of Our Resources," in Ibid., 46-47. Men like R.C. Wallace, Alan Coventry, Harold Innis, and A.H. Richardson (all of whom we will meet in subsequent chapters), shared Huntsman's idealistic vision, and like Huntsman advocated the implementation of conservation in the postwar period. For a discussion of the prevalence of idealism in interwar academic circles see Patricia Jasen, "The English Canadian Liberal Arts Curriculum: An Intellectual History, 1800-1950" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Manitoba, 1987), 203-210.

Chapter 2
Eden Revisited: The Role of Conservation in Reconstruction Planning, 1939-1945

Introduction

In December, 1939, a mere three months after declaring war on Germany, the Canadian government began planning for the eventual conclusion of World War II. Compelled by the experiences of the interwar period, Canada's leaders engaged in a planning process which rivaled the intensive effort being put into the waging of the war itself. Inspired, at least in part, by Keynesian notions of political economy, the Canadian government devised a comprehensive and purportedly progressive postwar reconstruction strategy that promised to rebuild the economy and to rehabilitate the land and its people. However, despite a rhetorical adherence to principles of democracy and progress, postwar reconstruction was inherently a conservative process, and ultimately representative of the underlying socio-political values held by a significant proportion of the country's ruling class. Likewise, in the context of postwar reconstruction, the resurgence of the conservation movement was not necessarily indicative of new and progressive attitudes towards either nature or society. Instead, the popularity of conservation lay in its inherent usefulness as an important tool for the material and moral re-civilization of the country. As in the Progressive Era, conservation became an integral component of the ruling elite's nation-building enterprise.

Planning for Peace

On the eve of World War II Canada was a tired and divided nation. Unlike the confident nation that went to war in 1914 armed with Sir Wilfrid Laurier's belief that the

twentieth century belonged to Canada, the country that was mobilized in 1939 was deeply shaken from nearly twenty-five years of domestic strife and economic insecurity.[1] The rise of political radicalism, the challenge of a multi-party parliamentary system and the instability of a market driven economy worried many Canadians, and ultimately threatened the social, cultural, and political hegemony of the country's traditional governing class. Not surprisingly, the mood in Canada in 1939 was hardly as euphoric as it had been at the beginning of World War I. Despite the apparent willingness to go to war as a country united against a common foe, most Canadians were astute enough to realize that the spirit of national co-operation was essentially superficial and would last only as long as Canada was engaged in the unavoidable "moral" conflict being waged against fascism overseas.

For Canada's leaders, the economic horrors of the interwar years had been nothing less than harrowing, and remained a vivid reminder of the precariousness of their socio-political station. Underlying the ruling elite's desire for a comprehensive program of postwar reconstruction, therefore, was a general sense of anxiety that had reached a peak by the beginning of the war. With the "dark clouds" of Canada's "decade of misery" looming in the collective memory of an entire generation that had lived through the hardships of the Great Depression, there was an overwhelming concern that conditions similar to those which ravaged the nation throughout the 1930s would return if a comprehensive strategy for the rehabilitation of the country's economy was not firmly in place once the war ended.[2] Businessmen and politicians alike argued that "a post-war depression, with its accompanying wave of unemployment, would be a disastrous aftermath and a hollow victory."[3] At no time during the war, in fact, did Canadians take for granted that either prosperity or social security would be immediately achieved once the last bombs had been dropped on Germany and Japan.

Everyone, it seemed, recognized the fact that the peace could be lost as readily as the war would eventually be won.[4]

For Canada's nervous politicians, planning for the conclusion of the war could not begin soon enough. The federal government, which began working toward a comprehensive rehabilitation scheme long before the Canadian military had even been engaged in battle, played an important leading role in the reconstruction process.[5] Having officially declared war on September 10, 1939, Mackenzie King's Liberal government in Ottawa wasted little time in passing legislation under the War Measures Act to establish a Special Committee of the Cabinet on Demobilization and Re-establishment.[6] Created on December 8, 1939, the purpose of the Committee was to identify and give full consideration to "the problems which will arise from the demobilization and discharge...of members of the Forces during and after the conclusion of the present war, and the rehabilitation of such members into civil life."[7] The Committee, whose role was to be expanded a number of times throughout the war (and whose basic aims were to be copied by provincial governments), formed the foundation of the reconstruction process in Canada.

Reconstruction rapidly became "a national byword" in Canada as "authors expounded on it, politicians promised it, and most Canadians waited impatiently for it."[8] Canada's leaders were quick to acknowledge that insufficient planning on the part of both government and industry was largely to blame for the labour unrest and the economic downturn which followed closely on the heels of World War I.[9] In 1918 Canada had lacked both the vision and the necessary domestic infrastructure to ensure the successful reconversion of the economy to meet the needs of peacetime production. A considerable number of factories that had been productive before the war and which had been converted to meet the requirements of wartime

production between 1914 and 1918 were shut down because of poor economic planning. As a result, the re-establishment of military personnel to civilian life became increasingly problematic, given that there was a lack of meaningful work for the thousands of men looking for employment.[10] In turn, there was an acute shortage of adequate housing available for returned soldiers, and a poorly planned system of land grants that had been created often meant that men and their families were given land that was ill-suited for settlement.[11]

In light of the disastrous experiences of demobilization that followed World War I, the government argued that the successful re-establishment of roughly 1.1 million service men and women to civilian life after World War II would hinge upon the ability of returned military personnel to earn a livelihood that promised an acceptable level of comfort and security.[12] Adequate employment and housing, therefore, became principal reconstruction issues. Postwar planners claimed that social stability would be possible only "when workers are adequately housed, and are no longer haunted by the fear of prolonged unemployment."[13] Of course, there was a great deal of discussion as to how best to achieve this goal over both the short and long term. However, despite differing viewpoints on the details of a comprehensive reconstruction program for Canada, postwar planners were of the unanimous opinion "that the monetary chaos" that caused unemployment and social unrest during the interwar years would not reoccur.[14]

The enormity of the task which faced Canada's postwar planners resulted in an extension of the mandate of the Committee on Demobilization and Re-establishment. An Order-in-Council passed in February 1941 expanded the terms of reference of the original committee so that the general question of postwar reconstruction could be examined more fully and recommendations could be made "as to what government facilities should be established to

deal with this question."[15] The committee, which after 1941 was generally referred to simply as the Committee on Reconstruction, solicited input from federal and provincial governments, as well as from numerous public and private agencies and individuals from across Canada. In turn, throughout the war numerous sub-committees and advisory committees were established to help deal with the immense job of postwar planning. By 1943, committees had been struck to handle issues such as economic policy, land settlement of veterans, interdepartmental co-operation, natural resource management, and even culture. Each of these individual committees put forth resolutions which, at root, were aimed at promoting measures that would allow for the "largest possible production of the good things of life" in order to protect Canadians from the social strife that had come to be associated with economic instability.[16]

The all-consuming fear of a return to pre-1939 conditions provided fertile ground for the ideas of John Maynard Keynes, a British economist who challenged the orthodox notion that government should be neutral in fiscal matters. Keynes' writings on political economy were a rational expression of a widespread interwar assumption that a new way of thinking was needed in order to save capitalism. In creating a formula for dealing with recession which advocated tax cuts and deficit spending during an economic downturn, Keynes emphasized that short term costs must be weighed against long-term benefits, and argued that a wise government "would spend more when private investors spent less, and recover deficits by tax increases and budget surpluses as the economy recuperated."[17] In championing the idea of deficit spending for an economy in trouble, Keynes suggested that government should be the compensating factor in the capitalist equation, cleaning up any mess that 'the invisible hand' might make, and indeed guiding it when necessary.

Another of Keynes' main contentions was that the economic health of the nation required a more equitable distribution of wealth and privilege than the traditional model of western political economy typically allowed. This notion, popularized at least superficially by the New Deal politics of the 1930s, became entrenched during the war in the call for an improved system of democracy based on a broader recognition of universal human rights. Politicians in Canada and abroad often appealed to Keynes' vision as a means of generating public support both for the war itself, and also for postwar reconstruction. Perhaps the most vocal and influential proponent of such ideas was United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt. In his annual state of the union address in January 1941, Roosevelt promised Americans "The Four Freedoms: freedom of speech, expression, and worship and freedom from want and fear."[18] Influenced by the Keynesian vision of a kinder, gentler form of capitalism, Roosevelt's "freedoms" quickly became an integral facet of wartime political rhetoric, not only in the United States, but also in allied nations such as Britain and Canada.[19] The sanctity of the state, it was felt, was seriously threatened by social divisions and economic disparity, and thus presented a problem which needed to be addressed immediately if democracy was to be saved, and the freedom of the western world preserved.[20]

Such notions expressed by supporters of Keynes and Roosevelt alike were met with mixed enthusiasm in Canada. Though a limited program of unemployment insurance had been implemented in Canada in 1941, there existed in many influential sectors of Canadian society a general disdain for universal programs of social security.[21] Yet, despite the resistance, a number of the government's policy advisors persisted in advocating the implementation of postwar welfare programs aimed at realizing these new "democratic" ideals.[22] One of the most notable supporters of such programs was Dr. Leonard Marsh, whose 1943 report "Social

Security in Canada" was at the time perhaps the most influential document on postwar social policy in Canada.[23] In his report, Marsh called for a comprehensive welfare program. As Raymond Blake suggests, it was essentially "a plan for freedom from want for every Canadian from the cradle to the grave."[24]

Eager to capitalize on the progressive ideals expressed by Marsh, a number of Canadian politicians appropriated the report's main sentiments as a means of generating public support. Even Mackenzie King paid lip service to the idea of state-supported welfare, promising in his government's 1944 throne speech a system of social security that would protect Canadians from infancy to old age.[25] Ironically, although King had been reluctant to experiment with interventionist policies prior to 1939, his government began to entertain Keynesian strategies during the war as a viable means of attaining postwar economic and, in turn, political stability. However, though a number of the government's advisors agreed with Marsh in principle, and thus advocated schemes which would have required a more equitable distribution of wealth and privilege, Canada's political and economic leaders were ultimately hesitant to implement comprehensive social security programs, especially those which would supplement workers' incomes in times of uncertain or diminished levels of employment. The social problems associated with unemployment, it was argued, could not possibly be eradicated by means of "national compulsory insurance for all classes, for all purposes, from the cradle to the grave."[26] Such "patchwork remedies" would only ensure that Canadians would "share in poverty" rather than prosperity.[27]

Welfare, therefore, was not seen to be the solution to Canada's potential social and economic problems. Instead, the key to providing widespread economic opportunity for all Canadians rested on the ability of the government to foster national development by re-

establishing strong domestic markets after the war.[28] To achieve this desired stability, government would need to support and improve Canada's primary industries in order to ensure the strength and efficiency of the Canadian economy. Government investment in massive public works projects and important private ventures was seen as the means to achieving a level of economic growth from which all Canadians would benefit.[29]

The decision against a truly Keynesian socio-economic strategy for the postwar era was strongly influenced by the private sector, in particular by industrialists and businessmen who drew the line at direct intervention into their affairs. Claiming that artificial wage controls were anti-democratic, their primary objection was against any scheme which would arbitrarily fix the wages of workers independently of market demand. Organizations such as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, for example, though they called for direct government involvement in terms of infrastructure and certain limited social programs, argued adamantly for indirect involvement in the actual running of the nation's business. Industry, they insisted, should still be allowed to conduct business without the overt "intrusion of government upon the field of private enterprise."[30] Successful postwar reconstruction, moreover, would be dependent upon the preservation of "all the long traditions of this Dominion," chief among them the principle of free enterprise.[31]

By 1944, with Allied forces poised for victory in Europe and the Pacific, Prime Minister Mackenzie King created the Department of Reconstruction and Supply to oversee the implementation of all aspects of postwar reconstruction and appointed C.D. Howe as Minister of the new department. In many respects Howe was the logical choice for the position. Having served as King's transportation Minister prior to the war, Howe had assumed the high profile position of Minister of Munitions and Supply after the conflict in Europe began, and eventually

became the symbol in Canada of total war.[32] In his new position at the head of the Department of Reconstruction and Supply, C.D. Howe truly lived up to his nickname as "the Minister of Everything," since the department administered all aspects of postwar planning and development, from housing and resources to foreign investment and immigration. With the inspiring, though perhaps misleading, notions of progress and development as guiding principles, CD Howe's department was a manifestation of the strong desire to rehabilitate the capitalist system in concert with the rebuilding of the nation itself.

On April 12, 1945, C.D. Howe presented the White Paper on Employment and Income in a speech to the House of Commons. As the government's primary postwar economic blueprint, the paper quickly became "the most important document on Canada's postwar reconstruction policy."[33] In spite of Mackenzie King's promise a year earlier to develop a "comprehensive national scheme" of social security that promised "general prosperity" for all Canadians, the White Paper on Employment and Income represented the more conservative voices within the Liberal caucus.[34] Arguing that postwar growth would be based upon the success of Canadian industry, C.D. Howe's reconstruction plan virtually ignored the call for an improved welfare system.

Despite the failure to implement a comprehensive program of social security, the establishment of Canada's program for reconstruction traditionally has been regarded as overtly progressive. Those sympathetic to the achievements of reconstruction planning argue that Keynesian ideas were adopted in spirit if not in practice, and further suggest that postwar planners advocated, at least in principle, an economic system which reached out to the marginalized sectors of Canadian society by offering a more equitable distribution of wealth and privilege. Historians such as David Slater argue that, despite the failure to implement all

of the social security recommendations, the government's reconstruction program, as it was laid out in 1944, "was an impressive and progressive achievement, even by today's standards."[35] However, there are many historians who, unlike Slater, have challenged the notion that Canada's reconstruction program was progressive and liberal. Scholars such as Gail Cuthbert Brandt and Reg Whitaker, for example, have argued convincingly that, despite the rhetoric of democracy and freedom, the reconstruction agenda actually consolidated the political power and social control of the ruling class.[36]

In "Pigeon-Holed and Forgotten," Brandt argues that the creation of the Department of Reconstruction and Supply in itself was a distinct reflection of the limited, highly partisan scope of Mackenzie King's reconstruction program. Brandt claims that Howe's department was certainly not "the powerful instrument to create a new society" that many politicians had promised.[37] Instead, the department ultimately represented the narrow interests of the country's political and economic elite. On the federal level, the task of physically rebuilding the Canadian nation was left almost entirely to Howe and his "Mandarins" in Ottawa, an exclusive group of ministers and civil servants whose ties to business and industry were both overt and profoundly intimate.[38] According to Brandt, the selection of C.D. Howe to a department that was "primarily concerned with the creation of capital expenditure projects" was a strong indication of the government's "conservative approach" to its "postwar designs."[39]

Perhaps the most radical interpretation of Canada's reconstruction program is that of Reg Whitaker whose critical, if perhaps extreme, approach offers refreshing insight into the reconstruction debate. Whitaker challenges the view that Canada's plan for reconstruction was progressive and democratic, and questions the idea that it represented even a symbolic shift towards a more equitable distribution of the country's resources and wealth. Arguing that

power was jealously guarded by Canada's leaders, Whitaker claims that token social programs were simply "the price capitalism was willing to pay for the social and political peace which would allow accumulation to continue" into the postwar era.[40] Moreover, the government's direct involvement in the development of infrastructure and industry, and the massive costs it was willing to support in the process, was in another sense an unavoidable expenditure needed to ensure sustained and prosperous growth, both over the short and the long term.

As Brandt and Whitaker would both suggest, reconstruction did not represent a triumph of liberalism, but rather served as an instrument of Canadian conservatism. The war, they argue, acted as a catalyst through which extensive government involvement in economic and social policy was legitimized. In turn, the organization of administrative structures to support a program of total war centralized political power in such an efficient manner that governments were reluctant to relinquish such power at the end of the war. Thus, the consolidation of capitalism, and the influential presence of government agencies devoted to reconstruction, provided the momentum and the administrative infrastructure to successfully implement extensive nation-building programs which rivaled in scope those of the Progressive Era. Moreover, as with the Progressive Era, the renewed economic and political stability of the ruling class would eventually contribute to the underlying sense of moral purpose on the part of the nation builders themselves.

Conservation Reborn

It was in this context of postwar reconstruction that the conservation movement was reborn in Canada. Far from advocating the means by which nature could be protected from

intensive urban and industrial development in the postwar era, conservationists sought to devise schemes that would increase the productivity of the nation's natural resources. As was the case with conservation in the Progressive Era, the need to maximize the use of nature in a sustainable fashion provided the overwhelming impulse behind the creation of postwar conservation programs. Beyond the numerous jobs that would be created over the short term, it was believed that nature could be managed and otherwise improved to encourage postwar growth. Massive water conservation and reclamation programs on the prairies, for example, would dramatically increase the amount of arable land available for farming and settlement and, in the process, would create opportunities for both immediate and long term development.[41] Forests, too, could generate more raw material and hence greater revenues if managed wisely.[42] Moreover, in urban areas, water-course conservation schemes in conjunction with public works and town planning would allow not only for urban development, but also for "the betterment of Canadian industry."[43] Conservation, therefore, would help provide the infrastructure upon which a prosperous postwar economy could be built.

As an overt nation-building tool, conservation was recognized as a significant part of the price that would have to be paid for social, political and economic stability in the postwar era. According to many advocates of conservation, it would be a price worth paying. As J.R. MacNicol claimed, conservation would provide "ample dividends to the country for every dollar invested."[44] The massive expenditures required for conservation projects across Canada, he insisted, would prove to be "self-liquidating," both in terms of employment generated in the immediate postwar period, and also in terms of long-term urban, industrial and agricultural development.[45] Other conservationists agreed whole-heartedly with MacNicol's sentiments. Though conservation programs would call for a considerable investment of "toil and money,"

the effort would be well-rewarded. According to one report, "a well kept land" would not only be "more prosperous and more attractive," but also would be "the home of a better society."[46]

In an obvious practical sense, conservation was intended to facilitate the production of all "the good things in life," helping to make plentiful and accessible the material items upon which the Canadian consumer would feed voraciously in the postwar era. However, transcending the purely pragmatic appeal of the conservation movement was an overwhelming sense of urgency and impending doom. Beyond the plans for the material reconstruction of the nation, in fact, was an overriding concern that immediate measures needed to be taken to reverse the process of environmental degradation that had started in the interwar years. Failure to do so, it was argued, would most certainly prove fatal to the future of civilization in Canada. Conservationists often appealed to the lessons of history in order to express their anxiety. In fact, much of the literature that focused on the pressing need for conservation in the postwar era pointed to the demise of many of the world's greatest civilizations. In each case, advocates of conservation made an effort to link the decline of a particular civilization to poor land use strategies. As a number of conservationists claimed, great empires which once thrived in Mesopotamia, the Middle East, China, Central America, and North Africa all collapsed because of a failure to manage resources in a sustainable manner.[47]

That conservationists would rely on historical anecdotes in their discussions on postwar reconstruction is not surprising. The situation as they perceived it was stark, and the references to the fall of the great civilizations of world history conjured up very powerful images. Perhaps the most poignant historical example was the fall of the Roman Empire. As one report exclaimed, "we have plainly reached the state of the Roman Empire at the height [sic] of its decline." The report went on to suggest that "with the exhaustion and misuse of natural

resources, entwined with other evil symptoms, such as senseless strife within the body politic," the Roman people were unable to resist "either the attacks of barbarians or the impact of natural catastrophes."[48] In light of the general experience of the interwar years, and also the external threat that both fascism and communism posed, the parallel to the well-known fate of the Roman Empire would have been obvious to many Canadians.

At the heart of the conservation resurgence during the war was the realization that environmental degradation came at the hands of human agents. Great civilizations, it was thought, had crumbled because they quite literally had "destroyed their natural resources."[49] The same could be said for Canada with respect to the near collapse of Canadian society between 1914 and 1939. Poor management of the environment in the interwar period, argued Alan Coventry in 1944, had "left the renewable natural resources of the country in a depleted and damaged condition." Coventry, a University of Toronto zoologist who was deeply involved in the conservation movement in Ontario, blamed the interwar "fall of nature" on ignorance of natural processes.[50] Using the Dust Bowl as a powerful example of the misuse and general neglect of nature, Coventry stated that "Man had a large share in producing the prairie tragedy." Much of the environmental destruction and the resulting misery of the interwar period, he claimed, could have been avoided had wise land use management strategies been employed.[51] Like many others, Coventry urged Canada's leaders to have a comprehensive conservation plan in place before the conclusion of the war.

The potency of the message being preached by conservationists during the war was greatly enhanced by the emerging discipline of ecology. Advanced by prominent scientists such as Frederick Clements and Charles Elton in the early twentieth century, and popularized in North America by conservationists like Aldo Leopold and Paul Sears, the ecological model

of natural systems had grown in popularity during the interwar years, largely as a response to the environmental crisis that gripped the continent.[52] Ecology conceived of nature "as an intricate web of interdependent parts, a myriad of cogs and wheels each essential to the healthy operation of the whole."[53] Fundamental to the thinking of ecologists, therefore, was the basic notion that "natural resources form a delicate, balanced system in which all parts are interdependent, and [thus] they cannot be successfully handled piecemeal."[54] Humans, too, were regarded as being an intricate part of nature itself, a fact which, from a purely theoretical point of view at least, effectively challenged traditional environmental models that viewed the human subject as somehow external to natural systems and processes. "Man himself is not a watcher," argued ecologists, "but like other living things, is a part of the landscape in which he abides."[55]

The rising popularity of ecology had a profound impact on the conservation movement, not only in Canada, but also around the world.[56] In adopting the ecological model, conservationists became keenly aware of the need to develop management plans that recognized the ecological integrity of the environment. Echoing the basic tenets of ecological science, conservationists argued that by compromising even one of the component parts of the ecosystem, the well-being of the whole would be seriously threatened. Nature quite simply needed to be managed on its own terms. It needed to be managed in accordance with its own borders, and not those imposed on it by human agents. Indeed, natural systems simply refused to conform to arbitrary political boundaries. Ecosystems, in fact, tended to transcend traditional administrative units. As one conservationist claimed, "the wooded areas and swamps of one county [typically] feed the streams that flow through adjoining counties."[57] Flora and fauna, moreover, rarely respected human borders. In light of such thinking,

conservationists turned to the watershed or catchment basin as the most logical unit for resource management.[58] The watershed, they suggested, provided natural boundaries within which interrelated land and water resources could be effectively managed and utilized.

Part of the new thinking that emerged alongside the watershed ideal was that nature must be treated with greater respect. However, it is important to note that, from a practical point of view, the idealized speech of watershed conservation did not represent a fundamental break with the paternal attitudes that had guided resource development in North America since the arrival of the first European settlers. Nature was still an "object" to be manipulated, improved and harvested for human consumption. As historian Brian Black wryly suggests, in spite of ecological thinking, the underlying attitude of most conservationists was that "to be used respectfully, [the] land had to first be carefully engineered."[59] Far from limiting or controlling resource use, watershed management actually called for a substantial alteration of the land as a means of guaranteeing the most efficient and productive exploitation of natural resources.

The recognition of the watershed as an ideal management unit ultimately aided the consolidation of government control over both nature and society. Beginning in the 1930s, the so-called "ecological" vision of the watershed became a highly popular method of promoting increased government authority not only over resource management, but also over economic development and urban planning.[60] One of the first attempts at watershed management in Canada was the creation of the Grand River Conservation Commission (GRCC) in Ontario on May 30, 1934. Based in part on the examples of similar agencies in the United States, the GRCC was primarily concerned with flood control problems. Though ultimately limited in

scope, the founding of the GRCC represented a distinct shift in Canada towards the broader ideals of watershed conservation.[61]

During the war, Canadians began to look more seriously at the importance of conservation within the broader scope of postwar reconstruction. In 1942, the federal Committee on Reconstruction appointed a sub-committee on the Conservation and Development of Natural Resources. Headed by Dr. R.C. Wallace, principal of Queen's University, the sub-committee was directed to "consider and recommend...the policy and programme appropriate to the most effective conservation and maximum future development of the natural resources of the dominion of Canada." Wallace's sub-committee was also given the responsibility of identifying "the importance of these resources as national assets" and was further asked to stipulate the proposed role conservation would play "in providing employment opportunities at the end of the present war."[62] Wallace, who would become an important figure in the foundation of watershed conservation programs in Ontario after the war, did not hesitate to look south of the border to develop his ideas. As in the Progressive Era, the United States was again proving to be the definite leader of the conservation movement in North America.

Driven by the interventionist strategy of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal policy, the United States was in fact the first country in the world to implement comprehensive conservation programs based on the principles of watershed management. The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) in Ohio, for example, was one of two watershed management agencies that grew directly out of Roosevelt's New Deal politics. Established by the Ohio State Legislature on June 3, 1933, the MWCD was 20,700 square kilometres in size, or roughly one fifth the total area of the state of Ohio.[63] Stretching from Lake Erie in the north

to the city of Marietta in the south, the MWCD was partially developed with the aid of a substantial federal grant intended to provide unemployment relief through the development of public works programs.[64] Hailed as "a great experiment in the mobilization of the resources of a river valley for the benefit of its people," the MWCD initiated numerous conservation programs ranging from flood control and soil erosion to reforestation and recreation.[65]

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was the other important conservation body established during the interwar period as a result of Roosevelt's New Deal policies. Created by the federal government on May 8, 1933, the TVA was the most ambitious, and perhaps even the most successful, of Roosevelt's New Deal projects.[66] Encompassing over 104,000 square kilometres, the Tennessee River basin included portions of the seven states of Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky.[67] The scope of the TVA program was truly astounding. By the beginning of World War II, the TVA had developed extensive flood-control and hydro-electric projects, and at the same time had taken great strides towards improving navigation on the Tennessee River and its tributaries. In addition, the TVA was actively involved in soil conservation, agricultural improvement and reforestation.[68]

As a reflection of Roosevelt's belief in government intervention to stimulate the economy, the TVA was, in large part at least, a direct response to the dismal economic conditions prevailing in the Tennessee Valley at the time. During the Depression, the area was by far one of the poorest regions in the country, with the per capita income rate standing at less than half that of the national average.[69] Moreover, the region lacked the infrastructure and industrial development characteristic of modern American society, and was thus generally considered to be "backward." As David E. Lilienthal proclaimed, it would be the aim of the TVA to bring the watershed and its people into the twentieth century. Lilienthal, one of the

three original directors of the TVA, was a tireless promoter of the authority as a powerful civilizing agent.

To both Lilienthal and President Roosevelt alike, the TVA was laden with symbolism relevant to the broader socio-economic problems of the day.[70] The massive dams and hydro-electric projects of the TVA were particularly significant in this respect. Acting like "clamp[s] upon the spirit of the unruly river," the numerous dams of the Tennessee Valley stood "as monuments throughout the nation," both as a symbol of humanity's authority over nature, and as a "more complicated symbol of efficiency and technical management."[71] Evidently, the TVA had at least some success in conveying this message to the American people. In 1941, Time magazine likened the impressive structural achievements of the TVA with Egypt's pyramids, Rome's Forum and China's Great Wall, and suggested that the TVA "will go down as one of the most permanent achievements of [American] civilization, [and] may even remain a landmark long after its usefulness is over."[72] For many people, in particular those *not* living in the Tennessee Valley, the TVA was indeed America's "Promised Land."[73]

Both the TVA and the MWCD attracted a great deal of attention from Canada and other countries during the 1930s and 1940s, with the TVA in particular becoming "a visionary model for comprehensive resource management" worldwide.[74] During the war itself, a number of Canadian delegations visited the TVA and Muskingum to discuss conservation matters in person with various directors and officials, and also to see firsthand how these complex agencies operated. Though the MWCD would ultimately provide the more practical examples for Canadian conservationists, the TVA was an important inspiration to Canada's reconstruction planners. Dr. R.C. Wallace, who spent two weeks touring the TVA in 1942, was deeply impressed by how the federal authority had taken the responsibility "of bringing back a

large watershed into productive life," and saw in it a model for planning and development in Canada.[75] Wallace was not alone in his enthusiastic praise for the TVA. As Alan Coventry proclaimed, the TVA represented "one of the outstanding examples of social and physical reconstruction."[76] Yet another conservation supporter, impressed by the scope of the programs developed in the Tennessee Valley, suggested that the TVA was succeeding because it was led by "men with a vision."[77] Taken together, both the TVA and the MWCD would provide excellent models for the development of watershed management programs in Canada in the postwar era, especially in Ontario.

The Guelph Conference

Ontario was at the forefront of the conservation revival in Canada. Like all Canadians, the people of Ontario had watched with growing disbelief as their province became "progressively impoverished" by the deterioration of nature during the 1930s.[78] Plagued by drought, floods and forest fires in the decade leading up to World War II, a number of Ontario's residents were of the opinion that "more should be done to preserve and save the province's natural resources."[79] By 1939, the desperate state of Canadian society in general, coupled with the immediate demands of a country at war, only hardened the resolve of Ontarians to take decisive action. Individuals like Watson H. Porter, editor of Farmer's Advocate magazine,[80] worked tirelessly during the war to promote the conservation cause, as did groups such as the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON) and the Ontario Conservation and Reforestation Association (OCRA).[81]

The FON and OCRA, in fact, were two of the most prominent conservation organizations in Ontario at the time. Drawing their membership from the ranks of southern

Ontario's educated elite, the FON and OCRA had a great deal of influence in the province. In February, 1941, the two groups, having independently appointed committees to study the role of conservation in postwar reconstruction, together resolved to organize a conference on the subject to be held later that spring. Support for their idea was strong. On April 25, 1941, representatives from a number of organizations interested in conservation met at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph, Ontario. The gathering, which immediately became known as the Guelph Conference, essentially marked the beginning of the conservation resurgence in Ontario and, more importantly, provided momentum for the conservation movement well into the postwar era.[82]

It is important to note that, typical of the reconstruction process in Canada in general, the Guelph Conference was a highly exclusive affair. Though the list of those attending the conference has been glorified by at least one commentator as "a roll call" of the conservation faithful in Ontario, the names on that list are hardly representative of Ontario society on a whole. The Guelph Conference was attended exclusively by men, the vast majority of whom were from major southern Ontario centres like Toronto, Ottawa, Guelph and London.[83] Of the thirty delegates present at the conference, five were listed as doctors, and twelve as professors at various Ontario universities. There were also four men representing the federal government, two men representing the military and one from the government of Ontario. Of the remaining six delegates, four, including Watson H. Porter, were not listed as being affiliated with any professional group in particular, while G.I. Christie represented the Ontario Agricultural College as its president, and C.R. Purcell, a Toronto resident, represented a group called the Men of Trees.[84] Though the delegates, like most conservationists, claimed to speak for all of Ontario's citizens, there can be no doubt that those present approached the issues surrounding

resource management from a very specific point of view, and that the remarkable homogeneity of the group thus had a pronounced influence on the nature of the resolutions passed at the Guelph Conference.[85]

There was, of course, no shortage of problems for the delegates at the conference to discuss (see for example Figures 2.1 and 2.2). As outlined in Chapter One, the environment had suffered as much in Ontario as it had in any other region in Canada during the interwar years, with the 1930s being particularly severe in terms of the damage visited upon the province's natural resources. Not surprisingly, drought was one of the main issues. Though perhaps not as dramatic as the Dust Bowl that terrorized the prairies, Ontario had been witness to conditions that were equally as disconcerting. Despite being spared the immediate menace of dust storms, Ontario was not immune to the exceedingly dry weather and the pronounced lack of rain. Rural Southern Ontario was hit particularly hard by the drought. "It was pitiful," remarked Watson H. Porter, "to see cattle milling around dried-up water holes and going daily to the stream bottoms where always previously there was water."[86] 1936 was a particularly desperate year as "wells that never failed before went dry [and] springs dried up."[87] The water level of the province's major rivers dropped to dangerously low levels in the summer months, thus depleting local water tables and seriously threatening the water supply of Ontario's populated centres. In turn, streams and creeks which had flowed freely in the past began in many places to disappear entirely. By 1939, it was estimated that in certain parts of Southern Ontario "between 80 and 85% of once permanently flowing streams [had] become temporary, drying up for at least part of a normal summer."[88]

With the notion of watershed management clearly in mind, delegates attributed the drastically low water levels in the province not to fluctuations in rainfall and temperature, but

Figure 2.1 Soil erosion in postwar rural Ontario. (Ontario Agricultural College photo, reprinted from O.M. McConkey, Conservation in Canada, 82.)

