

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS..... v

INTRODUCTION..... 1

Chapter

I. THE TRAVELLERS..... 8

II. "ETIQUETTE GOES OUT WHEN THE FROST COMES IN"..... 27

III. TRAVELLING AND SERVANTS..... 36

IV. THE JAIL AND THE LUNATIC ASYLUM WERE NOT WANTING..... 43

V. MANNERS, MORALS AND COOPERATION..... 51

VI. A "COURDUROY BRAGGOCIO"..... 58

CONCLUSION..... 68

APPENDIX..... 71

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 78

## ILLUSTRATIONS

| Figure |   | Reverse<br>of Page |
|--------|---|--------------------|
| 1.     | Number of Travellers by Quinquennial Age Periods.....   | 9                  |
| 2.     | The Main Routes in Canada West and the Population<br>Centres in 1851 .....                    | 11                 |
| 3.     | Number of Travellers by Occupation.....   | 19                 |
| 4.     | The Tour Periods of the Travellers.....   | 28                 |
| 5.     | Strength of the United States Army for Selected<br>Years 1842-1854 .....                      | 72                 |
| 6.     | Population of Toronto for Selected Years 1842-1850.....                                       | 72                 |
| 7.     | Similarity of Reginald and Daniel Fowler's Tours<br>of the Western Part of the Province ..... | 75                 |

## INTRODUCTION

During the period 1841-1867 more than four million people emigrated from the British Isles to North America.<sup>1</sup> Although crossing the Atlantic could hardly be classed as one of life's pleasures, the introduction of the propeller driven steam-ship was a decided improvement. The voyages became much simpler and less time-consuming; they were brought within the financial reach of a greater number of people.

Intermingled with this emigrant mass was an indeterminable number of travellers,\* who also found the steam-ship to be advantageous.<sup>2</sup> The Napoleonic wars rendered the 'Grand Tour' impractical in the early decades of the nineteenth century but with the return of peace it soon reappeared as "travel became organized...and in 1868 Thomas Cook conducted a party on a tour of Egypt and Palestine." "The early Victorian world" had become "a world of travellers."<sup>3</sup> Some com-

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<sup>1</sup> Stanley C. Johnson, A History of Emigration (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1966), pp. 344-345.

\*Obviously not all of the travellers returned to Britain and wrote books. But when consideration is given to the 200-plus which are listed by Max Berger for the period 1836-1860, (Max Berger, The British Traveller in America 1836-1860: (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1974), pp. 191(ff) and J. J. Talman's assertion that there are about 120 regarding Upper Canada, (J. J. Talman, "Travel Literature as source material for the History of Upper Canada, 1791-1840," Canadian Historical Review Report (1929) p. 112) then it must be concluded that the total number of travellers was large indeed.

<sup>2</sup> Max Berger, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Quayle Innis, Travellers West (Toronto: Clark, Irwin, 1956), p. 8.

plained that the situation had deteriorated to the point where anyone, just anyone; regardless of his station in life, could travel; one could meet a fellow John Bull in every capital.<sup>4</sup> It became passé to visit the usual spas. They were replaced by the United States. And by British North America, where the visitor could feel at home.<sup>5</sup>

The travellers and the emigrants came from different parts of society. Hence there is little correlation between their views. On the other hand there would appear to be a direct relationship between emigration as such and the narratives and the journals which flowed from the travellers' pens. A large number of these accounts were devoted, either in whole or in part, to investigating and extolling or condemning various areas where the emigrant might choose to settle. In the 1840s, "there was a prolific outpouring of books and articles telling people ...what the British Settlements could offer them."<sup>6</sup> These writings produced such a spate of articles that it has been dubbed "the Battle of the Quarterlies."<sup>7</sup>

In this respect what better men to visit America than William

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<sup>4</sup> Frances Duncan, Our Garrisons in the West, Or Sketches in British North America (London: Chapman, 1864), p. 64; Robert Playfair, Recollections of a Visit to the United States and the British Provinces of North America (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable, 1856), p. vi; and Robert Russell, North America (Edinburgh: Adam and Chas. Black, 1857), p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Duncan, pp. 174-175.

<sup>6</sup> John Manning Ward, Colonial Self-Government: The British Experiment 1759-1856 (New York: University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. 232. It has been asserted for the period of the 1890s that "no better means of advertising Canada could be found than...the published reports of intelligent observers that were based upon personal experience." (Norman Macdonald, Canada: Immigration and Colonization 1841-1903 (Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1966), p. 38).

<sup>7</sup> John S. Whitley and Arnold Goldman eds., "Introduction" to Charles Dickens, American Notes (N.p., 1842); reprint ed., Harmondsworth: Chaucer Press, 1972), p. 13.

Chambers, publisher of Chamber's Journal, a quarterly dedicated to emigration and one which freely joined the fray,<sup>8</sup> or W. H. G. Kingston, who published the Colonist, another emigration-oriented quarterly,<sup>9</sup> or the radical J. R. Godley, a friend of the colonizer E. Gibbon Wakefield, and known advocate of colonization.<sup>10</sup> These men probably fulfilled their role. But to what use have historians put such accounts?

The heritage of this literature is not insignificant. G. W. F. Hegel used an unidentified account as a source for information on the Yogis of India, and Marc Bloch and Alexis de Tocqueville referred to Arthur Young's work in their discussions of pre-revolutionary France.<sup>11</sup> There are a number of American works which discuss the British travellers' views of that country.\* In Canada, although

<sup>8</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Chambers, William," by Robert Hunt.

<sup>9</sup> Helen I. Cowan, British Emigration to British North America, rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), p. 178.

<sup>10</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Godley, John Robert," by Francis Watt; Cowan, pp. 106, 131; W. L. Morton ed., Monck Letters and Journals 1863-1868 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970), pp. x, 2n; and G. M. Craig, Early Travellers in the Canadas, 1791-1867 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1955), pp. 142-143.

<sup>11</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, The Philosophy of History, trans. J. Sibree (Colonial Press, 1899; reprint ed., New York: Dover Publications, 1956), pp. 149-150; Marc Bloch, French Rural History: An Essay on its Basic Characteristics, trans. Janet Sondheimer (London: Routledge and Keyan Paul, 1966), passim; and Alexis de Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1955), p. 97.

\*For instance see Max Berger, op. cit.; Allan Nevins, America Through British Eyes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948); and Edward Pessen, Jacksonian America, Society, Personality and Politics, (Nobleton: Irwin, Dorsey, 1969), particularly Chapter 2, "Jacksonian Character: A Contemporary Portrait of American Personality, Traits, and Values," pp. 5-38.

the existence and the value of travel accounts written about the Canadian provinces have long been known to historians, who have frequently drawn upon them in a variety of ways... they remain largely unknown and inaccessible to the general reader. Moreover, their formidable quantity and their uneven quality must dissuade the same general reader from becoming thoroughly acquainted with them.<sup>12</sup>

It would appear that the general reader is not alone. G. M. Craig's book Early Travellers In The Canadas, 1791-1867, contains extensive excerpts from a number of travel books with biographical notes of introduction.<sup>13</sup> It also has a general introduction which is based, to a large extent, upon his earlier article 'British Travellers in Upper Canada, 1815-1837.'<sup>14</sup> Mary Quale Innis's Travellers West uses the accounts of three explorers,<sup>15</sup> but only four others make any extensive use of such narratives. D. W. Earl's "British Views of Colonial Upper Canada, 1791-1841," is similar to Craig's article but, despite their predominance, it is not restricted to travel accounts.<sup>16</sup> Luella Creighton's The Elegant Canadians is limited to the immediate pre-Confederation period and to three travellers only.<sup>17</sup> In Western Ontario and the American Frontier Fred Landon looks at a special aspect of American-Canadian relations and Jean Burnet's Ethnic Groups In Upper Canada closes out in the early 1850s.<sup>18</sup> In defence of Landon and

<sup>12</sup> Craig, Early Travellers, p. xii. See also Talman, passim.

<sup>13</sup> Craig, op. cit.      <sup>14</sup> Ontario History, 43 (1951) No. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Innis, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> Ontario History, 53 (1961) No. 2, passim.

<sup>17</sup> Luella Creighton, The Elegant Canadians (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967).

<sup>18</sup> Fred Landon, Western Ontario and the American Frontier (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967); and Jean R. Burnett, Ethnic Groups in Upper Canada ([Toronto]: Ontario Historical Society, 1972).

Burnet it must be pointed out that their use of this source is very extensive. This listing, while not exhaustive, is certainly not impressive.

This failure may be due, in part, to the attitude reflected in the following passage:

Emigration being a subject of some interest in Britain, dozens of travellers and residents in Ontario set out to describe the mysterious, forested colony, and to turn an honest penny thereby. To the reader of today most of their accounts have finally a wearisome sameness: batteaux on the St. Lawrence; bad roads, crude inns, and grim tasks in the bush; alternatively the land of hope where anyone could rapidly become an independent farmer.

The author then proceeded to illustrate his point through the use of quotes which are restricted to the likes of Susanna Moodie's Roughing It In The Bush.<sup>19</sup> The general neglect is perhaps best illustrated by Allen Smith's article "American Culture and the Concept of Mission in Nineteenth Century English Canada" wherein he referred to the works of Isabella Lucy "Bishop" and James Dixon by citing them back to Craig's book.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, this article was published, and probably written, after Isabella "Bishop's" work was available in a paperback reprint under her real name.

Such accounts have their limitations. They have been criticized for not being sufficiently inclusive, for containing glaring errors, for presenting an overly-optimistic picture, for reflecting only a superficial curiosity, for praising everything English and condemning everything foreign, for seeing "only that about Canada which

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<sup>19</sup> G. P. de T. Glazebrook; Life in Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 25.

<sup>20</sup> Allan Smith, "American Culture and the Concept of Mission in Nineteenth Century English Canada," Canadian Historical Association Papers, 1971, p. 182.

was similar to the United States," and, because) the authors had no depth of knowledge, only a peculiar perspective, for not engaging in any social analysis.<sup>21</sup> Further, the reader is informed, when they did look at society these accounts "presented a distorted version" of it, and ignored urban life.<sup>22</sup>

Conversely it is argued that they form the only record of the true social situation, that they allow the reader to see things from an outsider's point of view, and that the scene they show, while not always representative, is authentic.<sup>23</sup>

Admittedly the repetition of the physical and geographic aspects is monotonous. But the very fact that it is speaks well for the authenticity of such accounts. Consider Niagara Falls, a 'lion' which was visited by every traveller. The researcher may take all of the narratives and draw a very accurate picture of the history of sight-seeing and general life at this scenic wonder. Since most of the travellers record their impressions of the other geographic locations throughout the province the same applies to many of these features. Taken over a period of time a valid assessment would appear possible. Further, the travellers, each according to their own interest, focussed their attention on separate topics; education, politics, agriculture, religion, geology and many others have been singled out for special

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<sup>21</sup> Macdonald, p. 33; J. A. R. Pimlott, The Englishman's Holiday: A Social History (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), p. 70; S. D. Clark, Canadian Society in Historical Perspective (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, Ryerson, 1976), p. 131; and Craig, "Early Travellers," p. xiv.

<sup>22</sup> Pessen, p. 10; and Margaret Angus, "Health, Emigration and Welfare in Kingston 1820-1840," in Donald Swainson ed., Oliver Mowat's Ontario (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), p. 122.

<sup>23</sup> Max Berger, p. 6; Landon, pp. 18, 270; Craig, British Travellers, p. 177; and Earl, p. 117.



attention. In addition these aspects are the subject of tangential remarks in many others. The researcher need but glean them all to arrive at a montage.

To illustrate the possibilities, the travellers' observations on a number of selected social relationships will be used as an example. This facet has been chosen not simply to facilitate a discussion but also because it would seem to have a special place in the considerations, not only of the British traveller, but of the British emigrant as well. It should also serve as an aid to further an understanding of Canadian society, its nature and structure. To preserve something of a continuum the period of the Union has been singled out.

In addition to the immediate economic situation and events such as the potato famine, the old land-holding, hereditary structure of British society was one of the main forces contributing to emigration. But to where? The choices were limited. A large number chose Australia and New Zealand. The North American continent, on the other hand, was within easy reach and although many opted for the republic to the south, Canada West received its share. The nature of its society played a role in the selection process. To assist the emigrant the travellers presented their views on these societies.

The discussion which follows commences by introducing the traveller. The task of listing and siting their volumes will be left to the bibliography. In between will be found their views on some selected aspects of the Canadian society as the travellers saw it and some observations upon the nature of the travellers themselves which bear directly upon their views of this society.

## CHAPTER I

### THE TRAVELLERS

Very few of the secondary works on travel accounts tell the reader anything about the traveller. The reader is left on his own to draw his own conclusions. Yet surely this is of some importance, for unless something is known about the traveller how can his point of view be understood and assessed? As a point of departure, they will be presented both as individuals and as a group.

The works of seventy-four travellers who visited Canada West have been located and will be considered in this essay. Of the forty-six for whom such information is available, the average age was 42.7 years when they started their trip.\* Eight of the seventy-four were female and of the four for whom this information is available the average age was 34.5. As can be seen from Figure 1 they were spread rather evenly over the last half-century of man's three score and ten years.

The youngest traveller was Victoria Stuart-Wortley, a twelve year old who accompanied her mother then returned to write a book dedicated to the young reader.<sup>24</sup> The other who had not yet reached the age of majority was William Newmarch, a son of a director of the Grand

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\*Throughout this essay, whenever the travellers are considered as a group, the many sources of the information will not be cited.

<sup>24</sup> [Victoria Stuart-Wortley], A Young Traveller's Journal of a Tour in North and South America During the Year 1850 (London: T. Bosworth, 1852), preface.

