

REDISCOVERING THOMAS ADAMS  
Rural Planning and Development in Canada

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thomas Adams' *Rural Planning and Development* was first brought to my attention by Professor Michael Troughton while I was studying for my undergraduate degree at the University of Western Ontario. Over the years it became a touchstone, a measure if you like, of how rural Canada and the profession of planning have evolved over the last hundred years. It is my hope that students of rural communities and planning will come to see the value of this book for its historic and philosophic contributions.

The republishing of this book has taken a number of years to come to fruition. It is a tribute to those who contributed in one way or another – to their patience, perseverance, and commitment to this project. To the contributing authors my many thanks. There are also many students at the University of Guelph who played a hand in the reproduction of this book. They include Kate Hagerman, Elizabeth Vanstone, Laura Weir, Erin Bankes, Nicolas Brunet, Irv Marucelj, Jennifer Ball, and Therese Ludlow. At UBC Press Melissa Pitts shepherded this project to completion and Holly Keller gave this old book new life, despite what must have felt like 10,000 ancient photos and maps.

At a personal level, none of this would be possible without the support, love, and encouragement of my wife Deborah and my children Michael and Alison. Words of thanks can never fully express my gratitude.

# INTRODUCTION

Wayne J. Caldwell

*[The point is] whether we stand still and talk ideals or move forward and get as much realization of our ideals as possible in a necessarily imperfect society, capable only of imperfect solutions to its problems.*

— Thomas Adams, *New Republic*, 6 July 1932

When Thomas Adams accepted an offer of employment from the Commission of Conservation (1909-21) and landed in Canada in 1914, it was still uncertain how much influence he would have on the newly established profession in which he had, largely through circumstances of the moment, become involved. He was invited to Canada because of his prior involvement in Letchworth Garden City, an experiment that was arguably unsuccessful in its implementation, if reasonable in its scope and idea. By managing that project from 1901 to 1906, however, Adams did acquire practical experience that made him marketable, and so he enjoyed professional life for the next eight years as one of the earliest private planning consultants, supplementing practice with academic study and seizing opportunities to speak at conferences around the world.

It was therefore because of Adams' reputation and experience that he was sought after and hired in Canada. Although he achieved some success, a number of factors undermined his long-term goals and ultimately soured his experience. Adams eventually left Canada for residency and employment in the United States, but not before leaving behind several legacies. He wrote numerous publications, the most comprehensive of which is *Rural Planning and Development: A Study of Rural Conditions and Problems in Canada* (1917). He established the Town Planning Institute of Canada and, finally, he ceaselessly promoted the modern planning profession, even though his efforts were often opposed by his newly adopted countrymen.

It is, perhaps, a testament to Adams' strength of character that he suffered professional disappointment in both Britain and Canada, and the disappointments followed him to the United States. Because they coloured his expectations

over time, his writings tend to include details of implementation rather than rhetoric. From this perspective, he is a planner's planner: the idea may be the thing, but application of a described process accomplishes the goal.

Adams also continues to be relevant because of his ability to effectively link short-term actions with their long-term effect, to link the tactical with the strategic aspects of planning decisions. In other words, he recognized that short-term projects could either contribute to or sabotage long-term goals. Some would call Adams an idealist, but though he might have walked with his head brushing the clouds, his feet were firmly locked to that plane of earth where business, government, and other man-made institutions swirled in conflict. He could draw, and explain to others, a traversable path from the realities of his world to the standards he was attempting to espouse.

### WHO WAS THOMAS ADAMS?

Thomas Adams was both a product of his times and of his personal circumstances. Having grown up on a family farm outside of Edinburgh, Scotland, Adams introduced a new concept of balance between rural and urban life to Canadian planning. Although his work was regarded highly throughout the world, he suffered the consequences of his time – a climate of war and uncertainty. As a convinced utilitarian and pragmatist, he insisted on attaining natural harmony in society and the co-operation of individuals.

In his early life, Adams had two major influences. Family, farming, and his involvement in public life allowed him to further his understanding of the social issues of his time. Distrust in the power of the state caused him to favour individual liberties (or associated individualism). His involvement in local politics became more serious when he became a local councillor at the end of the nineteenth century. This led to a career in journalism in London and involvement in the newly emerging Garden City movement.

Adams then qualified as a surveyor and became one of the first people in England to make his living entirely from planning and designing garden suburbs. In 1910, because of his growing reputation in his new profession, he became the first president of the British Town Planning Institute.

### Canada's Century, 1896-1913

Meanwhile, Canada was experiencing a fifteen-year period of economic prosperity and an incredible expansion of its population. This expansion was essentially caused by wide open immigration policies that were aimed at populating the Prairies. However, Canada's rural population rose only by 17 percent while its urban population grew by 62 percent. Urban development was characterized by grid design and did not take into consideration the topography of the land.

Market forces determined land use, and single-family housing encouraged the development of new subdivisions at an alarming rate. Adams identified some major consequences of these developments.

Adams noticed that land speculation resulted in cities expanding their boundaries to attain more land for development. However, a large proportion of this land had no prospect of being developed and would consequently become sterile. This idle land would result in increased costs for municipalities and lead to bankruptcy in some cases. Furthermore, according to Adams, land assessments were based on fictitious values. Unrealistically low densities of development, he argued, would lead to dramatic tax increases because of increased servicing costs. Residents of suburban areas would then be faced with high land and transport expenditures. Many homes would become slums because families would not be able to afford these unpredicted increases in living costs. Moreover, cities were increasingly becoming grim and dirty because of the lack of public investment in the arts and green spaces. There was little control over the exploitation of natural resources and land use.

Adams recognized that rural areas faced similar issues. Speculators held the best land, close to railways and off the market, and other lands were unavailable because of premature subdivisions. Settlements were scattered and lacked essential services such as health care, municipal services, and schools. This made the city look like a good option for rural Canadians and contributed to the depopulation of rural areas.

In response, city planning became a prominent feature of Canadian progressivism. It was believed that America's City Beautiful movement, with its well-laid-out plans and aesthetically pleasing concepts, would reduce social tension, secure property values, and promote stability and efficiency. Canadians in general, however, were not receptive to these ideas, stressing instead more urgent needs such as health care. Town planning came to be associated with luxury, and the City Scientific movement instead prioritized health, economics, and beauty (in that order). The movement was based on the British Garden City movement and, in its attempt to provide for the population at large, was oriented towards efficiency in the provision of services.

### Canada and Thomas Adams: A Marriage Waiting to Happen

The Commission of Conservation was established in response to a growing concern about the rapid destruction of natural resources in Canada. It sought to promote scientific management principles for the conservation and economic development of natural resources. Before the arrival of Thomas Adams, Dr. Charles Hodgett, the commission's chief medical officer, along with G. Frank Beer and Colonel Jeffrey H. Burland, was the leading authority in Canadian planning. Aware of the rapid decay of the urban environment, a lobby campaigned for

the appointment of a planning expert. To this end, Adams was appointed town planning adviser to the federal government in 1914 following three requests from Prime Minister Robert Borden. The British government simply could not spare Adams until that time. Adams was given a three-year contract, and he took on the new challenge in stride.

By early 1915, Adams had visited all the Canadian provinces except for Prince Edward Island. His aim was to establish planning as a central function of governments at all levels and to base it on an integrated structure of legislation, administration, public support, and professional organization, education, and expertise. Around the same time, he founded the commission's journal, *Town Planning and the Conservation of Life*, and advised many municipalities on planning problems, often through the Civic Improvement League. By 1918, five provinces had adopted new planning legislation. Early planning legislation was tame in comparison to the legislation of today because planning was usually limited to the urban fringe, not developed areas. Adams, inspired by his desire to make planning an academic discipline and his belief that little was known about Canada's environmental problems, also designed several projects. In his case study of Ottawa, he surveyed housing issues in the urban environment. He then undertook an investigation of attitudes towards urban planning and development by circulating a questionnaire in over two hundred towns. As he worked on these projects, he was also writing *Rural Planning and Development*, his first major work and possibly his most notable contribution to Canadian planning.

In 1916, Adams unveiled the first draft of an Act to ensure that new development would be regulated, that public monies would be spent in the best possible way, and, finally, that conditions in urban communities would not cause unnecessary impairment of health or loss of life. Executive responsibilities would be placed in the hands of a professional town planning surveyor, and planning would be made mandatory. Towns would adopt long-term planning schemes, while rural areas would adopt the simpler method of bylaws. His plan was criticized. Critics claimed it lacked imagination and was far too complex. The Act, therefore, was not adopted on a large scale. Adams' 1919 campaign for provincial planning legislation also had little success and came to a halt. Critics said that the legislation could not be adapted to the needs of Canada and that the British town planning scheme was not suitable for the North American context. Many provinces adopted American-style legislation, which was simpler and allowed municipalities to have comprehensive control over planning and zoning.

As a private practitioner, Adams was appointed as a consultant on a number of new Canadian communities, including Temiscaming in western Quebec, Corner Brook in Newfoundland, and the Richmond District of Halifax, which had been devastated by an explosion in the harbour in 1917. From 1922 to 1936, Welland,



Kitchener, and London each hired Adams as their town planning consultant. Kitchener's plan was the first to become law in Ontario. Adams also designed Lindenlea in Ottawa in response to demands for low-cost housing suburbs after 1918. In this case, his progressive plan was not followed, and the project was taken over by others. Although the project was completed, it never housed its target population.

### The Town Planning Institute of Canada

In 1919, a group of land surveyors and engineers combined their efforts with those of Adams to create the first professional planning institute, the Town Planning Institute of Canada. This group included Noulan Cauchon, Horace Seymour, A.S. Dalzell, and James Ewing, all of whom Adams had worked with previously. The institute had fifty-two members, and Adams became its first elected president, serving two terms. Members included engineers, surveyors, architects, and landscape architects.

### Leaving Canada, 1920-30

In the postwar era, growth was interrupted and planning seemed irrelevant. The major preoccupations of the profession became zoning and town and highway design, and recessions and government conservatism had a detrimental effect on Adams' work. The expiration of the Civic Improvement League and the progressive recommendations of *Rural Planning and Development* went unnoticed. In January 1921, the Commission of Conservation was dissolved because of policy conflicts between levels of government and intra-government jealousies. Adams' influence was reduced further when the Town Planning Branch of the Commission of Conservation was transferred to the National Parks Division of the Department of the Interior. Adams, however, was appointed town planning adviser for the Town Planning Branch.