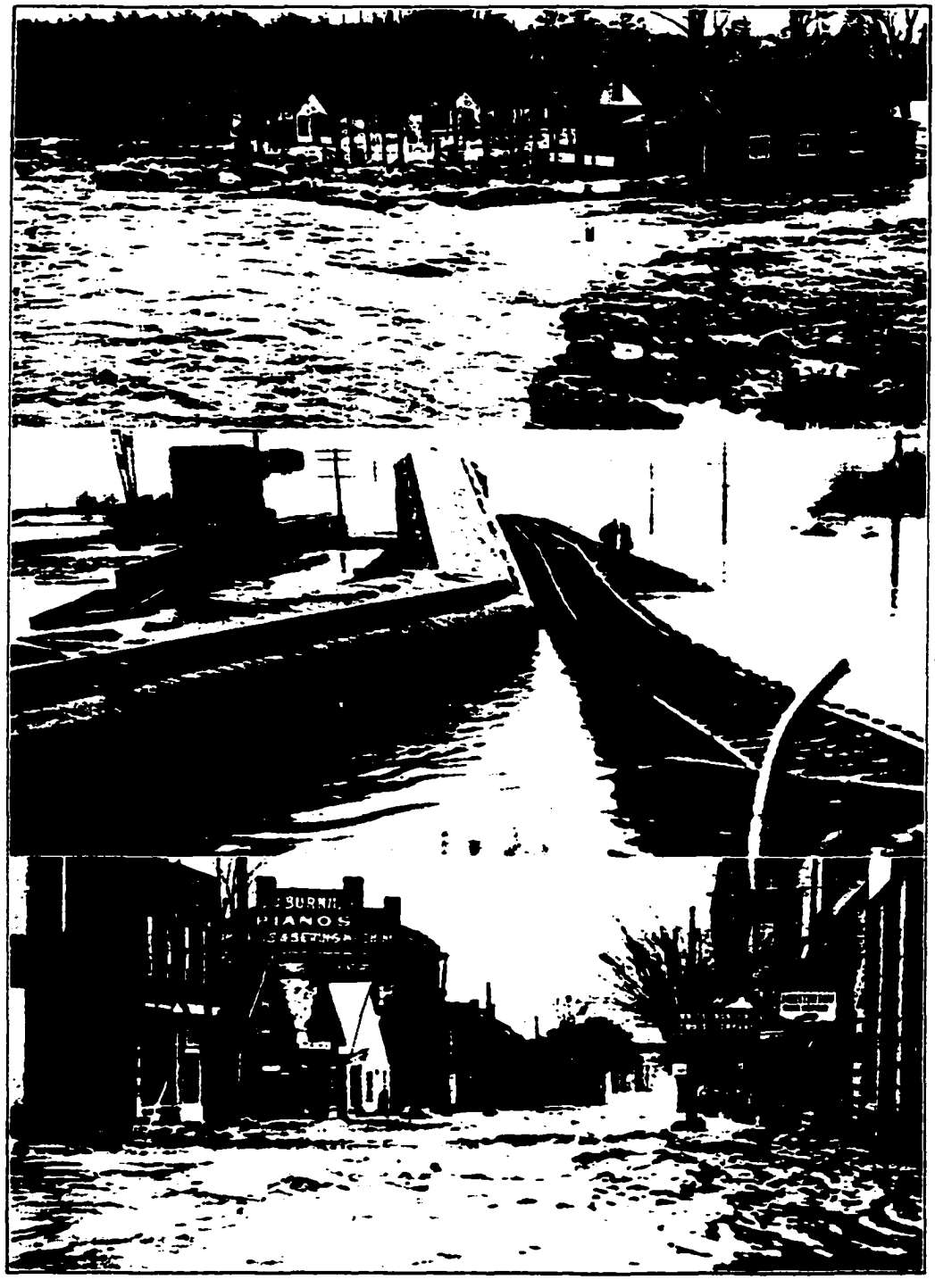

Figure 2.2 From the top, photographs of interwar flooding on three Ontario rivers; the Etobicoke, the Thames and the Ganaraska. (Reprinted from J.R. McNicol, Water Diversion, Flood Control, Conservation, 9.)

rather to nearly a century of faulty land-use strategies which, since the mid-1800s, had put incredible strains on the land. It was widely perceived that, ignorant of the basic principles of ecology, earlier generations had caused serious destruction to the province's natural resources as a result of "unplanned individualistic exploitation."[89] Delegates argued that, in addition to the drainage of swamps and marshes, "the ill effects of drought had been intensified by the needless slaughter of trees and the denudation of the countryside," in particular at the headwaters and along the banks of the province's numerous river systems.[90] The issue of desiccation and associated problems such as flooding, soil erosion, and diminishing fish and game reserves, was seen to be part of a broader problem, one which required a comprehensive and carefully planned conservation effort.

Despite the immense challenges facing the country at the time, Guelph Conference participants were generally optimistic about the postwar potential of conservation, not only for Ontario in particular, but also for Canada in general. However, underlying the mood of optimism was a pervasive "sense of urgency." Though certain that "something worthwhile could be accomplished," participants were of the unanimous opinion that "it must be done quickly and well."[91] True to the broader aims of reconstruction planning, conference delegates were deeply concerned with the possibility of an economic depression coupled with serious employment shortages following the war. In particular, the Guelph Conference regarded the necessity of "re-establishing men in civil life after the war" as one of the most pressing issues facing Canadians.[92] The final report issued by the Guelph Conference was therefore very specific about the value conservation would have within any rehabilitation scheme. The report stated that "it is the belief of those presenting the [Guelph Conference] programme that it will provide work for many thousands of men: work not only of a temporary nature, but also

permanent, since the greatly enlarged natural resources that must result from it will need constant care."[93]

In August, 1941, a committee of the Guelph Conference met with the Committee on Reconstruction in Ottawa. The resolutions of the Guelph Conference met with a favourable response, and it was agreed that federal funds would be appropriated to assist in conducting a pilot watershed survey in Ontario, so long as the survey constituted a "special piece of conservation research for application to Canada."[94] The Guelph Conference committee also met with Mitchell Hepburn, Premier of Ontario, later the same year. In a show of unconditional support for the Guelph Conference program, Hepburn created an Interdepartmental Committee on Conservation and Rehabilitation. A.H. Richardson, a long-time forester with Ontario's Department of Lands and Forests and one of the founding members of the OCRA, was subsequently appointed full-time chairman of the new provincial committee. As a result of these two meetings, it was determined that a conservation survey financed jointly by Ontario and the federal government would be carried out under Richardson's direction.[95]

Richardson selected the Ganaraska watershed east of Toronto for the pilot survey, partly because he considered it "a pleasant place to be," but mostly because the Ganaraska River valley exhibited "a complete group of conservation needs to develop."[96] From an environmental perspective, the ecological state of the Ganaraska catchment basin was no different from the situation that existed in a majority of Southern Ontario's watersheds. As in other watersheds in the province, a large portion of the land at the headwaters of the Ganaraska river system was considered to be "a barren waste."[97] Soil erosion, deforestation and desiccation were also commonplace throughout the valley. In turn, floods in Port Hope at the

mouth of the Ganaraska River were becoming more frequent and more severe, or so it seemed, and often were serious enough to cause extensive damage to public and private property in and around the city.[98]

Another factor that made the Ganaraska Valley attractive to Richardson and his survey team was the size of the catchment basin itself. At a mere 267 square kilometres, the watershed was small compared to most others in Southern Ontario. This was important given that the resources available to the survey team were limited owing to the overriding demands of the war. Moreover, in keeping with the general anxiety and sense of urgency that surrounded all reconstruction planning, there was a perceived need to finish the survey as quickly as possible. The relatively small size of the watershed, therefore, ensured the swift completion of the survey and the prompt publication of the final report.

On June 15, 1943, Richardson delivered the completed report totaling 450 pages to Dana Porter, Minister of Lands and Forests.[99] Entitled The Ganaraska Survey, the report was unlike any other ever produced by the Ontario government, and represented a significant departure from the way in which resources were traditionally regarded in Ontario. Porter complimented Richardson on the survey. As Richardson himself reported in Conservation by the People, the Minister apparently "held the report high in his hand and said in his affable manner, 'Mr. Richardson, this is a classic.'"[100] Though perhaps not a classic in the literary sense, the document proved to be monumental in terms of the resurgence of the conservation movement in Canada generally, and in Ontario in particular. In a broader sense, The Ganaraska Survey remains an important testament to the role that watershed conservation played in the postwar planning process.

Conclusion

Developed primarily as a means of marshalling the collective efforts of "man" against the "chaotic" elements of nature, conservation was representative of the underlying faith that Canada's ruling elite had in reconstruction as a civilizing force.[101] Driven by idealistic visions of recreating in Canada a veritable "Garden of Eden, " conservationists promoted programs which aimed at returning the nation's "natural heritage" to a state in which resources were plentiful, and nature itself tame and inviting.[102] By employing the ecological notion of watershed management, conservationists planned to reconstruct a healthy, clean and pure natural environment in which Canadian society would thrive and ultimately prosper. These ideas proved particularly appealing to postwar reconstructionists in Ontario. Encouraged by the wartime success of both the Guelph Conference and The Ganaraska Survey, and driven by the desire to have a complete provincial rehabilitation scheme in place for the postwar period, Ontario became the first province in Canada to implement a comprehensive watershed management program. Intimately tied to the broader scope of postwar reconstruction, Ontario's conservation authorities (which came into being immediately following the war) were certainly a testament to the overwhelming social, cultural, political and economic anxiety that fueled the postwar planning process.

Notes

[1] As one document stated, the foundations of Canada's "common civilisation" had been "dangerously weakened" by the strife of the interwar period. See Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction (Ottawa: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 1943), 3. The report was originally submitted as a brief to both The Special Committee on Economic Re-establishment and Social Security of the Senate and The Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-establishment of the House of Commons on May 28, 1943.

[2] Ibid., 2.

[3] NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III 31, vol. 8, file 25, "Brief submitted by the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities to the Special Committee of the House of Commons on Reconstruction and Re-establishment," (June 1943), 4.

[4] "It is not enough that Germany should *lose*," said one observer, "the Allied Nations must *win*." See H.J. Cody, "Recapitulation and the Ideals of Reconstruction," in Reconstruction in Canada: Lectures Given in the University of Toronto, ed. C.A. Ashley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1943), 131. Indeed, total victory for Canada and its allies would not be achieved merely by defeating the forces of totalitarianism overseas. As F. Cyril James claimed, victory would only be completed by defeating the forces of disorder that threatened the very foundation of western civilization from within. James, who was appointed head of the Advisory Committee on Reconstruction in 1941 (otherwise known as the "James Committee"), argued that "even though everyone of us confidently expects that the democratic powers will, in the long run, attain a military victory in the present struggle, that victory will not solve the [social] problems that confront us." See F. Cyril James, "Science and Society," in Proceedings and Transactions of The Royal Society of Canada: Appendix B, (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1940), 93. See also Peter S. McInnis, "Planning Prosperity: Canadians Debate Postwar Reconstruction," in Uncertain Horizons: Canadians and Their World in 1945, ed. Greg Donaghy (n.p.: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1997), 231.

[5] For a detailed discussion see J.L. Granatstein, Canada's War: The Politics of the MacKenzie King Government, 1939-1945 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975).

[6] Order-in-Council P.C. 4068.5. A variety of terms were used in conjunction with postwar planning. "Reconstruction" was the most common term employed, though "rehabilitation," "re-establishment" (usually with respect to returning military personnel), and "reconversion" (usually with respect to industry and the economy) were also frequently used.

[7] NAC RG 28, Series A, vol. 125, 3-C13-1, "Committee on Reconstruction", memorandum, (1942). See also AO RG 49 - 120, Box C57 C04-09-1-11, memorandum on reconstruction, (February 25, 1943).

[8] Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "Pigeon-holed and Forgotten: The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-war Problems of Women, 1943," Histoire Sociale/Social History 15/29 (May, 1982), 239.

[9] In the opinion of one commentator, "The lack of prepared minds with which we might have faced the post-war situation in 1918 was a contributory cause to our loss of the peace." H.J. Cody, "Recapitulation and the Ideals of Reconstruction," 131.

[10] NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, vol. 15, file 30, "Speech on Reconstruction: Editorial " (July 1944), n.p..

[11] See Richard Harris and Tricia Shulist, "Canada's Reluctant Housing Program: The Veteran's Land Act, 1942-1975," Canadian Historical Review 82/2 (June 2001), 253. The authors note that the Soldier's Settlement Act (SSA), which was largely intended to settle returned Wold War I veterans on farms "was a spectacular failure: many of the farms were on poor soil, many veterans lacked farm experience, and, saddled with large debts, they

soon found themselves in difficulty." For a compelling fictional account of the failure of the SSA see Jack Hodgins, Broken Ground: A Novel (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1998).

[12] In addition to returning soldiers, planning for demobilization had to take into account the equal number of men and women who had been mobilized by the nation's war industries between 1939 and 1945. See David Slater, War, Finance and Reconstruction: The Role of Canada's Department of Finance, 1939-1946 (Ottawa: n.p., 1995), 257. For more detailed discussions of the planning for the re-establishment of veterans see Robert England, Discharged: A Commentary on Civil Re-establishment of Veterans in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan, 1943); Walter S. Woods, Rehabilitation: A Combined Operation (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1953); Dean Oliver, "Canadian Military Demobilization in World War II," in The Good Fight: Canadians and World War II, ed. J.L. Granatstein and Peter Neary (Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995); Michael Stevenson, "The Industrial Selection and Release Plan, and the Premature Release of Personnel from the Armed Forces, 1945-1946," in Uncertain Horizons, 115-134; and Harris and Shulist, "Canada's Reluctant Housing Program: The Veteran's Land Act, 1942-1975," 253-282.
[13] Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, 14. Having been identified as being Canada's "greatest postwar problem," the assurance of adequate employment for all Canadians after the war quickly became the focal point of the discussion on reconstruction policy. See Dominion Engineering Works, Employment: The Foundation of all Social Security, (n.p.: Dominion Engineering Works, 1943), i. See also NAC RG 28, Series A, vol. 136, 3-C-42, "Re-establishment of Veterans," (1944?) and NAC RG 28, Series A, vol. 136, 3-C-42, "The Initial Period of Reconstruction with Special Reference to Employment and Income," (March 27, 1945).

[14] Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, 18.

[15] NAC RG 28, Series A, vol. 125, 3-C13-1, "Committee on Reconstruction," memorandum (1942). See also AO RG 49-120, box C57 C04-09-1-11, memorandum, (February 1943). The mandate of the Committee on Demobilization and Re-establishment was extended under Order-in-Council, P.C. 1213.

[16] Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, i. Of all the government agencies and departments active in postwar planning, the most central role was played by the Department of Labour, with the problems facing other federal government departments often being superceded in scope by the numerous and complex concerns facing the Department of Labour. See, for example, NAC, RG 28, series A, vol. 110, 3-A-15, "The Order-in-Council setting up The Advisory Committee on Rehabilitation and Re-establishment" (June 20, 1945).

[17] Douglas Sprague, Post-Confederation Canada: The Structure of Canadian History Since Confederation (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1990), 216.

[18] Cited in Dominique Marshall, "Reconstruction Politics, the Canadian Welfare State and the Ambiguity of Children's Rights, 1940-1950," in Uncertain Horizons, 262.

[19] Perhaps the ultimate manifestation of this is the incorporation of Roosevelt's ideas into the famous Atlantic Charter, signed by Roosevelt and Churchill On August 14, 1941. In the eight-point statement of the allied force's "peace aims," the two leaders promised that the postwar political order would provide "assurance that all men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want." Ibid., 262.

[20] There was a definite irony, however, in the call for democracy in the postwar era. As the ever-cynical Paul Fussell argues, "aggressive" democracy was tantamount to socialism. Fussell points to the case of British author J.B. Priestly who did a popular ten minute postscript talk after the nine o'clock evening news on BBC radio. His talks were intended as a morale booster, and his optimism was in line with the official "ends" of the war. However, when he began to dwell too closely on "the need for more social justice" after the war, or on the idea that "the happiness of the many" as being "more important than the privileges of the few," he was deemed to be "dangerously socialistic" and was taken off the air at the insistence of Churchill himself. Paul Fussell, Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 182.

[21] In spite of this, a second social security program, namely family allowances, would be added by the end of the war.

[22] As Peter McInnis claims, "While the political pragmatism of the Liberal cabinet limited the scope for substantial government planning, there was no denying that a certain propensity for tinkering with economic and social policy existed among Ottawa bureaucrats." One of the most progressive elements in this respect, he adds, was the F. Cyril James Advisory Committee on Postwar Reconstruction. Among other things, the James Committee was responsible for Leonard Marsh's report "Social Security in Canada." Peter MacInnis, "Planning Prosperity: Canadians Debate Postwar Reconstruction," in Uncertain Horizons, 235. However, even the so-called progressive attitudes of the James Committee need to be scrutinized closely. As James himself apparently claimed, "reconstruction is not a time for social revolution." Ibid., 240. Indeed, advancing the cause of a democratic system based on the collective recognition of universal human rights would be no easier in Canada than it was in either Britain or the United States.

[23] Marshall, "Reconstruction Politics, the Canadian Welfare State and the Ambiguity of Children's Rights, 1940-1950," 264. See also Michael Horn, "Leonard Marsh and the Coming of the Welfare State in Canada: A Review Article," Histoire Sociale/Social History 9 (1976), 197-204.

[24] Raymond Blake, "MacKenzie King and the Genesis of Family Allowances in Canada, 1939-1944," in The Good Fight, 325.

[25] Marshall, "Reconstruction Politics, the Canadian Welfare State and the Ambiguity of Children's Rights, 1940-1950," 263-5.

[26]Dominion Engineering Works, Employment: The Foundation of all Social Security, 1-2. See also Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, 19.

[27]Ibid., 2. The destitute and the less fortunate, they believed, would be better appeased by jobs and an abundance of affordable material goods than they would be by social security "hand-outs."

[28]NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 17, file 2, "Reconstruction and Rehabilitation," (August 1943), 6.

[29]J.R. MacNicol, "Speech on Reconstruction: Editorial," n.p.. "When the building and transport industries are busy," MacNicol argued, "the country is prosperous, jobs [are] available, and wages are good." See also George Luxton and W.F. Ryan, "Employment After the War," Public Affairs 7 (Summer, 1944) 199-205.

[30] Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, 7.

[31]NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 8, file 28, "A Summary of Proceedings of the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-habilitation," (1943?) 2.

[32] For a more detailed account of Howe's political career see Robert Bothwell and William Kilbourn, C.D. Howe: A Biography (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979).

[33] David Slater, "Colour the Future Bright: The *White Paper*, the Green Book and the 1945-1946 Dominion-Provincial Conference on Reconstruction," in Uncertain Horizons, 194. See also McInnis, "Planning Prosperity: Canadians Debate Postwar Reconstruction," 232-3.

[34] McInnis, "Planning Prosperity: Canadians Debate Postwar Reconstruction," 233.

[35] Slater, "Colour the Future Bright: The *White Paper*, the Green Book and the 1945-1946 Dominio-Provincial Conference on Reconstruction," 194. As Greg Donaghy suggests, "this general characterization of the war remains

valid for many Canadians and continues to attract its fair share of supporters." In the introduction to Uncertain Horizons, xvi

[36] Other critics include Peter MacInnis and Dominique Marshall, op. cit.. See also Cynthia Comacchio, Nations are Built of Babies: Saving Ontario's Mothers and Children (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 228; and Alvin Finkel, "Paradise Postponed: A Re-examination of the Green Book Proposals of 1945," Journal of the Canadian Historical Association (1993), 120-42. Donaghy also provides a good overview of the historiography on this subject in his introduction to Uncertain Horizons.

[37] Brandt, "Pigeon-holed and Forgotten: The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-war Problems of Women, 1943," 257.

[38] For a discussion on the role that the so-called "Mandarins" played in the reconstruction process see J.L. Granatstein, The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982). See also Slater, War, Finance and Reconstruction, 4. Though Slater argues that Canada's reconstruction effort was impressive, he does admit that the planning process itself represented the narrow views of the ruling elite. He writes: "'Old-boy' networks were influential, particularly in the programs of the Department of Munitions and Supply during the war, and the Department of Reconstruction and Supply after it."

[39] Brandt, "Pigeon-holed and Forgotten: The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-war Problems of Women, 1943," 257.

[40] Reg Whitaker, A Sovereign Idea: Essays on Canada as a Democratic Community (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 33. The italics are his.

[41] J.R. MacNicol was one of the main federal proponents of conservation during the war. One of his ideas, shared by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and others, was that the reclamation of land in the west would be a sound business policy for the east given that increased farming on the prairies would keep eastern manufacturers and suppliers busy indefinitely. See in particular NAC, J.R. MacNicol papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 14, file 23, "A Ten Year $100,000,000 Water Conservation and Reclamation Program For Irrigation, Power and Transportation," (n.d., 1943?); and NAC, J.R. MacNicol papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 16, file 31, "A Flood Control and Water Conservation Works Programme - A Sound Means For Big After-the-War Employment," (transcript of radio address, given August 17, 1944), 1.

[42] See, for example, Robert Newton, "Agriculture and Forestry," in Royal Society of Canada, The Wise Use of Our Resources: Papers from the Joint Session of Sections of the Royal Society of Canada, May 21, 1941 (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1942), 16-22; NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C 32, vol. 9, file 18, Canadian Society of Forest Engineers, "A Statement of Forest Policy," (1943) 1-8; and G.M. Dallyn, "Forest Regions of Southern Ontario," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Conservation in Eastern Ontario: Papers and Proceedings of the Conference on Conservation in Eastern Ontario Held at Queens's University, Kingston, Ontario, February 2nd and 3rd, 1945 (Toronto: T.E. Bowman, 1946), 58-69.

[43] Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, 6.

[44] MacNicol, "Reconstruction and Rehabilitation," 7.

[45] NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III 31, vol. 11, "Water: Diversions, Flood Control, Conservation," (January 1939), 8. This is a point that he continued to make throughout the war. See also Dallyn, "Forest Regions of Southern Ontario," 59.

[46] Alan Coventry, Conservation and Post-War Rehabilitation: A Report Prepared by the Guelph Conference on the Conservation of the Natural Resources of Ontario, (Toronto: n.p., 1942), 14-5.

[47]See MacNicol, "An Irrigation Programme for After-the-War Employment," 2, and also "A Ten Year $100,000,000 Water Conservation and Irrigation Reclamation Program for Irrigation, Power and Transportation," 1-2. See also Alan Coventry, "Address," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Report of Conference of Planning and Development held at Toronto, Ontario, May 8th and 9th, 1944 (Toronto: T.E. Bowman, 1944), 17; and Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation (Toronto: King's Printer, 1950), 5-8.

[48] AO RG 1 K-3, Box 20, "An excerpt from the discussion at the close of the United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources," (1949), 2. The idea that an empire weakened ecologically was susceptible to external attacks by "conquering hordes" of so-called barbarians was popular with postwar planners. See for example MacNicol "A Ten Year $100,000,000 Water Conservation and Irrigation Program for Irrigation, Power and Transportation," 1-2.

[49] Alan Coventry, "Address," 17.

[50] Coventry was one of the founding members of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists in 1931, serving as the organization's first secretary-treasurer. As the author of Conservation and Post-war Rehabilitation, he was also instrumental in the formation of the conservation authority movement in Ontario (for a more detailed discussion, see below).

[51] Coventry, "Address," 17.

[52] See, Frederick Clements, Plant Succession (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1916); and Charles Elton Animal Ecology (New York: Macmillan, 1927). Elton's book employs terms like "natural communities," "food chain," and "component populations," ideas which are today widely known, but that at the time were quite new. See also Aldo Leopold, Game Management (New York: Scribner, 1933); and Paul B. Sears, Deserts on the March 3rd ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959). Sears book, which was originally published in 1935, urged Americans to take ecology seriously. There is no shortage of good historical studies on the development of ecology in North America in the twentieth century. See, for example, Thomas R. Dunlop, "Ecology, Nature and Canadian National Park Policy: Wolves, Elk, and Bison as a Case Study," in To See Ourselves/To Save Ourselves: Ecology and Culture in Canada, ed. Rowland Lorimer et al. (Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1991); Donald Worster, The Wealth of Nature: Environmental History and the Ecological Imagination (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), in particular Chapter 13; Susan W. Flader, Thinking Like a Mountain: Aldo Leopold and the Evolution of an Ecological Attitude Toward Deer, Wolves and Forests (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993); and Gerald Killan and George Warecki, "J.R. Dymond and Frank A. MacDougall: Science and Government Policy in Algonquin Provincial Park, 1931-1954," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998 (Toronto: n.p., 1998). This study is noteworthy in that J.R. Dymond was himself involved in the development of Ontario's conservation authorities in the postwar era. Another article of interest is by Michael Barbour in which the author traces shifting notions of ecology through the 1950s. See Barbour, "Ecological Fragmentation in the Fifties," in Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature, ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1995), 233-255.

[53] Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), 195.

[54] Coventry, Conservation and Post-War Rehabilitation, 3.

[55] Paul B. Sears, "Science and the New Landscape," Harper's (July, 1939), 207.

[56] As Donald Worster writes, the 1930s was witness to "the birth in the public consciousness of a new conservation philosophy, one more responsive to principles of scientific ecology." Donald Worster, Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas, 2nd edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 232.

[57] A.H. Richardson, Conservation by the People: A History of the Conservation Movement in Ontario to 1970 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 3.

[58] A watershed is a geographic region drained by a particular river system.

[59] Brian Black, "Organic Planning: Ecology and Design in the Landscape of the Tennessee Valley Authority, 1933-1945," in Environmentalism and Landscape Architecture, ed. Michel Cohen (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, publication forthcoming), n.p..

[60] President Franklin D. Roosevelt, for example, strongly believed that river basins were the "most logical units" for planning and development. See Brian Black, "Authority in the Valley: TVA in *Wild River* and the Popular Media, 1930-1940," Journal of American Culture, 18/2 (Summer, 1995), 1.

[61] For a discussion on the history of the GRCC see Ontario, Our Valley 1/1 (January, 1955), 20; Ontario, Our Valley 1/2 (July, 1955), 29-32; Richardson, Conservation by the People, 29-32; Bruce Mitchell and Daniel Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality (Waterloo: University of Waterloo Department of Geography, 1992), 45-56; and Dwight Boyd, Anthony Smith, and Barbara Veale, "Flood Management on the Grand River, Ontario, Canada: A Watershed Conservation Perspective," Environments 27/1 (1999), 23-47.

[62] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 14.

[63] Lyle E. Craine, "The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District: A Study of Local Control," Law and Contemporary Problems 22 (1957), 380. See also Bryce C. Browning, "Watershed Management in the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District," Journal of Forestry (April 1960), 296-298; and Hal Jenkins, A Valley Renewed: The History of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (n.p.: The Kent State University Press, 1976).

[64] Mitchell and Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, 9.

[65] Craine, "The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District: A Study of Local Control," 378.

[66] Steven M. Neuse, David E. Lilienthal: The Journey of an American Liberal (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996), xviii.

[67] Mitchell and Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, 10. Despite its enormous size, the TVA, like the MWCD, was promoted as a regional agency, and was charged with the responsibility of improving the entire watershed of the Tennessee River for the benefit of all the citizens residing in the Valley. In reality, however, the TVA was essentially a federal corporation with directors appointed directly by the President himself.

[68] R.F. Legget, "Conservation in Eastern Ontario," in Ontario, Conservation in Eastern Ontario, 23. Leggett suggested that the TVA had done more reforestation in ten years than the province of Ontario had done in thirty.

[69] Mitchell and Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, 10. For a more detailed discussion see H. Knop, The Tennessee Valley Authority: A Field Study (Laxenburg, Austria: International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, 1979).

[70] "In order for American's to buy into the New Deal's vision of national progress, the government needed to first establish symbolic authority in other realms. Rivers offered this opportunity." Black, "Authority in the Valley," 1.

[71] Black, "Organic Planning," 3-4, 7, and 27-31. See also Donald C. Jackson, Building the Ultimate Dam (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990); and Walter Creese, TVA's Public Planning: The Vision, the Reality (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990).

[72] Time, (May 12, 1941) 46, cited in Black, "Organic Planning," 27.

[73] Black, "Authority in the Valley," 2.

[74] Mitchell and Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, 11. By the early 1940s the TVA had played host to delegations from Western Europe, Mexico, China, the Soviet Union, North Africa, the Middle East and Canada. See Neuse, David E. Lilienthal: The Journey of an American Liberal, 133. For a broader discussion on watershed management around the world, see Bruce Mitchell, ed., Integrated Water Management, (London: Belhaven Press, 1990).

[75] R.C. Wallace, "Address," in Ontario, Report of Conference of Planning and Development, 11.

[76] Coventry, "Address," in Ibid., 22.

[77] Legget, "Conservation in Eastern Ontario," 23.

[78] Aubrey Davis, cited in Richardson, Conservation by the People, 2.

[79] Ibid., 1.

