

## *The Bruce* by Robin R. Hilborn, Southampton, Ontario

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guided by God, carrying out God's purpose through history. Theirs was a singularly righteous inheritance. It was a story of progress through time. It blended with the British "Whiggish" interpretation of history. Presbyterians believed they had an inherited responsibility for the advancing of God's plan. Their Reformation narrative was populated with heroes and martyrs whose stories were invoked as inspiration for their current efforts to purify the world. History was alive. They might quarrel constantly about interpretations of the past, but they agreed that history provided both direction and purpose.

When they faced nineteenth-century millenarian controversies about the Second Coming of Christ, Presbyterians tended to be "post-millennial." That is, they believed that Christ would come again *after* a thousand-year period of peace and prosperity, rather than *before*. At issue: the apocalypse is almost immediately at hand—to be saved we must make public declaration of our personal conversion to Christ. Or: God's purposes are long term—as God's people we must continue to obey God's laws and work collectively in the world.

Such concerns seem strange today. Our apocalyptic fears are man-made: imminent

environmental collapse or world nuclear disaster. Eschatology and teleology may not be terms in common language, but our collective hopes and fears, about the future of our world and about the purpose of our lives, persist. McKim aptly quotes William Faulkner: "the past is never dead. It's not even past" (260).

*Boundless Dominion* is thus a detailed—at times even dense—discursion through Presbyterian church thought, attitude and action. I was reminded of the advice of an eminent divine to an about-to-be ordained theological student: "Don't try to put *all* your ideas into your first sermon—you might succeed!" However, I look forward with eagerness to Denis McKim's future work. Thoughtful commentary, indeed guidance, from deeply devoted disciples is, I think, desperately needed. In our third millennium secular society—self centered, media-connected, emotion-prompted—it is difficult to take any organized religion seriously, even one that affirms the worth of this world and necessity for ethical activity. But if we cannot, we lose yet another anchor in the midst of a mindless typhoon.

Chris Raible, Creemore, Ontario.

## *The Bruce*

By Robin R. Hilborn, Southampton, Ontario.

Bruce County Historical Society, 2018. 236 pages. \$35.00 hardcover ISBN 978-1-928192-05-3, ([www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca))

Which came first, the films or the book? I know this is a strange way to begin a book review but bear with me, the question is very relevant. The answer is provided below.

In May of 2016, a group of interested

individuals came together to begin work on an idea to create a film dealing with the history of Bruce County and the Saugeen Ojibway Territory. Initiated by the late Audrey Underwood, soon local interest began to grow in support of the concept.

Consequently, a partnership between the not-for-profit Ontario Visual Heritage Project and the Bruce County Historical Society (both in collaboration with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation) was formed. Funding from various sources was secured, and the end result was the production of a three-part documentary film. This series was ultimately featured and shown on TV Ontario (first aired between 12 August and 31 August 2018). To answer the question above, the films came first and the book second, but in a symbiotic way. Certainly a switch from the usual book to film process!

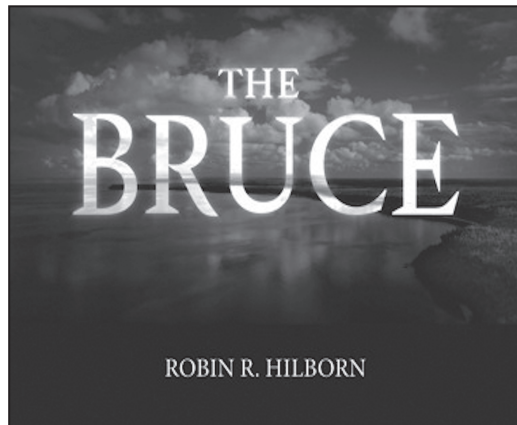
Southampton resident and author Robin Hilborn, was involved from the beginning of the film project and then he suddenly had an idea. He wondered whether writing a companion book to the films would make sense, be accepted, and be feasible? After all, he had previously published two books about the history of Bruce County, researched and written text for a pioneer settlement exhibit at the Bruce County Museum, and as a volunteer at the Bruce County Archives, was very familiar with reference and primary materials available there.

Further discussions with the film director Zach Melnick and producer Yvonne Debert, and as well with the Executive Members of the Bruce County Historical Society, resulted in a “thumbs up” for the book project to proceed. Local funding sources were sought, committed and earmarked towards the publication. Then Robin

Hilborn began work on what he has described as a book that would highlight “... topics specific to Bruce County.” He noted that the publication should not be regarded as a complete history of Bruce County. Instead, it would be seen as an initiative which would parallel the films in trying “... to portray the expressions of a broad range of people in the history of the County of Bruce and Saugeen Ojibway Territory.” The author then began his task of researching and writing. He benefitted from fifty research interviews of local residents and thirty-three interviews with historians, knowledge keepers, and elders, which were conducted in advance of the film production. He was also given permission to use the recently produced script for the film, as well as much associated research done by Bill Darfler.

