

Disregarded Sentiments: Discovering the Voices of Opposition to the Mactaquac Dam

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Abstract: The construction of the Mactaquac Dam on the St. John River in New Brunswick, Canada, during the late 1960s generated vocal and, at times, aggressive opposition. Dedicated to the preservation of the heritage, culture and natural beauty of the area, the opposition was deemed “sentimental” — negatively so — by dam-supporters. This thesis explores dam-opponents’ connection to the region’s heritage and culture, and particularly, their connection to the land. The importance of community and individual identities — as defined by history and culture — to environmental activism and oppositional movements is discussed. In addition, this thesis situates the Mactaquac case within broader patterns of water history and identifies the Mactaquac Dam as existing during a period of intense “authoritarian high modernism.” James C. Scott’s high modernism theory, thus, guides much of this thesis’s discussion of modernization schemes, notions of progress and social engineering. This work demonstrates that high modernist thought and the oppositional arguments were ultimately incompatible.

September 6, 2013

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**Introduction:
The Heedless Pace of Man: Water History and the Mactaquac Dam**

*The water understands
Civilization well;
It wets my foot, but prettily,
It chills my life, but wittily,
It is not disconcerted,
It is not broken-hearted:
Well used, it decketh joy,
Adorneth, doubleth joy:
Ill used, it will destroy,
In perfect time and measure
With a face of golden pleasure
Elegantly destroy.¹*

“The source of life itself;” the “lifeblood of an ecosystem;” and as Ralph Waldo Emerson elegantly wrote, “well used, it decketh joy.”² Water has been worshipped, written about, tapped, channeled, dammed, polluted, commoditized, privatized, fought over and has sustained and claimed life on earth over millennia. This thesis will situate itself within the multifaceted human-water relationship by examining the more modern development of and reaction to large dams, specifically the Mactaquac Dam built during the 1960s in New Brunswick, Canada. Much of the more recent historiography on dams and the environment situates itself within the water crisis discussion or focuses on the socioeconomic impacts of dams on humans. Both are undeniably valuable approaches, especially when considering the increasing awareness that dams have, in many cases, economically and socially devastated populations, as well as the alarming figures that substantiate the notion of a world water crisis. Vandana Shiva labels the water crisis as “the most pervasive, most severe, and most invisible dimension of the ecological

¹ Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Water,” in *Poems by Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin, 1904), 344.

² *Blue Gold: World Water Wars*, directed by Sam Bozzo (United States: Purple Turtle Films, 2008), DVD.

devastation of the earth.”³ Only 2.5 percent of the world’s water is fresh water, and of that only a miniscule amount — less than 1 percent— is available for human use.⁴ Despite this low number, Barbara Rose Johnston and John M. Donahue argue that it is technically enough to support the world’s population; however, the uneven distribution of water and humans on earth, as well as the poor management of water sources has resulted in current and, likely, future water shortages.⁵ As Steven Solomon notes, one-tenth of the world’s population, which is located in Brazil, Russia, Canada and the United States, has access to one-third of the world’s streamflow.⁶ Marq de Villiers believes that “[t]he trouble with water ... is that they’re not making any more of it. They’re not making any less, mind, but no more either ... People, however, they’re making more of – many more, far more than are ecologically sensible.”⁷ Dams have been one such way that humans have fostered and sustained a growing population. Large dams in particular — those over fifteen meters high — have increasingly been viewed by the global population as environmentally and socially destructive, as well as uneconomic. The large dam era, which began in the United States during 1930s, has come to an end — in the United States at least — with the rate of decommissioning of dams exceeding that of their commissioning.⁸ It would appear that one phase of the human-water relationship — that of an unshakable belief that nature can be conquered by humans — is coming to an end.

³ Vandana Shiva, *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*. (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2002), 2.

⁴ Steven Solomon, *Water: The Epic Struggle for Wealth, Power, and Civilization* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), 12-13; John M. Donahue and Barbara Rose Johnston, *Water, Culture, and Power*, 1.

⁵ John M. Donahue and Barbara Rose Johnston, eds., *Water, Culture, and Power: Local Struggles in a Global Context* (Washington: Island Press, 1998), 1.

⁶ Solomon, *Water*, 13.

⁷ Marq de Villiers, *Water: The Fate of Our Most Precious Resource* (Toronto: Canadian Publishers, 2003), 8.

⁸ Patrick MuCully, *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams* (London: Zed Books, 2001), 1xi.

Humans have used dams to manage and control access to water over several thousand years. As Patrick McCully notes, dams have been — and still are — built for such reasons as to provide water for agriculture, to supply energy for industry and households, for flood control, as well as to aid with river navigation.⁹ The production of electricity, in particular, has been the largest influence on the proliferation of large dams in the twentieth century. The benefit of hydroelectricity is that water can be stored in a dam's reservoir during low demand periods and then used during peak hours of electricity use.¹⁰ During the 1930s, beginning in the Western United States, large dams became a fundamental aspect of state building and demonstrations of progress and power. Solomon explains that such American developments quickly “diffused worldwide, spreading the prodigious material benefits deriving from the intensification of man's basic uses of water.”¹¹ By 1949 there were approximately 5,000 large dams around the world. By the end of the twentieth century there were over 45,000.¹² The 2000 report of the World Commission on Dams noted that China alone had gone from having twenty-two large dams before 1949 to 22,000 large dams by 2000. The United States ranked second in regards to large dam numbers with over 6,390 and Canada came in sixth with 793.¹³ The report also indicated that an estimated 40 to 80 million people had been displaced by large dams.¹⁴ Those displaced by large dams — oustees — are “the most visible victims of the [dam] designers, funders and builders” and, along with the environment, they have

⁹ McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 11.

¹⁰ McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 11.

¹¹ Solomon, *Water*, 323.

¹² World Commission on Dams, “Water, Development and Large Dams,” *A New Framework for Decision-Making* (London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, 2000), 8.

¹³ World Commission on Dams, “Water, Development and Large Dams,” 9; McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, xxvii.

¹⁴ World Commission on Dams, “Water, Development and Large Dams,” 16.

been a central focus in regards to recent historical, anthropological, economic and social impact studies. However, the economic and social aftermath that is so highly studied is usually preceded by civilian struggles against dam construction, which is generally less studied. As McCully notes, “[d]am building and other attempts to gain control of rivers have probably always provoked conflict.”¹⁵ It is these types of struggles and voices of opposition that have caught my attention and have guided my interest regarding the Mactaquac Dam.

At fifty-five meters high, the Mactaquac Dam is well over the fifteen-meter qualifier of a large dam. Constructed between 1965 and 1968, it is located fourteen miles upstream from the New Brunswick capital of Fredericton. It was promoted by the New Brunswick Government and the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission (NBEPC) as a necessary and progressive step towards the industrialization and, therefore, the betterment of the province. With an estimated cost of \$110 million, the Mactaquac Dam would be the largest dam in the Maritimes. At peak construction it would employ 2,500 people and once completed it would double the province’s electric power output.¹⁶ However, it is the organized and unorganized oppositional arguments, framed in terms of history, culture, and attachment to place — which were deemed “sentimental” and irrelevant by dam supporters — that will be the focus of this thesis.¹⁷ The socioeconomic approach largely employed by historians in their consideration of the human

¹⁵ McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 20.

¹⁶ “Atlantic Development Board Gives \$20 Million Grant for Mactaquac,” *Daily Gleaner*, 11 January 1964, vol. 84 no. 9.

¹⁷ Throughout the remainder of the thesis, the word “sentimental” in quotations is used to refer to the negative connotation that dam supporters applied to the opposition and their arguments. When referring to the legitimate emotional and personal connection residents had with the St. John valley and its history, I will simply use the word sentiment or sentimental without quotations.

consequences of dams has left a significant silence in regards to non-economic ramifications. One is left to wonder how, for example, deep historical connections to a specific landscape influence humans' reactions to modernization schemes? More specifically, how has early settlement along river valleys inspired modern arguments in opposition to dams, as in the case of the Mactaquac Dam? Are anti-dam activists more likely to turn to historical, cultural and aesthetic arguments to make their case than other environmental activists? If so, what are the consequences of their use of these sorts of arguments when they seek to make their voices prevail over those of dam builders and their allies? The Mactaquac Dam serves as a case study to address these questions. It is argued that the long-established human settlement along the St. John River in the Mactaquac region did indeed foster a specific reaction — that of concern for the heritage and culture of the area — to the proposed Mactaquac Dam.

At this juncture, it is important to define space and landscape. Anthropologist and geographer David Harvey provides us with a broad, yet nonetheless helpful, definition of space: “[E]ach social formation constructs objective conceptions of space and time sufficient unto its own needs and purposes of material and social reproduction and organizes its material practices in accordance with those conceptions.”¹⁸ Or more specifically, anthropologist Clark L. Erickson argues that landscape is “the medium created by human agents through their interaction with the environment.”¹⁹ In essence, landscape is a culturally-constructed space. Individuals and communities attribute cultural

¹⁸ David Harvey, “Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination,” *Annals, Association of American Geographers* 80 (1990): 419.

¹⁹ Clark L. Erickson, “Amazonia: The Historical Ecology of a Domesticated Landscape,” in *Handbook of South American Archaeology*, eds., Helaine Silverman and William H. Isbell (New York: Springer, 2008), 158.

significance to physical landmarks and space. Robert Layton and Peter J. Ucko contend: “Landscapes are particular ways of expressing conceptions of the world and they are also a means of referring to physical entities.”²⁰ These definitions will serve as a foundation to the thesis’s discussion of the Mactaquac opposition’s relationship to the St. John River landscape.

The thesis is divided into five chapters, including this historiography introduction and a conclusion. The first chapter discusses the construction of the Mactaquac Dam and the political and economic factors on which the government and the NBEPC based their decisions. In addition, James C. Scott’s concept of “authoritarian high modernism” is employed to help understand and situate the construction of the Mactaquac Dam within the broader twentieth-century trend of modernization schemes. The chapter is heavily dependent on provincial government and NBEPC primary documents found at the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick. This discussion is followed by the second chapter, which focuses on the early settlement in the Mactaquac region. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the historical connections that protesters later claimed existed between them and the land at the time the Mactaquac Dam was being developed and constructed. The third chapter is dedicated to the opposition to the Mactaquac Dam. This chapter explores the common themes that emerged from the oppositional arguments by specifically examining the initial reaction and later oppositional voices to the proposed project, as well as dam-supporters reaction to the opposition. This third chapter largely

²⁰ Robert Layton and Peter J. Ucko, *The Archaeology and Anthropology of Landscape: Shaping your Landscape* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 1.

relies on local newspaper articles and letters to the editor, as well as citizen opinions sent in to Premier Louis J. Robichaud.

The aim of this introductory chapter is to examine the relevant historiography on water, twentieth-century modernization schemes — in particular dams —, environmentalism, and specifically the Mactaquac Dam. The chapter approaches the historiography by focusing largely on the human-water relationship as presented in scholarly works rather than analyzing historians' specific approaches and styles on the Mactaquac Dam. The purpose of doing this is to illustrate how humans' interactions with and attitudes towards water have changed over time. Thus, an examination of the literature regarding earlier human practices of water worship, for example, will begin the historiographical survey. This will be followed by an examination of the historiography regarding such topics as Karl Wittfogel's "hydraulic society" theory, the eighteenth-century commodification of water, the twentieth-century large dam era, Scott's high modernism theory, the rise of environmentalism in the 1960s and 1970s, and of course the Mactaquac Dam. The purpose of the chapter is not so much to produce an extensive evaluation of the human-water relationship, but rather to demonstrate the fluid nature (no pun intended) of this relationship by highlighting significant developments and shifts in attitudes — including those of historians — that have taken place over the last several thousand years, and, in particular, those that have materialized over the last few hundred years. Overall, this introductory narrative will establish a broader context in which to situate the Mactaquac Dam and its opposition within the historiography and within water history.

Joseph Campbell remarked in his 2003 *The Hero's Journey*, “[a]lmost every mythology sees the origins of life coming out of water.”²¹ In *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams*, Patrick McCully notes that certain cultures referred to rivers as mothers — life-giving entities. The Narmada in India: “Mother Narmada;” the Volga in Russia: “Mother of the Land;” and he also notes that the Thai word for river translates as “water mother.” McCully also describes Ancient Egyptians’ belief that the flooding of the Nile was “considered the tears of the goddess Isis.”²² Tales of great floods were common within many cultures; the epic of Gilgamesh (circa. 2000 BC) is one such example. McCully also identifies early flood stories in Norse, Jewish and aboriginal cultures.²³ Gary L. Chamberlain notes in his 2008 book, *Troubled Water: Religion, Ethics, and the Global Water Crisis*, that such spiritual or religious traditions “echo the theme that water is either a divinity in itself, possesses divine characteristics, or manifests divine powers.”²⁴ Thus, as these more recent historical works have demonstrated, water was worshipped as the giver and feared as the taker of life within early civilizations.

In regards to the Americas, anthropologist Edward R. Swenson describes in his 2003 article, “Cities of Violence: Sacrifice, Power and Urbanization in the Andes,” how the Moche (c.100 AD- 750 AD) performed ritual sacrifices in order to, among other things, obtain water from the gods. He notes that on one particular ceramic vessel “a

²¹ Joseph Campbell as quoted in Steven Solomon, *Water*, 17.

²² McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 10.

²³ McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 10.

²⁴ Gary L. Chamberlain, *Troubled Water: Religion, Ethics, and the Global Water Crisis* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008), 32.

human victim lies supine over a phallic mountain peak, which likely symbolizes fertility, and her hair, or possibly blood, flows down the mountain peak as a representation of the life-giving and alpine-derived water required for irrigation agriculture on the desert North Coast.”²⁵ This spiritual connection with water contrasts with the more modern, capitalistic way in which humans have more recently approached water. As Shiva notes, “[t]he advent of water taps and water bottles has made us forget that before water flows through pipes and before it is sold to consumers in plastic, it is a gift from nature.”²⁶ American historian Donald Worster also remarked that with the disappearance of small subsistence communities “[w]ater is no longer valued as a divinely appointed means for survival.”²⁷ Thus, as McCully, Shiva and Swenson demonstrate, a spiritual connection to nature, and more specifically to water, was an earlier phase within the human-water relationship that, Shiva and Worster believe, has diminished over time. However, this notion of a lost spiritual and “non-capitalistic” relationship with water does not necessarily describe the Mactaquac case. The fact that those of the Mactaquac area viewed their surrounding landscape and specifically the St. John River in terms of their historical and cultural importance is reminiscent of past human-water relationships. Thus, while humans have adopted a capitalist approach towards water in more recent times, it does not define all human attitudes towards water, and in part this thesis identifies the significance of this distinction.

²⁵ Edward R. Swenson, “Cities of Violence: Sacrifice, Power and Urbanization in the Andes,” *Journal of Social Archaeology* 3:256 (2003): 261.

²⁶ Shiva, *Water Wars*, 131.

²⁷ Donald Worster, *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 52.

Early civilizations too had a much more complex relationship with water than simply a spiritual connection. Norman Smith's 1971 *A History of Dams* — an engineering history — explains that dams were also a part of early civilizations' water culture; one of the earliest dams was the Sadd el-Kafara in Egypt estimated to have been built between 2950 and 2750 B.C.E.²⁸ In addition, Solomon distinguishes the “four great cradle civilizations”— Egypt, Mesopotamia, that along the Indus River and, lastly, those settled along the Yellow River — as agricultural societies.²⁹ He argues that because these civilizations were based on irrigational works they became centralized, hierarchical, authoritarian states. The connection between water manipulation and the rise — and in certain instances, the fall — of past civilizations has been the focus of many historical studies. This is largely due to Karl Wittfogel's ground-breaking 1957 *Oriental Despotism*. Wittfogel's “hydraulic society” theory linked extensive development of water systems, such as canals and dams for flood prevention and irrigation, to a subsequent need for centralized power.³⁰ Solomon agrees that “[p]ower and social organization in such societies depended absolutely upon regimented, concentrated control of the water supply.”³¹ Sandra Postel also credits Wittfogel with drawing people's attention to “the relationships between large-scale irrigation and the evolution of social and political structures.”³² Postel's 1999 work *Pillar of Sand: Can the Irrigation Miracle Last?* argues that such irrigation systems enabled rapid population growth that in turn strained

²⁸ Norman Smith, *A History of Dams* (London: Peter Davies, 1971), 1.

²⁹ Solomon, *Water*, 24.

³⁰ Karl A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1957).

³¹ Solomon, *Water*, 25.

³² Sandra Postel, *Pillar of Sand: Can the Irrigation Miracle Last?* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 15.

agricultural production and made civilizations vulnerable to abrupt climate change, like that of the Akkadian Empire (2,300-2,154 BC).³³ Thus, Wittfogel's theory identifies an important step in the human-water relationship that illustrates the significance of water and the human manipulation of water to the establishment and the ruin of societies. As Solomon argues, "[a]s throughout water history, the success of one era was seeding the defining challenge of the next."³⁴ With the creation of centralized societies, the way in which humans interacted with water evolved and laid the building blocks for future change.

Wittfogel insightfully remarked that "nature changes profoundly whenever man, in response to simple or complex historical causes, profoundly changes his technical equipment, his social organization, and his world outlook."³⁵ The commercialization of water in Europe during the eighteenth century, which increased state responsibility and control, was one such response that changed the human-water relationship. French historian Jean-Pierre Goubert explains in *The Conquest of Water: The Advent of Health in the Industrial Age* that water became an economic product during the eighteenth century as increasing knowledge of the importance of clean water and the advancement of technologies fostered new demand. This new necessity and the increasing technological capabilities, paired with the English example of pumping stations developed in the sixteenth century, resulted in the establishment of a private water purifying company — or as Goubert described it, "the first capitalist water company" — in France by the end of

³³ Postel, *Pillar of Sand*, 18.

³⁴ Solomon, *Water*, 349.

³⁵ Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism*, 11.

the century.³⁶ In addition, the Industrial Revolution stimulated changing attitudes toward water as movement towards urbanization in England, for example, significantly contributed to the unsanitary state of London's water. The rate of population growth in London and the growth of industry there contributed to the Great Stink of 1858. It, in turn, forced politicians to take sanitation seriously, thus, the sanitary revolution was born.³⁷ The creation of sanitation works in London and elsewhere in Europe correlated with an increasing demand for clean drinking water and helped to foster, as Goubert argues, a modern water economy that would in turn spread to North America.³⁸

This eighteenth-century economic transition, fueled in part by the Enlightenment emphasis on science, organization and classification, and coupled with the Industrial Revolution stimulated what James C. Scott has defined as “authoritarian high modernism” in the twentieth century.³⁹ Scott's 1998 *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed* argues that the increased technological manipulation of nature during the twentieth century was part of a broader high-modernist phenomenon, which was grounded in state projects aimed at using science to organize and more effectively control society. He labels high modernism as “a particularly sweeping vision of how the benefits of technical and scientific progress might be applied — usually through the state — in every field of human activity.”⁴⁰ Scott's 2006 “High Modernist Social Engineering: The Case of the Tennessee Valley Authority”

³⁶ Jean-Pierre Goubert, *The Conquest of Water: The Advent of Health in the Industrial Age*, trans. Andrew Wilson (Oxford: Polity Press, 1989), 173.

³⁷ Solomon, *Water*, 250-1.

³⁸ It may be of interest to note that in France the consumption of water was metered, while in England water was a public service and thus paid out of taxation. See Goubert's *The Conquest of Water*, Chapter 7.

³⁹ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

⁴⁰ Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 90.

helpfully identifies the characteristics of high modernism, which he notes among other factors is the disregard of any evidence that legitimizes social practices, such as history and custom.⁴¹ In addition, high modernism flourishes in particular contexts, such as during a “crisis of state power”— a war, or an economic depression — or, in the case of colonial settings, when the state is able to plan without democratic impediments. Though quite pervasive within such contexts, high-modernist development was not always accepted by individuals and — in some instances — whole communities.

Ian McKay’s *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia*, illustrates the complexity of maintaining individual and community cultural identity within a modernizing world. McKay points towards the eighteenth-century German writers Johan Gottfried Herder and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm as the pioneers of the complex category of “Folk.” All three emphasized the value of tradition and social customs over modernity and Enlightenment thought. McKay notes that Herder “was self-consciously turning to the “barbaric” and the “primitive” as ways of countering the stresses of modernity, positioning tradition and custom as almost sacred elements of collective identity, and exalting the German *Volk* above all other peoples in the world.”⁴² Though perhaps less inclusive and tolerant than he may have described himself to be, Herder helpfully defined the value of tradition to collective identity, which, of course, is in stark contrast to notions of high modernity and a collective desire to progress and develop. Within his work, McKay utilizes such notions of the Folk, as well

⁴¹ James C. Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering: The Case of the Tennessee Valley Authority,” in *Experiencing the State*, eds. Lloyd I. Rudolph and John Kurt Jacobsen (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 7-8.

⁴² Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s university Press, 1994), 11.

as folklorist Heather Creighton's work on the people of Devil's Island during the 1920s and 1930s to develop an understanding of the "phenomenon of antimodernism" in Nova Scotia.⁴³ Though such individuals as Creighton and therapist and crafts revivalist Mary Black identified Nova Scotia as Folk — in essence, innocent, pure and rural — McKay argues that such cultural producers created a backwards Folk, one that catered to tourism and a region struggling with underdevelopment. This Folk had

flattered certain things about Maritime society — such as the continuity of communities and the persistence of tradition — and offered an explanation of that which could not be flattered in essentialist and culturalist terms. (Underdevelopment could thus be explained by a deficiency in entrepreneurial spirit, or the outcome of regional conservatism). The category thus provided both a means of sustaining subjective self-esteem and of shielding, from subaltern critique and activism, those political and social leaders who had led their society into such a crisis.⁴⁴

Though McKay is critical of such attempts to impose the Folk, his work reveals an antimodernist counter to Scott's high modernism. In so doing, McKay contributes to our understanding of the Maritimes' — specifically Nova Scotia's — response to twentieth-century modernization, as well as Scott's high modernism and its social and cultural implications.

Developments in the United States have been studied by many historians interested in Scott's high modernism theory, especially in association with hydraulic megaprojects.⁴⁵ The Tennessee River Authority (TVA), established in 1933 during Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration, is one such example. Scott himself has described the New Deal initiative as "*the* original, comprehensive, integrated development scheme,"

⁴³ McKay, *The Quest of the Folk*, 4.

⁴⁴ McKay, *The Quest of the Folk*, 307.

⁴⁵ Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water* (New York: Viking, 1986).

and “the granddaddy of all regional development projects.”⁴⁶ The TVA was created to harness the unpredictable eight-state-long Tennessee River to generate a wide array of societal benefits.⁴⁷ The Tennessee River basin encompassed an impoverished farming community facing severe soil erosion during the first half of the twentieth century, which was only exacerbated by the Great Depression during the 1930s. The United States Government, through the implementation of TVA development projects, sought to rectify the situation by transforming the “backward region” into a promising example of state-aided social and economic development, and more specifically to create a more socially acceptable citizen within the basin area.⁴⁸

Initial TVA planning included the building of dams to provide cheaper energy, safer navigational routes, flood control, and to stimulate economic development, in addition to the construction of schools to educate residents on such topics as proper hygiene and agriculture.⁴⁹ Historian David Ekbladh describes the TVA as a significant component of regional modernization, one that became attractive to not only other states, but other countries including Canada.⁵⁰ In “‘Mr. TVA’: Grass-Roots Development, David Lilienthal, and the Rise and Fall of the Tennessee Valley Authority as a Symbol for U.S. Overseas Development, 1933-1973,” Ekbladh describes the TVA’s appeal as a means of democratic development that reconciled the impersonal use of technology with the

⁴⁶ Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering,” 20; Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 6.

⁴⁷ Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering,” 20.

⁴⁸ Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering,” 19.

⁴⁹ Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering,” 20.

⁵⁰ David Ekbladh, “‘Mr. TVA’: Grass-Roots Development, David Lilienthal, and the Rise and Fall of the Tennessee Valley Authority as a Symbol for U.S. Overseas Development, 1933-1973,” *Diplomatic History* 26:3 (2006).

participation of those affected by the programs.⁵¹ Daniel Schaffer differs somewhat in approach, as his 1984 article “Environment and TVA: Toward a Regional Plan for the Tennessee Valley, 1930s” situates the TVA within a broader pattern of the standardization of natural resources.⁵² He notes: “Just as the unpredictable flow of the Tennessee River was to be harnessed for the economic well-being of the region, demographic trends were to be directed toward a more efficient land use pattern.”⁵³ Former Dalhousie University student, Juanita P. Montalvo, noted similar trends in her 1990 M.A. thesis in regards to the St. John River basin. In “Multipurpose River Development: The Case of Mactaquac, Tennessee Valley Authority and the Volta River Project,” she describes the regional similarities between the Tennessee River basin and the St. John River valley that alerted New Brunswick planners to the economic developments the TVA model promised.⁵⁴ Many of the Mactaquac Dam studies follow Montalvo’s example, including the TVA within their discussion. This is because the TVA was *the* model that developers looked to when planning and constructing the Mactaquac project. The historiography rightly illustrates that the TVA was an American creation that had global implications.