Following these events, Adams' involvement in Canadian planning issues became increasingly distant. In February 1920, Adams accepted a part-time position as chief consultant on planning for a new firm in the United States, American City Consultants. He also lectured part-time at MIT and went on to play a leading role in the establishment of US planning education. In July 1923, his contract as the town planning consultant to the Canadian government ended. In September, he was appointed chief consultant to the Committee on the Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs. Six years later, he retired after completing the plan's ten volumes. At that time, he had a staff of 150 and a budget of one million dollars, a considerable amount at the time. He then went on to become associate professor of research in city planning at Harvard University.

During this period, he wrote four books: *Neighborhoods of Small Homes: Economic Density of Low-Cost Housing in America* (1931); *Recent Advances in Town Planning* (1932); *Design of Residential Areas: Basic Considerations, Principles and Methods* (1934); and *Outline of Town and City Planning: A Review of Past Efforts and Modern Aims* (1935).

Throughout his career, Adams proved to be a pioneer in modern planning. On 24 March 1940, after a lifetime of dedication to the field, he passed away in Sussex, England, after a short illness. His professional experience in Britain, Canada, and the United States included significant disappointments, but perhaps they added to the realism and urgent practicality of his writings.

THE PLANNING OF YESTERDAY, TODAY

Although *Rural Planning and Development* was written for a different age, the issues that Adams identifies in it resonate with our own times. Adams spent a great deal of effort attempting to formalize the planning profession in Canada, and we now bear the benefits of his exertions. It is now recognized that planning has its own approaches, tools, and methods. Although planning may focus on land use issues, planners also concern themselves with the local economy, labour and employment, demographics, resource management, and environmental protection (see Figure 1). They adapt to and capitalize on parallel processes, relying on community initiatives as much as on legislated processes in the implementation of their initiatives. In sum, rural planning is the process of planning for rural areas, with a focus on rural issues and from a rural perspective (implying an appreciation for the rural community, its needs and aspirations) (Caldwell 2005).

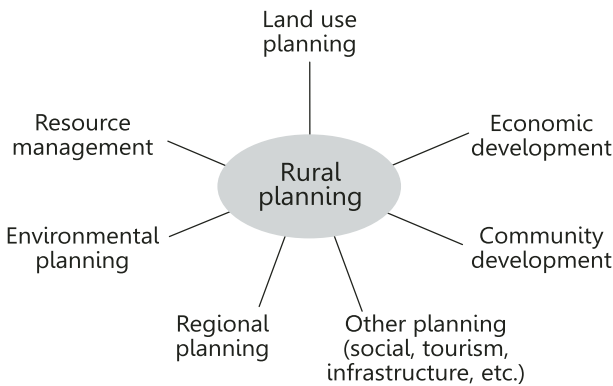


FIGURE 1 COMPONENTS OF RURAL PLANNING

Adams advises as much in *Rural Planning and Development*. Although his omission of public participation in the planning process is sometimes identified as a key difference between planning then and now, Adams does recommend comprehensive social surveys as a prerequisite to local planning (page 344). Although today's methods of eliciting community participation are not discussed explicitly in Adams' writing, it is evident that Adams was moving in that very direction with his conclusions on process and good planning. Along with his call for an integration of effort among different levels of government in planning initiatives, Adams' writing attempts to pre-empt the bureaucratization of comprehensive planning that came later.

As the designer, in the 1920s, of New York's first regional plan, Adams recognized the benefits of comprehensive planning, but he only did so in a manner that could be tolerated by residents. While Adams was open to a diversity of approaches and strategies, he was also sensitive to community aspirations with an appreciation for what the community would accept.

Adams' exploration of local character as a key to local planning solutions has been institutionalized over time, particularly in the rural context, where staying within budgetary or profitability limits can be more difficult than in the urban context. Farmers in the Okanagan Valley, for instance, face different issues than those in the Fraser Valley – the diversity of rural Canada has forced us to heed Adams' insistence on social and economic surveys in the search for realistic solutions.

Adams was also concerned about reactive government policies and public initiatives to stem urbanization. In *Rural Planning and Development*, he extensively acknowledges the challenges of rural living, the illusory ease of urban living, and the need for planners to maintain the rural-urban balance by planning rural communities that offer the same promises as their urban counterparts. The 29 November 2004 issue of *Maclean's*, which featured an article on the war between town and country, illustrates the continued currency of this issue. Canada has continued to transform from a rural to an urban country, and this shift has often meant a loss of political clout for rural communities, migrating youth, an aging population, the paving over of farmland for suburbs, and ongoing competition within urban Canada for increasingly limited resources.

Although Adams identified rural issues and outlined solutions, thoughtful and deliberate planning interventions are quite recent. There were efforts in the 1930s to respond to challenges on the farm through the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, but a broader community-based focus on planning was much later in coming. Following the Second World War, the rejuvenated planning profession turned its attention to urban issues, which, in the postwar decades of rapid economic growth and relative urban prosperity, proved to be more pressing. Regional planning focused on urban regions and the debate about metropolitan management

(Hodge and Robinson 2002). This focus in turn led to questions and concerns regarding the role of the so-called rural. The Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act (1961) created a framework for focusing on rural issues, and within fifteen years of the publication of Ralph Krueger's seminal study of Ontario's tender fruit lands (1959), Canadian planners had developed a distinct rural perspective. The 1961 legislation was followed by the Canada Land Inventory, which also facilitated this shift in perspective by cataloguing the location and quality of agricultural lands (Crerar 1963). In the early 1970s, provincial and municipal governments increasingly focused on planning for rural areas. David Douglas (1989) notes that agriculture resurfaced as the primary rural issue in the British Columbia Land Commission (1973), in the passage in Quebec of the Act to Preserve Agricultural Land (1978), and in the Ontario Foodland Guidelines (1978). Countryside planning in Ontario proved to be influential throughout the country (MacLaren 1975). All of these studies addressed planning issues related to an increasingly industrial agricultural sector (Troughton 1982). By the mid to late 1970s, effective municipal rural planning systems existed in areas such as the County of Kings, Nova Scotia, and Huron County and Waterloo Region in Ontario.

In many respects, urbanization and suburbanization, scattered rural development, economic decline, environmental degradation, and the relationship between primary industries and their host communities drove the rural planning agenda for the next four decades. Successful rural planning responded to these issues. British Columbia's Agricultural Land Reserve program, for example, stemmed the conversion of farmland for non-agricultural uses (Smith and Haid 2004). Quebec developed an Act to Protect Agricultural Land (Bryant 1994) and, in Ontario, some agriculturally based municipalities eliminated new, scattered, rural development (Caldwell, Weir, and Thomson 2003). However, challenges remain. Although Canadian cities have achieved relatively high densities (Condon 2004), the issue of sprawl and the related loss of farmland still exist. Recent initiatives, including Greenbelt legislation, attempt to respond to these trends.

Is rural planning constantly struggling to find its niche? Why is it that after a century of planning efforts, planners continue to face the same problems? Adams' professional experience caused him to recognize the conflictual nature of planning and the need for a focused dedication to principles. In his words, "there can be no simple and ready solution of the complicated social questions dealt with in this report, and it is equally obvious that the adoption of the most perfect system of planning and developing land will not do more than provide the right foundation on which to build a solution by a slow and gradual process" (page 339). In the closing chapter of *Rural Planning and Development*, Adams sets out an agenda that continues to represent the focus of today's rural planners (page 340). Although advancements have been made since his time – particularly in the investigation of rural issues, the adoption of planning legislation, and the formalization of planning processes – the rest of the world has not waited for

the planning world to implement its collective plan. As a result, the intensification of pressures has forced rural planners to constantly experiment with new strategies and to assess old tactics for their continued relevance. Given the pace of progress, it can be expected that some of today's challenges will burden the planners of the next century. And, as Adams' example shows, it is the policy of today that will prevent or ameliorate the issues of tomorrow. Again, this should not deter us from the accomplishments of *Rural Planning and Development*. Thomas Adams might have been one of the catalysts of the movement, but rural planners and those involved in rural planning but not formally of the profession also deserve credit. Rural planning in Canada has, however, continued to be a stew of challenges over the past decades.

From the Rural Planning District Commissions of New Brunswick to those who deal with the agricultural lands of Ontario and Alberta, there are planners dedicated to speaking about and addressing rural issues. As a profession, however, planners have devoted inadequate attention to rural matters. For example, a keyword search of articles in *Plan Canada* (1978-2008) yields 64 "rural" and 860 "urban" articles. Canadian planning texts make limited reference to rural or agricultural issues, yet approximately 20 percent of the country's population and more than 99 percent of the country's land is rural and remote. Thus, while a rural focus does exist in planning, it does not command a sufficient degree of attention.

One of the successes of rural planning has been a willingness to tackle diverse issues. Yet much of rural Canada remains susceptible to broad global and market trends that threaten community stability. Although the interest is there, rural planners lack the influence needed to guarantee the maintenance of rural qualities of life. Provincial governments also struggle with this issue. In Quebec, for example, the National Policy on Rurality was developed in 2006 to establish conditions conducive to ensuring that Quebec's rural areas develop and thrive.

Parts of Canada have made progress in recognizing the role of agriculture and acting to protect it. British Columbia took strong action nearly thirty years ago and continues to see dividends. Alberta is grappling with this issue. Ontario passed the Greenbelt Act in 2005 and a revised planning policy statement. Many farmers recognize that preventing scattered rural development serves the interest of agriculture. Complementary urban planning successes contribute to higher densities that, in turn, protect farmland.

Across Canada, specialized tools, techniques, and policies are used to plan for the countryside. Scattered residential development is generally discouraged. Legislation regulates land use issues associated with livestock production. Recreational and extractive uses can be accommodated. In Ontario, laws protect sensitive rural areas, including the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine. Although conflict continues, planners have attempted to use preventative and consultative strategies to facilitate decision making.

Many small towns and villages struggle with a changing economy. Although main street and heritage programs help, the decline in population and economic strength of small communities continues. Moreover, the desire for development sometimes leads to a lowering of community standards in the hope of attracting investment.

In a country as diverse as Canada, some communities have limited capacity and desire to pursue comprehensive planning. While some do not perceive a need for planning and others are reluctant to see an enhanced role for government, a wider range of communities could benefit from rural planning.

