

Liberty, Equality and Tourism: D. C. Harvey, Prince Edward Island, and the Power of Tourism/History, 1931-1956

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Daniel Cobb Harvey (1886-1965) was one of the most renowned of the twentiethcentury historians of Canada's Maritime Provinces. Although he served from 1931 to 1956 as the provincial archivist of Nova Scotia, he was throughout his entire adult life passionately committed to the history of his native Prince Edward Island. An ardent proponent of bringing the British liberal enlightenment to all Canadians, Harvey worked assiduously from the 1920s to the 1950s to make Islanders care about their province's progress and Canadians care about the Island. He scored some notable triumphs in the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, which, thanks to his efforts, conceded far more plaques to honour Island history than would otherwise have been the case. Yet in many ways the victory was a Pyrrhic one. Tourism-related public history placed a strain upon the very liberal enlightenment Harvey was attempting to secure. It did so both because of pressure from the nascent tourism industry, which both provincial and federal governments were coming to identify as a remedy for the Depression-induced crisis, and because it often meant the direct application of problematic standards to historical practice. It also entailed a politics of cultural selection that, in confirming again and again the inevitability and rightness of liberal order, paradoxically placed Harvey's liberal values themselves under pressure.

Daniel Cobb Harvey (1886-1965) est l'un des historiens des provinces Maritimes du Canada les plus réputés du XX^e siècle. S'il a été archiviste provincial de la Nouvelle-Écosse de 1931 à 1956, il s'est néanmoins passionné toute sa vie adulte pour l'histoire de sa province natale, l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard. Ardent promoteur de la diffusion des Lumières libérales britanniques auprès de tous les Canadiens, Harvey s'est employé sans relâche depuis les années 1920 jusqu'aux années 1950 à sensibiliser les habitants de l'Île aux progrès de leur province et à cultiver l'intérêt des Canadiens pour l'Île. Il a remporté quelques victoires remarquables à la Commission des lieux et monuments historiques. Grâce à ses efforts, celle-ci a en effet concédé beaucoup plus de plaques pour faire honneur à l'histoire de

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l'Île que ça n'aurait été le cas autrement. À bien des égards, pourtant, il s'agissait là d'une victoire à la Pyrrhus, car l'histoire publique liée au tourisme a tamisé fortement les lumières libérales mêmes que Harvey tentait de répandre. Elle l'a fait à la fois parce qu'elle subissait des pressions de la part de l'industrie touristique naissante, industrie que le gouvernement fédéral tout comme le gouvernement provincial en étaient venus à voir comme un remède à la crise provoquée par la Dépression, et parce que cela menait souvent à l'application directe de normes problématiques à la pratique de l'histoire. Elle a également entraîné une politique de sélection culturelle qui, en confirmant à plusieurs reprises l'inévitabilité et la justesse de l'ordre libéral, mettait paradoxalement les valeurs libérales de Harvey elles-mêmes à l'épreuve.

"MY WORK ... is rewarded chiefly in abuse," wrote a beleaguered historian and civil servant in 1931. "I inherited several rather furious rows between localities, races, and factions, and sometimes I am entirely fed up with the whole thing, and wish someone else had the 'honour'." The "honour' was that of serving as a regional representative on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), and the writer was Daniel Cobb Harvey (1886-1965), MA, LLD, FRSC, FCGS, remembered today as the renowned author of studies of the "intellectual awakening" in Nova Scotia and as the provincial archivist of Nova Scotia from 1931 to 1956. The 45-year-old Harvey moved to Halifax from Vancouver in 1931 to take up this position. One of its major draws was its proximity to Prince Edward Island (PEI), where Harvey had been born. Ever since 1910, as a Rhodes Scholar at Queen's College, Oxford, he had longed to write the history of his native province.² Unbeknownst to Harvey, his new position in Nova Scotia came with the proviso that he become a member of the HSMBC, which since 1921 had advised the Dominion Parks Branch of the Department of the Interior on its heritage policies. Part of this new responsibility was the duty to make sure that the heritage of the region—including PEI—received due attention. Harvey, already confronted with the extraordinary challenge of creating an orderly Public Archives out of mounds of disorganized records in a deficient building, could have said no in August 1931—indeed, he was sorely tempted to do so. Instead, in a decision that arose from his loyalty to his native province, the depths of his Puritan sense of duty, and his deep-seated conviction that it behoved the state to educate its citizens in liberal values, he said yes. As a result, Harvey, in many eyes the austere and intimidating apotheosis of the new archivally based and "scientific" professional history in the region, found himself enmeshed in the development of "tourism/history."

Tourism/history—arguably the predominant mode in which the past is apprehended under conditions of capitalist modernity—is characterized by an

Public Archives of Nova Scotia [hereafter PANS], MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, Daniel Cobb Harvey [hereafter DCH] to H. R. Stewart, March 6, 1934.

² PANS, MG1, Add. Mss., Harvey Papers 1992-085, file 3, DCH notes on early letters with E. W. R., entry for November 27, 1910.

overwhelming tendency to treat history as a resource to be profitably mined. Tourism/ history characteristically generates decontextualized properties and images that function as so many units in a liberal political economy, as incommensurable and distinct objects construed as having an abstract essence that differs in magnitude but never in kind. Such "historic properties" become, in a sense, units of exchange within a common framework, equivalent to one another as bearers of exchange value—and this exchange value consists in their mediation of human contacts by their production, sale, and distribution. Consciously reordering representations of the past so that it would live up to tourist expectations—expectations themselves shaped by tourism promotion—tourism/history encouraged the passive reception and consumption of images. The primary audience of tourism/history is made up of tourists—although inherent in it is a drive to educate local people to conform to the tourists' expectations. Tourism/history does not entail a strenuous dialogue with alternative readings of evidence aiming at (in Harvey's words) "organized knowledge obtained by investigation and enquiry."3 Rather, it is ultimately predicated upon the creation of commodities—things, experiences, literary works, sites, images—with cash value in a free-market world.⁴

Harvey's sincere, life-long pursuit of "organized knowledge" about the past—sustained by empirical researches in a Public Archives he likened to a "laboratory of history" made his obligatory involvement in tourism/history a source of personal and even political conflict for him. In fact, in Nova Scotia, Harvey was the scourge of people who wanted to profit from history. When asked as the provincial archivist to countenance tourism/history, Harvey functioned as the proverbial sceptic, demanding scientific evidence, discouraging romantic schemes, and deriding as "hopeless" those who spent their time trying to find the "First Things in Nova Scotia."

As early as the mid-1930s, his resistance to tourism/history was becoming well-known in historical circles. In 1935, already sensing what the new dispensation entailed, Harvey described his frustration in a letter to his friend and colleague J. B. Brebner, the region's most accomplished professional historian. Explaining that he was "in the depths," he added:

My depression is not due to unemployment but rather to the utter impossibility of accomplishing all that I am expected to do as archivist, professor, member of the Sites and Monuments Board, general source of information for half-baked

- For more on tourism/history, see Ian McKay and Robin Bates, In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010). This specific characterization of history as organized knowledge is drawn from PANS, MG1, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 456, DCH, "Archives and Historical Research," Daily Gleaner [Fredericton], January 25, 1943.
- 4 McKay and Bates, In the Province of History, p. 15.
- For a fuller treatment of this theme, see Ian McKay, "Imagining a Liberal Enlightenment: D. C. Harvey and a 'Laboratory for History' for Nova Scotia," *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, vol. 16 (2013), pp. 154-180.
- 6 PANS, MG1, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 456, DCH, "The Value of Local History to the General Historian."
- W. S. MacNutt, "Daniel Cobb Harvey," *Transactions*, Royal Society of Canada, 4th series, vol. 5, part 2 (1967), pp. 85-86, who remarks that Harvey "had little patience with the journalistic and romantic breed of researcher who came to the Archives to find grist for the mill of the popular, or semi-popular market."

genealogists, tourist mad newspapers, tourist seeking towns, subsidy seeking provincial governments, curiously minded provincial librarians in other provinces asking what they should know, and my frustrated ambitions to write.⁸

As Harvey told Brebner, he had no doubt it was mainly "Nova Scotia's drive for tourists" that burdened him with "racking my brains and searching the records in order to save the fair name of history from exploitation." Tourism/history ate up hours and hours of time Harvey could ill afford to lose. ¹⁰



Figure 1: D.C. Harvey, Archivist for Nova Scotia, 1931. *Source*: Nova Scotia Archives Photo collection, N-147.

Yet Harvey's resistance to tourism/history was not just about his own workload. He strongly believed that tourism/history meant the degradation of the historian's craft. The touristic (and for him "childish") pursuit of "firsts" was the bane of his existence—as he remarked, "When claims are made to first things in wide terms it is extremely difficult to be sure that one is right and it is equally difficult to prove that one is wrong." To tourism promoters such qualms, especially those regarding historical "firsts," were misplaced. Where was the harm in a little makebelieve? The harm, Harvey would reply, lay in giving official sanction to lies about the past. Such practices called the honour of history into question and trivialized the findings of the new science. Real history was not to be confused with "futile

⁸ PANS, RG 53, Vol. 5, 1935, File A-C, January 1935, DCH to J. Bartlet Brebner, February 14, 1935.