[80] The Farmer's Advocate was a magazine published out of London, Ontario. As managing editor, Porter used the publication as a platform for his ideas on conservation. A fervent supporter of watershed management, Porter would play an important role in the early development of the conservation authorities in Ontario.

[81] The FON was established in 1931 to act as a provincial body representing the interests of Ontario's numerous field naturalist clubs. The OCRA, founded in 1936, was concerned primarily with forestry and farming in the province, and drew its membership largely from provincial and municipal officials involved in reforestation and agriculture in southern Ontario. The organization disbanded in May, 1957.

[82] Despite its significance to Ontario's environmental history, little has been written on the Guelph Conference. In addition to Richardson's brief account of the conference in Conservation by the People, 9-14, see J.D. Thomas, "The Guelph Conference," Watersheds 1/4 (1966), 10-12, and Mitchell and Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, 56-58.

[83] There were no representatives from northern Ontario, nor were there any from primarily working-class centres like Windsor and Hamilton. Smaller cities and towns were also underrepresented.

[84] For the list of names see Richardson, Conservation by the People, 9-10.

[85] This argument will be explored more fully in Chapter Three.

[86] Watson H. Porter, cited in Richardson, Conservation by the People, 3.

[87] Ibid., 3.

[88] Coventry, Conservation and Post-War Rehabilitation, 5.

[89] Ibid., 3.

[90] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 3.

[91] Ibid., 10.

[92] Coventry, Conservation and Post-War Rehabilitation, 3. Even though the conference took place at the beginning of the war, the re-establishment of veterans was already perceived to be a problem. Coventry wrote, "Men are already coming out of the army in considerable numbers."

[93] Ibid., 12. A.H. Richardson added that conservation would provide "useful and healthy work" for returned men to engage in.

[94] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 14.

[95] The Guelph Conference continued to lobby both the federal and the provincial governments despite the overwhelming success of the original meetings in 1941. See, for example, AO RG 49-123, C57 C04-09-1-11, letter to D.R. Oliver, Chairman of the Ontario Rehabilitation Committee, from E.K. Hampson, Chairman of the Guelph Conference, April 1, 1943.

[96] From an interview with A.H. Richardson, July 9, 1964, cited in Mitchell and Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, 59.

[97] From R.C. Wallace's introduction to The Ganaraska Survey, cited in Richardson, Conservation by the People, 17. Wallace adds, "[the region's] prosperous days of lumbering, settlement and substantial contribution to Canada's wealth are merely history, although history is all too recent in terms of the exploitation and exhaustion of resources."

[98] Dr. R.C. Wallace argued that conservation projects in the Ganaraska watershed "could provide work for 600 men for a period of approximately two years. The projects could include woodlot improvement, tree planting, erosion control, dam construction, the organization of recreation centres and farm improvement." Cited in Richardson, Conservation by the People, 17.

[99] Only six copies of the full-length report were printed. However, with the assistance of Leonard Marsh, Richardson produced an abridged copy of the report, which was released in the summer of 1944.

[100] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 18.

[101] NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III 31, vol. 17, file 13, "An Irrigation Programme for After-the-War Employment," (n.d., 1944?), 2.

[102] See Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, i. See also MacNicol, "An Irrigation Program for After-the-War Employment," 2. As we saw in Chapter One, MacNicol was particularly fond of employing images of biblical Eden as a means promoting watershed conservation.

Chapter 3
Paving the Way for Progress: The Emergence of Conservation Authorities in Postwar Ontario, 1946-1961

Introduction

Though much of Canada's postwar planning took place on the federal level, provincial and municipal governments throughout the nation were also deeply involved in the reconstruction process. Ontario, for example, initiated a planning program similar to the one established by the federal government, and by the end of the war had created a department of government to deal expressly with reconstruction in the postwar era. As on the federal level, conservation was considered to be an integral component of postwar reconstruction in Ontario. One of the key notions that the province's postwar planners adopted was the conviction that conservation was an expression of the "common good," that it was truly a democratic concept with the interests of the entire province at heart.[1] It was in this spirit of liberal democracy that the Ontario government passed the Conservation Authorities Act in 1946. Drawing heavily on the rhetoric employed by the leaders of similar watershed conservation authorities in the United States, Ontario's conservationists argued that the creation of the conservation authorities in the postwar period represented a grassroots movement "of, for and by the people."[2] However, in keeping with the overtly conservative tone of the reconstruction process in general, the conservation authority concept was itself a product of a very particular socio-political vision for postwar Ontario. This distinctly conservative vision, one which was predicated on the federal model, would ultimately direct the conservation authority program well into the 1960s.

Premier George Drew and the Department of Planning and Development

From the point of view of Ontario's leaders, the need to establish a comprehensive program for reconstruction was driven by the challenges and problems that the postwar period was expected to bring. Approximately 350,000 of the province's men and women, comprising roughly a third of Canada's total armed forces, had been mobilized for military service between 1939 and 1945. Even more people, in particular the women of Ontario, had been mobilized to work in the numerous factories and businesses that had been converted to meet the considerable production needs of a country at war. Finding jobs for repatriated service personnel, while at the same time reconverting Ontario's economy to peacetime production, was widely expected to be a daunting though fundamentally necessary task. Many people also assumed that Ontario would play an important role in securing nationwide prosperity once the war came to an end. Indeed, the citizens of Ontario, who throughout the war had contributed "50 per cent of every Canadian tax dollar," were fully aware that they would be asked to make a substantial monetary contribution to the overall welfare of the nation in the postwar era.[3] As the country's industrial heartland, Ontario's economic strength would largely determine the future vitality of Canada's postwar economy.

Though postwar planning was on the minds of many Ontarians from the outset of the war, the political mechanisms required to facilitate meaningful provincial dialogue on the reconstruction process were not put in place until June 15, 1943 when the province's Liberal government, led by Premier Mitchell Hepburn, passed the Ontario Social Security and Rehabilitation Act. Within a week of the passing of the Act, a Social Security and Rehabilitation Committee had been established under the chairmanship of Dr. Duncan

McArthur, Minister of Education for Ontario. A total of twenty-five members were appointed to the Committee, including the Ministers of Labour, Welfare, Agriculture, Health, Highways, Lands and Forests, as well as other members of parliament and twelve private citizens.[4] Based on the federal model that had been established by the Committee on Demobilization and Re-establishment, the mandate of the Social Security and Rehabilitation Committee was broad and ambitious. In addition to its role as a liaison between various federal, provincial and municipal agencies, Ontario's Social Security and Rehabilitation Committee was charged with the task of drafting legislation that would outline a comprehensive program of reconstruction for postwar Ontario. Of primary concern was the need to develop detailed plans for the rehabilitation of agriculture and other natural resources, for the reconversion of wartime industries into peacetime industries, and for the repatriation and retraining of returned service personnel.[5]

One of the first tasks of the Committee was to appoint sub-committees "to deal in a preparatory way with briefs submitted to the main body." At the first meeting, held in Toronto on June 28, 1943, the Committee determined that three sub-committees would be established, namely Social Security and Training, Employment, and Constitution and Finance.[6] However, despite the initial enthusiasm for the provincial reconstruction initiative, it would be some time before anything concrete would be accomplished. Even before a second meeting could be held, the work of the Committee was temporarily halted by a provincial election called for August, 1943. Though the election had interrupted the province's planning process, the resulting victory of Colonel George Drew's Conservatives over Mitchell Hepburn's embattled Liberal party ultimately served to reinforce the sprit of reconstruction in Ontario.

George Drew, who had assumed the leadership of the provincial Conservative party in the dying years of the Depression, came to power on a Twenty-Two Point Program, an election

platform offered as "a counter-answer" to the socialist ideas being promoted by his chief political rivals in the CCF. Very few of the ideas that he presented to the electorate were new. "All and more than he offered," in fact, "was being offered by the CCF."[7] However, there was a distinct appeal to Drew in the eyes of many Ontarians, particularly those of the ruling elite. Drew exuded a certain confidence and political resolve which made him desirable to those searching for strong leadership to see them through the war and into the postwar era. While a substantial proportion of the population of Ontario had thrown their support behind the hopeful vision of the CCF, an even larger group were content to vote for a leader from a mainstream political party who promised prosperity within the context of a revitalized capitalist political economy.

With his upbringing and education exemplifying the ideals upheld by the province's social and political elite, Colonel George Drew embodied the prevailing attitudes of conservatism in Ontario. Born and raised in Guelph to an "old stone" Loyalist family, Drew attended Upper Canada College and later the University of Toronto, and eventually earned a law degree from Osgoode Hall. He served as an artillery officer in the First World War, achieving the rank of colonel (a title he would maintain proudly throughout his political career). Drew had little patience for the "general inefficiency" of politics in Ontario, and for the political and economic compromises that had been demanded throughout the Depression by populist parties and other special interest groups in the province.[8] Drew was entirely unsympathetic to the aims of communism, socialism and unionism, and like most of Ontario's conservative elite made no attempt to distinguish the less radical trade unionists from their more extreme cohorts on the far left. He was, as historian Joseph Schull claims, truly "a man of old central Ontario," a person, moreover, who reflected many of its traditional biases.

Beyond his disdain for populist politics, Drew "disliked separate schools, opposed the claims of the French and was inclined to stand on familiar Protestant grounds."[9]

Premier Drew was committed to the re-establishment of a strong country built upon the closely guarded traditions that he represented. However, despite his commitment to Canada as a nation, and as an important part of the aging British Empire, he was also a strong believer in Ontario's distinct rights as a province.[10] Though he was willing to co-operate with the general reconstruction aims of the federal government, he was at the same time insistent that Ontario would steer its own course through the postwar period. Drew was determined that his government would play a strong central role in the reconstruction of the province, and molded his political platform to reflect this fundamental conviction.[11] Drew's vision for Ontario emphasized the province's traditional economic strengths and its proud British heritage. Echoing the common themes of politics in Ontario, Drew spoke of the important agricultural tradition in the province, and promised that the wise use of Ontario's natural resources would coincide with the ambitious development of industry.[12] Drew and his supporters were careful, also, of addressing the importance of Ontario's human resources, stressing that the strength of the province lay not only in the material well-being of Ontarians in general, but also in the moral fortitude of each and every citizen. A concerted effort, therefore, was to be made to re-educate the public as to its proper social roles and civic duties. As on the federal level, the call for centralized government planning was important not only to the physical rebuilding of the province, but also to the moral rehabilitation of its citizens.[13]

In the Conservative's first budget presented to the legislature in the autumn session of 1943, Provincial Treasurer Leslie Frost (who would eventually succeed Drew as premier in 1946) reiterated Drew's vision for postwar Ontario.[14] "We are building not only for these

times," he insisted, "we are planning for a greater population, for industrial expansion, for prosperous farms and for a happy healthy people. We are laying the sure foundation for a greater and stronger Ontario."[15] As with the programs that were soon to be put in place, the rhetoric of postwar reconstruction was designed to instill confidence in a province that feared what "evils" the postwar period might bring. In the speech from the throne which opened the spring session of the Ontario Legislature in 1944, Drew's government acted on its visionary promises by outlining plans to create a Department of Planning and Development to oversee Ontario's postwar reconstruction program. Similar to C.D. Howe's federal Department of Reconstruction and Supply, the main function of the proposed Department was to "co-ordinate the plans of all Ontario municipalities so that each would become part of a complete provincial scheme for the full development of Ontario's resources."[16] Arising out of the practical need for postwar provincial planning, the Department was infused with Drew's infectious enthusiasm and his singleness of vision for a greater Ontario. The people of Ontario, he vowed, would emerge from the war united and would be "prepared for the peace to come."[17]

At a conference held in Toronto on May 8 and 9, 1944, George Drew unveiled the Department of Planning and Development to 450 municipal leaders from across Ontario. In his opening address to the conference, Premier Drew spoke of the vision that the new Department embodied. Comparing the scope of planning that the Ontario government was about to undertake to some of the classic examples of successful planning in the history of Western civilization, Drew stressed that the application of "science and skill" to provincial resources would guarantee an unprecedented level of "domestic stability." As a "young" and "vigorous" province, Ontario was, according to Drew, "a land of great opportunity" with a promising future "for our children and their children after them." Pointing to the overwhelming economic

possibilities that Ontario offered, Drew scoffed at cynics who maintained that, with a population of four million, the province had reached its demographic limit. "There is no reason," he insisted, "why this province cannot maintain a population of 25 million people in a higher degree of prosperity than we have ever known." Only a "lack of faith" could prevent Ontario from fulfilling its postwar destiny.[18]

Others confirmed Drew's broad vision and echoed his optimism regarding the rebuilding of Ontario after the war. Dr. R.C. Wallace, principal of Queen's University and one of three keynote speakers at the Conference on Planning and Development, emphasized that with proper planning in place, the "human and material resources" of the province could be wisely managed to the greater benefit of everyone.[19] In a later keynote address, Hugh Pomeroy, Director of the United States-based National Association of Housing Officials, complimented Drew on the newly formed Department of Planning and Development. Stating that the provincial government was "laying the foundations for the future of the Great Province of Ontario," Pomeroy advised Ontarians to "build well on them."[20] Like Drew and Wallace before him, Pomeroy emphasized the vital role that wise-use resource management would play in the postwar era. Ultimately, however, he left it to the conference's final speaker, Professor Alan Coventry of the University of Toronto, to articulate more clearly the crucial role that conservation would play in the province's reconstruction program. Indicating that "all the renewable resources of the province are in an unhealthy state," Coventry spoke of the need for "far-reaching measures of restoration and conservation," and called for the creation of "a considerable corps of scientifically trained men... to carry out the necessary surveys and planning." Filled with optimism for the potential of watershed management in Ontario, Coventry concluded his address by stating that conservation was "a scientific undertaking of

great magnitude and a social adventure of great promise, and one entirely worthy of the new world we hope to see when peace comes once again."[21]

Within the Department of Planning and Development there was strong support for the general aims of conservation. Both Dana Porter, the newly-appointed Minister, and George B. Langford, the Director of the Department, were sympathetic to the resurgence of the conservation ideal during the war, recognizing in particular the ecological and administrative merits of watershed management.[22] One of their first official acts was to conduct a tour of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in the summer of 1944. For Porter and Langford, the trip solidified the view that "all natural resources must be treated [in terms of] combined resource development."[23] However, more importantly, the TVA provided an excellent example of the type of comprehensive social and economic planning that the Department of Planning and Development sought to implement in Ontario. "Our job," reported Porter after visiting the TVA, "is to formulate plans, and to devise ways and means for the productive employment of the human and material resources of the Province."[24]

Like the administrators of the TVA, Ontario's leaders regarded conservation as only one of the necessary components of a broader plan for rehabilitation, a fact which was reflected in the administrative structure of the Department of Planning and Development. The Department was originally divided into four main branches; namely, Conservation, Community Planning, Immigration, and Trade and Industry.[25] Though it goes beyond the scope of this present work to fully explore the inner workings of the Department of Planning and Development, even a cursory examination of its various branches offers valuable insight into the underlying vision which fueled the reconstruction effort in Ontario. With respect to the physical rebuilding of the province, an appreciation of the close relationship of conservation to

such issues as industrial development, immigration and town planning helps to provide a better understanding of the broader role that conservation was expected to play in the postwar era.

The Trade and Industry Branch was by far the largest branch in the new Department. Designed to assist in the reconversion of old industries and the establishment of new ones, the Branch offered a multitude of important services. Acting primarily as an advisory body, the Trade and Industry Branch provided pertinent information on technology, raw materials, labour relations, marketing, and taxation to new and expanding industries in Ontario. The Branch also maintained Ontario House in London, England, an institute dedicated to promoting the province's numerous postwar economic opportunities.[26] Through Ontario House, the Trade and Industry Branch sought to nurture the province's existing industrial relationship with Great Britain by offering assistance to various British enterprises in their dealings with Ontario. Even more importantly, the Branch eagerly encouraged businesses to relocate in Canada's most prosperous province after the war. It was in this promotional capacity that the Trade and Industry Branch worked closely with the Immigration Branch to attract not only business, but also British immigrants to Ontario. Ontario House, therefore, had a second, though equally important, duty to fulfill. In addition to championing Ontario's unlimited industrial potential, the London-based office assisted the Immigration Branch in its efforts to bolster British immigration to Ontario, helping the Branch both to disseminate information (or, more accurately, propaganda) throughout the British Isles, and also to process the numerous applications for immigration that were received. The relationship between the two Branches was so close, in fact, that the Minister of Planning and Development eventually decided to fold the Immigration Branch into the Trade and Industry Branch in 1955.

The desire to attract British immigrants to the province was overwhelming.[27] Of course, it is not difficult to imagine why British immigrants appealed to Ontario's leaders above all others. As Premier George Drew noted in his speech to the Conference on Planning and Development, Ontario was, and hoped to remain, "traditionally British both by ancestry and inclination."[28] Besides being both white and English-speaking, the British were thought to have the sort of gritty determination that Ontarians were looking for in the ideal immigrant. Praising the British for their "guts" in the face of unspeakable adversity, Drew stated emphatically that, "I can imagine no better people to populate this province than those who have stood under the bombing and trials of this war in Britain, and who for some time stood between the German forces and the loss of freedom everywhere."[29] Coming from a country of supposedly honest, hard-working people of impeccable character, British immigrants were expected to "quickly assimilate" to life in Ontario, and to become an indispensable asset to the province.[30]

The relationship of immigration to the broader aims of postwar reconstruction in Ontario is not in itself difficult to understand. The relationship of immigration policy to conservation, on the other hand, demands a more detailed explanation. In fact, at first there would appear to be no clear link between conservation and immigration at all. However, one of the main concerns of the Immigration Branch was that poor farming conditions would deter British farmers from settling in Ontario after the war.[31] In 1949 the Immigration Branch issued a lengthy report on settlement patterns on the Holland Marsh which addressed the relationship between poor agricultural land and the rise of "foreign" populations within the province. Long considered marginal by British- and Canadian-born farmers, the Holland Marsh had started, just prior to the war, to attract non-British nationals who, being "used to working on farms

where soil is counted in inches and not in acres," were content to farm sub-standard land.[32] Though their success was laudable from a strictly material point of view, the growth of the Holland Marsh community itself gave reason for alarm. In fact, the industriousness of the non-British farmers was not so much praiseworthy as it was a matter of great concern. The basic fear was that, should non-British farmers prosper further, they would proliferate and push the traditional Canadian farmer - or, rather, a farmer of British descent - into total obscurity. The authors of the report stressed that in only a few short years of settlement the population on the Holland Marsh had grown considerably. By 1949, a third of the over five hundred farmers were of Dutch descent. The rest of the population was made up of "East Europeans, Italians, Germans as well as a few Japanese." The authors added that "the lack of Anglo-Saxon names on the Marsh is most noticeable and significant."[33] At the heart of the study was the underlying assumption that the failure to implement conservation measures aimed at making agricultural land more attractive to British immigrants would have a detrimental impact on the social and cultural integrity of the entire province.

As was the case with the Immigration Branch, the mandate of the Community Planning Branch was also linked to the broader aims of conservation. With the projected growth of both industry and population, urban centres across the province were expected to expand considerably in the postwar era. Housing and community planning, therefore, were regarded as being extremely important to the reconstruction effort. However, in addition to devising plans for the building of new communities and suburbs around existing urban centres, community planners also recognized the need for urban renewal. Downtown cores and older neighbourhoods had in many cases decayed significantly in the interwar years, losing not only their Progressive Era charm, but also their vitality as the important locus of urban affairs. One

of the top priorities of community planning, therefore, was to determine "how best to deal with the central downtown areas and maintain them on some kind of productive basis for the benefit of the community."[34] Officials with the Community Planning Branch suggested that urban renewal should take one of two forms. The first was to prevent further deterioration in the structurally and aesthetically sound areas of the community through effective municipal housekeeping practices and the stringent enforcement of bylaws aimed at controlling urban blight, while at the same time promoting "intelligent" community development. The raising of such standards, it was believed, would greatly aid the rehabilitation of the province's urban communities. The second approach to urban renewal called for the outright redevelopment of unsound areas within the city through the acquisition and clearance of seriously dilapidated physical structures and any other abandoned or derelict properties.[35]

The implementation of urban conservation measures, it was thought, would aid considerably in building the ideal cities of the postwar era. More importantly, well-devised conservation strategies would also contribute to the making of healthier, and thus better and more productive, citizens. Postwar planners suggested that the people of Ontario were essentially "raw material," and further argued that individual citizens as "resources" were in desperate need of both physical and moral rehabilitation.[36] Echoing the voices of Canada's Progressive Era social reformers, reconstructionists were confident that the implementation of a comprehensive program of conservation would contribute greatly to "producing a better race of men and women" by helping to eradicate prewar problems such as urban squalor, malnutrition, and poor public health.[37] In providing for a healthy and invigorating natural environment, conservation measures would help to renew the progressive spirit of the nation by improving the "mental and physical fitness" of individual citizens.[38]

The specific mandates of the three Branches outlined above provide a good indication of the type of province that reconstructionists sought to realize in the postwar era. It is evident that Ontario's leaders wanted to establish a strong industrial economy alongside thriving urban communities which could accommodate a growing populace in a healthy, efficient and ultimately prosperous manner.[39] Conservation formed an integral component of this postwar vision. Careful scientific management of the province's natural resources, for example, would certainly benefit industrial development, while the creation of parks and recreation areas would contribute significantly to urban renewal and beautification. Moreover, through the development of flood prevention measures, conservation would help to establish "control of [river] valleys for housing and other building purposes."[40] In turn, the creation of a healthier, more productive province would not only result in improved conditions for Ontario's citizens, but would also help to attract immigrants - in particular British immigrants - to Ontario's cities and farms.

Conservation by the People?

In November, 1944, the Honourable Dana Porter, Minister of Planning and Development, chose A.H. Richardson to head the Conservation Branch, appointing him to the position of chief conservation engineer. With an initial staff of six men, Richardson established his office alongside the three other Planning and Development Branches in the old downtown Toronto residence which housed the provincial government's newest department.[41] In spite of the integral role that conservation would play in Ontario's postwar reconstruction program, the office itself was hardly spectacular. With office space at a premium, the entire Conservation Branch was crammed into a former butler's pantry, which according to

Richardson measured a mere "ten by eighteen feet." It was from these "minimal quarters," however, that the decisions were made and the plans drawn up which would significantly alter the postwar landscape of urban and rural Ontario.[42]

The first item of business to be tackled by Richardson's team was the drafting of legislation which would turn the ideas of watershed management into a reality for postwar Ontario. Knowledge gained from the experience of the Grand River Conservation Commission (GRCC), which had been operating since 1938, coupled with official visits to the TVA and the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD), provided a solid foundation upon which plans for the development of Ontario's conservation authorities could be forged.[43] Richardson was intent to build upon existing legislation, in particular the Grand River Conservation Commission Act, and sought to devise a conservation strategy that would be unique to Ontario.[44] Drawing on the American example, Richardson proposed to broaden the scope of the GRCC by not restricting future authorities to flood control alone, which had been paramount in the earlier Act. Though flood control, recreation and to a lesser extent forestry would eventually become the primary focus of Ontario's conservation authorities, Richardson's Act also made provisions for the development of more peripheral conservation programs such as erosion control, soil conservation, and wildlife management. However, one of the main distinctions from the GRCC Act was the call for a more "democratic" approach to watershed management. Whereas the legislation governing the GRCC only named urban municipalities in its watershed management plans, "the Conservation Authorities Act required that all municipalities in a watershed – cities, towns, villages and townships – be included in the body corporate."[45]

Bill 81, a draft of Richardson's proposed Conservation Authorities Act, was completed in time for the 1945 session of the provincial legislature, but was not passed into law until the spring of 1946.[46] Reaction in Ontario to the Act was both favourable and swift. On July 30, 1946, the province's first two conservation authorities, the Ausable River Conservation Authority and the Etobicoke River Conservation Authority, were established. Others were soon to follow. In just two years, a total of eleven conservation authorities were created, a fact "which put quite a burden on the small technical staff" of the Conservation Branch.[47] By 1961, the year A.H. Richardson retired as head of the Conservation Branch, thirty-four authorities had been established in the province, twenty-seven of which were located in South-central and South-western Ontario.[48]

In Conservation by the People: The History of the Conservation Movement in Ontario to 1970, A.H. Richardson argued that Ontario's conservation authorities were an expression of grassroots democracy in action. Borrowing heavily from the political rhetoric of the TVA and MWCD, Richardson claimed that postwar conservation was a movement "of, by and for the people of Ontario," and further promised that this principle would remain central to the administrative structure of the conservation authorities.[49] He argued that the advent of conservation authorities in Ontario was a direct manifestation of "a growing conception" within the province of personal and community responsibility toward conservation problems.[50]

Though there was indeed a growing interest in conservation in Ontario following the war, the conservation authorities themselves were anything but representative of grassroots political action. Far from reflecting the myriad voices of the urban and rural population of a particular watershed, conservation authorities tended to be fundamentally exclusive organizations with a narrow mandate for the rebuilding of the province. In the first place,

conservation authorities typically represented the interests of the province's larger urban centres. Though the Conservation Authorities Act required that all municipalities in a particular watershed needed to be consulted before an authority was created, towns and cities, rather than outlying farming communities, effectively spoke with the loudest voice. Under the terms of the Act passed in 1946, all the municipalities within a particular watershed that petitioned the provincial government for the creation of a conservation authority were entitled to send representatives to the founding meeting. The number of representatives that a municipality could send was based upon the size of its population. A municipality with a population of over 50,000 could send three representatives; between 10,000 and 50,000, two representatives; and less than 10,000, one representative. If two-thirds of the appointed representatives were present then the meeting could go ahead. If two-thirds of those present voted in favour of forming a conservation authority, then a resolution was forwarded to the Minister requesting that an authority be established. It was conceivable, therefore, that a conservation authority could be formed in a particular watershed without the approval, or in some cases even without the participation, of smaller rural municipalities. Indeed, regardless of the initial input of non-urban municipalities and smaller towns, once a conservation authority was formed, the strongest representation on the board of directors invariably came from urban communities.[51]

Typically, many of the smaller municipalities, which as a rule tended to be underrepresented within the conservation authority structure, were either leery or otherwise thoroughly opposed to the creation of an authority within their particular watershed. These smaller municipalities, often rural communities situated upstream from the more heavily populated cities, tended to be suspicious of the conservation authority program. The smaller

communities often questioned the fairness, for example, of contributing financially to the creation of reservoirs created for flood control purposes that would benefit downstream communities by flooding out valuable farmland and sometimes entire villages upstream. Thus, conservation authorities often had to exert much energy to convince certain "anti-progressive" rural communities of their civic duty to contribute to the common good of the entire watershed. As one government report indicated, "a substantial part of effective conservation programming is the 'selling' of conservation ideas and conservation practices to private land owners," and in particular to "owners of rural farms."[52] Despite such efforts, resistance to urban-based conservation was often so strong that authorities had to resort to expropriation in order to remove stubborn farmers from land designated for particular conservation projects.[53]

In addition to representing a limited geographical area, the administration of the conservation authorities themselves tended to reflect the narrow social, political and economic interests of the watershed's urban elite. True to the postwar planning process at large, those involved most intimately with the running of an authority were typically educated, upper-middle class male professionals of predominantly British heritage. An examination of the short articles on Ontario's "Leaders in Conservation" published in the biannual Conservation Branch periodical Our Valley provides valuable insight into the remarkably homogeneous nature of the conservation authority vanguard through the 1940s and 1950s.[54] Almost without fail, these profiles of individual conservation authority chairmen from across the province chart the rise of a "country man turned city dweller"[55] who, after establishing himself as a respected businessman dedicated to the welfare of his community, turned to municipal politics.[56] The reference to a rural past, whether constructed or true, was by no means intended as an insignificant biographical tidbit. Establishing a connection with the province's strong

agricultural tradition was a mainstay of Ontario politics, especially in the context of postwar reconstruction.[57] Though this idea will be explored more fully in Chapter Four, it is important to note here that the fundamental social and cultural values of Ontario's ruling elite were deeply rooted an idealized agrarian past. The postwar construction of family values and gender roles was linked directly to farming and the land itself, as was the formulation of conservative political ideology. Establishing a link to the land was especially important for those seeking to justify their public role in conservation. As the profile of Bruce H. Smith, Chairman of the Moira River Conservation Authority suggests, "an early childhood spent in the woods and fields around Millbridge in the north-western part of the Moira Watershed" was significant in forming "a love of the unspoilt outdoors that has fitted him to be a leader in conservation."[58]

Even more than the administrative structure of individual authorities, the important role played by the Conservation Branch effectively consolidated the reconstruction interests of the province's ruling elite. Rather than promoting a province-wide dialogue on environmental problems and their possible solutions, the Conservation Branch actually served to limit the central discussion on conservation to a small group of self-proclaimed conservation experts in Toronto. In particular, the technical staff at the Conservation Branch was responsible for the compilation of conservation reports for each conservation authority. These reports, which used the Ganaraska Survey as a model, served as the virtual blueprints for the future development of Ontario's populated watersheds. According to Richardson, each conservation report contained "working plans" that could be considered "ready for action."[59] However, despite the pronounced differences between watersheds, not only in topography but also in urban development and demography, these preliminary surveys were invariably uniform in terms of the particular recommendations made.

A.H. Richardson himself played an important role in the uniformity of conservation authority policy for Ontario. Known affectionately as "Mr. Conservation" by those who worked with him, Richardson had a definite knack for being able "to generate public enthusiasm" for the aims of postwar conservation.[60] An avid promoter of the conservation ideal, Richardson was the main voice of the conservation authority movement in Ontario. However, it was as a liaison between the Conservation Branch and individual conservation authorities across the province that he exerted the greatest influence over conservation policy. Richardson supervised and often wrote substantial portions of the conservation reports that were created for each new conservation authority by the Conservation Branch. At the formative meetings of the conservation authorities, either Richardson or the assistant director of the Conservation Branch, A.S.L. Barnes, was present to conduct the meeting, and to assist and guide those present through the legal and technical nuances of the conservation authority program. Once an authority was established, Richardson, as Chief Conservation Engineer for the province, was appointed an ex-officio member of the authority's executive committee. This was not merely a honorary position. In fact, Richardson "frequently attended annual meetings of individual conservation authorities" which thus "enabled him to influence the activities of each authority," especially in their formative years.[61] Though individual authorities would ultimately decide upon the conservation projects to be undertaken, Richardson, supported by his Toronto-based staff, ultimately determined the scope of the conservation authority mandate throughout the province.