Donald Worster’s 1985 *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity and the Growth of the American West* examines the creation of the modern American West and its reliance on large hydraulic works. He applies Wittfogel’s hydraulic society theory to the American West, explaining that the United States Government initially approached nature — and in

⁵¹ Ekbladh, “‘Mr. TVA,’” 336.

⁵² Daniel Schaffer, “Environment and TVA: Toward a Regional Plan for the Tennessee Valley, 1930s,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 43: 4 (1984).

⁵³ Schaffer, “Environment and TVA,” 353.

⁵⁴ Juanita P. Montalvo, “Multipurpose River Development: The Case of Mactaquac, Tennessee Valley Authority and the Volta River Project” (M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1990).

many ways still does — as an object of conquest, and in so doing shaped a unique relationship between Americans and water. Worster argues that the West became a “land of authority and restraint, of class and exploitation, and ultimately of imperial power,” as, over time, it was constructed on an increasingly “alienating, intensely managerial relationship with nature.” Worster believes that during the early twentieth century, the United States became the greatest hydraulic society in the world.⁵⁵ The late Marc Reisner agreed, noting that Americans created “a Mesopotamia in America between the valleys of the Green River and the middle Snake.”⁵⁶ Reisner depicted the construction of such dams as the Hoover, Grand Coulee, McNary, and Bonneville as representative of America’s conquest of the arid West, and which also marked the beginning of what eventually became the global large dam era.⁵⁷ The construction of the Hoover Dam (1931-1936) in particular, as Solomon argues, was “a seminal turning point in water history—the age of giant, multipurpose dams” had begun and it quickly spread across the globe.⁵⁸

Before the large dam era began in North America, Canada depended on coal as its main energy source. Heavily dependent on American coal imports despite significant production by Maritime coalfields, Canada was shaken into a panic during the 1902 “Coal

⁵⁵ Worster, *Rivers of Empire*, 4-5.

⁵⁶ Reisner, *Cadillac Desert*, 2.

⁵⁷ Most historians identify the large dam era as a period between the late 1930s and the 1990s, with its peak during the 1970s; however, some would argue that it continues in such countries as China. McCully notes that though the amount of large dams built every year has gone down over the last couple of decades, dams are being built larger than ever. One need only think of the Itaipu Dam on the Paraná River bordering Brazil and Paraguay at 196 meters high, or China’s Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River finished in 2008 at 181 meters. Solomon on the other hand argues that the age of great dams came to a close during the 1970s, as all the best sites were taken, the uneconomic returns of large dams became apparent and modern environmentalism reached an all-time high. McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 22; Solomon, *Water*, 349, 352.

⁵⁸ Solomon, *Water*, 338.

Famine,” as the country was essentially left stranded by its Pennsylvanian supplier.⁵⁹

Canadians realized that there were serious risks attached to foreign dependency on energy supplies. As historian H.V. Nelles comments, such setbacks spurred a desire for economic security and industrial development that would be based on a more reliable energy source.

The nineteenth-century engineer T.C. Keefer pointed the way by advocating the

development of hydroelectricity. Water was to become the country’s “white coal,”

Canada’s means to a secure energy future. The processing of raw materials seemed to be Canada’s best economic path, and hydroelectricity offered a way to sustain such plans.⁶⁰

The development of the Niagara Falls waterworks in the late nineteenth century was such a response to increasing demands for hydroelectricity. It was promoted as an exceptional human achievement, as well as an aesthetic feat.⁶¹ The idea of a conquering beauty — science and technology blending into nature — forms the basis of Nelles’s criticism of North American attitudes towards nature. The construction of a “hydro myth” helped establish even greater support for hydroelectricity within Canada, as water was to act as a clean and “renewable” energy source that could be harnessed in a visually pleasing way.⁶² These attitudes extended into the twentieth century, as the demand for power and development only increased.

⁵⁹ H.V. Nelles, *The Politics of Development: Forests, Mines and Hydro-Electric Power in Ontario, 1849-1941* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1974), 217.

⁶⁰ Nelles, *The Politics of Development*, 215-216.

⁶¹ Karl Froschauer points out that the electricity produced on the Ontario side of Niagara Falls was being sent to the U.S. during the beginning of the 1900s. Canadians started to become envious as they witnessed American industry thrive with the help of their Canadian power, and noticed Canada’s steam-powered economy begin to lag behind. It was at this point, Froschauer believes, that Canada made a decisive transition towards damming rivers on a more significant level. Karl Froschauer, *White Gold: Hydroelectric Power in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999).

⁶² The current issue with claiming water is a renewable resource is the way in which humans abuse it. As Marc de Villiers comments in his work, pollution and mismanagement are limiting the amount of potable water.

World War II helped to accelerate Canada's investments in hydroelectricity. At home, Canada had to increase its energy production in order to produce such wartime materials as aluminum. Matthew Evenden's 2009 article, "Mobilizing Rivers: Hydro-Electricity, the State, and World War II in Canada," highlights the role of wartime aluminum production in fostering an increased demand for hydroelectricity in Canada, which in turn resulted in a new dependency on the energy source.⁶³ Evenden points to Marian Mildred Scott's poster "This is Our Strength: Electric Power" as a telling representation of hydroelectricity's growing significance in Canada. The poster (Figure 1) presents a strong masculine hand clenched in a victorious gesture, tearing through a flowing river to create a tapped resource with electrical lines in the foreground. Evenden argues that this new direction taken during World War II was associated with a new vision of nationalism, as hydroelectricity fuelled Canada's contribution to the war effort. This nationalistic imagery extended into the following decades, as nationalism came to include self-sufficiency and improved living standards.

⁶³ Matthew Evenden, "Mobilizing Rivers: Hydro-Electricity, the State, and World War II in Canada," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 99:5 (2009), 845-55.

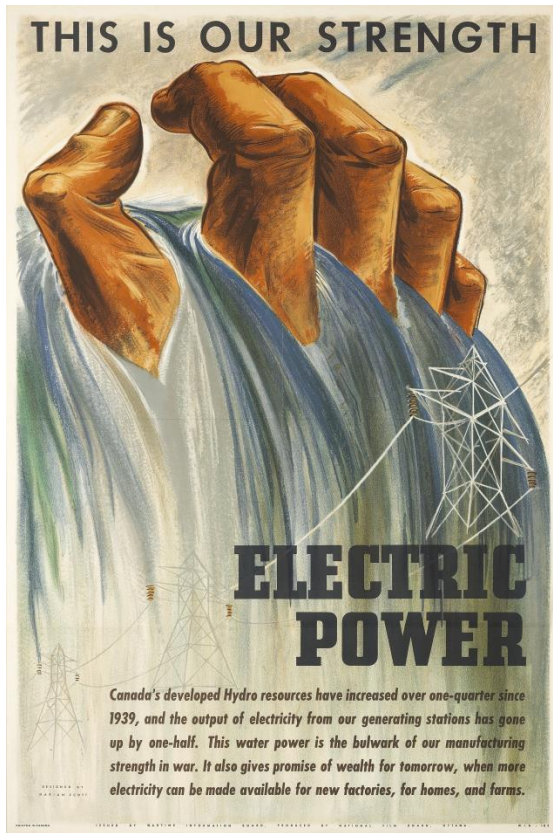


Figure 1- Marian Mildred Scott's "This is Our Strength: Electric Power." Courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada.⁶⁴

Evenden's 2004 book, *Fish Versus Power*, focuses specifically on such twentieth-century pressures to improve living standards in British Columbia.⁶⁵ This work is a unique contribution to dam historiography, as it focuses on what constrained development on the Fraser River rather than what facilitated it. Evenden sees the untapped state of the river as somewhat of a miracle given the twentieth-century dam boom. Except for a few smaller rivers, the Mackenzie is Canada's only other large river that has not been dammed. According to Evenden, the Fraser River's untouched state was owed to salmon.

⁶⁴ Marian Mildred Scott, "This is Our Strength: Electric Power", c. 1939-1945, National Gallery of Canada, no. 40477.

⁶⁵ Matthew Evenden, *Fish Versus Power: An Environmental History of the Fraser River* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1.

Scientists had spent years rebuilding salmon numbers after they were decimated by an earlier collapse of a portion of the riverside. The impediment created by fallen rock at Hell's Gate helped to demonstrate the negative effects of dam-like obstructions. Evenden explains: "Just as pressure built in British Columbia to proceed with major dam development on the Fraser in the late 1940s, salmon runs rebounded [after the construction of fishways] and Hells [sic] Gate emerged as a model of the costs of development."⁶⁶ By emphasizing the rarity of an untapped river, Evenden's unique approach illustrates the dominance of modernization schemes during this phase of the human-water relationship.

On the other side of the spectrum, Tina Loo and Meg Stanley examine the proliferation of dams in British Columbia from the 1960s to the 1980s. Their 2011 article "An Environmental History of Progress: Damming the Peace and Columbia Rivers" applies Scott's high modernism theory to those specifically involved in the construction of dams (engineers, geologists and construction workers) whom Loo and Stanley refer to as "agents of high modernity."⁶⁷ They argue that if "all knowledge has a geography" then Scott's theory must be adjusted so as to consider the local aspects of high modernist development, which they term "high modernist local knowledge."⁶⁸ Their work demonstrates the importance of Scott's theory to the study of twentieth-century modernization schemes, as well as illustrating that high modernism, as Scott defines it, does not necessarily characterize all modernization schemes.

⁶⁶ Evenden, *Fish Versus Power*, 14.

⁶⁷ Tina Loo and Meg Stanley, "Damming the Peace and Columbia Rivers," *Canadian Historical Review* 92:3 (September 2011): 407.

⁶⁸ Loo and Stanley, "Damming the Peace and Columbia Rivers," 407.

Loo and Stanley, while situating British Columbia dam development within broader Canadian developments, note Quebec's investment in hydroelectricity during the twentieth century. They explain that “[f]or René Lévesque, hydropower was the key to decolonization, allowing Quebeckers to become ‘*maîtres chez nous*.’ Linking hydroelectricity to citizenship, he declared, ‘*Nous sommes tous Hydro-Québécois*.’”⁶⁹ The supposed decolonization of Quebec came with a large price tag with the construction of the James Bay Project. In regards to physical size, as well as the amount of land flooded and the numerous people displaced, the construction of the James Bay Project during the 1970s was the most significant hydro development in Quebec. Sean McCutcheon's book, *Electric Rivers: The Story of the James Bay Project*, which focuses on the first phase of the “gigaproject” (La Grande), argues that Quebec's attempts to be environmentally sensitive during the construction process, though an improvement in comparison to other dam developments, were superficial and inadequate.⁷⁰ Historian Kreg Ettenger, using the testimony given by members of the Cree tribe, analyzes their losses and the challenges they faced as a result of the project.⁷¹ While Hydro-Quebec labelled the project a developmental and environmental success, McCutcheon emphasizes the gravity of the changes that occurred within the environment. Although the Quebec government hired biologists and replanted willows and jack pines, McCutcheon notes that the project

⁶⁹ Loo and Stanley, “Damming the Peace and Columbia Rivers,” 401.

⁷⁰ Sean McCutcheon, *Electric Rivers: The Story of the James Bay Project* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1991), 4.

⁷¹ The testimony given by Cree members was from a case against the Great Whale Project — the second phase of the James Bay Project that was introduced by Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa in the mid-1980s. In the 1990s the project was suspended due to oppositional forces and was never realized. Kreg Ettenger, “A River that was once so Strong and Deep: Local Reflections on the Eastmain Diversion, James Bay Hydroelectric Project,” in *Water, Culture, and Power: Local Struggles in a Global Context*, eds., John M. Donahue and Barbara Rose Johnston (Washington: Island Press, 1998), 47-72.

significantly altered nature, reversing natural cycles. Both Ettenger's and McCutcheon's works offer examples of growing popular resentment towards dams. Historian Oran R. Young remarked that megaprojects have recently "become lightning-rods charged with controversy relating to a broad spectrum of issues concerning human/environment relations."⁷²

Solomon argues that the end of the large dam era began in the 1970s owing to, among other factors, the rise of environmentalism.⁷³ Environmentalism began to take shape during the 1960s and was a manifestation of the growing awareness of the damage caused by such human activities as industrial pollution, dam construction and, in particular, insecticide use. Such events as the 1950s Great Parent Fear and the 1959 cranberry scare in the United States caused the American population to rethink their interactions with the environment.⁷⁴ In 1962, Rachel Carson spoke to these concerns when she published *Silent Spring*. Solomon argues that if the modern environmental movement had a "birth moment" it was the publication of *Silent Spring*.⁷⁵ William Cronon stated that *Silent Spring* "was a lightning rod like no other" and noted that by the

⁷² Oran R. Young, "Introduction to the Issues," in *Social and Environmental Impacts of the James Bay Hydroelectric Project*, ed., James F. Hornig (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 3.

⁷³ Of course there were non-environmental anti-dam activists, such as industry lobbyists, who argued that large dams were uneconomic — the price of a large dam was rarely offset by its economic returns. Solomon, *Water*, 352.

⁷⁴ During the 1950s, parents in the United States became increasingly concerned over the causes of DDT use and in particular its reported link to leukemia in children. The cranberry scare was a pesticide scare that occurred in the fall of 1959, just three weeks before Thanksgiving. The Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Arthur S. Sherwood, announced the reported contamination of northwestern cranberries by aminotriazole, a type of weed killer that was reported to cause cancer in rats. Housewives were warned not to buy cranberries until the contaminated batch were distinguished from the uncontaminated lot. Thomas R. Dunlap, ed., *DDT, Silent Spring, and the Rise of Environmentalism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 5. Priscilla Coit Murphy, *What a Book Can Do: The Publication and Reception of Silent Spring* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 11.

⁷⁵ Solomon, *Water*, 354.

first Earth Day in 1970, it was regarded “as one of the founding texts of environmentalism.”⁷⁶ In *Silent Spring*, Carson warned of the harmful effects of insecticide spraying on the environment, including their detrimental effects on humans. She lamented the “heedless pace of man” over “the deliberate pace of nature” that resulted in “the contamination of man’s total environment with such substances of incredible potential for harm.”⁷⁷ In addition, Carson specifically discussed the harmful effects of insecticide spraying — due to a spruce budworm threat — on the Miramichi River salmon in New Brunswick. Carson noted that “[s]oon after the spraying had ended there were unmistakable signs that all was not well. Within two days dead and dying fish, including many young salmon, were found along the banks of the stream.”⁷⁸ Carson called for viable and more natural alternatives, such as the introduction of predatory insects to get rid of other pests like the budworm. Carson’s work and the ensuing environmental movement are regarded by Solomon as representative of “a turning point in water and world history” — a transition in the human-water relationship.⁷⁹

Silent Spring was not the only impetus to the environmental movement, however. As Solomon notes, such incidents as the 1969 fire on the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland, which was caused by flammable wastes that had been carelessly dumped in the river, resulted in the creation of certain environmental legislation. In the US, in 1970, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established and then in 1972 the Clean Water Act, followed by the 1974 Safe Drinking Water Act.⁸⁰ In addition, early

⁷⁶ Cronon, foreword to *DDT, Silent Spring, and the Rise of Environmentalism*, ix,x.

⁷⁷ Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Boston: Mariner Book, 2002), 7, 8.

⁷⁸ Carson, *Silent Spring*, 131.

⁷⁹ Solomon, *Water*, 357.

⁸⁰ Cronon, introduction to *DDT, Silent Spring and the Rise of Environmentalism*, 8; Solomon, *Water*, 356.

expressions of the International Anti-Dam Movement (1980s) — anti-dam protests — reached their zenith during the 1970s.⁸¹ McCully argues that the rise of environmentalism and the increasingly unified force of environmentalist groups “greatly helped the opponents of dams,” who until recently had usually been defeated by the state initiative.⁸² Thus, rising environmental awareness was increasingly competing with twentieth-century capitalistic ambitions and the human desire to conquer nature.

Canada took similar steps towards a more environmentally-friendly way of life, as Lorne Hammond notes: “Canada was carried into the seventies on a groundswell of new concerns and new environmental organizations, and a flurry of environmental education and discussion.”⁸³ Canada’s increasing environmental consciousness manifested itself during the 1970s in the founding of Pollution Probe, the Society for Pollution and Environmental Control, the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, as well as the publication of journals *Nature Canada* and *Alternatives*. In the 1960s, the World Wildlife Fund Canada was established and in 1971 Greenpeace, originating out of Vancouver, British Columbia, was founded. In addition, the government made some legislative changes, such as the passing of the Arctic Waters Pollution Preservation Act (1970), the Clean Air Act (1971), and the Canada Wildlife Act (1973).⁸⁴

In the Atlantic Region, environmental awareness presented itself in a few early works: R.E. Balch’s 1965 *The Ecological Viewpoint*; Bruce Wright’s 1966 *Black Duck Spring*; and Elizabeth May’s 1982 *Budworm Battles: The Fight to Stop the Aerial*

⁸¹ McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 21.

⁸² McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 281.

⁸³ Lorne Hammond, forward to *Working for Wildlife: The Beginning of Preservation in Canada*, 2nd edition, by Janet Foster (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), xiii.

⁸⁴ Hammond, forward to *Working for Wildlife*, xiii.

Insecticide Spraying of the Forests of Eastern Canada. Though quite representative of the increasing environmental awareness during this period, these works predate environmental history, which only became an accepted and defined branch of study in Canada during the late 1990s.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, they, like *Silent Spring*, demonstrated a concern for the environment and noted the negative effects human development schemes had on nature.

The Ecological Viewpoint was originally broadcast as five radio lectures on the CBC University of the Air out of Fredericton, New Brunswick in the spring of 1965. The lectures were such a success that CBC quickly published them in paperback format.⁸⁶ In these lectures, Balch, officer-in-charge of the Dominion Entomological Laboratory in Fredericton, described the ecological viewpoint as a “means of looking at living things from the point of view of their relationships to their environment, and to each other.”⁸⁷ And in this, Balch noted humanity’s “all-pervasive” influence over the environment.⁸⁸

Black Duck Spring, on the other hand, is a striking environmental piece in that it narrates the experiences of a black duck in its natural habitat. Along his travels, the duck comes into contact with harmful insecticides and eventually loses his mate to the harsh chemicals. In the last chapter, Wright comments on humans’ imposition on nature:

Now when the son of the big male flies north, following his mate of the season, he will not disappear into land untouched by man. Vast cutovers of pulpwood companies stretch along the north shore of the St. Lawrence ... Huge dams are being built to harness the wild rivers for power... The black ducks nesting in the

⁸⁵ Alan MacEachern, “Voices Crying in the Wilderness: Recent Works in Canadian Environmental History,” *Acadiensis* 31:2 (Spring 2002): 215-26.

⁸⁶ Mark J. McLaughlin, “Green Shoots: Aerial Insecticide Spraying and the Growth of Environmental Consciousness in New Brunswick, 1952-1973,” *Acadiensis* 40:1 (Winter/Spring 2011): 18.

⁸⁷ R.E. Balch, *The Ecological Viewpoint* (Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1965), 46.

⁸⁸ Balch, *The Ecological Viewpoint*, 47.

interior are not immune from man any longer — instead they must be protected from him⁸⁹

Wright's work, though not a typical historical piece in regards to writing style and cited sources, demonstrates that there was — to a certain extent — an awareness of the negative implications of human industrial development on the environment.

Published sixteen years after Wright's *Black Duck Spring*, May's *Budworm Battles* also examined the harmful effects of insecticide spraying. *Budworm Battles* is May's memoir of her role in the opposition against insecticide spraying in Cape Breton. Though May's work does not contain footnotes or a bibliography, she does base much of her discussions on scholarly research and includes quotations from works by entomologists and physicians. On hearing that the Nova Scotian Government planned to spray, May recalls her initial thoughts: "I had enough background in ecology to know of the devastating impact of a poison on the many faceted, interacting organisms which balanced together to make an eco-system."⁹⁰ In this statement, May emphasizes the importance of preserving nature for its own sake and maintaining a balanced eco-system. May's work, along with Balch's and Wright's, was a product of increasing environmental awareness in Atlantic Canada that would, in turn, contribute to the next generation of environmental scholarship.

From the 1990s onwards, Canadian environmental history has become increasingly more popular. Claire Campbell and Robert Summerby-Murray explain that "[e]nvironmental history has blossomed in Canada in the past two decades as the fastest

⁸⁹ Bruce Wright, *Black Duck Spring* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Company Limited, 1966), 189.

⁹⁰ Elizabeth May, *Budworm Battles: The Fight to Stop the Aerial Insecticide Spraying of the Forests of Eastern Canada* (Halifax: Four East Publishing, 1982), 9.

growing, most creative area of the discipline.”⁹¹ American historian Paul Sutter humorously commented that since 1990, “the field of environmental history has grown like a kudzu on a hot July day.”⁹² On a more serious note, Sutter draws environmental historians’ attention to the importance of understanding the interconnectedness of nature and culture, arguing that “all environments are hybrid.” “Where the first generation of American environmental historians might have seen a dam thrown across a river in the western United States as an act of domination, of human artifice destroying a natural system, the second generation has been more likely to characterize such an intervention as creating a ‘second nature’ of the river, or... an ‘organic machine’.”⁹³ Works by Bill Parenteau, for example, have explored the oftentimes strained, but interconnected, relationship between the Atlantic Canadian economy and the environment, in particular the Atlantic fishery. In his 1998 article, “‘Care, Control and Supervision’: Native People in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1900,” Parenteau considers the commercialization of the Atlantic salmon and the struggles of aboriginal peoples to maintain their customs and livelihoods against encroaching fishermen.⁹⁴ And in a 2002 article, Parenteau explored the role that sports fishing had on fish and game conservation. Parenteau’s work examines specifically the resource development of and the economic

⁹¹ Claire Campbell and Robert Summerby-Murray, eds., introduction to *Land and Sea: Environmental History in Atlantic Canada* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 2013), 7.

⁹² Paul Sutter, “The World with Us: The State of American Environmental History,” *Journal of American History* 100: 1 (June 2013): 95.

⁹³ Sutter, “The World with Us,” 96.

⁹⁴ Bill Parenteau, “‘Care, Control and Supervision’: Native People in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1900,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 79:1 (March 1998): 1-35.

dependence on Atlantic Canadian rivers.⁹⁵ This is simply one way in which environmental historians are approaching and rediscovering Atlantic Canadian history. *Land and Sea: Environmental History in Atlantic Canada* is a recent collection of environmental history essays edited by Campbell and Summerby-Murray that explores topics of tourism, defining regionalism, settlement, and resource development in relation to and in interaction with the environment. In addition, rising environmental awareness and humans' ability to adapt to their natural surroundings after an unexpected ecological change are considered within the collection. Campbell and Summerby-Murray describe the collection as a way of making connections between how humans, past and the present, have interacted with their surrounding environments, as well as acknowledging the necessity of collaborative thinking and action in regards to the environment.⁹⁶ However, such concepts were not as common in New Brunswick during the 1960s. Modernization schemes were integral to the economic, political and social development of the area; progress, not environment, was the word of the day.

In New Brunswick, the province had undergone a transformation by the 1970s, as government modernization schemes of the 1950s and 1960s had redefined its economy, society and landscape. During the mid to late nineteenth century, the Atlantic Provinces had experienced an economic boom with the success of the timber and shipping industries. However, with decreasing British demand for timber and ships towards the end

⁹⁵ Bill Parenteau, "A 'very determined opposition to the law': Conservation, Angling Leases, and Social Conflict in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1914," *Environmental History* 9:3 (July 2004): 436-63.