⁹ PANS, RG 53, Vol. 5, 1935, File A-C, January 1935, DCH to J. Bartlet Brebner, July 30, 1935.

¹⁰ In 1952, he was even obliged to give tours of the Archives building. PANS, MG1, Vol. 3045, No. 16, Phyllis Blakeley Fonds, Phyllis Blakeley to Uncle Welton and Aunt Annie, December 28, 1951 [with internal letters of December 29, 1951 and January 2 and 3,1952].

¹¹ PANS, RG 53, Vol. 5, 1935, File A-C, May 1935, DCH to A. J. Campbell, September 29, 1935.

fiddling with first things as such, and prolonged searching for genealogical records of obscure people."12 At its worst, tourism/history was an affront to truth and critical representations of the past, an undermining of all those historians who had viewed knowledge as "an end in itself, of truth as an attainable ideal, of history as dowered with dignity." ¹³ It risked subordinating history to advertising. ¹⁴ Responding to the wave of enthusiasm for tourism/history in 1935—not unrelated to the election of Angus L. Macdonald as Nova Scotia's premier, which initiated a decades-long campaign to accentuate the province's supposedly Scottish essence—Harvey bluntly advised his minister: "My own attitude would be to count our profits and losses for a year or two in order to see whether the present intensive campaign for tourists has brought net returns, and to judge how much has been due to the exploitation of history as such. I am inclined to think that fresh air, scenery, bathing, fishing and good food may be the chief attractions to tourists." ¹⁵ He urged the many regional fans of Colonial Williamsburg, who kept asking why Canadians could not build an equally ambitious historical simulacrum, to think about such a project's extravagant costs and minimal intellectual contribution: "I cannot but feel that it is a case of misdirected energy and extravagance in the name of historical romanticism."16

Although he was a civil servant and perhaps running a risk of being fired, Harvey did not hide his opposition to what was becoming the tourism/history craze in Nova Scotia in the late 1930s. He knew he was "in bad" because of his stalwart resistance to those who wanted to promote Nova Scotia as the site of Norse colonization.¹⁷ For their part, both the minister responsible for tourism and the leading figure in charge of promotion upbraided Harvey for his scruples. "The Minister thinks that where there is a doubt, we should have the benefit of same," publicity chief A. J. Campbell advised Harvey on November 12, 1935, thereby announcing with eye-brow raising clarity epistemological principles that went flatly against all of Harvey's hard-earned insights into serious empirical historical research.¹⁸ Campbell was sufficiently exercised by Harvey's testy response to endless inquiries about provincial "firsts" that he brought the matter to the attention of his minister, A. S. MacMillan, who told Harvey to refrain from interfering with those who wanted to insert folksy tales into the province's history booklet for tourists. There was no harm in bending the truth a bit if that meant

- 12 PANS, MG1, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 456, DCH, "Archives and Historical Research."
- 13 PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, f. 94, Draft of "Canadian Historians and Present Tendencies in Historical Writing," *Report* of the Canadian Historical Association, 1930.
- PANS, RG 53, Vol. 8, 1939, File A-L, DCH to G. M. Dallyn, May 17, 1939. In this instance, Harvey was writing to G. M. Dallyn with a mild rebuke of the *Canadian Geographical Journal*'s tendency to prefer photography over texts, but he concluded more strongly: "I hope scholarship will not be subordinated to advertising."
- 15 PANS, RG 53 Vol. 5, 1935, File M-Mac/Mc, July 1935, DCH to A. S. MacMillan, Minister of Highways, July 30, 1935.
- 16 Library and Archives Canada [hereafter LAC], HSMBC Fonds, T-13504 RG 84 A-2-a 1174HS, DCH to J. B. Harkin, March 15, 1934.
- 17 PANS RG 53, Vol. 6, 1936, File A-C, Lawrence Burpee to DCH, November 4, 1936; DCH to Burpee, November 7, 1936.
- 18 PANS, RG 53, Vol. 5, 1935, File A-C, May 1935, A. J. Campbell to DCH, November 12, 1935.

Historic Nova Scotia might be more readable than some dry history treatise. ¹⁹ Harvey complied with the ministerial directive, but under protest—and then did his utmost to subject the booklet's principal author to the full gauntlet of his fact-checking rigour. ²⁰

Tourism/history fundamentally conflicted with the ideals Harvey upheld as an historian. Harvey took very seriously the injunction that the historian must be bound by documentary evidence and tell the truth about it. After all, his first major book, The French Regime on Prince Edward Island, a study of the Island's political and military history down to the 1760s, was meant to show how local patriotism could be enhanced by an archivally based history.²¹ Historian W. S. MacNutt still believed in 1967, four decades after its publication, that this book would "always remain a model of historical precision and zeal for ungarnished fact. Nobody has discovered gaps in [Harvey's] credibility." Here was a book for the ages.²² Everyone agreed that Harvey had pondered every relevant document in the Dominion archives.²³ The Bulletins that flowed from the Archives from the 1930s to the 1960s likewise announced a new asceticism, a refusal of romance, an aesthetic of disciplined attention to the real world that constituted, especially for young Depression-era historians, a breath of fresh air in a field hitherto saturated with romantic embellishments and vague generalities. If Harvey remained in some respects a romantic liberal imperialist carrying into the 1930s the Oxford imperialism of his pre-war days as PEI's Rhodes Scholar, he had also absorbed in Manitoba and British Columbia the newer emphases of North America's progressive historians, whose scholarly realism was advertised by their copious footnotes, dry style, and an often austere focus on institutions rather than personalities.

Such conspicuous empirical rigour was combined with the underlying conviction that the serious professional historian was obliged to find a deeper social evolutionary truth in the data he or she uncovered. Undergirding Harvey's conviction that local historians must be brought into communication with the general historical community was a faith in a world-changing and progressive transformation of history as a form of thought and practice. As local historians documented the "peaceful and workman-like solution of day by day problems," they would contribute to an understanding of human social evolution, the development over decades and centuries of an enlightened civilization.²⁴

- 19 PANS, RG 53 Vol. 5, 1935, File M-Mac/Mc, July 1935, A. S. MacMillan to DCH, November 7, 1935.
- 20 PANS, MG1, Vol. 3124, Phyllis Blakeley Fonds, Phyllis R. Blakeley, "Forty Years at the Archives," 1st Draft, November 1985, file 1. Harvey even registered quiet opposition to the premier's campaign to "tartanize" the province, to play up its supposed Scottishness, by registering his opinion, albeit in an obscure book review, that attempts to see seventeenth-century Scottish colonization as the "birth of Nova Scotia" were far-fetched. PANS, MG1, Vol. 436, Harvey Fonds, DCH, Draft Review of Thomas H. McGrail, Sir William Alexander, First Earl of Stirling (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1940) [handwritten, July 1941].
- 21 D. C. Harvey, *The French Regime on Prince Edward Island* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), p.
- 22 MacNutt, "Daniel Cobb Harvey," p. 86.
- 23 Archibald MacMechan, "Review of D. C. Harvey, *The French Regime on Prince Edward Island*," in *Halifax Herald*, March 29, 1926.
- 24 PANS, MG1, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 456, DCH, "The Place of Local in General History," n.d. [late 1920s].

Such historiographical commitments were intertwined with Harvey's faith in freedom. Liberalism for Harvey was the multi-dimensional core of his being: his philosophy, his faith, his practice, his meaning. It had, one might say, five dimensions: religious freedom (freedom of belief and no established church), political and social equality (democratic elections and no aristocracy), respect for human cultural diversity (always combined, paradoxically, with the conviction that such diversity had flourished most readily within the British Empire), intellectual openness and honesty (hence the passion for footnotes and reprinted primary documents), and the idealization of freehold property (the material precondition of these values whose character-building achievement fortified the individuals who best upheld them). The history worth researching was the History of Freedom—Harvey was directly influenced by the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce and warmly responded to the historical works of Francis Parkman and George Trevelvan—and this meant a socio-political order in which government was answerable to free, self-possessed individuals, each endowed with reason. Croce's History of Freedom had found in Canada—now with a seat at the League of Nations and, thanks to the courage of pioneers and the determination of liberal politicians, vested with self-government—some of its noblest and most exalted chapters.²⁵ Property played a large role in this liberal narrative. For Harvey, "property" was the reward of hard work. If it had the tincture of privilege or class distinction, Harvey was sceptical of it—but there is little evidence that he ever grasped the extent to which property's twentieth-century corporate forms complicated any equation of property-holding with free-standing individualism.

How, then, did the liberal scourge of tourism/history in Nova Scotia become its accomplice in PEI? One plausible answer might be sought in personal happenstance: having been tricked into assuming an unforeseen obligation, Harvey felt obliged—on the grounds of local patriotism and his puritanical sense of duty—faithfully to discharge it. Having made that decision, he accepted that its pragmatic institutional implications, whether or not they aligned with underlying personal values, simply had to be borne. Another answer can be found in a proud and often homesick Islander's quest to see his province's history respected by Islander and non-Islander alike, a local patriotism that might well override professional and scholarly niceties. Many times in his PEI correspondence Harvey sounds like a ward boss seeking patronage plums for his people. Yet a more interesting and significant answer lies in the nature of Harvey's liberalism, within which liberty, equality, and property were equally powerful, with the development of the pioneers' freehold property rights providing the indispensable social and economic context for the unfolding of the Story of Freedom. When a historian of Harvey's persuasion was called upon to commemorate history, he would do so in ways that conformed to this underlying ideological orientation.