We know that most Canadians, given the option, would choose to have dynamic, healthy, and sustainable rural communities. Much as Adams did several generations ago, it is now our professional obligation to guide our surroundings toward that goal. After all, from the planners that followed Adams, we have inherited the tools and policies that make this an achievable objective; in cases where they are wanting, we have the processes in place to refocus or change them entirely.

## PLANNING FOR TOMORROW

Today, there are more than eight thousand professional planners in Canada and millions of citizens who are engaged in the planning process in one way or another. In fact, everyone in the country, whether they are insulated in a condominium in the heart of our largest cities or travelling on roads in the most remote communities, have been influenced and affected by numerous planning decisions. Our transportation systems, our development standards, and, increasingly, the holistic planning of our communities (in accordance with Adams' thinking) affect how we move, live, and, ideally, thrive in our environments. Although there may not be direct linkages between all of Adams' conclusions and the planning challenges of today, Adams' critical method of investigation, recognition of (but not resignation to) realities, and openness to local perspectives all serve as excellent principles for planners to emulate.

*Adams' Rural Planning and Development* is unequivocally a milestone in Canadian planning for three reasons. First, it provides insight into rural planning a century ago. It has thus become valuable for its historical information. Adams provides us with a detailed overview of conditions in rural Canada at the turn of the last century. He draws upon census information and numerous case studies and examples from the United States, England, Australia, and elsewhere. He was witness to the development, speculation, and intolerable living and working conditions prevalent throughout rural and urban Canada, and he outspokenly condemned the trends.

Second, Adams' book provides a broad-based vision for planning. Although his work has a decidedly land use and development bias, Adams recognizes the

relationship between planning and the broader connections with health, culture, education, and employment. In fact, an argument can be made that Adams offers a comprehensive vision of planning that, at times, has been lacking for the past one hundred years.

Third, the book provides an objective and rational scientific vision for planning practice. Adams' focus on numbers, standards, and statistics clearly promulgated the value that planning could bring to society. He understood the political realities of planning and how to navigate government institutions and processes to achieve success. In this context, Adams sowed the seeds for planners and the planning profession, as it is known today.

*Rural Planning and Development* is an important book for all Canadian planners and students of planning. It provides historical context for our profession. It provides a formative, and still relevant, vision of what planning can be. And, through understanding Adams' personal experiences, it demonstrates that planning, whether rural or urban, requires hard work and individual initiative to be successful. Planners cannot afford to simply guard and maintain the processes and policies of the past; they must strive to improve the quality of life in the communities where they operate. In today's evolving, complex society, where communities struggle to achieve "sustainability," planners must, ultimately, be courageous enough to provide leadership.

## THIS BOOK

This book includes the complete text of *Rural Planning and Development*, including appendices, diagrams, and photos. None of the original work has been modified or changed in any way. Modern reflections or commentaries, however, follow each chapter.

These reflections are by leading academics and practitioners from across the country who provide their perspectives on Adams' work and the role he played in shaping communities and professional practice in Canada. The commentaries also update each chapter by reflecting on the context and, in some cases, the relevance of its conclusions in the twenty-first century. Adams' place in the history of the profession is evident in the enthusiasm that each author brings to the project.

Although each contributor offers a different perspective on Adams' influence, they all acknowledge that Adams was a product of his times, the First World War era, and heavily influenced by his background in the United Kingdom. They also recognize the thoroughness of his work and his perceptive understanding of rural conditions at the turn of the twentieth century.

Jeanne Wolfe, who passed away in 2009, in her commentary on Chapter I, notes both Adams' on-going relevance and the historical context of his work. She outlines Adams' understanding of the interplay between rural and urban

conditions and shows that this interplay persists today. Her description of Adams' holistic view of planning – one that included not only prescriptive land use but also an acknowledgment of the need to address local opportunities for social development – reinforces its applicability in the intervening years.

Wolfe also notes some of Adams' deficiencies. His writings on European immigration to North America and the re-integration of returning soldiers may have less direct usefulness today. In a wider sense, however, international population movement has not been staunched in recent years, and the challenges of rapid growth and the accommodation of immigrants into economic and social life are still with us.

The late Michael Troughton of the University of Western Ontario discusses how Adams connected the lack of protection for rural issues to a focus on urban planning and the encroachment of urban land use. Troughton notes the necessity to protect rural lands and Adams' quest for rural sustainability. Both are relevant to today's rural planners.

Understanding the Canadian context in which Adams worked is also central to formulating a clear view of both the factors that drove Adams' conclusions and our modern dilemmas regarding rural and urban attention. Being able to cleave the conclusions in *Rural Planning and Development* from the outdated societal conditions in which they were formulated increases the applicability of its lessons for today.

Chapter III of Adams' text focuses on systems of surveying and planning land in rural areas. In reviewing the chapter, Hok-Lin Leung notes the legacy of these initial survey patterns in both rural and urban forms throughout Canada. He flags the resulting contradiction between this man-made system and the "natural order" because of its implications for today's settlement patterns.

In Chapter IV, Ian Wight reflects on Adams' discussion of rural transportation and distribution, both within Canada and beyond. Wight supports Adams' promotion of comprehensive planning, although he acknowledges that the omission of public participation in Adams' writings would not be in line with today's practice. He concludes by recognizing the rational nature of Adams' planning and questioning. Wight also speculates on how Adams himself would operate as a planner in today's environment of increasingly qualitative approaches.

The late Len Gertler reflects on land speculation, assessment, and development in Chapter V, "Rural Problems that Arise in Connection with Land Development." Adams' cautions regarding land speculation and its ties to real property value and development incentives are very real today in both rural and urban areas, especially on the heels of the recent housing boom. Adams' warnings about subdivision and rural land severance have gone largely unheeded, and we have now witnessed many of the consequences he warned against.

Tony Fuller examines Adams' agricultural concerns in Chapter VI. In this chapter, Adams emphasizes the role of capital and education in promoting activities in



rural areas. There are parallels with the modern issue of rural credit in both the developed and developing worlds. Adams identifies types of rural industries, as well as issues regarding their incorporation into the greater community fabric. He uses the concept of distribution economy to help describe the challenges these industries face. Fuller also comments on Adams' promotion of co-operation among farmers, rural industries, and rural communities in general.

Chapter VII, "Government Policies and Land Development," delves into Adams' views on the realities planners face when they work through public administrations to accomplish their goals. Adams exposes the pressure that commercial interests can have on government decisions and the need for planners to maintain their professional stamina in the course of their work. The role that governments have in dictating planning is discussed by Jill Grant in her reflection on the chapter. She points out that Adams identified the repercussions of failing to achieve a balance between government and industry. He also discussed the role of infrastructure, primarily transportation networks, and the segments of society they promote. Grant perceptively observes that Adams' faith in scientific expertise reflected the philosophy of the progressive era, particularly its emphasis on the governments' role in achieving efficient and orderly development.

Chapter VIII, which addresses the reintegration of soldiers following the First World War, at first glance appears to be dated. In his reflections, however, John Devlin ties the issue of soldier settlement to settlement and migration in general, an issue that, in the rural-urban context, elicits as much concern today as soldier settlement did in Adams' time. At issue is the broad challenge of encouraging settlement in certain areas or certain patterns. Since overcrowding and sprawl remain problems, the details in this chapter maintain their relevance.

Adams addresses the need for planning legislation in Chapter IX. Gary Davidson notes that it was Adams' vision that set the tone for comprehensive planning legislation that covered both rural and urban areas. This was a new idea in Canada at the time, and it took time for the idea to come to fruition, even though Adams spent much effort planting the seeds in his work. Ever the pragmatist, he lays out a scheme in this chapter by which the legislation could be administered, updated, and enforced. Adams' instrumentalist, even ideological, view of planning is emphasized in Davidson's reflections. He argues that these ideas "started a planning process that has had significant negative impacts on rural communities." Although there is much to be praised in Adams' work, this critical observation is equally relevant to today's communities.

Chapter X summarizes Adams' recommendations, which I group into five themes. Government organization, or Adams' attempts to promote co-operation with and complement various levels of government on planning issues, is the first. Adams also reinforced the need for comprehensive survey during his work in Canada and beyond and, as Adams points out in Chapter IX, he believed formal legislation was critical to the sustainability and advancement of the planning

profession. The need for settlements, both agricultural and industrial, free from artificial pressures, was an important pillar in Adams' rational approach. Lastly, the issue of social readjustment, in the context of returning soldiers, illustrates Adams' understanding of the many factors that need to be taken into consideration to establish a thriving community and, therefore, what constitutes good planning.

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RURAL PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT

A Study of Rural Conditions and Problems  
in Canada

BY  
THOMAS ADAMS



WITH COMMENTARIES

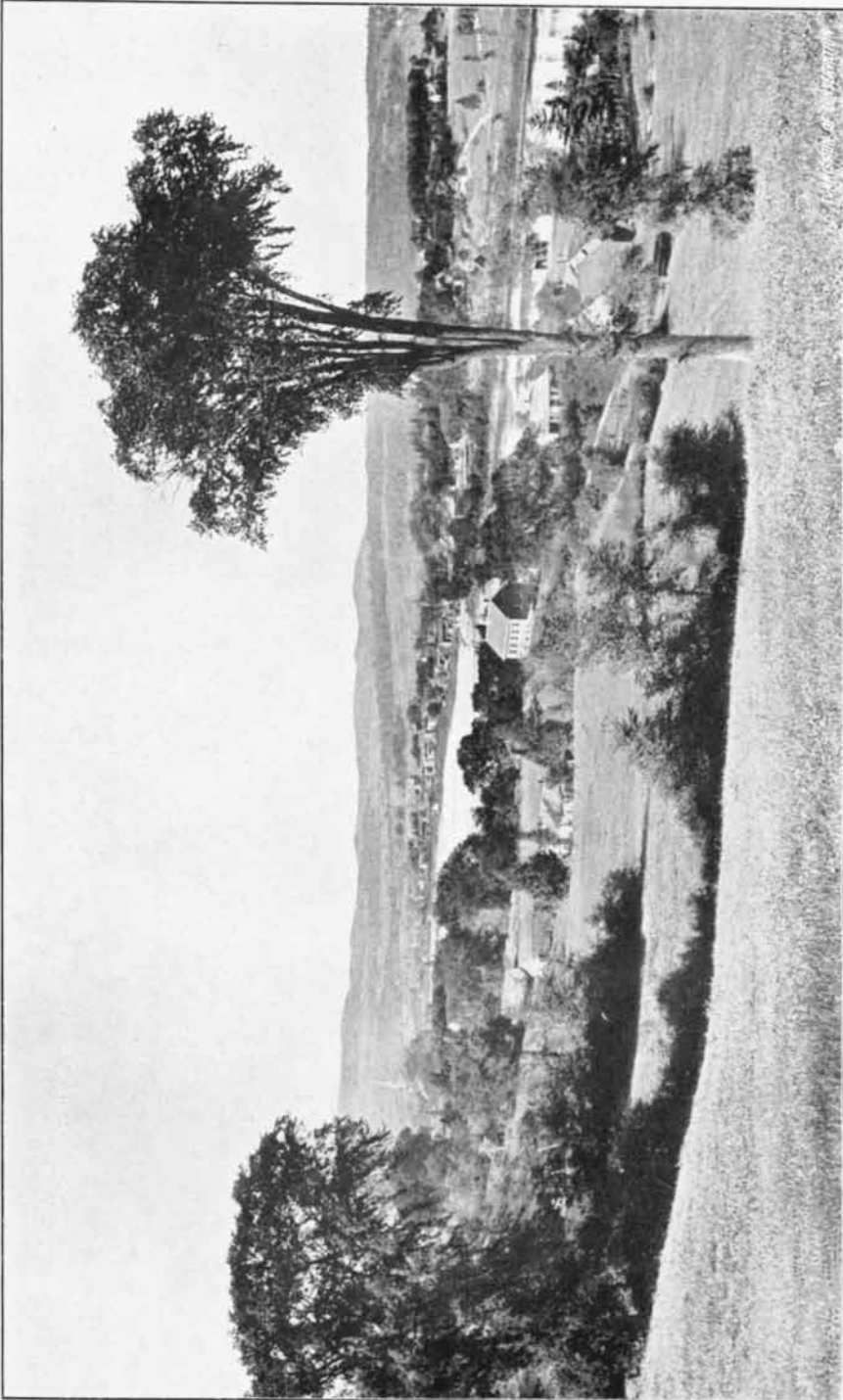


PLATE I VIEW OF RICHMOND, EASTERN TOWNSHIPS, QUEBEC

Where nature and the art of man combine to make the perfect blend of country and town.  
*Photo by courtesy of the Immigration Branch, Dept. of Interior*

## CHAPTER I

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### Introductory

*Old problems and a new perspective | Social problems that need emphasis | Conservation and development | Readjustment after the war | Kind of results to be aimed at | Necessity for planning for the purpose of proper development | British and Canadian conditions | Land settlement in Canada | The object of production*

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#### OLD PROBLEMS AND A NEW PERSPECTIVE

**A**FTER the great war, European nations will need restoration and reconstruction, but Canada will need conservation and development. There never was a greater opportunity for wise statesmanship – for the exercise of prescience and sound judgment by the men who lead in national affairs.

The period of pioneer achievement is not over in Canada, but it has entered upon a new phase, mainly because we see things in a different light after the crowded experience of recent years. We recognize that, in the future, science and clean government must march side by side with enterprise and energy in building up national and individual prosperity. The problems we have to solve are old but our perspective is new.

We are at the opening of a new era of social construction and national expansion, and the question is not whether we will grow but how we will grow. The mistakes of the past must be ignored, except as a guide for the future. On some things, it is possible, we have spent too much of our wealth as a nation, and on other things we have spent too little. Those things on which we have spent too much are easy to criticize, because we see them and can count the cost; those things on which we have spent too little may have caused greater losses, but they are not so apparent. Economic loss may be greater as a result of leaving some things undone than as a result of doing other things extravagantly. It is not certain that we would have gained by being less spendthrift in some directions, for it does not follow that we would have been more enterprising in others.

The war, and a combination of circumstances surrounding it, has brought new ideas to our minds, and none more vividly than this – that

the strength of a nation depends neither on the physical, intellectual and moral character of its citizens, nor on the stability and freedom of its institutions, nor on the efficiency of its organization, but on the existence of all of these things.

We share the growing consciousness, which is everywhere apparent, that national prosperity depends on the character, stability, freedom and efficiency of the human resources of a nation, rather than on the amount of its exports or imports, or the gold it may have to its credit at a given time.\* For lack of that consciousness in the past we have placed the sanctity of property on a higher level than human life and civic welfare. In that matter democratic nations are not the least blameworthy, for they are prone to exalt individual liberty above social justice, and to treat liberty as an end in itself, instead of as a means to attain the end of equal opportunity for all its citizens.†

The self-styled practical man, who has lacked ideals and vision in his outlook on life – and prided himself on the fact – has been perhaps the most potent factor in building up the organization and system in peace which has in part caused this war and been discredited by this war. Today the same man is claiming that the loss of material wealth in the war will be small as compared with the strength of soul we will gain as a result. Whatever be the truth as regards the claim, we have the important fact that the “man in the street” and the “man in the trench” have undergone a change of attitude that will have its effect in profoundly altering the course of history in the next generation. It is certain that that change will result in demands for more justice in our human relations, more efficient organization, more scientific training and higher ethical standards in public affairs, than have hitherto prevailed. We have indications that the tendency of governing bodies in Canada is to give a lead to human activity along these lines, and we may be sure that, in so far as

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\* While the conservation of natural resources and the promotion of industries are important and the development of trade has possibilities of benefit, the conservation of life and ability in the individual workers is supreme. Next to that comes the provision of conservation of opportunity for satisfactory employment. — *Report of Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education.*

† There is nothing more fatal to a people than that it should narrow its Vision to the material needs of the hour. National ideals without imagination are but as the thistles of the wilderness, fit neither for food nor fuel. A nation that depends upon them must perish. We shall need, at the end of the war, better workshops, but we shall also need more than ever every institution that will exalt the vision of the people above and beyond the workshop and the counting-house. We shall need every national tradition that will remind them that men cannot live by bread alone. — *The Right Hon. Lloyd George.*

government policies fail to recognize the growing sentiment in favour of scientific methods, as opposed to the haphazard methods of the past, they will fail in result.

### RURAL PROBLEMS THAT NEED EMPHASIS

Broadly speaking, we require to lay emphasis on the following needs as a means of conserving human and natural resources in connection with any policy inaugurated in the future:

(1) The planning and development of land by methods which will secure health, amenity, convenience and efficiency, and the rejection of those methods that lead to injurious speculation.

(2) The promotion of scientific training, improved educational facilities and means of social intercourse.

(3) The establishment of an efficient government organization and improved facilities for securing co-operation, rural credit, and development of rural industries.

We have to deal primarily with the first of these needs, and only incidentally and partially with the other two – but all of them are interdependent and cannot be separated in any sound scheme for improving rural conditions.

### CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

It is perhaps necessary to explain briefly why such matters, as are dealt with in this report, are regarded as problems of conservation. Briefly, the answer may be given that the land question, and all questions of conservation of natural resources, are fundamental questions, because they have to do with life. “The final aim of all effort, whether individual or social, is life itself, its preservation and increase in quantity or quality or both.”\* We have to ask ourselves whether the rural policy in Canada in the past has had conservation and development of life as its final aim. Conservation means economy and development at the same time. To conserve the forests means to prevent waste – for without that prevention there cannot be economy – and, simultaneously, to develop new growth. To conserve land resources means to prevent deterioration of the productive uses of the land that has already been equipped and

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\* *The Land and the People.* — *Times Series.*

improved, and simultaneously to develop more intensive use of such land, as well as to open up and improve new lands. To conserve human resources means to increase the quantity and quality of human activity that can be applied to production; to lessen social evils and injury to health under established conditions – a matter of economy – and simultaneously to develop conditions in the future which will remove the causes of such evils, a matter of still greater economy. Hence to conserve human and natural resources means not only to prevent waste in what we have but also to plan and develop for future growth. Considered in that sense nearly every social problem in Canada is a problem of conservation.

Out of the total area of 2,306,502,153 acres of land in Canada, it is computed that 358,162,190 acres of land are capable of being used for productive purposes.\* The population of the Dominion in 1911 was 7,206,643, or 1.9 persons to each square mile of territory. We have 35,582 miles of railway, or about one mile to every 200 persons, providing means of distribution by railway in advance of the needs of commerce. The natural resources may be said to be unlimited in extent, subject to proper conservation and development; and the means of distribution by main railways may be regarded as capable of no limitation in meeting demands for many years to come. But, while there is practically an unlimited quantity of natural resources, and of railways to distribute them, we are limited in the economic use to which we can put them. *Wealth is produced not from the existence of natural resources but from the conversion of these resources into some form for human use. Canada is seriously limited in actual resources by the extent to which it lacks sufficient population to apply the human activity necessary to adequately use and distribute its resources. Hence there is nothing so vital in the interests of production in Canada as to conserve and develop human life – not merely to conserve the physical qualities, but also to develop the intellectual qualities.*

We have, perhaps, made the error that all that matters as regards population is increase in quantity. But productivity depends on quality as well as on quantity of human material – on intelligence and organization as well as on physique. If, by increase of population, we can secure a higher level of prosperity per capita we should strive for that increase; if a lower level of prosperity we should strive against it. History shows that it is possible for a population to grow in a country of ample resources and yet to diminish in productivity and prosperity as it grows. With improved methods and organization, the average level of prosperity in Ireland is probably greater today than ever in its history, notwithstanding

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\* *Census for 1911*, Vol. IV, p. 7.



its depleted population. Notwithstanding the withdrawal of a large proportion of the productive workers of Great Britain from peaceful industries during the past three years, the volume of exports from that country appears to have greatly increased during that period.\* Conservation of life, so far as it implies the development of the qualities of efficiency and of the capacity to make the best economic use of the resources on the part of the people, counts most largely in increasing production. There was a period in the history of England when improved methods alone resulted in enormously developing natural resources. According to the census of 1851, the intelligence and capital devoted to the improvement of landed estates and farm stock, the formation of agricultural societies, the adoption of new processes, the drainage of marshes, the introduction of machinery, etc., and the impulse given to agricultural science in the middle of the 19th century, caused a great increase in production and population.

Whether such improvements are a cause or an effect of increase in population, the country benefits, but when an increase takes place without improvements and without proper development and organization, the increase may be injurious. Even on the basis of its present population, if Canada could retain its natural increase and properly safeguard the health of its citizens, and if it could develop its educational system and keep at home those whom it educated, it would soon enormously increase in wealth.

