

## **W.F. Ganong, A.H. Clark and the Historical Geography of Maritime Canada\***

Graeme Wynn

Volume 10, numéro 2, spring 1981

URI : [https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/acad10\\_2art01](https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/acad10_2art01)

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

The Department of History of the University of New Brunswick

ISSN

0044-5851 (imprimé)

1712-7432 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Wynn, G. (1981). W.F. Ganong, A.H. Clark and the Historical Geography of Maritime Canada\*. *Acadiensis*, 10(2), 5–28.

GRAEME WYNN

## W.F. Ganong, A.H. Clark and the Historical Geography of Maritime Canada \*

The study of Maritime Canadian historical geography had its beginnings in the work of William Francis Ganong, a botanist by training, an historian by avocation, a geographer by inclination, and a New Brunswick patriot at heart. Born of Loyalist stock in West Saint John in 1864, Ganong spent the latter part of his childhood in St. Stephen before completing high school in Saint John and receiving B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of New Brunswick in 1884 and 1886. In 1887, Harvard awarded Ganong a B.A. degree, a Fellowship, and an appointment as an Assistant in Botany. In the mid-1890s, after a year of study in Germany, Ganong returned to America with a Munich Ph.D. (1896) to become the first Professor of Botany and director of the Botanic Gardens at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. There he remained until his retirement in 1932. Widely esteemed as a teacher, Ganong made significant contributions to plant physiology; among the honours accorded him were the Presidency of the Botanical Society of America, in 1908, and life membership in the American Society of Plant Physiologists. At his death, in 1941, Canada was said to have lost one of its "greatest scholars".<sup>1</sup> At least in part, this tribute rested upon the considerable achievements of Ganong's "unofficial" life. Never one to squander time, Ganong spent his summers and his leisure hours exploring the human and natural history of his native province.<sup>2</sup> As his friend and fellow local historian, J.C. Webster, recalled, "vacation time did not mean for him slippered ease and aimless idleness, but only the opportunity to return to researches which had no connection with his regular professional duties".<sup>3</sup>

The yields of Ganong's "amateur" inquiries were immense. Of the one hundred and fifty papers he published in the *Bulletin* of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick, many bore upon his professional interests; but

\* My thanks are due P.A. Buckner for his encouragement; C.C. Berger and R.C. Harris, who offered helpful comments on an earlier version of this essay; D. Ward, who provided copies of several unpublished papers by A.H. Clark; A. Dunlop, who facilitated my use of the Clark papers in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia; and R.L. Gentilcore, who recalled the background of his 1956 study.

1 J.C. Webster, "William Francis Ganong (1864-1941)", *Transactions, Royal Society of Canada* [hereafter *TRSC*], 36 (1942), p. 91. See also J.C. Webster, *William Francis Ganong Memorial* (Saint John, 1942).

2 J. Bell and G. Whiteford, "Exploring New Brunswick with W.F. Ganong", *Canadian Geographic* (Aug./Sept. 1979), pp. 38-43.

3 Webster, *Ganong Memorial*, p. 5.

## 6 *Acadiensis*

others reflected his wide-ranging curiosity about the New Brunswick landscape. The merits of Ganong's investigations of the early cartography of Canada's Atlantic Coast (later assembled in more "compact form" as a 500 page volume) were, and continue to be, widely recognized by specialized scholars.<sup>4</sup> Lengthy and detailed monographs on New Brunswick also appeared under Ganong's name with remarkable frequency in the *Transactions* of the Royal Society of Canada and he contributed a score of articles to the *Collections* of the New Brunswick Historical Society, *Acadiensis*, and the *New Brunswick Magazine*.<sup>5</sup> Ganong translated and edited Nicolas Denys' *Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America* (Toronto, 1908) and C. Le Clerq's *New Relation of Gaspesia* (Toronto, 1910) for the Champlain Society; he also worked on the reprinting of Patrick Campbell's *Travels in . . . North America* (Toronto, 1937) and on the translation, annotation, and reprinting of *The works of Samuel de Champlain*, edited by H.P. Biggar (Toronto, 1922-36).

Three influences shaped Ganong's historical inquiries: his training, current ideas about the nature of history, and prevailing conceptions of geography. First and foremost, Ganong was a scientist. In 1895 he put aside a long-held plan to write a general history of New Brunswick because he felt that the "coldly scientific, precise, classified, complete" work to which he was inclined would "lack the life and form and colour" essential in a popular history.<sup>6</sup> Introducing his 1901 monograph, Ganong insisted that students of boundary evolution "must be trained rigidly in the modern scientific spirit of inquiry".<sup>7</sup> Time and again, by precept and in practice, he eschewed speculation, commended impartiality, and warned of the need "to guard against preconceived opinions".<sup>8</sup> Nowhere were the links between Ganong's professional expertise and his historical investigations more clearly revealed than in the cartographic studies which drew his attention in the 1880s and sustained it for half a century. Here was a subject "requiring the scientific inductive spirit for its investigation . . . minute observation of all obtainable facts, the grouping of these together according to the degrees of their likeness or unlikeness, and deduction therefrom of what is common and essential, and what individual and unimportant".<sup>9</sup> Maps offered "a fascinating study in evolution". In the cartographic record of any region, the

4 *Crucial Maps in the Early Cartography and Place Nomenclature of the Atlantic Coast of Canada* (Toronto, 1964), with an introduction by T.E. Layng. Appeared originally in nine parts in *TRSC* 1929 to 1937.

5 A complete bibliography is included in Webster, *Ganong Memorial*.

6 "A Plan for a General History of the Province of New Brunswick", *TRSC* (1895), p. 91.

7 "A Monograph of the Evolution of the Boundaries of the Province of New Brunswick", *TRSC* (1901), p. 142.

8 "A Monograph of Historic Sites in the Province of New Brunswick", *TRSC* (1899), p. 215; "A Monograph of the Cartography of the Province of New Brunswick", *TRSC* (1897), p. 318; *Crucial Maps*, p. xvi.

9 "Monograph of the Cartography", p. 318.

scholar might find "paralleled with curious and often startling exactness, the familiar phenomena of variation, adaptation and survival of the fittest". His investigations might reveal

heredity, the old features, coming into conflict with new knowledge, representative of environment, and the result of the struggle is always compromise, as it is in Nature. When heredity is too strong for the environment to influence it, there results the persistence of an old type, whose extinction is only the more certain in the end. Selection, here the choice by men of the best, in the long run always preserves the best adapted, i.e. the most accurate, which in turn can be replaced only by one yet better.<sup>10</sup>

So strongly did Ganong feel these similarities that he contemplated the classification of early maps into families, genre, and species. All his historical work revealed the scientist's desire to disentangle complex interactions and the botanist's penchant for precise observation and accurate classification.