"On to Muskingum"

In formulating a uniform postwar strategy for the development of Ontario's conservation authorities, A.H. Richardson was willing to draw liberally on ideas that had already been put into practice by similar conservation agencies in the United States. Indeed, one cannot underestimate the importance of the American example to the evolution of the conservation authority program in Ontario throughout the postwar era. The MWCD in particular served as an important inspiration for - if not the veritable template of - the conservation authority program during Richardson's tenure as Chief Conservation Engineer. In fact, in an effort to provide conservation authority leaders throughout Ontario with a firsthand opportunity to see watershed conservation in action, Richardson himself personally organized at least three official tours of the MWCD between 1948 and 1957. The first official tour of the MWCD was conducted in 1948 when seventy-five conservation authority delegates from across the province spent nearly one week touring what Richardson considered to be a very successful, and ultimately profitable, watershed management program. This first visit was perhaps the most important of all the visits to Muskingum, for it essentially set the tone for the development of watershed conservation throughout the postwar era.[62]

According to Watson H. Porter, whose lengthy On to Muskingum served as the official Conservation Branch report of the tour, the visit to Muskingum reinforced the conviction that flood control, and thus the construction of dams, would constitute the "core enterprise" of watershed management in the postwar era.[63] Delegates witnessed for themselves the benefits of a well-conceived flood control program. It was obvious that communities throughout the MWCD - except perhaps those small rural hamlets that had been relocated in order to create flood control reservoirs - were benefiting from the extensive program that had been in place for

over a decade. Not only were communities spared the seasonal menace of flooding, but also the water table in many areas had been partially restored. Desiccation was therefore less of a problem in 1948 than it had been throughout the 1930s. It was, of course, the larger urban centres that had benefited most. The river valleys that cut through many of the MWCD's major cities, for example, were being rehabilitated gradually. The implementation of extensive and ultimately effective flood-control measures had meant that river valleys could be more fully and profitably developed (in many cases, cities made use of reclaimed river valleys to develop urban green space). Moreover, the creation of massive reservoirs upstream from urban centres also ensured a steady flow of water through cities and towns during the dry summer months. This in itself was important for a number of reasons, not the least of which was that adequate stream flow was required to flush away the sewage and industrial waste that was dumped into the rivers.

Perhaps one of the most significant lessons learned from the MWCD was that a comprehensive watershed management program could even be profitable. Cognizant of the fact that flood control would ultimately prove to be a costly venture, the delegates were impressed to discover that other aspects of a watershed conservation program offered the potential for the generation of "sizeable revenue."[64] Forestry and recreation in particular were viewed as ventures that would help to offset the costs of flood control. Forestry, in fact, was one of the principal conservation initiatives that impressed the delegates. The enormous success of the MWCD's forestry efforts illustrated clearly that "under a system of proper forest management the forests will be one of the main sources of revenue" for conservation authorities in Ontario.[65] Beyond contributing to the "development and maintenance" of the "aesthetic value" of a watershed, forests, when managed carefully, could yield a perpetual

supply of marketable timber.[66] Moreover, wooded areas under authority control would also provide substantial opportunity for recreation, in particular hunting and fishing. For Porter and the rest of the provincial delegation, the potential for forestry within the broader scope of the conservation authority program seemed unlimited.[67]

Even more impressive than the potential for forestry within the conservation authority program was the potential for recreation as a revenue-generating enterprise. Though the seventy-five delegates had traveled to the MWCD as "practical...serious minded" men concerned primarily with the technical aspects of conservation, their attention was soon turned towards what they had formerly believed to be a secondary component of a practical conservation strategy.[68] Indeed, once the delegation realized how recreation facilities could produce a "handsome revenue" for a conservation authority, their minds were quickly changed as to the relative practicality of recreation to the development of a watershed conservation program.[69] Porter indicated that, though many men may have understood the need for recreation facilities in postwar Ontario, only "a very small percentage of them thought of recreation having any [direct] relation to river basin development. It came somewhat as a shock to learn that recreation is a big feature of the Muskingum programme."[70] By the end of the tour, Porter claimed, the delegates were intent to listen "open-eyed and with eager faces" to MWCD officials as they listed off both the economic and the social benefits to be derived from the creation of recreational facilities.[71] Of particular interest to these men was the extent to which recreation could be incorporated as a logical and perhaps even indispensable extension of flood control. In visiting the numerous dams of the MWCD, the delegates were as impressed with the flood control structures as they were with the recreation possibilities that the flood control reservoirs afforded. As Porter wrote in his report, "annual returns from the

recreational use of lakes [created by the dams]... will go a long way in meeting the maintenance costs of the entire [flood control] enterprise."[72] More than this, however, recreation was also seen as an essential "public service," one which, as we shall see below, became increasingly important as the postwar era unfolded.[73]

Inspired by the MWCD tour, the delegates returned to Ontario to preach the merits of watershed management to municipal councils and community organizations such as local Chambers of Commerce and Rotary Clubs. Issues of urban development were, of course, foremost in their minds. Eager to implement strategies that promised the creation of efficient and clean communities, these men actively promoted the conservation authority program in the newspapers and at "town-hall" meetings. Judging from the various reports submitted to the biannual Conservation Branch publication Our Valley, the flooding of urban centres was without a doubt the most pressing concern discussed at these meetings.[74] Of the nineteen conservation authorities that contributed reports between 1955 and 1960, a total of twelve indicated that flood control was the primary reason for the creation of an authority in their particular watershed. It is significant to note that detailed descriptions of flooding itself consumed a substantial portion of the reports catalogued in Our Valley. For example, most of the reports submitted by individual conservation authorities for the July issues of Our Valley provided an account of the ice and water damage done to urban centres as a result of the flooding caused by the annual spring break-up. Reports submitted in January, on the other hand, often described any flooding (or near-flooding) that might have occurred as a result of heavy periods of rainfall in the previous summer or autumn. Almost without fail, these reports recounted in dramatic detail how communities watched intently as water levels rose during actual or potential flood situations. Two common themes concerning flooding and flood

control surfaced within these reports. The first was the expression of gratitude for any existing flood control measures already established by the local conservation authority. The second was the expression of concern that existing structures were not yet sufficient to provide adequate protection to a particular area in the event of a future deluge of significant proportions.

Ontario's fixation with floods and flood control was understandable given both the extensive damage that floodwaters had visited upon the province's rural and urban communities in the interwar years, and also the ominous threat that flooding continued to pose into the postwar era.[75] 1947, in fact, had been one of the worst in Ontario's recorded history, as "over 80 serious floods occurred on 54 of the Province's rivers."[76] The memory of these floods, of course, only contributed to the already widespread appeal of the conservation authority program. Indeed, in promoting the conservation ideal in postwar Ontario, the Conservation Branch and, in particular, the individual authorities themselves, employed flood imagery to great effect. Drawing on the fear that flooding engendered in many of the province's built-up areas, conservationists were careful to point out that the initial outlay of funds for the development of flood control measures would have significant long-term benefits. Though the construction of dams would indeed be costly, the price was miniscule when compared to the substantial property damage that a serious flood could cause.[77]

For those communities that failed to heed the warning afforded by the 1947 floods, "the ravaging calamity of Hurricane Hazel" which struck Southern Ontario in October 1954 served "to shock governments, municipalities and citizens into action."[78] Leaving eighty-one people dead and causing damage estimated at twenty million dollars, the severe flooding that accompanied Hurricane Hazel quickly became the standard against which existing flood control structures were gauged and new expenditures justified.[79] Even where extensive flood

control structures existed, conservation-minded municipal officials frequently argued that they were not yet sufficient to handle the potential flows that natural disasters like Hurricane Hazel could deliver.

Flood control, however, was expensive, even in light of existing cost-sharing arrangements. Though the federal and provincial governments together would contribute seventy-five per cent of the total expenditures on flood control projects, the conservation authorities were responsible for covering the remaining twenty-five percent. In many cases this proved to be a considerable strain on municipal coffers. Drawing on the example provided by the MWCD, therefore, conservation authorities eagerly pursued other ventures - primarily forestry and recreation - to buttress the development of costly flood control projects. By the end of Richardson's tenure as head of the Conservation Branch in 1961, a total of 55,700 acres of land had been acquired by individual conservation authorities for use as authority forests, while 28,000 acres had been secured and developed by Ontario's conservation authorities explicitly for the purpose of recreation.[80] Despite the fact that twice as much land had been acquired for forestry, recreation proved to be more significant, both in terms of revenue generated and also in terms of its overall importance to the conservation authority program.

Though initially developed as part of a broader revenue-generating scheme, the acquisition of land for the purpose of recreation was also an expression of the perceived need "to create recreation facilities within easy reach of large centres."[81] These easily accessible recreation facilities – which came to be known as conservation areas – were intended to provide city dwellers with an opportunity to commune with nature without having to travel far from their comfortable suburban homes. Given that conservation areas were often developed around flood control structures, it is not surprising that activities oriented around the water

itself were popular. Fishing, in fact, was perhaps the most popular recreation activity promoted by the conservation authorities in the postwar era. Lakes created by dams quickly became "a fisherman's paradise," primarily because they were easily stocked with preferred species of fish, but also because of the proximity of these new man-made lakes to urban centres. For those Southern Ontarians unable to make the weekend or holiday trek north to popular natural fishing spots, flood control reservoirs provided an excellent opportunity to enjoy the out-of-doors closer to home. City folk who habitually "suffered the urge" to fish before these lakes were created near their cities could now begin "equipping themselves with tackle" with every hope of getting out on the water more regularly.[82] Fishing, in fact, was so popular that most conservation authorities across Southern Ontario arranged for family fishing days at various times of the year on man-made lakes and reservoirs which were often stocked with speckled trout especially for the occasion.[83]

Hunting, like fishing, was also an important aspect of the recreation program initiated by the conservation authorities in the postwar era. It was undoubtedly a popular sport, especially amongst the suburban "gentry" of Ontario's growing cities.[84] Efforts to stock conservation forests with game therefore became essential, for, like fishing, hunting was a serious business. During the 1940s and 1950s, the Department of Planning and Development, in collaboration with the Department of Lands and Forests, sought to capitalize on the growing popularity of hunting, and was especially intent on promoting sport hunting on land administered by the conservation authorities (in particular conservation forests). The influx of hunters to outlying rural regions proved to be an important economic activity. On the Grand watershed, for example, only 4% of the total hunter population during duck hunting season was comprised of local hunters. The rest were from urban centres, especially Toronto. Hunting on

the Grand rapidly increased in popularity as facilities were developed to accommodate growing hunter demand (a trend which developed at conservation areas throughout the province). At the Luther Marsh north of the city of London, for example, recreational hunting increased at a rate of 1,250 hunter-hours per year between 1947 and the early 1960s.[85] The economic impact on watershed communities was significant. As one report stated, the number of people drawn to the various recreation areas of the Grand River Conservation Authority for the purpose of hunting resulted annually in "rather impressive" economic returns for the entire watershed, primarily as a result of the increased demand for food, gasoline and lodging.[86]

Of course, recreation was not geared only towards those people who wanted to kill things. It was to an even greater extent geared towards those who wanted to consume nature in a more passive or indirect manner. Bird watching, for example, became increasingly popular in the postwar era, as did nature watching on a whole. Family outings devoted to picnics, and in turn to boating and swimming on conservation authority lakes, also became popular. Authorities across the province, therefore, sought to acquire property that would be well suited for such outdoor activities. As a rule, the more interesting or "culturally valuable" an area was considered to be, the more likely it was that it would be acquired for the purposes of recreation. Generally, areas exhibiting "unusual" or "spectacular" species of flora and fauna were earmarked for development as conservation areas, as were places with "spectacular landforms and...rare geological formations."[87] Though authorities claimed that their desire was to preserve a particular area in its "natural state," the need for landscaping was usually unavoidable.[88] The extent to which conservation authorities actively engaged in the landscaping of conservation areas varied greatly. Often, it amounted to little more than the planting of flowers, the cutting of grass or the introduction of discreet park benches into a

hitherto "undisturbed" near-urban ecosystem. However, sometimes landscaping efforts were more overt and extensive. In some cases this meant the expropriation and removal of houses and buildings. In other cases, it meant the construction of pavilions, parking lots and other facilities required to develop areas for picnicking, swimming, boating and so on. The conservation authorities justified such landscaping efforts by arguing that conservation areas would contribute to both the prosperity and beauty of the community.

However, beyond basic economic and aesthetic considerations, recreation was also seen as having a significant social role to play, particularly in terms of public health and the general well-being of Ontario's citizens.[89] Though regarded on one level simply as "the pleasurable use of leisure time," recreation was also promoted as fulfilling "an essential physical and mental need." As many conservationists would claim throughout the postwar era, "good recreation facilities are now recognized to be as significant in modern life as are good working conditions."[90] Of course, such thinking was by no means new or original. During the war, for example, reconstructionists had argued that recreation would form an integral component of the provincial reconstruction project. The importance of recreation to postwar reconstruction, however, was only fully appreciated by Ontario's leaders in light of the remarkable urban growth and economic prosperity that characterized the postwar period.[91] In fact, postwar reconstruction had been so successful that it gave rise to a new and more pronounced set of anxieties. Though Ontarians appeared to be marching confidently into the second half of the twentieth century, the giant leaps that were taken forward in terms of development were matched by a distinct sense of uneasiness, at least on the part of the ruling elite. Ironically, it was material progress that lay at the heart of the ruling elite's uneasiness. This anxiety, which was associated primarily with the rapid growth of the city after the war, represents one of the

most interesting paradoxes of postwar reconstruction, for while reconstructionists busied themselves with the physical community-building projects that fostered the development of Ontario's urban centres, they simultaneously lamented the social and moral costs of such development. To appropriate a phrase employed by Roderick Nash, "too much civilization, not too little," lay at the root of the problems which threatened to upset the social order in Ontario.[92]

For many of Ontario's leaders, material progress and urban development opened up a "Pandora's Box" of social problems. The idea of material progress itself, though desirable in an economic sense, in fact conflicted with the perceived need to rehabilitate the individual both morally and physically in the postwar era. In the first place, modern life was widely considered to be draining on the human spirit. The increased mechanization of a thoroughly urbanized and industrialized society was, it was thought, nothing short of oppressive and dehumanizing. It was in light of such attitudes that G. Ross Lord, the founding chairman of the Metro Toronto Region Conservation Authority, wrote that the most attractive aspect of Ontario's conservation areas was that they offered a welcomed retreat from "the throbbing life of urban expansion," and that they ultimately served "as oases of peace for those who toil in the city."[93] Echoing the wartime notion that "the intellectual and the spiritual must all enter into the high task of rebuilding the nation,"[94] Lord argued that conservation areas provided a much-needed space that was essential to the rejuvenation of the human spirit. It was vitally important, he contended, to protect at least some of the natural beauty of Ontario's increasingly urbanized watersheds in order that "these valleys may echo with the laughter of children, so that young people may witness the ever-recurring miracle of spring, and so that parents may enjoy the solace of nature for tired bodies and minds."[95]

A conservation area, therefore, was not merely a place for leisure, it was a space in which people could be cured from the perceived ills of modern society. Nature, in its well-packaged form, had a profound healing power. Green spaces similar to the one depicted in Figure 3.1 assumed an almost mystical air. For modern city dwellers, this carefully-preserved natural scene provided the space in which they could recharge their souls, and perhaps rehabilitate their moral character. Even specific recreational activities were infused with profound spiritual and moral meaning. As one conservationist insisted, "boys who like to go fishing seldom go bad. Fishing is a sport which brings a boy into close communion with nature, with its beauty and mystery, which quicken the imagination and strengthen the appreciation of those values which are cosmic and eternal."[96] These values, of course, were fundamentally conservative ones, and were certainly reminiscent of an idealized Victorian past. (See Figure 3.2)

A second problem that the creation of conservation areas sought to remedy was the anxiety associated with the apparent problem of physical degeneration. One of the more troubling social problems for Ontario's postwar leaders was the perceived effect that city living was having on the physical fitness of the citizens of Ontario. Ontario's ruling elite worried that the proliferation of modern urban conveniences, though desirable from a strictly economic point of view, would ultimately lead to a "softening" of the people. By promoting activities that would get people out of the city and into the countryside, it was hoped that Ontario's citizens would benefit from the "health-giving qualities of the open air."[97] This was especially important where the province's male population was concerned. Faced with the possibility of growing "soft" in an increasingly "feminized" world of suburban luxury, nature provided men with the opportunity to "flex a few unused muscles."[98] Beyond providing opportunities to hunt

Figure 3.1 A rustic scene on the Don River, near Toronto, c.1946. (Reprinted from Ontario, Conservation in South Central Ontario, 28.)

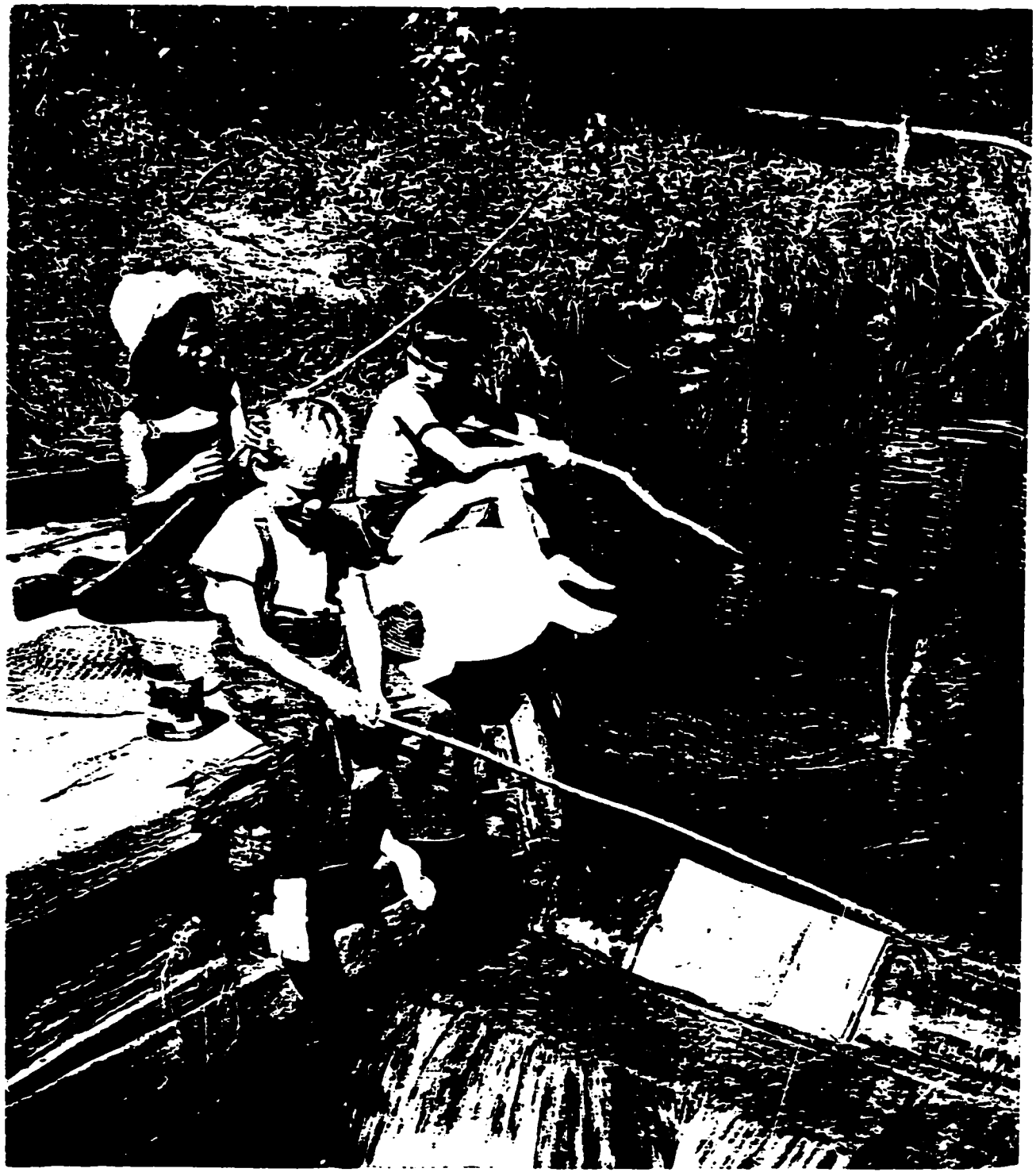

Figure 3.2 Boys fishing on the upper reaches of the Humber River c.1946. It is interesting to compare this photograph with the image of the "fisher-boy" in Figure 1.2. (Reprinted from Ontario, Conservation in South Central Ontario, 120.)

and fish, therefore, the conservation authorities also encouraged men to participate in actual conservation projects. Conservation areas, for example, provided men with the opportunity to participate in activities such as tree planting, ploughing demonstrations, and soil judging competitions. Conservationists even suggested that the acquisition of a plot of forested land in the country would be ideal for city men who might desire to manage small family woodlots of their own.[99] Such ventures would allow men to mix their toil and sweat with the land in wholesome work that ultimately would contribute to the physical rebuilding of postwar Ontario.[100]

The fishing ponds, hunting grounds, and woodlots of the province were more than just avenues of escape from the drudgery of urban life. In creating recreational space close to or within urban centres, conservation areas provided Ontarians, and especially men, with the necessary facilities to allow for the cultivation of strong, healthy bodies. This focus on physical fitness, in fact, coupled with the rejuvenating aspects of nature, would help to develop a citizenry that was not only physically fit, but also mentally fit.[101] Proper recreation facilities, it was thought, in conjunction with a clean and productive environment, would go a long way towards the creation of better and more productive citizens in the postwar era.

Conclusion

The resurgence of the conservation movement in Ontario was primarily fueled by the need to physically rebuild the province in the postwar period. As an integral facet of the postwar reconstruction process, the conservation authorities played a central role in rehabilitation of the province, and contributed in particular to the rapid development of Ontario's urban centres. However, as we have seen, the conservation authorities had a

secondary role to play in the rehabilitation of postwar Ontario, one which in some ways rivaled their primary flood-control function. Recognizing the moral implications of the reconstruction process, Ontario's conservation authorities consciously sought to create a landscape upon which the social and ultimately the cultural rehabilitation of the province could be played out. The significance of this carefully-constructed landscape will become even more apparent as we explore the romanticization of the farm in the next chapter.

Notes

[1] A.G. Huntsman, "Résumé," in Royal Society of Canada, The Wise Use of Our Resources: Papers from the Joint Session of Sections of the Royal Society of Canada, May 21, 1941 (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1942), 46.

[2] See A.H. Richardson, Conservation by the People: A History of the Conservation Movement in Ontario to 1970 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 149.

[3] Joseph Schull, Ontario Since 1867 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1978), 319.

[4] AO RG 49-123 C57 C04-09-1-11, "Personnel of the Ontario Social Security and Rehabilitation Committee," (1943?) Of the private citizens, there were two representatives from each of the following interest groups: labour, industry, agriculture, education and veterans' affairs. Two female members were also appointed to the Committee to represent the interests of Ontario's women. As on the federal level, women were treated as a special interest group whose voices remained largely peripheral within Canada's postwar planning circles (this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four).

[5] AO RG 49-123 C57 C04-09-1-11, "Ontario Provincial Reconstruction Agencies," n.d., 1. The Committee was also encouraged to devise strategies both for the organization and conservation of provincial resources, and for the extension of scientific research into the fields of industry and agriculture.

[6] AO RG 49-123 C57 C04-09-1-11, "Minutes of the First Meeting of The Ontario Social Security and Rehabilitation Committee," June 28, 1943.

[7] Schull, Ontario Since 1867, 312.

[8] Ibid., 302.

[9] Ibid., 302.

[10] Drew's stance caused a great deal of friction between himself and Prime Minister MacKenzie King. See David Slater, "Colour the Future Bright: The White Paper, the Green Book and the 1945-1946 Dominion-Provincial Conference on Reconstruction," in Uncertain Horizons: Canadians and Their World in 1945, ed. Greg Donaghy, (n.p.: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1997), 191-208. Though Drew promoted Ontario's sovereignty tirelessly, he was equally as fervent in his opposition to similar arguments made in Quebec.

[11] George Drew, "Address," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Report of Conference on Planning and Development held at Toronto, Ontario, May 8th and 9th, 1944 (Torornto: T.E. Bowman, 1944), 6.

[12] Ibid., 3-8.

[13] See, for example, Wallace, "Address," in Ibid., 12.

[14] Along with being the Provincial Treasurer, Frost was also the Minister of Mines. Frost was a popular and dynamic politician. Like George Drew, Frost was a veteran of World War I and a staunch supporter of the British Empire. He also cherished his country roots, and throughout his political career he carefully cultivated his small-town image. For a detailed biography of Frost, see Roger Graham, Old Man Ontario: Leslie M. Frost (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

[15] Cited in Schull, Ontario Since 1867, 313. For more on the life and political career of Leslie Frost, see Roger Graham, Old Man Ontario: Leslie M. Frost (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

[16] AO RG 49-123 C57 C04-09-1-11, "Ontario Provincial Reconstruction Agencies," n.d., 3.

[17] Drew, "Address," 8.

[18] Ibid., 3-4. Drew reiterated these ideas in his introductory remarks to Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Ontario: The Heart of the New World, Where Your Future Awaits (Toronto: n.p., 1944). Some of the noteworthy achievements of civilization that Drew mentioned were the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, and modern Europeans. In particular, Drew praised Paris, Athens and even Moscow as three of the most remarkable instances of urban planning and development.

[19] Wallace, "Address," 12.

[20] Hugh R. Pomeroy, "Address," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Report of Conference on Planning and Development, 16.

[21] Alan Coventry, "Address," in Ibid., 18 and 23.

[22] The appointment of Langford, a professor of mining geology at the University of Toronto, was particularly significant to the evolution of watershed management in postwar Ontario. As Director of the Department of Planning and Development, Langford, whose official position ranked higher than that of the Deputy Minister, had a substantial say in the direction the Department was to take. Langford was a primary consultant to A.H. Richardson's Conservation Branch, and thus also had an important impact on the eventual development of the province's numerous conservation authorities.

[23] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 21. See also AO, Pamphlet 1947, number 42, Dana Porter, "Flood Control: A Radio Address delivered April 16, 1947," 3.

[24] Dana Porter, "Address of Welcome," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Conservation in Eastern Ontario: Papers and Proceedings of the Conference on Conservation in Eastern Ontario held at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, February 2nd and 3rd, 1945 (Toronto: T.E. Bowman, 1946), 12.

[25] The Ontario Research Council was added to the Department of Planning and Development in 1947, while the Housing Branch was created in 1948. In 1953, the Department helped establish Regional Development Associations across Ontario.

[26] For an example of the promotional material distributed by Ontario House see Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Ontario: The Heart of the New World, Where Your Future Awaits. By the 1960s, other international offices similar to Ontario House had been established by the Trade and Industry Branch in Chicago, New York, Dusseldorf and Milan.

[27] Nowhere, it should be noted, did the Ontario government pursue immigrants more aggressively than in Britain. In fact, by 1947 the Immigration Branch, with the aid of Ontario House in London, England, began providing for "the transport by air of selected British immigrants to Ontario." AO, RG 1 K-3, box 20, Research Council of Ontario, miscellaneous memo, (1947).

[28] Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Ontario: The Heart of the New World, Where Your Future Awaits, 3. The language and sentiment of the eugenics movement that was barely concealed beneath statements like this in Ontario during the war runs at least partially counter to the position that Angus McLaren takes in Our Own Master Race. McLaren writes that by the 1940s "eugenic arguments had come to be viewed by the Western democracies as old-fashioned if not reactionary," as "those who had dabbled in eugenic speculation" in the 1930s sought "to distance themselves as much as possible from a movement whose basic principles had been plunged into disrepute" during the war. However, though Hitler's genocidal excesses in Europe undoubtedly compromised the credibility of eugenicists in Canada, a number of the nation's ruling elite expressed opinions which essentially

challenge McLaren's assertion that eugenics had lost its popular appeal in Canada during the 1940s. Indeed, as Royal Society Fellow A.G. Huntsman suggested in 1942, "control of the character of the human population that comes to us through immigration and generation deserves consideration [within the context of postwar reconstruction]." As a complicated "process of selection," he added, immigration posed a "ticklish problem of deciding what racial strains are best." Despite the fact that Nazi atrocities in Europe had dampened the spirit of eugenicists in Canada in general, the popular notions of racial purity and superiority, it seems, continued to have considerable currency within the privileged circles of Ontario's ruling elite. See McLaren, Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990), 9 and 147-8; and Huntsman, "Résumé," 42.

[29] Drew, "Address," 6-7. Earlier in his speech, Drew paid tribute to the British for their "courage to use their own human energy and to refuse to believe that they can be beaten either in war or in peace." 5.

[30] NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, volume 15, file 30, "Speech on Reconstruction: Editorial," (July 1944), n.p..

[31] For an example of this sort of anxiety see Coventry, "Address," 18.

[32] Evelyn Bronwell and S. Gordon Scott, A Study of Holland Marsh: Its Reclamation and Development (Toronto: King's Printer, 1949), 6.

[33] Ibid., 6.

[34] Wallace, "Address," 10.

[35] Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, "Urban Renewal Notes," (September 1958), 1.

[36] Robert Newton, "Agriculture and Forestry," in Royal Society of Canada, The Wise Use of Our Resources, 16. "Our most important and fundamental resource," he insisted, "is the people of this country."

[37] Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction (Ottawa: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 1943), i. Canadians, it was argued, "should be second to none in the world." See also L.R. Webber, in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Conservation in Eastern Ontario, 118. The aim of conservation within the context of postwar reconstruction, he wrote, should be the creation of a "healthy race."

[38] Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, 3.

[39] According to one Department of Planning and Development publication, these conditions would ensure that "the average Canadian" could afford a "five-room bungalow...standing on its own grounds, with a lawn in front, a garden in the rear" and a garage "to house his car." See Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Ontario: The Heart of the New World, Where Your Future Awaits, 26.

[40] AO, RG 1 K-3, box 20, Research Council of Ontario, miscellaneous file, minutes of Research Advisory Council (December 1, 1944) 2. A.H. Richardson was the chairman of the Research Advisory Council. Other notable members of the Council were Coventry, Dallyn, Leggett, and Langford.

[41] In addition to Richardson, the initial staff consisted of C.E. Bush, engineer; Leslie Laking , land use specialist; Verschoyle B. Blake, historian; H.J. Christian, accountant; Dr. G. Ross Lord, hydraulic engineering consultant; and A.S.L. Barnes, forester. Barnes was hand-picked by Richardson to be his assistant. By the early 1950s, the following men had been added to the staff: K.M. Mayall, wildlife and recreation specialist; J.W. Murray, hydraulic engineer; H.F. Crown, agriculturalist; and Dr. F.D. Ide, consultant in fish culture. Both Ide and Lord were professors at the University of Toronto. Lord would later become chairman of the Metro Toronto Region Conservation Authority.