But do we, as a nation, pay sufficient regard to the value of promoting healthy living conditions, developing skill and conserving our educational resources? Are the rural and urban conditions of Canada such as to provide the most ample protection possible of the most valuable asset of the country – healthy and active human life? In face of the fact that labour is so limited in proportion to the natural resources at its command, is the organization of labour and of the means of production capable of improvement? Is the system of planning and developing land, and of utilizing science and expert knowledge, such as to secure the greatest industrial efficiency, and the fullest opportunity for obtaining healthy conditions, amenity, and convenience for the inhabitants? We need a national stocktaking to enable adequate answers to be given to these

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\* With millions of men called to the colours, British exports in 1916 were valued at 507 millions, as compared with 525 millions in 1913, the last full year of peace. It is true that values have risen enormously and that the figures of 1918 do not represent anything like the same quantity of goods. But the new figures do not include the huge quantities of supplies sent wherever the British army is fighting. On the balance we have probably produced more goods than in the last year of peace. — *Westminster Gazette*, January 8, 1917.

questions, but sufficient is known to justify the attempt which is made in this report to deal with them in a preliminary way.

### RE-ADJUSTMENT AFTER THE WAR

In addition to the question of conservation as a permanent problem, we have the transitory problems of re-adjustment and reorganization that will have to be faced in Canada at the close of the war. In Europe, these problems are only less important and grave than those of the war itself; in Canada they can be made of secondary importance if we proceed at once to work out a constructive policy of rural and urban development. We will have new questions to deal with, like that of reinstating the returned soldiers into the social and industrial life of the community and providing for the maimed. We will also have old questions which are the outcome of the defective organization and unhealthy speculation that existed before the war, questions which, to a large extent, have been saved from coming to a head by reason of the activities and public expenditures caused by the war itself. In the war we have been made to see that even military strength must rest, in the final analysis, on a strong civil and economic foundation; how much more then must this be the case with industrial strength. A comparatively small number – 7 per cent – of our citizens are likely to be engaged in the direct work of warfare. The able bodied citizens among the other 93 per cent are assisting the nation in proportion as they are engaged in the task of production, or in that of preparation and organization for times of peace, or in providing healthy living conditions and education for the young who will form the source of human activity for the future. During the war, and after, a great majority of the citizens of the country must continue to live in their well-administered or mal-administered towns, villages, and rural districts; must pursue their daily tasks; must worship their domestic gods in their palaces or slums; must see their children grow in strength or in weakness, and must continue to look into the future in hope or in despair. And the country will grow in wealth and prosperity in proportion as the human activities of the great body of the citizens are conserved and properly directed.

### KIND OF RESULTS TO BE AIMED AT

In Canada we seem to have suffered, not so much from lack of organization as from lack of scientific methods applied to organization as a means of making the most of our limited human activities. The necessarily crude methods of the pioneer stage of development and civilization still prevail in many phases of government. Getting results still counts more with some

men than getting the right results in the most efficient and economic way. We lay out towns and townships, construct buildings, roads and bridges, and colonize land without proper development schemes, on the theory that getting things done quickly is more important than getting things done efficiently and well. This theory of going blindly for results, on the principle of "hustling," is the refuge of the unscientific and unimaginative mind that is impatient of expert advice or plans, because they are presumed to waste time in preparation which ought to be given to constructive work.

#### NECESSITY FOR PLANNING FOR PURPOSES OF PROPER DEVELOPMENT

Yet, of all the constructive work that is done in peace or war, there is none that counts more in obtaining good results than the planning and preparation that goes before the actual performance. To those who hold fast to the theories that nothing is practical that has not been tried by experience, that immediately tangible results must be obtained whatever the outcome, that preliminary financial success must be secured whatever the ultimate effect, it is possible that many of the lessons of recent years will be lost, and that sound schemes will be dismissed as visionary and impracticable. It is hoped that the theories advanced and the suggestions made in this report are both visionary and practicable, for there is no greater heresy than that which regards these two elements as necessarily opposed to one another. It is true statesmanship to look into the future and plan for the future in the light of experience gained from the past, and there are signs that Canada is not lacking in that statesmanship, and that suggestions which are put forward to improve conditions will not be despised because they involve the exercise of some imagination. The main consideration to be borne in mind in this regard is that the planning of territory shall not be an end in itself, but only a means by which the end is to be achieved. That end shall be the proper development of land for the purpose of securing the best results from the application of human activity to natural resources.

#### BRITISH AND CANADIAN CONDITIONS

Broadly speaking, the land question is at the root of all social problems, both in rural and in urban territory. It is so in Great Britain, and it is so in Canada. In a recent article T. P. O'Connor, M.P., writing of the present situation in England, describes the probable change of outlook which will occur after the war in regard to the land question. He sums up the situation by saying that they have in England the evidences of a "land revolution

as already an effect of the war.” He quotes Lord Northcliffe as a witness to what he calls the dawn of a new era, as follows:

*Tommy Wants His Land.* – In one of the chapters he (Lord Northcliffe) uses these remarkable words, talking of the conversation he had with the Tommies. The speaker in this instance had been a gamekeeper and a Tory when he was in civil life; but this is what he said:

“The men in the dugouts talk of a good many subjects, but there is one on which they are all agreed. That is the land question. They are not going back as labourers, or as tenants, but as owners. Lots of them have used their eyes and learned much about small farming here.”

And this is what another Tommy said:

“Many will go to Canada, some to Australia, I dare say; but I am one of those who mean to have a little bit of ‘blighty’ for myself. We see enough in France to know that a man and his family can manage a bit of land for themselves and live well on it.”

The remarkable effects of the system of peasant proprietorship in France, which had impressed this “Tommy,” are referred to in a later chapter, which goes to show that the success of that system is due as much to the rural industries and social opportunities in the rural districts of France as to the fact of ownership. It is possible that “Tommy” ascribed to mere ownership advantages which did not belong to it, although they accompany it. Ownership can be obtained in Canada as well as in France, but, in this country of wide spaces, and with the markets and social facilities so far distant from the farmer, more than mere ownership is needed. If a successful system of peasant ownership is set up in Britain after the war, and all signs point to this being achieved, the chances of securing British immigrants to Canada will lessen in proportion as Canada does not seek to provide facilities for proper planning, for co-operation, for marketing, and social intercourse.

In Great Britain the mistake which has been made in the past has been that the user of the land has not been sufficiently encouraged to own it or to improve it; he has lacked security of tenure and scope to make the most of his own improvements. We have drawn large numbers of British farmers and labourers to Canada by offering free homesteads, and this has, till recently, persuaded many to migrate to this country who were attracted by getting something which was not available at home. But in course of time the farmer has recognized that ownership is not everything, and that he has only exchanged a condition of one form of servitude for another.

Improved land in Great Britain can be rented at a sum which represents nothing more than a reasonable interest on the cost of improvements made by the owner. The writer has had personal experience in Scotland as a farmer, and spent ten years managing, inspecting and valuing rural land in England on behalf of large owners and purchasers. In 1908 he surveyed the rural conditions of three counties for the Board of Agriculture. That experience proved that bare agricultural land frequently produced no revenue to the owner. Apart, therefore, from the "magic of property," which, it is agreed, has a great value, farms can be had as cheaply in Britain as in Canada.

The British landowner has recognized that he can only keep his tenants by helping them to obtain good roads, social opportunities and cheap money, and by encouraging co-operation and improving the methods of husbandry. Moreover, he has acted as a partner with the farmer, in keeping up the productive quality of the soil by requiring proper crop rotation, in getting facilities for cheap transportation, and in obtaining government assistance to keep up a high quality of stock. In areas available for new settlers, the Canadian farmer gets ownership, but he loses other advantages which he regarded too cheaply while he had them. To make farm settlement in this country successful, therefore, we must not only give opportunities to obtain ownership, but the facilities and social conditions which go with tenancy in other countries. Thus, ownership will become an addition to the attractions which are available in these other countries, and not, as at present, an alternative.

It is as important to Great Britain as it is to Canada that more men and women of British blood, and possessing the ideals and courage of British citizens, should be attracted to Canada at the close of the war. It is important to Britain because her outlook in regard to food supply, and in regard to other matters connected with the future destiny of the British Empire, cannot be circumscribed within the narrow limits of the British Isles. Whatever Great Britain may do to improve agricultural development and to make herself more independent of foreign supplies of food it is only in a limited degree that she can artificially promote and carry out that improvement; and owing to the limited area of her land resources she must look more and more to her overseas Dominions for increased production.

It is in the direction of more intensive cultivation and more scientific production of dairy food, rather than an increased acreage of wheat, that there is most hope of building up agricultural development and a sound land policy in Britain, and for reducing importations from foreign countries without lessening demands on the overseas Dominions.

There can be no greater loyalty to Great Britain than that of persuading her to send of her best to build up Greater Britain. In the past it is probably true that the British people have not done justice to Canada, and few of them know or appreciate what Canada stands for in the Empire. They have sent too few of their fittest and best educated citizens to help in building up this country. Surely when the war is over there must be a stronger and more united effort made, both by Britain and Canada, to look more on each other as integral parts of a great whole, in which no part can benefit to the injury of the other, and no part be injured to the benefit of the other. All parts of the Empire must unite in a scheme of things in which there will be co-operation with independence; in which there will be a blending of ideals and ideas, and an interchange of citizenship. Why should there not be a greater interchange of population between Canada and Great Britain? Why should the university trained men of both countries not come and go and find a welcome in their diversified fields of labour? Perhaps Britain has revealed in connection with the war a strength and a power which Canadians who have never closely studied her institutions and her social conditions, scarcely realized as possible. Perhaps Canada has revealed resources and potency little dreamt of in Britain. Britain has had a great quality of keeping her most skilled and able men at home, and those who have gone abroad have not always done her justice, but in the future the maintenance of her strength will largely depend on spreading her talents into wider fields. On the other hand, there are men of great parts and resourcefulness in the Dominion who could find scope for their skill and energy in the Old Country. The splendidly organized means of transportation between Britain and Canada which existed before the war must be surpassed by greatly improved transportation in the future, and the linking up of the two peoples must be made more real and intimate. Canada needs the kind of human energy that Britain can give and which Britain will find it best to spare; and Britain needs the resources of the lands, the mines and the forests of which Canada has superabundance, when the labour is available to work them.