⁹⁶ Campbell and Summerby-Murray, *Land and Sea*.

of the century, the industries neared extinction and never recovered.⁹⁷ Though these industries were and are seen by most Eastern Canadians as fundamental within the nineteenth-century development of New Brunswick, historian P.D. McClelland chose to focus on them as twentieth-century hindrances. McClelland argues in his article “The New Brunswick Economy in the Nineteenth Century” that New Brunswick’s lack of investment and initiative in other industrial spheres left the province unstable within an advancing country and world.⁹⁸ As a result, the province’s economy developed slowly during the early twentieth century. In addition to these economic missteps, Ernest R. Forbes argues that federal wartime funding during the Second World War barely reached the Maritimes. In his 1986 article “Consolidating Disparity: The Maritimes and the Industrialization of Canada during the Second World War,” Forbes discusses the concentration of wartime industrial developments in Central Canada at the expense of the Maritimes, which compounded regional disparity.⁹⁹ Most historians do not deny the depressed economic state that existed in the Maritimes during the mid-twentieth century. Some scholars, such as Margaret Conrad, R.A. Young, James Kenny and Andrew Secord, however, note this period as a time in which the Maritime Provinces — the governments and the public — worked towards securing a more prosperous and stable economy.

⁹⁷ Margaret R. Conrad and James K. Hiller, 2nd ed., *Atlantic Canada: A History* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2010), 145-6, 181.

⁹⁸ P.D. McClelland, “The New Brunswick Economy in the Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of Economic History* 25:4 (1965), 686-90.

⁹⁹ Ernest R. Forbes, “Consolidating Disparity: The Maritimes and the Industrialization of Canada during the Second World War,” *Acadiensis* 15:2 (Spring 1986): 3-27.

Conrad labels the 1950s Atlantic Canadian movement for an improved economic situation the “Atlantic Revolution.”¹⁰⁰ The Maritimes were experiencing a relative economic decline during the 1950s, which contrasted with the booming Canadian economy. Conrad notes:

[T]he economic boom of the “fabulous fifties” failed to live up to its promise in Atlantic Canada, “the forgotten people,” as Maritimers had taken to calling themselves, once more buried their class and cultural differences, drew upon their shared sense of regional grievance (to which they added a generous measure of Newfoundland’s unfulfilled expectations), and produced a blueprint for development that was predicated on a radical revision of national policy.¹⁰¹

Modernization schemes, such as the Beechwood Dam on the St. John River and the development of thermal plants in the Atlantic Region, were a significant aspect of the Atlantic Revolution’s attempts to secure economic prosperity and stability. In “Planning for Power: The New Brunswick Electric Commission in the 1950s,” Young describes how electric power became New Brunswick’s key to economic progress.¹⁰² Kenny and Secord note in their 2001 article, “Public Power for Industry: A Re-examination of the New Brunswick Case, 1940-1969,” that the province’s economic planners desired to develop the mineral industry based on new base metal deposits found in Bathurst, which in turn required more energy and eventually resulted in the government and the NBEPCC’s “power for industry” campaign.¹⁰³ Both articles discuss the increasing “autonomization” of the NBEPCC and, as Young argues, its increasing investment in corporate self-interest at

¹⁰⁰ Margaret Conrad, “The “Atlantic Revolution” of the 1950s,” in *Beyond Anger and Longing: Community and Development in Atlantic Canada*, ed., Berkeley Fleming (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1988), 55-96.

¹⁰¹ Conrad, “The “Atlantic Revolution” of the 1950s,” 57.

¹⁰² R.A. Young, “Planning for Power: The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission in the 1950s,” *Acadiensis* 12:1 (Autumn 1982): 73-99.

¹⁰³ James L. Kenny and Andrew Secord, “Public Power for Industry: A Re-examination of the New Brunswick Case, 1940-1969.” *Acadiensis* 30:2 (2001): 84-108.

the expense — to a certain extent — of New Brunswickers.¹⁰⁴ The NBEPC's autonomy over New Brunswick's economic development and the continued usage of the "power for industry" campaign contributed to making the Mactaquac Dam a reality.

Kenny and Secord's more recent work, "Engineering Modernity: Hydroelectric Development in New Brunswick, 1945-1970," argues that the Mactaquac project was an example of the modernization schemes that dominated the Atlantic Provinces during the mid-twentieth century.¹⁰⁵ Scott's high modernism theory is central to their evaluation of the dam's place within provincial and more global modernization attempts. Though largely concerned with the political and economic aspects of the Mactaquac Dam, Kenny and Secord do touch on the dam's official opposition — the Association for the Preservation and Development of the St. John River in its Natural State (APDSJR). They argue that the APDSJR failed to stop the construction of the Mactaquac dam because of "the NBEPC's control of the economic planning process in the province."¹⁰⁶ Katie Shawn Ferrar's 2005 M.A. thesis, though also more politically and economically informed, examines the opposition more extensively.¹⁰⁷ In her last chapter, Ferrar notes the more general oppositional arguments: the relocation of residents, the negative effects the dam would have on the salmon fishery, the loss of rich farmland, the destruction of the beautiful St. John River valley and the loss of a cultural heritage. However, Ferrar's chapter on the opposition — "Managing Dissent" — is more concerned with the ways in which the New Brunswick Government and the NBEPC responded to or dealt with the

¹⁰⁴ Young, "Planning for Power," 73.

¹⁰⁵ James L. Kenny and Andrew Secord, "Engineering Modernity: Hydroelectric Development in New Brunswick, 1945-1970," *Acadiensis* 39:1 (2010), 3-26.

¹⁰⁶ Kenny and Secord, "Engineering Modernity," 26.

¹⁰⁷ Katie Shawn Ferrar, "Power for Progress: The Mactaquac Development and Regional Development Plans, 1964-2003" (M.A. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2005).

oppositional arguments, such as in the case of Premier Robichaud's information sessions, or the NBEPC's publication of informative pamphlets. Ferrar believes that "Robichaud's government and the Power Commission successfully subdued this opposition through an extensive public information campaign."¹⁰⁸ This notion fits in with her overall argument that the Mactaquac project was politically and economically a success and that it became a symbol of the "progressive attitude towards sustainable economic development that was championed in New Brunswick during the 1960s."¹⁰⁹

Joshua John Dickison, on the other hand, views the project as a failure.¹¹⁰

Employing a socioeconomic approach, Dickison's 2006 M.A. thesis argues that the Mactaquac project did not benefit rural inhabitants, but in fact solidified notions of rural underdevelopment and the "have-not" economy. While agreeing with Dickison in regards to the Mactaquac project's inability to generate enough employment to reduce unemployment rates, Montalvo believes that the project was "successful in increasing the province's ability to produce power with renewable energy" and she notes that more homes in York County had refrigerators, running water, bathing facilities and televisions than ever before.¹¹¹ Thus, Montalvo's economic study of the Mactaquac project nicely brings together Ferrar's political evaluation and Dickison's socioeconomic assessment — the Mactaquac project was a mixed bag of positive and negative developments.

¹⁰⁸ Ferrar, "Power for Progress," 97.

¹⁰⁹ Ferrar, "Power for Progress," 98.

¹¹⁰ Joshua John Dickison, *Making New Brunswickers Modern: Natural and Human Resource Development in the Mactaquac Regional Development Plan 1965-1975* (M.A. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2006).

¹¹¹ Montalvo, "Multi-Purpose River Development," 82, 83.

The most socially-considerate work that has been conducted on the Mactaquac Dam is Mark A. Manzer's 1996 B.A. thesis, "Dam the Mactaquac Region."¹¹² His work, conducted thirty years after the dam's construction, provides insight, through the use of interview responses, into the opinions of those who had been relocated by the dam. Manzer argues that such economic tools as cost/benefit analysis (CBA) and quality of life (QOL) do not fully consider all of the possible social consequences that the construction of a dam entails, as the interview responses illustrate. Though he included some of his interview questions in his appendix, Manzer unfortunately did not provide the full interview responses, or a location as to where they can be found. Therefore, this source, while extremely insightful, only possesses block quotations from interviews, which one must be aware were chosen and used so as to forward the author's arguments. However, the quotations from relocated residents that he does provide are considered and — to a certain extent — included in this thesis. The sense of loss that these statements evoke, whether it be a loss of heritage, culture or the beautiful view of the St. John River, cannot be disregarded.

The construction of the Mactaquac Dam and the subsequent relocation of residents along the St. John River have also produced fictional works. Alan R. Wilson's 1999 *Before the Flood* is a story about a teenage boy named Samuel MacFarlene who, along with taking part in regular teenage experiences, is worried about the effects the construction of the Mactaquac Dam will have on his town of Woodstock. In the epilogue, Wilson illustrates his negative opinion of the dam's consequences, writing: "The Mactaquac Dam terminated the long careers of the Saint John and Meduxnekeag as true

¹¹² Mark A. Manzer, "Dam the Mactaquac Region" (B.A. thesis, Saint Thomas University, 1996).

rivers. Victorian riverfront buildings and the salmon that migrated past them each year disappeared ... With all that had made the town unique reduced to memories, the stories ended. Only its vigorous history lay beyond the pale hand of what some call progress.”¹¹³

The 2011 Riel Nason novel, *The Town that Drowned*, is similar to Wilson’s in that the protagonist, Ruby Carson, is a teenager struggling to fit in.¹¹⁴ Set in the fictional town of Haventon, New Brunswick, *The Town that Drowned* explores how Ruby’s life as she knows it is threatened by the proposed construction of the Mactaquac Dam. Though not historical works, both novels recognize the existence and importance of cultural connections to the land, and they are able to emphasize this notion through the voices of fictional characters.

However, as noted previously, this thesis focuses on the *historical* expressions of such cultural connections. Thus, it illustrates the historical and cultural value of the Mactaquac area to those living there at the time the dam was proposed and constructed. Such arguments for the preservation of history and culture, as well as an aesthetic beauty were deemed by dam supporters as “sentimental” and, therefore, irrelevant. This type of high-modernist mentality defines, as Scott believes, twentieth-century state-guided modernization trends. However, as this historiography chapter has demonstrated, this was not always the way in which humans approached water. The works of Campbell, McCully, Chamberlain, Solomon, Shiva and Swenson demonstrate that not only are there different ways to approach water history, but also that humans’ desire to conquer nature, as well as their predisposition towards capitalistic thinking were not always the case. The

¹¹³ Alan R. Wilson, *Before the Flood* (Dunvegan: Cormorant Books, 1999), 235.

¹¹⁴ Reil Nason, *The Town that Drowned* (Fredericton: Goose Lane, 2011).

fact that earlier societies viewed rivers as mothers — givers of life — demonstrates an earlier phase in the human-water relationship that contrasts the more recent phenomenon of valuing water for its economic purposes. This earlier way of thinking was largely disrupted, however, by early societies' manipulation of water sources, which in turn, as Wittfogel argued, resulted in the centralization of power. This move towards state-controlled waterworks somewhat distanced people from natural water flows. In eighteenth-century England and France, state-controlled waterworks were increasingly the norm, with the state taking responsibility for supplying the public with clean water. Goubert describes this moment in history as the period in which water was commoditized. This transition paired with increasing state control guided twentieth-century modernization trends. While this is true of the New Brunswick Government and the NBEPC in the Mactaquac case, the opposition to the dam voiced their opinion of the waters of the St. John River in non-economic terms, which is reminiscent of the earlier phases of the human-water relationship. Thus, the fact that this non-economic manner of measuring value (historical, cultural and aesthetic significance) existed within a capitalist world concerned with modernization projects deserves our attention.

While the Mactaquac opposition is important to study because it resisted the dominant high-modernist mentality of the day, it is also significant because it was simultaneously situated within the early stages of a more environmentally-considerate human-water relationship. It is essential to note, however, that the Mactaquac opposition was less concerned about the dam's impact on the environment and was more so on its effects on their personal heritage and culture. Thus, the Mactaquac opposition is unique in

that it opposed state and popular high-modernist thought and diverged from emerging environmental arguments.

More generally, this historiographical chapter demonstrates that the changing attitudes towards water over time have also affected the historical discussions on and the approaches to humans' interactions with water. For example, the more socially- and environmentally-aware works, such as those by Shiva and McCully, are representative of a more recent attitude towards water that values it as something more than simply a commodity. Earlier works, however, such as Smith's 1971 *A History of Dams*, have been concerned with humans' engineering feats over nature. With social history becoming an accepted and frequently practiced field of historical study beginning in the 1970s, and environmental history only becoming an accepted approach in the late 1980s and 1990s, historians have become attracted to analyzing the human experience and the human experience in relation to nature. This thesis is situated within this more recent inclination towards social and environmental history. However, this work contributes something new to the field by focusing on the personal expressions of dam-opponents and on the significance of landscapes to human heritage and culture and less so on the traditionally discussed socioeconomic consequences of dams. Through this particular approach this thesis demonstrates that oppositional arguments based on the desire to preserve heritage, culture and aesthetic beauty were rooted in a long history of settlement along the St. John River.

Chapter 1: Being Swept Aside: High Modernism and the Mactaquac Dam

The fact of the matter is, you see, that progress can only be achieved by authority.¹

*When you start separating the people from their rivers what have you got?
“Bureaucracy!”²*

Under the bright sunny skies of June 22, 1968, 2,000 New Brunswick residents gathered around Premier Louis J. Robichaud as he unveiled a commemorative plaque and pushed the button that activated the third generator of the largest dam ever constructed in Canada’s Maritime Provinces — the Mactaquac Dam. For many, the 1,700 feet long and 180 feet high rock-filled dam, located just fourteen miles upstream from Fredericton, symbolized a new phase in New Brunswick’s history, one in which progress and industry replaced economic disparity. Premier Robichaud announced that all the hard work that went into the dam’s construction had made it “the perfect symbol of the spirit of determination and progress that is abroad in New Brunswick today,” and the chairman of the opening ceremony, Hon. H. Graham Crocker, exclaimed that power is “the key to progress.”³

Economically, the Maritimes had undeniably been lagging behind the rest of the nation during the era leading up to the construction of the Mactaquac Dam. In particular, New Brunswick’s average personal income in 1961 was \$1,054, while Canada’s was

¹ Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 1999), 326.

² Jack Kerouac, *On the Road* (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 148.

³ *Daily Gleaner*, 24 June 1968.

\$1,538.⁴ And with an unemployment rate of 8.9 percent in 1963 and a national rate of 7.2 percent, the region was in dire need of change and new opportunity. Many New Brunswickers — approximately 52,600 during the 1960s — left the province in search of better economic opportunities in such places as Central Canada and New England.⁵ With a population of less than 600,000 (compared to a population of 756,000 as of 2012), New Brunswick was relatively young with 57 percent of the population under twenty-five.⁶ This younger population was restricted by an economy still dependent on fishing, woodcutting, and agriculture/tenant farming, as well as lacking industrial investment, which Maurice Beaudin argues was in part due to K.C. Irving's "monopolistic concentration of industry."⁷

New Brunswick, and the Maritimes as a whole, had been dealing with a lagging economy for several decades. With the decline of the shipbuilding industry at the end of the nineteenth century and the foundering after World War I of the post-Confederation effort to establish a stable industrial sector, New Brunswick residents were struggling economically by the early-to-mid twentieth century.⁸ During the 1920s, the Maritime Rights Movement formed in response to the Eastern Provinces' decreasing influence in

⁴ Provincial Archives of New Brunswick (PANB), RS234, Jif. 1a, The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission, *Brief to The Atlantic Development Board Relating to the Supply of Electric Power in New Brunswick and the Comprehensive Development of the Resources of the St. John River Basin*, Oct. 1963.

⁵ Maurice Beaudin, "The State as the Engine of Development: Louis Robichaud and New Brunswick," in *The Robichaud Era, 1960-70: Colloquium Proceedings* (The Canadian Institute for Research on Regional Development, 2001), 90.

⁶ Beaudin, "The State as the Engine of Development: Louis Robichaud and New Brunswick," 90; Statistics Canada, "Population by Year, by Province and Territory, table 051-0001, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/101/cst01/demo02a-eng.htm> (accessed February 2, 2013).

⁷ Beaudin, "The State as the Engine of Development: Louis Robichaud and New Brunswick," 89, 90, 92.

⁸ P.D. McClelland, "The New Brunswick Economy in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Economic History* 25:4 (1965): 686-90; T.W. Acheson, "The National Policy and the Industrialization of the Maritimes, 1880-1910," *Acadiensis* 1:2 (Spring 1972): 3-28.

the Confederation and to the unfair economic policies introduced by Central Canada.⁹ According to Ernest R. Forbes, Central Canada continued to consolidate regional disparity in the Maritimes during the Second World War with the concentration of wartime industrial developments situated in Ontario and Quebec.¹⁰ Margaret Conrad notes that this disparity inspired yet another Maritimes movement — the “Atlantic Revolution” — during the 1950s.¹¹ The fact that the Atlantic Region’s average income remained below that of the rest of Canada, despite the attempts of the Atlantic Revolution, left many New Brunswickers less than optimistic about their economic future, but eager for a solution.

In addition to the economic and industrial challenges, the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission (NBEPCC) had calculated in 1963 that there would be an energy shortage within the ensuing two decades if the Maritimes did not develop more energy sources. The NBEPCC projected that the Maritimes’ total power needs would be 11 billion KWH by 1980, a 7.5 billion KWH increase from 1963.¹² New Brunswick’s response to such challenges came in the form of the proposed \$110,000,000 Mactaquac Dam project, which would employ 2,500 people and produce power for New Brunswick residents and, in particular, new industry. To ensure the success of the Mactaquac project, the project planners modeled it after the famous American Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) — a New Deal initiative. However, the TVA’s influence on the Mactaquac project was

⁹ Ernest R. Forbes, “The Origins of the Maritime Rights Movement,” *Acadiensis* 5:1 (Autumn, 1975): 54-66.

¹⁰ Ernest R. Forbes, “Consolidating Disparity: The Maritimes and the Industrialization of Canada during the Second World War,” *Acadiensis* 15:2 (Spring 1986): 3-27.

¹¹ Margaret Conrad, “The ‘Atlantic Revolution’ of the 1950s,” in *Beyond Anger and Longing: Community and Development in Atlantic Canada*, ed., Berkeley Fleming (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1988): 53-96.

¹² PANB, RS234, E5, *The Submission of the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission to the Atlantic Development Board*, 3 April 1963.

complex, and has been open to questionable historical interpretations that require reassessment

The difficulty in simply describing the Mactaquac project as being a modernization scheme modeled after the TVA is the fact that there were two TVAs by 1938. The first was the idealized multipurpose scheme developed in 1933 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his office in an attempt to foster social improvement in the Tennessee River Basin. The TVA, with Arthur E. Morgan as the intellect behind the scheme, planned to provide flood control and cheaper electricity with the construction of dams, as well as agricultural reform, services to teach residents how to improve their hygiene and diet and the building of schools and clinics. This incorporative scheme was aimed at producing a “new citizen,” one more socially and economically acceptable to the rest of the nation. The historian James C. Scott has labelled it “the most ambitious attempt in American history to improve the general welfare of millions of people.”¹³ Yet, with opposition coming from local institutions and the dismissal of Morgan, “the most thoroughgoing exponent of high modernism within TVA,” in 1938 this socially-minded scheme was replaced by a less extensive scheme of flood control and power production that became well-known for its work towards the end of the Great Depression.¹⁴ With David E. Lilienthal emerging as the TVA’s spokesperson in Morgan’s stead, the high-modernist ideals at the foundation of the TVA took on an element of political realism.¹⁵

As Scott explains,

¹³ James C. Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering: The Case of the Tennessee Valley Authority,” in *Experiencing the State*, eds. Lloyd I. Rudolph and John Kurt Jacobsen (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006) 18.

¹⁴ Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering,” 18, 28-30.

¹⁵ Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering,” 24.

[t]he high tide of TVA's comprehensive planning phase was comparatively brief, roughly from 1933 when the Act founding it was passed by Congress until 1938, when Arthur Morgan, the leading exponent of the broadest possible role for TVA was dismissed. . . Any residual hopes for broad social planning were dashed by the outbreak of the Second World War, when the TVA was valued chiefly as a supplier of electricity for the aluminum industry and later for the nuclear labs in Oak Ridges.¹⁶

Thus, the TVA moved away from social and moral concerns and emphasized national priorities, largely the economy.

In their 2010 article, "Engineering Modernity: Hydroelectric Development in New Brunswick, 1945-1970," James L. Kenny and Andrew Secord portray the idealized version of the TVA as the inspiration behind the Mactaquac project as of 1963.¹⁷

However, they argue that project planners failed wholly to follow the socially-minded TVA plan in their development of the Mactaquac project, as they neglected those directly affected by the dam. Kenny and Secord claim that because of that neglect, the Mactaquac project "bore little resemblance to the idealized TVA multipurpose development model." However, this disconnect between a socially-minded TVA and the Mactaquac project was owed to the fact that the New Brunswick government and the project planners were influenced by the second version of the TVA, the TVA that became so successful from the late 1930s onwards.

At the 1962 Conference on the Multiple Purpose Development of the St. John River held at the University of New Brunswick, the US Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Kenneth Holum, described this second version of the TVA:

TVA, which is a Federal corporation and not an Interior agency, is responsible to the President and the Congress. It constructs and operates hydro and fuel electric

¹⁶ Scott, "High Modernist Social Engineering," 20.

¹⁷ Kenny and Secord, "Engineering Modernity," 3-26.

power generating plants and electric power transmission facilities. It markets power on a wholesale basis from this system. Federally-constructed dams and reservoirs generally are of a multiple-purpose development type combining two or more purposes in a project to provide for flood control, navigation, irrigation, electric power generation, river regulation, recreation, fish and wildlife preservation, and municipal and industrial water.¹⁸

Not among the objectives listed was the establishment of health clinics, or educational institutions or services, or agricultural reform. The NBEPC's desire to construct dams on the St. John River was strikingly similar to Holum's description of the TVA's objectives: "To create head for power generation and the consequent formation of reservoirs with carefully controlled relatively constant water levels." This approach would also: allow for the development of waterborne transportation; improve the land for agricultural purposes; reduce annual flooding; provide water for irrigation; create more opportunities for game hunting and sport fishing; and develop tourist attractions.¹⁹ The education of the population around the economically-depressed Mactaquac area was not one of the purposes of the Mactaquac multipurpose project. While this was a significant component of the original TVA, the New Brunswick government restricted its conversation on education to merely acknowledging that some of the farmers forced to relocate by the dam would have to receive "further vocational training" in order to obtain replacement employment.²⁰ The government was not going to provide this training.

¹⁸ Kenneth Holum, "Lessons from Multi-Purpose River Development," *Conference on the Multiple Purpose Development of the St. John River* (Fredericton: University of New Brunswick, 1962), 23.

¹⁹ PANB, RS234, Jif. 1a, The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission, *Brief to the Atlantic Development Board Relating to the Supply of Electric Power in New Brunswick and the Comprehensive Development of the Resources of the St. John River Basin*, Oct. 1963, 2-4.

²⁰ PANB, RS234, E8a, H.G. Acres & Company Limited, *Proposal for a Planning Survey of the Area Affected by the Construction of a Dam at Mactaquac* for the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission, 6 February 1964.

Project planners were also very clear in their economic objectives regarding the Mactaquac project. NBEPC Chairman Daniel A. Riley was quoted in the *Daily Gleaner* as stating: “In New Brunswick, electrical power must be provided for a growing and expanding economy. The absence of an abundant supply of low-cost power will certainly hinder progress and present industrial development in this region.”²¹ Additionally, the provincial government’s and the NBEPC’s advocacy slogans “Power for Progress” and “Power for Industry” made it obvious that the multipurpose project was not multipurpose in regards to establishing social services for New Brunswickers. Thus, the Mactaquac project was not citizen-minded as was the original version of the TVA, but economically-oriented as was the second TVA.

Also at the 1962 UNB conference, R.E. Tweeddale (NBEPC General Manager) presented his high opinion of the TVA and his desire to follow its modernization model. The TVA that inspired Tweeddale was the second version, as he enthusiastically quoted David Lilienthal’s book, *TVA, Democracy on the March*: “It is a story of how waters once wasted and destructive have been controlled and now work night and day, creating electrical energy to lighten the burden of human drudgery....” Tweeddale went on to list all of the countries in which the TVA model was implemented, such as Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, China and Chile, and declared that: “It is time that we in Canada became aware that many of our resources are being misused.” And in regards to New Brunswick more specifically, he stated: “As was the case for the

²¹ “Mactaquac Project Forges Ahead,” *Power for Progress: Mactaquac Hydro Development, Daily Gleaner*, circa 1969, 3.

Tennessee Valley Project, so it might be for the St. John River Basin which if developed could be made an example of properly managed resources for all the world to see and to follow.”²² Thus, the TVA that inspired Mactaquac planners was, as Holum’s description reveals, focused on economic improvement and the subsequent betterment of living standards; it was not, as Kenny and Secord have argued, the citizen-focused TVA on which the Mactaquac project was modeled.