The structure for the book and topics to be covered could be found in the films. Hilborn decided to use the titles of the three films; *The Fishing Chiefs*, *The Last Frontier*, and *The Peaceful Path*, as broad content chapters in his book. His plan was then to expand upon the existing topics and text in these chapters, and in addition include a Preface, five Appendices, and an extensive bibliography. From the start, the author acknowledged that, due to time and

space limitations, “...many important stories had to be left out” of the final product. In a sense, the book mirrored the films, but added much more historical background than the somewhat limited parameter that the film’s script had offered. The fol-



lowing is a brief synopsis of what you can discover and enjoy in the book, which was launched on 13 August 2018 at the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre in Southampton:

Part One, “The Fishing Chiefs,” portrays the efforts made by those Saugeen Ojibway chiefs who were responsible for fish management in their traditional territory. The Ojibway relationship with their waters and their lands, and that with various new comers who had arrived, is investigated. Issues related to treaties, the resulting diminishment, and the shrinkage of territories, and the ongoing battle for recognition of Native fishing rights are delved into. Hilborn adds considerable details regarding the important Ojibway history of the area, which has often been dealt with sparingly or not at all in previous publications. This is one of the most laudable aspects of his book, and should be considered as an example for future county histories in Ontario to follow.

Part Two, “The Last Frontier,” deals with the period of colonization. Surveyors laid out roads and divided land into lots. European immigrants poured into the newly-formed Bruce County to purchase property and to begin farming. Communities like Kincardine, Walkerton, and Ripley were founded. Lumbering became a big business, furniture factories were opened, and clear cutting lead to destructive bush fires. The increasing need for land by incoming settlers began to impact upon the Saugeen Ojibway and Métis peoples, and the local ecosystems were adversely altered. The author greatly adds to the account of the life of Bruce County pioneers, which is a result of the research he conducted for the “Last Frontier” exhibit at the Bruce County Museum.

Part Three, “The Peaceful Path,” details passage through the two great wars and

the depression. A significant rebound of a stagnant economy is recorded, with the approval for and construction of the world’s largest nuclear plant at Douglas Point. This revival was further enhanced by the influx of tourists who were drawn to Bruce County’s natural beauty and new national parks. Nature conservation became an important new imperative. These more modern developments resulted in the Bruce being energized, and for Ojibway, Métis, and Europeans alike, it became a place for a peaceful future of all peoples living there.

Hilborn’s writing style is fluid and easy to read. Throughout the book, many useful images and photographs are inter-dispersed with the text. A total of 195 high quality images, 95 from the Bruce County Archives and 55 from other sources, supplement the written word. Hilborn’s cataloguing work with and knowledge about the massive Krug Brothers collection, which is housed at the Bruce County Archives, has resulted in the use of many informative and striking graphics. Many of them have never been published previously. His exhaustive review of 287 publications about Bruce County, which have already been written and published, adds to the historical value and utility of his volume. These titles are all conveniently listed in the extensive bibliography at the end of the book, which is sectioned into useful categories. This feature is certainly a big help for researchers, as is the thorough and complete eighteen-page index. One shortcoming that I must mention is the complete absence of footnotes. With a 236-page text, Hilborn should have included information about where he found and accessed much of the information contained in the publication. Whereas he is often helpful to readers and researchers in other parts of his book, the lack of footnotes is a real drawback. This less than favourable as-

pect is an unfortunate limitation to what is otherwise an excellent effort by the author.

In conclusion, Robin Hilborn's *The Bruce* is a wonderful example of a shared initiative between local First Nations and Metis peoples, an historical society, a county museum and archives, area residents and businesses, and a local historian/author. Together, the partners in this collaborative approach have produced an attractive, informative, and very affordable county history book. This specific sample of collectivity should be considered and then adopted as a template for other communities throughout Ontario to use. When embarking on similar projects which are focused on bringing your own unique her-

itage to local residents, and as well as to a broader audience, you should consider this book very appropriate. It should in the future prove to be a successful model for forthcoming local history publications. And once you have read the book, you can see some of the words put into pictures by viewing a one disc (either DVD or Blu-Ray format) of the three episodes on film. This option is also available for purchase from the Bruce County Historical Society. Enjoy both choices!

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## *Roots of Entanglement*

### *Essays in the History of Native-Newcomer Relations*

Edited by Myra Rutherdale, Kerry Abel, and P. Whitney Lackenbauer

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. 449 pages. \$44.95 paper ISBN 9781487521370, cloth \$95.00 ISBN 9781487501389, \$44.95 Book. ([www.utorontopress.com/ca](http://www.utorontopress.com/ca))

*Roots of Entanglement: Essays in the History of Native-Newcomer Relations* edited by Myra Rutherdale, Kerry Abel, and P. Whitney Lackenbauer serves as a response by academics to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call for a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between Indigenous peoples and those who settled in Canada (1). In re-evaluating these relationships, *Roots of Entanglement* builds off of the scholarship of historian J.R. Miller, who is recognized as an important early figure in the writing of



native-newcomer relations and continues with his efforts to emphasize Indigenous agency in the events that shaped Indig-