Whatever may be done in other belligerent countries to conserve population after the war, it seems as if the people of the British Empire will have to spread themselves over wider fields. But it must be done after careful thought and preparation is given to the scheme of distribution of human and material resources. Vigilance in preventing selfish exploitation of these resources, science in the system of planning and developing them for right use and, above all, conservation and development of the energy and intelligence of the people must underlie our imperial and social policies.

## LAND SETTLEMENT IN CANADA

The development of the land resources of Canada, and the skill and constructive ability which have been applied to the building up of the population and industries of the country during the past twenty years, combine to make one of the most remarkable achievements in the modern history of nations. The enormous increase in population and the settlement of the Western provinces between the years 1891 and 1914 were the result of a combination of circumstances, among which two of the most important were the development of the transportation system of the country and the skillful organization of the Canadian governments. This has to be recognized no matter to what extent it may now be found that the absence of proper planning and more scientific organization of settlement might have secured a greater measure of success in connection with the development that has taken place.

The defects in the system of land settlement in Canada have only become evident or at least pronounced in recent years. Even in the United States, where a similar system has been in operation for a much longer period of time, it is only lately that the people have begun to recognize the fact that a scientific plan of development prepared in advance of settlement is essential to enable a sound economic structure to be built up.

Whatever may be said as to the success of the system of land settlement in Canada up to a certain point, the time has come to abandon careless methods of placing people on the land without proper organization and careful planning. If the farmer is to be kept on the land he must have the kind of organization and facilities provided for him to enable him to make profitable use of the land.

In other words, the farmer requires a stronger tie than what is provided by the "magic of property" to keep him on the land. He requires the facilities and means to live as well as to exist; the enjoyment of better social conditions for his wife and family as well as for himself; the use of capital at a reasonable rate of interest, and the satisfaction that the facilities for distributing his products and for utilizing the natural resources of the country are not controlled to the disadvantage of his class. We have relied too much on the magnet of ownership to attract the labouring farmer to the soil of Canada and too little on the more enduring magnets of social amenities and efficient organization of the actual development of the land.

To keep the farmers on the land when they get there has become a greater problem than that of first attracting them to the land. They are said to be leaving the land in thousands at the present time, and we are

told that millions of acres of land, which had been occupied at one time, are now deserted, and that the present system of land settlement is productive of much poverty and degradation.\* Whether these statements are exaggerated or not, the fact that they are made by responsible people indicates a state of affairs that demands a remedy. Why do men now hesitate to go on the land in the first place, and find it uncongenial to stay in the second place? Why do women stay away, with the injurious consequences to rural life which is caused by their absence? The three outstanding reasons are:

First, the numerous ills caused by the holding of large areas of the best and most accessible land by speculators and the want of proper plans for the economic use and development of the land.

Second, the compelling social attractions and the educational facilities of the cities and towns, and,

Third, the lack of ready money and of adequate return for the labour of the farmer, because of want of co-operation, rural credit and of facilities for distribution of his products.

To secure any real improvement in rural life and conditions we must try to bring tracts of land held for speculative purposes into use, prepare development schemes of the land in advance of settlement, try to take part, at least, of the social and educational facilities of the cities into the rural areas, and, simultaneously, provide the co-operative financial and distributive conveniences that are necessary to give the farmer a larger share of the profits of production.

### THE OBJECT OF PRODUCTION

But before embarking on any scheme of improvement, of our rural as well as of our urban conditions, we must have regard to the object we have in view in increasing production as well as the method by which we seek to attain the increase. We have, in the historic case of Germany, an instance of what appears to have been an efficient organization directed to the achievement of a bad object, with the result that forty years of wrongly directed effort in production have been largely wasted. Conservation and development under such conditions are worse than useless, for they are merely instruments in a scheme which has destruction as its ultimate aim; the aim of Germany or rather of its military party, being to destroy the development of other peoples at the risk of destroying

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\* Millions of acres of land homesteaded in Western Canada have been abandoned by men who failed as farmers. — *Farmers Advocate*.



its own. There is no danger in our democratic country of such a disaster as is befalling Germany, but the pursuit of material gain as a sole object is dangerous and futile, whether the aim be accretion of wealth or of military power. When the object of development in a state is to secure the greatest freedom and equality of opportunity for the greatest number of its citizens to enjoy the results of human labour, then the accumulation of wealth follows as a result of that freedom, and history shows that it is only on such a foundation that national prosperity can be maintained. But we must direct our policies and measures with that object and not our words only.

Freedom and equality of opportunity cannot be attained on the basis of what is sometimes misnamed individual liberty – the license for each citizen to do as he wills whether or no other citizens suffer from his actions. We recognize the principle of limiting individual liberty to do wrong in regard to certain moral issues but not so freely as we should in regard to matters affecting health and general welfare.

The needs of human life are social as well as individual or personal. The four primary human needs are food, clothing, shelter and social intercourse. All of these are essential to normal existence – although the length of time a human being can dispense with any one of them varies. In a civilized community provision for shelter is more distinctly a social than a personal need; the family being the unit corresponding to the dwelling rather than the individual citizen. Social intercourse is not always regarded as a necessity of human life, and yet no healthy and intelligent human being can do without it for any lengthy period.\* If our object be to build up real national prosperity we have to see that our citizens have not only the bare necessities of food, clothing and shelter; but we must also direct the ends of government so as to secure that the shelter shall be healthy and that the desire for social intercourse, for recreation and education shall be gratified. It is after these needs are met that a progressive country obtains surplus wealth by the barter of its surplus production for things its citizens desire but cannot themselves produce. If we are only able to secure a surplus by withholding the necessities for well-being from our own people we shall lose more than we gain, in the end.

A community exists by reason of its industry in production whether the industry be agriculture or manufacture. That is the condition of its being.

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\* Marshall in *Economics of Industry* makes a distinction between “necessaries for existence” and “necessaries for efficiency,” defining the latter as including good sanitary conditions, some education and recreation, etc. Social intercourse is in some degree necessary for existence and in a greater degree necessary for efficiency.

But in modern life it needs also healthy environment, efficient organization, convenience for distribution and social amenities. These are the conditions of its well-being. The aim of all government and all planning should be to promote, simultaneously, the being and the well-being of the community.

Particularly in our rural districts the conditions of well-being of the community have not been sufficiently respected in Canada – and until they are we shall lack in the essentials of real progress. Therefore, whatever scheme may be put forward to improve the methods of laying out and developing land, or to increase production, should have regard to these fundamental considerations.

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTORY

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*Commentary by Jeanne M. Wolfe*

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Thomas Adams' introduction to *Rural Planning and Development* is strongly embedded in the time in which he wrote, the year 1917. The Great War had been raging for three years: by this time, it was felt that the tide was turning and that the end was in sight. Adams pitches his message toward a new, improved, and reconstructed future, one in which freedom, social justice, human well-being, equal opportunity, and civic welfare would necessarily prevail, arguing that "the loss of material wealth in the war will be small as compared with the strength of soul we will gain as a result" (page 4).

Part of this strength of soul would come from an acceptance of the ideas of the conservation movement, the conservation of human life and of natural resources, and the development of both in a scientific and productive manner. This focus on these ideas, of course, is an early definition of what today is referred to as the three-legged stool of sustainable development: the resolution of conflict between the needs of people, the environment, and the economy.

There is, however, one element in Adams' message that is different: in his time, conservation meant development. He believed the conservation of human resources and the natural environment would make economic development more efficient, equitable, and durable. The idea of nature for nature's sake simply did not enter into his argument. Furthermore, arguments in favour of nurturing biodiversity were not part of early nineteenth-century rhetoric.

When it comes to the careless and wasteful use of resources, Adams' text is, sadly, as pertinent today as it was when it was written. However, there are parts that do not resonate as well. First, his fierce insistence on encouraging British immigration to Canada can doubtless be attributed to the wartime situation – there were many immigrants of German origin who were regarded with suspicion and many others from eastern Europe who did not speak English and were equally a cause for concern. Some of these immigrants were interned as "undesirables" for the duration of the war.

Second, Adams tirelessly flogged British ideas about planning. Earlier publications of the Commission of Conservation – substantial annual reports, for instance – refer to examples of conservation and planning approaches from all of the Western countries, including Germany, from which early notions of North American zoning were derived. Furthermore, the then vigorous conservation movement in the United States, from which Canada borrowed so much of its agenda and terminology, is not mentioned.

Third, Adams completely disregards the opinions of the people for whom planning was to benefit. There is no discussion of popular participation in conservation and planning processes. Although he includes some fine words on democracy, there is no hint that the people should be directly consulted about their futures, much less involved in decision making. Rather, they are to be instructed, trained, and educated to behave in a scientific, rational, and prudent way.

On the other hand, although the contexts differed, many of the issues Adams identifies in the introductory chapter are as debated today as they were in the early twentieth century. Adams understood the complex interrelationships between urban and rural settlement. He deplored unhealthy living conditions in both rural and urban areas, nefarious land speculation, lack of rural educational opportunities, and defective civic organization. In *Rural Planning and Development* he calls for postwar adjustments to attack these problems, particularly planning and careful management. He blames the drift of people to cities from uneconomic, remote farms – far from services, support systems, and social interaction – for the lack of a systematic approach to land settlement, both in the subdivision of land and in the placement of settlers.

It is worth remembering that in the years before the First World War Canada received more immigrants than at any other time in its history. The peak year was 1913, when over four hundred thousand arrived at a time when the country's total population was only 7.6 million. Many went to the Prairies, where the square mile system of land subdivision meant neighbours were likely to be at least half a mile apart, making social interaction difficult. The loneliness of pioneer life and the hardships of making a living often precipitated moves into the nearest town.

Adams also found farming methods to be inadequate. He felt that a more intensive mixed cultivation, including dairying, would be a sounder agricultural practice than the blind monoculture of wheat or other crops, an observation that is only now gaining currency. In the Introduction, he also points to the need for quality educational, social, financial, and marketing infrastructures, which he considers essential to maintaining rural populations. He notes that the provision of rural-based industries and winter work could be the key to making the lives of rural settlers in closely knit communities both more viable and enjoyable.

Adams also writes about the profitable ownership of land by peasants in rural France and how British and Canadian soldiers noticed, perhaps enviously, their success while fighting overseas. He brushes this approach aside for Canada, however, because it must be supported by dense networks of markets and social facilities. But he states that the approach is a necessity in highly developed Britain, where there is a high proportion of landless peasantry. In his discussion of these options, he anticipates the current theories of Hernando de Soto's *The Mysteries of Capital* by eighty years.