FIGURE 1

NUMBER OF TRAVELLERS  
BY QUINQUENNIAL AGE PERIODS

| AGE   | NUMBER | AGE   | NUMBER |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| 11-15 | 1      | 41-45 | 7      |
| 16-20 | 1      | 46-50 | 4      |
| 21-25 | 5      | 51-55 | 4      |
| 26-30 | 6      | 56-60 | 3      |
| 31-35 | 2      | 61-65 | 3      |
| 36-40 | 7      | 66-70 | 3      |

Trunk Railway.<sup>25</sup>

The trio of over sixty-fives was composed of John W. Oldmixon, R. A. Slaney, and Fred Lillywhite. Only Fred Lillywhite, the "non-parieles" bowler who accompanied the English cricket team on their 1859 tour, complained of the rigours of the voyage.<sup>26</sup>

The pall of ignorance which surrounds the travellers and their works has already been noted. It is exemplified by the following passage:

Dunlop followed an unusual route. From Jamaica he sailed to New Orleans, where he transferred to a river boat to go up the Mississippi. After brief stops in Chicago and Detroit, Dunlop crossed into Canada to visit his uncle in Goderich, then to Hamilton, Niagara, Toronto, Kingston, Montreal, Quebec, and finally to the American eastern seaboard.<sup>27</sup>

Dunlop's itinerary, both in Canada and the United States, was hardly unusual. Almost two-thirds of the travellers entered Canada West from Montreal and departed through Niagara Falls or reversed this direction but used the same ports. More than half of the remainder entered and departed through one of these cities. The pattern was so well established by 1844 that J. R. Godley, while visiting Woodstock, observed that it was an odd spot for a traveller. Most of them, he reflected, went from Niagara Falls to Montreal via Toronto and

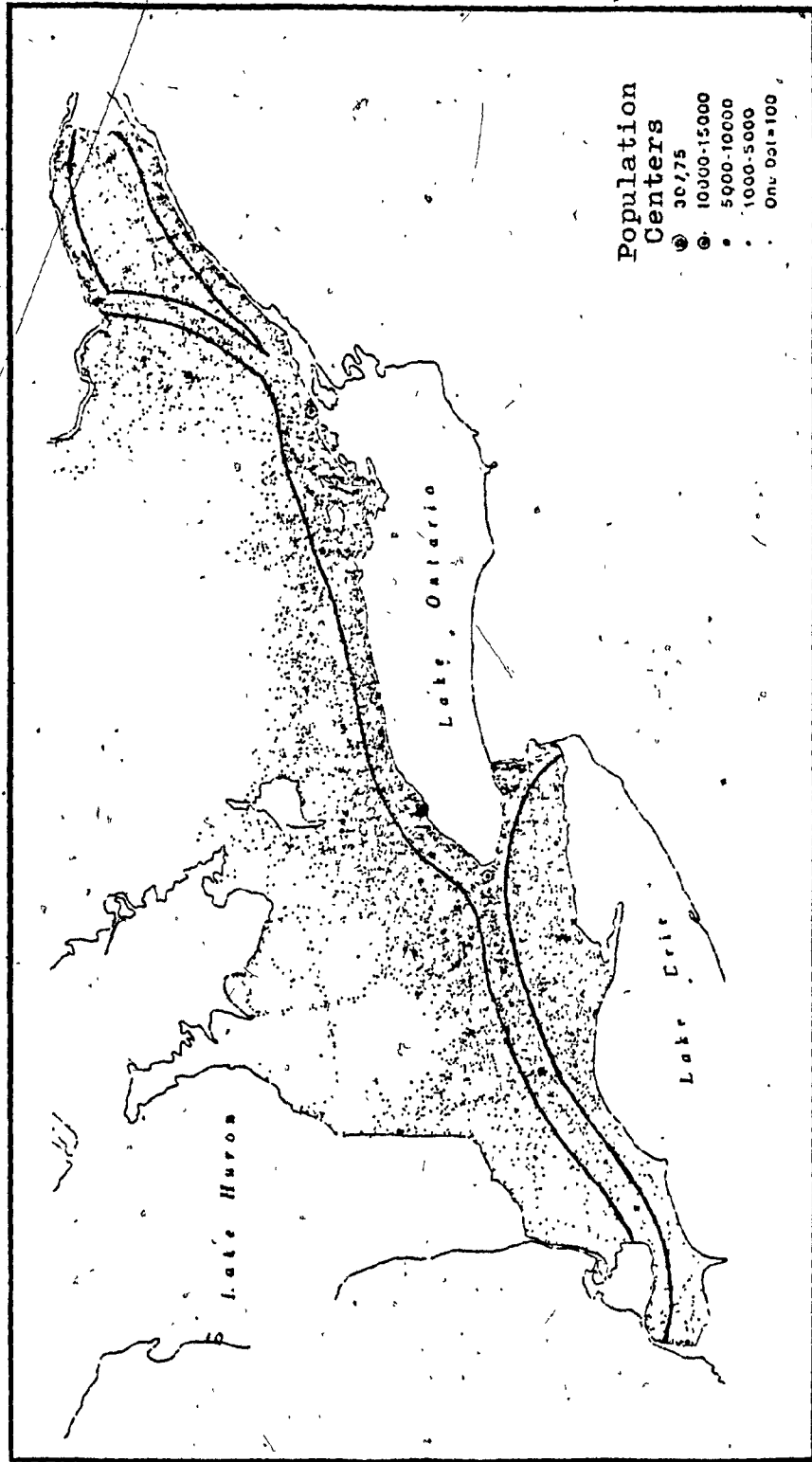
<sup>25</sup> William Thomas Newmarch, Letters Written Home in the Years 1864-5 ([London]: n.p., 1880), frontispiece.

<sup>26</sup> Fred Lillywhite, The English Cricketer's Trip to Canada and the United States (London: Author, 1860), passim; and Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Lillywhite, Frederick William," by G. C. Boase.

<sup>27</sup> New Title Announcement [Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1977], n.p.

FIGURE 2

THE MAIN ROUTES IN CANADA WEST AND THE POPULATION CENTERS IN 1851



Kingston.<sup>28</sup> Another ten percent followed Dunlop's trail from Sarnia to Montreal and the rest entered somewhere along the Saint Lawrence River and departed at Niagara Falls. These general flows are marked on Figure 2 by a wide corridor.\*

It has been observed of the British traveller that, in general, "few strayed from the well-trodden paths;" none but the eccentric were interested in exploring the little-known hinterland off the main routes.<sup>29</sup> Only the more daring, such as W. H. G. Kingston and "C. H. C.", ventured very far from civilization. Kingston, newly married at age thirty-nine, and his bride, spent five months in the fall and early winter honeymooning in Canada West. A large portion of this time was spent living with the Indians in the Muskoka and Sault Saint Marie areas.<sup>30</sup> Not necessarily a remarkable feat but a honeymoon to remember and certainly unique. "C. H. C." also shunned city life and its comforts. Most of his visit, although within easy reach of civilization, was through the bush on foot, horseback, sleigh and cart.<sup>31</sup> They provide a sharp contrast with Henry Ashworth who stayed close to civilization and the amenities which it offered.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> John Robert Godley, Letters from America (London: J. Murray, 1844), I:177-178.

\*Map taken from R. L. Gentlecore, "Settlement," R. L. Gentlecore ed., Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 29.

<sup>29</sup> Pimlott, p. 72.

<sup>30</sup> William H. G. Kingston, Western Wanderings or, A Pleasure Tour in the Canadas (London: Chapman and Hall, 1856), I:vii, II:319.

<sup>31</sup> C. H. C., It Blows, It Snows (Dublin: P. W. Brady, 1846), passim.

<sup>32</sup> Henry Ashworth, Tour of the United States, Cuba and Canada (London: A. W. Bennett, 1841), passim.

The similarity of the routes in the United States also indicates well-established patterns. Landing at New York or Boston the traveller would proceed north up the Hudson River and Erie Canal system either to Niagara Falls or Montreal. Those who went south invariably saw Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Charleston and New Orleans in that order. Then they turned north up the Mississippi to Saint Louis, Cincinnati and Chicago thence to either Detroit or Pittsburg before entering Canada at Windsor or Niagara Falls. Here the routes joined and the visitor completed the circuit. It was, to a large degree, a packaged experience.

The exceptions were provided by the few who landed at Halifax for a visit to the Maritimes before proceeding elsewhere, by those who merely passed through the eastern states and provinces on their way to the 'far' west and by those who looped south to the Carribean. The usual point of departure for a southern swing was New Orleans and nine of the travellers included this area on their itinerary. Three of these visited South America as well. In addition Reginald Fowler travelled extensively in the Mediteranean area, Alexander Marjoribank's tour included New Zealand and Charles Wentworth Dilke visited New Zealand, Australia, Russia and India.

The similarity of these routes should provide both consistency in, and reinforcement for, the observations. But this cannot be taken too far as some of it may have been occasioned by their familiarity with each other's works. Charles Lyell's book, for instance, was read by at least four of the others before they wrote theirs; J. F. W. Johnston's was read by three of them. In addition to Charles Lyell's and J. F. W. Johnson's works, Alexander Marjoribanks was familiar with

those of Barkley-Allardice, Lady Stuart-Wortley, Lord Carlisle and G. D. Warburton, and at least five others had read one other volume.<sup>33</sup>

This raises the point of originality. To illustrate its drawbacks consider the little anecdotes which the travellers narrated. In most instances they were probably very singular tales and if they were repeated they were camouflaged beyond recognition. But Lady Stuart-Wortley and A. J. Pairpoint stand out as both told the tale of a father who sent his young son out to bring in a log for the fire. The son returned with a small branch. The father rebuked him and sent him back for a bigger one. The son departed and did not return for thirty years at which time he reappeared lugging a huge log which he could barely get through the door. According to Lady Stuart-Wortley the father then exclaimed "This 'ere log 'll do; but you've been a darned long time a-fetching it." (*Italics original*)<sup>34</sup> Five years later Pairpoint told the same tale except that he had the father exclaiming "This 'ere log 'll do, but you've been a darned long time a-fetching

<sup>33</sup> Alexander Marjoribanks, Travels in South and North America (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1853), *passim*; William Brown, America: A Four Year's Residence (Leeds: Kemplay and Bolland, 1849), p. iv; Philip Kelland, Transatlantic Sketches (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1858), pp. 14-15; John W. Oldmixon, Transatlantic Wanderings (London: Routledge and Co., 1855), pp. 1, 88-89; Sir W. H. Russell, Canada, Its Defences, Conditions and Resources (London: Bradbury and Evans, 1865), p. 43; Sir E. R. Sullivan, Rambles and Scrambles in North and South America (London: Richard Bently, 1853), p. 156; and John Thornton, Diary of a Tour Through the United States and Canada (London: F. Barker, 1850), frontispiece.

<sup>34</sup> Lady E. Stuart-Wortley, Travels in the United States (New York: Harper and Bros., 1851), p. 30. All italics in quotes from original texts will be from the original throughout this essay. To preserve the original text in its form as written the term [sic] will not be used. However, to aid the syntax bracketed words will be inserted as necessary.



it."<sup>35</sup> The similarity is too much, too striking. Such tales must be approached rather warily.

G. T. Borrett, who spent only seven days in Canada West, has been seen by one historian as a "casual" traveller.<sup>36</sup> With respect to Borrett the point must be accepted. It also holds true for those authors who are cited only once or not at all in this essay. Their average tour in Canada West was slightly less than twenty days. If the Rev. George Easton's one hundred and sixty-five days are deducted it shrinks to exactly thirteen days. These authors most certainly qualify as casuals and bring to the fore the reaction of one traveller who, upon meeting a youthful voyager busily rushing from lion to lion in an attempt to see everything in three months, was put

in mind of thousands of English travellers one meets on the Continent, and elsewhere throughout the world: hurrying, posting, rushing along, much to their discomfort, and in no degree to their benefit.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand not all travellers were this casual. The average traveller may have spent only slightly more than two months in Canada West, but those who are cited more than once in this essay averaged exactly 100 days there. They had adequate time in which to gain more than just a passing familiarity with the province and its inhabitants. It is from these yarns that the skein will be formed and together they weave a tapestry of whole cloth.

In all of this rushing about the travellers managed to make

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<sup>35</sup> A. J. Pairpoint, Uncle Sam and His Country (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1857), pp. 103-104.

<sup>36</sup> Craig, Early Travellers, p. 277.

<sup>37</sup> David Sinclair and Germain Warkentin eds., The New World Journal of Alexander Graham Dunlop 1845 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1976), p. 50.

each others acquaintance. Isabella Lucy Bird and Amelia M. Murray were shipmates on the way out; it was a situation which did not particularly please the former,<sup>38</sup> but that was, as Francis Duncan had pointed out, one of the perils. Sir James Alexander dined with Charles Dickens in Kingston.<sup>39</sup> James Fergusson and Sir E. W. Watkin, although Watkin was not on the tour of which he wrote in the book considered for this essay, met first in Montreal and then returned to Britain together some months later.<sup>40</sup> Finally, Horton Rhys took particular pains to rush from Belleville to Hamilton in October 1859 to see the English cricket team play and renew acquaintances with his Eatonian school pal, Fred Lillywhite.<sup>41</sup>

The travellers read each other, they met each other and they mingled with the best of what North America had to offer socially. No traveller went abroad unless he was armed with letters of introduction. Without them the doors remained closed. Mrs. C. K. F. Bromley, for instance, would not debark from the steamer at Toronto because she lacked such a paper.<sup>42</sup> With them the visitor could be received by the the most distinguished residents--everything was possible. The

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Hill Clark ed., "Forward" to Isabella Lucy Bird, The Englishwoman in America (London: J. Murray, 1856; reprint ed., Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1966), p. vii.

<sup>39</sup> Sir James Edward Alexander, L'Acadie: Or Seven Year's Exploration in British America (London: Colburn, 1849); I:127.

<sup>40</sup> James Fergusson, Notes of a Tour in North America in 1861 (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1861), p. 22.

<sup>41</sup> Charles Horton Rhys, A Theatrical Trip for a Wager Through Canada and the United States (London: C. Dudley, 1861; reprint ed., Vancouver: Alcuin Society, 1966), pp. 171-172.

<sup>42</sup> C. K. F. Bromley, A Woman's Wanderings in the Western World (London: Saunders, Oatley and Co., 1861), p. 56.

travellers rode, dined, and visited with such personages as Sir Edmund Head, Lord Elgin, Sir Charles Bagot, President Polk, Bishop Strachan, Chief Justices Robinson and Draper, Professors Longfellow and Agassiz, the railway promoters Watkins and Brydges and numerous elected representatives. And so it went. The letters served well but as will be shown the travellers were not out of their element. It was only natural that they should meet people in stations such as these.

The Paris Exhibition of 1835 was the 'lion' of the first of Cook's continental tours, and as the "English middle and working classes" were freed from the routine drudgery of their daily work they patronized such adventures.<sup>43</sup> Liberated, they showed "an educated interest in the cultures and customs and manners of other nations," and they indulged in travel once "it ceased to be the privilege of the leisured and wealthy."<sup>44</sup> This appears to have held true in the United States where the travellers of the late 1820s were reputedly members of "the upper and professional classes."<sup>45</sup> Twenty years later this had shifted to those of "middle or upper class backgrounds" and by the late 1850s the middle class alone was represented.<sup>46</sup>

The very cost of such a voyage would appear to have been a restricting factor. In the early 1840s 50 pounds would have been a good annual income and with 100 pounds a man could aspire to "the top of the tree - a magnate, a magistrate, a major of militia."<sup>47</sup> Twenty years later it was noted that if a man had an annual income of 1000

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<sup>43</sup> Pimlott, pp. 168-169. <sup>44</sup> Ibid, pp. 190-191.

<sup>45</sup> Nevins, p. 79. <sup>46</sup> Max Berger, pp. 13-14, 21.

