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A REGIONAL APPROACH FOR NEW ENGLAND AND THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES

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In a period when it is especially important that American universities provide for teachers, college professors, businessmen, diplomats, and educated men and women generally more opportunities for study and research on Canada and Canadian-American relations, those opportunities remain distressingly few. If they are to be increased, both the problems and the possibilities of establishing such programs need reexamination.¹

What are the necessary ingredients of a stable and continuing program of Canadian-American studies in an American university? Both for graduate and for undergraduate work at more than a minimal level, these seem desirable: a sympathetic and interested administration; at least a small group of faculty members in history and related fields with some training in and commitment to Canadian studies; a measure of wider faculty support; a basic and actively growing Canadiana collection in the library; and enough financial backing, institutional and from other sources, to sustain such essential activities as conferences, lecture series, seminars and research by both students and faculty. Few institutions in the United States have, or perhaps can have, all of these requisites; many have some of them. Among the possible ways of increasing the number and insuring the continuation of Canadian-American studies programs in United States universities, one promising approach is through the coordination and better utilization of the resources of regions involving both countries. The example I am going to use is the New England-Atlantic Provinces-Quebec region. While most of my illustrations will be drawn from the New England section of the region, some of the ideas should be applicable in other areas of the United States and in Canada.

An obvious advantage of this type of regional approach is that it provides wider opportunities in almost all of the basic needs of a Canadian-American program. First, there is likely to be in the administrations, faculties, and student bodies of a region so constituted a nucleus of interested people, attracted to the program either by the geographical proximity of Canada with its attendant possibilities in study, research, and international exchange, or, occasionally, because they themselves have

¹ For earlier assessments of Canadian studies in American universities see Reginald G. Trotter, "Canadian History in the Universities of the United States," *Canadian Historical Review*, VIII (September, 1927), and Robin W. Winks, "Thirty Years After: Canadian History in the Universities of the United States," *Canadian Historical Review*, XL (March, 1959).

Canadian backgrounds. Administrators like President John Sloan Dickey of Dartmouth, Vermont's President, Shannon McCune, a geographer, the late President Sills of Bowdoin, a native of the Maritimes, the University of Maine's former President, Arthur Hauck, a long time member of the Canadian-American Education Committee, or Maine's new President, Edwin Young, originally from Newfoundland, can do much to assist Canadian-American programs at their own institutions and regionally. New England can also provide faculty members interested both in Canadian history and in related disciplines. Among those who have recently been or are now engaged in historical research and teaching in the field are Professors Robin Winks and Gaddis Smith of Yale, Allan Foley of Dartmouth, William Metcalfe of Vermont, Harold Davis of Bradford College, Charlotte Melvin of Ricker College, Robert Black of Trinity, Marine Leland of Smith, and Professors Max Thatcher of the University of Connecticut and John Harris of the University of Massachusetts in Political Science. Others in related fields could be named.

The American side of this region reflects the situation in the rest of the United States, unfortunately, in that it has few planned Canadian-American studies programs. Robin Winks' 1959 article on the teaching of Canadian history in the United States mentions theses on Canadian subjects at Harvard, Yale, Clark, Brown, Vermont, Boston College, and the Fletcher School at Tufts,² but these schools are not all active Canadian-American teaching centres. Harvard currently has no Canadian historian, though it still has research and theses on Canadian topics. Yale continues to provide advanced Canadian instruction. Vermont, with the largest and best organized undergraduate Canadian area studies program presently offered in New England, is looking to graduate instruction in this field at the Master's level. The University of Maine, which has one of the country's older Canadian history courses, started in 1927 and given quite regularly since, has had occasional regional theses and is now developing a New England-Atlantic Provinces Studies program as an extension of its relatively new American history Ph.D.

A problem of considerable dimensions in the development of Canadian-American studies in the United States, especially in smaller universities and colleges, is that of acquiring library resources on Canada. This has also apparently presented problems in the American area for Canadian institutions.³ In these days of mounting library costs, and of competition from new universities in both Canada and the United States, building up a really good Canadian collection may well be beyond the means of any but the best-endowed libraries or those with special foundation support. Here the full identification and use of such collec-

² Winks, *op. cit.*, 48, 49.

³ Wallace D. Farnham, "The Study of American History at Canadian Universities," Canadian Historical Association, *Report*, 1958, 68, 69.

tions as do exist within a region, through such devices as inventories, photocopying, and inter-library loans, together with some degree of specialization, may well be the answer to providing the necessary research and teaching base. New England can draw on the large Canadiana collections of Harvard, Yale, and Dartmouth, and the lesser but growing resources of Brown, notable for its Canadian literature collection, Smith, Connecticut, Vermont, Rhode Island, Trinity, and the University of Maine, which is specializing in Atlantic Provinces materials. Public and state libraries of some of the region's colleges also have surprising potential. Both the well known Boston Public Library and less well known libraries like the Bangor Public can often supplement university holdings. Students of Arctic Canada are aware of Dartmouth's fine Polar Studies Library; fewer may know that Bowdoin College has much of interest on the Canadian North, especially on Labrador.⁴ Serious graduate work on Canadian-American relations must involve research in both countries and perhaps also in Europe, but closer collaboration of libraries on both sides of the border can save time and money for the student and the faculty researcher.