Nor did these predispositions divorce Ganong from the main currents of historical thought in turn of the century North America. As romantic novels gave way to more realistic portrayals of the human condition and photographs challenged the popularity of romantic painting in late nineteenth-century Canada and the United States, so objective, impersonal, realist history gained favour over the symbolic and spiritual conceptions of earlier romantic historians. Institutions replaced personalities as the preferred foci of historical studies; romantic values were subordinated to the scientific spirit. Entailing far more than a critical outlook (to which Parkman or Bancroft might justly have laid claim), the new scientific history was "relentlessly concerned with the relation of things to one another instead of their relation to the realm of ultimate meaning". It was, moreover, emphatically evolutionary in its stress upon continuity and the notion of "cumulative on-going change, operating through an endless chain of tangible causes and effects".<sup>11</sup> In accord with these ideas, Ganong regarded history as "an explanation of the *raisons d'être* of present social and political institutions" and thus intrinsically more important than romantic narrative which tended "to make prominent those heroic or other stirring events which appeal[ed] to the healthy human imagination or which

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214.

<sup>11</sup> J. Higham, with L. Krieger and F. Gilbert, *History. The Development of Historical Studies in the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1965), p. 94. See also W. Stull Holt, "The Idea of Scientific History in America", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, I (1940), pp. 352-60. For a discussion of contemporary Canadian developments, see C.C. Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History. Aspects of English Canadian Historical Writing: 1900-1970* (Toronto, 1975), pp. 1-31, and K. Windsor, "Historical Writing in Canada (to 1920)", in C.F. Klinck, *et al.*, eds., *Literary History of Canada. Canadian Literature in English* (Toronto, 1965), pp. 191-250.

## 8 *Acadiensis*

magniff[ied] the merits or glories of one's own people".<sup>12</sup> Yet Ganong's position was only partly congruent with that of the major American realist historians of the day. Working beyond the United States and preoccupied with local study, Ganong never saw in the past the triumph of national over parochial interests discerned by many of his American contemporaries and, although familiar with at least some of their work, he was less convinced than they of the perils of historical narrative.<sup>13</sup> Ganong's treatment of the past was heavily empirical and rigidly factual; he gave great labour to the critical appraisal of documents; he believed that historical scholarship was cumulative; and the presentation of his results often lacked cohesion. But he was convinced that popular taste demanded an impressionistic touch and lamented his "pre-Raphaelite" historical tastes. In the best of worlds, Ganong believed, history would consist of a "firm skeleton" of facts, arguments, and analysis "clothed with the graceful draperies" of stirring narrative.<sup>14</sup>

If the impersonal standards of late nineteenth-century scientific historians mirrored contemporary inclinations to "subject passion and caprice to objective law",<sup>15</sup> so the ambitions of their immediate successors reflected the pervasive early twentieth-century spirit of reform in North America. Heightened interest in the present (epitomised in the sociological surveys of urban slums) led progressive historians to emphasize those facets of the past most relevant to their own day; it encouraged them to seek explanations for change in the surrounding environment; and it fostered connection with the new social sciences. Out of these circumstances there grew a lively concern about the relations between geography and history.<sup>16</sup> With Frederick Jackson Turner (whose famous address of 1893 explained American history by reference to natural conditions and adumbrated some of the main ideas of James Harvey Robinson's "new history") to the fore, historians agreed that their subject had "found a valuable assistant" in physiography (or, more broadly, physical geography).<sup>17</sup>

12 "A Monograph of the Origins of Settlements in the Province of New Brunswick", *TRSC* (1904), p. 6.

13 Justin Winsor, "The Perils of Historical Narrative", *Atlantic Monthly*, 66 (1890), pp. 296-7. Ganong mentions Winsor in "Monograph of the Cartography", p. 315. See also R.H. Dabney "Is History a Science?", *The University Magazine*, 10 (1894), pp. 3-9.

14 "Monograph of the Origins of Settlements", p. 7.

15 Higham, *History*, p. 96.

16 Most obviously reflected in F.J. Turner, "Report on Conference on the Relation of Geography and History", *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1907* (1908), pp. 43-8, and E.E. Sparks, "Report on the Conference on the Relations of Geography to History", *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1908* (1909), pp. 57-61.

17 F.J. Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History", *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1893* (1894), pp. 199-227; J.H. Robinson, *The New History* (New York, 1916). Quote from Sparks, "Report", p. 57. Note also the description in the *University of Toronto Calendar*, 1893-4, p. 118, of the first three years of courses in the

Geography itself was in flux. Although the subject was no longer preoccupied with cosmology, or the compendious summary of information about the world, works of geography as inventory persisted. As late as 1881, the Oxford historian E.A. Freeman devoted a two volume *Historical Geography of Europe* (London, 1881) to tracing the extent of various states at different times with painstaking care. But by century's end geographers generally recognized that "the Earth and its inhabitants stand in the closest mutual relations", and sought to investigate this connection.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, before 1914 most geographers and many historians accepted that environment shaped society and that geographical facts "very largely influence[d] the course of history".<sup>19</sup> Some espoused a thoroughgoing environmental determinism. Others summed up their views aphoristically: "history is geography accumulating at compound interest" or "history is governed by geography".<sup>20</sup> A third group cautioned against denying other factors while maintaining that history was barely intelligible without geography. These views echoed a common conviction: that almost all events of historical importance are caused or conditioned by geographical factors.

Ganong's studies of New Brunswick encompassed both the older tradition of geographical inventory and the progressive interest in environmental influence. Extending Freeman's concern to mark the different boundaries of Europe, Ganong endeavoured to explain the genesis and evolution as well as the location of New Brunswick's provincial, county, and parish lines. Echoing Freeman's distress at the inaccurate use of historical toponyms, Ganong undertook his study of New Brunswick's historic sites to provide precise information for general historians whose work touched upon the province. While accepting that the complete and accurate cataloguing of archeological data bore the same relation to history as dictionaries did to literature, Ganong found value in locating the spot where historic events occurred, that one might go there and feel oneself "surrounded by the very witnesses, inanimate though they may be, of [those] events".<sup>21</sup> Similarly, the investigation of New Brunswick place names was important in contributing to historical facts, and in providing a link between history and geography, for place names were "the fossils exposed in the cross-sections" of national history, providing a permanent index to the past.<sup>22</sup> From

Department of History and Political Science: "the lectures will be directed mainly to the principles underlying the progress of history — the influence of race, religion, physical geography, and other sources of national development".