Through its comprehensive approach, this introductory chapter sets the stage for the rest of the book. Despite later claims to the contrary, this first Canadian planning manual addresses not only land questions but also the social, educational, and economic attributes and consequences of planning in fostering the well-being of populations and the health of communities. Critiques of planning in later years, particularly during the late 1960s, blamed early planners for focusing on the physical and neglecting the social and economic aspects of human environments. Adams was clearly different: his approach was as holistic as that of the most dedicated planner today.

## CHAPTER II

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### **Rural Population and Production in Canada**

*Urban increase and rural decrease | Depopulation of homestead land | Female population | Movement of population | Bad conditions in Ontario | Physical and moral deterioration | Good conditions in Ontario | Conditions in Western Provinces | Distribution of lands | Profits of farming and values of farm products | Rural production | Mining, lumbering and fishing industries | New developments of rural industries | Water-powers | Past tendencies in industrial growth*

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#### URBAN INCREASE AND RURAL DECREASE

THE rapid growth of urban populations need not be an evil, if the urban development is properly directed and controlled, and if the urban conditions are made as healthy as the rural conditions. Neither growth of cities nor depletion of rural population is necessarily an unhealthy tendency. If the movement from the country to the town is the result of desires for greater opportunities and educational facilities and for obtaining better sanitary and social conditions, who can say that a movement so inspired is an evil? If every city and town were as healthy as the rural districts, as they could be under proper conditions of development, why deplore the natural tendency of population to migrate to the most profitable industries, so long as they remain the most profitable. We may deplore rural depopulation, but it will be futile to fight against it so long as manufacturing produces a better return to labour and capital than agriculture, and so long as there are urban opportunities for human betterment superior to those in rural districts. Indeed, we cannot have national prosperity unless human activity is applied to the most profitable fields of production – whether they be growing food, or making clothes, or building ships. One of the men who failed to make a farm pay in Northern Ontario is today managing a large and successful motor industry in Canada, and there are hundred of others who have gone through the same experience. Indirectly, that man, in making cheap motors, is a great agricultural producer; if he had remained on the soil he would have

practically been a non-producer, as he would be wasting his efforts on an unprofitable business.

But what is wrong is not that that man and thousands of others have left the soil, but that the opportunities for making profitable use of their skill were not present in the country. What is wrong is that wasteful and inefficient methods have driven the most intelligent and energetic men into the towns, and, as a consequence, the absence of these men has perpetuated the wastefulness and inefficiency. What is wrong is not that people go to the cities and towns to find social opportunity, but that they are not able to get that opportunity on the farm. What is causing deterioration of mind and body in urban communities is not the growth of cities and towns, but the unnecessary overcrowding and bad sanitation which accompanies that growth as the result of laxity of government. What makes rural depopulation in Canada most serious to the rural districts themselves is the quality, rather than the quantity, of those who leave the land, and the fact that the capital and energy which have been spent to artificially promote settlement have been so largely wasted.

As a rural area becomes thinner in population the causes of migration become accentuated, social opportunities and facilities for co-operation and distribution are further lessened, and there is a consequent further lowering of the profits of production. It is usually the best of the rural population that is drawn to the city for these reasons and, where the land is of poor quality, the residue becomes more and more impaired in physique, intelligence and morals as the process of depopulation continues. The small wage of the agricultural labourer in England, which was first a cause of the best men leaving the rural districts, has become an effect of the lowered efficiency of those who have remained. May not the alleged lack of business capacity of the farmers in some of the older provinces of Canada be an effect of the low profits of the industry, before it becomes a cause? Parallel with low profits to the producer is the anomaly of high costs to the consumer. The high cost of living is a premium paid for lack of efficient development and organization of production.

It is difficult to determine to what extent Canada as a whole has suffered from movement of population. In so far as it has been encouraged by injurious speculation, by the sale of farms at high prices for purposes of subdivision, or by the opportunities of making easy money in land-gambling, it has been wholly injurious. In so far as it is the result of the settlement of land which was unsuited for agriculture and could not be put to economic use it has also been injurious. On the other hand, in so far as it may have increased production in the city at the expense of diminished production in the country, it may not have been entirely an



PLATE II OVERCROWDING

Four-storey tenement house in a Canadian city occupied by eight families.



PLATE II ISOLATION

Neither city life nor country life need be unhealthy. Unhealthy conditions arise from overcrowding in the city and isolation in the country, largely due to want of proper control of the development of land in both urban and rural areas.



evil; on the contrary, it may have been a benefit if it has meant the transfer of labour from an unprofitable to a profitable industry. Within proper limits the development of manufacturing is as important as the development of agriculture, and over-production in agriculture has to be guarded against as well as under-production. There must be a proper equilibrium maintained between the two kinds of industry. Unfortunately for the country at present the production of food has not been commensurate with the demand; because the equilibrium between the rural and the urban industries and populations has not been properly maintained.

While, however, it is wrong to jump to the conclusion that the movement of population from rural to urban districts is necessarily injurious to a country, there is no gainsaying that a large proportion of this movement in Canada has resulted from a play of forces which has left us weaker and poorer as a nation. If, by Government subsidy or other artificial means, we were to succeed in temporarily increasing rural settlement in the future, without revising our methods of planning and arranging agricultural holdings so as to improve farm revenues and obtain opportunities for better social conditions, and if we were not, at the same time, to place difficulties in the way of land-gambling, we would not succeed in arresting such injurious results as follow from the migratory tendencies of the population.

Sir Horace Plunkett has stated that the city on the American continent has been developing at the expense of the country. Would it not be more correct to say that neither the city nor the country has developed properly because of their neglect of each other? Both have suffered, because of lack of recognition of their inter-dependence.

#### DEPOPULATION OF HOMESTEADED LAND

Whatever question there may be as to the effects of rural depopulation, on health and production as a whole, there can be no question as to the deplorable national and social waste which must result from any failure to secure permanent rural settlement, after public money has been expended and public property has been alienated to secure that settlement under a system of free homesteading. If a costly and artificial method of opening up new territory is resorted to, if settlers have to be secured by immigration at considerable public cost,\* if railways and roads have to be

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\* In five years ending 1914, the Dominion Government spent \$6,725,216 to get 1,661,425 immigrants, or an expenditure of about \$4 per head.

built and public lands alienated to assist the process, if the private capital of settlers is sunk in improvements, and several years of energy is applied to the task of development – if all that is done, what must be the loss if the result is anything short of permanent settlement under conditions which not only increase production, but make production profitable to the producer?

The evidence of population and other statistics, supported by the evidence of observers of social conditions in rural territory, is that all the efforts and expenditures enumerated above have been employed in developing certain areas, and that, instead of permanent settlement, there are to be found in many of these areas depleted population and unoccupied homesteads. A primary cause of this condition appears to have been the forcing into settlement of areas unsuitable for settlement. Where settlement has been successful in Canada, in spite of an indifferent system of planning and settlement, it has been largely because of three factors, first, the great fertility of the soil in areas suitable for agriculture; second, the energy and enterprise of the governments and administrations, and, third, the fine qualities of the settlers. When, as a result of these things, success has come, it has proved the best means of securing additional settlers of the right kind. When, however, in spite of these things, perhaps because of the placing of settlers on poor land, the scattered nature of settlement and the absence of co-operative and distributive facilities owing to forced homesteading, there has been failure, is it not likely that the real causes of that failure will be misunderstood and that outsiders will assume that the causes lie deeper than inefficiency of organization – that they lie in the general unproductive character of the industry?

Canada need not fear comparison with any country as a field for successful farming, if its soil and other natural resources get a chance to be properly used, but, for lack of a proper system of development, the capacity of these resources is apt to be and is being underestimated. Whatever the defects of land settlement in Canada may be, they are not natural defects of the country or its resources, they are not defects of its settlers as a whole, they are not caused by mal-administration, but they are due to the absence of a proper system of planning and development. Being no deeper than that, they are capable of artificial treatment if we are prepared to learn from the mistakes of the past.

Our governments have already used the wisdom that comes from experience to control such natural resources as our water-powers, and have made advances in the direction of guaranteeing the proper utilization and development of our forests. Indiscriminate use of mineral resources in Canada cannot now be made without consideration of the public

welfare. Generally in respect of these water-powers, mines and forests great progress has been made in regard to reasonable government control, and in regard to scientific development and efficiency in utilizing the products. It is in respect of the land – the greatest and most valuable of our natural resources – that we are most backward in our system of directing and organizing development.

It might be more profitable for the government of the country, and in any event the matter is worthy of earnest consideration, to adopt the policy which is being pursued in Australia, of purchasing private lands near to railways and re-settling them, in preference to pushing the development of new territory. Corporations like the Southern Alberta Land Company and the Western Canada Land Company, which own large areas of western lands, and are now in liquidation, might be prepared to sell out at a reasonable price. If such lands can be acquired and settled on a profitable basis would it not be better to suspend the free homestead system in remote districts for a time? Homesteads should only be given where there is a certainty that they can be put to profitable use. Abandoned lands should be carefully surveyed, and, where they are forsaken solely for want of capital to improve them, they might first be improved and then re-settled. These questions, together with that of the sizes of holdings for homestead purposes, should be the subject of careful investigation at least; and all such land should be classified and planned to make it adaptable to the best use.

In 1909 the then President Roosevelt of the United States appointed a commission to enquire into the conditions of country life in that country. In the summary of its proposed remedies for the most prominent deficiencies, it made the following as its first recommendation:

“The encouragement of a system of thoroughgoing surveys of all agricultural regions in order to take stock and to collect local facts, with the idea of providing a basis on which to develop a scientifically and economically sound country life.”\*

A similar thoroughgoing survey is needed in Canada, but it is necessary, if good results are to be secured, that such a survey should not only be prepared with respect to existing conditions, but should be made in respect to all new territory in advance of settlement.

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\* *Report of Commission on Country Life*, page 20.