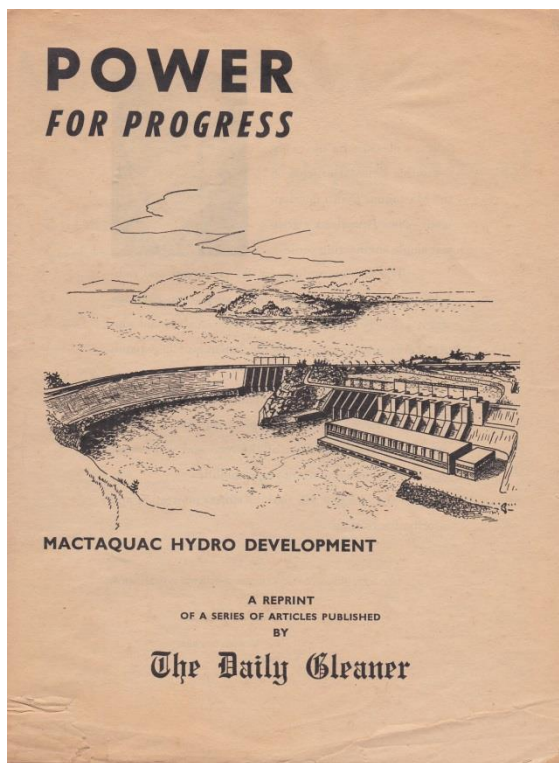


Figure 2: The *Daily Gleaner*’s collected articles on “Power for Progress” circa 1969.²³

²² R.E. Tweeddale, “Multi-Purpose Development of the St. John River Basin,” *Conference on the Multiple Purpose Development of the St. John River*, 1962, 30-7.

²³ This collection of articles is of the author’s own collection, though a copy can be found at the Harriet Irving Library in Fredericton.

Planning for the Mactaquac project had begun as early as 1943, with field studies and test drilling commencing in 1945.²⁴ Four other alternative dam sites were also considered between the 1940s and the early 1960s: the Long's Creek, McNally Ferry, Lower Mactaquac and the Mactaquac Island sites.²⁵ In 1961, all four sites were determined to be more expensive than and/or incapable of storing as much water as the Mactaquac site.²⁶ In addition to these dam sites, the feasibility and costs of alternative energy sources were considered in comparison to the Mactaquac project. Thermal, nuclear and tidal power were all estimated not only to cost more than the Mactaquac project, but also to take longer to develop and construct.²⁷ The purchasing of energy from external sources, such as the proposed Hamilton Falls (Churchill Falls) in Labrador was also considered; however, the instability of this energy source — due to the long-distance transmission — was a significant obstacle.²⁸ Therefore, by 1964, the provincial government and the NBEPC considered the Mactaquac project to be the best option for increasing New Brunswick's energy supply. And in January of 1964 Riley as NBEPC Chairman announced publicly the Commission's plans for the proposed Mactaquac Dam, which was shortly underway (land surveys and land clearing) by the end of 1964.²⁹

²⁴ Zhizhong Si, "A Theoretical Framework for Social Impact Analysis with Special Reference to Population Relocation at the Mactaquac Dam Project on the St. John River" (PhD Dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1993), 110.

²⁵ PANB, RS173 D.1, H.G. Acres & Company Limited, *Report on the Mactaquac Development, Volume 1*, for the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission, May 1961.

²⁶ PANB, RS173 D.1, H.G. Acres & Company Limited, *Report on the Mactaquac Development, Volume 1*, for the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission, May 1961.

²⁷ PANB, RS416-1964, folder 227, H.G. Acres & Company Limited Correspondence with NBEPC, September 1964.

²⁸ PANB, RS416-1964, folder 227, H.G. Acres & Company Limited correspondence with NBEPC, September 1964.

²⁹ "Mactaquac Opens Exciting Prospect," *Sentinel-Press* (Woodstock), 16 January 1964.

The main parties involved in the planning of the massive project were the government-owned NBEPC, which had been responsible for the dams in Tobique and Beechwood in 1953 and 1958; the Ontario-based engineering and management consultant, H.G. Acres & Company Limited; and two federal agencies, the Atlantic Development Board (ADB) and the Agricultural Rehabilitation Development Agency (ARDA). These agencies were responsible for feasibility studies, as well as for engineering, economic and social surveys of the project and area. However, there was much more behind the construction of the Mactaquac Dam than simply engineering feasibility reports and the desire to progress economically. The Mactaquac Dam was also a manifestation of a broader high-modernist mentality. This twentieth-century phenomenon, labelled authoritarian high modernism by James C. Scott, was essential to the development and construction of the Mactaquac Dam, and will be examined here through a detailed analysis of the arguments and mentalities manifested in the project planners' documents.

As briefly noted in the introduction, Scott's concept of authoritarian high modernism is at its most basic a theory that describes the desire of the bureaucratic powers of states to engage in social engineering. Scott describes high modernism as:

a strong, one might say muscle-bound, version of the self-confidence about scientific and technical progress, the expansion of production, the growing satisfaction of human needs, the mastery of nature (including human nature), and, above all, the rational design of social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural laws.³⁰

Thus, high modernism is the belief in the validity of organizing nature and society — largely for economic purposes — based on scientific knowledge and evaluation. In

³⁰ Scott, *Seeing like a State*, 4.

regards to the authoritarian aspect of Scott's theory, he notes that there is a particular relationship between state powers and high-modernist ideals. Scott explains that those carrying out high-modernist projects,

required state action to realize their plans. In most cases, they were powerful officials and heads of state. They tended to prefer certain forms of planning and social organization (such as huge dams, centralized communications and transportation hubs, large factories and farms, and grid cities), because these forms fit snugly into a high-modernist view and also answered their political interests as state officials. There was, to put it mildly, an elective affinity between high modernism and the interests of many state officials.³¹

In short, those in a position of authority, such as governments, are the most capable of conducting high-modernist projects, which, among other things, require large sums of capital, as well as the ability to requisition land and enforce public cooperation. Thus, as Scott argues, one would be hard pressed to find a high-modernist project that was not organized by a state authority.

In the case of Mactaquac, the New Brunswick Government, led by Liberal Premier Louis Robichaud, was responsible for making the project a reality. As Beaudin appropriately notes, when Robichaud's government came into office in 1960, it was a time in which "governments elsewhere were establishing new structures and mechanisms meant to help modernize the state, plan economic and social development, and eliminate the chronic underdevelopment of whole regions."³² The Liberal government of New Brunswick followed suit with such initiatives as its Programme of Equal Opportunity, which placed education and health care in the hands of the provincial government instead of the financially disproportionate local governments. In addition, the Robichaud

³¹ Scott, *Seeing like a State*, 4-5.

³² Beaudin, "The State as the Engine of Development: Louis Robichaud and New Brunswick," 100.

government democratized the province's industry sector by welcoming new types of development and corporations to the province and in particular to undeveloped regions of New Brunswick.³³ The Mactaquac project was the government's greatest material manifestation of its modernization initiatives. Robichaud himself explained the necessity of the project to a concerned resident: "After the most careful and exhaustive studies, it is the view of the Government that this project will substantially reduce the cost of power for industrial purposes and thus contribute to the more rapid expansion of employment opportunities and human betterment in our Province. With this in mind, it is both our duty and responsibility to proceed with the construction of these facilities without delay."³⁴ It was with this perceived necessity that the New Brunswick Government enlisted the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission and other project planners to essentially reorganize and rationalize nature and society along the St. John River.³⁵

As ascertained from the Mactaquac development reports, H.G. Acres shared these high-modernist assumptions. In a proposal to the New Brunswick ARDA Committee, the firm argued for the need to organize and standardize the natural resources in the Mactaquac area:

The forestry land should be classified according to productivity and an inventory should be made of privately held forests in terms of volume and species available to the logging, and lumbering industry. It will also be desirable to consider new management practices and forms of organization which will achieve optimum development of the forestry resource ... It is clearly desirable to raise the income and standard of living of those engaged in farming. Successful agricultural development depends on the formation of economic farm units and optimum

³³ Beaudin, "The State as the Engine of Development: Louis Robichaud and New Brunswick," 93-6.

³⁴ PANB, RS416 folder 227, Robichaud Office Records.

³⁵ Scott argues that high modernism's "most fertile social soil was to be found among planners, engineers, architects, scientists, and technicians whose skills and status it celebrated as the designers of the new order." Scott, *Seeing like a State*, 5.

utilization of soil resources, the introduction of modern farm management techniques, and suitable arrangements for financing and marketing.³⁶

This excerpt demonstrates the economic and social benefits that H.G. Acres assigned to scientifically-organized agricultural lands. It was this method of rationalization and simplification of nature — high modernism at its most basic — that state powers desired to implement.³⁷ And, as Scott notes, such fundamental high-modernist thought was a global phenomenon, to which H.G. Acres made reference in its proposal:

The region has a high degree of individuality, which appears to be a product of its sense of history, its highly distinctive architecture, the beauty of its natural setting and the personal qualities of its population. In a world that tends towards standardization, this individuality is an asset. It is one of the specific challenges of the development programme to foster economic growth in a way which permits the continuing expression, perhaps in new forms, of this “regional personality.”³⁸

Quite aware of contemporary standardization trends, H.G. Acres hoped to avoid entire conformity, and yet high-modernist ideals were too pervasive to escape. In particular, the St. John River was a resource that simply had to be harnessed and made to serve human needs.

Rivers have been manipulated for thousands of years to suit human needs; however, the twentieth century witnessed technological advancements that allowed humans to transform their rivers’ water into goods on a massive scale. Nowhere in the world was this more evident than in the Western United States under President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal administration. Just before being succeeded by Roosevelt,

³⁶ H.G. Acres and Company Limited, *The Mactaquac Regional Development Area: An Appraisal for The New Brunswick A.R.D.A Committee*, May 1964, 2.8.

³⁷ Scott, *Seeing like a State*, 91.

³⁸ H.G. Acres and Company Limited, *The Mactaquac Regional Development Area: An Appraisal for The New Brunswick A.R.D.A Committee*, May 1964, 3.5.

President Herbert Hoover characterized what would become the guiding force behind New Deal hydroelectric development: “Every drop of water that runs to the sea without yielding its full commercial returns to the nation is an economic waste.”³⁹ Even Joseph Stalin believed that “water which is allowed to enter the sea is wasted.”⁴⁰ Similar attitudes were prevalent in New Brunswick thirty years after the introduction of the New Deal. And it was such a mentality that justified the construction of the Mactaquac project. NBEPC Chairman Riley stated just before the January 1964 announcement of the dam’s construction that New Brunswick would benefit economically from tapping “the water which flows down the hundreds of miles of the St. John River and discharges wastefully in the Bay of Fundy.”⁴¹ In the minds of high modernists, wasting natural resources was not the way to improve society.

Further analysis of H.G. Acres’s and NBEPC’s Mactaquac documents provides additional examples of their desire to rationalize and commodify nature, and organize society accordingly. In a 1963 submission to the Atlantic Development Board, NBEPC stated that “[a] very large potential for hydro power exists in the province which includes the full development of the St. John River.”⁴² NBEPC’s economic aspirations were mirrored in H.G. Acres’s own reports as well. In 1964, H.G. Acres’s *The Mactaquac Regional Development Area: An Appraisal* measured the usefulness of the natural resources in the Mactaquac area in quantitative terms, suggesting that studies should include “an inventory of privately held forests in terms of total volumes and the economic

³⁹ Solomon, *Water*, 358.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Solomon, *Water*, 358.

⁴¹ “NBEPC Chairman: Cause of Power Failure under Study,” under subsection “Water Power,” *Telegraph Journal*, 9 January 1964.

⁴² *The Submission of the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission to the Atlantic Development Board*, 3 April 1963.

species available to industry.”⁴³ Furthermore, H.G. Acres viewed even the relocation of residents within an economic design: “The report represents the objectives and scope of a work program which is recommended in order to deal effectively with the relocation and re-establishment of inhabitants of the area which will be flooded, within the framework of a sound regional plan for economic development.”⁴⁴ H.G. Acres’s attitude towards the issue of relocation was that of unquestionable necessity due to the higher priority allocated to economic progress. In yet another 1964 proposal, H.G. Acres remarked that “the development of the hydro-electric potential of the St. John River at Mactaquac will have an immediate impact on the lives and liveihood [sic] of about 3,000 to 4,000 people living in the area which will be flooded by the reservoir. These people will have to relocate and change their pattern of living for the benefit of the majority of residents of New Brunswick.”⁴⁵ The “necessary improvement” of New Brunswick living standards and the economy, as acquired through the simplification and organization of natural resources, came at the expense of those living between the Mactaquac and Woodstock areas.

However, while H.G. Acres was quite steadfast in its belief that a few would have to sacrifice for the many, there were instances of social consideration. The firm acknowledged the “burden” that residents would experience due to “the loss of the land” and the importance of supporting those residents in order for them to benefit “from the

⁴³ H.G. Acres and Company Limited, *The Mactaquac Regional Development Area: An Appraisal* for The New Brunswick A.R.D.A Committee, May 1964, 6.11.

⁴⁴ H.G. Acres and Company Limited, *The Mactaquac Regional Development Area: An Appraisal for The New Brunswick A.R.D.A Committee*, May 1964, 1.

⁴⁵ PANB, RS234, E8a, H.G Acres and Company Limited, *Proposal for a Planning Survey of the Area Affected by the Construction of a Dam at Mactaquac* for The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission, 1964, page 1 of introduction.

progress and increase in standard of living brought about by the construction of the Mactaquac project.”⁴⁶ In November of 1963, Tweeddale commented during an Atlantic Development Board Ad Hoc Committee meeting that a survey of the problems associated with relocation and flooding should be under way “very soon,” as “he felt this was necessary for psychological reasons.”⁴⁷ Tweeddale also acknowledged the inadequacies of having an engineer evaluate the value of land: “He was concerned with the problem of having his engineers assessing the value of land in the area without, at the same time, being able to discuss with the people concerned the problems of their re-settlement.”⁴⁸ Thus, while project planners were guided by high-modernist mentality they demonstrated a concern for the well-being of those directly affected by the dam’s construction. Whether planners were genuinely concerned about the social implications of the dam or were simply interested in quelling dam opposition is hard to determine, yet their actions would seem to rule out the former. Kenny and Secord argue that the “utility officials were so certain of the project’s progressive nature that they planned the development largely without public consultation and dismissed local concerns as “backward thinking” or as issues that could be solved by science and technology.”⁴⁹ By implication, the provincial government and the NBEPC considered the benefits of the dam as a gift to all New Brunswickers regardless of their association with the affected area. In addition, while the project had taken on the increasingly more common Tennessee Valley Authority’s “no

⁴⁶ PANB, RS234, E8a, *H.G Acres and Company Limited, Proposal for a Planning Survey of the Area Affected by the Construction of a Dam at Mactaquac for The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission*, 1964, page 1 of introduction.

⁴⁷ PANB RS234, E.5, *Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Development of the Saint John River Basin, N.B. and Related Problems*, November 1963, 2.

⁴⁸ PANB RS234, E.5, *Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Development of the Saint John River Basin, N.B. and Related Problems*, November 1963, 2.

⁴⁹ Kenny and Secord, “Engineering Modernity,” 5.

worse off” philosophy, Zhizhong Si maintains in his PhD dissertation that this approach was purely aimed at economic considerations.⁵⁰ Another consideration is that a high-modernist mentality is simply incompatible with the implementation of any social concerns. As one H.G. Acres proposal noted, all socioeconomic factors were to be evaluated through the process of a “detailed and co-ordinated [sic] examination of facts by widely differing technical disciplines leading to the preparation of a single comprehensive plan for the re-development of the area and its resources.”⁵¹ The issue with technical surveys is that they pass over individuals’ and communities’ opinions of the modernization schemes in question. Therefore, whether planners were genuinely concerned about the social consequences caused by the construction of the Mactaquac Dam or not, or even if they were restricted by high-modernist ideals, the planners’ actions were in essence socially inconsiderate.

Furthermore, many of those who were to be affected by the dam only learned of that fact, and gained subsequent information, through the media. Two weeks after the announcement was made that the Mactaquac Dam would become a reality, the NBEPC responded to some of the public’s questions, one of which concerned those to be affected. The 900 people expected to be affected had not yet been notified by this point, stated the NBEPC, and definite answers as to when they would be were not given.⁵² Simply, the NBEPC provided specific details regarding the number of churches, graveyards and headstones that would have to be relocated. Years later, one relocatee remarked that when

⁵⁰ Si, “A Theoretical Framework,” 115.

⁵¹ PANB, RS234, E8a, H.G Acres and Company Limited, *Proposal for a Planning Survey of the Area Affected by the Construction of a Dam at Mactaquac for The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission*, 1964, page 1 of introduction.

⁵² “Some Questions and Answers about Mactaquac,” *Daily Gleaner*, 25 January 1964.

he was approached by the NBEPC, the official emphasized the dam's benefit for "future generations," leaving him no choice, but to make way for progress.⁵³ Therefore, Tweeddale's social concerns were buried beneath the reality of the NBEPC's high-modernist goals.

This mentality extended to the St. John valley's natural beauty as well. Ironically, the planners' seeming appreciation for the beauty of the St. John River aroused their desire to reconfigure that very nature into a "useful" beauty, one that would attract tourists. H.G. Acres remarked: "[T]he valley is rich in natural beauty and historical lore, and opportunities for sport fishing and hunting are excellent, but development in the field of recreation and tourism has scarcely begun."⁵⁴ The allure of tourism undoubtedly played a part in H.G. Acres's approach towards New Brunswick's environment; the aesthetic enhancement of the province's natural state, which became an aspect of the multipurpose project, was aimed at attracting tourists' dollars. Not surprisingly, this mentality was similar to that of the US Interior Secretary Stewart Udall's opinion regarding the proposed two-dam Grand Canyon project during the early 1960s. Udall commented that tourists in motorboats would be able to see the scenery of the Grand Canyon much better if there were such a reservoir.⁵⁵ Indeed, advocacy and implementation of such developments were common within the high-modernist world.

Nevertheless, there was a distinct difference between Scott's high modernism criteria and the Mactaquac case study — the important role of history. Since high

⁵³ Manzer, "Dam the Mactaquac Region," 26.

⁵⁴ H.G. Acres and Company Limited, *The Mactaquac Regional Development Area: An Appraisal for The New Brunswick A.R.D.A Committee*, 2.3.

⁵⁵ McCully, *Silenced Rivers*, 283.

modernism values science, Scott argues that there is no room for history and tradition within high-modernist logic: “First and foremost, high modernism implies a truly radical break with history and tradition. Insofar as rational thought and scientific laws could provide a single answer to every empirical question, nothing ought to be taken for granted.”⁵⁶ In regards to the Mactaquac project, however, project planners utilized history to support their development of a large dam in New Brunswick’s beloved St. John valley. In a 1963 brief to the Atlantic Development Board, the NBEPC summarized the value that water had historically, as well as its more current uses:

Historically, the progress of human civilization and the creation of material wealth in many parts of the globe have been associated closely with the names of larger rivers. This is not only because the bare existence of man depends upon a supply of good water for domestic purposes, but also because water serves so many of the essential needs of civilized society. Rivers and lakes provide unlimited opportunities for recreation, they provide an abundance of fish for the basic diet or for sport, they provide cheap waterways for travelling and for the transportation of goods, they provide water for irrigation of fertile lands and a multitude of industrial purposes, and finally many rivers can be harnessed to supply an abundance of low cost electrical energy.⁵⁷

While Scott argues that high modernism disregards history as a valuable source of societal construction, the Mactaquac example contrastingly demonstrates a type of appreciation for history. In this instance, however, water is portrayed as historically important only in relation to the economy. Thus, one may conclude that those in charge of the development of the Mactaquac project interpreted or portrayed history anachronistically so as better to serve their plans for social engineering. Instead of rejecting the “authority of history,” the Mactaquac project planners realized the

⁵⁶ Scott, *Seeing like a State*, 93.

⁵⁷ PANB, RS234, Jif. 1a, The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission, *Brief to The Atlantic Development Board Relating to the Supply of Electric Power in New Brunswick and the Comprehensive Development of the Resources of the St. John River Basin*, Oct. 1963.

importance of history — of a sort — and utilized it to justify their plans for development.⁵⁸ One NBEPC pamphlet declared that the Mactaquac used to be a “modest stream” used by aboriginal peoples, but “[n]ow ... with the decision to construct a hydroelectric development” Mactaquac would “take on a new and much greater significance ... than it ever had in the past.”⁵⁹ Another pamphlet, entitled “Prelude to Mactaquac” (Figure 3), outlined the various periods and types of settlement in the Mactaquac area, beginning with the “Indian Period.”⁶⁰ The purpose of this pamphlet was to demonstrate that progress is natural, in addition to advocating further historical discovery through the excavation of the Mactaquac site — a positive outgrowth of the dam’s construction. In addition, the establishment of King’s Landing just outside of Fredericton to preserve the Mactaquac area’s heritage demonstrated an acknowledgement of the importance of history. Though Scott argues that high modernism refuses to “recognize sources of legitimation for social practices other than those that derive from its own assumptions,” it is apparent that history was used in the Mactaquac case to help facilitate the dam’s construction.⁶¹ For those who opposed the dam, however, the historical significance of the St. John valley was being dismissed by the very parties advocating the historical significance of the Mactaquac Dam. Thus, in this respect, Scott is correct in assuming that high modernism disregards history, or at least in the Mactaquac case history had been appropriated for high-modernist purposes.

⁵⁸ Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering,” 8.

⁵⁹ PANB, RS173.G, Mactaquac pamphlets.

⁶⁰ PANB, RS173. G, Mactaquac Development Project Records, “Prelude to Mactaquac,” circa 1964.

⁶¹ Scott, “High Modernist Social Engineering,” 7-8.

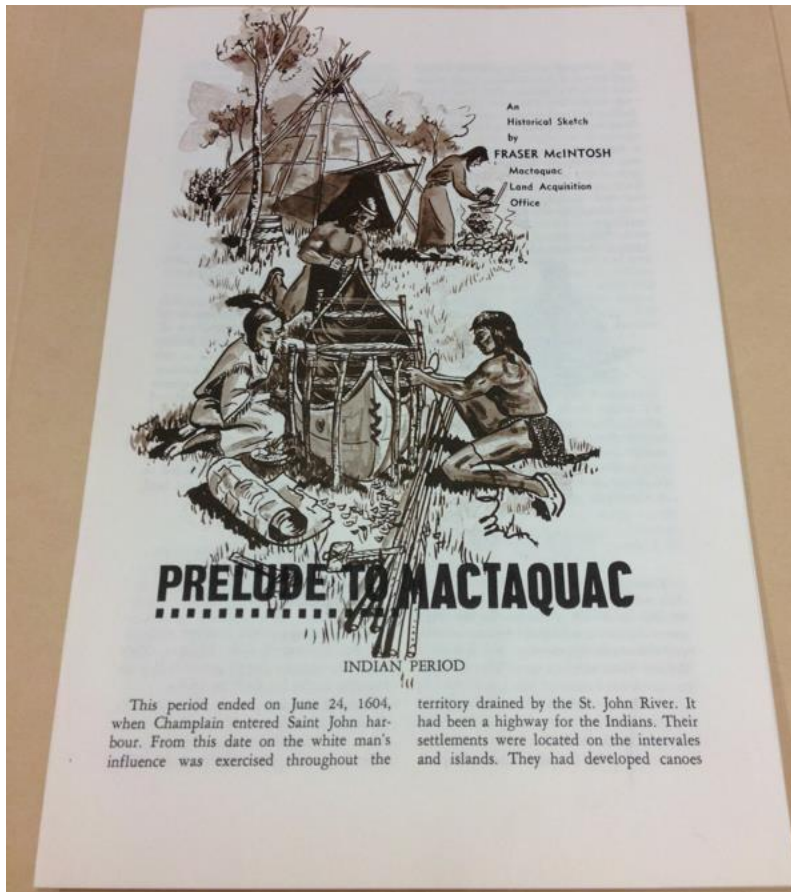


Figure 3: “Prelude to Mactaquac” circa 1964. Courtesy of the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick.⁶²

In the summer of 1968, the Mactaquac Dam made, in a sense, its own history as the largest dam ever to be constructed in the Maritimes. Indeed, the dam represented a new phase in New Brunswick’s history, a phase that, as Scott argues, consumed the whole world during the twentieth century — high modernism. State governments implemented modernization projects, such as those of the Tennessee Valley Authority in the US, in order to improve the economy and living standards in particular regions, and,

⁶² PANB, RS173. G, Mactaquac Development Project Records, “Prelude to Mactaquac,” circa 1964.

more broadly, to participate in what was increasingly a “progressive” world. The TVA in particular influenced modernization schemes around the globe, including the Mactaquac project. However, it was the second, more economically-focused version of the TVA that guided project planners at Mactaquac, rather than the more idealistic and socially-minded model of the early 1930s. The Mactaquac project’s purpose was to provide electricity for new industry, flood control and recreation and not to create a new and improved citizen along the St. John River.