Harvey first had to work for recognition by the HSMBC that the Island had in fact a history worth commemorating. One of the Board's most galling decisions

²⁵ PANS, MG1, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 456, DCH, "Canada From Colony to Country. An address delivered by Prof. D. C. Harvey, M.A., F.R.S.C, at the unveiling of the Canadian Jubilee Memorial Window in the Library of the University of British Columbia, November 28, 1928," draft.

had been its early verdict in 1921 that "there were no sites of national importance in Prince Edward Island."26 There was more to this observation than a disregard for the Maritimes. Within the military perspective regnant within much of the field, shared by Chairman Brig. Gen. E. A. Cruikshank, who was past director of the military historical section of the Department of Militia and Defence until 1921, the significant sites in Canadian history were those related to the French/ English conflict of the Seven Years War or to the War of 1812. Most of those in the region had already been acknowledged, and a more extravagant programme of renovating entire forts was not on a penny-pinching government's agenda. The well-connected and ferocious J. C. Webster—the New Brunswick-based heritage impresario who alternatively inspired and exasperated Harvey—was able to cajole the Board into recommending numerous small commemorative plaques at or near his pet project Fort Beauséjour, yet in the eyes of other Board members even commemorating this impeccably military and patriotic site smacked of celebrating the inconsequential.²⁷ Judge Walter Crowe of Sydney, whom Harvey replaced in 1931, largely agreed.²⁸

The HSMBC proceeded through an odd combination of amateurism and professionalism, voluntarism and bureaucracy, functioning as an advisory "central committee" of remembrance that brought together the upper echelons of heritage elites across the country. To serve on it was to share the same space with many of the "big boys"—they were all boys—of Canadian history, whose non-academic status was belied by their often formidable command of specific details. (Harvey and his friend Fred Langdon were in the minority as professors.) By the 1930s the Board had resolved that only sites of "national significance" were to be commemorated—leaving a precise definition of national significance to a later date. Harvey wanted to supplement the fife-and-drum history favoured by the amateurs with the social evolutionary themes of liberal progress he had championed since his university teaching days in Winnipeg and Vancouver. In his eyes, Canada, a bastion of British liberal civilization, had with the very formation of the HSMBC signalled to the world "that she wished to trace the road by which she had come, and to erect mile-stones along that road, in order that her citizens and other citizens of the world might be stimulated to read her story and estimate the degree of civilization to which she had attained."29

In the *Dalhousie Review* in 1939, Harvey distilled his own philosophy of the HSMBC. Aligning himself with the sentiments of his hero Joseph Howe—who in 1851 had observed that even the most "barbarous nations" erected cairns to mark their glorious dead and that such monuments inspired "rising generations" to

²⁶ PANS, MG 1, Vol. 1789, f. 6, Harvey Papers, Off-print of "National Historic Sites in Nova Scotia," Dalhousie Review. In 1925 J. C. Webster informed James Harkin of the Parks Branch that "of course there is very little of national importance in the development of the Island and it would be foolish to appoint a member." See C. J. Taylor, Negotiating the Past: The Making of Canada's National Historic Parks and Sites (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), p. 75.

²⁷ Taylor, Negotiating the Past, pp. 76-77.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 92-93.

²⁹ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, f. 94, DCH, Draft of "National Historic Sites in Nova Scotia," Dalhousie Review, January 1939.

"emulate the virtues which their forefathers have regarded it as a sacred obligation to record"—Harvey saw the HSMBC as an agency that worked "to propagate historical knowledge and to perpetuate national sentiment." The paradox of the HSMBC had been that, in a country with a history that was "comparatively brief," the Board had been required to "encourage each section and province to take an interest in its own history and thus, paradoxically, to foster national consciousness by reviving sectional interests." It had somehow to escape from the old tendency of viewing the history of Canada "as if it were only an expansion of Quebec and Ontario east and westward through the annexation of certain outlying sections that were happy in having no history." It was time to turn the page on "romantic" history, now fully dealt with, and turn attention to the history "of the social, cultural, economic, and political history of Canada," by inference those events and people that could be linked to a unified emergent liberal nationalism with something important to say to the world.³⁰

In addition to the military and cultural currents influencing the historians of the HSMBC, however, a third major influence was at work; the rise of tourism as a significant force in Depression-era Canada. In the National Parks Branch, which the HSMBC advised, arguments predicated on tourism were increasingly powerful in the late 1930s.31 The HSMBC received a myriad of requests for plaques and cairns from people convinced these would add to tourism revenues. Many communities wanted recognition of their attributes, and their local notables wanted confirmation of their status. Recognition claims were fought out in the HSMBC in part on the uncertain grounds of "national significance," but also through arguments that a given site would be generally acclaimed and popular. Commemoration ceremonies accompanying the unveiling of plaques and cairns were celebrated if they drew large crowds and well-heeled dignitaries. Phenomenal energies were expended in such ceremonies. The media events associated with unveilings were seen as important components of tourism, because they offered local communities momentary prominence that might be translated into a widespread interest in visiting them. Political and commercial motivations were thus intermeshed. Such ceremonies constituted a performance of history, often by local notables and sometimes with high-powered visitors. From Harvey's perspective, they also educated an audience of local residents about their leading civilizational accomplishments as well as broadcasting news of such achievements to the wider world.

As the HSMBC wrestled mightily but incoherently with the problem of what precisely constituted "national significance," one obvious solution seemed to reside in asking whether the phenomenon in question represented the first of its kind in Canada. If so, its value as a commodity in the significance sweepstakes

³⁰ PANS, MG 1, Vol. 1789, f. 6, Harvey Papers, Off-print of "National Historic Sites in Nova Scotia," Dalhousie Review (January 1939), pp. 434-447.

³¹ As Alan MacEachern observes, the logic of tourism, to a quite startling extent, can be discerned in the Parks Branch's planning for the Prince Edward Island National Park and in its key figures' abundantly realized expectation that the new park would draw thousands of tourists in quest of suntans and swimming more than a withdrawal into the wilderness. See MacEachern, Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935-1970 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), pp. 81, 96.

went up. Halifax in 1923 had already won a designation for being the site of the first printing press; a 1925 Board meeting approved the commemoration of the first Canadian railroad, steamship, paper mill, salt works, and so on. This "first things" phenomenon was precisely what Harvey resisted so mightily after his arrival in Nova Scotia in 1931. Yet the same Harvey who fought the phenomenon outside the HSMBC can be found using the "first things" argument within it. Moreover, while Harvey resisted direct political intrusion into the realm of historical scholarship, within the HSMBC he played along with, and even encouraged, such intrusion, especially when it seemed linked to the promotion of his beloved PEI. He was thus often caught in a contradictory position, deriding in one sphere the very arguments and practices he followed in another. One can see these tensions playing out in five spheres in particular, each attached to a theme central to Harvey's scholarly *oeuvre*: the French Régime, Responsible Government and Confederation, the advent of modern communications technology, the achievements of the propertied individual, and the celebration of the Island's cultural figures.

The French Régime raised interesting challenges for a convinced liberal like Harvey. Following Parkman, Harvey believed the French in North America to have been priest- and aristocrat-ridden, fated to yield to the evolutionarily more advanced and liberal British. He also associated the French Régime with the "romantic" history he was anxious to supersede. Yet at the HSMBC, he confronted two issues that both demonstrated the continuing significance of French Régime "sites of memory" and the contradictions of his liberal history-making.

The Cartier celebration of 1934, extensively analysed by Alan Gordon, was in part driven by the high-level diplomatic politics of the uneasy interwar British/ French alliance. Promoted as an emblem of the *bonne entente*, Cartier could figure as the founder of the French-Canadian people and the French and Catholic discoverer of Canada—nationalist and religious options unattractive to a historian of Harvey's British liberal stripe. He preferred a second approach that "secularized" Cartier, downplayed his nationality, and even queried whether Cartier by erecting his cross at Gaspé had really claimed Canada for France. In social evolutionary terms, Cartier had not initiated an enduring settlement, he did not represent a force of reason, and his attachment to a state-linked church made him alien to religious freedom. He thus did not cut much of a figure in Harvey's Canadian Story of Liberty, yet here he was, thrust into the limelight through the most powerful (and unscholarly) of political pressures. Harvey as a regional member of the HSMBC had no choice but to spend considerable time and effort on his commemoration.

For Harvey, the first strong indication of how directly he would become involved in the Cartier event came with a missive in early 1934 from PEI Premier W. J. P. Macmillan. Macmillan wanted Harvey—whom he considered the island's representative on the Board³⁴—to circumvent the due process of the HSMBC and

³² Taylor, Negotiating the Past, pp. 72-73.

³³ See Alan Gordon, The Hero and the Historians: Historiography and the Uses of Jacques Cartier (Vancouver and Toronto: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), pp. 132-146. It is noteworthy that Cartier never figured in Harvey's ample list of Canadian heroes in an earlier series he wrote for Winnipeg's Grain Growers' Guide.