[42] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 26.

[43] Bruce Mitchell and Daniel Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality (Waterloo: University of Waterloo Department of Geography, 1992), 64.

[44] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 25.

[45] A.H. Richardson, Conservation Authorities in Southern Ontario (Toronto: Department of Planning and Development, 1953), 3.

[46] In spite of overwhelming government support for Richardson's legislation, Bill 81 was not tabled in 1945, as an altercation between the ruling Conservatives and the opposition CCF forced Premier Drew to dissolve the legislature mid-session and to call an election (which the Conservatives ultimately won).

[47] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 28.

[48] Of these thirty-four conservation authorities, seven were later involved in amalgamations to create larger authorities. Thus, under Richardson's direction, twenty-seven of the present thirty-eight conservation authorities in Ontario were created.

[49] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 142. Richardson's concept of grassroots democracy was first employed in the context of conservation by David E. Lilienthal, one of the three original directors of the TVA. The title of Richardson's book, in fact, is distinctly reminiscent of TVA: Democracy on the March, the title to Lilienthal's highly partisan history of the TVA, first published in 1944. In terms of conservation historiography, there is no shortage of critical analyses of Lilienthal's notion of grassroots democracy. See in particular Philip Selznick, TVA and the Grassroots: A Study in the Sociology of Formal Organization (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949); Erwin C. Hargrove, Prisoners of Myth: The Leadership of the Tennessee Valley Authority, 1933-1990 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994); and Steven M. Neuse, David E. Lilienthal: The Journey of an American Liberal (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1996).

[50] Richardson, Conservation Authorities in Southern Ontario, 3.

[51] Even within the urban community, as we shall see, the "voice of the people" was limited to the very narrow interests of a select elite. In particular, the implementation of advisory boards, ostensibly created so that "the work of conservation can become the personal concern of each individual living in the valley", effectively limited participation in conservation authority decision making to a select few. As Mitchell and Shrubsole suggest, the advisory boards were typically comprised of former conservation authority directors and other local citizens with a vested political or economic interest in a specific conservation project or program. See Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Conservation Authorities in Ontario: Prepared for the Members of the Legislature (Toronto: n.p., 1955) 13; and Mitchell and Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, 98.

[52] AO RG 1 A-1-9, box 5, file 3, "Task Force on Disposition of Conservation Authorities Branch," Appendix F (1970?), 13. There was a distinct effort in the immediate postwar era to "sell" the ideas of watershed conservation to farmers by means of educational talks and the distribution of conservation literature. Such efforts, however, were met with much resistance. Many people reluctantly sold their property in order to facilitate various conservation authority projects. Still others had to be literally forced off their land.

[53] This was a problem that all watershed conservation agencies in North America faced. Take, for example, the MWCD. In the development of extensive flood control projects, often "[entire] villages were relocated, and so were hundreds of miles of railroads, highways and public utilities." Some private citizens fought in courts over the acquisition of their land, but these people were regarded as "anti-progressive" elements of society. Though

"delayed now and then" by protest, "the progress was never stopped." See Hal Jenkins, A Valley Renewed: The History of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (n.p.: Kent State University Press, 1976), 171.

[54] For examples see Ontario, Our Valley 2/1 (1956), 28; 2/2 (1956), 40; 3/2 (1957), 12; and 3/2 (1957), 42. Our Valley was published twice a year between 1955 and 1960. It was, in essence, a collection of semi-annual reports of existing conservation authorities from across the province.

[55] Ontario, Our Valley 3/2 (1957), 42. This quotation comes from a profile of Bruce H. Smith, Chairman of the Moira River Conservation Authority.

[56] "Leaders in Conservation" were typically active members of organizations like the Freemasons or the Rotary Club, and more often than not were influential members of the local Chamber of Commerce. (Ontario's many Chambers of Commerce, as well as Rotary Clubs, were particularly active in supporting the conservation movement in the postwar era.)

[57] Successive Conservative premiers in Ontario between 1930 and 1961 came to power with strong support from the farming population, especially in Southern Ontario. George Stewart Henry (1930-1934), George Drew (1943-1948) and Leslie Frost (1948-1961) all played on their rural roots as a means of generating political support amongst farmers and city-folk alike, and each worked hard throughout his term as Premier to strengthen or maintain his rural appeal.

[58] Ibid., 42. There were other practical political advantages to be had by claiming one's rural roots. As a former "country man" Smith, for example, was considered "well fitted to mediate between urban and rural interests, as is required of an Authority Chairman and Leader in Conservation."

[59] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 27 and 17.

[60] G. Ross Lord, introduction to Richardson, Conservation by the People, xi; and Mitchell and Shrubsole, Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality, 63.

[61] Ibid., 63.

[62] The two other tours were in 1954 and 1957. For a brief report of the 1954 tour see Ontario, Our Valley 1/1 (1955), 42-44.

[63] Watson H. Porter, On To Muskingum: Ontario Conservation Authorities Tour to the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, September 27 to October 1 (Toronto: King's Printer, 1948), 10. It is important to note that though ecological principles were a mainstay of conservation authority rhetoric in the postwar era, the authorities themselves were reluctant to devise truly ecological strategies where flood control was concerned. Conservationists clearly recognized that "floods are increasing in frequency and violence in Canada as man continues to upset the balance of nature." However, instead of seeking to limit the imposition of "man" on the environment, the conservation authorities opted for structures of concrete and steel to control and subdue nature rather than intensive reforestation and soil conservation programs to restore its balance. Dams, not trees, were the solution. A government report compiled in the mid-1960s typified the prevailing attitude toward the postwar development of flood-control measures in Ontario. The report noted that "while good forestry and land-use practices will serve in some measure to reduce floods, flood control is really accomplished in most instances by engineering structures." As a result of such thinking, flood control therefore did much to change the landscape. In the building of the dams, hundreds of acres of land – typically farm land upstream from the more heavily populated settlements which were to be the main benefactors of flood control – were flooded to create extensive reservoirs. But dams did more than just effect significant changes in the land. By altering the course of rivers to better fit the needs of human communities, and by manipulating stream flow and creating artificial lakes, the construction of flood-control structures invariably compromised the ecological integrity of the entire watershed. See O.M. McConkey, Conservation in Canada

(Toronto: J.M. Dent and sons, 1952), 7; and Ontario, Department of Energy and Resources Management, Annual Report 1965-1966 (Toronto: n.p., 1966), 8. See also Richardson, Conservation by the People, 35.

[64] Watson H. Porter, On To Muskingum, 58.

[65] Ibid., 58.

[66] Ibid., 59. This remained a popular and pervasive sentiment. See for example Our Valley 1/1 (1955), 29. If properly reforested, stated a conservation official, "many thousand acres of land suited only for forestry purposes" would certainly prove to be "a profitable undertaking."

[67] Of course, forestry programs undertaken by the conservation authorities were limited almost exclusively to Southern Ontario. The vast percentage of Ontario's forests, particularly its northern forests, remained under the jurisdiction of the Department of Lands and Forests. It is also important to note that forest management programs initiated by the conservation authorities were administered jointly with the Department of Lands and Forests.

[68] Watson H. Porter, On To Muskingum, 9.

[69] Ibid., 5.

[70] Ibid., 9. See also W.J.K Harkness, "Utilization of Fish and Game Resources of Ontario," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Conservation in Eastern Ontario, 34.

[71] Porter, On To Muskingum, 9. During a similar tour conducted of the MWCD in 1954, Bryce Browning, Secretary-manager of Muskingum, reiterated the importance of recreation to any comprehensive watershed management strategy, arguing that recreation represented "the extra dividends of a solidly conceived conservation program." See Ontario, Our Valley 1/1 (1955), 43.

[72] Watson H. Porter, On To Muskingum, 8.

[73] Ibid., 9.

[74] As Richardson argued, most authorities were brought into being simply "because of flooding within their areas." See Richardson, Conservation Authorities in Southern Ontario, 3.

[75] Richardson gives a brief account of interwar flooding in Ontario in Conservation by the People, 29-32.

[76] Ontario, Department of Lands and Forests, Annual Report, 1961-1962 (Toronto: n.p., 1962), 26.

[77] Between 1946 and 1962, over fourteen million dollars were spent by Ontario's conservation authorities on flood control measures. See Ibid., 47.

[78] G. Ross Lord, introduction to Richardson, Conservation by the People, ix.

[79] See for example AO RG 25, box 2, "Supplement 'A' to the Brief on Flood Control Dams and Conservation Reservoirs for the Humber Watershed: Determination of the Cost-Benefit Ratio and Water Conservation for the Proposed Scheme," (February, 1955).

[80] Ontario, Department of Energy and Resource Management, Annual Report: 1969-1970 (Toronto, n.p., 1970), 23. Though there are no accurate statistics available to determine the extent to which the land set aside for recreation was utilized by the people of Ontario between 1946 and the mid-1950s, it is evident that by the end of the decade the use of conservation areas was steadily increasing. In 1957, the first year for which accurate statistics are available, campers and day visitors to conservation areas in Ontario numbered .2 million. By 1960, that number

had grown to 1.58 million. By 1969, visitation stood at 3.7 million, with 1.5 million annual visitors to Metro Toronto Region Conservation Authority sites alone.

[81] Watson H. Porter, On To Muskingum, 33. Given the need to develop recreation facilities that were easily accessible to a large number of people, conservation authorities determined that "good access from first-class highways" was also "essential."

[82] Ibid., 9-10.

[83] Events like these were common, and are catalogued in Our Valley. At one such event, a Junior Trout-Fishing Day, sponsored by the Humber River Conservation Authority in 1956, a total of 563 fish were caught in a single afternoon.

[84] It is interesting to note that many of the province's conservation authority leaders were active members of local Fish and Game clubs. See for example Ontario, Our Valley 2/2 (1956), 40; and 3/2 (1957), 42.

[85] AO RG 1 474, box 1, "Additional Information re: Economics and Wildlife Management," (1966), 1.

[86] Ibid., 1. See also Harkness, "Utilization of Fish and Game Resources of Ontario," 33-4.

[87] Ontario, Department of Lands and Forests, Annual Report: 1961-1962, 28-9. These guidelines served as a precursor for the wetlands evaluation model devised by the Ministry of Natural Resources in the 1970s. See AO RG 1, 247, box 1, "A Systematic Method of Wetland Evaluation," (1970).

[88] Ontario, Our Valley 2/2 (1956), 23.

[89] Watson H. Porter, On to Muskingum, 9.

[90] Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation, 151. See also Ontario, Our Valley 2/2 (1956), 32.

[91] The end of World War II marked the beginning of a long awaited period of sustained economic growth in Canada. Though Canadians had feared a return of conditions similar to those that had plagued the nation throughout the Depression, the postwar economic depression which had worried many reconstruction planners during the war simply did not materialize. Despite a brief economic downturn which followed the war, and a short recession at the end of the 1950s, the country's economy flourished throughout the postwar period at a level which rivaled the boom years of the Progressive era. The Gross National Product, which had languished at an annual per capita rate of roughly 1% through the interwar years, climbed to a healthy rate of 2.8% per year between 1939 and 1960. Moreover, having been successfully re-converted to meet the demands of peacetime production, the nation's industrial sector thrived in a postwar climate of economic stability and confidence. In turn, the jobs which had been promised to returned servicemen and women proved to be plentiful, and incomes were maintained at levels that were generally sufficient to provide many Canadians with a comfortable existence for themselves and their families. In Ontario, as in the rest of the country, the postwar economic boom fueled a decade and a half of development that was as ambitious as it was diverse. Backed by the Department of Planning and Development's "progressive" vision for Ontario, extensive public works projects were initiated throughout the province. Cities grew as suburbs were developed to accommodate the growing middle class. The real per capita income for the province's citizens rose at an average rate of 2.7% per year from $1,641 in 1941 to $2,557 in 1960. For all practical purposes, the economic unrest that had characterized the interwar years had been avoided, and postwar reconstruction could be considered an economic success. The resulting economic security was welcomed by an entire generation that had come of age during the Depression, and Ontarians generally had more leisure time and disposable income to finally "enjoy those things that help to make up the good life." See Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Ontario's Industrial Development: Review of a Decade, Preview of the 1960s (Toronto: King's Printer, 1961), 5; F.H. Leacy, ed., Historical Statistics of Canada, 2nd edition (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1983); Gerald

Killan, Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Provincial Park System (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 75; and The National Film Board of Canada, "Careers and Cradles," (1947).

[92] Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), 143. Many Canadian scholars have made similar observations, especially in the context of urbanization in Canada at the turn of the century. See, for example, George Altmeyer, "Three Ideas of Nature, 1893-1914," Journal of Canadian Studies 11/3 (August 1976), 21-36; and Patricia Jasen, Wild Things: Nature, Culture and Tourism in Ontario, 1790-1914 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), in particular Chapter Five.

[93] G. Ross Lord, in Richardson, Conservation by the People, xi.

[94] Robert A. Falconer, letter to the Committee of Council, in Royal Society of Canada, The Wise Use of Our Resources, 48. Elaborating on his point, Falconer claimed that along with "plenty of food, shelter, and well-distributed external [sic] goods...the development of individual powers of intellect, heart, emotion, and will" must be given equal consideration in reconstruction planning. "The individual," he continued, "must become master of himself and his physical environment."

[95] G. Ross Lord, in Richardson Conservation by the People, xi.

[96] Ontario, Our Valley, 2/2 (1956), 41.

[97] George Haythorne and Leonard Marsh, Land and Labour: A Social Survey of Agriculture and the Farm Labour Market in Central Canada (Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1941), 57-8.

[98] Peter Harvie, "A Woodlot is a Family Affair," Watersheds 5/1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1970), 17.

[99] The idea of the family woodlot remained popular well into the 1970s.

[100] There is an interesting connection here between the promotion of family woodlots and the Veteran's Land Act (VLA), a federal initiative which was created in 1942 and was not discontinued until 1975. As Richard Harris and Tricia Shulist claim, one of the main ideas behind the VLA was to encourage returned soldiers to resettle on the land, and to take up farming. However, recognizing that this was not entirely practical, the authors of this plan decided that part-time farming of small rural plots should also be promoted. Part of the thinking was that this would "get the veteran out of the city and into the country." See Richard Harris and Tricia Shulist, "Canada's Reluctant Housing Program: the Veteran's Land Act, 1942-1975," Canadian Historical Review 82/2 (June 2001), 260.

[101] Both mental "ignorance" and physical "ill-health" were considered by postwar planners as "evils to be banished" from Canadian society. See Canadian Chamber of Commerce, A Program for Reconstruction, i. The relationship of "ill-health" to "ignorance" or "personal deficiency" in the context of Canadian nation-building in the twentieth century is discussed by Angus McClaren and Cynthia Comacchio. See McClaren, Our Own Master Race, 31; and Comacchio, Nations are Built of Babies: Saving Ontario's Mothers and Children (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 9-10.

Chapter Four
Citizen Farmers And Monogamous Geese: Conservation and the Socio-Cultural Reconstruction of Postwar Ontario, 1946-1961

Introduction

Flood control, recreation and, to a more limited extent, forestry were the cornerstones of the conservation authority movement in the postwar era. There was, however, a fourth aspect of the conservation authority program - namely, conservation on the farm - which has not yet been discussed. The connection between the urban-based conservation authorities and Ontario's farms is perhaps one of the most intriguing aspects of the conservation authority program, primarily because the practical scientific impact that the conservation authorities had on agriculture in the province was minimal. In fact, problems associated with soil conservation, desiccation, and agriculture in general fell under the purview of the Department of Agriculture, and not the Department of Planning and Development. However, though farm conservation programs remained peripheral to the conservation authority mandate, idealized images of both the rural landscape and the traditional family farmer were nevertheless central to conservation authority discourse between 1946 and the early 1960s. A fuller exploration of the significance of this "farm romance" will contribute to a better understanding of the underlying social and cultural agenda of Ontario's postwar conservation movement.

Romancing the Farm

Ontario's idealization of the farm in the postwar period was largely derivative of the collective anxiety that had been generated during the 1930s, and was thus intimately tied to the broader context of postwar reconstruction in Canada. Indeed, one of the more serious

problems addressed during the war by reconstructionists in Ontario, and thus also by conservationists, was the plight of the nation's farms. Ontario's postwar planners, like most Canadians, recognized that the country's agricultural heritage - and with it the land and its people - had suffered incredibly in the interwar period. What at one time had been a symbol of Canada's strength and promise as a nation quite simply had collapsed under the combined pressure of depression and drought. Though farmers across the country had begun to show modest signs of recovery by 1939, there were no truly effective mechanisms or plans in place to prevent such an environmental catastrophe in the future. It is not difficult to imagine, therefore, why reconstruction planners would have discussed in great detail the pressing need to develop comprehensive farm rehabilitation schemes for the postwar period.

Economic considerations were recognized as being one of the principle motivations for the implementation of farm rehabilitation projects. Canadians could not afford another agricultural disaster, especially not in the context of postwar reconstruction. An agricultural failure of any kind would certainly jeopardize the efforts to "win the peace" in the immediate postwar period. The rehabilitation of Canada's farms, therefore, was considered to be one of the keys to a successful program of postwar reconstruction. Reconstructionists like J.R. MacNicol assured Canadians that the implementation of extensive conservation programs aimed at eradicating the problems of soil erosion and desiccation would undoubtedly result in increased agricultural efficiency, and would thus maximize both the productivity and ultimately the profitability of Canada's farms. Such conditions would not only make for "happy farmers," but would also help to rejuvenate rural communities across the country by generating jobs and infusing money into local economies.[1] MacNicol also claimed that a booming agricultural sector would create sizeable industrial demands. "One can scarcely

comprehend," he suggested, "the orders for manufactured goods" that would inevitably be placed by farmers throughout the country. Using Alberta as an example, MacNicol wrote that "one can appreciate how pleased a bag factory would be to receive an order for the 18,000,000 bags required to bag the sugar produced from Alberta sugar beets," or "how pleased a can factory would be to receive an order for the millions of cans required to can Alberta corn, peas and other crops."[2] There would also be an increased demand for tractors and other equipment, a fact which was bound to be enticing to manufacturers as far removed as Toronto, Montreal or even Halifax. MacNicol was confident, therefore, that farm conservation programs would contribute greatly to the "national wealth" in the postwar period.[3]

Sentiments like MacNicol's were popular amongst Canada's political leaders during the war. Yet, at the same time, reconstruction planners also expressed a profound concern over the fate of Canada's farmers and their families. Though the "economic aspects" of soil and water conservation were, of course, significant, the overall welfare of the "individual" farmer, it was argued, should in no way be subordinated completely to the technological or material progress of the nation.[4] As Harold Innis boldly declared in a wartime speech on conservation, "the enormous... literature on the conservation of material resources" needed to be complemented with a more clearly articulated interest "in human resources."[5] Innis implied that if Canada's postwar planners and leaders allowed the social and cultural decay of the interwar period to persist, Canadians in general would certainly be ill-prepared to tackle the problems associated with the rebuilding of the nation, no matter how rich the country itself might become. The task of any conservation program, Innis argued, should be concerned as much with the rehabilitation and preservation of social and cultural values as it was with the wise use of resources.

These notions regarding the socio-cultural significance of conservation within the context of postwar reconstruction were developed even further by Robert Newton, an academic who during the war was Acting President of the University of Alberta and, like Innis, a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. Newton was concerned with the welfare of the farmer, in particular. Like many other prominent Canadians, Newton held the traditional Canadian farmer in high esteem.[6] In a speech entitled "Agriculture and Forestry" given in 1941, Newton called for a careful and sensitive treatment of Canada's farm crisis, and advocated the implementation of agricultural policies that would take into account the privileged though endangered status of the Canadian farmer. There was, he seemed to suggest, something sacred about the traditional relationship between the farmer, the land and the nation. Newton proclaimed that "the three-quarters of a million farm families occupying over 163 million acres of Mother Canada are in very truth bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh." He continued by arguing that "farming is the primal and natural way of living; it is only secondarily a way of making a cash income."[7] Newton insisted that the intimate connection between the farmer and the land that he worked needed to be protected. It was as if the welfare of the entire nation depended on the preservation of this traditional agrarian institution. Though undoubtedly a romantic notion, the essence of Newton's appeal would find a sympathetic audience during the war, and would continue to have a great deal of currency throughout the postwar period.[8]

The general ideas put forward by MacNicol, Innis and Newton on the federal level were ultimately echoed in the reconstruction programs devised on the provincial level. In Ontario, for example, the rehabilitation of the province's farms, and thus also of its farmers, was an important topic of discussion both during and immediately following the war. The significance of agriculture to Ontario's postwar reconstruction program was certainly made evident in the

Report of the Select Committee on Conservation released by the provincial government in 1950. Compiled by a Select Committee of the provincial legislature, the report, which was nearly two years in the making, was the product of extensive research, the bulk of which was taken from over one hundred briefs that had been presented by organizations and individuals from across the province. The scope of the report was broad, covering a wide range of conservation issues that reflected the government's overall project for the physical and moral rehabilitation of the province. Though flood control and forest conservation occupied much of the discussion, agriculture (and with it the plight of the province's numerous farming communities) was also a main source of concern for those who presented briefs to the Select Committee on Conservation.

For obvious reasons, the state of the province's soil resources garnered a great deal of attention. The situation, as many perceived it, was nothing short of grim. Decades of poor land-use management had created conditions on Ontario's farms that were so severe that by the 1940s they warranted a comparison with the devastation wrought by the Dust Bowl on the Prairies.[9] Conservationists blamed existing agricultural conditions on a number of factors, chief among them overgrazing, obsolete ploughing methods, improper drainage, a poor system of crop rotation and the intensive cultivation of hilly and marginal lands.[10] The key to any successful farm rehabilitation scheme, therefore, would be a comprehensive program of soil conservation, one which would take full advantage of the "scientific weapons which are at our command."[11] To underscore the importance of soil conservation, the authors of the report argued that "soil is not just the material on which we build buildings, it is the stuff empires are made of. No nation can prosper if its basic agriculture is declining."[12] They continued: "Soil,

as we see it, is our heritage from the dead and our dowry to countless numbers yet unborn; it represents the future at our feet."[13]

The focus on soil as a vitally important provincial resource was unique within the broader context of the report. It was, in fact, idealized in a way that other resources were not. The romanticization of the farm that was present in Robert Newton's speech, for instance, was also evident in the views on soil conservation proffered by Ontario's Select Committee on Conservation. Unlike any other resource that was discussed in the report, soil alone was revered for its profound life-giving qualities. It was, in short, regarded as "the basis of life."[14] Again, the intimate connection between agriculture and civilization, and between the land and the culture it supported, was an underlying yet distinct theme. Indeed, "man himself" was regarded as the chief product of the soil. The authors of the report maintained that "from the soil come the quality of his bone and muscle, and the state of his health."[15] There was, in fact, a distinct connection drawn between a healthy environment and robust, productive citizens, almost as if the land alone was responsible for the physical character of those who lived on it. But it was not just the physical body of "man" that owed its vitality to a sacred bond with the earth. One's moral character was also forged upon the land. In the words of the report, "man is what he is because of where he is in relation to the soil. His energy, his ability to think, and his very disposition come from the soil on which he walks."[16] Implicit in this statement was the notion that the further removed "man" was from the land, the more questionable his character would become.

It was against this romanticized notion of the land that an analysis of the state of the province's farms was presented. Though soil erosion was regarded as the most pressing of the province's agricultural predicaments, none of the problems facing Ontario's farms was left

unexplored. The report, for instance, studied the declining rural demographic, and discussed the need for programs that would keep people, in particular young people, on the farms. Stating that many rural areas of the province had supported a "population that was much greater 80 years ago than it is today," the authors of the report argued that swift and decisive action would be needed in order to reverse the decline of Ontario's farms.[17] Improved farm conditions, it was thought, would entice farmers to remain on their family farmsteads, and might also encourage others who had already abandoned their farms to return to the agricultural fold.

In addition to the fate of rural populations, the report also raised the issue of the physical degeneration of farming communities themselves. The decline of Ontario's once-prosperous farms, it was argued, had given rise to "rural slums" throughout the province.[18] The Select Committee was careful to point out that in many areas of the province, poorly managed farm land was being overtaken by "sparse pastures, weeds, and derelict houses."[19] The principal concern was that the existence of these rural slums would have a detrimental impact on the physical well-being and moral character of the citizens of the province. This idea, in fact, was pervasive in postwar conservation discourse, and was especially evident in the images that the province's conservation authorities employed in their various publications between 1946 and the early 1960s. The Conservation Branch photos shown in Figure 4.1, for example, coupled with the illustrations in Figure 4.2, provide a good indication of the widespread belief held by conservationists and reconstructionists alike that "poor land makes poor people."[20] The message conveyed by images like these was that drastic measures needed to be taken in order to repair the damage caused by years of neglect. Naturally, conservation would be the key to the physical rebuilding of the province's farms and rural areas.

Figure 4.1 An indication that "poor land makes poor people." (Conservation Branch photo, reprinted from O.M. McConkey, Conservation in Canada, 186.)

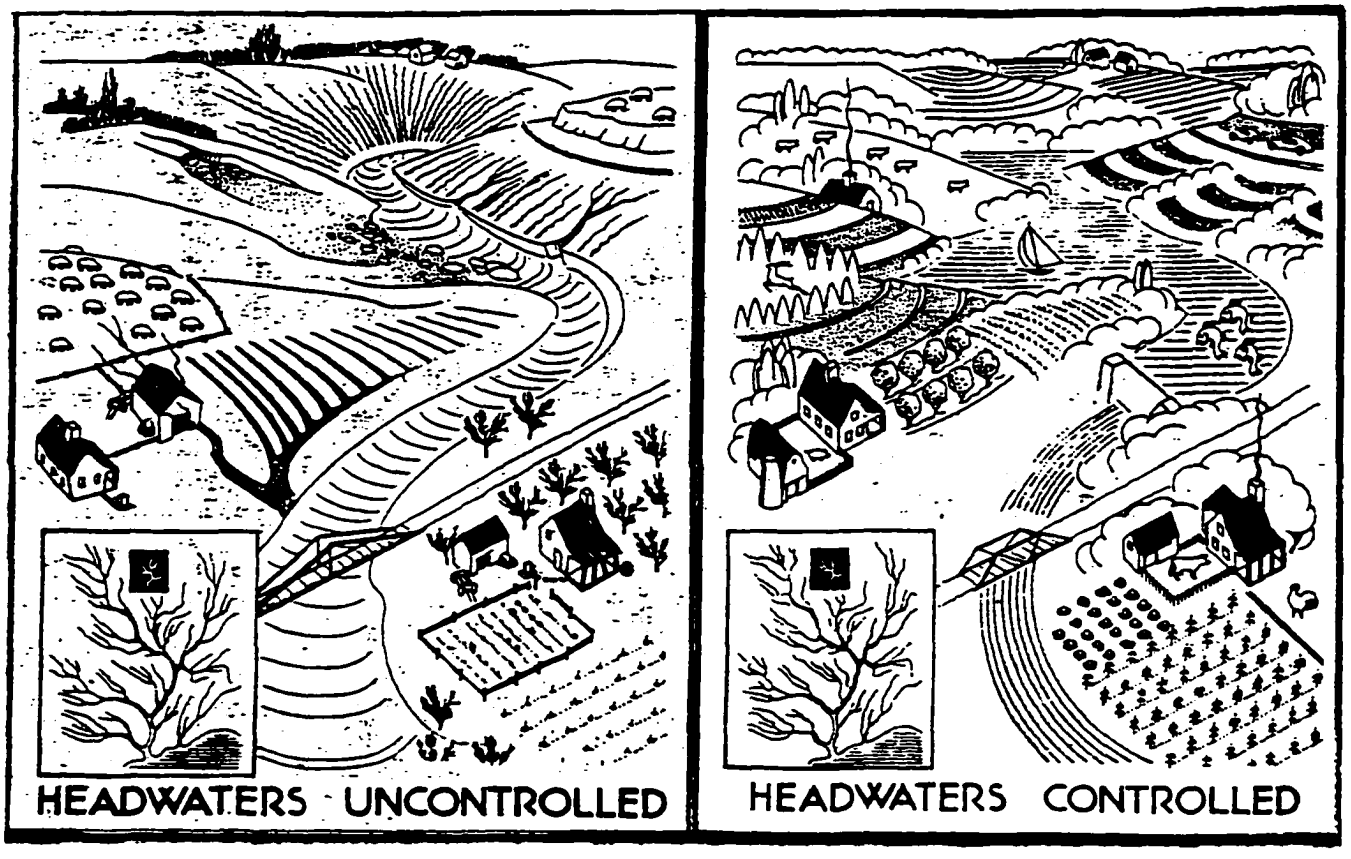

Figure 4.2 A diagram adapted from a United States Department of Agriculture publication illustrating the benefits of watershed conservation. (Reprinted from Ontario, Conservation in Eastern Ontario, 20-21.)

In general, the wartime and postwar discourse surrounding the need for comprehensive farm rehabilitation schemes was punctuated by a distinct sense of loss. Conservationists and postwar planners alike expressed their concern over the visible depletion of soil resources, and in turn lamented the decline of rural populations and communities. Though farm rehabilitation programs were implemented quickly after the war, this sense of loss was only enhanced during the postwar period. Residents in Southern Ontario in particular watched as cities developed and as new expressways cut their way across fertile fields and valleys.[21] They also witnessed the ever-widening sprawl of suburbia as it quickly devoured the once highly-productive soil that lay on the immediate outskirts of urban centres.[22]

It was not, however, merely physical space that was being lost. Tied up with this traditional agrarian space was a conservative worldview which, having been severely challenged in the interwar period, was now in danger of disappearing with the land itself. As one advocate of postwar farm rehabilitation wrote, "country life has set a high moral standard in the past" and must therefore be reclaimed as a necessary counterbalance to "the confusion that exists in the world today."[23] The preservation of the agrarian ideal, though purportedly aimed at the province's rural population, was recognized as being important, if not essential, to Ontario's urban population. As Alan Coventry stated in his keynote address to the Conference on Planning and Development in 1944, "the reconstruction and conservation of the countryside is by no means a matter of interest to the countryside alone."[24] In fact, the renewal of the rural aesthetic in Ontario was regarded as being vitally important in terms of its overriding "social implications" for the entire province.[25] Stressing the bond between the city and the country, Coventry argued that the rehabilitation of the countryside would play an integral role in Ontario's reconstruction effort. Of course, Coventry, like so many others, had a specific

relationship in mind. Though city folk would bring material civilization to the agricultural hinterland, it was rural Ontario that would provide the moral landscape upon which social and cultural values could be forged after the war.[26]

Fueled by the desire to return the countryside to its former glory, the Ontario government, in conjunction with various agencies throughout the province, actively pursued a detailed program of rural improvement in the postwar period, one which focused a great deal of attention on the renewal of the rural aesthetic itself. The program that was adopted was indeed comprehensive, so much so that it did not overlook seemingly minor details such as the "painting of weathered mailboxes standing at farmyard gates."[27] The restoration of farm buildings, and in particular the farm house, was of central importance to the provincial farm rehabilitation scheme. There was, it was thought, "a definite connection between the good-looking farm home and the well-managed farm."[28] Though one of the principal goals of farm conservation was to enhance agricultural productivity, there can be no doubt as to the overwhelming significance of the renewed rural aesthetic itself. According to the Select Committee on Conservation, "there is no finer sight than the well-tended farmstead, protected by trees and grass, blending naturally into the splendid setting of a productive farm."[29] Beyond the farm house, therefore, an effort was also made to reforest marginal agricultural land in order to enhance the visual appeal of the typical rural scene. The importance of the rural aesthetic, in fact, only rose in significance throughout the postwar era as Ontario's citizens grew increasingly mobile. As Alexander Wilson notes, with the rise of "pleasure driving" as "an increasingly popular form of outdoor recreation," the revitalized farm landscape in general became an important scenic backdrop for the leisurely weekend get-away from the city.[30]

It was in this context that A.H. Richardson's Conservation Branch, along with individual conservation authorities, actively encouraged - and even financially supported - farm conservation schemes that ultimately complemented the broader provincial plans for the rehabilitation of rural Ontario in the postwar period. Of course, given the predominantly urban focus of the conservation authorities, farm conservation remained a relatively peripheral program. In fact, aside from sponsoring soil and ploughing demonstrations at conservation areas throughout the province, the conservation authorities had very little impact on the practical aspects of farm conservation. Instead, the role that the conservation authorities played in the rehabilitation of the province's farms was limited to projects devoted almost exclusively to the renewal of the idealized rural aesthetic.