By providing much of the broader context and by emphasizing the pervasiveness of high modernism, this chapter illustrates the prevailing conviction in New Brunswick — specifically among government officials and project planners — that the implementation of science was the only manner in which to progress economically and socially. Opponents of the Mactaquac Dam were confronted by this high-modernist mentality, with the added twist that history itself had been pressed into service to support the project. And as will be demonstrated in chapter three, high modernists were not sympathetic to opposing arguments, as Scott explains: “[T]hose who through retrograde ignorance refuse to yield to the scientific plan need to be educated to its benefits or else swept aside.”⁶³ The Mactaquac opposition was no exception.

⁶³ Scott, *Seeing like a State*, 94.

Chapter 2:

Acknowledging a Debt: The History and Heritage in the Mactaquac-Woodstock Area

This SUMMARY REPORT, MACTAQUAC REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, is an excellent example of man's effort to plan for a better future. Specifically, it seeks to point the way to economic progress in a rural area peopled by descendants of the pioneers and developers of new land, of whom I often think with admiration and humility, for they labored long and hard and intelligently to pass on to us a fine legacy.¹

Premier Robichaud was confident that the Mactaquac Dam and the subsequent development that it fostered was a necessary notch in New Brunswick's timeline. Progress and development had always been a part of New Brunswick's history and the Mactaquac Dam was the newest and most exciting advancement. However, the history of the pioneers and developers to which Robichaud appealed was the very history that the opposition hoped to protect by opposing the dam's construction. One opponent railed against the New Brunswick Government and the NBEPC's intention and ability to destroy valued history and natural beauty for mere power:

To me, there seems to be something radically wrong with a system that permits a few individuals by a mere stroke of the pen to alter the lives of thousands of native-born New Brunswickers and deprive them and their children of their natural heritage ... I emphatically state that the loss of valuable farm lands, fishing, historic sites and rare beauty are too high a price to pay for something that can be obtained elsewhere.²

Many local residents followed suit, opposing the construction of the Mactaquac Dam because it threatened their heritage and culture. Though deemed "sentimental" by dam-supporters, such oppositional arguments were based in a rich river valley heritage that did not translate within a high-modernist world. Thus, in order more fully to understand and

¹ Public Archives of New Brunswick (PANB) RS416 B.8.2, The New Brunswick A.R.D.A. Committee: Mactaquac Regional Development Plan Summary Report," March 1965.

² PANB RS416-1964 Folder #227, letter to Premier Robichaud from Gertrude L. Moore dated October 22, 1964.

appreciate the Mactaquac Dam opposition, it is necessary first to examine, in the words of Campbell and Summerby-Murray, the “layers of geographical, biological, and human pasts” of the area of the river valley region between Mactaquac and Woodstock.³

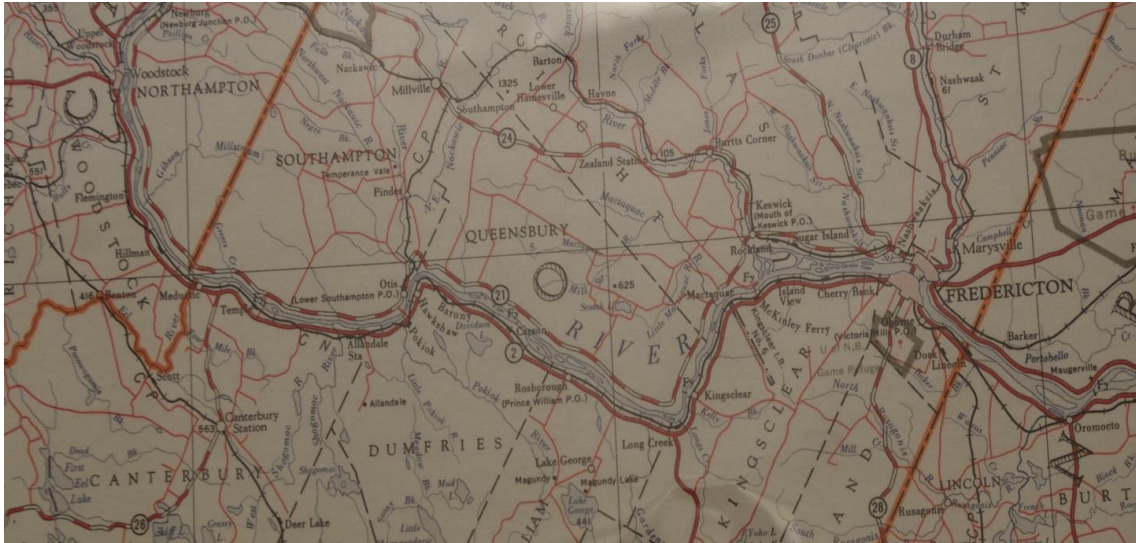


Figure 4: A 1955 map of the St. John River and surrounding area from Fredericton to Woodstock. Courtesy of the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick.⁴

As Zhizhong Si explained in his PhD dissertation, the aboriginal inhabitants of New Brunswick were the Maliseet, Mi’kmaq and Passamaquoddy.⁵ The Maliseet settled along the St. John River valley and to this day a number of Maliseet reserves are located in the river valley area. In fact, the Mactaquac stream — a tributary of the St. John — was named by the Maliseet; “Mactaquac” meaning “big branch.” The Maliseet’s history and settlement in the Mactaquac-Woodstock region resulted in their being particularly affected by the Mactaquac Dam. In fact, an old settlement at Meductic, including a

³ Campbell and Summerby-Murray, *Land and Sea*, 1.

⁴ PANB, H1-203-1955.

⁵ Si, “A Theoretical Framework for Social Impact Analysis with Special Reference to Population Relocation at the Mactaquac Dam Project on the Saint John River,” (PhD Dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1993), 124.

Maliseet cemetery, and a reserve at Lower Woodstock were flooded by the dam's headpond. Thus, the Maliseet are particularly important to the Mactaquac story.

The Meductic settlement, or Fort Medoctec, located on the west bank of the St. John River four miles above where the Eel River meets the St. John and eight miles below the town of Woodstock, was a principal Maliseet settlement during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.⁶ This river valley settlement relied on the river for travel, food and protection. Reverend W.O. Raymond noted in a 1897 paper that the Meductic settlement

guarded the eastern extremity of the famous portage, some five miles in length, by which canoes were carried in order to avoid the rapids that obstruct the lower twelve miles of Eel River. The village here was a natural rendezvous whenever anything of a warlike nature was afoot on the St. John. It formed a midway station between the great French stronghold at Quebec, and the Acadian settlements at the head of the Bay of Fundy, and it occupied a similar position as regards the Madawaska Indian village on the upper St. John, and Villebon's fort at the Nashwaak.⁷

Built before European settlement, the Meductic Fort served as protection against hostile indigenous tribes — likely the Mohawk.⁸ This location in particular was valued for its excellent game, its fertile soil, which allowed the Maliseet successfully to cultivate corn, and the abundant fish stock of sturgeon, bass and trout in the region's rivers. The St. John River and its tributaries were also essential to Maliseet travel and culture. Through the

⁶ Louis R. Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic, New Brunswick*. National Parks and Historic Sites Branch. Manuscript Report Number 123 (Department of Northern and Indian Affairs, 1969), 1.

⁷ Rev. W.O. Raymond, "The Old Meductic Fort and the Indian Chapel of Saint Jean Baptiste," paper read before the New Brunswick Historical Society (St. John: *The Daily Telegraph*), 1897, 3. Villebon's fort refers to governor of Acadia, Joseph Robinau de Villebon's, Fort Saint-Joseph or Fort Nashwaak. Villebon had relocated the capital of Acadia from Fort Jemseg upriver to Fort Nashwaak, constructing the fort in the early 1690s. Villebon believed that the upriver location would offer better protection from attack and it also placed Villebon closer to the Maliseet at Meductic. Émery le Blanc, "Robinau de Villebon, Joseph," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio.php?id_nbr=239 (accessed August 8, 2013).

⁸ Raymond, "The Old Meductic Fort," 7; Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 4.

use of canoes, the river acted as a link between the Meductic Maliseet and the various other settlements and tribes along the St. John River. Culturally and spiritually, the St. John River was of great importance to the Maliseet. In Meductic, the cemetery, which would receive especial attention during the 1960s excavations, was located on a slight elevation and was known to become an island during the spring floods.⁹ Accustomed to the seasonal floods and geography of the area, the Maliseet in Meductic buried their dead on an elevated plain along the river. Similarly, future European and Canadian river valley communities buried their dead along the St. John River, illustrating the cultural significance of the river to multiple cultures. In the 1960s, the proposed relocation and destruction of these cemeteries due to the Mactaquac project became one of the opposition's main arguments against the dam.

With French settlement slowly taking shape during the early seventeenth century, the Maliseet along the St. John River adapted to new circumstances. By the mid-seventeenth century, French fur traders were quite familiar with the northern reaches of the St. John River and the Maliseet became increasingly familiar with French and English trading posts. Located just four miles away from the mouth of the Eel River, which was a part of a major water route to New England, the Maliseet were in an ideal location to trade with English settlers in addition to French traders such as René D'Amours de Clignancour.¹⁰ D'Amours, a fur trader born in Quebec, was given the de Clignancour seigneurie in Acadia (the Maritimes, eastern Quebec and northern Maine) in 1684, which

⁹ Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 10.

¹⁰ Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 4.

included land on both banks of the St. John River from Meductic to Grand Falls.¹¹ Instead of developing the land, D'Amours preferred to trade with the indigenous inhabitants of the area.

Religious missionaries quickly followed French settlement in the Meductic area with a Recollet priest, Simon-Gérard de La Place, taking up residence in 1685.¹² As well as his missionary activities, La Place conducted a census of the Maliseet settlement during his time there.¹³ After his death in 1699, La Place was followed by Jesuit missionaries Pierre-Joseph Aubrey and Jean-Baptiste Loyard in the early eighteenth century. Under Loyard, a chapel was constructed on the site in 1717.¹⁴ Engraved in the chapel's bell was the French fleur-de-lis and the inscription "to the Malicites of the River Saint John."¹⁵ As far as it is presently known, the chapel was the first Catholic place of worship built in the territory of New Brunswick.¹⁶

During this period, and in surrounding eras, the French and the British were often at war on the continent and in the colonies. The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, which ended the War of Spanish Succession, saw the land between Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait "restored" to Britain. In addition, Acadia was partitioned with Britain acquiring mainland

¹¹ Acadia was declared a royal colony in 1670. Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 4; George MacBeth, "Damours de Clingnancour, René," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/damours_de_clingnancour_rene_2E.html (accessed June 10, 2013).

¹² Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 4.

¹³ Frédéric Gingras, "La Place, Simon-Gérard de," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/la_place_simon_gerard_de_1E.html (accessed June 10, 2013).

¹⁴ Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 5.

¹⁵ The bell inscription was translated into English by Lilian M. Beckwith Maxwell. Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 5.

¹⁶ Léon Pouliot, "Loyard, Jean-Baptiste," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/loyard_jean_baptiste_2E.html (accessed June 11, 2013).

Acadia, taking over Port-Royal.¹⁷ However, despite the treaty, tensions between the French and the English continued. In 1763, the Treaty of Paris ended the Seven Years' War with Britain largely taking possession of France's remaining colonies in North America, including French claims in what had been Acadia. It was around this time that the settlement at Meductic was believed to be abandoned.¹⁸ Raymond noted that Father Charles-François Bailly wrote in 1767 that "the last Indian at Medoctec having died, I caused the bell and other articles to be transported to Ekpahaugh [Aucpac]" located on the St. John River near Springhill, New Brunswick.¹⁹ The significance of the Meductic settlement, however, was not quickly forgotten. T.C.L. Ketchum, Mayor of Woodstock from 1911-1912, stated that "Meductic is, not only, the most historic spot in Carleton county, but one of the most historic in Maritime Canada..."²⁰ By the 1960s, however, the site's historical significance was not a particular rallying point for the opposition. This is perhaps surprising considering that the opposition was largely concerned with the disruption and destruction of the region's heritage that the dam would occasion. However, as will be made clear in the next chapter, the opposition was much more concerned with the preservation of a British heritage. As in the eighteenth century when the British came to dominate the region, so too did "Britishness" come to dominate the oppositional arguments in the 1960s.

¹⁷ Conrad and K. Hiller, *Atlantic Canada*, 64-5.

¹⁸ Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 6.

¹⁹ Raymond, "The Old Meductic Fort," 16.

²⁰ Carleton County is located in west-central New Brunswick and encompasses the municipalities of Woodstock, Florenceville-Bristol, Harland, Centreville and Bath. York County, just south of Carleton, covers the province from Fredericton to North Lake and encompasses the Mactaquac area — Kingsclear and Keswick Ridge. T.C.L Ketchum, *A Short History of Carleton County New Brunswick* (Woodstock: Sentinel Press, 1922), 8.

New Brunswick was once again shocked into a new existence with the arrival of the Loyalists during the 1780s. Almost 15,000 Loyalists arrived at the mouth of the St. John River, engulfing Acadian and aboriginal residents and in certain instances pushing them off their lands completely.²¹ Si explains that the long narrow grants of land extending from the river bank to the uplands, on which the Loyalists settled, created what is still the dominant settlement pattern today.²² Meductic was no exception and by 1790 the land had been divided into lots and claimed by the new Loyalist settlers. In addition, a school for the local Maliseet was built on the Meductic flat in 1788.²³ Raymond explained that by 1841, there were only twenty-nine aboriginal inhabitants living on or by the Meductic site. At this time, the Indian Commissioner recommended that the aboriginal residents be moved and the land broken up and leased to settlers.²⁴ With some of the Maliseet living already in the Woodstock area, the government selected Lower Woodstock for the Meductic relocatees. In 1851, the Woodstock reserve was established with the government purchasing 200 acres of land for “[p]ublic uses: that is to say, for the use of the Melicette Tribe of Indians at the Meductic... in Lieu of a Tract of land of which the said Indians have been wrongfully deprived as is alleged.”²⁵ However, by the mid-1960s, the Maliseet were once again subject to displacement, as the Lower Woodstock reserve was within the Mactaquac flood zone.

²¹ Conrad and Hiller, *Atlantic Canada*, 96.

²² Si, “A Theoretical Framework,” 127.

²³ Though somewhat uncertain, the excavations of a brick-filled cellar and various artifacts during the 1960s excavations “may have been the remains of a schoolhouse built for the Indians in 1788.” Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic*, 6.

²⁴ Raymond, “The Old Meductic Fort,” 40.

²⁵ Richard H. Bartlett, *Indian Reserves in the Atlantic Provinces of Canada*, Studies in Aboriginal Rights, no. 9 (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan Native Law Centre, 1986), 19-20.

Almost two centuries before the Woodstock reserve was faced with imminent inundation, the Loyalists had made their way up the St. John to today's Carleton County. Ketchum relates that the "first permanent white settler in Woodstock" was Benjamin P. Griffith, a military officer in a company led by Stephen DeLancey's company, along with other military and Loyalist settlers in 1784.²⁶ It appears, however, that many of DeLancey's men were not satisfied with the block of land allocated to them. Ketchum notes that: "[W]ithin a few years after the formation of New Brunswick, many of their grants became escheated or forfeited, presumably for noncompliance with governmental regulations" and were reallocated to other Loyalist settlers.²⁷ Griffiths, however, stayed in the area and is cited as "active in the first settlement of Woodstock."²⁸ Along with Griffiths, those who did settle in Woodstock, such as the English minister Frederick Dibblee, lived on narrow plots with access to a waterway, like the neighbouring Meductic plots. Within a compact area and on narrow plots, settlers were close neighbours. Ketchum notes the value of this settlement pattern: "Men and women who had been neighbors in the New England colonies, found themselves still neighbors on the banks of the St. John."²⁹ Not only were these settlers pioneers of "new" territory, but they also brought with them settlement and cultural patterns that had been influenced by New England and could be traced ultimately, perhaps with questionable accuracy, to England itself. These connections to an English heritage and what would increasingly become an

²⁶ Ketchum, *A Short History of Carleton County*, 12.

²⁷ Ketchum, *A Short History of Carleton County*, 13.

²⁸ Raymond, "Lieutenant Benjamin P. Griffith, W.O. Raymond Scrapbook at the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, <http://archives.gnb.ca/Exhibits/FortHavoc/html/Raymond48.aspx?culture=en-CA> (accessed June 12, 2013).

²⁹ Ketchum, *A Short History of Carleton County*, 15.

idealized pioneer past would be emphasized almost two centuries later during the Mactaquac Dam debate.

The Woodstock settlement grew within the first several years with log homes, taverns and rough dirt roads making their appearance. By 1803, the population had reached around 380.³⁰ Of course, within this settlement like all those along the St. John River, the river was the most important means of transportation and communication. Ketchum wrote: “Canoes and tow-boats were utilized, and in the winter the ice on the river formed a highway.”³¹ The farming of wheat, corn, oats, rye, flax and hemp supported the community and livestock. Eventually, mills emerged and timber became a particularly prosperous industry.³² With increased immigration from the British Isles in the nineteenth century and improved transportation, as well as considerable outmigration to the United States, the community slowly, but steadily grew.

With a growing community came social activities, such as holiday festivities and sport and agricultural exhibitions. Woodstock held many of its exhibitions on Island Park located on the St. John River. Originally inhabited by the Maliseet during the summers before Loyalist settlement and then later employed for farming, Island Park became a recreational location around the turn of the century.³³ The island was “a popular spot for residents and tourists, boasting a 2500-person grandstand, ball diamond, picnic area, racetrack, and other amenities. Amusement rides were often brought in. A miniature

³⁰ Ketchum, *A Short History of Carleton County*, 17.

³¹ Ketchum, *A Short History of Carleton County*, 16.

³² Ketchum, *A Short History of Carleton County*, 17, 19.

³³ “Island Park,” Canada’s Historic Places, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8540> (accessed June 12, 2013).

steam railway was designed and manufactured by local resident Albert Wort.”³⁴ The fate of Island Park came into question during the 1960s and the Mactaquac opponent, particularly those living in Woodstock, protested the loss of the historically- and culturally-significant island. Ironically, the site was recognized as a national historic site for its Maliseet, Loyalist, and cultural past in 2006, forty years after it was inundated by the Mactaquac headpond.

Almost 100 kilometres downstream from Woodstock and Island Park was the small industrial village of Jewett’s Mills. Descendants of English settlers who had settled in New England during the seventeenth century, Daniel Jewett and his family came to settle in Keswick Ridge in 1802 and shortly thereafter moved to the western bank of the Mactaquac stream.³⁵ The family established a foothold along the Mactaquac by constructing a rock and timber dam along with a saw mill and grist mill.³⁶ In a community history, *The Vanished Village*, Evelyn Gordon and Harry Grant explored the history of Jewett’s Mills and the surrounding St. John River communities and marveled at the settlers’ ingenuity and determination to survive and prosper. The authors noted: “A high degree of self-sufficiency was necessary for the pioneers to survive. The lack of dependence upon others for the essentials of life was remarkable.”³⁷ In fact, Gordon and Grant idealized the pioneers and particularly those of Jewett’s Mills. For example, they told the story of Nathaniel Jewett who in 1859 lost his arm in a saw mill accident. Despite losing a tremendous amount of blood during the boat ride to the nearest doctor in

³⁴ “Island Park,” Canada’s Historic Places, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8540> (accessed June 12, 2013).

³⁵ Evelyn Gordon and Harry Grant, *The Vanished Village* (Petheric Press Limited, 1972), 20.

³⁶ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 21.

³⁷ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 22.

Fredericton, Nathaniel was able to walk to the doctor's house. Gordon and Grant admirably noted that "Nathaniel found it impossible to carry on his former work in the mill, but no pioneer would allow even this disability to prevent his making a contribution to the family effort."³⁸ Published in the early 1970s, Gordon and Grant's "sentimental history" mirrored the emotional investment exhibited by the Mactaquac opposition in the 1960s.³⁹ Once again, it was a history that, in the eyes of the Mactaquac opposition, was largely British — in fact, largely English. The earlier indigenous and French histories might add on occasion a layer of mystery and romance, but they were not central to the historical arguments of dam opponents.

With a wool carding operation set up along with the saw and grist mills, Jewett's Mills was a small industrial village. Gordon and Grant described the bustling and growing village, with women spinning wool garments, respected blacksmiths, the establishment of a successful carriage factory around 1900, and a prosperous religious and community life. In addition, they revealed that the Maliseet of the Kingsclear reserve — established in 1792 — would at times dine with Jewett's Mills residents, and residents in turn would purchase baskets from them.⁴⁰ There had even been a small African-Canadian community in the area with a small church that at one time catered to African-Canadian families in the general Mactaquac area.⁴¹ W.A. Spray explains that with the Loyalists moving up the St. John River from Saint John, "slaves were soon found in almost all the prominent settlements such as Fredericton, Maugerville, Gagetown, Kingston, Hampton, Sussex,

³⁸ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 25.

³⁹ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, forward.

⁴⁰ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 47.

⁴¹ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 47.

Westmorland, Kingsclear, Prince William, Woodstock and St. Andrews.”⁴² By 1831, with slavery ended, there was a separate school for black children in Kingsclear.⁴³ However, by the time *The Vanished Village* was published in the 1970s, it had been many years since there was an African-Canadian community on the site. There was only a small graveyard filled with “the graves of those who died many years ago.”⁴⁴ Similarly, there was and is no longer a Jewett’s Mills, as with the filling of the Mactaquac headpond the entire village was inundated by 1967. Gordon and Grant’s community history was their response to the loss of Jewett’s Mills; it was their way of preserving their history.

The legacies of centuries of aboriginal, European and Canadian settlement along the St. John River between Mactaquac and Woodstock were significantly altered, if not destroyed, by the Mactaquac Dam. This chapter endeavors to demonstrate what kind of river-valley history the Mactaquac opposition held dear and hoped to preserve by the 1960s, as well as illustrating the aspects of local heritage that were not included in their oppositional arguments, such as — to any significant degree — Maliseet. That the opposition was more likely to protest the destruction of their European past than an aboriginal past was telling, and speaks to different interpretations of a self-consciously pioneering history. Premier Robichaud promoted the Mactaquac Dam as a continuation of the progress begun by the area’s pioneers and developers, while the Mactaquac opposition emphasized the preservation of this pioneering past. The Mactaquac case illustrates two very distinct readings of the past and of what history means to a region’s

⁴² W.A. Spray, *The Blacks in New Brunswick* (Brunswick Press, 1972), 17, 57.

⁴³ Harvey Amani Whitfield, “The Struggle over Slavery in the Maritime Colonies,” *Acadiensis* 41:2 (Summer/Autumn 2012): 17-44.

⁴⁴ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 47.

identity. On the one side, the area was grounded in the pioneers' ingenuity and a determination to prosper, something that to some, including the New Brunswick Government, was a valuable and necessary approach towards future development. On the other side, the heritage deriving from this ingenuity and determination, including material manifestations such as the Loyalist buildings and cemeteries, were accorded greater value than the continuance of change and development. The predominance of high modernism ensured that the latter was largely disregarded by project planners and the public. As Gordon and Grant noted in 1972, "We owe much to our ancestors, and it is not fashionable to acknowledge that debt."⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 14-5.

Chapter 3:
A Dreary Life? The Oppositional Arguments that Challenged the Mactaquac Dam

*So hire the men — Bill, Jim and Jack —
 And dam the river at Mactaquac.*

*You know the farmers can't pick and choose
 When Progress and Kilowatts hit the news.*

*Our heritage? — we must sink or swim,
 They've made of Progress a Provincial hymn;
 But Judas, at least, had the decency
 To hang himself from the Judas Tree!¹*

This evocative poem by Dr. George Frederick Clarke became emblematic of the oppositional sentiments confronting the New Brunswick Government, the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission and dam-supporters after the January 1964 Mactaquac Dam announcement. Clarke and others who opposed the dam were motivated by a desire to protect and preserve the St. John valley, its history, culture and natural beauty. Subsequently, oppositional arguments were deemed “sentimental” — negatively so — by dam-supporters. James L. Kenny and Andrew Secord note: “Their [the opposition] interests in the river, beyond the market value of lost property, were of a ‘sentimental nature’ and essentially of no value within the logic of the NBEPC.”² Rather, the NBEPC and many New Brunswick residents emphasized scientific figures and economic values as the logical and necessary pieces to the modernity puzzle.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the opposition to the Mactaquac Dam was situated in a period of intense high-modernist mentality and increasing environmental

¹ George Frederick Clarke’s poem in “The Maritimes: No one alters the St. John River and gets away with it. Not even Robichaud,” *Macleans Magazine*, 5 September 1964.