18 Karl Ritter, cited by S.W. Wooldridge and W.G. East, *The Spirit and Purpose of Geography* (London, 1958), p. 23.

19 H.B. George, *The Relations of Geography and History* (5th ed., Oxford, 1924), p. 1.

20 Aphorisms cited by H.C. Darby, "Historical Geography", in H.P.R. Finberg, ed., *Approaches to History* (London, 1965), p. 154.

21 "A Monograph of Historic Sites", p. 214.

22 "A Monograph of the Place-nomenclature of the Province of New Brunswick", *TRSC* (1896), p. 176.

such indices, the effects of environment on man might be discerned. Maps, for example, provided "graphic records of the influence which geography . . . exerted upon the course of history".<sup>23</sup> Turner's conviction that "the master key to American history" lay "in the geographical fact of an expanding people occupying a vast and varied area of the New World"<sup>24</sup> only added potency to Ganong's observation of 1895 that in New Brunswick (as in slightly different guise at the Cumberland Gap) there came "into view in succession the roving Indian, the hurrying explorer seeking a passage to the west, the picturesque French fur-trader, the colonizing Englishman, the independent New Englander, the exiled Loyalist and the sturdy immigrant from Europe".<sup>25</sup> If historical, environmental, and sociological factors shaped the settlement of any country, the environmental influences were clearly the most important. They alone were "incessant in their action, and in a broad way almost unvarying in their operation".<sup>26</sup>

Thus Ganong's historical studies reflected the intellectual climate of their creation in their concern for objectivity, in their desire to establish the facts, and in their conviction that societies, and their histories, were shaped by "geographical" or environmental influences. Recognizing this in retrospect, Ganong described his monographs on place nomenclature, cartography, historic sites, boundaries, and settlement origins as a series "designed to cover the historical geography of New Brunswick".<sup>27</sup> Earlier, he had designated a collection of edited documents as historical geographical studies for the light they threw upon "the geographical phases of New Brunswick history".<sup>28</sup> And these characterisations reveal a good deal about all of Ganong's historical writing. In one way or another, much of his work explored the "geographical phases" of New Brunswick's past; in approach and in content many of his inquiries reflected the concerns of a still embryonic field that is today described as geographical history as often as it is called historical geography.<sup>29</sup>

The environmental determinists' basic assumption that geography studied the impact of the physical environment on man retained currency in British and North American geography for several decades after 1914, although not without

23 "A Monograph of the Cartography", p. 313.

24 F.J. Turner cited by R.H. Block, "Frederick Jackson Turner and American Geography", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 70 (1980), p. 36

25 "A Plan for a General History", p. 96.

26 "Monograph of the Origins of Settlements", p.8.

27 "Additions and Corrections to Monographs on the Place-nomenclature, Cartography, Historic Sites, Boundaries and Settlement-origins of the Province of New Brunswick", *TRSC* (1906), p. 3.

28 "Report of the proceedings of the Troops on the Expedition up the St. John's River . . . , under the Command of Colonel Monckton", *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, II (1904), p. 163.

29 Darby, "Historical Geography", pp. 151-5.

challenge and modification. The ensuing debate, which continued into the 1960s, was often abstruse and frequently tedious.<sup>30</sup> Participants ranged themselves by conviction, with a shrinking group of strict determinists flanked by “probabilists” and “stop-and-go determinists” at one end of a continuum, and “possibilists” and supporters of free will at the other. Fragmentation was the result of this “unreal and futile” controversy.<sup>31</sup> Although the mood was generally positive as geographers sought to limit their field, to improve the work done by narrowing its scope, and to establish a niche for their subject within the structure of existing scholarship, pitfalls lay in establishing a common focus and acceptable bounds for the discipline. Scientific determinists sought more precise calibration of the effects of environment on man than was provided by the ‘crude’, sweeping, assertions of their predecessors.<sup>32</sup> Carl Sauer, the dominant intellectual figure of twentieth-century American geography, protested his colleagues’ pre-occupation with the causal connection between environmental circumstance and human response, and advocated a “phenomenological” (subject matter) definition of geography as the study of area and landscape.<sup>33</sup> Others argued the closely allied position that geography was chorology, that it investigated the spatial arrangement of things on the surface of the earth.<sup>34</sup> Yet a fourth group sought legitimation in biology by seeking parallels in the human

30 G. Tatham, “Environmentalism and Possibilism”, in T. G. Taylor, ed., *Geography in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1951); K.G.T. Clark, “Certain Underpinnings of our Arguments in Human Geography”, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 16 (1950), pp. 15-22; A.F. Martin, “The necessity for determinism: a metaphysical problem confronting geographers”, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 17 (1951), pp. 1-11; E. Jones, “Cause and Effect in Human Geography”, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 46 (1956), pp. 369-77; G.R. Lewthwaite, “Environmentalism and Determinism: A Search for Clarification”, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 56 (1966), pp. 1-23.

31 O.H.K. Spate, “Toynbee and Huntington: A Study in Determinism”, *Geographical Journal*, 118 (1952), pp. 406-28 introduced “probabilism”; Griffith Taylor, *Australia: A Study of Warm Environments and their Effect on British Settlement* (London, 1940), pp. 478-9, coined “stop-and-go determinism”; L. Febvre, *A Geographical Introduction to History*, trans. by E.G. Mountford and J.H. Paxton (London, 1942), p. 236, summarized the possibilist position — “There are no necessities but everywhere possibilities; and man, as master of the possibilities, is judge of their use” — current in French Geography (see A. Buttner, *Society and milieu in the French geographic tradition* [Chicago, 1971]); quote from R. Hartshorne, *Perspective on the Nature of Geography* (Chicago, 1959), p. 57, fn. 5.

32 Compare E. Huntington, *Civilization and Climate* (New Haven, 1915), with E.C. Semple, *Influences of Geographic Environment* (London, 1911).

33 C.O. Sauer, “The Morphology of Landscape”, *University of California Publications in Geography*, 2 (1925), pp. 19-54, reprinted in J. Leighly, ed., *Land and Life: A Selection from the Writings of Carl Ortwin Sauer* (Berkeley, 1967), pp. 315-50.