³⁴ PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, W. J. P. MacMillan to DCH, February 13, 1934. His government was

orchestrate a commemoration the Board would have no choice but to approve.³⁵ H. L. Stewart, Deputy Provincial Secretary and a long-time associate of Harvey's, then entered the picture. In a letter to Harvey, Stewart argued that, in the interests of inspiring tourists and winning publicity. Cartier's monument should be erected in Charlottetown. The case for a Charlottetown plaque was all the more compelling because "a French liner is likely to call at Charlottetown on its way to Gaspé, a number of the passengers being officials and others from France, coming to Canada to take part in the celebration." Here, in short, was a chance for the Island to be part of something much bigger—the ongoing diplomacy between Britain and France. "The unveiling of a tablet at Charlottetown during the visit of the liner would be an event of great interest, and could be easily handled," Stewart urged.³⁶ Harvey, never a fan of Cartier to begin with, was now being asked to abandon his vows of historical accuracy. Cartier may never even have landed on PEI, and, if his Island landfall had indeed taken place, the only plausible site for it was located on the north shore and now likely some hundred yards out to sea due to centuries of erosion. The French explorer had certainly never glimpsed the area that would later become Charlottetown.

Stewart's letter thus made Harvey angry: "You do not know how the attitude which you Charlottetown people are taking complicates my work in securing memorials for Prince Edward Island." Harvey had tried to do so much—indeed, PEI had secured "more attention than Nova Scotia which is giving me my living" and had succeeded in part because he had been reasonable and judicious in his treatment of his HSMBC colleagues. Yet how could Harvey retain their respect if he tried to promote such rushed requests? Stewart & Co. had "bungled" the matter, so much so that it was doubtful if anything could be done at such a late date. And how could the backers of the Charlottetown site live with themselves, as they demonstrated time and again "that the capital of Prince Edward Island wants to get everything!"³⁷ To the premier, Harvey expressed himself more circumspectly but no less forcefully: there was simply no historically valid reason for the plaque to go to Charlottetown. Placing the memorial there would be "ridiculous." Harvey's reputation as an historian was at stake: "Cartier's Journal of his Voyages was printed in full and authoritatively edited by the Public Archives of Canada in 1924. This must be in the Legislative Library. It is known to all historians, and I could not, as a historian, support Charlottetown as the site of this memorial."38 It seemed, for the moment, that Clio had prevailed over Politics and Tourism.

Until, that is, J. C. Webster, the heritage giant who had placed Harvey on the Board, made his own viewpoint plain in March 1934. In a manner reminiscent of a

soon to be swept out of office, losing every one of its seats in the legislature.

³⁵ The Premier in turn was likely responding to pressure from above, since the previous December an Island delegation visiting Ottawa, with Webster's strong support, had waited upon the Prime Minister to have the Island included in the forthcoming Cartier celebrations.

³⁶ PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, H. R. Stewart to DCH, February 16, 1934. Stewart hardly needed to mention that the monument would be useful to a beleaguered provincial government in its effort to show it was on the *qui vive*.

³⁷ PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, DCH to H. R. Stewart, February 20, 1934.

³⁸ PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, DCH to W. J. P. MacMillan, February 20, 1934.

commanding officer admonishing an uppity subaltern, Webster reminded Harvey that he was the man in charge of PEI. Yes, he had obligingly let Harvey, as a native son, have a hand in a recent commemoration, but, on all decisive matters, Webster was still the Maritime kingpin, the dispenser of both wisdom and patronage. He also believed that a "real monument" should be erected—not some minor plague. Webster revealed that he had written to Prime Minister R. B. Bennett "in my private capacity" and secured his support for the Cartier commemoration, one for which the regular HSMBC budget made no provision. This plan meant going beyond the rules of the HSMBC, because the Board would have no time to meet and agree to the monument in time to coincide with the anniversary of Cartier's visit (June 30). "In times of great emergency, I believe in taking action promptly and explaining afterwards," he advised Harvey, in a candid admission of his Bonapartism. "I did not intend to waste time by a preliminary correspondence with the Department." That Webster had made rather a mockery of the due process by which worthy historical figures attained immortality courtesy of the HSMBC was patent: he had pulled rank, secured the prime minister's support, done an endrun around the Parks bureaucracy—and had the gumption to upbraid Harvey for his (and PEI's) assumption that the archivist was the Island's man in Ottawa.³⁹

As was generally the case with most people confronting Webster in full battle-gear, Harvey—who deeply admired Webster for his heritage work and shared at least some of his enthusiasm for things imperial—backed down. There had been no thought of "giving offence to you," he wrote, nor of "encroaching upon your field of work on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board." He had imagined himself, as he pursued other Island cases, to be entitled to do so, little realizing that Webster felt a continuing responsibility for the Island. ⁴⁰ Up against Webster, the prime minister, and the premier, the empiricist historian had little chance. Charlottetown successfully staked its claim to Cartier. Having a little over a month earlier judged a Charlottetown monument "ridiculous," indeed a veritable affront to Clio and his professionalism, Harvey now considered erecting a monument in the city preferable to losing the deal altogether: "Our main concern, as yours," he wrote MacMillan, "is to get another memorial for the Island."

Not only did Harvey have to back down on a subject upon which he had staked Clio's honour, but he also was left with organizing the endless details of high-level commemoration. Which flags should be flown? Harvey settled diplomatically for an approach that placed equal emphasis on the flag of *La République française* and the Union Jack—but seemingly never considered the well-established national flag of the Acadians, whose twentieth-century nationalism had sorely troubled the author of *The French Regime*.⁴² Then there was the quandary of how the plaque should be worded. Harvey preferred something brief: "Commemorating the 400th anniversary of the landing of Jacques Cartier on Prince Edward Island

³⁹ PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, J. C. Webster to DCH, March 8, 1934.

⁴⁰ PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, DCH to J. C. Webster, March 9, 1934.

⁴¹ PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, DCH to W. J. P. MacMillan, March 27, 1934.

⁴² PANS, RG 53, Vol. 4, 1934a, N-Y, March 1934, DCH to H. R. Stewart, June 29, 1934. Of course, a stickler for accuracy would have insisted upon the royal flag and not the republican tricoleur.

June 30th and July 1st, 1534." The vagueness of such wording voided Cartier's religious significance, slighted his French connection, and slid past Harvey's own sceptical objections to the Charlottetown location—but was now seemingly the overwhelming choice of those with the money and power to influence the decision. In the end, instead of feeding such historical controversies, the plaque obscurely quoted a picturesque translation of Cartier from Richard Hakluyt from 1598—"All the said land is low and plaine, and the fairest that may possible be seene, full of goodly medowes and trees." By highlighting a quaint old English saying from Hakluyt, a notable sixteenth-century English proponent of North America, the plaque essentially effaced Cartier's Frenchness. Perhaps the tourism-conscious Stuart, keenly alert to the imperative to have history performed before the public, ave us the basic reason for this curious text when he argued that "the quaintness of the wording will catch the interest of visitors."

Premier MacMillan, who must have remembered how strenuously Harvey had objected to the whole affair, wrote to congratulate him on his role and to confirm him as PEI's man in Ottawa: "We look upon you as an Islander and as our historian." He praised Harvey's *French Regime*, looked forward with keen interest to his "volume setting forth the English period," and offered him both his appreciation and a promise of future co-operation.⁴⁶ Harvey confided to MacMillan that the entire thing had been a learning experience, which he had shared with only one or two other people: "I have never been active or skilled in politics and have tried always to look at every question, historical or otherwise, as a shcolar [scholar] trained to take the larger view. For that reason I was content to sink personal feelings and to forego personal honour in order to facilitate the securing of a monument for Prince Edward Island. In this particular instance I did what I could to support the man who handled the political side of the question."⁴⁷

Harvey had learned that the practice of tourism/history bore little resemblance to the conduct of a graduate history seminar at Dalhousie University. The result was a monument that was, in essence, a kind of romantic lie. Its content and form not only took public history back to the "romantic age" that Harvey wanted

- 43 Although Harvey was keen to highlight the cultural forces in history, he was never comfortable with an emphasis upon religion as a powerful influence. In this case, an emphasis upon Cartier's religious significance implied an interpretation of the history of early Canada as completely reliant upon the expanding energies of Catholic Europe. Making Cartier and Champlain exemplars of Catholicism symbolically vested the Church with a formative influence at which a liberal Protestant such as Harvey might well balk. Alan Gordon argues that PEI's refusal of the cross, smaller than that awarded Quebec, might also have been a protest against any casting of the eastern province in a lesser position (*The Hero and the Historians*, p. 146).
- 44 Had the event gone ahead in Alberton as Harvey wanted, there would have still been in Stewart's imagination a ceremony in Charlottetown: "the closing of an electric circuit here causing the unveiling to take place, the addresses at Charlottetown to be broadcast and amplifiers to be installed at the site of the cairn, so that the public gathered from far and near would hear the entire program." PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, H. R. Stewart to J. C. Webster, March 16, 1934.
- 45 Gordon, The Hero and the Historians, p. 147. Gordon discerns in the text an oblique claim of PEI to priority over Québec to rightful possession of Cartier and hence priority as a site of European colonization in Canada. No one in this debate seems to have paid much attention to the Vikings.
- 46 PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, W. J. P. MacMillan to DCH, August 29, 1934.
- 47 PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, DCH to W. J. P. MacMillan, September 1, 1934.

to transcend. It also left him vulnerable to the criticisms of rival historians.⁴⁸ It insinuated Charlottetown's connection to a historical figure that was wholly fictitious. And it came with a text designed not to further understanding of history as "organized knowledge obtained by investigation and enquiry" but to please with its exoticism and quaintness the travelling and consuming public.