² Kenny and Secord, “Engineering Modernity,” 12-3.

awareness. What distinguished the Mactaquac opposition was that it not only went against the popular high-modernist mindset, but it also did not take the form of environmental activism that was, at this time, increasingly associated with the protection of natural habitats and wildlife. Despite being considered out of touch and, by some, opposed to progress, the opposition was persistent in its appeals to the government and the public. In fact, Clarke's untitled poem was not the only piece of published poetry he wrote to express his opposition to the Mactaquac Dam. In particular, his poem "The Return (after Mactaquac)" articulated the spiritual and emotional disruption that the flooding of local burial grounds would occasion.³ The ethical issue of flooding cemeteries in the area became a significant concern for the opposition, especially since it meant the disruption of a physical connection to the past, as well as to specific locations along the St. John River. Clarke's poetry, thus, reflects a personal and tender affinity for the local river valley history and way of life that was being threatened by the construction of the Mactaquac Dam.

Clarke's poetry, however, was not the only form in which his opposition appeared over the course of the dam's construction. Of Woodstock, New Brunswick, Clarke was a well-respected dentist and local author, as well as an outdoor enthusiast and vociferous Mactaquac Dam opponent. Shortly after the NBEPC announced in January its plans to construct the Mactaquac Dam, Clarke — along with his son-in-law, Ken Homer, and a local farmer, Robert J. Speer — established the organized opposition, the Association for the Preservation and Development of the St. John River in its Natural State (APDSJR). All three, and in particular, Clarke, were relentless in their appeals to the public and

³ George Frederick Clarke, "The Return (after Mactaquac)," *Daily Gleaner*, 31 January 1964.

Premier Louis J. Robichaud. The APDSJR became “a ubiquitous presence in the province’s media throughout 1964” and gathered almost 1000 names for a petition to delay the dam’s construction.⁴ Clarke, the most “prominent and articulate” anti-dam spokesperson, followed by Speer and Homer, were joined by many other New Brunswick residents eager to voice their opposition.⁵

Many of the dam’s opponents expressed their views aggressively in letters to local newspapers and to Premier Robichaud. One S.G.T. (likely Susan G. True, who was a vocal dam opponent) demanded to know why the dam was needed: “We are told and we believe, that the Mactaquac dam is not necessary, so what is the reason for building it? Is it in some way of benefit to a few despotic rulers while we the people are the dupes and victims?” She went on to argue that if the project was carried out that it would “go down in the history of New Brunswick as one of the most vile crimes ever committed against its people.”⁶ One anonymous New Brunswicker advised Robichaud that the proposed Mactaquac project would make the provincial government “as bad as any Communist government in the Iron Curtain.”⁷ Even the well-respected Clarke commented that “[w]e

⁴ Kenny and Secord, “Engineering Modernity,” 20.

⁵ Kenny and Secord, “Engineering Modernity,” 18. It is important to note that the opposition discussed in this chapter is not confined to the organized opposition, the APDSJR, but encompasses a larger range of those who opposed the construction of the Mactaquac Dam. Thus, the “opposition” simply refers to all those who voiced their opposition against the dam’s construction in letters to local newspaper editors, like *Daily Gleaner* (Fredericton), *Sentinel-Press* (Woodstock) or *North Shore Leader* (Newcastle), as well as in journals, such as *Maclean’s Magazine* and the *Atlantic Advocate*. Dam opponents also sent handwritten or typed letters of opposition to Premier Robichaud. When discussing the organized opposition, it will be referred to as the “organized opposition” or the APDSJR. The APDSJR also forwarded its opposition to local newspapers and to Premier Robichaud, and organized a formal petition. Thus, the various arguments and forms of opposition found in the local newspapers and Robichaud’s office documents (located in the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick) will be examined in this chapter.

⁶ “Letter to the Editor; Death of a River,” *Sentinel-Press*, 14 January, 1965.

⁷ PANB, RS416, folder 227.

are living under a dictatorship as ruthless as any country in the Dark Ages.”⁸ Clarke also compared the displacement of people by the dam to the expulsion of the Acadians.⁹ This was a trenchant comparison, and perhaps purposely so, considering Robichaud was the first Acadian elected Premier of New Brunswick. Clarke’s sister, Ruby M. Clarke, also wrote to Robichaud: “Should the project go through, (I do not believe it will) many a poor soul will die of a broken heart and you will be a murderer.”¹⁰ Julia M. Walker pushed the subject by asking Robichaud how much money had “been spent on brain-washing” citizens into thinking positively of the Mactaquac project.¹¹ These examples of discontent illustrate not only a dissatisfaction with the government’s decision, but also a strong emotional investment in the area and a willingness to use graphic and heightened imagery. The Mactaquac Dam threatened people’s livelihoods, heritage and culture established along the river and as a result many residents voiced their opposition vigorously and in hostile terms; the threat that the dam posed, for them, was personal.

Of particular concern to the opposition was the flooding of churches and burial grounds. The NBEPC released an estimate in January 1964 that approximately sixteen graveyards, 1,657 headstones and nine churches were to be moved or demolished.¹² These cemeteries represented most literally a historical connection to the land; not only were people’s ancestors buried in these cemeteries along the river, but one could also trace the lifespan of the various St. John River settlements by examining the dates on the headstones. As Ken Homer wrote to the *Daily Gleaner*: “There is something symbolic in

⁸ PANB, RS416, folder 226.

⁹ “Letter to the Editor: Wants Data on Mactaquac,” *Daily Gleaner*, 23, January 1964.

¹⁰ PANB, RS416-1964, folder 226.

¹¹ PANB, RS416-1964, folder 227.

¹² “Some Questions and Answers about Mactaquac,” *Daily Gleaner*, 25 January 1964.

the fact that Saint John River people built their churches and buried their dead not far from the river.”¹³ The cemeteries captured the very essence of river valley settlements; the river had been much more than simply a resource.

Residents voiced their own personal investment in the cemeteries in letters to Robichaud. In January of 1965, S.G.T. argued: “The angry condemnation of this project by a resident whose ancestors from England are buried in the Southampton Cemetery, strengthens the conviction that this is not a popular project.”¹⁴ Charlotte H. Winslow from Woodstock asked: “[H]ow in the world are they going to remove the bones from graves going back to those Loyalists who struggled to clear the land and build settlements? Are we to forget those brave people who were loyal to the British Crown?”¹⁵ S.G.T.’s and Winslow’s appeals to a British patriotism is interesting, yet not surprising. By 1964, talks about centennial celebrations of Confederation were common and the Loyalists were idealized by many Anglophone New Brunswickers. The Commonwealth status of Canada and its British past were explicitly linked to Canadians’ identity, and in this instance at least two New Brunswickers emphasized the significance of a British heritage. Thus, among the many other things that these local cemeteries represented, they were also a way in which New Brunswickers connected to a British colonial identity and past.

As noted above, George Frederick Clarke himself opposed the flooding of local cemeteries in his poem “The Return (after Mactaquac)” (see Appendix 1), which he submitted to the *Daily Gleaner* in January 1964. In it, Clarke relates the story of four spirits, a woman and her three children, trapped in the physical world as their resting

¹³ Ken Homer, “St. John River Should not be Altered,” *Daily Gleaner*, 2 April 1964.

¹⁴ Letter to the Editor; Death of a River,” *Sentinel-Press*, 14 January, 1965.

¹⁵ “Against Building the Dam,” *Daily Gleaner*, 6 February 1964.

place was flooded by the Mactaquac headpond. The poem, unsurprisingly, ends on a somber note: “And yet, in the month of June each year, / You may see her there / On the shore of the pond, so dark and deep, / Her fingers combing her long wet hair, / And children three at her knee.”¹⁶ This solemn ending embodies Clarke’s emotional and spiritual investment in the area’s churches and cemeteries, and in that context his use of poetry as a means of expressing his and his community’s cultural and personal investment in the area could be seen as fitting and meaningful. Indeed, several other New Brunswickers voiced their opposition through poetry as well, which will be further explored later in this chapter.

Interestingly, those concerned about the flooding of cemeteries and the disruption of Loyalist history largely ignored the Maliseet cemetery that was also to be flooded. The prominent Mohawk activist Kahn Tineta Horn of Caughnawaga, described by the *Daily Gleaner* as “a nationally-known champion of the Indians,” recommended the excavation of the Maliseet cemetery in Meductic and the preservation of relics in a special aboriginal museum.¹⁷ The *Gleaner* reported that Horn had observed that “it is not generally known that the old Maliseet cemetery at Meductic would be lost forever when the project goes through.”¹⁸ It was not entirely clear whether Horn meant that people were generally ignorant of the existence of the Maliseet site and, thus, were unaware that it would be flooded, or simply that the public was unaware that the dam would cause the inundation of the site. However, the few articles that did mention the Maliseet site and planned archaeological work at least indicate the latter. At this time — February 1964 — it was

¹⁶ George Frederick Clarke, “The Return (after Mactaquac),” *Daily Gleaner*, 31 January 1964.

¹⁷ “Visitor Declares Mactaquac to Flood Maliseet Cemetery,” *Daily Gleaner*, 11 February 1964.

¹⁸ “Visitor Declares Mactaquac to Flood Maliseet Cemetery,” *Daily Gleaner*, 11 February 1964.

too early to understand the extent of the Mactaquac Dam's consequences. Nevertheless, the brief and lackluster nature of later articles that discussed or even mentioned the Maliseet cemetery indicated that the inundation of the site was not of particular concern.

The *Sentinel-Press* of Woodstock carried only a few articles that referenced the archaeological work being done in Meductic. In a November 1964 issue, the *Sentinel-Press* noted that amateur archaeologist John McClemment's progress report "included some of the history of Fort Meductic and comments on the legend and lore of the Indians who made the interval the site of their gatherings and activities long before any material was recorded about the historic old Fort."¹⁹ To learn any more about the site, one must consult Raymond's 1897 "The Old Meductic Fort and the Indian Chapel of Saint Jean Baptiste." In his paper, Raymond helpfully described the location of the aboriginal site: "The site of old Fort Medoctec lies on the west bank of the St. John river about eight miles below the town of Woodstock on land now owned by A.R. Hay ... Unfortunately for the historical student the site has been so well cultivated by thrifty farmers that there now remains little to indicate the outlines of the fortifications" (see Figure 5).²⁰ However, despite the gradual disappearance of the site's existence, Fort Meductic, also known as Meductic Indian Village, was designated a national historic site of Canada in 1924 and in 1925, a wooden cross reading: "Site of Ancient Indian-French Graveyard R I P" was placed in the cemetery.²¹ Today, there is a cairn dedicated to the "Meductic Indian

¹⁹ "Historical Society Opens Fall Season.....," *Sentinel-Press*, 5 November 1964.

²⁰ Raymond, "The Old Meductic Fort," 5.

²¹ "Meductic Indian Village/ Fort Meductic National Historic Site of Canada," Canada's Historic Places, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=14831>. (accessed 31 March 2013); Louis R. Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic, New Brunswick*. National Parks and Historic Sites Branch. Manuscript Report Number 123 (Department of Northern and Indian Affairs, 1969), 9. This report does not

Village/Le Village Indien de Medoctec” located on Fort Meductic Road.²² The site’s historic status would explain why the National Historic Sites Service of the Parks Branch of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development conducted archaeological research in 1967 in addition to the NBEPC’s 1964 excavations.²³ The resulting 1969 Parks Canada report described the aboriginal cemetery — a sixty foot area of overgrown brush and trees surrounded by cultivated fields — as the “focal point of the site.”²⁴ As mentioned previously, the report noted that the area around the cemetery had been known to flood during the spring, thus, leaving the site an island.²⁵ This perhaps explains the cemetery’s particular location along the river. Despite the fascinating local and geological history found at this site, its status as a nationally-recognized historic place and, more specifically, its local relevance were rarely mentioned in New Brunswick newspapers. Letters to Premier Robichaud were also void of any discussion of the Meductic site. To judge from the lack of significance attributed to it, the Maliseet heritage had only a limited place in the non-indigenous views of the past that characterized the Mactaquac opposition, once again signifying the colonial settler identity of the opposition.

Nevertheless, in one *Atlantic Advocate* article, the General Manager of the NBEPC, R.E. Tweeddale, addressed the Meductic issue by arguing — perversely, to the opponents — that the Mactaquac Dam would actually bolster the significance of the site. He believed that the planned construction of the dam facilitated the discovery and

note if the cross was placed in the cemetery by local and/or Maliseet residents or the government, though, gathering from the provided picture it was likely the former.

²² “Meductic Indian Village/ Fort Meductic National Historic Site of Canada,” Canada’s Historical Places, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=14831>. (accessed 31 March 2013);

²³ Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic, New Brunswick*, ix. This Parks Canada report includes findings from the 1964 and 1967 excavations.

²⁴ Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic, New Brunswick*, 9.

²⁵ Caywood, *Excavations at Fort Meductic, New Brunswick*, 10.

preservation of the small amount of aboriginal material culture located at the Meductic site: “The Indian artifacts have been there for many hundreds of years ... Nothing has been done about them until now. The Mactaquac project is acting as a catalyst ... If people are so keen on it why wasn’t it done before?”²⁶ Several readers were outraged by Tweeddale’s comment and wrote to the *Atlantic Advocate*. One such reader was Clarke, who corrected Tweeddale by explaining that many aboriginal artifacts had been retrieved from the site over the last forty years. James B. Wilber of Halifax agreed: “The collection of Indian artifacts is not suddenly a 1964 project. Many interested people have sought out these historic objects for a long time and interesting collections can be viewed by anyone who wishes to see them.”²⁷ Thus, it would appear that the site did maintain a certain significance among local residents, such as Clarke, and even a broader audience including Wilber of Halifax.²⁸ This evidence makes the sparse coverage of the site in local newspapers even more striking.

²⁶ John Braddock, “Two Sides of a Dam,” *Atlantic Advocate* 54:11 (July 1964): 22.

²⁷ “Letters,” *Atlantic Advocate* 54:12 (August 1964): 12, 100.

²⁸ Clarke was very interested in local aboriginal history and wrote about it in various works. He also conducted his own excavations of the Meductic site years preceding the Mactaquac Dam announcement. “Historical Society Opens Fall Season.....,” *Sentinel-Press*, 5 November 1964.

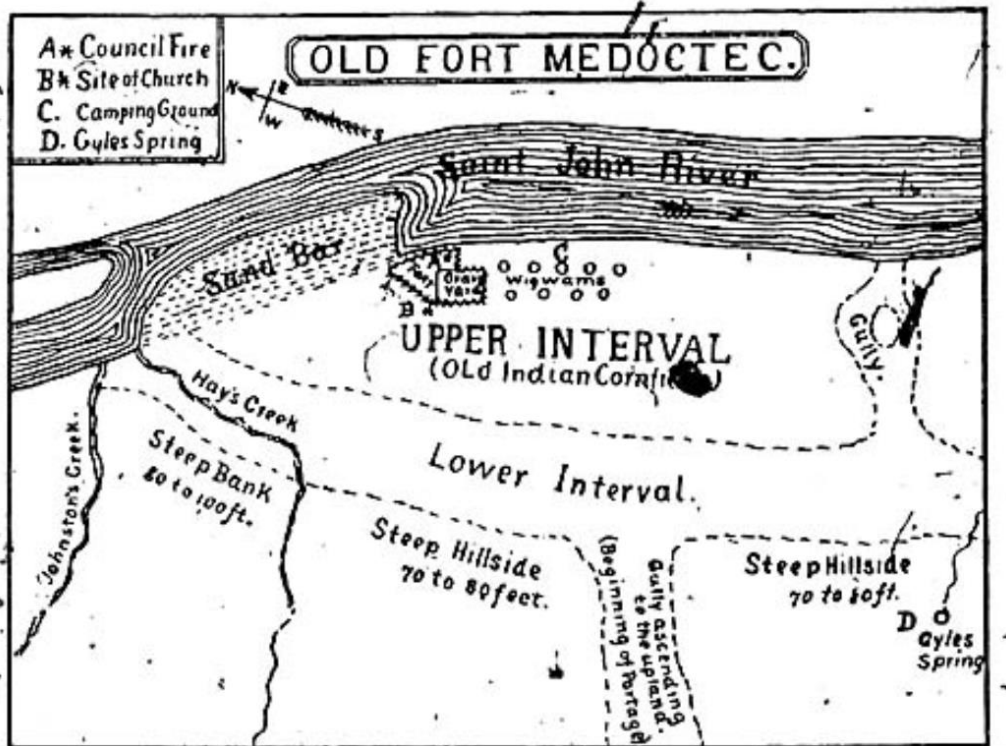


Figure 5: Map of Meductic Fort Site in Raymond's "The Old Meductic Fort and the Indian Chapel of Saint Jean Baptiste."²⁹

In her M.A. thesis, "Power for Progress: The Mactaquac Development and Regional Development Plans, 1964-2003," Katie Shawn Ferrar attempts to explain the provincial government's treatment of the aboriginal site. In describing the relevance of the Maliseet site to the provincial development scheme, Ferrar notes:

Their results [of excavation of the Meductic site] were not extensive but yielded evidence of a 1717 French mission chapel, an Indian schoolhouse from 1788, burial sites, fire pits, and various artefacts from the French contact and Loyalist periods. The excavations at Fort Meductic did not produce anything New Brunswick Museum officials considered to be significant; they had hoped to find evidence of red paint burial sites. It was therefore decided that the site would not be developed into an Indian Village tourist attraction because it, unlike the region's Loyalist descendants, had not yielded enough artefacts to provide the basis for such an establishment.³⁰

²⁹ Raymond, "The Old Meductic Fort," 6.

³⁰ Ferrar, "Power for Progress," 56.

This assessment mirrors Raymond's description: the Maliseet site had been disturbed by other settlers and farming and, thus, any substantial material record of aboriginal existence in the area was lost. However, this explanation and the general lack of coverage fits in with a broader pattern of silence regarding the indigenous heritage, even from the Maliseet on the nearby Lower Woodstock reserve. The reserve was in the relocation area, and yet only once did the *Sentinel-Press* report, in December 1965, on the relocation plan in an indigenous context. The December article merely noted the compliance of the Maliseet band in the relocation process: "The Maliseet band under Chief Oliver Polchies ... met with New Brunswick Power Commission officials on Monday evening and accepted the general principle of the relocation plan."³¹ The passage noted that the Maliseet had been given two options: to have their houses raised and a retaining wall built, or to relocate completely to higher ground a short distance away. What seems to have been an effortless negotiation may simply have been the result of inadequate or discriminatory reporting. In fact, Ferrar notes that aboriginal community members of Woodstock did voice their concern regarding the dam's impact on the fiddlehead industry. A survey was conducted and the results indicated that the industry was not as profitable as aboriginal harvesters had claimed.³² Aside from this contention, aboriginal residents were relatively silent. The lack of any letters of opposition from self-identifying aboriginal or reserve residents to Robichaud suggests that they were not politically or

³¹ "To Relocate Village," *Sentinel-Press*, 9 December 1965. The article notes that there were about seventeen houses in the reserve that were to be moved to the new location.

³² Ferrar, "Power for Progress," 79. Aboriginals claimed that the fiddlehead industry brought in approximately \$75,000 annually, while the survey determined that it only produced \$2,000 to \$4,000.

publically involved and were perhaps not as distressed by the possible consequences of the proposed dam as other residents.

However, what makes the aboriginal — in particular the Maliseet — silence more striking is the vocal role the Maliseet played in opposing government schemes in the two decades prior to the Mactaquac Dam's introduction. As Martha Walls explains, the Maliseet effectively campaigned against the federal government's plan to centralize New Brunswick reserves in the 1940s.³³ In fact, Oliver Polchies — the chief of the Maliseet reserve forced to relocate by the Mactaquac dam — was a vociferous centralization opponent.³⁴ And as Walls contends: "Strong Maliseet opposition to the scheme ... demonstrates the limits of state power as, in the face of federal machinations, the Maliseet, with some assistance from non-Native supporters mobilized against centralization. That centralization did not happen in New Brunswick was the result of this opposition."³⁵ This "strong Maliseet opposition," as Walls labels it, illustrates that the Maliseet of New Brunswick were willing to mobilize against government initiatives. Interestingly, Walls also notes that the Maliseet opposed the government's plan to centralize the St. Mary's, Woodstock and Oromocto reserves at Kingsclear because, among other reasons, the Kingsclear reserve was never recognized as a "bonafide Maliseet settlement" despite its establishment as a reserve in 1792.³⁶ The Maliseet had moved to the site after being pushed out by Europeans from another St. John River

³³ Martha Walls, "Countering the "Kingsclear blunder": Maliseet Resistance to the Kingsclear Relocation Plan, 1945-1949," *Acadiensis* 37: 1 (Winter/Spring 2008).

³⁴ Walls, "Countering the "Kingsclear blunder"," 12.

³⁵ Walls, "Countering the "Kingsclear blunder"," 4.

³⁶ Walls, "Countering the "Kingsclear blunder"," 6, 22.

settlement.³⁷ What is interesting about the Kingsclear reserve in this particular instance is that despite its being located closer to the dam site (the Mactaquac Dam itself is in Kingsclear) than the Woodstock reserve, there was no mention of the site or any Maliseet concern in newspapers or letters to Robichaud. Perhaps the site's illegitimacy as a reserve in the eyes of the Maliseet resulted in their silence in regards to this particular reserve.

In addition to the Maliseet involvement in the centralization opposition, the Tobique First Nation, along with fishing clubs, had brought lawsuits against the NBEPC for damages done to the fishery by the Beechwood and Tobique Dams built in the 1950s. Kenny and Secord explain that despite the construction of a fish ladder and elevator system, the Beechwood and Tobique Dams impeded the movement of salmon upriver. The Maliseet relied on the fishery for food and employment and furiously protested the two dams. The NBEPC eventually settled the Tobique First Nations lawsuit in 1962 at \$50,000. Come the Mactaquac project in the mid-1960s, the NBEPC believed that they could overcome any challenges to the fishery through the use of improved technology.³⁸ Tweeddale explained: "We are convinced that sports fishing on the St. John River and its tributaries will be improved, not made worse by plans which are being made jointly by the Fisheries authorities and the Commission in conjunction with the Mactaquac project."³⁹ Tweeddale's confidence did not prevent residents from fearing the impact the Mactaquac Dam would have on the fishery. Former New Brunswick resident, Iris Fish MacDonald, believed that the dam would wipe out not only the local cemeteries, but the

³⁷ Walls, "Countering the "Kingsclear blunder"," 22.

³⁸ Kenny and Secord, "*Engineering Modernity*," 10.

³⁹ Braddock, "Two Sides of a Dam," 22.

salmon fishery as well.⁴⁰ The APDSJR argued that “[i]f Mactaquac is built, regardless of artificial attempts to alleviate the situation, the law of diminishing returns will eventually reduce the St. John to the condition of Atlantic rivers along the American seaboard,” which would upset the province’s fishing economy.⁴¹ Surprisingly, at the time of the dam’s imminent construction, such concerns over the well-being of the fishery were not joined by the aboriginal voices, thus, once again leaving a silence.

However, in 2008, after twenty-five years of negotiation, the Woodstock First Nation received financial compensation from the Government of Canada for the over 2.5 acres of reserve land that had been flooded in the 1960s by the Mactaquac Dam.⁴² The government acknowledged that the 2.5 acres were flooded with no instrument ever being “issued to regularize the flooding. [And] [u]nder the Indian Act, third parties cannot flood reserve lands without such an instrument or they would then be in trespass.”⁴³ The settlement demonstrates the Maliseet’s dissatisfaction with the loss of reserve land caused by the Mactaquac Dam, and yet, it highlights the relative silence of the 1960s that much more. However, by not ascribing enough agency to the Maliseet of New Brunswick, one perhaps misses the possibility that the Maliseet believed it more beneficial to proceed with a lawsuit after the dam’s construction than participate in the opposition before and during its construction. In fact, it would not be surprising if — in regards to the

⁴⁰ PANB, RS416-1964, Folder 227, Iris Fish MacDonald letter to Robichaud.

⁴¹ PANB, RS416-1964, Folder 227, APDSJR brief to Robichaud and members of Cabinet.