34 R. Hartshorne, *The Nature of Geography: A Critical Survey of Current Thought in the Light of the Past* (Lancaster, Pa., 1939); G. de Jong, *Chorological Differentiation as the Fundamental Principle of Geography* (Groningen, 1962).



## 12 *Acadiensis*

and biotic occupation of area and describing geography as the study of human ecology.<sup>35</sup>

When offered as a paradigm for all geography by Harlan Barrows of the University of Chicago in 1922, the latter proposal received little support. Yet seven years later, when Derwent Whittlesey pursued the organic simile and suggested the study of "sequent occupance" as a chorological analogue to plant succession in botany, geographers adopted his concept with some enthusiasm.<sup>36</sup> Combining the tenets of evolution with a muted environmentalism, the study of geography as "a succession of stages of human occupance" seemed to add perspective and dynamism to the subject by placing "the current stage in its proper relation to antecedents and to successors" without subordinating chorology to chronology.<sup>37</sup> Nonetheless, early enthusiasm for studies of sequent occupance soon faded. Anticipated retrospective and predictive generalisations never materialized and American geography turned, increasingly, to the study of the present. Within a decade, the original concept was much diluted. In a subject that saw its highest task in regional geography, "the description of the earth by portions of its surface",<sup>38</sup> the past was important only as it formed part of the current scene. That which existed before is significant "only if it has left vestiges and so exists also . . . in the present", conceded Whittlesey in 1936.<sup>39</sup> Although geographers were still urged not to ignore the past, strict attention to previous *stages* of occupance waned as existing patterns of population distribution and aspects of the visible landscape received more attention.

Several geographical studies of Maritime Canadian topics produced in the 1950s and 1960s reflected this emasculated legacy of the sequent occupance approach although they were more probably shaped by the context of current geographical practice than by explicit reference to Whittlesey's original or modified conception. Peggie Hobson's study of "Population and Settlement in Nova Scotia" asserted that "the composition and distribution of the population of Nova Scotia today is unintelligible without some knowledge of its long and complicated history".<sup>40</sup> But her treatment of that history was brief and subordinate to her discussions of existing patterns. Similarly, a cluster of studies

35 H.H. Barrows, "Geography as Human Ecology", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 13 (1923), pp. 1-14. S.R. Eyre and G.R.J. Jones, eds., *Geography as Human Ecology: methodology by example* (London, 1966).

36 D. Whittlesey, "Sequent Occupance", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 19 (1929), pp. 162-5. M.W. Mikesell, "The Rise and Decline of 'Sequent Occupance': A Chapter in the History of American Geography", in D. Lowenthal and M.J. Bowden, eds., *Geographies of the Mind. Essays in Historical Geosophy* (New York, 1976), pp. 149-69.

37 Whittlesey, "Sequent Occupance", p. 164.

38 Hartshorne, *The Nature*, p. 449.

39 D. Whittlesey, "Round Table on Problems in Cultural Geography", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 27 (1937), p. 170.

40 *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 70 (1954), p. 49.

undertaken by members of the Geographical Branch considered the past as prologue to the treatment of rural settlement and land use in various parts of the Maritimes. Norman L. Nicholson's work on the New Glasgow region was typical. This study described the mid twentieth-century rural landscape of the Cumberland-Pictou Lowlands in meticulous detail, reviewed six epochs of earlier settlement, and averred that population movement due to farm enlargement and the adjustment of land use to soil type and topography would "continue to produce changes in the pattern of the rural geography of the region".<sup>41</sup> Thus the landscape of 1950-51 was related to its antecedents and its successors.<sup>42</sup>

The most striking contribution in this genre was J.W. Watson's essay on "Relict Geography in an Urban Community", published in 1959. Watson, the Director of the Geographical Branch in the mid-1950s, derived the methodology of his essay from the work of Alan Ogilvie, a British geographer in whose honour it was written. Whatever its pedigree, Watson's approach closely resembled many facets of sequent occupance.<sup>43</sup> There were explicit parallels between relict geography and plant ecology; the focus on "objects left behind" by change compelled a dynamic treatment; and because relics lingered on, they necessitated description of the current "scene as part of what has gone before". Within this framework, processes of competition and invasion loomed large; zones of accommodation (partly relict), retardation (curbing change), ossification, deviation, and deterioration were distinguished in Halifax by examination of relict relief features, relict roads, and relict residences. Thus, in the city centre, where modern buildings had largely replaced residences, Watson concluded that "*succession* is nearly accomplished, and the urban climax, the dominant response to the urban climate, has been reached". On the fringes of the city, in contrast, "except for those immobilised by relief, relict homes . . .

41 "Rural Settlement and Land Use in the New Glasgow Region", *Geographical Bulletin*, 7 (1955), pp. 38-64; Nicholson's "The New Glasgow Region of Nova Scotia", *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 69 (1953), pp. 78-86, is a more ephemeral piece.

42 Broadly similar approaches characterize Brooke Cornwall, "A Land-use Reconnaissance of the Annapolis-Cornwallis Valley, Nova Scotia", *Geographical Bulletin*, 9 (1956), pp. 23-51; C.W. Raymond, "Agricultural Land-use in the Upper Saint John River Valley, New Brunswick", *Geographical Bulletin*, 16 (1961), pp. 65-83; C.W. Raymond and J.A. Rayburn, "Land Abandonment in Prince Edward Island", *Geographical Bulletin*, 19 (1962), pp. 78-86.

43 In fact, the intellectual roots of Ogilvie's ideas can be traced back to the United States, for he was a student of the Chicago plant ecologist, H.C. Cowles, and the Harvard geomorphologist, W.M. Davis. Whittlesey was on the faculty of the University of Chicago from 1919 to 1929, and was surely familiar with the work of Davis, the leading figure of early twentieth-century American geography, famous for his "geographical cycle" which described youthful, mature, and old age land forms. Ultimately, of course, the enthusiasm for organic analogies had its origins in Darwin's recognition of the intimate relationship between organic life and habitat. See D.R. Stoddart, "Darwin's Impact on Geography", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 56 (1966), pp. 683-98.