It must have been with some relief that Harvey turned to the commemoration of Jean Pierre Roma, near Georgetown, PEI, in 1936. Roma, whose gritty absolutism-resistant eighteenth-century entrepreneurship commended itself to Depression-weary Islanders, had figured as an almost heroic figure in The French Regime. 49 Yet in its way the Roma celebration also suggested the extent to which an historical commemoration had become a kind of currency in the new marketplace of significance. It had its beginnings in Georgetown's interest in commemorating the 200th anniversary of the arrival of its first settlers. Harvey warned the local enthusiasts that the HSMBC was dead set against any generalized marking of old settlements and cemeteries, but he did hold out hope of finding another alternative. He found it in Roma, who could be positioned as a heroic pioneer who "strove against adversity to plant a colony, contribute to a national industry and build up a three-cornered commerce." The plaque added: "To his industry and enthusiasm in pursuit of these objects we pay tribute today and in recognition of his good judgment in choosing this site we have erected a monument to mark the site and to perpetuate the memory of his activities here." Georgetown's road to success, in short, lay in converting its first historical property (pioneers) into a scarcer commodity (Roma), thereby establishing a Canada-wide claim to having a first French settlement—precisely the sort of "first"-mongering that Harvey had derided so fiercely in Nova Scotia. 50 When the plaque was unveiled, it was emphatically shaped by Harvey's view of history. Roma's "national significance" did not reside in either his Frenchness nor in the violent raid of New Englanders that ended his settlement. 51 Even commentators of the day thought it peculiar that the ceremonies commemorating a French settlement were conducted entirely in English.52

When we come to Harvey's work in commemorating Island politicians, particularly those he associated with the coming of liberal democracy, we seemingly enter a sphere more congenial to his underlying paradigm. Yet, in fact, in this sphere we appreciate especially how much Harvey was adjusting his historical *praxis* to the new realities. Harvey was instrumental in having

⁴⁸ The "Cartier Question" roused A. B. Warburton to write a substantial letter to the *Guardian* on Cartier's sighting of the Island and the intricate points it raised in his mind. PANS, MG1, D. C. Harvey Papers, Vol. 454, f. 278, A. B. Warburton, "A Bit of History," *Guardian* [Charlottetown] [undated news clipping, c. 1934].

⁴⁹ PANS, MG1, D. C. Harvey Papers, Vol. 454, DCH, "Roma and His Settlement at Three Rivers," Charlottetown Guardian, September 3, 1936. That same year Harvey came out with an article on "Roma and His Settlement at Three Rivers" that emphasized Roma's can-do attitude and practical achievements.

⁵⁰ PANS, MG1, Vol. 450, Harvey Fonds, f. 242, DCH, Comments on the unveiling of a plaque to Roma.

⁵¹ See LAC, RG 84, HSMBC Fonds, T-13539, A-2-a1212 HS-71, Harvey to Harkin, September 12, 1936.

⁵² Helen Jean Champion, *Over On The Island* (Toronto and Halifax: The Ryerson Press, 1939), p. 135: "At the unveiling of the cairn to the memory of this gallant *Frenchman*, the audience, with amusement, noted that all the speakers were *Englishmen*."

the HSMBC celebrate *all* the Fathers of Confederation. Since a "Father of Confederation" is by convention a term applied to any of the 36 men who attended at least one of the Charlottetown, Quebec, and London conferences from 1864 to 1866, no matter whether they were ultimately supporters or enemies of the deal, a commemoration could encompass a lot of politicians. Prince Edward Island could claim no fewer than seven such Fathers. Some were noteworthy—here one might cite Edward Whelan, long one of Harvey's heroes.⁵³ Others had languished in well-deserved obscurity. If one were keeping score—and Harvey certainly was—the arrangement meant that PEI's Board representative was 'cleaning up' on on behalf of his beloved province. One can see the power of his PEI patriotism in his subsequent boasting of his plaque-getting prowess. Whether the outcome was a triumph for history as an organized form of inquiry about the past, devoted to achieving a truer insight into "human nature," as Harvey claimed,⁵⁴ or whether it approached that "weakness for meaningless details" with which he had once reproached local historians seems an open question.⁵⁵

More generally, the overall impression created by this string of commemorations was highly misleading. Harvey insinuated the centrality of the Islanders to a political scheme that most of them had, in awkward fact, turned down. Before Harvey's 1931 return to the Maritimes, one historian had satirized the ingenuity of PEI in putting itself forward as the "Cradle of Confederation," when the colony had in fact rejected the agreement. ⁵⁶ It was a nice example, this historian suggested, of the way in which history could be used and abused. That same historian went on to remark, after reading William Menzies Whitelaw's *The Maritimes and Canada Before Confederation* (1934), that this eyebrow-raising and disillusioning account showed how little the Maritimers had in fact been authors of their own fates and masters of their own destiny in the 1860s. ⁵⁷ That revisionist historian's name was D. C. Harvey.

When, in 1938, Harvey wrote to Premier Thane Campbell, "I am anxious that I get as many tablets and memorials for Prince Edward Island as I can while you are Premier, because a certain amount of credit goes to the government when any of these memorials are erected during its administration," one might imagine oneself in a smoke-filled room in which mnemonic wheeling and dealing had become the new normal. 58 One also misses any sense that these memorials were to serve the higher purpose of showcasing organized knowledge obtained by investigation and inquiry. In 1939, as Matthew McRae has revealed, PEI turned a celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Charlottetown Conference into a major moment

⁵³ The prime example of a hero receiving his commemoration was Edward Whelan, reverently restored to memory by Harvey in 1927. PANS, MG1, Vol. 443, Harvey Fonds, DCH, Draft introduction to Whelan, The Union of the British Provinces (1927).

⁵⁴ PANS, MGİ, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 440, f. 86, DCH, "Two Notable Centenaries," draft version of "Centenary of Sam Slick," *Dalhousie Review* (January 1937).

⁵⁵ PANS, MG1, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 456, DCH, "The Value of Local History to the General Historian."

⁵⁶ PANS, MG1, Vol. 437, Harvey Fonds, DCH, draft of "The Charlottetown Conference Revived," Canadian Geographical Journal (September 1939), pp. 184-191.

⁵⁷ DCH, Review of William Menzies Whitelaw, The Maritimes and Canada Before Confederation (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1934), in Dalhousie Review, vol. 14 (1935-1936), pp. 255-256.

⁵⁸ PANS, MG1, D. C. Harvey Papers, Vol. 455, DCH to Thane Campbell, September 15, 1938.

in the advent of a tourism industry that many Islanders had regarded with some scepticism, complete with parades, the crowning of a carnival queen, and the staging of a great pageant celebrating the *Romance of Canada*, as well as—but of course—the unveiling of Harvey's commemorative plaques.⁵⁹

In the 1920s, Harvey as a progressive academic and avid reader of the "new historians" had imagined a relationship between the local and the global historian in which the two were mutually supportive and alike committed to human enlightenment and progress. In the public history world of the 1930s, locales competed with each other for global recognition, and local historians, often bitterly resenting the professionals who sometimes corrected their errors, took malicious delight in accusing a man like Harvey of error. He had imagined a world that operated something like a Greater Seminar, actuated by an earnest search for truth. What he found was often hard-ball politics, human venality, and an emergent quest to make history into a paying proposition, often by making highly questionable claims to a particular location's distinctiveness or priority.

Perhaps the most vexing single issue to arise during Harvey's leadership of PEI public history occurred in this sphere of celebrating liberal political economy, in the form of the Atlantic Cable Dispute. On its face, this attempted celebration of the region's location at the hub of nineteenth-century imperial transatlantic communications provided Harvey with an excellent opportunity to celebrate improvement, technology, and liberal Empire. Yet it embroiled him in precisely the kind of "first things" debates that he had condemned so fervently in Nova Scotia—and showed how vulnerable the HSMBC's version of historical science could be when it was played out before a critical crowd and assessed in terms of its potential impact on tourists.