<sup>47</sup> Sir Richard Henry Bonnycastle, Canada and the Canadians, in 1846 (London: Colburn, 1846; reprint ed., Toronto: Canadiana House, 1969), II:82-83.

pounds he could be the gentleman and live the life of luxury with servants and maids and not have to work at all.<sup>48</sup> In the earlier period the fare for two from New York to Liverpool was \$120 American.<sup>49</sup> In the early 1860s it was sixty-two pounds from Boston.<sup>50</sup> Certainly these would have been luxuries for the magnate, magistrate and major and would probably give the gentleman some second thoughts. So despite Duncan's concern, not everybody could make such a voyage.

Even if the mass of the travellers were middle class, those who wrote books on their experiences were not. Book-writing is not a proletarian pastime. A cursory glance through the bibliography will give an indication of the general social level of the travellers. Five had been knighted, a sixth was a Lord and one was a Lady. Degrees tailed along after many of their names and they belonged to prestigious organizations. The aforementioned Francis Duncan, for example, was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, a Fellow of the Geographical Society, a member of the Colonies Committee Society of Arts and held an honorary degree from Kings College, Nova Scotia.<sup>51</sup> It would seem that they were not the ordinary British subject. Like Charles Dickens they were singular, and in some instance very well-known, British personages.

Some further specific examples are in order. Philip Kelland

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<sup>48</sup> B. W. A. Sleigh, Pine Forests and Hacmatach Clearings (London: Richard Bentley, 1853), pp. 392-395.

<sup>49</sup> Alexander, II:258. (Probably first-class fare).

<sup>50</sup> Lady C. A. Lefroy ed., Autobiography of Sir John Henry Lefroy (London: Pardon and Sons, [1895]), p. 108. (Again probably first-class fare).

<sup>51</sup> Duncan, frontispiece.

FIGURE 3

NUMBER OF  
TRAVELLERS BY OCCUPATION

| OCCUPATION             | NUMBER |
|------------------------|--------|
| Author-Journalist..... | 16     |
| Professional.....      | 10     |
| Merchant-Businessman.. | 8      |
| Cleric-Minister.....   | 7      |
| Miscellaneous.....     | 7      |
| Military Officer.....  | 6      |
| Politician.....        | 4      |

was a professor of mathematics who visited North America to gather actuarial statistics for a firm in which he held a directorship.<sup>52</sup> Lucy Bird was the first woman elected to the Royal Geographical Society and John MacGregor was a philanthropist who wrote using the pen name 'Rob Roy.'<sup>53</sup> Amelia Murray, writer, botanist and artist, became Maid of Honour to Queen Victoria in 1837. As a result of her trip to America her sentiments became so anti-abolitionist that she was obliged to resign her position in order to have her book published.<sup>54</sup> Another, R. Barkley-Allardice, was world-famous for his prodigious pedestrian ploddings, and Robert Russell, a naturalist, delivered a lecture at the Smithsonian Institute during his visit.<sup>55</sup>

A breakdown of the travellers by occupation is presented at Figure.3. Unfortunately biographical information is available for only fifty-nine of them and of these only forty can be found in the standard works. This would seem to indicate, as noted by Duncan, that there were at least two levels of society represented. Most authors appear to belong to the elite levels but, as will become apparent, some were more elite than others.

The author-journalist category is not only the largest but probably contains the more familiar names--if not in to-day's world then in the British world of the mid-1800s. Charles Dickens needs no introduction or comment. Two of the others came from travelling

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<sup>52</sup> Kelland, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> Clark, p. ix; and Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Macgregor, John," by Thompson Cooper.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., s.v. "Murray, Amelia Matilda," by Gordon Goodwin.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., s.v. "Allardice, Robert Barclay," by Leslie Stephens; and Max Berger, p. 213.

families. Anthony Trollope was the son of Frances M. Trollope, whose earlier book on American manners had raised such a storm of protest, and C. R. Weld, a historian of the Royal Society, drew inspiration from his half-brother's almost century old book, and wrote of his visit at the urging of Sir Charles Lyell, another of the group.<sup>56</sup> Amelia Murray was not the only Maid of Honour who toured abroad. The younger Stuart-Wortley was so appointed in 1861 and could also boast the Queen as namesake and Godmother.<sup>57</sup> Many of the authors restricted their works to travel accounts and in a period of ever-widening horizons there were many successful travel writers. Of note were John MacGregor and the apparently indefatigable Kingston, whose trip to Canada West served as the basis for at least one of the hundreds of books and articles that flowed from his pen.<sup>58</sup>

Amongst the professionals were the mathematician Phillip Kelland, Sir Charles Lyell, whose geological works won world acclaim, and W. B. Cheadle, a physician who accompanied William Fitzwilliam on his trip through the Rockies over a route which was eventually used by Sir Sandford Fleming to lay out the C.P.R.<sup>59</sup>

Sir E. W. Watkin, the railway promoter and President of the

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<sup>56</sup> C. R. Weld, A Vacation Tour in the United States and Canada (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1855), pp. 2-3; and Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Weld, Charles Richard," by Thomas Seccombe.

<sup>57</sup> Mrs. Henry Cust, Wanderers (London: Jonathan Cape, 1928), pp. 13, 19.

<sup>58</sup> Donald Creighton, Towards the Discovery of Canada (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), p. 126; Kingston, "Frontispiece"; and British Museum, General Catalogue of Printed Books, s.v. "Kingston, William Henry Giles."

<sup>59</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, 2nd Supplement, s.v. "Cheadle, Walter Butler," by E. M. Brockbank.

Grand Trunk owed his start to his father, a cotton merchant and one of the founders of the Manchester Examiner.<sup>60</sup> Watkin visited Canada West on business. For most of the other businessmen-merchants the same situation holds; it is highly probable that the trip would not have been made without their monetary reserves. J. F. W. Johnson, a chemist, married into money and there is every probability that had he not done so he would have been obliged to pursue his agricultural avocation on soil much closer to his native land.<sup>61</sup> The same holds true for James James Lumsden who started as a partner with his father in the engraving business and subsequently founded the Clydesdale Bank in 1838; it holds true for George Moore, a philanthropist; it holds true for the "rich" William Playfair; and it holds true for John Henry Vessey, a gentleman sheep farmer who could trace his lineage back to a signator of the Magna Carta.<sup>62</sup> Moore came for his health; Playfair to visit his sister, and Vessey to search for the heir to a baronetcy.<sup>63</sup> These are hardly middle class pastimes, or reasons.

As is the situation with the military category there are no individuals of note among the men of the cloth. But the fact that most of them made the trip to attend a religious conference or council

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<sup>60</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, 2nd Supplement, s.v. "Watkin, Sir Edward Williams," by C. W. Sutton.

<sup>61</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Johnson, James Finlay Weir," by Gordon Goodwin.

<sup>62</sup> Modern English Biography, s.v. "Lumsden, James;" Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Moore, George," by the Rev. A. R. Buckland; Max Berger, p. 211; and Brian Waters ed., in John Henry Vessey, Mr. Vessey of England (New York: Putnam, 1956), pp. 15-16.

<sup>63</sup> George Moore, Letters from the United States, Cuba and Canada (London: Palmer and Clayton, 1845), "Preface;" Playfair, p. iv; and Waters ed., p. 15.



focuses attention on the reasons for the trips in the first instance. At the same time it calls into question the cost of the trip and its real impact upon individuals of this social level. Almost sixty percent state that their tours were associated with their professions; they were, like Watkin, on business. The authors and correspondents visited to discover new themes and report the facts; the military officers were on a tour of duty; and the professionals were seeking to advance their knowledge. The clerics were attending a religious meeting and at the same time spreading their faith. Another twenty-five percent toured for reasons of health or to visit relatives. A small percentage came out of idle curiosity and the rest for various other reasons. John Vessey's search has already been mentioned. Sir E. R. Sullivan came at the urging of a friend; and Robert Barklay-Allardice came to settle a relative and visit his daughter in Hamilton.<sup>64</sup> And then there was the thespian, Horton Rhys, whose motives derived from a mixture of professionalism, sportsmanship and monetary advancement. Rhys deserves special comment. In a bar-room conversation some friends questioned an actor's ability to even subsist if he was not playing in a country in which he had built up a reputation. Rhys objected and to win a bet of 500 pounds travelled to America to prove the point. After the specified year he returned with the necessary profit.<sup>65</sup>

Of the seven individuals who comprise the miscellaneous category two stand out from the rest. William Brown sets himself apart

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<sup>64</sup> Sullivan, p. 9; and R. Barklay-Allardice, Agricultural Tour in the United States and Canada (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1842), pp. vii, 62.

<sup>65</sup> Rhys, pp. 5-8.

from other travellers by averring that, as a tavern keeper, his associations with the middle class have given him a better knowledge and understanding of farmers, merchants and mechanics.<sup>66</sup> The second is also unique.<sup>67</sup> William Thomson was a weaver who came to Canada "in the hope of alleviating his tubercular condition."<sup>68</sup> He apologized to the reader for assuming that such a humble tradesman should even attempt to follow the fashion of far greater men and write a book narrating his experiences, especially by presenting the working man's view. He devoted his

attention particularly to the collection of information on the actual condition of the farmers and tradesmen - what they eat, drink, and what they wear; and seeing that the numerous books that have been written on the subject do not descend far enough into scale of society...I propose to make this my task.<sup>69</sup>

The political category includes only those individuals who did not have another apparent occupation. They too are somewhat special. There are travellers in most of the other categories who were also politicians; for instance, Charles Wentworth Dilke, who was to become a noted Imperialist in his later days, and Sir W. H. Russell, who has been described as "one of the greatest of all war correspondents,"<sup>70</sup> both qualify as authors. On the other hand, R. A. Slaney, despite being a rural and economic reformer, is simply a member of parlia-

<sup>66</sup> Brown, pp. iii-iv. <sup>67</sup> Craig, Early Travellers, p. 132.

<sup>68</sup> Max Berger, p. 13.

<sup>69</sup> William Thomson, A Tradesman's Travels in the United States and Canada (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1842), pp. 1-2.

<sup>70</sup> Nevins, p. 216; and Dictionary of National Biography, 2nd Supplement, s.v. "Dilke, Sir Charles Wentworth," by J. R. Thursfield.

ment.<sup>71</sup> The same could not be said for Laurence Oliphant. Oliphant was Lord Elgin's secretary when the 1854 Reciprocity Treaty was signed in Washington. He returned with Elgin to Quebec to become the Superintendent of Indian Affairs.<sup>72</sup> The other members of this group had a similar advantage and the typical aristocratic background of the mid-century British politician.<sup>73</sup> Henry Ashworth was a founding member of the Anti-Corn League and a friend of Richard Cobden.<sup>74</sup> James Caird's visit and book were aimed at promoting settlement in the Illinois country.<sup>75</sup> His observations and comments drew the ire of a Toronto pamphleteer who replied in "Caird's Slanders on Canada answered and refuted." He was a free-trader, supported by Cobden and John Bright and held numerous political appointments during his long career.<sup>76</sup> The politicians then, although small in number, were not insignificant men and perhaps reflect the general social level of the travellers.

In light of what is known about the travellers to this point, what can be expected from their writings and of their view of the Canadian scene? Considering an average age of forty-three, probably nothing too radical--rather conservative. Considering the similarity of the routes their observations should be complimentary and spread as

<sup>71</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Slaney, Robert Aglionby," by Ernest Clarke.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, s.v. "Oliphant, Laurence," by Leslie Stephen.

<sup>73</sup> G. Kitson Clark, The Making of Victorian England (London: Methven and Co., 1962), pp. 58-59, 210.

<sup>74</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Ashworth, Henry," by W. E. A. Axon.

<sup>75</sup> Landon, p. 249.

<sup>76</sup> Dictionary of National Biography, 1st Supplement, s.v. "Caird, Sir James," by I. S. Leadam.

they were over a period of time they should highlight any changes which were occurring.

There are far too few books by the likes of William Thompson and William Brown. As a previous visitor had noted "Gentlemen and lady travellers" were given the best treatment and as a consequence were "the worst judges possible."<sup>77</sup>

It is not, however, the traveller's judgement which is being sought. It is their observations. Considering the traveller's apparent place in the British social scale their views of the society of Canada West will obviously be from the top. They will be the observations of a class-conscious, almost caste-conscious, elite which will be quick to notice the nature of the Canadian society. They will be equally quick to rail against any trends which appear unacceptable-- trends which run counter to their expectations or the expectations of the British society of the day.

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<sup>77</sup> Bonnycastle, II:83-84.

## CHAPTER II

### "ETIQUETTE GOES OUT, WHEN THE FROST COMES IN"

As indicated in Figure 4 the voyages covered most of the period of the union.\* The visitor's knowledge is apparent for they did not cross the Atlantic during the period from November to March when the weather and the sea are likely to be at their worst. Almost eighty-five percent made the crossing during the warm days from May to October which surround the vernal equinox and took full advantage of the North American summer and fall.

There are several single year periods in which it would seem that no published works apply. Since the entries in the figure are restricted to those travellers for whom a definite arrival or departure date is available, it is not all-inclusive. Robert Everest was on tour in 1855, so it is possible that his remarks pertain to that year. Similarly Sir Francis Duncan, Sir W. H. Russell and C. W. Dilke may provide information for the years 1857, 1863 and 1865. Two years, 1846 and 1866, appear destined to remain vacant. The last three years warrant further comment.

The American Civil War, the blockade and the epidemics of typhus, smallpox and other diseases which swept the major cities of the

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\*For the purpose of this essay we have taken the start of Alexander Dunlop's trip to be April 1845 when he left Jamaica. Until that point in time he had intended to live there. (Sinclair ed., pp. xi-xii). We have also shown Reginald Fowler's trip as occurring in 1842-1843. A detailed discussion of this latter change is presented in the Appendix.

FIGURE 4

THE TOUR PERIODS OF THE TRAVELLERS

|           | 1840     | 1841     | 1842      | 1843      | 1844  | 1845 | 1846 | 1847     | 1848 | 1849           | 1850 | 1851    | 1852 | 1853     |
|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------|------|------|----------|------|----------------|------|---------|------|----------|
| January   |          |          |           |           |       |      |      |          |      |                |      |         |      |          |
| February  |          |          |           |           |       |      |      |          |      |                |      |         |      |          |
| March     | Thompson |          | Allardice |           |       |      |      |          |      |                |      |         |      |          |
| April     |          |          |           | Alexander |       |      |      | Dixon    |      | Baird          |      |         |      |          |
| May       |          |          |           | Wagner    |       |      |      |          |      | Stuart-Wortley |      |         |      |          |
| June      |          |          | Gouley    | Moore     |       |      |      | Playfair |      | Thornton       |      |         |      |          |
| July      |          |          | Dickens   | Wagner    |       |      |      |          |      | Marjoribanks   |      |         |      |          |
| August    |          | Slyell   | Fowler    | Wagner    | Moore | Shaw |      | Wagner   |      | Johnston       |      | Watkin  |      |          |
| September |          | McCallie |           |           |       |      |      |          |      |                |      | Caswell |      |          |
| October   |          |          |           |           |       |      |      |          |      |                |      |         |      | Kington  |
| November  |          |          |           |           |       |      |      |          |      |                |      |         |      | Charters |
| December  |          |          |           |           |       |      |      |          |      |                |      |         |      |          |

|           | 1854 | 1855 | 1856 | 1857 | 1858 | 1859 | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| January   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| February  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| March     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| April     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| May       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| June      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| July      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| August    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| September |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| October   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| November  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| December  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

Key: In Canada West; Exact dates known — unknown —  
 In other areas; Exact dates known \* — unknown ---

Eastern seaboard probably served to dissuade travellers effectively during this period. In most instances the prime object of the trip was the United States and for some the Civil war provided an even greater incentive,<sup>78</sup> but conditions such as these might have ruled out a great number of trips. With this gap just prior to Confederation the works of George Easton and G. J. Chester have been included despite the fact that their visits did not commence until late 1867.