The rehabilitation of the farm woodlot was one such project that the conservation authorities sponsored throughout the postwar period. The farm woodlot, which had been "neglected" in the interwar period, was considered to be an important component of the idealized farm landscape, and hence needed to be rehabilitated in order to contribute to the overall "pleasantness of the countryside."[31] Thus, in the 1950s, under the auspices of Richardson's Conservation Branch, conservation authorities across the province devised tree-planting programs that offered farmers both financial and technical assistance in order to encourage them to revive woodlots on their property. Those farmers who applied to the conservation authorities were given a substantial number of saplings at no cost (the number of "free trees" varied from one authority to the next). Often tree-planting machines were made available free of charge (even in cases where a rental fee was charged, the cost was heavily subsidized by the authority.) Richardson, himself a forester by training, was particularly proud of the program, and was pleased with its overall popularity. Though popular and largely

successful throughout the 1950s, the program was nevertheless expensive, and was eventually phased out in the early 1960s.[32]

Even more successful than the farm woodlot program, however, was a similar program devoted to the rehabilitation - or in some cases the actual creation - of farm ponds. Again, individual conservation authorities offered financial assistance, equipment, and practical technical advice to rural watershed residents. During the 1950s literally hundreds of farm ponds were created or restored throughout the province.[33] In some cases, these ponds served an important agricultural function, either as a source for the irrigation of crops or the watering of livestock. In yet other instances, the significance of the farm pond was viewed from a strictly recreational point of view. A large farm pond, for example, provided the opportunity for boating in one's own back yard. If properly stocked, the farm pond would also become an ideal fishing hole (see Figure 4.3). However, over and above any practical function it might have served, the farm pond was viewed as an integral aspect of the romanticized farm landscape. As Figure 4.4 illustrates, the stylized farm pond was very much an extension of the rural living space. The image that was conveyed was one of order, health and prosperity. In conjunction with the revitalized woodlot, the farm pond was thus a vital component of the rehabilitated farm landscape.

It should be noted that the preservation of the rural aesthetic was also important within the city itself. Of course, the conservation authorities had no desire to reverse the trend of urban development in the postwar era. Instead, they sought to diminish the overall visual impact of urban growth by creating and maintaining pockets of green space that in themselves approximated the idealized image of the rustic rural landscape. A report submitted by the Don Valley Conservation Authority in 1956 is indicative of the kind of urban green space that the

Figure 4.3 The farm pond as fishing hole. (Reprinted from Ontario, Conservation in Eastern Ontario, 26.)

Figure 4.4 The farm pond as an integral component of the idealized rural landscape. (Reprinted from Ontario, Conservation in Eastern Ontario, 25.)

conservation authorities wanted to preserve or recreate. Speaking to conditions on Toronto's Don River Valley, the report indicated that every effort should be made to save those areas where development "has not yet marred the rural scene." In part, the "rural scene" functioned merely as a space in which "the lover of nature may take his family for a ramble and picnic."[34] However, this space had a significance which went beyond its mere recreational function. Infused with profound social and cultural meaning, the recreated rural aesthetic was central to the re-civilizing mission of Ontario's postwar planners. As a fundamental manifestation of the postwar reconstruction process, this idealized landscape played an important role in reconstructing what postwar Premier Leslie Frost (1948-1961) repeatedly called "the good old province of Ontario."[35]

Idealizing the Farmer

The idealization of the agrarian landscape in Ontario was not in itself unique. It was, in fact, part of a broader worldwide trend, one which had its roots in the late nineteenth century and which flourished in most modern industrialized nations in the interwar and postwar periods. As Raymond Williams argues, idealized images of a predominantly agrarian or pastoral countryside were compelling because they were directly associated with a "natural way of life," while rural living itself was believed to be endowed with "peace, innocence, and simple virtue."[36] According to Williams, the symbolic import of the rural landscape was directly related to the anxiety generated by life in the city. The concern expressed by an urban elite over the loss of agricultural land or over the decline of rural communities was, he suggests, nothing less than an expression of a perceived crisis within modern urban society.[37] As elsewhere in Canada and the industrial world, therefore, Ontario's ruling elite openly

revisited the rural ideal in an attempt to mitigate the social, cultural and even moral implications of postwar urban development. However, the goal of Ontario's farm rehabilitation projects was not merely the renewal of the rural aesthetic. Central to such projects was the ultimate hope of producing better citizens.

There can be no doubt that A.H. Richardson and the rest of Ontario's conservation authority leaders were motivated by such lofty goals. Indeed, conservation authority discourse, though often loaded with technical details, was nevertheless saturated with the language of social and cultural engineering that literally permeated the broader federal and provincial discussions on postwar reconstruction. Of course, as we have seen in other chapters, the conservation authority program was not influenced merely by developments in Canada. Examples that had been set by similar agencies in the United States, and in particular by the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD), had a profound influence on the conservation authorities in Ontario. Thus, in order to determine the overall socio-cultural significance of the idealized farm landscape to postwar conservation authority discourse, it is important to return briefly to the MWCD, and in particular to Malabar Farm.

Established by author Louis Bromfield in 1939, Malabar Farm was an effort "to show how traditional rural values could be reconciled with the modern, industrialized agriculture that...emerged during and after World War II."[38] In one sense, Malabar Farm was intended to demonstrate modern methods of conservation. But the farm was more than just an agricultural experiment. More than anything, it was a romanticization of the agrarian lifestyle, and in particular of the social and cultural values embodied in the traditional farm family. According to Watson H. Porter, the farm was one of the more memorable stops of the 1948 tour of the MWCD.[39] And though a relatively small number of conservation-minded Ontarians actually

visited Malabar Farm in person, many would have been able to read about it. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Bromfield wrote extensively about Malabar Farm. Of his many books and essays, the novels Pleasant Valley and Malabar Farm became essential reading for an entire generation of conservationists.[40] Many of Ontario's conservation authority leaders appeared to have read and enjoyed his books. Bromfield, moreover, traveled to Ontario on a number of occasions to give talks on the virtues of both watershed conservation and rural living. His lectures reportedly drew large and enthusiastic audiences.[41]

The main themes of Bromfield's literary works revolved around the perceived crisis inherent in modern society. In general, Bromfield railed against life in the big city, and against the legions of "regimented people herding at night into subways to return to a cave somewhere high up in a skyscraper, living as man was never meant to live."[42] Bromfield lamented the incredible social cost that such an existence entailed, and was concerned in particular by the mental and physical deterioration of the individual, and by the apparent breakdown of traditional social institutions such as the nuclear family. By stark comparison, life on the farm was viewed by Bromfield to be nothing short of "paradise." It was, quite simply, a natural way of living from which modern people had been alienated. A return to the land - even a symbolic or temporary return - would serve to revitalize the human spirit. Bromfield argued that a direct interaction with the rural landscape would not only teach a "love of Nature," but would also serve to restore "a sense of balance and of values" that had been greatly compromised by an urban existence.[43]

Central to Bromfield's idealization of life on the farm was an idealization of the farmer himself. According to Bromfield, the farmer enjoyed an enviable existence. A life of hard work under open skies and in the clean air, he argued, left the farmer "sturdy and young." For

Bromfield, there was "in all the world no finer figure than a sturdy farmer standing, his feet well-planted in the earth, looking over his rich fields and his beautiful shiny cattle." Bromfield romanticized the fact that the farmer was free to "leave his stamp upon the whole of the landscape seen from his window."[44] By means of his labour the farmer could turn his land into both a source of food, and a thing of beauty. Life on the farm also provided the opportunity for the farmer to cultivate a close relationship with his family, and in particular with his sons (the idealized agrarian landscape was for Bromfield very much a masculine domain). As Bromfield wrote, the rural lifestyle enabled the farmer "to go places with his boys, to fish and hunt with them."[45] In the final analysis, he argued, "the farmer has a security and independence unknown to any other member of society."[46]

The idea of the rural landscape romanticized by Ontario's conservation authorities between 1946 and the early 1960s had much in common with the image that Bromfield presented. Similar to Bromfield's depiction of Malabar Farm, for instance, the farmer himself was central to the idealized landscape. In many of the photographs and illustrations that peppered conservation authority documents, the farmer is depicted as a steward of the soil, passing knowledge, tradition and, of course, the land, from father to son, from one generation to the next (see Figures 4.5 and 4.6). However, though it is tempting to read these images at face value (especially in light of Bromfield's rhetoric), the idealization of the farmer as a steward of the soil was problematic, if not paradoxical. Though perhaps highly romanticized as the traditional "keeper of the land," the traditional family farmer was not actually credited with having the intelligence or the vision to guide agriculture successfully into the postwar era. Often the traditional farming methods of the farmer were condemned as being outdated, and the farmers themselves blamed for having "overlooked and misunderstood" the lessons of

Figure 4.5 A farmer and his son survey the fields of a traditional family farm. (Reprinted from Ontario, Conservation in Eastern Ontario, 123.)

Figure 4.6 A young lad learns to farm. (Reprinted from Ontario, Conservation in Eastern Ontario, 116.)

history.[47] In some cases, the "ignorance" of farmers was considered to be outright "criminal."[48] The ignorance of the traditional farmer in Ontario, in fact, was part of the problem that needed to be overcome through the leadership of forward-thinking organizations like the conservation authorities. The actual relationship between farmers and conservationists, therefore, was not truly based on reverence for the farmer, but rather became highly paternalistic in nature. In many ways, conservationists saw themselves as having to take over the role of "agrarian stewards" in the province, at least within the context of postwar reconstruction.[49] Farmers, it was thought, literally needed to be taken under the wing of the conservation movement (see Figure 4.7, for example). They had to be taught how to properly farm the land which purportedly was theirs by birthright. In place of the wasteful techniques employed on Ontario's numerous traditional farmsteads, the conservationists sought to promote and encourage wise land-use strategies, placing emphasis on efficiency, productivity, modernization and, of course, increased profitability.[50]

This apparent contradiction, however, in no way diminished the idealization of the farmer in the postwar period. In fact, the idealized image of the farmer in postwar conservation discourse bore little resemblance to the way in which conservationists perceived or dealt with *actual* farmers. In other words, it was not the farmer himself who was revered; rather, it was the *idea* of the farmer that was valued. In contrast to the perception of farmers as poor, ignorant, and unsophisticated, conservationists followed Bromfield's lead and painted highly romanticized pictures of farmers which idealized them simultaneously as labourers, as capitalists, as community-builders, and as undisputed heads of the traditional nuclear family. The ideal farmer, in short, was portrayed as the ideal male, and even as the ideal citizen.[51] In almost every respect, the farmer was presented as the perfect social and cultural archetype

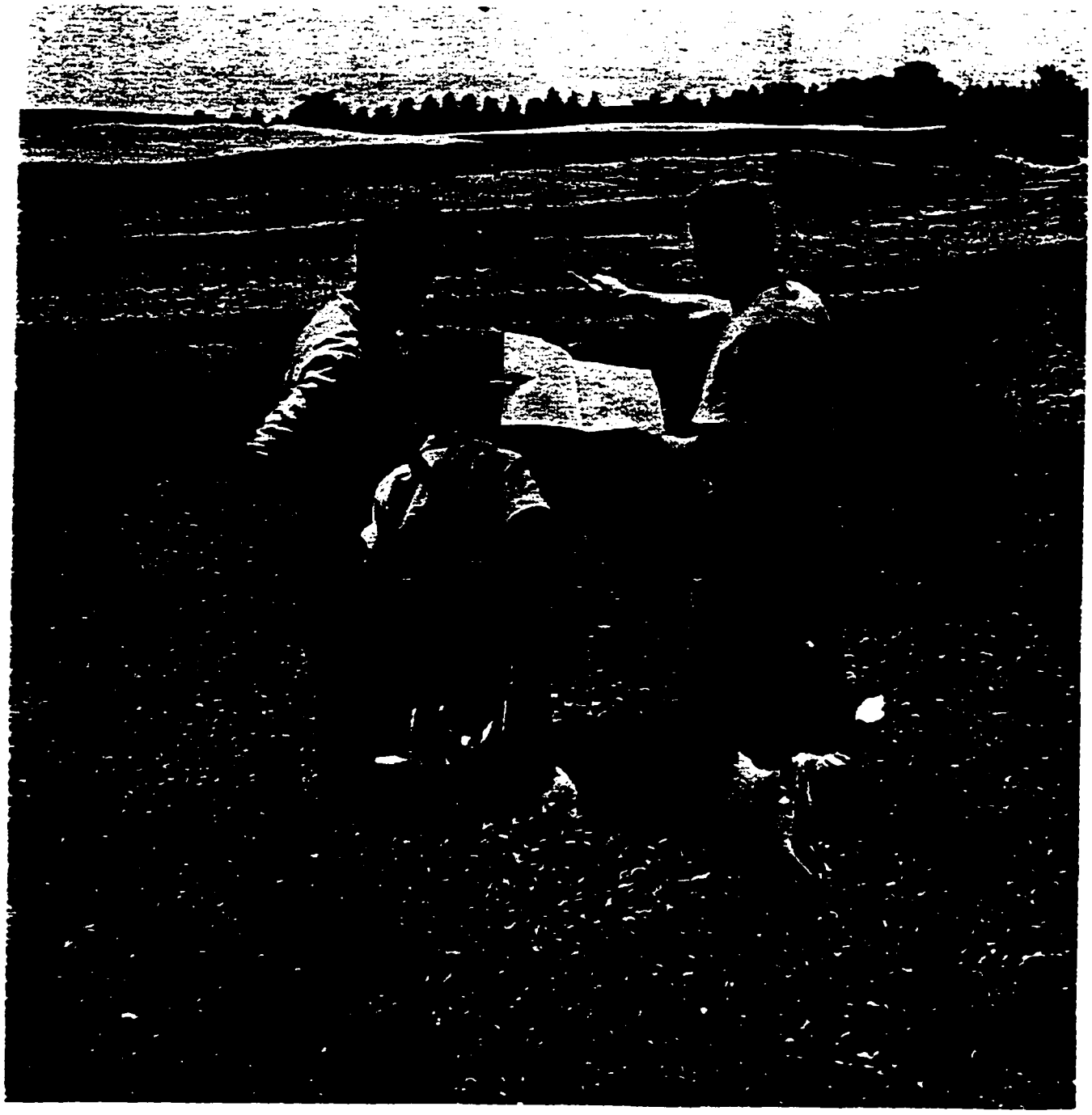

Figure 4.7 A farmer and his son (on the left) are shown the "proper" way to cultivate a field by a farming "expert" (on the right). (Reprinted from L. Ray Silver, The Story of a Flood, 10.)

against which the moral reconstruction of the province could be measured. Whether or not the typical Ontario farmer was a capable steward of the land was immaterial. It was, instead, his currency as a socio-cultural icon that was cherished.

The overwhelming desire to find a postwar model of the ideal citizen cannot be underestimated. Indeed, the rise of socialism in the interwar period, combined with the social changes demanded by the overall needs of a country at war, had challenged traditional social and cultural constructs, not only of citizenship, but also of gender and class. Such conditions generated a great deal of anxiety amongst the nation's ruling elite. These concerns were only heightened in the postwar period as urban growth and prosperity amplified the perceived crisis within Canadian society and culture. In Ontario, this heightened anxiety was characterized primarily by the blurring of gender roles in the home and in the workplace, the influx of non-English speaking immigrants into Ontario's growing cities, and, of course, the growing strength of the labour movement.[52] Reconstructionists thus sought to stem the tide of shifting social and cultural values in the immediate postwar era. Even moderate change, they argued, would be divisive, and certainly would not be compatible with the kind of unified communities that they hoped to build.

However, given the socio-cultural aims of the reconstruction process, the search for an acceptable model of the ideal citizen would not be easy. In some ways, the ideal citizen was an ambiguous, if perhaps contradictory figure. On the one hand, postwar planners valued "initiative and personal enterprise."[53] A healthy capitalist system required an independent and entrepreneurial spirit. However, given the emphasis that postwar planners placed on community-building, too much individualism would be a bad thing. Likewise, although close-knit communities were desirable, too much emphasis on the transcendent importance of the

community over the individual would have been treading too close to the fundamental tenets of socialism and communism. Perhaps H.J. Cody summed it up best when, in a speech on reconstruction given at the University of Toronto in 1942, he stated that "we need a social ideal, under which the individual is not to be crushed in character, worthy ambition, or enterprise, and yet is a social being linked to his fellows in a society; and under which freedom and organic unity are both conserved. The result might be called 'socialized individualism.'"[54] What he and others were looking for, therefore, was a model of citizenship which was able to accommodate two conflicting, though socially and culturally desirable, character traits.

It is in light of these considerations that we can begin to explore the notion of the farmer as a social and cultural ideal in Ontario in the postwar era. The farmer, in fact, was perhaps the perfect incarnation of Cody's socialized individual. The idealized image of the farmer struck the perfect balance between individualism, on the one hand, and the broader social collective represented by the community or state, on the other. Of course, it is important to keep in mind that English-speaking postwar planners idealized the farmer of "British stock," and not the immigrant farmers in the west, who were linked to agrarian socialism and the rise of the CCF, nor French farmers, who were regarded as being tied not only to an outdated mode of farming but also to a life regulated too heavily by religion and social custom.[55] In Land and Labour, a report issued by the federal government during the war, co-authors James Haythorne and Dr. Leonard Marsh suggested that the "British" farmer had consistently set the standard for citizenship in Canada. Unlike their French and ethnic counterparts, the Canadian farmer of British heritage was able to maintain an appropriate balance between competing social, political and economic forces. Haythorne and Marsh argued that the typical "British" farmer was not only progressive, but also inventive and independent.[56] Compared to the French in

particular, a typical English-speaking farmer in Ontario was capable of acting on his own initiative in a way that a farmer in Quebec was not.[57] Though "family and community solidarity [was] far from lacking" in the conventional English-speaking farm community, these ties were simultaneously "a less pervasive and less dominating social force" than they were in Quebec.[58]

The farmer was also idealized with respect to the unique role that he played within the capitalist system. According to Haythorne and Marsh, farming was "one of the few remaining fields of one-man enterprise left in a world of giant corporations and wage labour."[59] The farmer was, in other words, his own boss. More importantly, he was free from the dehumanizing world of the corporation or factory in which men became numbers, sacrificing their individuality for a weekly pay cheque. As Reg Whitaker suggests, the traditional family farmer was both "a proprietor of his own means of production and the source of the labour required for production. The farmer in a sense combined the class antagonists of capitalism within his own person."[60] As an owner of land, the farmer was essentially a capitalist. To be more precise, he was a businessmen responsible for the efficient and profitable running of his farmstead. To a varying degree, he was also an entrepreneur, responsible for new business initiatives and also for the marketing of his own produce. Importantly, however, the farmer was also a labourer, a worker engaged in what many regarded as meaningful and important work. Day in and day out the farmer toiled selflessly on his fields and in his barn. Indeed, the fruits of the farmer's labour contributed greatly to the welfare of the state. His dawn-to-dusk work ethic, his connection to the land, and the stoic way in which he went about his business, therefore, were all qualities to be desired in the ideal citizen.

It is significant to note that the identity of the "British" farmer as a labourer did not in any way diminish the import of the farmer as a model postwar citizen, primarily because the farmer himself generally did not challenge the social or political hegemony of Canada's urban, middle-class elite. Farmers, though in a sense labourers, were in no way identifiable with the perceived socialist tendencies of the working class. As Reg Whitaker observes, farmers were not seen as supporters of social welfare reforms, "which were a concern for working-class people but only of marginal importance to farmers who were more self-sufficient by nature of their occupation."[61] Farmers of "British stock," in fact, were staunch opponents of socialism in the postwar era (or, at least, this was their reputation). In Ontario in particular, the program of the CCF had long been considered "unacceptable to the farm movement."[62] As historian Joseph Schull has argued, the farm vote reportedly prevented the CCF from winning the provincial election in 1943.[63] In addition to being an embodiment of the spirit necessary for the rebuilding of the province, therefore, the farmer was also an important political ally of the political right in Ontario.

Above all else, it was the image of the farm family itself that had a definite appeal to Ontario's postwar planners. The farm family, in fact, provided reconstructionists with an image of the family as an indivisible social unit. In Land and Labour, Haythorne and Marsh argued that "family solidarity" was perhaps the most desirable non-economic feature of farm life. "Personal associations," they claimed, "are closer among the members of farm families than among those in urban centres."[64] Unlike the typical suburban family, whose activities were stretched across the vast depersonalized expanse of the modern city, the life of a farm family revolved around the working of a farm, a fact which required the participation and teamwork of every family member. Moreover, with clearly-defined public and private roles to play, the

farmer and his wife were the perfect icons for a nation hoping to reassert traditional social and cultural values.

The clear distinction between the role played by the farmer and his wife was particularly significant in light of the perceived "gender chaos" which prevailed in Ontario's urban centres in the postwar era.[65] Despite the concerted efforts of Ontario's postwar planners, the blurring of gender roles that had begun during the war was by no means reversed in the postwar era. Many women, for example, simply refused to return to the home after the war (as had been hoped), and in fact began entering the workplace in increasing numbers.[66] In the home, moreover, it was feared that men in general were assuming domestic duties that were widely considered to be "women's work."[67] In turn, the institution of the nuclear family itself, which to many represented the sacred embodiment of traditional gender roles, was also regarded as being under siege. Any effort to reassert traditional notions of masculinity and femininity, therefore, would also have to be grounded in an attempt to rehabilitate the concept of the family.

The idea that the re-establishment of the ideal Ontario family would be central to the social rehabilitation of the province was of course rooted in reconstruction discourse. During the war, reconstruction planners had argued that the properly constituted family, one in which each member was aware of his or her expected social role, would be a pillar of postwar society. Families, it was argued, "must be safeguarded as the fundamental social unit." The "sanctity and solidarity of the family" was a fundamental "domestic principle" around which society needed to be organized.[68] The implications of such notions were wide-ranging. As Cynthia Comacchio suggests, the nuclear family not only functioned as the basis for the community as a whole, but also provided an ideal model for "the traditional view of male and female roles both

within the home and in the marketplace." Key to this model, she argues, was the reassertion of "the male bread winner role."[69] Other Canadian social historians have made similar observations, and have further argued that the right to define the "family" and "family values" was jealously guarded by the ruling class. As Dominique Marshall writes, "the tradition of defending the integrity of families still belonged to the conservative elites."[70] Throughout the postwar era, therefore, the idealized notion of the family would remain a very powerful symbol of the socially conservative goals inherent in the reconstruction process.[71]

Ontario's conservation authorities certainly accepted the concept of the sanctity of the nuclear family, and sought to perpetuate this conservative notion of the ideal family. A.H. Richardson himself proved to be a vocal supporter of the family as an indivisible social and moral unit. Pointing to an "example" provided by nature, Richardson suggested that "divorce and polygamy are unknown in Canada geese and in that respect they set a good example to the human race."[72] Though this statement in itself may appear humorous, or perhaps even ridiculous, it is nevertheless highly indicative of the conservative social values that the conservation authorities promoted. Events sponsored by individual authorities at conservation areas across the province, for instance, almost always had a family focus. By encouraging families to play together, the notion of recreation developed by the conservation authorities reinforced the intimate and socially necessary bonds between individual family members.

In Ontario, therefore, the idealized image of the farm family provided the leaders of the conservation authorities with a desirable and readily identifiable model of the properly-constituted nuclear family, a model which was perhaps more poignant than Richardson's romanticization of the monogamous practices of wild geese. The presence of the traditional family farm in conservation authority rhetoric and iconography, and in particular the attention

devoted to the aesthetic import of the farm house, was itself a reflection of the socio-cultural importance of the idealized farm family within the conservation authority program for the rehabilitation of the province.

Conclusion

The romanticization of the farm in the postwar era served an important rhetorical function within the reconstruction discourse of Ontario's conservationists. The idealized rural landscape provided images of a healthy, vigorous provincial environment, while the idealization of the farmer and his family helped to set the moral standard for a largely urbanized populace. Though farming itself remained relatively peripheral within the conservation authority program in Ontario, the "rural ideal" proved to be an effective means of conveying the social and cultural values that conservationists themselves shared with the rest of the province's ruling elite. Idealized notions of farm life, in fact, played an important role in the concerted attempts to reassert a conservative middle-class hegemony in the province. An appreciation of the farm as a socio-cultural construct, therefore, helps to provide a clearer picture of the sort of society that Ontario's leaders wanted to build - or rather rehabilitate - in the postwar period.

Notes

[1] NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C 31, vol. 17, file 13, "An Irrigation Programme for After the War Employment," (1944), 2. See also pp. 3 and 6-8.

[2] Ibid., 6.

[3] Ibid., 1. See also J.R. MacNicol, "After-the-War Employment Programme," in Canada, House of Commons Debates Official Report: Extracts from a few of the Speeches of Mr. J.R. MacNicol on Labour and Employment Problems (Ottawa: n.p., 1944), 1-5; NAC, J.R. MacNicol papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 14, file 23, "A Ten Year $100,000,000 Water Conservation and Reclamation Program For Irrigation, Power and Transportation," (n.d., 1943?); and NAC, J.R. MacNicol papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 16, file 31, "A Flood Control and Water Conservation Works Programme - A Sound Means For Big After-the-War Employment," (transcript of radio address, given August 17, 1944), 1.

[4] Harold Innis, "The Economic Aspect," in Royal Society of Canada, The Wise Use of Our Resources: Papers from the Joint Session of Sections of the Royal Society of Canada, May 21, 1941 (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1942), 14.

[5] Ibid., 14. Innis claimed that the literature on the conservation of material resources was "notoriously superficial," by which he meant that conservationists sometimes had the tendency to ignore the cultural and spiritual needs of the people.

[6] The praise that reconstructionists had for farmers was largely rhetorical. As we shall see below, any praise for the farmer as a cultural ideal was usually matched by a contempt for actual farmers themselves.

[7] Robert Newton, "Agriculture and Forestry," in Royal Society of Canada, The Wise Use of Our Resources, 21.

[8] There was, however, a distinct (though unintended) irony implicit in the promotion of the social, cultural and economic significance of Ontario's farms - especially the family farm. One of the main agricultural objectives that the conservationists supported, for example, was the idea that "every acre of [farm] land" should "be put to its best use on a sustained yield basis." (Ontario, Our Valley 1/1 (1955), 21.) However, the sustained-yield methods promoted by conservationists required an accumulation of capital and material resources that the typical family farmer simply could not muster. Farmers generally could not afford, for example, the modern machinery that would allow for increased agricultural efficiency, nor could they afford to invest in the costly practices that soil conservationists advocated. Many, therefore, sold their farmsteads to the land-hungry corporate farms that were springing up across the province. Many more left farming communities altogether to pursue greater opportunities in Ontario's larger centres. Ironically, the family farm was being run out of business by the forces of urban development that conservationists themselves helped to promote and further implement. This is especially true of the farms that bordered the expanding suburbs of Ontario's cities and towns. The drastic increase in the land values of property bordering urban centres rendered farming economically nonviable. Farmers would make more money by selling their land to developers than they would by keeping it under the plough. Even the most stubborn of farmers, therefore, would have had difficulty resisting the overwhelming forces of urban expansion. See David Fischer, "Economic and Environmental Impacts of Soil Erosion Control," in A Conference on Erosion (Toronto: n.p, 1972), 44-55. See in particular Figure 1, "Socio-Environmental Conflicts Associated with a Soil Conservation Programme," on page 49. For a more detailed discussion on the rise of corporate farms in Ontario see Christopher Bryant and Thomas Johnston, Agriculture in the City's Countryside (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); and Jim Lemon, "Limits to Growth: Nature Challenges Human Hubris," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998 (Toronto: n.p., 1998), 2. Lemon argues that modern mechanized farm techniques introduced after the war rendered most agricultural workers obsolete.

[9] As an example, refer back to Figures 1.1 and 1.2 in Chapter One.

[10] Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation (Toronto: King's Printer, 1950), 10. See also p. 13.

[11] Ibid., 29.

[12] Ibid., 26.

[13] Ibid., 27.

[14] Ibid., 26. Earlier in the report it was written that "each and every civilization has been poised precariously on this thin, life-giving carpet. It [i.e., soil] covers only a small part of the earth's surface, yet without it humanity would be reduced to a few small bands of nomadic fishermen and hunters." See p. 3.

[15] Ibid., 27.

[16] Ibid., 27.

[17] Ibid., 26. See also George Haythorne, Labour in Canadian Agriculture (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), 7-12.

[18] Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation, 25.

[19] Ibid., 25. For a discussion on the connection drawn between derelict land, slums and degradation, see Christopher Andreae, "Industry, Dereliction, and Landscapes in Ontario," Ontario History 89/2 (June 1997), 161-180.

[20] Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation, 25. See also Ian T. Kenyon, "'Weeds Uprising Where the Hearth Should Be': Rural House Abandonment in Southern Ontario," Ontario Archaeology 64 (1997), 39-55.