⁴² Along with the 2.5 acres of land lost due to flooding caused by the Mactaquac Dam, the settlement included compensation for the “alienation in 1910 of around five acres of unsurrendered land; [t]he occupation of about half an acre of unsurrendered land between 1908 and 1910; [and] [t]he taking in 1915 for railway purposes, without payment or compensation, of an area of approximately 66 feet by 100 feet.” For these claims, the Woodstock First Nation was compensated \$2.5 million and was also given the option to purchase 10 acres of replacement land. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/aiarch/mr/nr/j-a2008/2-3023-bk-eng.asp> (accessed June 6, 2013).

⁴³ Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/aiarch/mr/nr/j-a2008/2-3023-bk-eng.asp> (accessed June 6, 2013).

Mactaquac project — the Maliseet were influenced by the Tobique First Nation's successful lawsuit against the NBEPC in 1962.

An issue about which some dam-opponents, particularly Woodstock residents as well as local media, did choose to voice their concern was the threat that the dam posed to Island Park. Though by no means as vocal about Island Park as they were about local cemeteries, opponents, nevertheless, lamented the forthcoming loss. Used for recreational activities and exhibitions for over sixty years, and even home to an airstrip, Island Park was a historically- and culturally-valued aspect of Woodstock. Initially, the NBEPC proposed that the park would be built up in order to survive the higher water level, in addition to satisfying the public's preference. However, it was quickly decided after further surveys that it would be best to relocate the park completely.⁴⁴ As Hazel M Hitchcock wrote to the *Sentinel-Press*, it was a contested decision: "What would an elephant look like without a trunk? What would Woodstock be like without the Island? Can you picture it? I can't." She went on to argue that to flood the island would be a waste, and especially a waste of new buildings and a swimming pool. Hitchcock also hoped to encourage Woodstock residents to become more assertive about their discontent over the island's inundation: "In my opinion the people of Woodstock should voice their opinions aloud... not just talk it over among themselves, and then when the Island is really gone, begin to cry over it and voice their opinions when it is too late."⁴⁵ Hitchcock's rhetoric regarding the notion of the unnatural destruction of culture and

⁴⁴ "Island Park Re-location Topic at Council Meeting," *Sentinel-Press*, 25 June 1964.

⁴⁵ "Letters to the Editor," *Sentinel-Press*, 20 August 1964.

history — an elephant without a trunk — exemplified a strain of thought that was at the root of key oppositional arguments.

Significantly, many of those who did voice their opposition were aware that their “sentimental” arguments evoked heated criticisms from dam-supporters and even those of a neutral position. This criticism contributed to how members of the opposition defined and presented their own views. Admitting to the sentimentality of her own opposition, Carolyn L. Chase of Woodstock claimed in a letter to the *Daily Gleaner*:

Letters with the slightest trace of sentiment have been jeered unmercifully, and the authors made to look like incompetent fools ... [The] reaction to sentiment has made me realize that it would be futile to protest against the building of the dam either on the basis of my own emotion or on the fact that the children of my friends who live along the river flats are having nightmares occasioned by the threat to their security.⁴⁶

Chase went on to emphasize the economic potential of the St. John valley as a historic tourist site. This turn towards an economic assessment of the St. John valley was a measured attempt to appeal to a broader audience and in particular those — the NBEPCC and New Brunswick Government — who equated value with economic advantage.

The organized opposition also attempted to ensure the preservation of the St. John River by promoting its historical value to the provincial government. In November 1964, the APDSJR requested that:

[T]he Government of New Brunswick, as a Centennial gift to the Province of New Brunswick and future generations ... declare and designate the St. John River a historic water-way, and ... proceed with a development program of the natural river which will take full advantage of its extensive historic association, its unrivaled tourist appeal, the sport potential of the Atlantic Salmon and its great capacity for Agricultural development.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ “Arguments Against Mactaquac,” *Daily Gleaner*, 18 February 1964.

⁴⁷ PANB, RS416- 1964, folder 226.

The APDSJR, like Chase, hoped that by promoting the historical development of the St. John River and its subsequent benefits to the tourism, recreational fishing, and agriculture industries that the government would reevaluate the necessity of the Mactaquac project. Members of the APDSJR also believed that the timing of the dam was quite ironic: “As we near the celebration of the anniversary of Confederation and more attention is focused upon the events of our past, it is ironic that we are planning to wipe out so much of New Brunswick history and legend by exploiting the St. John River for power.”⁴⁸ By emphasizing the hypocrisy of the New Brunswick Government’s Centennial celebrations and its proposed destruction of valued St. John River history, the APDSJR identified the opposition’s main issue with the Mactaquac Dam: state-authorized destruction of valued local river valley history and culture, as well as the aesthetic beauty of the St. John valley.

Purportedly at least, the New Brunswick Government and the NBEPC made some concession to the opposition’s desire to preserve local history by including the establishment of the Historic Village at King’s Landing in the Mactaquac multipurpose plan.⁴⁹ Though a 1976 report noted that King’s Landing was simply an aspect of “a comprehensive plan designed to make full use of all resources of the entire area,” local residents did, however, make recommendations as to which buildings and items should be incorporated into the village.⁵⁰ Interestingly, the report noted that the NBEPC had to convince the provincial government of the importance of such a development, thus, portraying the NBEPC as much more considerate than perhaps previously perceived. In

⁴⁸ PANB, RS416-1964, folder 226.

⁴⁹ King’s Landing is located in Prince William, New Brunswick about thirty kilometers southwest of Fredericton.

⁵⁰ PANB RS173.D.8, *N.B Power Participation in the Realization of the Historical Village at King’s Landing N.B.*, 23 August 1976, 1, 2.

truth, however, the NBEPC co-opted the sentimental value — the history, culture, ruralness and innocence — of the Mactaquac-Woodstock area in order to turn a profit. By establishing King's Landing, the provincial government and the NBEPC acknowledged the *economic* value of history, in this case, a relocated and altered history. In addition, the opposition's call to preserve the natural beauty of the St. John valley — though it indeed attracted tourists to the area — was considered irrelevant, since to its proponents the Mactaquac Dam would in fact improve the look of the valley.

The scenery of the St. John valley was revered by many New Brunswickers and became a particular aspect of the opposition. George F. Clarke “mourn[ed] the irreparable loss of the beauty of the river that has so many voices, so many enchantments to please the eye and evoke quiet and peaceful thoughts of the mind and soul.”⁵¹ Winslow A. MacLaughlin of Prince William claimed: “The St. John River is the most beautiful river on the North American Continent — the pride of New Brunswick.”⁵² Once again, the APDSJR attempted to promote the economic benefits of preserving the St. John River by, in this instance, pointing out the value of the valley's natural beauty: “The word “beauty” seemed to have fallen into disrepute for a time in this scientific age, but recently it has reappeared in the vocabulary of economists who have begun to realize that natural beauty has a major dollars and cents value for any region fortunate enough to possess it.”⁵³ The APDSJR's perceptive understanding of the less-than-harmonious relationship between development and preservation highlights the acknowledged pervasiveness of high-

⁵¹ “Letter to the Editor: Woodstock Author Speaks out Against what He Calls ‘The Curse of Mactaquac’,” *Daily Gleaner*, 16 January 1964.

⁵² “Letter to the Editor: Wants Mactaquac Studied,” *Daily Gleaner*, 11 February 1964.

⁵³ RS416-1964, folder 227. Brief presented to Premier Robichaud and the Cabinet by the APDSJR.

modernist thought, a mentality the opposition sought to combat. The opponents continued to voice the individual and community — sentimental — loss that the dam would cause, using poetry to do so on a number of occasions.

Poetic expressions of residents' connection to their local history and culture included Clarke's untitled poem and "The Return (after Mactaquac)," communicating the heartbreaking loss he — and many others — felt on hearing the government and NBEPC's Mactaquac Dam proposal. George A. Davis followed suit when he submitted "Spare the Valley" to the *Daily Gleaner* (see Appendix 2) in July 1964. The first stanza of Davis's poem reads: "Here are the homes of people, / Here are the graves of our dead, / Here we know peace and contentment, / For which our ancestors bled."⁵⁴ Again the issue of the disruption of graves and the dissolution of ancestral claims to the land are articulated. Davis argued that there were plenty of alternative energy sources that could be tapped into instead of constructing the dam at Mactaquac. He also called for people to rise up and unite against the destruction of their cultural landscape: "Let us rise as one man with a purpose. / Rise up and proclaim each his right, / To hold fast his heritage holy, / Let us unite in the strength of our might."⁵⁵ Interestingly, Davis equated heritage with holiness, which illustrates the emotional and even spiritual nature of the residents' connection to the area. This harkens back to the more spiritual human-nature relationship that was discussed earlier in the introduction. Though largely consumed by a high-modernist mentality, 1960s New Brunswick was not always valued according to strictly economic criteria; local residents were attached to their rich river valley history.

⁵⁴ George A. Davis, "Spare the Valley," *Daily Gleaner*, 4 July 1964.

⁵⁵ Davis, "Spare the Valley," *Daily Gleaner*, 4 July 1964.

Davis's devotion to the area's history and culture was complemented by a more "practical" poem, "Dam Bad (Appendix 3) by Fredericton's F.R. Risteen. Risteen presents the distressing possibility of the collapse of the Mactaquac Dam and the subsequent destruction that it would cause in Fredericton:

Fredericton is mostly on low-lying land,
 And that dam is too dam close at hand!
 My home is ninety-nine years old;
 Has withstood well both heat and cold,
 But it might as well be just a shack
 If the Dam does break at Mactaquac!⁵⁶

This was in fact quite a common concern. J. Bennett Macaulay of Sussex warned that the dam "could obliterate Fredericton."⁵⁷ And S.G.T. compared the dam to the Titanic when the NBEPC guaranteed the dam's safety.⁵⁸ However, Risteen chose to express his sentiments poetically, signifying a more personal relationship to his city and — in regards to his ninety-nine-year-old house — its history. Despite Fredericton being located downriver and outside of the proposed flood zone, the dam was nevertheless seen by some residents as a threat to not only human lives, but also Fredericton history. Thus, though less "sentimental," in that it did not emphasize the loss of heritage and culture in the immediate area of the flooding caused by the dam, Risteen's opposition was made sentimental by virtue of its format and its reference to material heritage.

Importantly, the significance of poetry to the Mactaquac opposition follows a longer tradition of social movement culture. As Budd Hall argues: "Perhaps second only to themes of love, poetry has a rich and nearly timeless connection to social movements,

⁵⁶ F.R. Risteen, "Dam Bad," *Daily Gleaner*, 28 February 1964.

⁵⁷ PANB, RS416-1964, Folder 226. Letter to Robichaud dated 2 March 1964.

⁵⁸ "Letters to the Editor: Mactaquac Opposed," *Daily Gleaner*, 19 February 1964.

to the protection of the weak, to the causes of hope, and as a mantra against hopelessness.”⁵⁹ More recent sociological works have also examined artistic expressions, such as music and literature, as manifestations of the culture of social movements. William G. Roy, for example, argues that “many people *doing* art, *doing* music, *doing* drama, *doing* literature, not just consuming it, is an extraordinarily powerful mode for both solidifying commitment to social movements and for helping them achieve their goals.”⁶⁰ Mactaquac poetry was one such cultural expression of a movement that conveyed, on the one hand, hopelessness and, on the other, hope for a preserved heritage and culture.

Although the opposition’s subscription to the sentimental was evident, there were also examples in local newspapers of an increasing environmental awareness in New Brunswick.⁶¹ Woodstock’s the *Sentinel-Press* ran an article on April 8, 1965 for National Wildlife Week and that year’s subject of water pollution.⁶² The article acknowledged the negative effects that such things as industrialization and urbanization had on water sources:

The mushrooming populations and rapid industrialization that followed World War II created conditions which were new and quite different. Two decades of rapid change from rural to urban living and from primary production to industrial complexity have found us poorly prepared to deal with our new problems. Sewage treatment plants designed for the relatively simple task of treating human

⁵⁹ Budd Hall, “Lyrics of the Dawn: Poetry and Social Movement,” *Conducive* 2 (June/July 2009), <http://www.conducivemag.com/2009/06/lyrics-of-the-dawn-poetry-and-social-movements/> (accessed June 1, 2013).

⁶⁰ William G. Roy, “How Social Movements Do Culture,” *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 23:2/3 (2010): 86.

⁶¹ The term sentimental in this case does not refer to the opposition negatively, but rather identifies the oppositional arguments as largely pertaining to personal and community-oriented grievances. Dam-supporters viewed the sentimental as a negative and invalid, but this author simply uses the term to identify the nature of the opposition.

⁶² “National Wildlife Week,” *Sentinel-Press*, 8 April 1965.

wastes could not be expected to cope with the hundreds of new chemical wastes which are the by-products of modern industrial production.⁶³

In addition to the promotion of water management awareness, the *Sentinel-Press* published an article the very next month on Conservation Week (May 16 to 22), discussing forest protection. Ironically, the article initially commended the aerial campaign against the spruce budworm, but then went on to claim: “Man himself is one of the worst enemies of the forest. Either willfully or by carelessness, he has been responsible for about 80 per cent [sic] of all forest fires.”⁶⁴ These conflicting notions are representative of the transitional period in which New Brunswick was becoming more environmentally aware and, yet, was still unsure about the effects of such things as pesticides. Admittedly, the New Brunswick Government was quite attached to the aerial spray and its function as a resource manager, which resulted in the program’s continuation into the 1980s. Thus, this article’s support of the aerial spray may in fact be indicative of a political bias rather than a naivety about environmental consequences. In fact, Marc J. McLaughlin noted that K.C. Irving, “the most powerful industrialist in New Brunswick,” proposed to not only continue the spraying program but to spray more of the province’s forests and — if necessary — to use stronger insecticide. Despite the political and commercial perspectives, McLaughlin also explained that the 1950s and specifically the 1960s witnessed the birth of modern environmentalism in New Brunswick.⁶⁵

Alongside the increasing environmental awareness presented in New Brunswick newspapers, came a near-veneration of electricity and progress. The *Sentinel-Press*

⁶³ “National Wildlife Week,” *Sentinel-Press*, 8 April 1965.

⁶⁴ “Conservation Week is May 16 to 22,” *Sentinel-Press*, 13 May 1965.

⁶⁵ McLaughlin, “Green Shoots,” 19, 4.

published editorials on Electrical Week in February of each year. One such editorial stated: “[T]he progress that has been made in science and technology since electricity has been made available, and the higher standard of living made possible by electricity in the home are proof that progress does depend on electricity.”⁶⁶ The next year, the commentary disagreed, but only slightly: “To say that electricity alone is responsible for this atmosphere for progress is an exaggeration. But it is an important factor. Electricity literally transforms ideas into realities ... Electricity stands and waits to do what it is bid. It is an awesome power, a power for progress.”⁶⁷ Whether directly responsible for or a tool for achieving progress, electricity was a significant modernization tool that was understandably idealized by the media and the public.

This somewhat paradoxical relationship between the ideal of modernization and energy and that of preservation was also reflected in the opposition’s own arguments. Ken Homer acknowledged the importance of progress and development, but argued that in certain instances — like that of the Mactaquac Dam — the state challenged larger issues of preservation: “It [the pro- and anti-dam debate] concerns the whole conception of preservation ... There are many cases where such a hydro project is regrettable but justified, such as the one in the Tennessee Valley. But there are others — and the Mactaquac is one — when it is not justified because the sole purpose of changing the river is only for power. Power can be obtained in other ways.”⁶⁸ The APDSJR maintained that New Brunswick’s increasing energy demands could be fulfilled through other means,

⁶⁶ “Feb. 9-15 is National Electrical Week: Adequate Wiring is Very Important,” *Sentinel-Press*, 13 February 1964.

⁶⁷ “Electrical Week February 7-13,” *Sentinel-Press*, 4 February 1965.

⁶⁸ Braddock, “Two Sides of a Dam,” 23

such as nuclear power or the power from Labrador's not-yet-built Hamilton Falls (Churchill Falls). Among the APDSJR's demands was that the Mactaquac project should be postponed pending further economic studies of the St. John River's potential if left in its natural state.⁶⁹

In addition, despite being responsible for the construction of the Beechwood Dam in the 1950s, former Premier Hugh John Flemming (1952-1960) opposed the construction of the Mactaquac Dam. Flemming worried that the dam would destroy the "heritage of the beautiful river" and argued that other options such as the proposed Passamaquoddy and Hamilton Falls projects should be thoroughly considered before construction on the Mactaquac Dam commenced.⁷⁰ C.B. Sherwood, leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, was increasingly swayed by public pressure and asked that the government consider other sources of energy.⁷¹ The St. John valley, particularly the area between Fredericton and Woodstock, which the New Brunswick Historical Society claimed contained "a tremendous amount of our history," was valued above other cultural landscapes also threatened by hydro projects.⁷² This is not surprising considering that the majority of those who favored other hydro projects were those living in the Woodstock-Fredericton area. Unfortunately for the opposition, the New Brunswick Government, the

⁶⁹ PANB, RS416-1964, Folder 226.

⁷⁰ "Alternative Power Sites," *Daily Gleaner*, 11 March 1964. Progressive Conservative, Edgar Fournier noted: "We must also not lose sight of the fact that if this large power dam is now possible it is again due to the good government of the Honourable Hugh John Flemming, who made it possible to build the Beechwood dam and carry out the expropriation of the Gatineau power plant on the Saint John River, which today provides the river flow control required at the new dam. "Made Mactaquac Possible," *Daily Gleaner*, 16 March, 1964. The Passamaquoddy project was a proposed tidal power mill in the Passamaquoddy Bay, an inlet of Fundy Bay located between Maine and New Brunswick. This project had been contemplated since the 1920s, and during the 1960s was seriously considered, but never completed.

⁷¹ Kenny and Secord, "Engineering Modernity," 21.

⁷² "Atomic Power and Mactaquac," *Daily Gleaner*, 16 March 1964.

NBEPC and many residents throughout the province were not interested in postponing progress.

In fact, in reviewing the local newspapers it becomes clear that Mactaquac supporters were almost as vocal in voicing their opinions as the opposition. Lewis E. Carr of Fredericton addressed the opposition's many suggestions and arguments, in particular, that of the preservation of the valley's scenic beauty and history:

The Mactaquac dam is an essential pillar in the progress of New Brunswick. Unless the people and government are willing to make this first big step to get New Brunswick back on the road to advancement, this province will become a museum. How long can we live off the revenues of our decrepit covered bridges, our quaint towns or scenic beauty? ... If we took the attitude that we shouldn't try to advance, we would still be wearing animal skins and living in a cave ... New Brunswick has far too much natural attraction to be marred by one, two or ten "Mactaquacs".⁷³

Stephen D. Peterson, a grade nine student from Fredericton, also weighed in, stating:

[T]here are always those who are against any new progressive action, at least it would seem such is the case in the unprosperous [sic] province of New Brunswick. Perhaps that is why it is unprosperous and few have plenty while many have not ... [A]nd as for spoiling nature's beauty, it has been proven many times that man can improve the irregularities of nature, and this is meant in no way as an offense to our Maker's plan of the universe. But we are created by God and in turn have the power bestowed upon us to create.⁷⁴

Both Fredericton residents, Carr and Peterson emphasized the necessity of progress and deemphasized the significance of preserving the aesthetic beauty of the St. John valley. It is not surprising that many dam-supporters were located outside the general Mactaquac-Woodstock area; such residents as those in Fredericton were not confronted by the inevitable loss of heritage, culture or St. John River scenery. In regards to the relocation of cemeteries and churches, C.A. Kelly, another Fredericton resident, remarked that it

⁷³ "Mactaquac and Progress," *Daily Gleaner*, 1 February 1964.

⁷⁴ "Letters to the Editor: All for Mactaquac," *Daily Gleaner*, 7 February 1964.

was “regrettable” but no worse than the thousands of “soldiers whose bodies must lie in foreign soil, some in common, and unmarked graves....”⁷⁵ Without the threat of losing one’s history and culture, those living outside the affected area were more inclined to support the dam and the progress it promised. One dam-opponent tellingly entitled a letter to the *Daily Gleaner*: “Doesn’t Fredericton Care?”⁷⁶ Many New Brunswick residents, particularly those in Fredericton justified the construction of the Mactaquac Dam by promoting human ingenuity, progress and necessary sacrifice.

Some dam-supporters were even hostile and at times quite personal in their appeals. While the oppositional arguments were largely sentimental in nature, dam-supporters’ became personal when attacking the opposition’s rationale. One Olan B. Fox argued: “Beauty of the Valley. Everyone who loves, sees beauty in what they love and everyone who has seen the St. John River has loved her. I would therefore ask Mr. Homer and those who think as he does, ‘If you cannot love the River when shes [sic] older and she’s broader, what of your wives and mothers should they grow broader when their older?’”⁷⁷ In regards to a APDSJR petition, the editor of the *Sentinel-Press* argued: “[T]he reason we will tell the signature seekers to go fly a kite is because we have weighed all the alternatives...read all the information available...and are convinced that Mactaquac is feasible and that it will do this area far more good than it will harm.”⁷⁸ Again, the Mactaquac Dam was trumpeted as the best option for the province and, at times, dam-supporters became aggressive, as well as dismissive, while voicing their

⁷⁵ “Letters to the Editor: Mactaquac Supporter,” *Daily Gleaner*, 26 February 1964.

⁷⁶ “Letters to the Editor: ‘Doesn’t Fredericton Care?’” *Daily Gleaner*, 31 March 1964.

⁷⁷ “Letter to the Editor,” *Sentinel-Press*, 16 April 1964.

⁷⁸ “We Need Mactaquac,” *Sentinel-Press*, 25 March 1964.

support for progress. E. Jones of Fredericton bluntly argued that progress in New Brunswick “cannot be halted for sentimental reasons only.”⁷⁹ And Jones was right. The NBEPC and the New Brunswick Government launched a successful information campaign that bolstered and sustained high modernist mentality within the province. The NBEPC began clearing land at the Mactaquac site in August of 1964.⁸⁰

With work intensifying on the Mactaquac site in the new year, and in likely correlation with the NBEPC and provincial government’s successful promotional campaign, oppositional arguments decreased in appearance in local newspapers. By May of 1965, letters to the editor and critical editorials were almost non-existent in the *Daily Gleaner*. In fact, by June, the *Daily Gleaner* was running a series of articles that exalted the work of the men and machines working at the site. The series celebrated the human ingenuity of the project, as well as humanizing the project by publishing stories about the individual workers, making the developments a more relatable experience. The headlines included: “An Army Travels on its Stomach — So does the Work Force at Mactaquac,” “Living in Trailer is Adventure, Fun,” “Mactaquac Challenge to Men, Machines,” “Old Tom the Horse is Change of Pace from Giant Machines,” “Mactaquac’s 9 Girls Enjoy Office Work” and “Chief Paymaster is War Amputee.”⁸¹ The *Daily Gleaner* even championed the site’s mascot — a pregnant cat named Mathilda or Mrs. Mactaquac.⁸²

⁷⁹ “Letter to the Editor: Let New Brunswick Advance,” *Daily Gleaner*, 25 February 1964.

⁸⁰ “Clearing Land for Mactaquac,” *Sentinel-Press*, 6 August 1964. In regards to land acquisition, residents were offered a monetary compensation, which the majority accepted. The few residents who did refuse had their land expropriated. Ferrar notes that after the land acquisition trouble with the Beechwood Dam, The New Brunswick Electric Power Act was modified in 1959, which prohibited residents from taking legal action against the NBEPC for the expropriation of land. Ferrar, “Power for Progress,” 76.

⁸¹ *Power for Progress: Mactaquac Hydro Development*, *Daily Gleaner*, A reprint of a series of articles, published circa 1969.

⁸² “Men of Mactaquac have Feline Mascot,” *Daily Gleaner*, 29 May 1965.

The *Sentinel-Press* also increasingly filled its pages with the everyday developments on site and less so with letters of opposition to the editor. Was this because the newspapers had joined the Mactaquac Dam promotional campaign, or was it simply because the opposition became resigned to the St. John valley's fate? Likely, it was a combination of both. By the time work intensified in 1965, newspaper editors and the opposition were both aware that it was very unlikely that the Mactaquac project would — or could — be stopped. Thus, the newspapers decisively picked a side (the *Daily Gleaner* had been quite vocal in its support for the project from the beginning) and the opposition got quiet.