As a consequence of the seasonal nature of the voyages there is a second gap. Having worked all spring and summer, the Canadian made up for lost time in the late fall and winter when he busied himself mending his social fences. In general the travellers missed the season in which the Canadian was introduced to society and its manners.<sup>79</sup> This is a decided loss for

the winter, which commences generally about Christmas and ends in April, is the chief season of idleness and enjoyment. Then trade and farming operations become necessarily suspended, and with such interruption begins a course of protracted outdoor pleasures. These consist of fashionable routes, pic-nic parties...skating in rinks, and sleighing.<sup>80</sup>

Before focussing on the sleigh party, a passing word on that unique vehicle made it all possible, for sleighs brought

....dear friends together,  
From distances far away,  
Who would seldom see each other  
Was it not for the sleigh.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Ashworth, "Preface."

<sup>79</sup> [G. D. Warburton], Hochelega (London: Henry Colburn, 1846), I:289.

<sup>80</sup> Samuel Phillips Day, English America (London: T. Cautley Newby, 1864), II:238-239.

<sup>81</sup> James Taylor, Narrative of a Voyage to, and Travels in Upper Canada (Hull: John Nicholson, 1846), p. 33.

In addition to being a very necessary and practical mode of transportation, they were the very hub of the winter social season, and

sleighs, with their fur-enveloped occupants, glide musically over the snow; the whiskey goes around as well as the waltz; match-making mammas afford plenty of opportunities for their daughters; etiquette goes out, when the frost comes in. Almost every district has its sleighing club...at half-past one or two o'clock, a hot luncheon, with whiskey punch, put all, not excepting our fair companions...into capital humour for the drive....after...as evening closed in, a dance or two ended the amusement for that day, and, at a very early hour, all were snugly housed by their own firesides.<sup>82</sup>

Adults were not the only ones who caught this infection.

Rubbing the effected parts with snow was the accepted method of curing frostbite but one did not always know whether one had been bitten or not. As a result one usually asked of one's companions or they stood guard and told you. Taking advantage of this situation the small fry delighted in telling the newcomers that they had frostbitten noses and then impishly rubbed their victims' faces heartily.<sup>83</sup> Scarcely a traveller who visited in the winter months neglects to mention the sport of "tarboggining," but only one seems to have caught the younger generation in the act of hitching rides on the backs of passing sleighs.<sup>84</sup>

The travellers quite obviously were freed from the more mundane aspects of the working world in which they moved and in many ways their lives were

a continued series of amusements. During the summer, the day was spent in fishing or shooting; and the sleighing club and

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<sup>82</sup> Reginald Fowler, Hither and Thither (London: Fredrich R. Daldy, 1854), pp. 237-238.

<sup>83</sup> Brown, p. 88. <sup>84</sup> Sir W. H. Russell, pp. 59-60.



billiards...with a rubber of whist in the evenings killed most pleasantly the dreary months of winter.<sup>85</sup>

As a consequence the accounts are replete with information on amusements and sports. They reflect the settler's well-known proclivity to attend the local amusements. The travellers were well aware of this trait for many of them were the entertainment. Horton Rhys was more than successful in winning his wager. Speakers such as Charles Dickens and Charles MacKay were never lacking audiences. The English cricket team drew a crowd wherever it went, despite the gruesome weather of the fall of 1859.\*

"Bees," occasioned by a "great scarcity of labour," were commonplace and more often than not terminated in a social evening with "games, dancing and merrymaking...till the morning."<sup>86</sup> It should come as no surprise for settlement was dispersed for ease of travel to work but this dislocated the social scene.<sup>87</sup> To fill in the void autumn fairs were born and the Canadians used every pretext to further their contacts and engage in amusements.<sup>88</sup> For instance, although it had little to offer in the way of stock, the 1844 Christmas Quarterly

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<sup>85</sup> Fowler, p. 226.

\*In addition to cricket the sporting scene included a wide variety of other activities. Some of the travellers, such as Reginald Fowler, who resided for a year near the Bay of Quinte, had more than adequate time in which to observe on these past-times. He commented on trolling with a metal bait which he termed a "brazen serpent." (Fowler, pp. 225, 228-229, 231.) Sir E. R. Sullivan, in a similar situation, reflected that perhaps the "maskinonge", were "spoon-fed during their infancy." (Sullivan, p. 113.)

<sup>86</sup> Bird, pp. 205-206.

<sup>87</sup> R. Cole Harris and John Warkentin, Canada Before Confederation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 125-126.

<sup>88</sup> Glazebrook, p. 111; and Pairpoint, p. 105.

Meeting at Peterborough, despite the inclement weather, was described as "the best specimen of hilarity and amusement."<sup>89</sup> The Canadians danced better and with more gusto than did the English and even a short visit for tea was liable to end up as a "hop."<sup>90</sup> If they were anything like the frequent balls, the music, contrary to English fashion, would be "nought save quadrilles, waltzes, and gallops [with] country dances and reels...though seen in royal palaces, being voted decidedly vulgar in the colonies."<sup>91</sup>

Concerning the subject of intemperance both sides of the debate appeared. John Godley noted that drinking was prevalent and that "at least half of the young settlers fall into the habit."<sup>92</sup> Henry Caswall observed that the Canadians were better off than the English and hence less likely to go astray; this he found decreased the frequency of property and personal crimes but thought that it had led to drinking becoming a crime in itself.<sup>93</sup>

There can be little argument that liquor was a normal presence on the Canadian scene or that considerable quantities were consumed. While driving down a forest trail Sir James Alexander was invited by a backwoodsman to "Come...and have some grog, I'm what you call a 'canuck,' a (Canadian)."<sup>94</sup> The same author and his party were curtly

<sup>89</sup> C. H. C., p. 158.

<sup>90</sup> A. C. and J. C. Jr., United States and Canada, as Seen by Two Brothers in 1858 and 1861 (London: E. Stanford, 1862), pp. 114-115.

<sup>91</sup> Alexander, I:225. <sup>92</sup> Godley, I:172.

<sup>93</sup> Henry Caswall, The Western World Revisited (Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1854), p. 198.

<sup>94</sup> Alexander, I:272-273. The nature of the invitation, even deep in the forest, may not have been unique but the invitation

dismissed by Colonel "Gay Tom" Talbot when they would not join him for a glass or two after he had dined them.<sup>95</sup>

Still all of this drinking did not seem to lead to drunkenness; it was observed that the Scot danced and drank at a ball until "grey daylight" without any derogatory effects.<sup>96</sup> It was an observation raised by one of the clan so perhaps more weight should be given to John Vessey's assertion that the Englishman was his usual drunken self at the local fair.<sup>97</sup> Reginald Fowler noted that although there was a decided trend towards intemperance, his bachelor friends drank more than 120 gallons of whiskey during the winter months "without anything approaching insobriety." This, he concluded, was the result of the environment—it was much too cold to get drunk.<sup>98</sup> Alexander Marjoribanks reflected a somewhat rationalized outlook in his remarks on the subject:

Though whiskey in Upper Canada is only three-pence the bottle, there is but little drunkenness. It is certainly a curious fact, that in those countries of the world where liquors are the cheapest, drunkenness should prevail the least.<sup>99</sup>

While on their voyages the travellers were dependent for their hospitality, to a very large extent, upon the many letters of introduction which they brought with them and they spent considerable time

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was. This is the first recorded use of the term. (M. H. Scargill, A Short History of Canadian English (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1977), p. 22; and Personal Correspondence, M. H. Scargill to the author February 8, 1978.

<sup>95</sup> Cust, p. 34; and Alexander, I, 146-147.

<sup>96</sup> John Francis Campbell, A Short American Tramp in the Fall of 1864 (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1865), pp. 224-245.

<sup>97</sup> Waters, ed., pp. 132-133. <sup>98</sup> Fowler, p. 230.

<sup>99</sup> Marjoribanks, p. 262.

as guests of some of the more important personages. Notwithstanding this advantage most still frequently spent a night or two in one of the many roadside inns, strategically located every six to ten miles,<sup>100</sup> or at one of the many hotels along the way. In such establishments Canadian drinking habits came under their purview. One of the most noticeable differences was that the Canadian frequently stood, in addition to sitting or lounging, when he imbibed.<sup>101</sup> The physical setting was also a change and John Shaw provided a description of the London House bar-room for contrast with the British variety. He also noted that it was frequented by all classes of people, even the groom's and bootblack's sons being welcomed.<sup>102</sup> They found themselves in good good company, for it was

not regarded in the slightest degree derogatory to character for any gentleman to take refreshment at common 'bars.' I myself have imbibed at these places with members of the government, judges, British officers, and even clergymen. Still I could perceive that there was a gnawing feeling entertained by the best society against such customary resorts; and there can be no question that they are more or less morally injurious.<sup>103</sup>

The sleigh parties, the bees and the travelling entertainment all served to gather the settlers together with their neighbours. Very little urging appears to have been necessary. It would appear that all levels of society participated in these activities. The travellers,

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<sup>100</sup> William Chambers, Things as They are in America (London: W. and R. Chambers, 1854), p. 124.

<sup>101</sup> Taylor, p. 45; and Day, II:223. The observation raises a sociological point which, when taken together with the author's personal observations, give rise to the conclusion that the ibibers were pretentious.

<sup>102</sup> John Shaw, A Ramble Through the United States, Canada and the West Indies (London: J. F. Hope, 1856), p. 51.

<sup>103</sup> Day, II:224.

despite their social position, do not take exception to this situation. On the other hand the more refined Canadian ladies, who found the bees and the drunkenness repulsive, did object.<sup>104</sup> These ladies and the travellers sprang from the same general level of British society. But only the Strickland sisters engage in keeping up the pretense. The traveller had seen the term being discounted in Britain and saw a similar trend in Canada as barriers crumbled under the strain of a society where everyone worked hard, and played hard, together.<sup>105</sup> As they met to raise a barn, watch a play, or quaff an ale Canadians of all levels were exposed to the other levels and were forced to reflect upon their differences and similarities. They found the differences to be few; they found the similarities to be plentiful. The social contact made the lower classes aware of this. Once they became aware of it it was only natural that the hereditary social norms should be eroded.

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<sup>104</sup> Edwin C. Guillet, Pioneer Days in Upper Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), pp. 125-126.

<sup>105</sup> Earl, p. 136.

### CHAPTER III

#### TRAVELLING AND SERVANTS

The methods of transportation and those aspects of every day life associated with it drew the particular attention of the visitors. One of the travellers observed that "whereas in England we have adapted the road to the carriage, in Canada they have prudently adapted the carriage to the road."<sup>106</sup> The jury must remain out as to the comfort of the vehicle as it was condemned as often as it was praised. Likewise its construction varied; in some accounts it had springs, while in others it was quite springless.<sup>107</sup> In Ottawa the two-horse buggy was asserted to have been "a curious vehicle with a flat top supported by poles, a leathern back, and two benches for seats;" and the drivers were

all...small Irish lads, for a man's labour in this district is far too valuable to be employed in work which a boy may perform. There is that in the country which sharpens a lad's wits and perves his young arms, so that he is fit for work at a much earlier age than he would be at home, when his energies are not developed by early use.<sup>108</sup>

These and many other adaptations were direct reflections of the realities of the environment. Some toll-gates, for instance, were two-story affairs with the gate being raised and lowered by a winch

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<sup>106</sup> H. S. Tremenheere, Notes on Public Subjects During a Tour of the United States and Canada (London: John Murray, 1852), pp. 180-181.

<sup>107</sup> Marjoribanks, p. 257; and Fowler, p. 202.

<sup>108</sup> Kingston, II:69.

inside the gate-keeper's lodge. The keeper collected the fee by passing a ladle at the end of a long pole through a hole in a window and was never exposed to the weather outside.<sup>109</sup>

In the summer months the two-horse carriage was the way to take the scenic tour.<sup>110</sup> It provided a mobility far superior to the steamers and the train but for a number of reasons the steamers which plied their way across and along Lakes Ontario and Erie appear to have been the preferred method. They were more comfortable and less expensive, the scenery was less boring and the traveller was spared the inconvenience of transferring to a hotel every night or the challenge of trying to sleep on a train.<sup>111</sup>

But steamer travel was also dangerous. The 300 pic-nickers on board the steamer which carried John MacGregor started dancing before breakfast and eventually got the ship swaying so badly that she shipped water into the boilers and went aground, and a terrified Isabella Bird narrated her episode of "The ship on her beam-ends."<sup>112</sup> Yet in neither of these instances is there any mention of an air-tight, hour-glass shaped seat which was reportedly in use as a safety float before the grounding incident.<sup>113</sup> The Canadian steamer was also fitted with a whistle which Amelia Murray thought could have served admirably in

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., I:127-128.

<sup>110</sup> Edwin C. Guillet, Pioneer Travel in Upper Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), p. 186.

<sup>111</sup> Duncan, p. 170.

<sup>112</sup> John MacGregor, Our Brothers and Cousins (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, 1859), pp. 39-41; and Bird, pp. 188-189.

<sup>113</sup> Caswall, p. 190.

Britain to prevent collisions between craft afloat.<sup>114</sup>

Turning to trains it appears that the British had something to learn here as well, for the British train was not as easy to escape from when on fire and the great number of doors made communication difficult.<sup>115</sup> In addition Canadian trains were equipped with bells to announce their departure and a reverse gear of sorts. The later was also a signal advance in the view of William Newmarch.<sup>116</sup> Mrs. Monck, Lord Monck's sister-in-law, who was accustomed to travelling in style, complained that the trains were always behind schedule and did not like the sleeping accommodations. She also noted that they stopped for a respectable period of time at the main stations where one could obtain an excellent meal.<sup>117</sup> It was quite a departure from English fare.

As were the passengers. Mrs. Monck found them disturbingly offensive and vulgar; "The men looked like bricklayers in their Sunday best, the ladies wore feathers in small hats," she reported disdainfully. She railed at being obliged to eat in the company of such people from the lower classes.<sup>118</sup>

On board it was observed that "Canadians had sufficient good sense to patronize first and second class carriages."<sup>119</sup> It was a significant development which did not reach its peak in Britain for

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<sup>114</sup> Amelia Matilda Murray, Letters from the United States, Cuba and Canada (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1856), p. 104.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. <sup>116</sup> Newmarch, p. 79.