### FEMALE POPULATION

The absence of social attractions in the rural districts helps to encourage the migration of females from these districts – a wholly injurious form of migration, when we consider the need for improving family life in the country, and when we have regard to the valuable part which the woman plays in the economy of the farm and in the building up of a co-operative organization. As Sir Horace Plunkett has so well put it, “Woman is needed in the country to make co-operation successful; home life is impossible without her; social organization needs her.” In the older provinces Ontario had the lowest ratio of females to males in rural divisions in 1911, the percentage being 86.73, as against 93.69 for Quebec, and an average of 93.88 for the three Maritime Provinces.\*

In the western provinces the deficiency of female population in 1911 was not much greater in the rural than in the urban districts. In the three Prairie Provinces the ratio of females to males in rural and urban divisions in 1911 was 71.9 and 73.9 per cent, respectively. Women are needed in the towns of Western Canada just as much as in the rural districts.

### MOVEMENT OF POPULATION

In the census for 1911, it is set forth that the population of Canada was divided into 3,280,964, or 45.5 per cent, urban and 3,925,679, or 54.5 per cent, rural.† These figures, however, are based on a division which includes in the urban population a large number of what are practically small agricultural villages.‡

In 1911 there were 142 towns in Canada with a population of 500 or over which were either not in existence or whose populations were below 500 in 1901. A great many of these will never really be more than rural villages, and in any event they are not at present urban in character. The rural population of the Dominion might very properly be regarded as consisting of the population outside of the cities, towns and villages of 1,500 inhabitants and over. All towns of less than 1,500, which are not immediately adjacent to large cities, are more or less rural in character, and it is not unreasonable to include them in the rural class.

In the United States, all unincorporated and incorporated places of less than 2,500 are classed as rural; the corresponding figures for Ireland and

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\* Table 12, *Canada Year Book*, 1915.

† Table 9, *Canada Year Book*, 1915.

‡ Table 8, *Canada Year Book*, 1915.

Scotland are 2,000 and 1,000; while in England the population of many towns and villages is counted as part of the rural population.

The urban population in cities, towns and villages of Canada, having a population of 1,500 or over, increased from 1,771,435 in 1901 to 2,845,073 in 1911, whereas the rural population outside of these towns increased from 3,599,880 to 4,361,570 in the same period.\*

On the basis of these figures the rural population of the Dominion comprises 60.5 of the total, instead of 54.5, the figure usually quoted. The rate of increase of the rural population for the ten years is 21 per cent as against 60.6 per cent for the urban population – the actual increases being 761,690 and 1,073,638 respectively, (Figure 1). This is not a bad showing for a rural population, having regard to the rapid growth of urban manufacturing industries and the lack of organization of rural industries; it practically means that the small towns under about 6,000 in population, together with rural districts, in the ten years had an increase nearly as great as the cities and larger towns. The principal falling off in rural population was in Ontario and Nova Scotia, which, so far as the older provinces were concerned, was largely counterbalanced by a substantial increase in rural Quebec. The increase in Quebec was significant, since it was largely an internal growth, and was apparently, to a great extent, the result of the closer settlement and planning of the land in the lower province.† Much remains to be done in Quebec to raise the standards of sanitation and of building construction (the absence of which has been strikingly illustrated in the disastrous fires in the province) and to remove the causes of the high death rate of 17.02 per 1,000; but in regard to its system of planning land in the past and its highway policy, which is assisted by that system, it has reason to claim better results than the other eastern provinces.‡

The advantage of internal growth of population, as compared with growth from the outside by means of immigration, is being demonstrated during the present war; the sources from which new population is drawn from the outside of the provinces are cut off, while the internal growth continues. More attention should be given than in the past to keeping

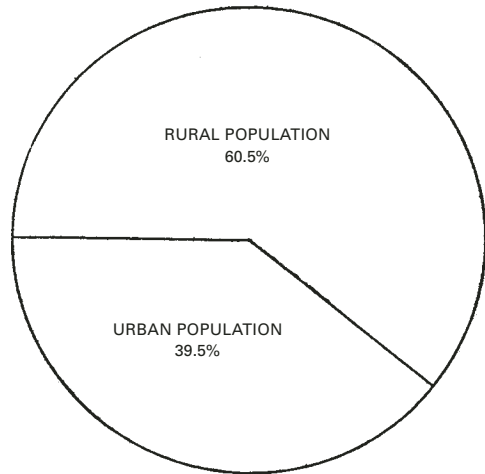
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\* *Census of Canada*, Vol. III, Page XV.

† "The closer settlement of the agricultural population (in Quebec), due to the early French system of planning the land, has been one of the factors preventing rural depopulation." — *J.A. Grenier, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Quebec*.

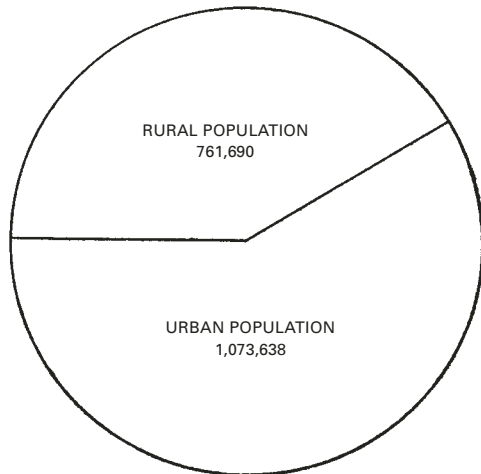
‡ The growth of Quebec during 1914-15-16 is indicated by the fact, quoted in *The Monetary Times*, that in these years no less than 297 branches and sub-branches of banks were opened in the province as against 72 closed. The totals for all the other provinces were 212 opened and 254 closed.

FIGURE 1  
RURAL POPULATION IN 1911  
ON BASIS WHICH INCLUDES  
ALL CITIES TOWNS & VILLAGES  
HAVING 1,500 OR LESS OF  
POPULATION



INCREASE OF POPULATION  
ON SAME BASIS AS ABOVE IN  
10 YEARS - 1901-1911

*Commission of Conservation  
Town-Planning Branch*



the population on the land that is already settled and encouraging its healthy growth. Indirectly that will assist the right kind of immigration, for nothing counts so much as a feature in developing a country as the health, contentment and prosperity of the citizens already settled in the country. At the same time the Canadian settlers are, as a rule, better than immigrants, and we need to pay more attention to the conservation of our existing population.\*

\* In an investigation made by the Commission of Conservation in the county of Dundas, Ontario, the satisfactory condition was found that over 98.7 per cent of 400 farmers visited were born in Ontario.

## BAD CONDITIONS IN ONTARIO

While it is claimed that the rural decrease has not been so great as it is made to appear in the census figures, *i.e.*, when the agricultural village and small industrial town is included in the rural category, the revised classification does not afford much satisfaction when we come to consider actual conditions in some of the older provinces. Reports have been written with regard to conditions in Ontario, and these are referred to here merely as illustrations and not to show that conditions in Ontario are worse than in other provinces.

Rev. John McDougall, in *Rural Life in Canada*, points out that, while the census of 1911 shows a decrease in the rural population of Ontario of 52,184, or 4.19 per cent, there was, during the decennium, a rural gain of 44,940 in five new districts in that province. Therefore, on the census basis, the rural loss in the remaining territory was 97,124. He also shows that the natural increase of the population of Ontario during the 10 years was 1.5 per cent, which, if it had been retained, would have accounted for an increase of 200,183 in rural population; so that, according to his estimate, the actual decrease in rural Ontario amounted to 373,567, instead of 52,184. In Grenville county, alone, the falling off was from 21,021 to 17,545 between 1901 and 1911.

The effect of this diminution on the educational system is very bad. One school district in Ontario, Mr. McDougall says, had only three children on the roll one year, and during three months only one child was in attendance, although the school register, about 40 years ago, showed an average attendance of 45 children. The average school attendance in the rural schools of Ontario in 1913 was only 22.9, as against 329.1 in the cities.

In one hamlet in Grenville there were seven farms which had once been occupied but were without occupants in 1913, while in the whole county 352, or 9.17 per cent, of the dwelling houses became unoccupied in the ten years prior to 1911.

A report of a Survey of the Trent Watershed, prepared for the Commission of Conservation in 1913, by Dr. B. E. Fernow, Dr. C. D. Howe and Mr. J. H. White, contains some interesting data regarding the social and industrial conditions in the counties of Hastings, Peterborough, Haliburton and Victoria.

The main object of the survey was to deal with forestry conditions, but Dr. Fernow gives as another reason for its prosecution the fact that a portion of the population of the watershed appeared, on preliminary inspection, to be occupying farms unfit for sustaining civilized conditions. "Not only," he says, "have many farms been abandoned by the removal of their

occupants to more hopeful conditions, but a considerable number that should be abandoned remain occupied by those who lack the means and energy to move, thus forming a poverty-stricken community. A far-reaching policy for the management of this region must include a plan for the removal of this degenerating population.”

This shows that he regards the problem as more serious than is represented by mere figures of depopulation; and he advocates the formation of a broad and far-reaching scheme of development and recuperation. “The waterflow should be safeguarded and industries should be developed to utilize such small resources as are left and to contribute freight to the canal, thus assuring a better future for this area than can be anticipated under the present policy of indifference and neglect.”

In the area of 2,100 square miles with which the report deals there are now less than 15,000 people, although it is over 50 years since settlement first took place; hardly 10 per cent of the area of all the 35 townships has been cleared for farm purposes. That this condition is due to the fact that the greater part of the area is not suitable for agriculture is evident by the abandoned farms “which are found throughout the whole region in large numbers, and which are sold from time to time for non-payment of taxes at an average of less than six cents per acre.\*

In consequence, during the last decade the decrease in population has been 15 per cent in this area, as against 5 per cent decrease of rural population in the whole province.” This is an instance where rural depopulation is a benefit, not an injury, to the country as a whole, although, of course, it is injurious to the people who remain behind in the depleted area. As Dr. Fernow states, “It is to be expected that those who left are elsewhere doing better than merely eking out a precarious existence; the land which they left, being fit for nothing else but forest growth, gradually reforests itself.”†

The following is a summary of the facts set out in Part III of the report relating to the economic and industrial conditions of the area:

(1) The geological origin and nature of the soil of the region is for the most part unsuited to agriculture, yet the bulk of the population is engaged in farming.

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\* A total of 194 farms, comprising 18,085 acres, appeared on the official lists for 1912 to be sold for three years' back taxes, aggregating \$3,178.29, or at the rate of less than six cents per acre per year.

† In another report prepared for the Government of Nova Scotia on “Forest Conditions in Nova Scotia,” Dr. Fernow estimates that 80 per cent of the Maritime Province – when not barren – is forest country, and practically destined to remain so.



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