A regional approach has another advantage which should be mentioned, the possibility of using, and supplementing, existing institutional channels of cooperation to provide special courses or graduate work. One example is the arrangement made by the New England land-grant universities to allow students at one institution to attend the others at special tuition rates in specified programs. Another is the close collaboration in course and student exchange of the group of colleges in Western Massachusetts which includes the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Smith, and Mount Holyoke. Similar exchanges of students or teachers between Canadian and American institutions have taken place from time to time. Some of the New England colleges, including the teachers colleges of Connecticut, and Smith College, have for some years sponsored student exchanges under the auspices of such groups as the Canadian-American Women's Committee.⁵ Planned faculty exchanges, like that of Professor Fred Cogswell of the University of New Brunswick with Professor Edward Ives of the University of Maine in the summer of 1965, have made more widely available to the students of both universities subjects, in this case Canadian literature and regional folklore, which neither could provide from their own faculties. Similar benefits have occurred from shorter visits. In 1946 Canada's distinguished historian

⁴ See Alice R. Stewart, comp., *The Atlantic Provinces of Canada: Union Lists of materials in the Larger Libraries of Maine*, Orono, Me., A65.

⁵ This Committee, and its American Chairman, Dr. May Hall James of Quinnipiac College, Connecticut, have been active since 1942 in promoting various types of joint Canadian-American activities, especially student and some teacher exchanges. For the early work of the Committee see A. H. Goodman, *Current Practices in Canadian-American Interchanges of Educational Personnel*, New York, 1948, 45-47, 61, 62; also Winks, *op. cit.*, 38.

Frank Underhill helped by summer lectures at the University of Maine to revive the teaching of Canadian history in that state.⁶ More recently New England has profited from lecture series at Dartmouth and at Vermont, the latter university having brought to its campus in 1964, with other outstanding Canadians, Professors Ramsay Cook of the University of Toronto in history, and Jean Darbelnet of Laval University in French literature.

A Canadian-American region also has research possibilities which are often most readily pursued or at least started within the region itself. In these the New England-Atlantic Provinces-Quebec area is especially rich. While some of the more obvious topics, such as the boundary controversies, have been quite thoroughly explored, even these might be reexamined, and there is still much work to be done on the social, economic, and cultural history of this region on such subjects as international trade, fisheries, lumbering, the paper companies, maritime enterprise, religious and social movements, immigration, the rise and decline of such ports as Boston, Portland, Halifax and St. John and their interconnections. Studies of international communities, like that of Harold Davis on the Ste. Croix,⁷ and of Charlotte Melvin on Madawaska⁸ or of the influence of waterways like the St. John, or the Champlain-Richelieu route now being investigated by H. N. Muller of Mount Allison, can add to the history of the region and of Canadian-American relations generally. A promising effort to follow up the earlier Carnegie Canadian-American Relations series with studies focussed on this region is being sponsored by the Yale and McGill Presses, with Robin Winks and Gerald Craig as the United States and Canadian editors. Their authors can draw on a considerable number of published works and on theses like those directed by Drs. D. C. Harvey and C. Bruce Fergusson, and Professors Peter Waite and George Rawlyk at Dalhousie, and Professors Alfred Bailey, W. Stewart McNutt, and James Chapman at the University of New Brunswick, but they will still find areas of basic research which remain to be done.

Finally, while regional cooperation will not be enough by itself, it may help to provide some of the necessary financial support for Canadian-American studies programs. Many graduate fellowships offered by universities in the region are open to the students of both countries. In New England and the Atlantic Provinces a few are especially designed for regional students, and more could be given. The Beaverbrook Fellowships of the University of New Brunswick for the study of Maine-New Brunswick

⁶ Goodman, *op. cit.*, 65.

⁷ Harold A. Davis, *An International Community on the St. Croix (1604-1930)*, Orono, Maine, 1950.

⁸ Charlotte L. Melvin, *Madawaska: a Chapter in Maine-New Brunswick Relations*, University of Rochester, Canadian series (Micro-card), 1956. (M.A. Thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1955.)

relations, and the Maritime Scholarships of the University of Maine for graduates of Maritime Provinces Universities, are examples, as are the New England-Atlantic Provinces Graduate Fellowships recently authorized by the University of Maine specifically for regional studies. Foundation support, somewhat limited for Canadian projects in recent years, might be more attracted by cross-border programs of a regional nature. In both countries there are increasingly generous amounts of government money available, as in the National Defense Education Act grants in the United States or those of the Canada Council, though much of it is understandably limited to the citizens of the country granting it. Universities already receiving such support, and many do, might well look to its use in Canadian-American studies programs for such purposes as institutes, centers, fellowships and library buying.

The potential for the regional approach to Canadian-American studies, as well as for such programs generally, both for teaching and research, is considerable. Conferences like those at the University of Maine and at Dartmouth in the 1950's, or the University of Maine-University of New Brunswick conference of 1964⁹ can be helpful, but much planning and the efforts of many institutions and organizations like the Canadian and American Historical Associations will be needed before this potential can be realized.

⁹ New England colleges and universities have held a considerable number of Canadian-American conferences. Some have been of a specialized nature, like the Canadian-American Seminar for Management held regularly at Goddard College in Vermont, the meetings sponsored by the student councils of Ricker College and the University of New Brunswick, or the conference on Canadian-American education held at the University of Maine in 1938. Others have been more general, examples being the Canadian-American Affairs Conference at Maine in 1951, the Dartmouth conference on the Anglo-Canadian-American Community in 1957, and the conference on Canada sponsored by the University of Connecticut and the Canadian-American Women's Committee in 1965. See R. L. Morrow, ed., *Conference on Educational Problems in Canadian-American Relations, Proceedings*, Orono, Maine, 1939; "The Dartmouth Convocation on Great Issues in the Anglo-Canadian-American Community September 5, 6, 7, 1957," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* (October, 1957); Newsletter of the American Section of the Canadian-American Women's Committee, August, 1965.