<sup>117</sup> Frances E. O. Monck, My Canadian Leaves (n.p.: Dorset County Express, [1873]; reprint ed., Toronto, University of Toronto Press for Canadian Library Services, 1963), pp. 68-69, 75.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., pp. 70, 75.

<sup>119</sup> H. A. Murray, Lands of the Slave and the Free (London: G. Routledge, 1855), p. 285.



another quarter-century.<sup>120</sup> As the lower classes gained a measure of station in Britain the second class coach disappeared and all facilities were opened to every class.<sup>121</sup>

This levelling trend was also reflected with respect to servants.<sup>122</sup> As has been noted the travellers were not average people. They were members, with small exception, of the elite. Some, like Amelia Murray, who brought her own maid with her, were charter members. As such they paid particular attention to servants, maids and other domestic help. This group invariable drew some comment.

A minority of the travellers perceived little, if any, change. J. R. Godley, upon being re-united with some of his own ex-servants, found that they still respected their "relative position" even though they were doing well in Canada.<sup>123</sup> It might be that this relationship arose because they were his servants, but the same opinion is shared by G. D. Warburton who observed that the relationship of the lower, working class and servants was similar to that found in England.<sup>124</sup> Surprisingly the socially aware H. S. Tremenheere made no reference to inter-class relationships throughout his chapter on "Society in Canada."<sup>125</sup>

In the more settled area around Woodstock it would appear that such help was relatively easy to obtain,<sup>126</sup> but elsewhere this was not the case. In the Peterborough area "Mr. S., the first settler who came to this township twenty years ago," had difficulty retaining

<sup>120</sup> Pimlott, p. 164. <sup>121</sup> G. Kitson Clark, p. 145.

<sup>122</sup> Max Berger, pp. 55-57. <sup>123</sup> Godley, I:192-193.

<sup>124</sup> [Warburton], I:297. <sup>125</sup> Tremenheere, p. 299.

<sup>126</sup> Godley, I:168.

them.<sup>127</sup> The shortage was alleviated somewhat by the steady stream of emigrants but they tended to take on airs, to think of themselves as equals and to take their leave when not permitted to eat with their masters.<sup>128</sup> The promise of a better way of life, such as that offered in the role of a bank messenger at 100 pounds per annum, was sufficient incentive.<sup>129</sup> Moreover the travellers found them to be somewhat arrogant. Isabella Bird noted that servants were hard to get and were "solely Irish Roman Catholics who thought it a great hardship to wear shoes, and speak of their master as the 'boss'." One of the servants at a home where she visited started to read a book in the dining room after serving supper and, "on being remonstrated with for her conduct...replied that she 'would not remain an hour in a house where those she helped had an objection to a young lady's improving her mind'." The author did not relate, sadly, if the young lady carried out her threat, but she did note that one of the other hands quit "because only half a pound of butter had been allowed for breakfast."<sup>130</sup> In another example Reginald Fowler narrated the following tale:

Servants are a great plague - expensive, whimsical, and idle. On one occasion a servant, who came to be hired by a lady friend of mine, entered the room, and immediately seated herself on the sofa by the lady of the house; scrutinized her thoroughly; asked the nature of the duties she was expected to perform and her salary; and said abruptly - 'Well I like the looks of you, and I guess I'll come'....most of the women

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<sup>127</sup> "Langton to his father, April 4, 1834," as quoted in W. A. Langton ed., Early Days in Upper Canada: Letters of John Langton (Toronto, 1926), as quoted in Michael S. Cross ed., The Frontier Thesis and the Canadas (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1970), p. 108; and Godley, I:207-209.

<sup>128</sup> Alexander, I:189-190. <sup>129</sup> Weld, p. 155.

<sup>130</sup> Bird, pp. 202, 214.

servants are Irish; and the men, who hire themselves as farm servants, always expect to be boarded in the house; which is really an almost intolerable nuisance; and if the lady should, unfortunately, from any cause, be without servants, these people will be offended if their dinner is not cooked and their rooms attended to by her.<sup>131</sup>

There are two considerations which must be put forward at this point. The travellers who made the foregoing remarks qualify to be classed very close to Amelia Murray in any social scale and were visiting homes of an appropriate status. By way of comparison consider John Shaw's experience at M'Kenzie's inn where it was routine for the servants to eat with their master. He made it a point of joining them for one meal.<sup>132</sup> Shaw, a rather down-to-earth doctor, author and musician, offers no comment on this experience. This in itself is significant. The social level of the hosts, Fowler's 'lady' and Shaw's innkeeper is equally significant. Secondly, it must be noted that these observations were all made in the first half of the period. There is nothing comparable during the second half. From necessity, they must be placed beside George Easton's 1868 comment that

whether hired by the month or year, farm-servants are treated as members of the family. So far as I could learn, that there are not 'two tables' among the farmers of Ontario, master and servant fare together.<sup>133</sup>

Aside from Easton's the only accounts subsequent to 1845 which mention this aspect specifically are those of Isabella Bird and C. R. Weld. For a frame of reference the earlier observations must be compared with Michael Katz's work on the City of Hamilton in which he noted that all classes lost servants during the period from 1851 to

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<sup>131</sup> Fowler, pp. 239-240.    <sup>132</sup> Shaw, p. 50.

<sup>133</sup> George Easton, Travels in America (Glasgow: J. S. Mann and Sons, 1871; reprint ed., n.p.: Canadiana House, 1970), p. 86.

1861.<sup>134</sup> This would indicate a general shortage of servants, a point which the travellers make time and time again. They are speaking mainly of the rural situation but together with Katz's observations with respect to the urban scene a general shortage would seem to be indicated. The shortage of servants meant that ladies and gentlemen were obliged to perform tasks below their station and as a consequence they became rather common.<sup>135</sup> Under such circumstances some degree of equality would appear to be a natural condition of service.

In Great Britain the prerogatives of the elite were undermined as train travel became less class-oriented. The travellers observed this break-down of class lines in Canada West a number of years before it happened in the British Isles.

The possession of a servant was the "badge of membership in the Victorian middle class"<sup>136</sup> but it was not a mark of birth. It was a mark of wealth. It was the mark of an entrepreneur on the way to the top of the scale, not of someone already there. It was a reflection of a society on the move,<sup>137</sup> in flux, in which class lines were becoming blurred and less stable. The pretensions of the aristocracy were being challenged. The travellers recorded this shift in their tales and comments upon the position of the servant in the home.

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<sup>134</sup> Michael B. Katz, The People of Hamilton, Canada West (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 77.

<sup>135</sup> Earl, p. 120. <sup>136</sup> Katz, pp. 27, 187.

<sup>137</sup> Michael Cross, ed., The Workingman in the Nineteenth Century (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 5.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE JAIL AND THE LUNATIC ASYLUM WERE NOT WANTING

The fact that the visit to Canada West was just a "side-excursion", is rather standard fare in the works relating to travel accounts.<sup>138</sup> That this was so becomes painfully obvious when the total length of time that the visitors were on tour is compared with the period that they spent in Canada West. In those instances where both dates can be determined exactly the travellers spent an average of 251 days on tour of which only 64, or slightly more than 25 percent, were passed in Canada West. When all travellers are considered these figures become 283, 61 and slightly more than 21 percent, respectively. The highlight of the trip was the United States and the travellers in the quarter-century prior to Confederation, like their predecessors, entered the colony after spending considerable time in the republic to the south. It was the neighbour which had attracted the visitor in the first instance. If, in view of the small size of the province and its population when compared to that of the United States or the whole of the continent, these figures seem disproportionate, one must also consider the fact that the travellers were British and were visiting a British colony.

The voyagers passed comment upon the differences which they observed and in general they were not as impressed with Canada West as they had been with the United States. James F. W. Johnston claimed

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<sup>138</sup> Craig, "British Travellers," p. 187; and Earl, p. 122.

that the inhabitants were equally energetic but he noted that, because of the advanced state of settlement and the existence of the Erie Canal, the residents of Buffalo led a much better life.<sup>139</sup> In the early 1850s it was noted that the Americans were vigorous while the Canadians were described as "langourous;"<sup>140</sup> that Canadians were "indifferent, even moreso than the Yankee;" that in Canada all was "sluggish and slovenly," and that there was, in Toronto, "a morning sloth...compared with the American wide-awake cities!" with "nobody awake...till eight or nine o'clock."<sup>141</sup> James Dixon, although impressed with the Canadian cities and institutions, found American manners more to his liking.<sup>142</sup> As did William Thomson,<sup>143</sup> and Jabez Burns who

fancied...that [he] saw a marked change so soon as [he] entered Canada. Fewer newspapers, less activity, and the spirit of enterprise performing on a much lower key.<sup>144</sup>

The feeling was not unanimous as Charles MacKay saw Toronto as having "a Yankee look...a pushing, thriving, business-like, smart appearance," and Sir Francis Duncan described it as "a bustling and wealthy city."<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> J. F. W. Johnson, Notes on North America (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1851), I:246.

<sup>140</sup> Fowler, pp. 210-211. <sup>141</sup> Oldmixon, pp. 86, 91.

<sup>142</sup> James Dixon, Personal Narratives of a Tour Through a Part of the United States and Canada (New York: Lane and Scott, 1849), passim.

<sup>143</sup> Thomson, p. 95.

<sup>144</sup> Jabez Burns, Notes of a Tour in the United States and Canada in the Summer and Autumn of 1847 (London: Houlston and Stoneman, 1848), p. 142.

<sup>145</sup> Charles MacKay, Life and Liberty in America (New York: Smith, Elder and Co., 1859), II:269; and Duncan, p. 201.

The proximity of the United States was readily apparent, for American ways, especially words and phrases, crossed the border easily.<sup>146</sup> It was not a difficult challenge and the travellers observed that most of the newspapers, journals and magazines were of American origin, and contained articles which had been "pirated" from British publications.<sup>147</sup> Their general contents, the ladies found, had "a very objectionable tendency," being rather sensational and full of "blood, murder, bigamy etc."<sup>148</sup> Such papers helped to introduce an idiom which was one of the first things that the traveller noticed upon his arrival; autumn had become 'fall,' "the overseer...[was] ludicrously termed...the boss," shops were called 'stores,' towns were 'cities,' hotels were 'halls' or 'houses' and "the man who [sold] groceries, or who [stood] at the bar...[was] a gentleman; and the only people who [did]...a service with a good grace [were] the few real gentlemen, or the black waiters at the hotels."<sup>149</sup> Samuel Day opined that the fat lady at the Toronto exhibition "must have been a 'lady' [because] in America...every woman assumes the appellation."<sup>150</sup>

It has been said of the period when Ontario was being settled that the migrants formed "the great tapestry of sub-communities they

<sup>146</sup> Earl, p. 128; and Landon, p. 130.

<sup>147</sup> Godley, I:188-189; Kingston, II:34-35; and Sir W. H. Russell, pp. 55-56.

<sup>148</sup> Bird, pp. 316-317; and Monck, p. 70.

<sup>149</sup> Alexander, II:10; C. H. C., p. 30; Kingston, I:337; and Fergusson, p. 29.

<sup>150</sup> Day, II:19.

remain to-day."<sup>151</sup> Another author has pointed out that by the 1850s "an ethnic group, with a Canadian point of view, was emerging."<sup>152</sup> Yet another has averred that the travellers "tell us much about...the distinctive characteristics of a somewhat heterogeneous population, not yet formed into a cohesive society".<sup>153</sup> Which way was it in the travellers' eyes?

Sir Charles Lyell, one of the earlier travellers, had great difficulty even finding someone with whom he could converse in the area north of Toronto.<sup>154</sup> John Godley made reference in 1842 to the Canadian mosaic; everyone, he observed, remained a foreigner in Canada, there was no "fixed, definite character...in the province, which might absorb and remodel that of the new comers."<sup>155</sup> There was an attachment to Canada, but the emigrants, even twenty years after they arrived still considered Britain to be home, the Scot even more so than the others.<sup>156</sup> It was not unusual for the Scot to be the exception.<sup>157</sup> In the mid-1850s it was noted that the emigrant mass was "not cemented by any common ties of nationality."<sup>158</sup> Whereas in the United States the emigrants were assimilated, the settlers in Canada did not seem to lose the manners and customs which they brought with them.<sup>159</sup> Again the Scot more so than the others.<sup>160</sup> In the area around White Lake pride

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<sup>151</sup> Arthur R. M. Lower, Canadians in the Making (Toronto: Longmans Canada, 1958), p. 207.

<sup>152</sup> Burnett, p. 4. <sup>153</sup> Craig, Early Travellers, p. xiii.

<sup>154</sup> Lyell, II:95. <sup>155</sup> Godley, I:200-201.

<sup>156</sup> A. C. and J. C. Jr., p. 109; and Bird, p. 212.

<sup>157</sup> John Kenneth Galbraith, The Scotch (Toronto: New America Library, 1970), pp. 12-17.

<sup>158</sup> Bird, p. 307. <sup>159</sup> Brown, p. 95. <sup>160</sup> MacKay, p. 286



and indifference contrived to keep the Scottish and Irish well apart.<sup>161</sup> This separation was far from being simply a local trait as as there were in 1862 large enclaves of the ethnic stocks scattered throughout the province.<sup>162</sup>

The strains were separated economically as well for it would appear that the Scot became a merchant or banker, the Irish (Amelia Murray's observations to the contrary notwithstanding) became lazy labourers, and the Englishman, because he could fade into the local scene, both in the United States and Canada, did not appear to have any particular occupation of note.<sup>163</sup> Like the young English lad encountered by Alexander Dunlop in the tunnel under Niagara Falls, the English were still "afraid of committing" themselves.<sup>164</sup>

A visitor in 1844 noted that each class of settler had imported its own manners and customs.<sup>165</sup> In 1862 another noted that the settler never lost his national characteristics of custom and usage.<sup>166</sup> The separation appears to have persisted well past the middle of the century.

In some ways, however, the British attachment was strange indeed. For instance, Alexander Marjoribanks discussed annexation--the annexation of the United States to Canada!<sup>167</sup> George Rose, writing in 1867, suggested that

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161 C. H. C., p. 91. 162 Day, II:80.

163 MacKay, II:269-270, 281; Sinclair and Warkentin eds., p. 52; A. M. Murray, p. 115; Brown, p. 75; Lower, p. 196; Max Berger, p. 165; and Rhys, pp. 158-159.

164 Sinclair and Warkentin eds., p. 47.

165 [Warburton], II:294. 166 Day, II:220.