[21] As geographer Jim Lemon notes, the postwar era was a period of intense road building, one which saw the construction of highways and in particular expansive networks of freeways around the nation's larger cities. Most of Canada's freeways, he notes, were built in the 1950s and 1960s. "Few new freeways have appeared on the landscape since 1970." Lemon, "Limits to Growth: Nature Challenges Human Hubris," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: Univerity of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998 (Toronto: n.p., 1998), 6. For the effect of freeways on the landscape and also the culture of North America see Alexander Wilson, The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1991).

[22] For a discussion of this postwar phenomenon see Fischer, "Economic and Environmental Impacts of Soil Erosion Control," 44-55.

[23] AO RG 16-79, "Canadian Council on 4-H Clubs Files (1927-1980)," from a file of miscellaneous newspaper clippings (dated 1945-1948), "Young People Must Maintain Present High Moral Standards."

[24] Alan Coventry, "Address," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Report of Conference on Planning and Development held at Toronto, Ontario, May 8th and 9th, 1944 (Tororrnto: T.E. Bowman, 1944), 23.

[25] Ibid., 23.

[26] The ideas pursued by Ontario's conservation authorities were similar to the "human engineering" projects pursued by the TVA and the MWCD. David Lilienthal (author of TVA: Democracy on the March), for example, was a strong proponent of the idea that the bringing of "civilization" to the Tennessee River watershed would be beneficial not only for the rural folk, but also for urban Americans who would visit the Valley. Brian Black pursues this notion in his work on the TVA. Black argues that one of the perceived benefits in creating an "efficient" and

"aesthetically pleasing" landscape was that it would simultaneously bring into being a "recreated regional culture." Underlying such a vision, suggests Black, was faith in the idea that proper planning in the watershed "could resurrect a downtrodden portion of society" not only materially, but also morally. See Brian Black, "Organic Planning: Ecology and Design in the Landscape of the Tennessee Valley Authority, 1933-1945," in Environmentalism and Landscape Architecture, ed. Michel Cohen (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, publication forthcoming), n.p.. See also David Lilienthal, TVA: Democracy on the March (New York: Harper, 1944).

[27] Joseph Schull, Ontario Since 1867 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1978), 315. It would be very interesting to do a comparative study between the rehabilitation of rural Ontario in the postwar period and similar initiatives undertaken in the Progressive Era. Neil Forkey, for example, points out that the Commission of Conservation pursued policies of rural rehabilitation during its short existence. Rehabilitation schemes, he suggests, were motivated by a dual impulse to "reverse the tide of inefficiency and social degeneration in rural areas. [The Commission] sought, in other words, to conserve the land and rescue its people from the ill-conceived policies of their predecessors." He adds that "the rural dweller needed to be saved, and the urban expert was ready for the task." See Neil Forkey, "Victorian Dreams, Progressive Realities: The Commission of Conservation Critiques Old Ontario's 'Colonization' Policy," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History, 1 and 9. See also Donald J. Pisani, "Reclamation and Social Engineering in the Progressive Era," Agricultural History 57/11 (January 1983), 46-63; and Linda M. Ambrose and Margaret Kechnie, "Social Control or Social Feminism?: Two Views on the Ontario Women's Institutes," Agricultural History 73/2 (Spring 1999), 4.

[28] Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation, 179.

[29] Ibid., 179.

[30] Wilson, The Culture of Nature, 30. In the postwar period, the number of automobiles registered in Ontario jumped from 585,604 in 1946 to 1,700,000 in 1960, while thousands of kilometers of roads were constructed and improved province-wide. By 1960, 76% of the province's households owned at least one automobile, a sign of both the increasing mobility and the relative affluence of Ontario's rapidly growing population. See Gerald Killan, Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Provincial Park System (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 75.

[31] Newton, "Agriculture and Forestry," 18. It is interesting to note that the conservation authorities also argued that marginal agricultural land should be reforested so that city-dwellers could enjoy the thrill "of hunting in an attractive environment." See Ontario, Department of Energy and Resources Management, Annual Report1965-66 (Toronto: n.p., 1966), 16.

[32] The program is well documented in the Conservation Branch publication Our Valley.

[33] There is no accurate statistic available on the actual number of farm ponds created under the auspices of the conservation authority program in the postwar period. However, a number of individual authorities documented the number of farm ponds developed in a given year in the reports submitted to Our Valley.

[34] Ontario, Our Valley 2/2 (1956), 22.

[35] Schull, Ontario Since 1867, 332. Schull states that this was one of Frost's favorite expressions, one which was "to haunt his speeches to the point of exhaustion." See also Roger Graham, Old Man Ontario: Leslie M. Frost (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

[36] Raymond Williams, City and Country (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973) 1. For an indication of the pervasiveness of the agrarian ideal since the late nineteenth century see, for example, Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 231-269; Donald Worster, Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); Wilson, The Culture of Nature, 193-220; Yael Zerubavel, Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 148-157; Simon Schama, Landscape and Memory (New York:

Vintage Books, 1995); and Richard Harris and Tricia Shulist, "Canada's Reluctant Housing Program: the Veteran's Land Act, 1942-1975," Canadian Historical Review 82/2 (June 2001), 253-282. Harris and Shulist argue that there was a distinct anti-urban element within the postwar reconstruction process. Repelled by an increasingly urban, industrial way of life, many reconstruction planners extolled the virtues of rural living.

[37] Williams, City and Country, 289.

[38] Charles E. Little, ed., Louis Bromfield at Malabar: Writings on Farming and Country Life (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), ix. Louis Bromfield (1896-1956), himself a city-born man, was an interesting figure. In 1928, at a mere thirty-one years of age, Bromfield won a Pulitzer Prize, and was in the same year nominated by Vanity Fair magazine to their Hall of Fame (other inductees that year included such notables as Walter Gropius, Pablo Picasso, Serge Diaghileff, Thomas Mann, and Ernest Hemingway).

[39] Watson H. Porter, On To Muskingum: Ontario Conservation Authorities Tour to the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, September 27 to October 1 (Toronto: King's Printer, 1948), 13.

[40] Porter claimed that Bromfield was "the author of some of the most interesting conservation literature available today." Ibid., 6. See also Louis Bromfield, Pleasant Valley (New York: Harper Books, 1945); and Malabar Farm (New York: Harper Books, 1948).

[41] See for example Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation, 4.

[42] Louis Bromfield, in Louis Bromfield at Malabar: Writings on Farming and Country Life, 2.

[43] Ibid., 2.

[44] Ibid., 4.

[45] Ibid., 4.

[46] Ibid., 3.

[47] Ontario, Report of the Select Committee on Conservation, 5.

[48] E.N. Davis, "Farmers Told Bluntly of their Soil Crimes," Globe and Mail, May 24, 1958. See also Porter, On to Muskingum, 13.

[49] As one postwar planner remarked, "we have to see that the resources that have been given to us by Providence...are not squandered, but handed down from generation to generation...as a farm is handed down to a son." Wallace, "Address," in Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Report of Conference on Planning and Development, 12.

[50] The ambiguous, if not problematic, relationship between farmers and urban-based province-builders and government officials in Ontario goes back to the nineteenth century. As Linda Ambrose and Margaret Kechnie note, "efforts to provide Ontario farmers with agricultural education began in 1874 with the [Department of Agriculture's] most ambitious undertaking, the founding of the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) and Experimental Farm at Guelph Ontario." Other organizations, such as the Farmer's Institutes of Ontario (FIO), established in 1885, were created to promote state-sponsored farm initiatives, and, as some scholars have argued, "to impose middle-class ideals and values" on rural communities. See Ambrose and Kechnie, "Social Control or Social Feminism?: Two Views of the Ontario Women's Institutes," 222-223. For a history of the OAC and the creation of the FIO see Alexander M. Ross, The College on the Hill (Vancouver: Copp Clark, 1974). It is of interest to note that the Guelph Conference (at which the conservation authority idea was essentially born) was held at the OAC.

[51] As Louis Bromfield suggested, the farmer was perhaps society's "most important member." See Louis Bromfield at Malabar: Writings on Farming and Country Life, 3.

[52] For more detailed discussions of this postwar "societal crisis" see Veronica Strong-Boag, "Canada's Wage-Earning Wives and the Construction of the Middle Class, 1945-60," Journal of Canadian Studies 29/3 (Fall 1994), 5-25; J.M. Bumsted, "Home Sweet Suburb: The Great Post-War Migration," in Coming of Age: Readings in Canadian History since World War II, ed. Donald Avery and Roger Hall, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1996), 139-148; and Franca Iacovetta, "Making Model Citizens: Gender, Corrupted Democracy, and Immigrant and Refugee Reception in Cold War Canada," in Whose National Security? Canadian State Surveillance and the Creation of Enemies, ed. Gary Kinsman, Dieter K. Buse, Mercedes Steedman (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2000), 154-167.

[53] Ontario, Department of Planning and Development, Ontario: The Heart of the New World, Where Your Future Awaits (Toronto: n.p., 1944), 3.

[54] H.J. Cody, "Recapitulation and the Ideals of Reconstruction," in Reconstruction in Canada: Lectures Given in the University of Toronto, ed. C.A. Ashley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1943), 140.

[55] George Haythorne and Leonard Marsh, Land and Labour: A Social Survey of Agriculture and the Farm Labour Market in Central Canada (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1941), 66.

[56] This obviously is a contradiction of the view presented above, namely that the farmers were not capable stewards of the land. However, here Haythorne and Marsh are undoubtedly presenting an idealized account of the Canadian farmer.

[57] Idealized is the "sense of independence...enjoyed by farm people" (that is, of course, by the typical farmer of British heritage). Haythorne and Marsh, Land and Labour, 57. These views were echoed by Robert England, who in 1943 wrote "the independence of the man of the soil has ever reflected the area of personal freedom that attaches to the agriculturalist who owns his farm. There is here a social value, a check to the uniformity and proletarianization of urbanism." In Discharged: A Commentary on the Civil Re-establishment of Veterans in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan, 1943), 296.

[58] Haythorne and Marsh, Land and Labour, 66.

[59] Ibid., 57.

[60] Reg Whitaker, A Sovereign Idea: Essays on Canada as a Democratic Community (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1992), 16. See also Lemon, "Limits to Growth: Nature Challenges Human Hubris," 10.

[61] Whitaker, A Sovereign Idea, 33.

[62] Schull, Ontario Since 1867, 310.

[63] Ibid., 310. In 1943, George Drew's Conservative's captured thirty-eight seats, the CCF took thirty-four, and the Liberals a meager fifteen.

[64] Haythorne and Marsh, Land and Labour, 59. Of course, we must keep in mind that the ideal family in the eyes of Haythorne and Marsh was undoubtedly the "British" farm family.

[65] Veronica Strong-Boag, "Canada's Wage-Earning Wives and the Construction of the Middle Class, 1945-60," 13.

[66] Ibid., 6-7.

[67] Ibid., 12-13.

[68] Cody, "Recapitulation and the Ideals of Reconstruction," 138 and 140.

[69] Cynthia Comacchio, Nations are Built of Babies: Saving Ontario's Mothers and Children (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 228. See also her recent book The Infinite Bonds of Family: Domesticity in Canada, 1850-1940 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 65-156.

[70] Dominique Marshall, "Reconstruction Politics, the Canadian Welfare State and the Ambiguity of Children's Rights, 1940-1950," in Uncertain Horizons, 268.

[71] Reg Whitaker claims that the socially constructed model of the nuclear family was one of the ruling elite's "fundamental symbols of ideological hegemony." See Reg Whitaker, A Sovereign Idea, 29. Franca Iacovetta, in turn, writes that the postwar era "witnessed the resurgence of a conservative and hegemonic family ideology that 'normalized' an idealized bourgeois Anglo-Celtic nuclear family, and that in turn served as an (unrealistic and oppressive) standard against which 'non-conformists' were harshly judged, harassed and punished." See Franca Iacovetta, "Recipes for Democracy? Gender, Family, and Making Female Citizens in Cold War Canada," Canadian Woman Studies 20/2 (2000), 13.

[72] Richardson, Conservation by the People, 74.

Chapter Five
"We Stand Shoulder to Shoulder With Our Menfolk": Women and Conservation in Postwar Ontario

Introduction

The romanticized image of the farmer discussed in Chapter Four was undoubtedly a masculine construct, one which clearly outlined and further reinforced the gender-specific role that men were expected to play in the postwar reconstruction of the province. By actively promoting the image of the ideal farmer, Ontario's conservation authorities helped to perpetuate the traditional notion that nature was very much a public arena within which men asserted their masculinity, not only as physical labourers, but also as businessmen, scientists, technicians, and so on. Having been cast as the builders of a new society, it was primarily the men of the province who were mobilized to bring to life the ambitious conservation authority program. The physical rebuilding of the nation was, and would remain, primarily a male duty. Closely linked to this notion of masculinity, however, was a highly conservative notion of femininity, one which was held by conservationists and reconstructionists alike. It will be the task of this chapter, therefore, to explore the role of women within the conservation movement in postwar Ontario.

Women, Conservation, and Postwar Reconstruction

The role of women in postwar Ontario was tied almost exclusively to traditional notions of domesticity. Whereas men were portrayed as public builders, women were idealized as wives and mothers.[1] Their proper place, it was thought, was in the home, and their primary duties would be limited to issues pertaining exclusively to the domestic sphere. Far from

challenging these conservative notions of domesticity, the conservation authority program in Ontario promoted such traditional, gender-specific roles in the postwar era. Women were, for example, virtually excluded from the administrative structure of the province's conservation authorities.[2] Moreover, women were typically peripheral in conservation authority rhetoric and iconography. Occasionally there were pictures or written accounts of young girls fishing or planting trees with their fathers, but images of women actively engaged in a conservation activity were rare. If women were present in conservation authority discourse, they were very much confined to the background, functioning as passive observers rather than active participants.

The following account of the typical family woodlot may serve as an illustration of the gender-specific role assigned to women by Ontario's conservationists. In an article advocating the woodlot's social benefits, one conservation authority supporter wrote that while "father" is busy exercising "his muscles" and "learning forest conservation by doing his forestry," and while the children are amusing themselves at play, "mother as usual will slap flies and feed the troops with sandwiches generously mixed with soil, sand and sawdust."[3] In this account, the line between what was considered by the author to be socially proper male and female behavior was clearly drawn. Forestry, at least in this case, was obviously regarded as being an exclusively male activity, and only served to reinforce traditional notions of masculinity. For women, on the other hand, the woodlot was nothing more than an extension of the domestic sphere. Though the wife had joined her husband and family in the country, she was not encouraged to actively participate in physical activity, and in turn performed a function that reflected the traditional role that she would have been expected to play in her urban home (the

image of "mother swatting flies," in fact, suggests that women were perceived to be somehow out of place in nature.)

This is not to say, however, that women in general were not interested or involved in conservation itself. Though the voice and visible participation of women in the affairs of Ontario's conservation authorities was minimal, women did manage to influence - albeit indirectly - the conservation authority agenda. Groups with strong female membership, such as field naturalist clubs or horticultural clubs, as well as organizations representing the interests of women alone, such as the Women's Institute, were given a limited though distinct voice in the development of the conservation movement in Ontario. It is important to note, however, that the voice with which they spoke was distinctly conservative, and served to support rather than challenge the paternalism of the conservation authority program.

To fully appreciate the role women were expected - or perhaps allowed - to play in the postwar conservation movement in Ontario, it is important to return briefly to the broader context of postwar planning. Indeed, the role that women eventually assumed in the conservation movement in postwar Ontario was strongly influenced by conservative attitudes that were generated in the course of reconstruction planning. These attitudes, of course, were largely articulated by men. In fact, one of the most striking features of the formal discourse on postwar planning was noticeable lack of women in the "official" political discussions surrounding reconstruction.[4] Though women undoubtedly voiced their concerns and opinions both privately and publicly throughout the war, they were essentially excluded from the central debates on the most important problems being dealt with by postwar planners. Instead of having direct input into issues of basic economic and political import, women were assigned tasks that were limited by socially constructed notions of traditional gender roles.[5] The

ultimate irony was that Canadian women had been slowly encroaching upon the male-dominated public sphere since the turn of the century, a process which was accelerated noticeably during the war. Between 1939 and 1945, women entered into traditionally male-dominated fields in unprecedented numbers. Mobilized to replace male workers who had been called to military service, women took on all sorts of employment, from the operation of heavy machinery to the drafting of technical plans. Women also assumed positions of authority in industry and business. Elsie MacGill, for example, an aeroplane designer at Fort William's Canada Car plant, had close to 7,000 people working under her direction during the war.[6]

The irony of exclusion was not lost on Canadian women. In a letter dated September 2, 1941 to Dr. F. Cyril James, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Reconstruction, M.M. Wherry, president of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, criticized the fact that women were not represented on the Advisory Committee. Wherry's letter to Dr. James was very similar to one she had sent to Mackenzie King five months earlier.[7] Wherry stated that the absence of women was "much deplored," especially as "the women of Canada are as much affected by war conditions and what will be done after the war as are the men of Canada."[8] Wherry argued that as major contributors to national defense and income, Canadian women deserved equal say on postwar economic planning. She wrote that "in every country women have borne equally with men their share of the burdens of this war" and that in England, "Miss Caroline Haslett, C.B.E., electrical engineer and Chairman of our British Federation of Business and Professional Women, has been named advisor to the Ministry of Labour".. She suggested, therefore, that the opinions of Canadian women like Elsie MacGill should be given the same sort of consideration in Canada as Haslett's were being given in England.[9]

Under increasing pressure to deal with the problems "likely to confront women working in war industries once peace returned," the King government created a special Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Reconstruction in January 1943.[10] Under the chairmanship of Margaret Stovel McWilliams, wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and personal friend of the Prime Minister, the Subcommittee on the Post-War Problems of Women was asked to examine all the aspects of reconstruction relating to women. Ten women in total were appointed to the Subcommittee, and though they represented Canada's various geographical regions, they were all members of the upper-middle class. In keeping with the overriding socio-cultural disposition of the reconstruction process, the women of the Subcommittee represented the interests and attitudes of Canada's privileged elite rather than the concerns of average Canadian women.[11] The Subcommittee, which met a total of four times during its short existence and was only given eight months to complete its broad mandate, had very little influence on the course of postwar planning. Though their report submitted to the House of Commons in January 1944 contained a number of proposals aimed at improving the status of women in Canada, it received little parliamentary attention, and ultimately "suffered from a lack of public support."[12]

A serious treatment of the status of women in Canada remained very much on the periphery of the reconstruction agenda. Instead of liberalizing the role of women in Canadian society, the entire reconstruction process served to tie women more closely to idealized prewar notions of domesticity and femininity. During the war, women were portrayed as marching "shoulder to shoulder with their brothers in arms" working hard on the homefront for a peace which would "bring their men home."[13] However, it was widely expected that in the postwar era women who had worked so that the men could fight would return to the private sphere to

resume their moral social duties as mothers and housewives. In the much anticipated struggle to "win the peace" which would commence as soon as the war ended, postwar planners made it clear that women would be counted upon to play an important supporting role, but only as their purported nature *as women* would allow. While men were busy rebuilding the nation physically, women would return to their conventional "occupation" as helpmates and moral companions in the home and in the community.[14]

In her groundbreaking book "They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood, Ruth Roach Pierson argues that "the War's slight yet disquieting reconstruction of womanhood in the direction of equality with men was scrapped for a full-skirted and redomesticated post-war model, and for more than a decade feminism was once again sacrificed to femininity."[15] Pierson's thesis, which was originally intended to challenge the conventional wisdom that the war had actually liberated women from the confines of the domestic sphere, has become the standard interpretation of the effect of the war on the cultural construction of femininity and women's social roles in the immediate postwar era. Alexander Wilson, for example, in his study on the relationship between landscape and culture in North America since the war, follows Pierson's lead in suggesting that in the postwar era, "women were unceremoniously escorted back from the factories to the hearths where they were now supposed to marshal the new armies of commercialism."[16] Though it is true that women in general were returned to the home after the war, it is important to point out that they were not excluded from the male-dominated public sphere altogether. However, as active participants in postwar community building, the role of women was almost exclusively limited to cultural or moral issues.

In keeping with the broader trends of postwar reconstruction in general, it was as cultural or moral agents that women actively engaged in the conservation resurgence in Ontario after the war. The niche that women carved for themselves within the movement, therefore, was one that did not challenge the existing patriarchal power structure, but rather complemented it. Involvement in conservation typically broke down into a distinction between men's work and women's work. While men were responsible for dealing with issues such as the building of dams, the improvement of rivers, the construction of irrigation schemes, and the scientific management of forest resources, women took the responsibility over matters of primarily domestic and aesthetic significance. Their involvement, in other words, typified the role that women had played in the conservation movement in North America since the late nineteenth century. As Val Plumwood argues, for over a century "women have been prominent in the struggle in all ecological areas, but especially in peace, neigbourhood and health issues."[17] The role of women in the conservation movement, she suggests, can be characterized as an extension of maternal feminism. Since the 1880s, this role has reflected and in turn solidified the image of women as mothers, as nurturers, and as virtuous moral agents.

Unfortunately, very little work has been done on the role of women in the conservation movement in Canada, especially on the involvement of women in the resurgence of the conservation movement in the postwar era. We can, however, look to the work of some prominent American historians whose studies of the role of women in the Progressive Era conservation movement sheds much light on the traditional gender roles that Canadian reconstructionists attempted to revive after the war. Carolyn Merchant, for example, argues that though female conservationists actively participated in the conservation movement during

the Progressive Era, "they nevertheless accepted the traditional sex roles assigned to them by late nineteenth century American society."[18] Merchant notes that as early as the 1890s, organizations such as the General Federation of Women's Clubs in the United States promoted conservation programs aimed at the betterment of communities nation wide. Local clubs in particular participated in "cosmetic campaigns" to clean up their towns and cities, and embarked upon projects which sought to improve the aesthetic appeal of architectural structures and to enhance the natural beauty of the urban and near-urban environment. In the spirit of the City Beautiful movement, and in conjunction with other community groups, the women of the conservation movement were responsible for "the beautification of yards, vacant lots, school yards, and public buildings through planting trees and shrubs."[19] They also worked towards the acquisition of wooded land to be preserved and enjoyed by those desirous of communing with nature in its most primitive state. Moreover, women engaged in the "clean water" movement which, equating pure water with health and impure water with death and disease, was a fundamental issue for women as nurturers and healers. Involvement in the "clean air" movement was determined along similar lines. In a recent paper on industrial pollution in Pittsburgh near the end of the nineteenth century, Angela Gugliotta claims that though men were effected most directly by the smoke generated by local ironworks, the "environmental dirt, and smoke in particular, was seen by middle class municipal housekeepers and other elite activists as women's problems." She adds that "with the extension of the domestic sphere to the city as a whole came an extension of women's cleaning activities and responsibilities to the civic environment."[20]

Likewise, women who played an active role in the postwar conservation movement in Ontario generally did so by asserting their maternal virtues as mothers, nurturers and as

essential helpmates to men in their physical nation-building cause. In a brief presented to the Ontario government's Select Committee on Conservation in 1950, for instance, the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) appropriated wartime propaganda to reassure the committee that their interests were not in any way opposed to the paternal power structure that the province's conservation program represented. The FWIO clearly stated in their opening comments that "We wish this Committee to know that we will stand shoulder to shoulder with our menfolk in any conservation program that this Committee sees fit to promote."[21] (It is significant to note that, as the only exclusively female organization to make a presentation to the Select Committee on Conservation, the FWIO represented primarily rural rather than urban women.) While the numerous male-dominated organizations that presented briefs to the Select Committee focused on predominantly material issues such as soil conservation and flood control, the FWIO argued for measures that were reminiscent of the Progressive Era Municipal Housekeeping movement. Indicating the need for anti-litter leagues, the roadside spraying of unattractive weeds, and plans to enhance the beauty and comfort of private homes and public buildings, the FWIO lobbied for conservation programs which aimed at improving the beauty and cleanliness of Ontario's rural and urban communities.

The welfare of the community as an organic social body was also an area of concern for the FWIO. The main focus of the FWIO was in fact the "conservation of life" itself. The life and vitality of the community as a primarily moral or cultural unit rather than as an economic or political entity was the principal rallying point for women involved in conservation projects in the postwar era. Though men were also concerned with the moral welfare of their community, the physical or technical aspects of its upkeep often took precedence over what was regarded as less practical considerations. For example, male-dominated organizations

advocated the application of conservation principles to the practice of agriculture in order to determine the means by which the production of food staples such as grain could be maximized. The FWIO, on the other hand, claimed that soil conservation needed to address more fundamental issues of agricultural production, such as the nutritional quality of grain and the manner in which the crop itself was eventually consumed. In their plea for the "conservation of grain" the FWIO stated that "we deplore that life-giving grain...is used in such quantities in the manufacture of alcohol." It was sinful, they argued, to deny people both nationally and internationally "badly needed sustenance" through such reckless use of the province's natural resources. In the true spirit of the temperance movement, the FWIO warned against "the destruction of life and property through drunkenness," and the general "unhappiness and immorality caused by liquor." Pointing to the perceived decline of Ontario's rural communities, they concluded that the need for conservation was very apparent.[22]

The FWIO was particularly adamant in its claim that conservation "as it related to the home" was the ultimate responsibility of Ontario women.[23] This domestic attitude prevailed well into the 1970s. Though the issues facing conservationists had changed significantly by the mid-1960s, the conservative notions of gender-specific roles had not. Writing for the conservation authority periodical Watersheds, Ruth St. Clair, a researcher for a CBC Radio program entitled "The Elements of Life", suggested that, in the war against pollution, the main battle to be fought by women was against pollution in the home. Arguing that the home was an uncontested "female realm" she stated:

> I heard the cry somewhile ago 'away with pollution' but the cry was faint, and anyway, it was about reeds in rivers and lakes, and dirty air and the business of getting rid of the garbage. That was men's business, and though I agreed it was important, it didn't really concern me. But like any

> war, it has gradually come closer and closer, and has now involved my home. So I'm at war, and my enemy is pollution.[24]

The appeal to the domestic role of women in the fight against pollution is a further indication of the highly gendered structure of the conservation authorities in Ontario. Indeed, St. Clair's invocation of a clearly nineteenth-century image of the ideal woman as a veritable "angel in the house" is testament to the deeply rooted social conservatism which guided the conservation authorities throughout the postwar era.

Conclusion

The postwar role of women in the conservation movement in Ontario, and indeed in the rest of Canada, is a topic which deserves a great deal more attention than has been given here. A better understanding of the relationship between idealized notions of femininity and the conservation movement in general would shed much valuable light on the reconstruction process itself. Of particular importance would be a study which focused more closely on the actual voices of women. A more detailed study of the involvement of the FWIO in conservation projects would be a good start, though a look at other organizations with a large female membership (such as field naturalist groups and horticultural societies) would also prove to be fruitful.

Notes

[1] Louis Bromfield's account of the idealized farm family provides a good indication of the primarily domestic role that women were expected to play in the postwar period. Though women were aided in their housework by technological advancements, they were not liberated from traditional domestic duties. Bromfield wrote that, in spite of modern conveniences, "the good smell is still there in the kitchen and the farmer's wife is still the same at heart, although in these times she is not bent with rheumatism at forty from carrying water and wood and bending over a washboard." He added that "at 40 she is likely to be spry and young and busy with her clubs and neighbourhood activities - as young looking as her eighteen-year-old daughter." In Charles E. Little, ed., Louis Bromfield at Malabar: Writings on Farming and Country Life (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 3.

[2] There was at least one notable exception. The first chairman of the Neebing Conservation Authority, now part of Lakehead Region Conservation Authority in Thunder Bay, was a woman. She was later elected mayor of Port Arthur.

[3] Peter Harvie, "A Woodlot is a Family Affair," Watersheds 5/1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1970), 17.

[4] As David Slater notes, "women were absent from government leadership" during the war, and thus during the planning process. See David Slater, War, Finance and Reconstruction: The Role of Canada's Department of Finance, 1939-1946 (Ottawa: n.p., 1995), 4.

[5] Women had a particularly strong voice in what reconstruction planners considered the "cultural aspects" of reconstruction. See, for example, NAC RG 28, series A, vol. 139, 3-C-44, "Cultural Aspects of Reconstruction," (1943?).

[6] See Gordon Burkowski, Can Car: A History, 1912-1992 (Thunder Bay: Bombardier Inc., 1995), 44-47.

[7] Gail Cuthbert Brandt indicates that Wherry wrote to the Prime Minister in April 1941 "to express her concern that not a single woman had been appointed to the Reconstruction Committee." Brandt also notes that though Mackenzie King replied to Wherry and even promised to bring it up in Cabinet, little serious discussion was generated and "no further action was forthcoming." See Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "Pigeon-holed and Forgotten: The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-war Problems of Women, 1943," Histoire Sociale/Social History 15/29 (May, 1982), 241.

[8] NAC RG 28, series A, vol. 125, 3-C13-1, "Committee on Reconstruction", letter from Miss M.M. Wherry, president of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs to Dr. F. Cyril James (McGill University), Chairman of the Committee on Reconstruction, September 2, 1941.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Brandt, "Pigeon-holed and Forgotten: The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-war Problems of Women, 1943," 242.

[11] Ibid., 242-245. Brandt argues that "the Subcommittee members did not represent a cross-section of Canadian womanhood since they were overwhelmingly well-educated, of British origin, Protestant and middle-aged."

[12] Ibid., 258-9.

[13] The National Film Board of Canada, How They Saw Us (a collection of seven films produced between 1942 and 1958). The first quote has been taken from a film entitled "Proudly She Marches," (1943), the second from "Women at War," (1942).

[14] Such attitudes had a great deal of currency amongst Canadians. Both men and women (especially those of the ruling elite) believed that, in accordance with traditional Canadian notions of domesticity and femininity, the role of women in the rebuilding of the nation after the war should remain intimately tied to the private sphere of the conjugal family. One woman, for example, wrote to the federal Department of Labour during the war suggesting that "with strong propaganda and advertising, the Canadian home would become the backbone of the nation once again with women able to stay in their homes once they no longer have to balance the family budget by going to work." Letter from Mrs. Jean Raham to the Department of Labour, August 13, 1945, cited in Michael Stevenson, "The Industrial Selection and Release Plan, and the Premature Release of Personnel from the Armed Forces, 1945-1946," in Uncertain Horizons: Canadians and Their World in 1945, ed. Greg Donaghy (n.p.: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1997), 115.

[15] Ruth Roach Pierson, 'They're Still Women After All': The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1986), 220.

[16] Alexander Wilson, The Culture of Nature, 27. See also Bumsted, "Home Sweet Suburb: The Great Post-War Migration," 145.