[were] few because this . . . [was] the zone of most aggressive *invasion*, before which farms, shacktowns, and cottage colonies . . . [were] falling like ninepins". Such analysis reinforced the point that regions are changing entities and offered the relict method as a useful aid to their comprehension. By showing "what it was in the past that became important for the present", relict geography permitted "a description of the present which is sufficiently illuminated by the past to throw its shadow into the future".<sup>44</sup>

Yet, for all its apparent ability to bring coherence to large quantities of disparate data, the organic analogy was of little real help in the conduct of geographical inquiry. As a synthetic rather than an analytical conception, it was essentially metaphysical; it posed no questions, and its underlying holistic assumptions offered an organisational framework of dubious value, not answers. There were also more evident practical difficulties. Relics remain only in areas of arrested or partial change; surviving elements of past phases are not always comprehensible when considered apart from associated phenomena that have disappeared. Much muted, the sequent occupance metaphor lingered in the inclusion of historical preludes to discussions of the current scene. In this form it is perhaps best described in its own terms as a "deteriorated relict" facing the invasion of an increasingly ahistorical regional geography that was, at worst, little more than a catalogue of categories of contemporary data.<sup>45</sup>

Fading enthusiasm for studies of sequent occupance reflected a growing conviction that the geographer's concerns were contemporary ones. In 1939, Richard Hartshorne's enormously influential inquiry into *The Nature of Geography* described the discipline as "the study of the areal differentiation of the earth surface", and offered a logical place among the sciences for a subject so defined.<sup>46</sup> Following Immanuel Kant, and the twentieth-century German geographer Alfred Hettner, Hartshorne argued that three distinct perspectives were necessary to comprehend reality in its entirety. Systematic sciences, defined by the objects they studied, examined "the relations of similar things"; historical sciences focussed upon "the temporal progression of events in time"; and chorological sciences considered "the arrangement of things in space".<sup>47</sup>

44 J.W. Watson, "Relict Geography in an Urban Community", in R. Miller and J.W. Watson, eds., *Geographical Essays in Memory of Alan G. Ogilvie* (London, 1959), pp. 110, 134, 141, 143; Darby, *Historical Geography*, p. 150, has compared Watson's approach to "those architectural plans that show the varying dates of different portions of a building or buildings". The same analogy is suggested by the maps depicting the date of original land grants in Raymond "Agricultural Land Use".

45 Watson, "Relict Geography", p. 112, describes relict zones of deterioration as areas that have "lost the function they once possessed and have declined in appearance, usefulness and status"; they might contain relics "like churches that have become gin shops".

46 Hartshorne, *The Nature of Geography* (1966 ed.), p. x.

47 *Ibid.*, pp. 138-48. Here I paraphrase Hartshorne's summation of Hettner's views on pp. 140-41; the quotations are from Hartshorne's citations of Hettner.

Thus, Hartshorne concluded (again following Hettner) that Geography "does not follow the course of time as such . . . but lays a limited cross-section through a particular point of time and draws on temporal development only to explain the situation in the time chosen". This view did not entirely limit the subject to the study of the present. Treatment of the past as it affected the present, and studies of the "geography" of any particular time in the past were permissible. While it was agreed that two or more past geographies of the same area would allow a form of comparative historical geography, this approach was considered dangerously close to history. Narrative historical geography was obviously impossible. Applied to geography, the adjective "historical" meant "of the past"; it did not imply a "direct connection with the field of history".<sup>48</sup> Although Carl Sauer argued, in reply, for a genetic human geography that encompassed the furthest reaches of human time in its quest to understand "how things came to be", his was not a popular vision in the 1940s.<sup>49</sup> The call to build "from all the earth in all the time of human existence" a "retrospective science" with the ability to look ahead was simply too ambitious, too demanding, and too esoteric to attract many geographers in a country whose development so denied the importance of historical and cultural differences and at a time when circumscription of the discipline was a common desire.<sup>50</sup> Hartshorne suggested that much of Sauer's work, with its emphasis upon "chronological order", was better regarded as history or anthropology than as geography and most historical geographers, concerned to maintain their disciplinary integrity, agreed to reconstruct "the geographical conditions of past times".<sup>51</sup> Echoing the conclusion of English geographers in the 1930s, that "the application of the adjective 'historical' to the noun 'Geography' strictly speaking merely carri[e]d the geographer's studies back into the past: his subject matter remain[ed] the same", they accepted Hartshorne's assertion that in geography "time in general steps into the background".<sup>52</sup> These, then, were difficult years for geographers open to and interested in the past, and it is a measure of Andrew Clark's achievement that he was instrumental in gaining acceptance for the work of historical geographers among his disciplinary colleagues in North America during the 1950s and 1960s.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 184-5.

49 C.O. Sauer, "Foreword to Historical Geography", in Leighly, *Land and Life*, pp. 351-79; J.B. Leighly, "Carl Ortwin Sauer, 1889-1975", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 66 (1976), pp. 337-48.

50 Sauer, "Foreword", p. 379.

51 Hartshorne, *The Nature of Geography*, p. 178. The best example of historical geography as reconstruction of the geography of a specific past time is R.H. Brown, *Mirror for Americans. Likeness of the Eastern Seaboard, 1810* (New York, 1943), a finely crafted account in the style of the times, purportedly the work of an imaginary author resident in Philadelphia in 1810.

52 Anon., "What is Historical Geography?", *Geography*, 17 (1932), pp. 42-3; Hartshorne, *The Nature of Geography*, p. 184. O.H.K. Spate, "The Nature of Historical Geography", *Monthly*

Born on a Manitoba Indian reserve, the son of a Baptist medical missionary, Andrew Clark came late to geography, and his early career was often interrupted.<sup>53</sup> Graduating in 1926 from Brandon Collegiate Institute at the age of fifteen, he received a B.A. in Mathematics and Physics in 1930 from McMaster University through Brandon College. After a year working for the Manitoba Good Roads Board, he entered graduate work in accountancy at the University of Manitoba in the middle of the depression, and in 1932 was employed as an actuarial assistant by the Manufacturers Life Insurance Company in Toronto. Three years later Clark joined the embryonic department of geography in the University of Toronto as "student, instructor and general factotum", an apprenticeship that culminated in 1938 with a summer of field reconnaissance in Western Europe and North Africa in the company of Griffith Taylor.<sup>54</sup> In the fall of 1938 Clark moved into the Ph.D. programme in the University of California at Berkeley. In 1941 and 1942 he was in New Zealand as Lecturer in Geography at the University of Canterbury. Between 1943 and his appointment as Associate Professor at Rutgers University in 1946, he contributed to the war effort by lecturing airforce cadets in meteorology at Berkeley, working in the A.S.T.P. programme at John Hopkins University, and serving as a geographer with the U.S. Department of State and the O.S.S. in the United States, India, and China. After World War II, Andrew Clark quickly rose to prominence in North American geography. From Rutgers, where he founded the department of geography, he moved to a professorial position in the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 1951. Three years later he chaired the Association of American Geographers' Committee on Historical Geography, and authored its report for the Association's semi-centennial review of the discipline.<sup>55</sup> At the end of the