167 Marjoribanks, p. 263

if the Canadians should at any time prefer trusting themselves to the Stars and Stripes rather than to the Union Jack, the British Lion would allow them to secede not only without a growl, but with a paternal blessing.<sup>168</sup>

Some authors, such as John MacGregor, William Chambers and Sir W. H. Russell felt that progress towards "political independence and nationality" was being made and shared the opinion that the current status had been achieved and could only be guaranteed through the continued existence of the British connection.<sup>169</sup> Opposed to this view were Henry Ashworth, John Oldmixon, and H. A. Murray who would have preferred to see an independent Canada, one not so "smothered by Imperial misrule as to cause doubt of its existence," compliments of Colonial Office mismanagement.<sup>170</sup> On the whole the travellers' accounts bear out this latter sentiment.

These differing opinions draw attention to the fact that one of the main reasons why these travellers authored books was to enlighten the British population in general, and her administrators in particular, with respect to the status of the colony. The British lack of knowledge, as indicated in the following passages, was almost legendary:

The aversion with which the British public regards all questions of colonial policy, no doubt arises, in a great measure, from the extraordinary ignorance which prevails among the educated masses of this country...the indifference of the public, not unnaturally, sometimes extends to those

<sup>168</sup> George Rose, The Great Country (London: Tensley Bros., 1868), p. 296.

<sup>169</sup> Chambers, p. 137; MacGregor, pp. xviii-xix; and Sir W. H. Russell, p. vii.

<sup>170</sup> H. A. Murray, pp. 292-293; Ashworth, p. 160; and Oldmixon, p. 89.

charge with colonial affairs.<sup>171</sup>

It is indeed remarkable...what very indefinite, not to say absurdly erroneous ideas, people at home, in other respects well informed, have of life in the colonies. They seem to think colonists live a sort of Robinson-Crusoe existence.<sup>172</sup>

Much to their surprise the British were informed that the Canadians were at least as British as they themselves and "more attached to the blessings of the British than the British." In 1857 "the whole province" celebrated "the Queen's birthday," and had since 1849.<sup>173</sup> Upon his arrival the traveller found, thankfully, that Canada West was a 'little Britain' and

soft and familiar sound came from the shore; it was the well-known note of the British bugle, and the flag whose silken folds were rising and falling on the breeze was the meteor flag of England. Long may it brave 'the battle and the breeze!' English uniforms were glancing among the crowd on the quay, English faces surrounded me, English voices rang in my ears; the negligé costumes which met my eyes were in the best style of England. A thrill of pleasure went through my heart on finding, more than 4000 miles from home, the characteristics of my own loved land...If anything were needed to complete the illusion, those sure tokens of British civilization, a jail and a lunatic asylum, are not wanting.<sup>174</sup>

And hear another of them:

When one is far from home and friends, and in a foreign land, a sojourn with an English regiment is just like so much time spent in the 'old contrie'.<sup>175</sup>

<sup>171</sup> Laurence Oliphant, Minnesota and the Far West (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1855), p. 13.

<sup>172</sup> Kingston, II:94. See also Craig, "British Travellers," p. 178.

<sup>173</sup> Waters, ed., p. 132; and Careless, The Union of the Canadas, p. 163.

<sup>174</sup> Bird, pp. 180, 183.

<sup>175</sup> Sinclair and Warkentin eds., p. 51.

One would expect the latter from Alexander Dunlop who held that his fellow passengers were "silent, stupid Canadians, born Colonists."<sup>176</sup> Upon his arrival in Canada the traveller usually rejoiced, he was back under a friendly flag, ruled by the same Queen and garrisoned by troops wearing the same uniform.<sup>177</sup> All was English.

The American influence cannot be discounted. Yet it appears to have been largely superficial in nature. The break with the homeland was not complete. The colonists and emigrants retained this connection and reflected their heritage. It, too must be considered.<sup>178</sup> But even when society stabilized neither the American social environment nor the British social heritage predominated. Rather they gave way to a particularly Canadian culture,<sup>179</sup> which the travellers saw in its formative years.

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>177</sup> Caswall, pp. 181-182.

<sup>178</sup> Donald Creighton, p. 43; and J. M. S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolisism, and Canadian History," in Carl Berger ed., Approaches to Canadian History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. 75-76.

<sup>179</sup> Burnett, pp. 119-120.

## CHAPTER V

### MANNERS, MORALS AND COOPERATION

In addition to the relaxed tone of speech a similar effect was noticeable, according to one American reviewer, in the habits of the Americans as seen by the travellers in the period 1825-1845. This change was supposedly brought about by "Jacksonian democracy and the frontier."<sup>180</sup> The reflection in the language has already been noted. What of its impact upon the manners of the colony?

It is averred that "the...moral norms of the British society were not invalidated by Upper Canadian circumstances."<sup>181</sup> On the other hand it is argued that

the Canadians had found their own unique distinction in manners and accent...as well as their own distinctive differences in a thousand criteria of taste. It was revealing, not to say disturbing, to the English visitor that no apologies were made for the Canadian manners and customs where they differed, sometimes sharply, from the unquestioned standards of social behavior at home.<sup>182</sup>

John Thornton, would not agree, as he became

more and more pleased with Canadian manners, and the simple elegance of the young ladies, whose mothers' I observed were elegant and accomplished, which accounts for their daughters' good breeding.<sup>183</sup>

It must be pointed out that Thornton was in Guelph and that not all authors shared his view. Some held their pens back; some, like William Thomson did not; "I did not like the manners of the people in

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<sup>180</sup> Nevins, p. 81.    <sup>181</sup> Burnett, p. 115.

<sup>182</sup> Donald Creighton, p. 41.    <sup>183</sup> Thornton, p. 40.

Canada so well as those in the States" he complained.<sup>184</sup> Isabella Bird attributed this deficiency to the arrival of the emigrants and asserted that it led to a feeling of equality.<sup>185</sup> On further inspection it would appear to have deeper roots.

Allan Nevins, looking at Capt. Basil Hall's earlier book, placed Hall's observations with those of Frances Throllope and Francis Hall. The travellers observed on "the excessive strictness of the line drawn to separate men and women" who maintained "the most respectful and icy propriety upon all occasions when young people of different sexes were brought together." This, averred Nevins, was not the case.<sup>186</sup> It can hardly be said to have held in Canada West, where the parents were too busy attending to other tasks to chaperone their young. Like the Ottawa cab-driver, their children became self-reliant at an early age.<sup>187</sup> But what parent would wish to accompany their offspring; the cold of the winter and its snowbanks, the mud of Spring and its mosquitoes, were powerful deterrants to such excursions.<sup>188</sup>

The small size of the social sphere itself led to a great degree of familiarity and the use of first names which in turn played a part in retarding the impetus towards a separation of the classes.<sup>189</sup> It also led, again as Major John Thornton observed, to other significant social adjustments, for he was

more and more struck with the difference in the manners and feelings of these children of the forest, compared with those in the 'old country'...where the modes of education and the

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<sup>184</sup> Thomson, p. 95. See also Dixon, passim.

<sup>185</sup> Bird, p. 199. <sup>186</sup> Nevins, p. 88.

<sup>187</sup> Burnett, p. 54. <sup>188</sup> Galbraith, p. 24.

<sup>189</sup> A. C. and J. C. Jr., p. 115.

unnatural restraints, and strict separation of the sexes, are mischievously wrong.<sup>190</sup>

In Canada, unlike England, the young gentlemen escorted the single girls home from the social gatherings whether they had accompanied them or not.<sup>191</sup> It had become common-place. At sleighing parties the

young ladies willingly trust themselves, and the mammas as willingly confide their daughters (unaccompanied by any one to play propriety), to the charioteering skill of the young bachelor candidates for this honour.<sup>192</sup>

It was a strange experience indeed for Mrs. Bromley to be questioned by a group of school girls on a 'grand tour' during their holidays, and to find them quite "unchaperoned by fathers, mothers or governesses."<sup>193</sup>

Thus it is not difficult to understand the bewilderment of the traveller who observed that

a characteristic of the people of this country is, the great respect and attention they show to females....in accordance with this feeling, the steamers are usually fitted up with a number of state-rooms on the saloon deck, which are reserved for females, while the gentlemen are consigned to berths around the eating-room, a dark and ill-ventilated place....at the country hotels...there is always a clean and well-furnished drawing-room for females alone. In the railroad cars, and in the stage-coaches, you are expected to yield your place to them, if desired.<sup>194</sup>

If the ladies had a special niche they had earned it for in Canada they were more domesticated than their cousins to the south and performed more chores.<sup>195</sup> Charles Dickens singled out a female

<sup>190</sup> Thornton, p. 46. <sup>191</sup> A. C. and J. C. Jr., op. cit.

<sup>192</sup> Fowler, p. 238. <sup>193</sup> Bromley, pp. 55-56.

<sup>194</sup> Robert Everest, A Journey Through the United States and Canada (London: J. Chapman, 1855), p. 42.

<sup>195</sup> Johnston, I: 262-263; Burnett, p.52; and Lower, p. 203.

prisoner at Kingston, who had spied for William Lyon MacKenzie during the rebellion, and who was fully capable of riding a horse or handling a team of four, as well as any man.<sup>196</sup> It was a common observation; the reader is informed that "Females of tender years," drove so well "that it is noticed only to be admired," and, in addition, while their husbands quenched their thirsts, they did the selling at the market.<sup>197</sup> Isabella Bird remarked that the lack of domestic help obliged one hostess, who, "till she came to Canada had never attempted anything in the culinary line," to do her own cooking.<sup>198</sup>

Samuel Day found a female toll-collector along the road from Bowmanville to Whitby who "exhibited more the appearance of a young lady dressed for an evening party, than the follower of so proletarian an occupation as that of a toll-collector."<sup>199</sup> Continuing to focus his attention on their dress Day commented that

the ladies, many of whom would grace more pretentious assemblages, looked thoroughly English, and were attired in a style indicative of anything but proletarian tastes or prepossessions....the 'ladies of Canada' are rather inordinately addicted to a love of show and finery; are arrogant in manner, and somewhat indolent in their habits. Although fond of admiration and exhibiting themselves in public places, they are, nevertheless modest and virtuous in a superlative degree.<sup>200</sup>

On the other hand it may have been a function of time, as earlier accounts would have it otherwise. John Shaw observed in 1845 that the wife of any army officer whom he visited was hardly dressed as became a lady, let alone one of her station, and Isabella Bird remarked in 1854 that "a lady is not less a lady though she may wear a dress" and

<sup>196</sup> Dickens, p. 249.    <sup>197</sup> Taylor, pp. 26-27.

<sup>198</sup> Bird, p. 207.    <sup>199</sup> Day, II:70.

<sup>200</sup> Day, II:25, 235.



a bonnet of a fashion three years old."<sup>201</sup> Or then again it might have been the observer as two others noted in 1861 that the ladies appeared to have only a limited wardrobe but seemed quite content to wear the same clothes to a number of social events.<sup>202</sup> In the same year, James Taylor noted that many of the females (he did not specify servants) went barefoot in the summer.<sup>203</sup>

Luella Creighton has asserted that the era just prior to Confederation

was a period when the terms 'ladies' and 'gentlemen' had some significance...There existed in these years a definite code of conduct, social and moral, known to all men.<sup>204</sup>

The terms may have had some meaning for her Elegant Canadians but for the majority they were probably only shadows of their former lives for the society in which they were used was not the same as the society which had spawned them. Nor was it the same society that prevailed in Canada West.

Winter snow was a definite hinderance to travel and as a consequence the area between Peterborough and Lake Simcoe, like most others, had a local ordinance which required the farmers to clear the roads in front of their farms. Similarly the postmasters at Saint Vincent and Owen Sound had to assist communications by blazing the trails through the bush once per week.<sup>205</sup> In Toronto the dray-men were required to carry barrels in their carts during the winter months in case a fire should break out while the water mains were frozen. Should

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<sup>201</sup> Shaw, p. 43; and Bird, p. 208.

<sup>202</sup> A. C. and J. C. Jr., op. cit.

<sup>203</sup> Taylor, p. 50. <sup>204</sup> Luella Creighton, p. 9.

<sup>205</sup> C. H. C., p. 160; and Brown, p. 79.

this occur the drivers were to proceed, over the ice if necessary, to the bay, fill the barrel, and report to the scene of the fire.<sup>206</sup> John Shaw, much to his annoyance and discomfort, was obliged by the Hamilton constabulary, despite his protestations that he was a gentleman and a traveller, to form a link in the bucket brigade.<sup>207</sup>

These are examples of obligatory cooperation; they were necessary in this sparsely-populated land and in cities where fire posed a major threat. The travellers do not indicate that such fiats were resented. It would appear that such was probably not the case for the settler's cooperative outlook is well documented.<sup>208</sup> Nearly every traveller commented upon this facet of everyday life, for despite the isolation, or perhaps because of it, the settlers went out of their ways to be helpful and friendly. Their benevolence was not restricted to the local population but extended to the traveller and "the Hotel-keeper at Paris gave" Phillip Kelland "a buggy...and a good horse, without even asking [his] name, or where [he] came from."<sup>209</sup> The traveller on foot was usually offered a ride by those who overtook him in another mode of conveyance.<sup>210</sup> The settler's neighbourliness among themselves extended well past this limit; at harvest time the threshing machine travelled from farm to farm and all pitched in to help, and it was noted that "a new settler has not much difficulty in getting the neighbours to turn out and assist him to build a house."<sup>211</sup> Sanfield MacDonald was reputed to have always set two extra places at his table

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid., p. 89.    <sup>207</sup> Shaw, pp. 60-61.

<sup>208</sup> Guillet, Pioneer Days, pp. 119-120.

<sup>209</sup> Kelland, p. 35.    <sup>210</sup> Taylor, p. 52.

<sup>211</sup> Kingston, I:324; and Thomson, p. 103.

for unexpected quests from any walk of life.<sup>212</sup>

The self-reliance of the younger generation and the freedom which it was accorded lowered the barriers between it and the older members of society. Obviously, since the travellers do not make any untowards comments, the young folk did not take blatant advantage of their status.<sup>213</sup> But they had been given a certain degree of equality. Likewise the females appear to have been on a par with the men-folk. It has been asserted that the values exhibited by this society were reflections of the classic liberalism of Jacksonian democracy which placed "individual freedom before time and community," and that settlement along the isolated Canadian frontier, brought this individualism<sup>214</sup> to the fore. The picture which is reflected in the travellers' accounts does not mirror such an individualism. The settlers were more akin to their New England neighbours, a "common people," anti-aristocratic, innovative and cooperative for "equality demanded a limitation on individualism."<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> George Tuthill Borrett, Out West (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1865), p. 176.

<sup>213</sup> Harris and Warkentin, p. 112; and S. D. Clark, The Developing Canadian Community, second edition, (Toronto, 1968), as quoted by Cross ed., The Frontier Thesis, p. 182.

<sup>214</sup> David W. Noble, Historians Against History (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965), p. 48.