The debate antedated Harvey and also his predecessor, Judge Walter Crowe, who when he arrived on the Board had had to deal with a proposal to erect a tablet at North Sydney to commemorate the "first submarine telegraph cable laid on this side of the Atlantic." This cable, Judge Crowe was sure—having consulted the General Plant Manager of Ocean Cables, as well as the *Encyclopedia Americana*—was the one that in 1856 had joined North Sydney, Cape Breton and Cape Ray, Newfoundland. In 1930, on the authority of the HSMBC, a tablet was affixed to the Cable Building at North Sydney to commemorate the events connected with the laying of the first submarine telegraph cable in North America, with an approved text—"First Atlantic Cable. This tablet commemorates the first submarine telegraph cable in North America, laid in 1856 between Cape Breton and Newfoundland. The first stage of development of cable communication between this continent and Europe"—that placed the HSMBC's imprimatur upon the claim.⁶⁰

Almost as soon as the tablet was affixed, PEI's irrepressible H. R. Stewart wrote to J. B. Harkin of the Parks Branch to point out that on November 20,

Matthew McRae, "The Romance of Canada: Tourism and Nationalism Meet in Charlottetown, 1939," Acadiensis, vol. 34, no. 2 (Spring 2005), pp. 26-45.

⁶⁰ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, Walter Crowe to F. H. H. Williamson, February 25, 1931; J. B. Harkin to DCH, September 16, 1931.

1852, the first ocean cable had in fact been laid between Cape Tormentine, New Brunswick, and Cape Traverse, Prince Edward Island. Harkin immediately wrote to Judge Crowe, and the HSMBC as a whole decided to convene an emergency committee of the Maritime Provinces representatives to "verify, if possible, the correctness of the inscription on the tablet already cast and erected." ⁶¹

Only the devil could have designed a more ticklish situation. On the one hand, the plaque was up, the unveiling ceremony had taken place, Judge Crowe had shone for a moment on the local stage, and Nova Scotia had a site attesting to its technological prowess and contribution to the onward and upward march of progress. On the other hand, the approved and now all-too-solid text appeared to convey clearly erroneous information, thereby slighting the achievement of another Maritime province and calling into question the HSMBC's credibility. Moreover, taking away North Sydney's site would mean that the PEI-born-and-bred Harvey, Nova Scotia's representative on the HSMBC, was complicit in aiding and abetting a monument grab that benefited his home province at the expense of the jurisdiction that had the honour to pay his salary. History as organized, archivally sound knowledge was in tension with history as a human pursuit carried out in hierarchical local communities by status-conscious notables, often with an eye to an international audience of potential tourists.

Was there a way out? From the standpoint of the General Plant Manager of Ocean Cables, the North Sydney claim was valid. He did not consider a line between Cape Tormentine and Cape Traverse to be one lying in the ocean, but rather in inland waters. Yet no Islander could conceivably accept a description of the Northumberland Strait as an "inland water." Once that argument was scuttled, the evidence seemingly pointed without equivocation to PEI's priority over Cape Breton. Harvey and Webster thought the inscription, though not well worded, could stay in place—at least if one did not notice the comma between "North America" and "laid in 1856." Once the comma was erased, the plaque might simply be commemorating *this* particular cable. Unfortunately, it was hard to erase a cast-in-bronze comma. As it stood, the inscription "if read as two separate parts" was "certainly wrong." Harvey and Webster speculated that an additional tablet could be erected in PEI commemorating the first submarine telegraph cable in North America, "providing that this fact can be established beyond doubt." "63

Harvey went to work and consulted one A. E. Morrison, evidently the world's living authority on the Atlantic cable and thought to have the goods on the PEI case. "Though a complete stranger to you, I am imposing this burden upon you as a fellow Islander anxious to have as many historic sites as possible marked on the Island," he explained frankly. Morrison provided ample details from original sources. The Island cable had been part of a project commenced in 1851 in Newfoundland to run a line of steamers between Galway and St. John's. A submarine cable was then to be laid to Cape Breton and thence by means of another cable to East Point, PEI, and thence from Carleton Head, PEI, to Cape

⁶¹ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, J. B. Harkin to DCH, September 16, 1931.

⁶² It probably did not help the optics that Harvey himself hailed from Cape Traverse.

⁶³ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, DCH to T. C. James, November 16, 1931.

Tormentine, NB, in 1852. The Island never did become a link in the Atlantic Cable system, although this had clearly been the intention of the people laying the cable. Thus Morrison's projected wording for the tablet—"Their line is gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world," from Psalm XIX, Verse IV—was rather misleading, given the rather un-Biblical distance from PEI to New Brunswick. Even calling it the "First Atlantic Cable" was a stretch. Perhaps the little cable had given somebody somewhere confidence that such a cable might eventually be put in place, but it had hardly constituted an organic part of this grander evolutionary development. The project had been, rather, a false dawn, not a successful beginning. An earlier Harvey might have in fact condemned it as a flash-in-the-pan with no lasting evolutionary significance.

Webster "graciously" handed the situation over to Harvey to settle with his Island compatriots. Harvey entered into negotiations with the premier and provincial secretary, who predictably wanted another Charlottetown tablet. Although this meant robbing his native county of its moment, Harvey could see their point: "Carleton Head would be out of the way far from a public road or any tourist attraction and therefore lost." The old headquarters of the telegraph system had been located nearby in the old Law Courts Building, after all, and "[b]esides if it pleases P.E.I., that is something gained." But Harkin was suspicious. The Charlottetown scheme was a new proposal and would require a new decision, and, if the inscription at North Sydney was in fact wrong, that tablet should be removed. 66

The Board did approve the scheme and decided that the wording on the North Sydney plaque had to be changed. Harvey now took up the challenge of editing history. The old inscription for the "First Atlantic Cable" was now provisionally adjusted to: "This tablet commemorates the *laying of a* first submarine telegraph cable in North America, laid in 1856 between Cape Breton and Newfoundland; the first *an essential* stage in the development of cable communication between this continent and Europe. Erected 1930."

As Harvey said to Harkin, it had truly been an "ungracious task" to revise the words of his esteemed predecessor and "to rob his home town of a glory that did not belong to it." The difficulty of writing history in stone and bronze is that any corrections to "history" were time-consuming and embarrassingly public. Harvey, exasperated by unwanted editorial suggestions, explained to Harkin in November 1932 that he had undertaken a "very delicate task" that had required him to "consider sensibilities as well as historical accuracy." It would be too much now to rob North Sydney of its national significance, "a much greater offense than mere neglect." Accuracy had to be weighed against political and social expediency.

⁶⁴ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, Albert E. Morrison of Charlottetown to DCH, November 19, 1931.

⁶⁵ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, DCH to J. B. Harkin, December 23, 1931.

⁶⁶ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, Harkin to DCH, January 5, 1932.

⁶⁷ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, W. Crowe to DCH to Albert E. Morrison, November 17, 1931; Albert E. Morrison of Charlottetown to DCH, November 19, 1931; J. B. Harkin to DCH, September 14, 1932; DCH to Harkin, October 13, 1932; Harkin to DCH, November 16, 1932; DCH to Harkin, October 13, 1932; DCH to J. B. Harkin, October 3, 1933; DCH to Historic Sites and Monuments Board,

At last the issue was settled, it seemed, in September 1933, with the proud unveiling of the "first submarine telegraph tablet" at Charlottetown. It put PEI on the map, Harvey reported:

Thirteen cable and telegraph dispatches were received and read from London, New York, and different points of Canada; besides the Manager of the Bell Telephone Company phoned in a special message in the midst of the proceedings. I know of no function that was so inherently capable of eliciting so many complimentary dispatches. These are all printed in full in the local papers, and I am sure you will be glad to know that in practically every instance there was a friendly reference to the work of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board.⁶⁸

It was a site that was bound to appeal to Harvey's heart, because it linked his native Island and indeed his native county to science, progress, and the Empire, and it told an uplifting story in the depths of the Great Depression.

Yet, within a year of the tablet going up, it came under fierce attack, orchestrated by one D. G. Whidden, the stipendiary magistrate in Wolfville, ardent genealogist, and evidently no friend of Harvey. Whidden launched his attack in the widely circulated *Family Herald and Weekly Star*. He raised two points. One was that submarine cables had been laid in the harbour of New York City in 1848. The second was that a telegraphic link had been earlier established linking Canso with Cape Breton. Whidden's second point was easily dismissed; although he was right in saying that telegraph communication had been established, it had been achieved by throwing a wire across the Strait—not by laying an underwater cable beneath it. The first point was much trickier and potentially more embarrassing, since word of the PEI claim had reached *Scientific American*, which published an item in August 1935 disputing it. The magazine had in its back files a letter that discussed the laying of a cable at the bottom of the Hudson River between New York and Jersey City in July 1848.

The prospect of becoming a continental laughing-stock was sobering, and Whidden and his co-conspirator W. C. Milner, a former archivist and professional loose cannon, played it up. "I think it too bad for a country like Canada to have a tablet in Charlottetown for United States tourists who may happen to know something to laugh at," Whidden exclaimed. Whidden's polemic gave Harvey many an anxious night, but the more he investigated the case, the more assured he became that the HSMBC decision was the correct one. The cable between New York and Jersey City had been laid across a *river bed* (albeit, surely, a quite salty "river bed"), and it was never intended to be part of an oceanic communication system. It was surely right and proper to distinguish "between an experimental riverine and a permanent submarine cable." The controversy continued a little while longer—the *Truro Daily News*, Charlottetown *Guardian*, and *Charlottetown Patriot* were drawn in, and Harvey was told by one editor that the whole affair

September 6, 1935 [in reply to D. G. Whidden]; DCH to J. B. Harkin, March 25, 1935; D. G. Whidden to C. Gordonsmith, April 13, 1935 [copy]; DCH to J. B. Harkin, April 23, 1935; J. B. Harkin to DCH, September 10, 1935; DCH to Harkin, September 21, 1935; Harkin to DCH, September 27, 1935.