Susan G. True's protests, however, continued to appear in local newspapers. Her few appeals, appearing in June and October of 1965, were more explicit in her disapproval and in her opinions of the New Brunswick Government:

The "new" New Brunswick is a mess and Mactaquac, to my mind, is a fraud. We all know that a dam on the St. John River is not needed for power — not in this day of nuclear energy and other alternatives ... A drive along the river now is a sickening experience — shades of Sodom and Gomorrah! The thought of people scurry out of their homes — they must go, or they will be forced out. The bones of our loved ones are to be taken from their graves and trundled off to another place ... [T]he powers that be would not hold up for a brief enough time to allow for a proper study of all factors. It reminds me of a tyrannical Hitler screaming at his henchmen "Is Paris burning Now?"⁸³

In October, True called the project, "The Curse of Mactaquac," and lamented the loss of "all evidence of our history."⁸⁴ Confronted by the inevitable construction of the Mactaquac Dam, and, essentially, the failure of the opposition, True became more ardent in her belief that the New Brunswick Government was a dictatorship. Whether or not her depictions of the government were accurate, progress and development were the words of

⁸³ "Letters to the Editor: Says Mactaquac Not Needed," *Daily Gleaner*, 25 June 1965.

⁸⁴ "Letters to the Editor: Mactaquac," *Daily Gleaner*, 30 October 1965.

the day and stiff opponents to defeat. However, despite the inevitability of the project, True's opposition demonstrated that what was lost during the mid-1960s as a result of the dam would not be easily forgotten.

Though the New Brunswick Government and the NBEPC prevailed in their ambitions and completed the dam in the summer of 1968, many residents did not simply forget their loss. Harry Grant of Jewett's Mills, for example, co-authored *The Vanished Village* with Evelyn Gordon in 1972 to revisit and to preserve his community's history after the village itself had been lost underneath the Mactaquac headpond. In what was labelled a "sentimental history," Grant and Gordon lamented, what many dam-opponents in 1964 and 1965 had feared, the loss of a physical connection to his heritage and culture.⁸⁵ They wrote: "[W]hat could take the place of the soil, and the little stream which had nourished them and their fathers and grandfathers? What can replace "home" with all its associations? It is too much to expect that any community, however small, will become oblivion."⁸⁶ Proud and protective of his small community established along the Mactaquac stream, Grant (with Gordon) put pen to paper and preserved, as best he could, Jewett's Mills. Though others did not undertake the writing of a history of their own communities, various residents affected by the dam maintained similar sentiments years after the dam's completion.

In his 1996 BA thesis, Mark A. Manzer revealed the lingering resentment that the dam had on those forced to relocate. He interviewed three relocated residents, one man and two women who had relocated to areas between Mactaquac and Woodstock. One of

⁸⁵ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, forward.

⁸⁶ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 13-4.

them shared his memories of finding out that he had to leave his home: “When the NB Power official or the government official ... came he told me that this process of being relocated was for the best ... for the Province of New Brunswick, and that the future generations would definitely have a better life because of what the government was trying to do ... But I don’t want to go ... I’m old and my life is here.”⁸⁷ Another resident commented on their appreciation of the area’s rural lifestyle:

The reason why my family moved here in the start was the “ruralness factor.” By this I mean it was like a small country community. You knew the people by their first names, you knew their kids and what was going on in everybody’s lives ... Now after relocation we had people living beside us who we didn’t even know ... There was a loss of community and spirit, everybody seemed to just worry about themselves....⁸⁸

The area’s unique setting was an attractive and valued quality for some residents. For others, the forced relocation and destruction of the valley resulted in the loss of historical roots and sentimental sites. One resident reminisced about the beautiful falls that were unfortunately consumed by the multipurpose project: “There’s another thing gone ... due to that dam. It was very pretty. The wife and I ... would go there when we were courting.”⁸⁹ Even thirty years later, the loss of historical and cultural connections to the land was felt by residents.

Manzer interpreted his interviewees’ responses as an example of how such economic analyses as “cost-benefit” and “quality of life”, as well as “no worse off” practices used by such project planners as the NBEPC do not consider the social aspects of culture, heritage and a sense of belonging. Manzer concluded that the dam did

⁸⁷ Manzer, “Dam the Mactaquac Region,” 26.

⁸⁸ Manzer, “Dam the Mactaquac Region,” 32.

⁸⁹ Manzer, “Dam the Mactaquac Region,” 31.

negatively affect relocated residents: “The use of monetary criteria are not appropriate for development decision making, because they do not evaluate adequately environmental effects which inturn [sic] affect people’s behaviour and culture ... [and thus,] it is imperative to include possible social impacts into the development equation.”⁹⁰ Aside from Manzer’s commentary on the failures of economic analyses, his work demonstrates the lasting social effects of the Mactaquac Dam. The fact that there was still some resentment among relocated residents illustrates the personal and emotional connection to the land that had in the 1960s driven the opposition.

Recently, the Mactaquac Dam has incited new voices regarding its and the area’s future. Residents in the Mactaquac region have taken an interesting position in regards to the possibility of the dam’s decommissioning. As geologist James Whitehead explained: “The concrete sections of the dam are suffering from alkali-aggregate damage[, which] results in volume expansion and cracking ... Despite an original expected lifespan of one hundred years, a NB Power Commission engineering report contracted in 1999 estimated the remaining lifespan to be 15-30 years[.]”⁹¹ And last year CTV reported: “When it was built back in the 1960s, New Brunswick’s Mactaquac hydro dam was supposed to last 100 years, but as it is now, it won’t reach 70 years.”⁹² NB Power (formerly NBEPC) and the New Brunswick Government are faced with rebuilding, refurbishing or

⁹⁰ Manzer, “Dam the Mactaquac Region,” 48, 1

⁹¹ James Whitehead, “Geology of the Fredericton-Mactaquac Dam Area.” In *Geology of New Brunswick, New England Intercollegiate Geological Conference Guidebook*, 93rd Annual Meeting, New Brunswick. Edited by R.J. Pickerill, and D.L. Lentz, 2001, AI-6.

⁹² “N.B. Gov’t Working to Determine Future of Mactaquac Dam,” CTV News, 27 August 2012, <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-b-gov-t-working-to-determine-future-of-mactaquac-dam-1.932170> (accessed 4 May 2013).

decommissioning the dam, each of which would cost an estimated three billion dollars.⁹³ This has raised residents' concerns over the possible decommissioning of the dam and the loss of waterfront property, tourism and a valued ecosystem.⁹⁴ One such resident commented on the consequences of the decommissioning of Mactaquac Dam: "It would not only destroy our community, it would destroy the valuable habitat, the ecosystem that's been in place now, tourism, our beautiful Mactaquac Parks sits here, which was built on expropriated land."⁹⁵ Despite being relocated with her family by the dam in the 1960s, this resident hopes to move on from the past with the dam intact: "We had to move our house ... They had to give up their livelihood. I mean, the mills and things that was a whole culture. The church was burned, I mean farms were lost and so why can't we just leave that behind us?"⁹⁶ This resident, having experienced the separation at a young age from her family's and her community's culture, lifestyle and heritage desired to avoid similar developments. As CTV reported, the fight against the construction of the Mactaquac Dam has "come full circle."⁹⁷

What will become of the dam is still uncertain. However, with the large dam era a relative thing of the past, humans are currently — and will continue to be — confronted with the deterioration and subsequent decommissioning of dams all over the world. This

⁹³ "N.B. Gov't Working to Determine Future of Mactaquac Dam," CTV News, 27 August 2012, <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-b-gov-t-working-to-determine-future-of-mactaquac-dam-1.932170> (accessed 4 May 2013).

⁹⁴ "Mactaquac Dam's Future Speaks Debate: World Wildlife Federation is Studying the St. John River's Health," CBC News, 22 January 2013, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/story/2013/01/22/nb-mactaquac-future-1039.html> (accessed 4 May 2013).

⁹⁵ N.B. Group Fighting to Save the Mactaquac Dam," CTV News, 11 September 2012, <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-b-group-fighting-to-save-the-mactaquac-dam-1.951985> (accessed 4 May 2013).

⁹⁶ N.B. Group Fighting to Save the Mactaquac Dam," CTV News, 11 September 2012, <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-b-group-fighting-to-save-the-mactaquac-dam-1.951985> (accessed 4 May 2013).

⁹⁷ N.B. Group Fighting to Save the Mactaquac Dam," CTV News, 11 September 2012, <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-b-group-fighting-to-save-the-mactaquac-dam-1.951985> (accessed 4 May 2013).

thesis is not the place to discuss or guess the human reaction to such developments; however, over the next couple of decades the Mactaquac Dam will become a case study for how humans view and deal with a large dam at the end of its lifespan. By understanding the opposition to the construction of the Mactaquac Dam, the opposition to the decommissioning of the dam can be better appreciated. However, that is not the sole contribution of this research. Rather this thesis addresses questions left unanswered by previous literature that focused largely on the political and economic reasons for the dam and, to a certain extent, on the socioeconomic consequences of the dam. The voices of the opposition have largely been excluded from this history. By paying closer attention to the opposition, one is able to better understand how individuals related to their local heritage and culture through a specific physical landscape and how such a relationship shaped the nature of the opposition. As R.E. Balch, author of *The Ecological Viewpoint*, noted, the St. John River “gives the Province its character and embodies most of its history.”⁹⁸ Though deemed, in a very negative sense, sentimental, there was substance to and value in such oppositional arguments. As T.C.L. Ketchum believed: [L]ife, in many ways, dreary enough, would be infinitely more dreary, without sentiment.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ “Letters to the Editor: Defends River Association,” *Daily Gleaner*, 22 December 1964.

⁹⁹ Ketchum, *A Short History of Carleton County New Brunswick*, 13.

Conclusion:**Defining Stories: Concluding Remarks on Identity, Opposition and the Environment**

[W]hat could take the place of the soil, and the little stream, which had nourished them and their fathers and grandfathers? What can replace “home” with all its associations? It is too much to expect that any community, however small, will welcome oblivion.¹

By paying closer attention to the voices of the Mactaquac opposition, this thesis has emphasized the historical and cultural connections that existed between St. John River valley residents and the landscape. These connections influenced how residents viewed and reacted to the proposed Mactaquac project. Though the organized opposition highlighted the negative economic consequences of the project in newspapers and letters to Premier Robichaud, the opposition as a whole was mainly concerned with the destruction of the Mactaquac area’s cemeteries, historical homes, natural and historical landmarks, and communities. Due to their explicitly emotional connection to the area, dam opponents were, at times, quite aggressive in their appeals. Some compared the planned project to communist schemes and argued that Robichaud’s government was akin to a dictatorship. Such aggressive expressions of opposition were indicative of the intimate relationship between residents — largely those in the affected region (Mactaquac-Woodstock area) — and the St. John valley landscape.

The valley from Mactaquac to Woodstock embodied the history of British and, acknowledged to a lesser extent by the opponents, French and aboriginal settlement. The opposition identified British history as integral to regional identity and, as a result, the preservation of such physical sites as Loyalist cemeteries was emphasized by various individuals, as well as the APDSJR. Such arguments, alongside calls for the preservation

¹ Gordon and Grant, *The Vanished Village*, 13-4.

of the natural beauty of the St. John valley, were deemed sentimental by dam supporters. Situated within a time of intense high modernist thought, the NBEPC and the New Brunswick Government launched a successful campaign in favor of the dam's construction that — alongside the NBEPC's increasing monopoly over the province's power resources — resulted in, as Kenny and Secord argue, the opposition's failure.² However, regardless of this perceived failure, the significance of the opposition is its commentary on the value of local heritage and culture as contained within the physical setting of river valley settlements. The landmarks and cultural practices configured around the St. John River were not only practical, but also meaningful. That is, the St. John River was not only a resource, but was in fact integral to the formation of lifestyles and beliefs of the river valley residents. The sentimental nature of the oppositional arguments demonstrates just that.

With an attachment to and a sense of identification with a British past, the threat the dam posed to the Meductic site, and the necessary displacement of the Lower Woodstock Maliseet reserve, were not given much media attention. However, also absent from the scene were letters to local newspapers and to Premier Robichaud from self-identifying reserve residents protesting the dam's construction. Though it is not surprising that white, Anglophone New Brunswickers were less likely to protest the protection of aboriginal heritage and culture in the Mactaquac case, it is striking that the area's aboriginal residents, in particular the Maliseet, were also silent. This is perhaps due to discriminatory reporting on the part of the local newspapers and/or a sense of helplessness and ineffectualness among aboriginal peoples. However, previous examples

² Kenny and Secord, "Engineering Modernity," 26.

of Maliseet opposition to government initiatives, such as reserve centralization in the 1940s and the Beechwood and Tobique dams in the 1950s, illustrate that there was in fact a sense of and potential for political activism among the Maliseet. Thus, it is unlikely that the Maliseet were indifferent to the changes and loss of land brought about by the Mactaquac project. This was made evident in 2008 when, after twenty-five years of negotiations, the Government of Canada settled with the Woodstock First Nation for financial compensation for land flooded by the dam. This settlement emphasizes the dissatisfaction among the Maliseet caused by the dam's construction, but also, perhaps, a measured approach towards state modernization schemes on their part. The Maliseet may have determined that relocation, followed by a later lawsuit against the government would be more beneficial than joining the opposition. Nevertheless, the absence of any aboriginal opposition in newspapers and letters to the premier at the time of the dam's proposal and construction draws further attention to the Mactaquac opposition's preoccupation with a British heritage.

In particular, Loyalist heritage and its physical landmarks were to be guarded and preserved, as they contributed to many Anglophone New Brunswickers' sense of cultural and historical identity, and — more specifically — a colonial settler identity. The opposition made clear its identification with a British sense of ownership of the land — and therefore the history and culture — between Mactaquac and Woodstock. Patrick Wolfe has recently commented on the importance of land to the settler identity, stating: “As the settler takes over the territory, so does the territory take over the settler—hence

the distinctive vascular condition of having the land run in one's blood.”³ In New Brunswick, the Mactaquac case served as an opportunity for residents to express the importance of a British colonial past and its preservation for a future identity. As a result, the opposition wanted to protect and preserve the area's pioneering past from the transformative and, at times, destructive progress of the day. The NBEPC and the New Brunswick Government, on the other hand, interpreted and valued the Mactaquac-Woodstock regional history quite differently. While all could agree on their admiration for a pioneering past, the NBEPC and the provincial government viewed this historical period as simply the beginning of New Brunswick's sense of determination and desire to progress that should continue — it was argued — into the 1960s, and, thus, supported the spirit of the Mactaquac project. To the parties involved in the construction of the dam, looking back on the region's past simply illustrated how the area had continued to progress over time. From the nomadic aboriginal peoples to the sedentary, farming existence of Loyalist settlers; from river-based travel to the Trans-Canada Highway; and from coal-powered homes and industry to the increasing availability of electrical power, the NBEPC and the provincial government viewed the Mactaquac project as yet another logical step towards a more self-sufficient and progressive province. Therefore, the NBEPC and the provincial government also identified with a British colonial past; however, rather than working towards preserving its historical roots, they valued its continued application.

³ Patrick Wolfe, “The Settler Complex: An Introduction,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 37:2 (2013): 1.

This difference in historical interpretation helps to answer a question posed at the beginning of this thesis: do deep historical connections to a specific landscape influence humans' reactions to modernization schemes? In the Mactaquac case, these connections did indeed shape the type of reaction the proposed dam received. The opposition largely consisted of residents directly affected by the project, whether that entailed the loss or relocation of their home, their community or of a neighbouring community. As a result, the opposition was at times extremely hostile to and defensive towards the proposed project and project planners, thus, demonstrating the personal and emotional investment in the river valley and its communities. Such a reaction was contrasted by project planners' own interpretation and use of the region's history, and this was due in large part to planners' detachment from the particular areas being threatened by the dam. In addition, high modernist thought informed the planners' interpretation of history. Contrary to what Scott has argued (that high modernism discounts social customs, such as history), the Mactaquac case demonstrated that the project planners in fact maintained their own version of history, which had been influenced by their own high-modernist beliefs and goals, which they in turn disseminated among the public. Their high-modernist view of history also allowed for the co-option of the Mactaquac-Woodstock regional history. King's Landing is such an example of the economization of the sentimental history valued and contained within the region.

In this way, the Mactaquac case highlights certain variants from Scott's definition of high modernism, while also affirming some of the crucial aspects of his theory. The Mactaquac project's connection to the Tennessee Valley Authority, for example, emphasizes its high-modernist characteristics. As the quintessential high-modernist

initiative, the TVA was dedicated to the reorganization of nature and society through the implementation of science and technology in the interests of social engineering. The Mactaquac project was no different. By the 1960s, New Brunswick was believed to stand in need of initiative and economic stimulus. Of the two TVA models, the second, more economically-oriented model had become the more popular modernization scheme after 1938. It was concerned with multi-purpose projects that provided for flood and navigation control, irrigation, recreation, electric power generation, and fish and wildlife preservation rather than creating a “new citizen.” The Mactaquac project was similarly dedicated to generating power for industry, providing flood control and creating or enhancing recreational spaces. Contrary to Kenny and Secord’s assessment that the Mactaquac project was modeled after the first, more socially-minded TVA, the Mactaquac planners in actuality were more concerned with industry than with the residents within the flood and dam zone.

The lagging New Brunswick economy, paired with high-modernist thought, made the Mactaquac project a much anticipated scheme by many New Brunswickers and a difficult project to oppose successfully. The opponents were aware that their sentimental — or as McKay would define it, antimodernist — arguments were falling on deaf ears. As a result, the APDSJR argued strategically that the area would be much more profitable if the landscape and local history were left in their natural states. The St. John valley was already a tourist attraction, especially for fishermen, and the APDSJR hoped that the provincial government and the NBEPC would see the economic potential in preserving the history of the area. Project planners agreed that there were economic benefits to preserving the area’s history, and thus the establishment of Kings Landing. The NBEPC

selected and preserved various historic buildings and structures from the flood zone and created a historic settlement park for tourists. In this way, project planners did take advantage of the area's physical history as the APDSJR suggested, but more so in a high-modernist manner that required a reorganization and simplification of the land and society. Unfortunately for the opposition, the historical and cultural value of landscape was not of particular concern to the high modernists of the day. Once again, we see that project planners were aware of and attentive to the region's history; however, they interpreted and appreciated that history quite differently than residents.

In fact, the residents' intimate connection to the landscape, particularly to the St. John River itself, was reminiscent of the spiritual relationships between humans and water in past societies. In a way argued by some scholars to have been a characteristic of the continuing human-water relationship, residents threatened by the Mactaquac Dam exhibited a spiritual connection to the river valley, which they expressed through various forms, in particular poetry. The disruption of graves and of the physical connection to the past and to the land was a considerable concern for residents. The area and its history were holy and, therefore, warranted protection. However, such a concept was incompatible with high-modernist thinking. As a result, the opposition went against the popular thought of the day, but, interestingly, it also did not follow the emerging environmental movement that emphasized the protection of nature and wildlife for its own sake. Aside from the risks to the fishery, the Mactaquac opposition was much more concerned about the environment in its relation to human memory and identity. The Mactaquac case, therefore, sheds light on a different aspect of environmental activism focused on humans as the affected rather than the wildlife and wilderness.

The Mactaquac Dam continued and, in fact, continues to generate concern and, at times, resentment despite having been completed almost fifty years ago. As Manzer illustrated in his 1996 thesis, almost thirty years after the dam's construction, residents in the Mactaquac region were still bitter and saddened by the loss they suffered. Once again, the destruction of the St. John valley's natural beauty and of a cultural and historical connection to the landscape was emphasized. Most recently, with the dam's lifetime shortened considerably by an alkali-aggregate reaction in the concrete, issues of decommissioning or reconstruction have caused debate in New Brunswick. There are those who wish to see the Mactaquac region restored to its former natural state; there are others who hope that the dam, through either repairs or reconstruction, continues to provide the province with electrical energy and recreation; and, there are those who were forced to relocate in the 1960s and who hope to avoid yet another forced relocation. Former residents and descendants of Jewett's Mills are particularly worried. After being forced to relocate, residents spent years reestablishing themselves along the altered St. John River and new headpond. Thus, the Mactaquac experience is ever-present in their minds and it has become a part of their historical and cultural identity.

As the Mactaquac Dam's future becomes clearer, it will be interesting to note the voices of support and opposition that emerge, especially in comparison to the 1960s opposition. Up until the present time, dam historiography has dealt largely with the construction of a dam and/or the socioeconomic consequences caused by a dam. However, with the number of decommissioned dams increasing, these histories have to be reexamined. This thesis, it is hoped, will provide a foundation for such future reevaluations regarding the Mactaquac case. First and foremost, however, the thesis

demonstrates the importance of the landscape and the environment to community and individual identities. In regards to the Mactaquac project, these identities informed and shaped the opposition. As Campbell and Summerby-Murray argue, “place attachment most often motivates environmental concern and action.”⁴ Residents’ attachment to the British heritage and natural beauty of the area dominated the oppositional arguments. It is this interaction between identities and the environment that is vital to the examination and understanding of environmental activism, and in particular anti-dam movements.

Alterations to the environment, especially large projects such as dams, usually affect humans in one manner or another. Thus, the human experience and their “defining stories” are essential to the study of environmental activism and history.⁵

⁴ Campbell and Summerby-Murray, *Land and Sea*, 5.

⁵ Campbell and Summerby-Murray, *Land and Sea*, 2.

Appendix

Appendix 1

The Return (after Mactaquac)

She sat beside her children three
 On the sloping bank near the water's edge,
 And combed wet hair from her tired eyes,
 Her pale sad face, and said:
 "The water is deep, and cold, and brown,
 Children dear, I can search no more
 For the small white church
 With its sweet-toned bell,
 In the steeple high with its golden cross,
 And four neat mounds in a row,
 The stones with your names etched deep
 In the little churchyard plot.["]

"Listen, darlings, I'll sing you to sleep
 With a lovesome hymn we sang of old:
 Don't moan, don't sigh, don't weep,
 Or you'll break my heart:
 Mayhap I lost my way,
 And this isn't the Valley we knew lang-syne:
 Perchance it lies beyond those hills
 On the farther shore,
 Where we'll find the church
 With its cross of gold, and sweet-toned bell,
 And our little churchyard plot.
 Hush, my children, weep no more — hush — hush."
 Thus she spake.

And yet, in the month of June each year,
 You may see her there
 On the shore of the pond, so dark and deep,
 Her fingers combing her long wet hair,
 And children three at her knee.

George Frederick Clarke (Woodstock, N.B.)
Daily Gleaner 31 January 1964

Appendix 2

Spare the Valley

Here are the homes of people,
Here are the graves of our dead,
Here we know peace and contentment,
For which our ancestors bled.

Here in this beautiful valley,
Our River flows to the sea,
The St. John, world famed and renowned,
Beloved of you and of me,
Shall we let Mactaquac Dam despoil us,
And desecrate graves that are dear?

Shall we let our hearthstones be ruined,
Our lives drenched in sorrow and fear?
Let us rise as one man with a purpose,
Rise up and proclaim each his right,
To hold fast his heritage holy,
Let us unite in the strength of our might.

The alternatives for power are plenty,
To our shores to the east and the west,
So leave us our farms and our good earth,
Where life can be lived at its best.
For here are the homes of the living,
Here are the graves of our dead,
Here we have peace and contentment,
With freedom from danger and dread.

Let us call on forces of reason,
May our leaders get on the right track,
To guard the best interest of New Brunswick,
And to save us from dreaded MACTAQUAC.

George A. Davis
Daily Gleaner, 4 July 1964

Appendix 3

Dam Bad!

It is nineteen hundred and seventy-three —
 Things are not the same as they used to be —
 We are living in Fredericton, I'd say,
 Dangerously from day to day,
 And it's all because, Alas and Alack!
 A dam was built at Mactaquac.

There is a deep, disturbing fear
 Of a disastrous flood — it could be near.
 Engineers say the danger is slight,
 The dam's well built — They may be right —
 A thousand to one it will not break,
 But a chance we'll dam well have to take!

Fredericton is mostly on low-lying land,
 And that dam is too dam close at hand!
 My home is ninety-nine years old;
 Has withstood well both heat and cold,
 But it might as well be just a shack
 If the Dam does break at Mactaquac!

That goes for the house, and as for me,
 No doubt I'd be carried out to sea!
 Lots of others, I'll venture to state
 Would likely share a similar fate.

As I write these lines — and ponder more
 Suddenly I hear a rushing roar!
 I open the door to look outside—
 I see a tremendous approaching tide!
 Good-bye, Farewell! Alas! Alack!
 The dam just broke at Mactaquac.

F.R. Risteen (Fredericton, NB)
Daily Gleaner, 28 February 1964

Appendix 4

Untitled

So hire the men — Bill, Jim and Jack —
And dam the river at Mactaquac.

You know the farmers can't pick and choose
When Progress and Kilowatts hit the news.

Our heritage? — we must sink or swim,
They've made of Progress a Provincial hymn;
But Judas, at least, had the decency
To hang himself from the Judas Tree!

George Frederick Clarke (Woodstock, NB)
Maclean's Magazine, 5 September 1964

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