*Bulletin of the Geographical Society of New South Wales*, N.S., 7 (1962), p. 1, provides a mildly captious but enlightening recollection of the 1932 discussion between the English Historical and Geographical Associations, out of which this position emerged: "the historians tended to assume that the point of historical geography was to discuss how geography has influenced human development. The geographers on the whole ran away from this; they capitulated . . . and turned the question by styling this older 'Historical Geography' geographical history. As they were all historical geographers, however, some justification for their existence was necessary. This was found in proclaiming that historical geography was the reconstruction of past geography, no less and certainly no more".

53 Obituaries include: R. Cole Harris, "Andrew Hill Clark, 1911-1975: An Obituary", *Journal of Historical Geography*, 2 (1976), p. 2; Douglas R. McManis, "Andrew Hill Clark, 1911-1975", *Historical Geography Newsletter*, 6 (1976), pp. 13-9; David Ward, "Andrew Hill Clark, 1911-1975", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 67 (1977), pp. 145-8. D.W. Meinig, "Andrew Hill Clark, historical geographer", in J.R. Gibson, ed., *European Settlement and North American Development* (Toronto, 1978) is a full and sensitive appraisal of Clark's career.

54 A.H. Clark, "The Rationale of Historical Geography" (unpublished, undated address [to the University of Toronto, Department of History, 1951?]), Clark Papers, MG1, vol. 1517, no. 10, PANS.

55 "Historical Geography" in P.E. James and C.F. Jones, eds., *American Geography: Inventory*

decade, he was the editor of the Association's new monograph series. Early in the 1960s, the gathering momentum of the graduate programme in historical geography at Madison, Clark's growing list of publications, and his presidency of the Association of American Geographers, confirmed his leadership of historical geography in North America.

In the years after 1945, much of Andrew Clark's scholarly energy was directed to the study of Maritime Canada. Despite his American citizenship and the location of the only residence he ever owned in Ontario, Clark was hardly a scholar "from away". "Both of his parents and three of his grandparents", he wrote in one of his studies, "were Islanders born and his roots are as deeply set in its red soil as those of any of its English-speaking sons".<sup>56</sup> His two major books and eight articles on the region, published over a period of twenty-five years when there were few historical geographers in North America, are the outstanding geographical contribution to our knowledge of early Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.<sup>57</sup>

Three men moulded Clark's intellectual development during the formative years of his professional career. At Toronto, Harold Innis, sometime Associate Professor of Economic Geography in the University, and Griffith Taylor, the foundation professor of geography, were Clark's mentors. And at Berkeley he was greatly influenced by Carl Ortwin Sauer. Innis, whose connections with the fledgling geography department at Toronto were strong (and who was apparently instrumental in securing the appointment of environmental determinist Griffith Taylor over a candidate who favoured a human ecological approach to the subject), introduced Clark to economic history.<sup>58</sup> Innis also "planted the original germ of a combined historical and geographical study of Maritime Canada" in Clark's mind, excited Clark about the variety of "geographical problems to be seen in the great parallel sweep of the eye-through-space and the mind-through-time" in Canada, and urged him to pursue his work in historical geography.<sup>59</sup> But perhaps the economic historian's most important influence upon the young geographer lay in the model of careful documentary research

and *Prospect* (Syracuse, 1954), pp. 70-105.

56 A.H. Clark, *Three Centuries and the Island. A Historical Geography of Settlement and Agriculture in Prince Edward Island, Canada* (Toronto, 1959), p. vii.

57 Complete bibliographies are included in Ward, "Andrew Hill Clark", and Gibson, *European Settlement*, pp. 224-8.

58 The details of the development of geography at Toronto can be found in the Cody, Falconer, and Mavor Papers in the University Archives and Rare Books Collections. Innis advocated the appointment of Taylor in March 1929 (Falconer Papers, Box 118 ) but the financial difficulties of the depression postponed action until 1935. Innis was appointed Associate Professor of Economic Geography in 1931. I am indebted to an unpublished paper by Patrick W. Naughton, "The Development of the Department of Geography at the University of Toronto" prepared for Ed. Theory 1801 in April 1977 for the outline of these developments.

59 Clark, *Three Centuries*, pp. vi-vii; A.H. Clark, "Honing the Edge of Curiosity: The Challenge of Historical Geography in Canada", in W.G. Hardwick and J.D. Chapman, eds.,

that he provided, and in his conviction that it was essential (as Clark expressed it) "to know the qualities of the natural environment, the nature of the people involved, and as much as one could of the empirical facts of their social and economic history before one could develop useful hypotheses in the field of explanatory description".<sup>60</sup>

Griffith Taylor bequeathed an altogether more mixed and complex legacy. Like Innis, he won Clark's admiration as an indefatigable field man.<sup>61</sup> But Clark found no merit in Taylor's deterministic view that habitat was more important than habit in directing human action. Echoes of Clark's rejection of the determinist stance ran through his work. In a study of the Foreign Protestants of Lunenburg, Clark denied that these immigrant farmers turned to the fishery "at the firm beck of the environment"; their settlement did not provide evidence "of the rapid work of nature's lathe in turning a square peg for a round hole".<sup>62</sup> Much of Clark's work on Prince Edward Island sought to uncover the influence of cultural origins (habit) on human actions reflected in the use of the land.<sup>63</sup> And in an essay written for a volume commemorating Griffith Taylor, he was careful to point out that despite the environmental limitations of early Nova Scotia, the Acadians "chose among alternatives" in developing their "distinctive geographical entity in its own corner of the new world".<sup>64</sup>

Both challenged and encouraged by his introduction to geography, Clark entered the University of California, where Sauer's striking personality, and the distinctive emphases of the programme in "culture-history" (as Sauer reckoned historical geography) were fundamental in refining and re-inforcing Clark's developing conception of his subject. At Berkeley, in the late 1930s, it was accepted that geography was a genetic science. Field and archive were considered basic sources for its study and work at local and regional scales was encouraged. In essence, this approach was built on the premises that cultural regions were reflections of the distinctive peoples who occupied them and that the landscape was the focus of geographical interest. At Berkeley, human

*Occasional Papers in Geography*, No. 4 (Vancouver, 1963), p. 8; A.H. Clark, "Obituary of Harold Adams Innis", *Geographical Review*, 43 (1953), pp. 282-3.