⁶⁸ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, DCH to J. B. Harkin, October 3, 1933.

had created an "unfortunate impression" on the Island—yet finally it died down. Both North Sydney and Charlottetown were able to claim the monuments to their progressiveness.⁶⁹

Frustrating and exhausting for Harvey—he may have written as many as 25 letters on the subject, in addition to bearing the burdens of humiliating a former Board member and having his own credibility attacked in the public press—the episode brightly illuminated the interwar politics of history. It confirmed how tightly interwoven were the relations of power and position that complicated any quest for "national significance." In this case, the "tourist gaze" was no academic abstraction, but an argument wielded in the course of deciding whether a site should count or not.

In 1940, Harvey found an opportunity to celebrate a theme close to his heart: that of the stalwart adventurer and pioneer. Throughout his life as an historian, Harvey had thrilled to tales of the fur trade. He had also loved masculine adventure stories and saw PEI as itself a kind of frontier. How could this tale of adventure and civilization be brought to the Island, especially in a way that distinguished it from the rest of the continent? Harvey hit upon fox farming. Charles Dalton, Tignish entrepreneur, had set about collecting breeding stock in 1883, but also drew upon the expertise of Robert Oulton, who had been raising foxes in captivity; the two of them started the first fur farm in 1884, on an island later known as Oulton Island in Alberton Harbour. Their pelts began to attract extraordinary prices, which meant their prior secrecy about their methods of raising fox litters could no longer be maintained. By the 1910s, a "Big Six Combine" had formed in the industry, centred in western Prince County, still predicated upon an agreement not to sell a live fox nor produce too many pelts. The members of the Big Six combine became very wealthy, and, after their monopoly was cracked, a veritable frenzy of foxfarming swept up hundreds of PEI farmers. The industry kept going throughout the war, but crashed in the mid-1940s. 70 Some remembered that many farmers were left "holding the bag" when boom led to bust, although Dalton emerged from it all a millionaire.71

The notion of commemorating the PEI fox farming industry, as exemplified by the Dalton Fox Ranch, seems to have started with Stewart, who asked Harvey about it in December 1933. Stewart was convinced of the importance of fox farming in PEI history, as the hidden factor that explained its resilience in the Depression.⁷² In 1938, Harvey argued that PEI's "Silver Black Fox Industry"

- 69 PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, DCH to Historic Sites and Monuments Board, September 6, 1935 [in reply to D. G. Whidden]; DCH to J. B. Harkin, March 25, 1935; D. G. Whidden to C. Gordonsmith, April 13, 1935 [copy]; DCH to J. B. Harkin, April 23, 1935; DCH to Charlottetown Guardian, September 6, 1935; DCH to Historic Sites and Monuments Board, September 6, 1935; J. B. Harkin to DCH, September 10, 1935; DCH to Harkin, September 21, 1935; Harkin to DCH, September 27, 1935.
- 70 This synopsis relies on Sarah Stresman, "The Fox Industry of Prince Edward Island," http://culturesummerside.com/assets/Program-The-Fox-Industry-on-Prince-Edward-Island.pdf (accessed January, 2016), which contains a useful bibliography.
- 71 Champion, Over On The Island, p. 225.
- 72 PANS, RG 53, Vol. 3, S-Z, August 1933, H. R. Stewart to DCH, December 14, 1933. Stewart's counterfactual argument leaves one wondering how profitable the fox farms were overall and, more specifically, how the wealth they generated was divvied up.

was of national significance and worthy of commemoration because it revealed a level of entrepreneurial prowess and scientific experimentation on the part of Islanders that had resulted in a world-famous "boom in fox ranching" that "spread immediately over the Maritime Provinces, Canada and the United States and ultimately to Europe and Asia."⁷³

By 1938 Harvey had clearly learned some important tricks of the national commemoration trade. It was possible, for instance, to manoeuvre intensively on behalf of a given project—to the point of soliciting support from the premier of PEI, sorting out local controversies over emphasis, and selecting the exact site of a monument—without prior consultation with or clearance from the Board. "Please do not announce this publicly because it has not yet been submitted to the Board or approved by it," Harvey remarked to Thane A. Campbell in November 1938. "I am merely trying to get everything shipshape for our next meeting of the Board and I shall do my best to carry it through. It would embarrass me, however, if it were announced beforehand that a particular type of monument was going to be erected in Alberton or elsewhere."⁷⁴

Vexed questions of priority were raised once again. Should one commemorate the man who first bred the foxes, the inventor who solved the problem of "working out the proper type of nest for the young," the man who came up with the best design for the pen, the man who perfected cross-breeding, or finally the man who promoted the industry? So were questions of liberalism and property. Did a flash-in-the-plan panacea that had not in fact successfully endured in the Island really merit commemoration? Did the man who broke the monopoly merit celebration as a liberal free trader, or condemnation as the man who undermined PEI's privileged position? Moreover—and here in 1938 Harvey encountered an unexpected feminist challenge to the masculine bias that ran through so much of his public history *praxis*—had this really been an industry run by the free-standing male individuals? What about the "fox-women"—the wives without whom the industry would never have been a going concern and whose several descendants and neighbours thought should be mentioned? 16

Finally, there was the commemoration of the great Islanders who had contributed to culture. For Harvey, the major PEI writers—those with more than a local reputation—were Sir Andrew Macphail, Jacob Gould Schurman, Sir Robert Falconer, Basil King, and Lucy Maud Montgomery. He also venerated the artist Robert Harris, whose most famous Canadian painting was of the "Fathers of Confederation" (1884). Under Harvey's leadership, plaques were secured for Montgomery (1948), Harris (1949), Falconer (1949), and Schurman (1951). The commemorations of Macphail, the author of *The Master's Wife*, a portrait of rural

⁷³ PANS, MG1, D. C. Harvey Papers, Vol. 455, DCH, "The Silver Black Fox Industry."

⁷⁴ PANS, MG1, D. C. Harvey Papers, Vol. 455, DCH to Thane A. Campbell, November 12, 1938.

⁷⁵ PANS, MG1, D. C. Harvey Papers, Vol. 455, DCH to Thane Campbell, October 18, 1938; Thane A. Campbell to DCH, November 8, 1938; Anonymous to Thane A. Campbell, November 7, 1938 [copy].

⁷⁶ PANS, MG1, D. C. Harvey Papers, Vol. 455, DCH to Hon. Thane A. Campbell, Premier of PEI, April 14, 1939.

⁷⁷ PANS, RG 53, Vol. 12, 1947, File A-M, DCH to Charles Clay, May 15, 1947.



Figure 2: Postcard showing Historic Sites and Monuments Board cairn to silver fox industry *Source*: Author's collection

life in PEI that Harvey warmly admired, 78 and King, a widely-read religious writer and novelist, evidently posed more challenges. 79

In the case of Dr. Jacob Gould Schurman (1852-1942), so anxious was Harvey in 1941 to obtain a plaque for him that he mobilized support for his commemoration while the man was still alive. (Harvey delicately explained to Schurman's brother that the HSMBC did not commemorate people until they were dead and was not "trying to hasten that event.") Schurman was a former philosopher, university head, president of the first United States Philippine Commission, United States minister to Greece, Montenegro, and China, ambassador to Germany, and, perhaps not coincidentally, a native of Harvey's Prince County. As an "[e]ducationist, author and ambassador" and "[a]uthor of several philosophical treatises," Schurman was clearly a man who exemplified Harvey's Enlightenment ideal, and recognition of the diplomat might warm somewhat strained relations with Americans. Thus,

- 78 In 1956, as guest speaker to the Prince Edward Island Historical Society, Harvey offered to present a collection of historical documents to a new provincial museum; he also envisaged the erection of a "literary shrine" to the memory of Macphail, similar to that now honouring Lucy Maud Montgomery. PANS, MG1, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 456, "Sees Great Wealth for Provincial Museum Here," *Charlottetown Patriot*, n.d. [1956].
- That King was a religious writer, some of whose books were controversial in the stormy 1920s, could not have helped him win recognition in Harvey's secular commemorative world. Among King's works are *The Conquest of Fear* (1921), *The Bible and Common Sense* (1924), *Faith and Success* (1925), *Seven Torches of Character* (1929), and *Adventures in Religion* (1929). It is difficult to say why there would be any troubles with the Macphail file, although, as Ian Ross Robertson points out in his excellent biography, Macphail's master work *The Master's House* was not that well-known in the 1940s and 1950s (Harvey loved it), and it is possibly of interest that Macphail's conservative outlook led him to critique the inequalities and injustices of liberal order. See Ian Ross Robertson, *Sir Andrew Macphail: The Life and Legacy of a Canadian Man of Letters* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), p. 219

relatively fresh in his grave, Schurman acquired a status of "national significance" that few Canadians today would acknowledge.⁸⁰ It was telling that Schurman—along with all the other cultural figures celebrated by Harvey—was no longer an Island resident but rather a minor North American celebrity.