## CHAPTER VI

### A 'COURDUROY BRAGGOCIO'

The initial Loyalist settlement was followed by an even larger influx and by 1812 more than three-quarters of the population of Canada West was of American origins.<sup>215</sup> But the numbers were still relatively small and it was not until the period of peace which followed the Napoleonic wars that emigration on any scale occurred. It reached its apogee in the late 1840s and early 1850s by which time there were several different strands which made up the Canadian fibre. The second generation of Loyalists had reached maturity, the initial post-Napoleonic emigrants were 'old-timers,' and the new wave was just 'settling in.' Meanwhile the proportion of Americans had dropped to less than twenty percent of the total population of 1.4 million.<sup>216</sup>

Distributed as they were chronologically and concentrated as they were geographically, the travellers bear witness to the changes which occurred across the province with the passage of time. They observed that "the original settlers, the Loyalists," provided a strong base and Toronto in 1850 "probably [owed] much of its sound prosperity...to the circumstance of the whole province having been settled by American Loyalists, who found here a refuge and a home."<sup>217</sup> This view was reinforced by Henry Caswall who noted that "the early emigrants, having their faculties sharpened by travelling and by encountering

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<sup>215</sup> Landon, pp. xvi, 19-20; Harris, p. 116; and Burnett, p. 9.

<sup>216</sup> Harris, p. 118. <sup>217</sup> Sullivan, p. 156.

difficulties, were a clever and enterprising race of men." He continued, however, that "their children, being deprived of this stimulus, began to shew many signs of [agricultural] degeneracy."<sup>218</sup> These early settlers were to another author simply "a rude race of poor and ignorant labourers," who lacked schooling, as did the more recent emigrants, and as a consequence there could be no progress until the next generation came into its own.<sup>219</sup> Ten years later the success of the second generation, at least in the Milton area, was confirmed by Amelia Murray.<sup>220</sup>

It was noted that the farmers along Yonge Street enjoyed "a more enviable and independent position in society" than did an English gentleman. But here again it was the second generation which had moved in after the first had fallen and lost everything.<sup>221</sup> This general trend was seen by Reginald Fowler in the early 1840s as he remarked that,

people come to the colony with small resources and old country habits, and soon dissipate whatever capital they bring with them. Discontent, neglect of their business, and reckless improvidence, follow. Too much is expected from a small capital; and it is only when too late, that emigrants find out the real truth, that none but hard-working, careful people, can succeed here - unless backed by an income, drawn from other sources than their farms.<sup>222</sup>

In the well-established Peterborough area Horton Rhys remarked that there were a number of stone houses only half-built and apparently abandoned. This he took to be a reflection of the sorry state of affairs generally where the original settlers were overcome by the

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<sup>218</sup> Caswall, p. 199.    <sup>219</sup> [Warburton], I:291, 305.

<sup>220</sup> A. M. Murray, p. 108.    <sup>221</sup> C. H. C., p. 142.

<sup>222</sup> Fowler, p. 203.

immensity of the task.<sup>223</sup> It was not an isolated incident as "a good deal of land" was seen to be "in the hands of people, who have insufficient capital to work it properly, by the labour of others, and who are too proud to labour on it themselves."<sup>224</sup> Although this area had a better 'tone' than most it was settled by "half-pay officers and other English gentlemen,"<sup>225</sup> and it was a common observation that neither of these could make a success of settling in Canada. Nor were the "young sons of genteel families," commonly referred to as "gentlemen choppers," given any better chances.<sup>226</sup> It was true also

along the bay [of Quinte] shore, [where] there are some few farms, which...have...fallen into the hands of well-bred settlers from the old country - who, emigrating at a mature period of life, brought with them a refinement of manners and tastes, which formed a striking contrast to the rough mode of life of their neighbours. Unfortunately they were scarcely the class of persons to succeed in a country such as this.<sup>227</sup>

The situation was much the same where in the Woodstock area, reputedly the home of the elite of the Upper Canadian society in 1841,<sup>228</sup> where

the gentry keep up the old English fashions and games...but as they also imitate old country tastes by giving grand dinners, and drinking champagne, they frequently find the pace too good for them, and have to remove to some less jovial neighbourhood.<sup>229</sup>

And "much of the district" en route from London to Sarnia

had been settled a number of years ago by half-pay officers, who, after clearing portions of their properties, and

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<sup>223</sup> Rhys, p. 137.      <sup>224</sup> Fowler, p. 211.

<sup>225</sup> Craig, *Early Travellers*, p. 202; Alexander, I:134-135; and PF 94, 1841-43, Vol. 31, No. 5, p. 72. Bagot to Stanley, 20 Feb. 1843, as quoted by Macdonald, p. 14.

<sup>226</sup> Playfair, pp. 64, 66.      <sup>227</sup> Fowler, pp. 225-226.

<sup>228</sup> Alexander, I:134.      <sup>229</sup> Sullivan, p. 48.

otherwise exhausting their means, got disheartened, and left the place. Those who could not sell their farms, let them to new and more hardy settlers, and these continued in possession till they had realized enough money to become purchasers; and as such they were doing well - so true is it, that none but those who will work with their own hands, and for a time dismiss all delicacy of living, can expect to thrive.<sup>230</sup>

Other incidents associated with travelling shed more light on the nature of this society. Although "the road-hog and hot-rod had not yet put in an appearance,"<sup>231</sup> Sir Charles Alexander observed that on the back roads the settlers would not yield the right-of-way, or any way, to his coach.<sup>232</sup> Innkeepers treated all travellers with complete indifference regardless of the style or method of transportation which they used, and John Shaw partook of his meals at M'Kenzie's surrounded by all manner of individuals from the establishments of the town.<sup>233</sup> On board the 'Queen Victoria' Mrs. Monck was obliged to dine at the same table as the servants who, much to her dismay, ate in a "genteel" way.<sup>234</sup> The habit of tipping, which, by inference, had obviously become the norm in some parts of the world, was strictly taboo in Canada West in 1845 as "gifts [were] not looked for by waiters, chamber maids, or coachmen."<sup>235</sup> Almost twenty years later, when the raftsmen who had taken his party down a slide on a crib, refused a gratuity, G. T. Borrett commented that "waiters...porters...[the] spirit of independence forbids them to take any remuneration from any one but their master." He reflected upon this situation and concluded that it had

<sup>230</sup> Chambers, p. 134.    <sup>231</sup> Macdonald, p. 20.

<sup>232</sup> Alexander, I:239-240.

<sup>233</sup> Taylor, p. 48; and Shaw, pp. 41-42.

<sup>234</sup> Monck, pp. 66-67.    <sup>235</sup> Taylor, p. 48.

arisen because everyone was treated as an equal, there were "no grades, no classes, no rank," and "uniforms, liveries, and such-like frivolities of a bloated aristocracy, are alike discarded." There was a second reason. The service was not there; a tip was not warranted as the travellers had to carry their own bags on the railroads and the chambermaid may or may not answer their calls. "Please" and "thank you" were forgotten phrases.<sup>236</sup> The lower classes cannot bear all of the blame for the changes. The aristocrats can hardly be said to have set a good example.

It was reflected in the political system and was, at the same time, a reflection of that system.<sup>237</sup> Isabella Bird was of the opinion that Canadian property qualifications had "a tendency to elevate the tone of electioneering, and to advance the value...attached to a vote."<sup>238</sup> Opposed to this view was John Godley who felt that the gentry had been excluded from politics; this in turn had introduced "an undue proportion of members from the lower ranks of society."<sup>239</sup> A rather miffed Horton Rhys would have agreed with him:

The Honorable Brown (by-the-bye, reader, in your ig-- I mean innocence, you will wonder what the editor of the "Globe" was doing with, or had done, to get Honorable tacked to his name.) "Good gracious! sir and madam, he was a member of parliament, a representative of the people, a stump orator - a very great man, I assure you; and the members of the Canadian Parliament having one day, in the exuberance of their humility, conferred on themselves the title of honorable, nem dis. So did John Brown become honorable."<sup>240</sup>

Anthony Trollop "was much struck...By the sturdy roughness, some would call it insolence, of those of the lower classes of the

<sup>236</sup> Borrett, pp. 45-46. <sup>237</sup> Ward, p. 211.

<sup>238</sup> Bird, p. 306. <sup>239</sup> Godley, I:235. <sup>240</sup> Rhys, p. 157.



people."<sup>241</sup> In many cases it was seen as insolence as "...the Canadian people seem to say, 'Do you not know that I am a gentleman? Keep your distance, sir'."<sup>242</sup> John Shaw, as unpretentious as he was, in commenting upon the "uneducated immigrants, English and foreign," warned his readers that "the well-bred settler has frequently the hard task of submitting to the humiliating contact of these would-be-great people."<sup>243</sup>

There are other examples. Reginald Fowler thought that good strong clergymen were required at the edge of civilization to correct the "insane fanaticism and extravagance of the self-sufficient but most necessarily ignorant" settlers found there.<sup>244</sup> Anthony Trollope opined that maids and other people of service displayed a "courduroy bragocio" because they felt equal. Since they were not well-dressed as a rule they asserted themselves openly to show that they were, beneath their clothing, equals. This he analyzed to be an "acknowledgement... of internal inferiority."<sup>245</sup> Mrs. Bird was of the opinion that "fiery tempers have to be curbed in Canada West, for the same spirit which at home leads men not to 'touch their hats' to those above them in station, here would vent itself in open insolence and arrogance."<sup>246</sup> It was a common observation but was it really insolence? James Taylor found the people to be "more independent...kings on their own domains," and that there was "not that homage paid to rank in Canada that there

<sup>241</sup> Anthony Trollope, *North America* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1862; reprint ed., London: Dawson's, 1968), I:71.

<sup>242</sup> Dixon, p. 124. <sup>243</sup> Shaw, p. 40.

<sup>244</sup> Fowler, pp. 220-221. <sup>245</sup> Trollope, I:72.

<sup>246</sup> Bird, p. 199.

[was] in England."<sup>247</sup> But he did not see it as insolence.

The tavern-keeper, Mr. M'Kenzie, would have agreed as he informed John Shaw that although the settlers were not rich, they had everything that the "great lords in England could possess." He asserted that he would not take his hat off to anyone and that his wife would have considered it degrading for one of their sons to marry the daughter of an English lord.<sup>248</sup> Sir James Alexander thought not too, for, observing on the "many rough people...course in dress and manners," he reflected that "they deserved to be respected as the first, perhaps, who had broken ground in the forests around," the Bay of Quinte.<sup>249</sup> There was, in Canada, no courtesy but generosity, "no French politesse, but a ready hand; no good breeding, but a willing heart...nothing like pride, nothing artificial, as amongst our upper classes at home, no gulf separating the rich from the poor."<sup>250</sup> The Reverend Caswall reflected that many of the Englishman's ills were psychosomatic and disappeared in Canada because he was obliged to work harder and there was no "spirit of caste."<sup>251</sup> It was a much stressed stressed theme:

Lawyers, medical men, artists...clergymen, missionaries and schoolmasters....cannot condescend to keep a chemist's shop, become a printer, or any other pursuit of the kind at home, however laudable in itself, without in a certain degree losing caste. A storekeeper in the colonies, on the contrary, is not excluded from good society on account of his trade, although he may be seen in his shop of a morning in his apron; his daughters go to the best parties, there being no independent class above him as with us, no aristocracy but that of wealth, of which he is probably himself a member.<sup>252</sup>

<sup>247</sup> Taylor, p. 35.      <sup>248</sup> Shaw, pp. 49-50.

<sup>249</sup> Alexander, I:125.      <sup>250</sup> Borrett, p. 46.

<sup>251</sup> Caswall, p. 204.      <sup>252</sup> Playfair, p. 67.

The above observations come from the pen of Robert Playfair, who qualifies to be a member of the aristocracy of wealth.<sup>253</sup> Isabella Bird shared his opinion:

In Canada...it is not necessary to keep up appearances. For instance, a gentleman does not lose caste by grooming his own horse, or driving his own produce to market in a lumber-wagon.<sup>254</sup>

As a further example consider the Mayor of Bowmanville, "reputed to be worth several millions of dollars;" he was "a master wheelwright, and - let it not shock the nerves of sensitive Englishmen - positively worked at the bench."<sup>255</sup> Although the value of the Mayor's holdings is questionable in light of current wages and values, it could never have obtained in England.

In Canada West the towns sprawled, there was room everywhere for expansion and the streets were wide; on the whole it suggested "ease without wealth."<sup>256</sup> The two societies were hardly the same, for in Canada it

costs but little...the necessities of life are cheap, and the luxuries are neither looked for, nor to be had. Friends are contented with a kind welcome, and feel all the more at their ease, when conscious that the host (rarely a rich man) will suffer little at their hands. I knew few countries where greater hospitality prevails, or where people feel less degraded by being often obliged to perform menial offices for themselves. A lady in Canada, in the strict sense of the term, is none the less so, because she has spent her morning in salting beef, making tallow candles, and other kindred household duties. At home she would infallibly lose 'caste' - that dire bugbear. Here she does not.<sup>257</sup>

After a conversation with "one of the toiling class," William Chambers observed that

in England he would probably talk in an embarrassed 'if you

<sup>253</sup> Max Berger, p. 211.      <sup>254</sup> Bird, p. 208.      <sup>255</sup> Day, II:61-62.

<sup>256</sup> Fergusson, p. 25.      <sup>257</sup> Fowler, pp. 238-239.

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please' fashion. Transferred to a country where he was called upon to act an independent part, he spoke without timidity, but also without rudeness; and if not what is ordinarily called a gentleman, he at least behaved like one.<sup>258</sup>

In his chapter devoted to "Society in Canada" Hugh Tremenherre ignores this levelling,<sup>259</sup> but treated as an equal, the settlers and emigrants responded like equals and with the possibility of a future, they looked forward to it. One settler told William Chambers

that all the time in the Old Country, he never felt any inducement to save; for it was a dreary thing to look forward to the accumulation of a shilling or two a week, with no prospect of trading on the account, and only at the end of his days having a few pounds in the savings bank. 'But here,' said he, 'with a savings of two dollars we can buy an acre of land, and may, perhaps, sell it again afterwards for ten dollars'.<sup>260</sup>

The elegance of Luella Creighton's Quebec is that of the seat of government. It was a society of the English, Colonial officials, military officers, Canadian parliamentarians, their Ladies and wives.<sup>261</sup> It was the society described by Sir Charles Alexander, and to some extent by Reginald Fowler, which existed in Kingston during the early days of "the Union."<sup>262</sup> It was also the society of the original settlers, the Peterborough of Mrs. Traill and Mrs. Moodie, where the farmers, merchants and shop-keepers were gentlemen in the British scheme.<sup>263</sup> But they toiled, failed, and brought disrepute to themselves and to the system which they represented. The structure did not

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<sup>258</sup> Chambers, p. 135.    <sup>259</sup> Tremenheere, p. 299.