60 Clark, "Honing the Edge", p. 8.

61 A.H. Clark, Review of T.G. Taylor, *Journeyman Taylor. The Education of a Scientist* (London, 1956). *Geographical Review*, 49 (1959), p. 600.

62 "Legend and Fact in Historical Geography: An illustration from Nova Scotia", abstract in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 38 (1948), pp. 85-6. In "Rationale of Historical Geography", p. 20, Clark observed: "Believe me, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island are no happy hunting ground for a determinist of any kind".

63 *Three Centuries*, pp. v-vi; "The use of the 'control area' in the study of broader regional geographies" (unpublished paper delivered to the 52nd annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Montreal, April 1956), abstracts in their *Annals*, 46 (1956), p. 241.

64 "Acadia and the Acadians: The creation of a geographical entity", in J. Andrews, ed., *Frontiers and Men* (Melbourne, 1966), pp. 115-6.

geography examined the transformation of the landscape, "the spatial differentiation of culture", and the "localization of ways of living"; it had nothing to do, Sauer asserted, with individuals "but only with human institutions or cultures".<sup>65</sup> Thus "culture" became a basic organizing principle for studying those central concerns of the human geographer, the differences between peoples and the distributions of artifacts. Derived from the theory of culture outlined by anthropologists Alfred Kroeber and Robert Lowie earlier in the century, this approach severely downplayed investigation of the workings of society — political and power relationships, social organization — and the reasons for individual behaviour.<sup>66</sup> Manifest especially in Clark's doctoral dissertation on New Zealand — in which the characteristic Berkeley interest in man's impact upon the environment was central — the legacy of Clark's training under Carl Sauer was also evident in his conception of ethnic groups as fundamental realities by which the historical geography of North American regions might be understood, in his careful descriptions of pre-contact vegetation and settlement patterns which provided datum-planes for his studies of Prince Edward Island and Acadia, and to some extent, in his scant attention to the strategies and institutions of individual and group interaction in the past.<sup>67</sup>

In the decade after 1945, as Clark initiated his research programme on Maritime Canada, and formulated his distinctive views of a categorically "historical" geography, the ideas nurtured during his scholarly apprenticeship had to be reconciled with the disciplinary context of his work.<sup>68</sup> Initially, Clark's investigations reflected geography's preoccupation with the contemporary scene. Recalling the preliminary phases of his work on "the origins and development of patterns and practices of land use in Maritime Canada", Clark acknowledged that "the problem was, essentially, the nature of the present cultural rural landscape". His approach to it resembled that employed in contemporary studies of sequent occupance. Field reconnaissance was essential:

65 Sauer, "Foreword to Historical Geography", pp. 361, 352, 358, 360, 372-5.

66 J.S. Duncan, "The Superorganic in American Cultural Geography", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 70 (1980), pp. 181-98, explores the implications of the link with anthropology. See also H.C. Brookfield, "Questions on the Human Frontiers of Geography", *Economic Geography*, 40 (1964), pp. 283-303, and M.W. Mikesell "Tradition and Innovation in Cultural Geography", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 68 (1978), pp. 1-16.

67 Clark turned to work on New Zealand when he joined the newly created geography department in Christchurch. His dissertation, accepted in 1944, was published as *The Invasion of New Zealand by People, Plants and Animals: The South Island* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1949). Sauer, in Leighly, ed., *Land and Life*, p. 333, had argued that studies of the cultural landscape begin at the beginning with reconstruction of the "original natural landscape"; cf. ch. 2 of *Three Centuries* and ch 2 of *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760* (Madison, 1968).

68 Clark had intended to make Maritime Canada the subject of his doctoral dissertation and devoted the summer of 1939 to field work in the region, but these plans were postponed by the intervening opportunity offered in New Zealand.



## 20 *Acadiensis*

out on the highways and byways of the region one must go. In Nova Scotia . . . thousands of questions were raised by the landscape itself and were jotted down, such as: 1. Why were certain fields abandoned or recently changed in use? . . . 3. Why did one valley have jersey cattle, a second Herefords and a third one nondescript scrubs? . . . 6. Why should one valley have scores of acres in buckwheat when the crop was not grown elsewhere for miles around . . . ?

Maps, libraries, and archives offered some answers, but interviews were at least as important. By mapping the remembered changes in farm layout and asking "when did your orchard shift from Gravensteins to Macintosh Reds?", or "why can't the owners of the marshland get together in the construction of aboiteaux?" the geographer should be able to decide where *present* techniques and patterns originated and offer "explanations . . . of the present situation".<sup>69</sup> There were echoes of Berkeley in Clark's statement. The emphasis on field and archival evidence, the concern with "the meeting of natural and cultural history", the effort to determine "the characteristics of the occupying culture", and the attempt to ascertain farmers' perceptions of their milieu, all were themes advanced by Carl Sauer.<sup>70</sup> But Clark's emphasis on uncovering the origins of the current scene inevitably restricted the historical sweep of his inquiry, and placed his work within the framework of contemporary geographical orthodoxy. Temporal development was considered insofar as it explained the present situation.<sup>71</sup>

Yet the nucleus of a more wide-ranging research design was emerging. After some two and a half years of work on the postwar landscapes of Nova Scotia, Clark claimed, in 1948, that his study was "*now* conceived as part of a long-term project" (emphasis added), investigating "the transference of agricultural and pastoral patterns and practices from the shores of the North Sea to the

69 A.H. Clark, "The Origins and Development of Pattern and Practices of Land Use in Maritime Canada" (unpublished Tps with emendations [late 1948]), MG1, vol. 1517, no. 7, PANS. pp. 5, 8, 11, 13.

70 Clark claimed his study rested on an understanding of physical geography and "what many would call culture history". The phrase "the meeting of natural and cultural history" is Sauer's and comes from his *Agricultural Origins and Dispersals* (New York, 1952), p. 2. Clark's program of inquiry of course paralleled that employed in his New Zealand work. The second quotation of this sentence is from Clark, "The Origins and Development", p. 6.