Lucy Maud Montgomery's rise to the pantheon of the historically significant was almost as rapid as that of Schurman. In the case of Montgomery, Harvey was directly lobbied by the Island Travel Bureau, which clearly sensed the mass-tourism potential of *Anne of Green Gables*. Arguing for recognition for Anne's author one year after Montgomery's death—the plaque itself would go up in 1948—Harvey was taking "national significance" (and himself) into a much more explicitly tourism-oriented territory. Tourists had informed Harvey that the existing farm house did not look like the dwelling they had imagined from reading the books. Harvey lobbied for a site sacred to "memorials of 'Anne' herself." The Women's Institute was mobilizing on the question, and Harvey felt the National Parks Branch should heed its voice and make the House "absolutely sacred to 'Anne'."

On September 12, 1948, Lucy Maud Montgomery was officially commemorated; as many as 1,500 people attended the hurriedly organized ceremony. Harvey was delighted by the participation of the local notables—the Chief Justice, Lieutenant Governor, worthies from the Women's Institute—and by the attractive appearance of the monument, made from stone quarried by inmates of a Quebec penitentiary, a detail revelatory of the social relations of heritage production omitted from the programme because "We thought it would probably cast a shadow over the otherwise romantic atmosphere." From Montgomery's career Harvey drew the proud—if not really plausible—conclusion that "it is not necessary for an Islander to go abroad to win international fame or to seek for hidden treasure outside our own garden. For it was the intensive cultivation of her own garden that carried her name to the five continents."

Yet Harvey was also in his prosecution of this case diverging radically from the precepts of critical history he had long defended. Responding directly to the tourism-related demands for commemoration, he was quite consciously now placing his expertise at the industry's disposal, in a way that in other contexts he had found radically objectionable. When Harvey wrote a decade later to Campbell, who had become Chief Justice of PEI, to secure his services for the unveiling

- 80 PANS, MG1, Harvey Fonds, Vol. 456, DCH to Dr. Jacob Gould Schurman, May 31, 1941; DCH to M. F. Schurman, June 20, 1942; M. F. Schurman to DCH, August 6, 1942; W. D. Cromarty to DCH, December 17, 1943; April 5, 1944; June 18, 1945; and July 29, 1946; DCH to Cromarty, February 4, 1947.
- 81 Signs that the "Anne phenomenon" the Island successor to Nova Scotia's "Land of Evangeline" promotion could be a crowd-pleaser were, Alan MacEachern notes, already in evidence by the late 1920s (Natural Selections, p. 83). Matthew McRae, "The Romance of Canada," notes that Cavendish had drawn Anne-focused tourists as early as 1908.
- 82 PANS, MG1, Vol. 445, Harvey Fonds, DCH to W. D. Cromarty, September 17, 1948, with plaque inscriptions.
- 83 Ibid. In more academic contexts, Harvey had used the term "romantic" to denote precisely the type of history that he hoped his new social and intellectual history would supersede.
- 84 PANS, MG1, Vol. 442, Harvey Fonds, f. 172, Notes for a speech at the unveiling of the plaque to Lucy Maud Montgomery.

of a memorial to Lucy Maud Montgomery, one might have been forgiven for imagining one was overhearing a ward boss talking to an underling: "Please do not decline and let me know as soon as possible."85

Did the Anne monument really instantiate "organized knowledge obtained by investigation and enquiry"? Most tourists were (and are still) travelling to the island to visit the famed and imaginary "Green Gables"—which were green thanks to the National Parks Branch, which had in 1936 found the original whitewashed exterior and unpainted trim unsuitable—and not to re-experience the actual history of rural turn-of-the-century PEI. ⁸⁶ Anne is only in part a reminder of the world of Harvey's rural youth. She more crucially functions at the centre of a profit-making nexus of myths and symbols in our own era. ⁸⁷

Thus the same Harvey who rightly figures as the liberal scourge of tourism/ history in Nova Scotia can just as appropriately be figured as one of its pioneers in Prince Edward Island. In 1943, Harvey proudly noted that, since he had arrived on the Board, PEI had received 15 tablets and six cut stone monuments or cairns. The public *History of Prince Edward Island* that he wrote in bronze and stone, the unsatisfactory substitute for the book dreamt of in 1910 and tragically unwritten by the time of his death in 1966, was undoubtedly a form of history—but was it still "dowered with dignity"? Or could it not be seen as down-and-dirty with local politicians and tourism promoters, slowly being changed into its present-day form of entertaining but intellectually vacuous summer festivals?

Harvey is of great contemporary interest as an intellectual who grasped many of the unsettling underlying implications of the new tourism/history and struggled, in certain contexts, to preserve history as a form of critical knowledge about the past. His mentorship of a cadre of critical scholars and his own profound attachment to liberal values made possible a body of critical historical knowledge and an archival institution wherein it could be further developed. Harvey sincerely wanted to turn the page on romantic history and focus soberly on how communities over time solved their problems in ever more enlightened ways. He wanted to lift local historians out of their restricted outlooks and encouraged them to develop a more holistic vision of their mission. Erecting monuments to celebrate civilizational achievements was meant as a signal, both to the world and to local citizens, that history should incite people to make their best efforts and should acquire the reasoned foundations of a common citizenship. The point of history was to help

⁸⁵ PANS, MG1, Vol. 445, Harvey Fonds, DCH to Thane A. Campbell, August 27, 1948; Thane A. Campbell to DCH, August 31, 1948; DCH to Campbell, September 3, 1948.

⁸⁶ MacEachern, Natural Selections, p. 73.

⁸⁷ It is suggestive that both Anne and Evangeline came to share the spotlight at the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlottetown in 2013. In his "author's notes" to his musical, Ted Dykstra salutes the world premiere of his *Evangeline* with the comment: "What a great country we live in. Here am I, a first-generation Dutch Canadian from Northern Alberta, telling a 25-year-old tale of French people from the Maritimes, written by an English American 150 years ago, and performed by an incredible, multilingual, and diverse cast from all over Canada, in the cradle of Confederation." See Ted Dykstra, "Author's Notes," Confederation Centre of the Arts, *Evangeline* (Charlottetown, 2013), programme, p. 11.

⁸⁸ PANS, MG1, Vol. 442, Harvey Fonds, f. 172, Notes for a speech at the unveiling of the plaque to Lucy Maud Montgomery. Eight more were added by the end of 1952.

⁸⁹ PANS, MG1, Vol. 441, Harvey Fonds, f. 94, Draft of "Canadian Historians and Present Tendencies in Historical Writing," *Report* of the Canadian Historical Association, 1930.

humankind—Prince Edward Islanders included—to apply organized knowledge, rationally and reflectively, to social ends.

Yet, drawn almost involuntarily into the HSMBC world and sometimes within it fighting tenaciously for the liberal values of free inquiry and open discussion, Harvey was also led by his profound attachment to the Island into forms of historical practice influenced by an entirely different logic; that of a state and its local adherents seeking to legitimize itself through performances of identity and through the encouragement of profit-making in civil society. (He would confront similar challenges in the same period as the HSMBC representative for Nova Scotia, complicated by the more salient persistence in that province of the "Acadian Question" as a consequence of its quasi-official promotion since the 1890s of the "Land of Evangeline" and the presence of an active heritage-seeking Acadian community.) In a pattern familiar throughout the twentieth-century West, Harvey discovered in essence that his liberal values contained a basic contradiction: under existing conditions, the seemingly fundamental values of liberalism were marginalized by twentieth-century social and economic realities that Harvey could neither theorize nor change within the paradigm governing his praxis. He was driven, with the best of intentions, to forms of historical practice radically opposed to those he had sought to instantiate and preserve in his "laboratory of history." For someone as idealistic as he, the consolations of prestige and power did not efface the indignity of seeing Clio undermined—Harvey would have surely have said, debased—by commerce.

Harvey had tried so hard to make public history pay off for his beloved, beleaguered Island. Yet he had the bitter sense, as he contemplated finding a successor in the late 1940s, that, after all his hard work and all his compromises, he was still regarded as a "foreigner" in PEI. 90 Trapped by contradictions that were not of his own making, in which "negotiating the past" often entailed the victory of the loudest and best-connected voices,⁹¹ increasingly pushing a centralist agenda antithetical to Harvey's own, and also finding himself prompted by a "local patriotism" to enter into forms of historical practice that made a mockery of his ethics and his epistemology, Harvey viewed his time as PEI's ranking public historian with sharp regret. He lamented that it had cost him the scholarly study of his native province that he had wanted to write for 50 years. The region's foremost advocate of history as an organized form of critical knowledge about the past now mourned his involvement in new forms of historical practice that were antithetical to his scholarly ideals, his lifelong ambitions, and his liberal idealism. In retrospect, his verdict on his own complicated involvement with the world of tourism/history was that it had constituted a tragic waste of his time. Contemporary heritage workers, especially those directly affected by tourism, who seek to maintain their intellectual integrity amid the market-driven logic of a now imponderable vast mnemonic enterprise, can find in Harvey an instructive and sobering preview of their own contradictory struggles.

⁹⁰ PANS, MG1, Vol. 450, Harvey Fonds, DCH to J. Walter Jones, September 17, 1948.

⁹¹ As amply documented in Taylor, Negotiating the Past, pp. 129-135.