<sup>260</sup> Chambers, p. 345.    <sup>261</sup> Morton, p. xx.

<sup>262</sup> Alexander, *passim*; Fowler, *passim*; and Guillet, Pioneer Days in Upper Canada, p. 166.

<sup>263</sup> [Catherine Parr Traill], The Backwoods of Canada: Being Letters from the Wife of an Emigrant Officer (London: 1846) as quoted in Cross ed., The Frontier Thesis, pp. 119-122.

admit of the separation of classes as it did in Britain.<sup>264</sup> The common man toiled, succeeded and, as Michael Katz has noted, saw himself as a gentleman in an occupational framework.<sup>265</sup> To himself and in the eyes of the British travellers, he became the equal of the British 'gentleman.'

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<sup>264</sup> A. C. and J. C. Jr., p. 116.    <sup>265</sup> Katz, p. 65.

## CONCLUSION

The travellers' accounts contain a wealth of historical information. Admittedly they have their drawbacks. In the physical sense their "wearisome sameness" is quite evident and their "emphasis on practicability [is]...depressing" at times.<sup>266</sup> These show, perhaps more than anything else, the immediacy of the geographic setting.

The society which these accounts present in montage is friendly and convivial. It did not reflect the individualism of the United States frontier area but rather a community cooperation which was also foreign to its British roots. Again consideration must be given to the very immediate physical realities which advanced the degree of equality between sexes and generations.

The proximity of the United States is obviously of importance but only in a superficial way for whereas the language and some of the more physical aspects reflect this influence, the British heritage and roots from an undercurrent which cannot be ignored. But again a Canadian hybrid is reflected in the manners and general moral tone.

The interaction of these forces led to a lowering of class barriers. The travellers saw it at every turn. They saw it in their travel arrangements, in the almost snobbish attitude exhibited by servants and in a loosening of manners. They saw it in a society which, except perhaps in the perambulating capital, had discounted the British aristocratic system but which had not yet fully developed an

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<sup>266</sup> Glazebrook; p. 25; and Craig, Early Travellers, p. xx.

alternate structure, such as the American system, based upon industrialization or wealth.<sup>267</sup>

Until the middle of the period it had been an expanding society. But once settlement came to a halt at the edge of the Canadian Shield its pioneer nature became outmoded and it was forced to look inward. The Hamilton shopkeeper and the mayor of Belleville were the forerunners of a structure which admitted of a degree of social equality which differed from the structure in Great Britain, or the United States or which the traveller saw in Canada West.

G. M. Craig warns that G. T. Borrett's equality, classlessness, "The 'Leveling Principle' in Canadian Life, was seen only by the casual traveller and that a more discerning individual would observe that there were classes."<sup>268</sup> It has been shown that not all of the travellers could be categorized as casual visitors. It must be further observed that they did not see it as classlessness.<sup>269</sup> Rather they saw a society in which the old, British, aristocratic upper class had been discounted. It had not, at least apparently, been replaced with any other obvious structure. It was a society in transition, in flux.

As members of the elite British class the travellers were deeply aware of these changes. Viewing the society from the outside they saw them in greater relief than did the natives.<sup>270</sup> Their observations are too pertinent to be ignored or dismissed. Undoubtedly other researchers will interpret the travellers' observations in

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<sup>267</sup> Careless, The Union of the Canadas, p. 36.

<sup>268</sup> Craig, Early Travellers, p. 277.

<sup>269</sup> Careless, The Union of the Canadas, p. 193.

<sup>270</sup> Landon, p. 270.

different ways; they will cut and tailor the cloth to suit their particular frame. They cannot do this, however, unless they are aware that the material exists. It is to their advantage to familiarize themselves with this literature for it is a valuable historical source.



## APPENDIX

### REGINALD FOWLER

In his bibliography, Max Berger informs the reader that Reginald Fowler's Hither and Thither was "written by a barrister who claimed to have spent two years in North America."<sup>271</sup> This statement is of particular importance because Fowler is not listed in any of the standard biographical works and as a consequence no other information is readily available. Armed with this remark the reader knows that he was a barrister--period. The very fact that he made the trip appears questionable. Thus from the start attention is attracted to this narrative. Since it is one of the more readable and enjoyable books, and has a certain ring of authenticity, this attraction is heightened.

As a result of chancing upon a number of articles concerning the Canadian water-colour artist Daniel Fowler and from subsequent readings it is advanced that the two were brothers, that Reginald was visiting Daniel on Amherst Island, and that the period of Reginald's visit was 1842-3, not 1854 as would seem to be indicated by the publishing date and the order of the visits which is implicit in the order of the chapters and dates in Reginald's book.\* The detailed reasoning for these conclusions follow.

Reginald's travels take him from Madiera, to Lisbon, to

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<sup>271</sup> Max Berger, p. 201.

\*This opinion is shared by Frances K. Smith, Curator, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University, Kingston. (Personal correspondence Frances K. Smith to the author, January 4, 1978).

FIGURE 5

STRENGTH OF THE UNITED STATES  
ARMY FOR SELECTED YEARS 1842-1854

| YEAR | STRENGTH | YEAR | STRENGTH |
|------|----------|------|----------|
| 1842 | 10,780   | 1852 | 11,376   |
| 1843 | 9,102    | 1853 | 10,572   |
| 1844 | 8,730    | 1854 | 10,894   |

FIGURE 6

POPULATION OF TORONTO  
FOR SELECTED YEARS 1842-1850

| YEAR | POPULATION | YEAR | POPULATION |
|------|------------|------|------------|
| 1842 | 15,356     | 1844 | 18,420     |
| 1843 | 17,805     | 1850 | 30,775     |

Gibraltar, to Malta, to Italy, to England, to New York, to Canada West and thence back to England via New York. That is the order in the book. He does not give any specific time frame except to state that he visited Gibraltar in the winter of 1853. After that he returned to Britain and sailed to America. In America he travelled north from Sarasota Springs in August, he started his trip around Lake Ontario in June, he spent "nearly a year" near the Bay of Quinte, there was ice on the bay in late April, and he left the United States in early August.<sup>272</sup> Although this scenario is not impossible it is highly unlikely, as that would put him in Canada from August 1853 to August 1854. It would have been quite a challenge to write the book and still have it bear a publisher's date of 1854.

It is more likely that the second part of the book, which starts in Italy, represents a visit which preceded the first part and the visit to the other parts of the Mediterranean. It is more likely that Fowler was in Gibraltar in 1853 but in New World prior to that visit. In support of this contention the following observations are advanced.

The strength of the United States Army and the population of the city of Toronto during the early years of the 1840s and 1850s are shown at Figures 5 and 6.<sup>273</sup> Fowler cited these as being 9,000 and 20,000 respectively.<sup>274</sup> Despite the obvious difference in the instance

<sup>272</sup> Fowler, pp. 176, 55, 201, 225, 235, 271.

<sup>273</sup> Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army (New York: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 566-567; and C. Pelham Mulvany, Toronto Past and Present 1882 (Toronto: Caiger, 1884, reprint ed., Toronto: Ontario Reprint Press, 1970), p. 31.

<sup>274</sup> Fowler, pp. 173, 202.

of the population figure it is most probably the earlier figures that he has rounded-off and quoted.

Fowler averred that his "...circle was almost always increased by some of the officers quartered at Kingston, and...the government employess...". He followed up by remarking that a fish which he party caught was sent to the Governor-General.<sup>275</sup> He did not say who the Governor-General was and where he lived but it is unlikely that the fish was sent to Quebec. Residing near Quinte and Kingston it would appear that the choice should be for the early 1840's rather than 1853-4.

The points raised thus far have all been of a negative nature; they have shown that the trip probably did not take place in the 1850s but rather in the early 1840s. This alone is insufficient. Some positive indication is also required. It is available in the works concerning the artist.

Daniel Fowler's diary cited "Reg" to be one of his travelling companions.<sup>276</sup> In his autobiography he stated that he was accompanied on his trans-Atlantic voyage, and for a while after he arrived, by a brother; that while waiting for his new home to become available during the summer of 1843 he resided with his brother-in-law, Robert Gale, who was already a resident of Amherst Island; that the period of idleness was "society ridden;" and that it and the following summer consisted of fishing, shooting, a good deal of amusement, sleigh and whist parties. In all of this his brother-in-law had a large hand. These gatherings

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>276</sup> Thomas R. Lee, "An Artist Inspects Upper Canada: The Diary of Daniel Fowler, 1843;" Ontario History, Vol. 50 (1958), No. 4, p. 216.

FIGURE 7

SIMILARITY OF REGINALD  
AND DANIEL FOWLER'S TOURS OF  
THE WESTERN PART OF THE PROVINCE

| ACTIVITY OR DESCRIPTION  | PAGE NUMBER IN               |                            |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------|
|  | REGINALD<br>FOWLER'S<br>BOOK | THOMAS<br>LEE'S<br>ARTICLE |
| Party lost time as a result of boat<br>accident (paddlewheel broke)..... | 201                          | 212/213                    |
| Party tours up Yonge Street<br>pricing land.....                         | 202                          | 213                        |
| Party tours under Niagara Falls.....                                     | 205                          | 214                        |
| Description of Whirlpool.....  | 212                          | 214                        |
| Party goes to Buffalo by rail.....                                       | 213                          | 215                        |
| Party separates at Port Rowan and<br>Reginald goes west alone.....       | 215-224                      | 216                        |
| Rest of party goes to London.....  | 224                          | 216/217                    |
| Party returns to, and meets at,<br>Hamilton.....                         | 224                          | 218                        |

were attended by the soldiers from Kingston among which were numbered several of his wife's relatives.<sup>277</sup> This sounds in many ways like Reginald's social life while he resided in the area.

\* On July 25, 1845, Daniel's fifth child, Reginald Amherst, was born.<sup>278</sup>

More specific similarities are available in the parts of the narratives which pertain to the trip around the western portion of the province and which are shown in in Figure 7.\* Admittedly the correlation is not exact, but it is sufficient to warrant placing Reginald with Daniel in his search for a homestead in June 1843.

Before concluding a further point must be taken into consideration. Daniel emigrated in the spring of 1843, therefore Reginald, since he came from New York in August, was not the brother who crossed with Daniel. A possible explanation for this is available in the size of the Fowler family—it totalled twelve.<sup>279</sup> Further inferential evidence is available in the nature of Reginald's bachelor companions, and perhaps co-residents, who consumed such a quantity of alcohol over the winter months. Again Robert Gale would appear to be implicated for it is unlikely that, as a bachelor, he lived alone on Amherst Island. It is more likely that Reginald, Robert and at least

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<sup>277</sup> Thomas R. Lee, "The Artist Turns Farmer: Chapters from Autobiography of Daniel Fowler," Ontario History, Vol. 52 (1960), No. 4, pp. 101-104.

<sup>278</sup> Frances K. Smith, "Daniel Fowler" (Toronto: [Dundurn Press], [1977]), n.p.

\*Lee, "An Artist Inspects Upper Canada: The Diary of Daniel Fowler, 1843."

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

one other account for the plurality of bachelors.\*

It can, therefore, be concluded that Reginald came over in August 1842 and returned in August 1843. This is where he has been included for all considerations in this essay.

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\*Most probably Henry Fowler who was also a bachelor and who is reported to have settled in Australia as a sheep farmer. He would have been 28 at the time. (Frances K. Smith to Author, January 4, 1978).

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One of the basic aims of this essay was the compilation of an exhaustive list of the books written by British travellers in Canada West. It was inherent in this aim that they had to be located. Quite obviously such a search leads to many dead-ends. It is not necessary to dwell on those aspects associated with the physical problems of actually locating or obtaining a book which is not catalogued or which is in the non-circulating section of a rare book collection of a distant library. Suffice to remark that occupational circumstances were such that many libraries were searched which someone in another walk of life would not be able to visit and as a consequence this aim has probably been attained.

Turning to the books themselves, the titles listed in the Primary Source section have been divided into five sub-sections. The entries in the first form the basis for this essay. The duration of their visits, as has been indicated, varies considerably, but only three spent less than one week in the province. Although W. E. Surtees spent only two days in the province,<sup>280</sup> most of the others were there a little longer. In two instances they resided in Canada West for two years or more. Having eliminated some of the other works on the grounds that the author was really a settler, why have these two been retained? William Brow's America: A Four Year's Residence has already singled out. The author of the second volume, James Taylor, never had

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<sup>280</sup> W. E. Surtees, Recollections of North America in 1849-50-51 (London: [Chapman and Hall], [1852]), pp. 12-14.



any idea of settling in Canada West. He came to visit and roamed the province at will for twenty-seven months.<sup>281</sup> Under these circumstances it has also been included.

Three other authors deserve special mention at this time. Listed in the third section of the bibliography are three books of the Prince of Wales' visit in 1860. A fourth appears in the first section. The fourth work has been included because the author added his own personal reflections and observations to the reports which he sent back to the Times, as its official tour correspondent.<sup>282</sup> It alone is of value, one of the others being a journal of people, places and events, another written, apparently, by an American and the last written by a Canadian.

The second sub-section contains books of voyages which occurred in the period but were to another part of America. Not necessarily just the United States as, in the case of G. Rankin's Canada And Crimea, the visit was to Canada East.<sup>283</sup>

In the third section are grouped those books which, despite their date of publication, were of visits which occurred either before or after the period of the Union.

The fourth sub-section contains those books which have been cast aside for a number of various reasons. In it are such volumes as Canada As It Is, which is an immigrant guide;<sup>284</sup> A Gentlewoman In Upper Canada, written by Anne Langton who, after 12 years as a resi-

281 Taylor, "Preface." 282 Woods, "Frontispeice".

283 (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1862).

284 G. W. Warr, (London: W. E. Painter, 1847).

dent, hardly classifies as a traveller.<sup>285</sup> Sir R. H. Bonnycastle's volumns have also been placed in this category as they gradually became more emigrant-oriented. Also in this sub-section are Nova Britannia, a prize-winning essay submitted to the Mercantile Library Association of Montreal, which was written by a Canadian;<sup>286</sup> The Conquest Of Canada which is a history of the times;<sup>287</sup> and Bartlett's Canada, a book of paintings and sketches.<sup>288</sup>

The titles listed in the fifth sub-section are volumns which are apparently not available in Canada.

As an aid to future searchers the standard library key has been used to identify the location of the volumns listed.<sup>289</sup> The existence of two or more keys indicates that the book was obtained from more than one source during the progress of this essay. Where no key is used the volumn is the author's private collection. Also included in the bibliography are remarks indicating multiple publication places and dates, etc. and comments on apparently associated volumns. Microfilm, Microfiche and Micropaque copies are indicated with the key (MF).

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285 H. H. Langton ed., (Toronto, Clarke, Irwin, 1950).

286 Alexander Morris, (Montreal, J. Lovell, 1858).

287 [G. D. Warburton], (London, R. Bentley, 1849).

288 W. H. Bartlett, (Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1968).

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