[17] Val Plumwood, "Feminism and Ecofeminism: Beyond the Dualistic Assumptions of Women, Men and Nature" The Ecologist 22/1 (Jan/Feb 1992), 10.

[18] Carolyn Merchant, "Women of the Progressive Era Conservation Movement, 1900-1916," in Environmental History: Critical Issues in Comparative Perspective, ed. Kendall E. Bailes (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 162. See also Val Plumwood, "Feminism and Ecofeminism: Beyond the Dualistic Assumptions of Women, Men and Nature," 8-13.

[19] Merchant, "Women of the Progressive Era Conservation Movement, 1900-1916," 155.

[20] Angela Gugliotta, "Gendering Environmental Justice: Masculinity, Femininity and the Differential Impact of Smoke on Men and Women, Pittsburgh, 1868-1922," in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998 (Toronto: n.p., 1998), 6. A revised and expanded version of this paper has recently been published as "Class, Gender, and Coal Smoke: Gender Ideology and Environmental Justice in Pittsburgh, 1868-1914," Environmental History 5/2 (April 2000), 165-193.

[21] AO RG 49-123 D-I-44, Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, "Briefs and Reports of the Select Committee on Conservation, March 20, 1950," n.p.. Much valuable has been done recently on Ontario's Women's Institutes by Linda Ambrose and Margaret Kechnie. See Margaret Kechnie, "Keeping Things Clean for Home and Country: The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, 1897-1919," (Ph.D. dissertation, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1995); Linda Ambrose, For Home and Country: The Centennial History of the Women's Institutes in Ontario (Guelph, Ont.: Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, 1996); and Ambrose and Kechnie, "Social Control or Social Feminism?: Two Views of the Ontario Women's Institutes," 222-237.

[22] Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, "Briefs and Reports of the Select Committee on Conservation, March 20, 1950," n.p..

[23] Ibid., n.p..

[24] Ruth St. Clair, "What Can I Do About Pollution," Watersheds 5/1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1970), 20.

Conclusion

In 1961, A.H. Richardson, who had been the director of the Conservation Branch of the Department of Planning and Development since 1944, retired from his post as Chief Conservation Engineer for Ontario. His retirement marked the beginning of the end of an era for the conservation authority movement in the province. The period between 1946 and 1961 had been one of sustained growth and development for Ontario's conservation authorities. Under Richardson's leadership, twenty-seven out of total of thirty-eight authorities had been created (with the rest following within a decade of Richardson's retirement).[1] More significantly, it was during Richardson's term at the head of the Conservation Branch that the conservation authority program itself was created and ultimately refined to respond more effectively the postwar needs of the province. Throughout the 1950s, in fact, the conservation authorities had been one of the leading voices in the conservation movement in Ontario. However, regardless of their postwar popularity and prominence, the conservation authorities became increasingly peripheral after Richardson's retirement.

In part, the declining importance of the conservation authority movement throughout the 1960s may have been a result of Richardson's departure itself. The conservation authorities had certainly benefited throughout the postwar era from Richardson's dynamic leadership, and from his ability to drum-up support for watershed conservation throughout the province. But the diminished role of the conservation authorities after 1961 is better explained by the social and political changes that occurred in Ontario in the early 1960s. One of the major changes was within the Ontario government itself. By 1960, the postwar reconstruction process had run its course. Reconstruction had been a success, and as a result much of the anxiety that had

motivated the government's plans for the rehabilitation of the province had been addressed. There was, therefore, a distinct shift not only in the outlook of the provincial government, but also in its very structure. This shift had a direct impact on the conservation authorities. In 1962, the Conservation Branch left the Department of Planning and Development (which had been renamed the Department of Economics and Development in 1961), and was moved to the Department of Lands and Forests. Once touted as *the* voice of conservation within the government's plans for postwar reconstruction, the Conservation Branch became just one of many competing conservation voices in the Department of Lands and Forests, a department devoted almost exclusively to the management of resources in Ontario's non-urban hinterland, and not to conservation problems within its cities. The privileged status that the Conservation Branch had enjoyed in the multifaceted Department of Planning and Development all but disappeared in the years following Richardson's retirement.

Beyond redefined administrative structures, however, the most significant change in the 1960s was within the conservation movement itself. Throughout the 1960s, a host of authors and scientists helped to shift the focus of conservation discourse toward issues such as pollution and population growth. In particular, the publication of Rachel Carson's Silent Spring in 1962 marked the dawning of new environmental attitudes in North America. Arguing that the widespread use of synthetic pesticides was poisoning the environment, Carson cautioned her readers that "we know not what harm we face."[2] Though the narrow focus of her work was on the declining numbers of songbirds in the United States, Carson effectively drew attention to the growing problem of pollution, and especially the toxic nature of air-borne pollutants. Numerous books on a wide range of environmental topics were published in the years that followed. One of the most sensational, and also influential, of these works was Paul Ehrlich's The Population

Bomb. Selling more than three million copies in the first few years after its original publication in 1968, Ehrlich's book initiated "an immense debate about the virtues of having more people on the planet."[3] Coupled with the growing sense of an impending environmental crisis, concern over unchecked population growth only served to heighten the stakes surrounding environmental action, not only in the United States, but also around the world.

These concerns, in fact, brought about a new generation of conservationists in Ontario with a rather different set of anxieties and priorities. No longer concerned with flooding and drought, a host of "new" environmental problems became hot topics of public debate. Pollution, in particular, became an issue that Ontarians were forced to deal with. Whereas the conservation authorities throughout the 1950s had been content merely to flush water-borne pollutants downstream and away from the cities, the new breed of conservationists wanted to eradicate pollution altogether. Moreover, air pollution, which had not even been a consideration within the original conservation authority mandate, now became a central issue. Such attitudes, coupled with a growing spirit of social activism, resulted in an explosion of new conservation organizations in the 1960s. These organizations, which would become the foundation of the environmental movement in the 1970s, became the new collective voice of conservation in Ontario. Again, the conservation authorities, which had been one of the most dominant conservation institution in the postwar era, became increasingly peripheral within a growing environmental movement that had itself moved beyond the issues and anxieties that had motivated an entire generation of Ontario's postwar planners.

Notes

[1] By 1968, all but four of Ontario's authorities had been founded. In the mid-1970s the last of a total of thirty-eight conservation authorities was finally established.

[2] Quoted in Hal K. Rothman, The Greening of a Nation?: Environmentalism in the United States since 1945 (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1998), 90. See also Rachel Carson, Silent Spring (New York: Fawcett Crest, 1962).

[3] Ibid., 91.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

National Archives of Canada (NAC)

NAC RG 28, Series A, vol. 125, 3-C13-1, Committee on Reconstruction Files, (1941-1944)

NAC RG 28, Series A, vol. 136, 3-C-42, "Re-establishment of Veterans," (1944?)

NAC RG 28, Series A, vol. 136, 3-C-42, "The Initial Period of Reconstruction with Special Reference to Employment and Income," (March 27, 1945).

NAC RG 28, Series A, vol. 139, 3-C-44, "Cultural Aspects of Reconstruction," (1943?)

NAC, J.R. MacNicol Papers, MG 27 III C31, vol. 8, file 25, "Brief submitted by the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities to the Special Committee of the House of Commons on Reconstruction and Re-establishment," (June 1943)

_____. vol. 8, file 28, "A Summary of Proceedings of the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-habilitation," (1943?)

_____. vol. 9, file 18, Canadian Society of Forest Engineers, "A Statement of Forest Policy," (1943).

_____. vol. 11, "Water: Diversions, Flood Control, Conservation," (January 1939).

_____. vol. 14, file 23, "Canada Should Have a National Flood Control Policy," (n.d.)

_____. vol. 14, file 23, "A Ten Year $100,000,000 Water Conservation and Irrigation Reclamation Program for Irrigation, Power and Transportation," (1943?).

_____. vol. 15, file 30, "Speech on Reconstruction: Editorial " (July 1944)

_____. vol. 16, file 28, J.R. MacNicol, "Dictatorship and Democracy," (1944).

_____. vol. 16, file 31, "Flood Control and Water Conservation for the Thames River" (1944).

_____. vol. 16, file 31, "A Flood Control and Water Conservation Works Programme - A Sound Means For Big After-the-War Employment," (August 17, 1944).

_____. vol. 17, file 2, "Reconstruction and Rehabilitation," (August 1943)

_____. vol. 17, file 13, "An Irrigation Programme for After-the-War Employment," (1944)

Archives of Ontario (AO)

AO RG 1 A-1-9, Box 5, file 3, "Task Force on Disposition of Conservation Authorities Branch," Appendix F, (1970?)

AO RG 1 K-3, Box 20, Research Council of Ontario Miscellaneous Files, (1944-1947).

AO RG 1 247, Box 1, "A Systematic Method of Wetland Evaluation," (1970).

AO RG 1 474, Box 1, "Additional Information re: Economics and Wildlife Management," (1966).

AO RG 16-79, Canadian Council on 4-H Clubs Files, (1927-1980).

AO RG 25, Box 2, "Supplement 'A' to the Brief on Flood Control Dams and Conservation Reservoirs for the Humber Watershed: Determination of the Cost-Benefit Ratio and Water Conservation for the Proposed Scheme," (February 1955).

AO RG 49-120, Box C57 C04-09-1-11, "memorandum on reconstruction," (February 25, 1943).

AO RG 49-123, Box C57 C04-09-1-11, The Ontario Social Security and Rehabilitation Committee Files, (1943-1944).

AO RG 49-123, D-I-44, Briefs and Reports of the Select Committee on Conservation, (1950).

Government Publications

Ontario. Our Valley, vols. 1-5 (1955-1960).

_____. Report of the Select Committee on Conservation. Toronto: King's Printer, 1950.

Ontario, Department of Energy and Resource Management. Annual Report: 1969-1970. Toronto, n.p., 1970.

_____. Annual Report 1965-1966. Toronto: n.p., 1966.

Ontario, Department of Lands and Forests. Annual Report, 1961-1962. Toronto: n.p., 1962.

Ontario, Department of Planning and Development. Ontario's Industrial Development: Review of a Decade, Preview of the 1960s. Toronto: King's Printer, 1961.

_____. "Urban Renewal Notes." (September 1958).

_____. Conservation Authorities in Ontario: Prepared for the Members of the Legislature. Toronto: n.p., 1955.

_____. Conservation in South Central Ontario: Papers and Proceedings on Conservation in South Central Ontario, November 29th and 30th, 1946. Toronto: Baptist Johnston, 1948.

_____. Conservation in Eastern Ontario: Papers and Proceedings of the Conference on Conservation in Eastern Ontario Held at Queens's University, Kingston, Ontario, February 2nd and 3rd, 1945. Toronto: T.E. Bowman, 1946.

_____. Report of Conference of Planning and Development held at Toronto, Ontario, May 8th and 9th, 1944. Toronto: T.E. Bowman, 1944.

_____. Ontario: The Heart of the New World, Where Your Future Awaits. Toronto: n.p., 1944.

Other Primary Sources

Ashley, C.A. ed. Reconstruction in Canada: Lectures Given in the University of Toronto. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1943.

Bronwell, Evelyn and S. Gordon Scott. A Study of Holland Marsh: Its Reclamation and Development. Toronto: King's Printer, 1949.

Canadian Chamber of Commerce. A Program for Reconstruction. Ottawa: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 1943.

Commission of Conservation. Conservation of Life 1/1 (August 1914).

Coventry, Alan. Conservation and Post-War Rehabilitation: A Report Prepared by the Guelph Conference on the Conservation of the Natural Resources of Ontario. Toronto: n.p.,1942.

Dominion Engineering Works. Employment: The Foundation of all Social Security (n.p.: Dominion Engineering Works, 1943).

Haythorne, George and Leonard Marsh. Land and Labour: A Social Survey of Agriculture and the Farm Labour Market in Central Canada. Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1941.

Porter, Watson H. On To Muskingum: Ontario Conservation Authorities Tour to the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, September 27 to October 1. Toronto: King's Printer, 1948.

Royal Society of Canada. The Wise Use of Our Resources: Papers from the Joint Session of Sections of the Royal Society of Canada, May 21, 1941. Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1942.

_____. Proceedings and Transactions of The Royal Society of Canada. Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1940.

Secondary Sources

Abella, Irving. Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973.

Altmeyer, George. "Three Ideas of Nature in Canada, 1893-1914." Journal of Canadian Studies 11/3 (August 1976): 21-36.

Ambrose, Linda. For Home and Country: The Centennial History of the Women's Institutes in Ontario, Guelph, Ont.: Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, 1996.

Ambrose, Linda M. and Margaret Kechnie. "Social Control or Social Feminism?: Two Views on the Ontario Women's Institutes." Agricultural History 73/2 (Spring 1999).

Andreae, Christopher. "Industry, Dereliction, and Landscapes in Ontario." Ontario History 89/2 (June 1997): 161-180.

Armstrong, Alan H. "Thomas Adams and the Commision of Conservation." In Planning the Canadian Environment, ed. L.O. Gerter. Montreal: Harvest House, 1968.

Armstrong, Ellis L. ed. History of Public Works in the United States, 1776-1976. Chicago: American Public Works Association, 1976.

Arnup, Katherine. Education for Motherhood: Advice for Mothers in Twentieth-Century Canada. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

Artibise, Alan F. and Gilbert A. Stelter. "Conservation Planning and Urban Planning: The Canadian Commission of Conservation in Historical Perspective," In Consuming Canada: Readings in Environmental History, ed. Chad Gaffield and Pam Gaffield, 152-169. Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995.

Atwood, Margaret. Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature. Toronto: Anansi, 1972.

Avery, Donald. Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979.

Bacchi, Carol. "Race Regeneration and Social Purity: A Study of the Social Attitudes of Canada's English-Speaking Suffragists." Histoire Sociale/Social History XI (November 1978): 460-74.

Barbour, Michael. "Ecological Fragmentation in the Fifties." In Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature, ed. William Cronon, 233-255. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1995.

Barnes, A.S.L. "The Story Behind Ontario's 38 Conservation Authorities." Watersheds 5/1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1970): 18-19.

Bella, Leslie. Parks for Profit. Montreal: Harvest House, 1987.

Benedickson, Jamie. Idleness, Water, and a Canoe: Reflections on Paddling for Pleasure. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

Berger, Carl. The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970.

Black, Brian. "Organic Planning: Ecology and Design in the Landscape of the Tennessee Valley Authority, 1933-1945." In Environmentalism and Landscape Architecture, ed. Michel Cohen. Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, publication forthcoming.

_____. "Authority in the Valley: TVA in *Wild River* and the Popular Media, 1930-1940." Journal of American Culture, 18/2 (Summer, 1995): 1-14.

Blake, Raymond. "MacKenzie King and the Genesis of Family Allowances in Canada, 1939 1944." In The Good Fight: Canadians and World War II, ed. J.L. Granatstein and Peter Neary. Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995.

Bothwell, Robert and William Kilbourn. C.D. Howe: A Biography. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

Boyd, Dwight Anthony Smith, and Barbara Veale. "Flood Management on the Grand River, Ontario, Canada: A Watershed Conservation Perspective." Environments 27/1 (1999): 23-47.

Brandt, Gail Cuthbert. "Pigeon-holed and Forgotten: The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post war Problems of Women, 1943." Histoire Sociale/Social History 15/29 (May, 1982).

Brown, Robert Craig. "The Doctrine of Usefulness: Natural Resources and National Park Policy in Canada, 1887-1914." In Canadian Parks in Perspective, ed. J.G. Nelson. Montreal: Harvest House, 1970.

Brown, Robert Craig and Ramsay Cook. Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed. Toronto:

McClelland and Stewart, 1974.

Browning, Bryce C. "Watershed Management in the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District." Journal of Forestry (April 1960): 296-298.

Bryant, Christopher and Thomas Johnston. Agriculture in the City's Countryside. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992.

Bumsted, J.M. "Home Sweet Suburb: The Great Post-War Migration." In Coming of Age: Readings in Canadian History since World War II, ed. Donald Avery and Roger Hall, 139-148. Toronto: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1996.

Burkowski, Gordon. Can Car: A History, 1912-1994. Thunder Bay: Bombardier, Inc., 1995.

Burr, Christina. Spreading the Light: Work and Labour Reform in Late Nineteenth-Century Toronto. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Carson, Rachel. Silent Spring. New York: Fawcett Crest, 1962.

Clements, Frederick. Plant Succession. Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1916.

Careless, J.M.S. Canada: A Story of Challenge. London: Cambridge University Press, 1953.

Comacchio, Cynthia. The Infinite Bonds of Family: Domesticity in Canada, 1850-1940. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

_____. Nations Are Built of Babies: Saving Ontario's Mothers and Children, 1900-1940. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993.

Cook, Ramsay. "Canada: An Environment Without a History?" In Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998. Toronto: n.p., 1998.

_____."1492 and All That" Making a Garden Out of Wilderness." In Consuming Canada: Readings in Environmental History, ed. Chad Gaffield and Pam Gaffield, 62-80. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1995.

_____. The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

Copp, Terry. The Anatomy of Poverty. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1974.

Cosgrove, Denis. Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape. London: Croom Helm, 1984.

Craine, Lyle E. "The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District: A Study of Local Control." Law and Contemporary Problems 22 (1957): 378-404.

Creese, Walter. TVA's Public Planning: The Vision, the Reality. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990.

Dunlop, Thomas R. "Ecology, Nature and Canadian National Park Policy: Wolves, Elk, and Bison as a Case Study." In To See Ourselves/To Save Ourselves: Ecology and Culture in Canada, ed. Rowland Lorimer et al. Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1991.

Elton, Charles. Animal Ecology. New York: Macmillan, 1927.

England, Robert. Discharged: A Commentary on Civil Re-establishment of Veterans in Canada. Toronto: Macmillan, 1943.

Fallis, Lawrence S., Jr. "The Idea of Progress in the Province of Canada: A Study in the History of Ideas" In The Shield of Achilles: Aspects of Canada in the Victorian Age, ed. W.L. Morton. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968.

Finkel, Alvin. "Paradise Postponed: A Re-examination of the Green Book Proposals of 1945." Journal of the Canadian Historical Association (1993): 120-42.

Fischer, David. "Economic and Environmental Impacts of Soil Erosion Control." In A Conference on Erosion, 44-55. Toronto: n.p, 1972.

Flader, Susan W. Thinking Like a Mountain: Aldo Leopold and the Evolution of an Ecological Attitude Toward Deer, Wolves and Forests. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.

Forkey, Neil S. "Victorian Dreams, Progressive Realities: The Commission of Conservation Critiques Old Ontario's 'Colonization' Policy." In Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998. Toronto: n.p., 1998.

Francis, R. Douglas et al. Destinies: Canadian History Since Confederation, 2nd ed. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1992.

Friesen, Gerald. The Canadian Prairies: A History. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.

Frye, Northrop. The Bush Garden. Toronto: Anansi, 1971.

Fussell, Paul. Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

_____. The Great War and Modern Memory. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Gillis, Peter and Thomas Roach. Lost Initiatives: Canada's Forest Industries, Forest Policy and Forest Conservation. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986.

_____. "The American Influence on Conservation in Canada: 1899-1911." Journal of Forest History (October 1986).

Girard, Michel. L'écologisme retrouvé: Essor et decline de la Commission de la Conservation du Canada. Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1994.

Gorjup, Branko ed. Northrop Frye: Mythologizing Canada: Essays on the Canadian Literary Imagination. Toronto: Legas, 1997.

Graham, Roger. Old Man Ontario: Leslie M. Frost. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990.

Granatstein, J.L. The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982.

_____. Canada's War: The Politics of the MacKenzie King Government, 1939-1945. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Gray, James. Men Against the Desert. Saskatoon: n.p., 1967.

_____. The Winter Years: The Depression on the Prairies. Toronto: n.p., 1966.

Gugliotta, Angela. "Gendering Environmental Justice: Masculinity, Femininity and the Differential Impact of Smoke on Men and Women, Pittsburgh, 1868-1922." In Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998. Toronto: n.p., 1998.

Hargrove, Erwin C. Prisoners of Myth: The Leadership of the Tennessee Valley Authority, 1933 1990. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Harvie, Peter. "A Woodlot is a Family Affair." Watersheds 5/1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1970):16-17.

Harris, Richard and Tricia Shulist. "Canada's Reluctant Housing Program: The Veteran's Land Act, 1942-1975." Canadian Historical Review 82/2 (June 2001).

Hays, Samuel. Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Haythorne, George. Labour in Canadian Agriculture. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960.

Heron, Craig ed. The Worker's Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Hodgins, Bruce W., Jamie Benedickson, and Peter Gillis. "The Ontario and Quebec Experiments in Forest Reserves, 1883-1930." Journal of Forest History (January 1982).

Hodgins, Bruce W. and Jamie Benedickson. The Temagami Experience: Recreation, Resources and Aboriginal Rights in the Northern Ontario Wilderness. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989.

Hodgins, Jack. Broken Ground: A Novel. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1998.

Horn, Michael. "Leonard Marsh and the Coming of the Welfare State in Canada: A Review Article." Histoire Sociale/Social History 9 (1976): 197-204.

_____. The Dirty Thirties: Canadians in the Great Depression. Toronto: n.p., 1972.

Hubbard, Jennifer. "The Commission of Conservation and the Canadian Atlantic Fisheries." Scientia Canadensis 34 (Spring 1988): 22-52.

Iacovetta, Franca. "Making Model Citizens: Gender, Corrupted Democracy, and Immigrant and Refugee Reception in Cold War Canada." In Whose National Security? Canadian State Surveillance and the Creation of Enemies, ed. Gary Kinsman, Dieter K. Buse, Mercedes Steedman, 154-167. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2000.

_____. "Recipes for Democracy? Gender, Family, and Making Female Citizens in Cold War Canada." Canadian Woman Studies 20/2 (2000).

Inwood, Kris and Thanasis Stengos. "Discontinuities in Canadian Economic Growth, 1870 1985." Explorations in Economic History 28 (1991).

Jackson, Donald C. Building the Ultimate Dam. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990.

Jasen, Patricia. Wild Things: Nature, Culture and Tourism in Ontario, 1790-1914. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.

_____. "The English Canadian Liberal Arts Curriculum: An Intellectual History, 1800 1950." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Manitoba, 1987.

Jenkins, Hal. A Valley Renewed: The History of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District. N.p.: The Kent State University Press, 1976.

Kealey, Gregory. "Labour and Working Class History in Canada: Prospects in the 1980s." Labour/Le Travailleur 7 (Spring 1981).

Kechnie, Margaret. "Keeping Things Clean for Home and Country: The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, 1897-1919." Ph.D. dissertation, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1995.

Kenyon, Ian T. "'Weeds Uprising Where the Hearth Should Be': Rural House Abandonment in Southern Ontario." Ontario Archaeology 64 (1997): 39-55.

Killan, Gerald. Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Parks System. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993.

Killan, Gerald and George Warecki. "J.R. Dymond and Frank A. MacDougall: Science and Government Policy in Algonquin Provincial Park, 1931-1954." in Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998 (Toronto: n.p., 1998).

Kulberg, Mark. "We Have 'Sold' Forestry to the Management of the Company: Abitibi Power and Paper Company's Forest Initiatives in Ontario, 1919-1929." Journal of Canadian Studies 34/3 (Fall 1999): 187-209.

Lambert, Richard and Paul Pross. Renewing Nature's Wealth: A Centennial History of the Public Management of Lands, Forests, and Wildlife in Ontario, 1763-1967. Toronto: Department of Lands and Forests, 1967.

Leacy, F.H. ed. Historical Statistics of Canada, 2nd ed. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Minister of Supply and Services, 1983.

Leopold, Aldo. "The Conservation Ethic." In Readings in Conservation Ecology, ed. George W. Cox. New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969.

_____. Game Management. New York: Scribner, 1933.

Lemon, Jim. "Limits to Growth: Nature Challenges Human Hubris." In Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998. Toronto: n.p., 1998.

Lilienthal, David E. TVA: Democracy on the March. New York: Harper, 1944.

Little, Charles E. ed. Louis Bromfield at Malabar: Writings on Farming and Country Life. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.

Luxton, George and W.F. Ryan. "Employment After the War." Public Affairs 7 (Summer, 1944): 199-205.

Mackenzie King, William Lyon. Mackenzie King to the People of Canada. Ottawa: Le Droit Printing, 1945.

Marshall, Dominique. "Reconstruction Politics, the Canadian Welfare State and the Ambiguity of Children's Rights, 1940-1950." In Uncertain Horizons: Canadians and Their World in 1945, ed. Greg Donaghy, 261-283. N.p.: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1997.

McConkey, O.M. Conservation in Canada. Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1952.

McDonald, Robert. "'Holy Retreat' or 'Practical Breathing Spot'?: Class Perceptions of Vancouver's Stanley Park, 1910-13." Canadian Historical Review 65/2 (1984): 127-153.

McInnis, Peter S. "Planning Prosperity: Canadians Debate Postwar Reconstruction." In Uncertain Horizons: Canadians and Their World in 1945, ed. Greg Donaghy, 231-259. N.p.: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1997.

McKay, Donald. Heritage Lost: The Crisis in Canada's Forest. Toronto: Mcmillan, 1985.

McLaren, Angus. Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990.

Merchant, Carolyn. "Women of the Progressive Era Conservation Movement, 1900-1916." In Environmental History: Critical Issues in Comparative Perspective, ed. Kendall E. Bailes, 153-170. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985.

Mitchell Bruce, ed. Integrated Water Management. London: Belhaven Press, 1990.

Mitchell, Bruce and Daniel Shrubsole. Ontario Conservation Authorities: Myth and Reality. Waterloo: University of Waterloo Department of Geography, 1992.

Morton, Desmond. A Short History of Canada. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1983.

Nash, Roderick. Wilderness and the American Mind. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968.

Nelles, H.V. The Politics of Development: Forests, Mines and Hydro-Electric Power in Ontario, 1849-1941. Hamdon, CT: Archon Books, 1974.

Neuse, Steven M. David E. Lilienthal: The Journey of an American Liberal. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996.

Oliver, Dean. "Canadian Military Demobilization in World War II." In The Good Fight: Canadians and World War II, ed. J.L. Granatstein and Peter Neary, 367-386. Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1995.

Osborne, Brian S. "The Iconography of Nationhood in Canadian Art." In The Iconography of Landscape, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, 162-178. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Owram, Doug. Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.

Palmer, Brian. The Working Class Experience, 2nd edition. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992.

Pierson, Ruth Roach. 'They're Still Women After All': The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1986.

Pisani, Donald J. "Reclamation and Social Engineering in the Progressive Era." Agricultural History 57/11 (January 1983): 46-63.

Piva, Michael. The Condition of the Working Class in Toronto: 1900-1921. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979.

Plumwood, Val. "Feminism and Ecofeminism: Beyond the Dualistic Assumptions of Women, Men and Nature." The Ecologist 22/1 (Jan/Feb 1992): 8-13.

Pursell, Carroll. "Conservation, Environmentalism, and the Engineers: The Progressive Era and the Recent Past." In Environmental History: Critical Issues in Comparative Perspective, ed. Kendall E. Bailles. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985.

Radforth, Ian. Bush Workers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.

Rea, J.E. The Winnipeg General Strike. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973.

Read, Jennifer. "Water Pollution Management in the Great Lakes Basin, 1900-1930." In Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998. Toronto: n.p., 1998.

Richardson, A.H. Conservation by the People: A History of the Conservation Movement in Ontario to 1970. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.

_____. Conservation Authorities in Southern Ontario. Toronto: Department of Planning and Development, 1953.

Ross, Alexander M. The College on the Hill. Vancouver: Copp Clark, 1974.

Ross, Sinclair. The Lamp at Noon: and other Stories. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968.

Ross, W.W.E. "There's a Fire in the Forest." In Shapes and Sounds: Poems of W.W.E. Ross, ed. Raymond Souster and John Robert Colombo, 99. Toronto: n.p., 1974.

Rothman, Hal K. The Greening of a Nation?: Environmentalism in the United States since 1945. New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1998.

Schama, Simon. Landscape and Memory. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Schull, Joseph. Ontario Since 1867. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1978.

Sears, Paul B. Deserts on the March, 3rd ed. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959.

_____. "Science and the New Landscape." Harper's (July, 1939).

Selznick, Philip. TVA and the Grassroots: A Study in the Sociology of Formal Organization. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949.

Slater, David. "Colour the Future Bright: The *White Paper*, the Green Book and the 1945-1946 Dominion-Provincial Conference on Reconstruction." In Uncertain Horizons: Canadians and Their World in 1945, ed. Greg Donaghy, 191-208. N.p.: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1997.

_____. War, Finance and Reconstruction: The Role of Canada's Department of Finance, 1939-1946. Ottawa: n.p., 1995.

Smith, C. Ray and David Witty. "Conservation, Resources and Environment: An Explanation and Critical Evaluation of the Commission of Conservation." Plan Canada 11/1 (1970): 55-71.

Sprague, Douglas. Post-Confederation Canada: The Structure of Canadian History Since Confederation. Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1990.

St. Clair, Ruth. "What Can I Do About Pollution." Watersheds 5/1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1970); 20.

Stevenson, Michael. "The Industrial Selection and Release Plan, and the Premature Release of Personnel from the Armed Forces, 1945-1946." In Uncertain Horizons: Canadians and Their World in 1945, ed. Greg Donaghy, 115-134. N.p.: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1997.

Strong-Boag, Veronica. "Canada's Wage-Earning Wives and the Construction of the Middle Class, 1945-60." Journal of Canadian Studies 29/3 (Fall 1994): 5-25.

Thomas, J.D. "The Guelph Conference." Watersheds 1/4 (1966): 10-12.

Urquhart, M.C. "New Estimates of Gross National Product, Canada, 1870-1926: Some Implications for Canadian Development." In Long-term Factors in American Economic Growth, ed. S. Engerman and R. Gallman. Chicago: University of Chicago Press and the National Bureau of Economic Research, 1986.

Valverde, Mariana. The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885 1925. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1991.

Vance, Jonathan. Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997.

Waiser, Bill. "The Political Art of Park Making: Mackenzie King and the Creation of Prince Albert National Park." In Themes and Issues in North American Environmental History: University of Toronto Conference, April 25, 1998. Toronto: n.p., 1998.

Whitaker, Reg. A Sovereign Idea: Essays on Canada as a Democratic Community. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992.

Williams, Raymond. City and Country. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Wilson, Alexander. The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez. Toronto: Between the Lines, 1991.

Wood, Louis Aubrey. A History of Farmer's Movements in Canada: The Origins and Development of Agrarian Protest, 1872-1924. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975.

Woods, Walter S. Rehabilitation: A Combined Operation. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1953.

Worster, Donald. Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas, 2nd edition. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

_____. The Wealth of Nature: Environmental History and the Ecological Imagination. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

_____. Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the United States. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Zerubavel, Yael. Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.