71 It is crucial, I think, that Clark's strongest advocacy of field work occurred when his historical inquiries were tied to the current scene. As his interests focussed on the more distant past for its own sake, the usefulness of interviews and observation of the type described above, declined. Clark continued to pay lip-service to 'field work' but such reconnaissance clearly had little impact on his later writing, and the tone of his pronouncements about field investigation became less strident. A.H. Clark, "Field Research in Historical Geography", *Professional Geographer*, old series, 4 (1946), pp. 13-22.

mid-latitude lands overseas settled therefrom".<sup>72</sup> Three years later, this programme was described as "an attempt to understand the changes in regional character, viewed geographically, which resulted . . . [from the European settlement of] lands overseas".<sup>73</sup> Clark's views of his subject were also evolving. A correspondence with Hartshorne had provided stimulating discussion of methodological questions, and by 1951 Clark saw historical geographers searching for "knowledge of genetic processes of the past — and of changes in regional character in the past". Contemporary geography, in contrast, studied "circumstances largely unaltered at the time of writing".<sup>74</sup> The distinction was not clear cut. Clark continued to argue the utility of the past as a key to the present, and in 1954 he asserted that the "larger aim" of historical geographers "is to understand the geography of the present by study of the changing geography of the past".<sup>75</sup>

Although he denied much enthusiasm for methodological issues, Clark found himself drawn into extended discussion of such questions as his views of historical geography developed during the 1950s.<sup>76</sup> Drafted on to the committee charged to offer a review and prospect of American geography at the beginning of the decade, Clark was largely responsible for its statement on "Historical Geography". Seeking to broaden the profession's conception of the subfield, he adopted a catholic stance, citing an eclectic list of more than 200 authors whose work bore on an historical geography defined as "any study of past geography or geographical change through time".<sup>77</sup> In the final analysis, however, his posi-

72 "The Origins and Development", p. 3.

73 "The Rationale of Historical Geography", p. 17; Meinig, "Andrew Hill Clark, historical geographer", has noted how unusual this commitment to a long-term scholarly programme was among Clark's contemporary geographers.

74 "The Rationale of Historical Geography", pp. 3-6.

75 "The Rationale of Historical Geography", p. 23; "Titus Smith, Junior and the Geography of Nova Scotia in 1801 and 1802", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 44 (1954), p. 291. Clark published little on Maritime Canada in the early 1950s, but the type of work he envisaged is perhaps suggested by R.L. Gentilcore, "The Agricultural Background of Settlement in Eastern Nova Scotia", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 46 (1956), pp. 378-404. This work grew out of a chance encounter between Clark, D.C. Harvey the archivist of Nova Scotia, and Gentilcore, who had completed a PhD dissertation on "Land Use and Agricultural Production in Antigonish County, Nova Scotia" at the University of Maryland, College Park, in 1950. The dissertation had little historical perspective although the focus on Antigonish County had been prompted by an interest in the work of the Co-operative Movement, and Clark and Harvey encouraged Gentilcore to explore the historical antecedents of mid-century circumstances in the county. The result was a study of the trans-Atlantic transfer of "agricultural and pastoral patterns and practices".

76 A.H. Clark, "The Whole is Greater than the Sum of the Parts", in D.R. Deskins Jr., et al., eds., *Geographic Humanism, Analysis and Social Action: A Half-Century of Geography at Michigan* (Ann Arbor, 1977), pp. 1, 2, and 19.

77 James and Jones, *American Geography*, p. 71. Clark echoes these ideas in "Geographical Change: A Theme for Economic History", *Journal of Economic History*, 20 (1960), pp. 607-16;

tion was a relatively conservative one, for Clark sought to place the study of change within Hartshorne's generally accepted model of geography. Arguing that the difference between history and geography lay less in their exclusive concern with time and space than in the clear differences between their characteristic emphases, he urged historical geographers to recognize and investigate the changes associated with man's occupancy of area. Provided they studied "the past circumstances of, or . . . changes in, phenomena of concern to geography" their efforts could remain geographical. This would set historical geography apart from history, which emphasized the study of human societies, and the ideas and circumstances influential in changing them. Thus conceived, historical geography could be more than the study of the past in the present or the construction of "cross-sections" of time; it could examine geographies as "continually changing entities". Provided the focus was upon "the geographical structure of change", geography's traditional interest in areal association and differentiation on the surface of the earth would be "in no degree compromised."<sup>78</sup>

This position had crucial ramifications for both the discipline of geography and Clark's own work. Its role in creating a broader view of historical geography is best reflected in Richard Hartshorne's attitude toward the field. In 1959, Hartshorne conceded that the strict Hettnerian orthodoxy of his earlier views on historical geography had been too restrictive and that "History . . . must be in greater or less degree geographic". Conversely, he admitted that "since the concept of 'the present' — or of any other point of time — is an abstraction, all geographic work must be in greater or less degree historical. The distinction between the two kinds of study is not one of separation but of difference in purpose and emphasis". In contrast to his 1939 assertion that there was "no conceivable way of . . . presenting simultaneously all the changing features of even one region, even in outline", he allowed this might be achieved "by selecting a relatively small region of restricted variation in area and affected by a limited number of factors producing historical change".<sup>79</sup> Clark's influence upon Hartshorne's thinking on these questions is undocumented, but it is significant that the two men were colleagues in Madison from 1951, and that Clark edited the series in which Hartshorne's statement appeared.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the very model of the type of historical geographical study Hartshorne envisaged — Andrew Clark's *Three Centuries and the Island* — appeared in the same year as Hartshorne's *Perspective*. Ostensibly undertaken to resolve difficulties in the

"Historical Geography in North America", in A.R.H. Baker, ed., *Progress in Historical Geography* (Newton Abbot, 1972), pp. 129-43; and "Some suggestions for the geographical study of Agricultural Change in the United States", *Agricultural History*, 46 (1972), pp. 155-72.

78 Clark, "Geographical Change", p. 611; James and Jones, *American Geography*, pp. 72-3.

79 R. Hartshorne, *Perspective on The Nature of Geography* (Chicago, 1959), pp. 179, 103-4; Hartshorne, *The Nature of Geography*, p. 188.

80 Clark offered a brief comment on this relationship in "The Whole is Greater", p. 19.

interpretation of Nova Scotia's more complex geography, *Three Centuries* was also a methodological tract "intended to illustrate and test an approach to the study of historical geography". An overwhelming interest in the uneven spatial distribution of people, places, crops, and livestock in this small and climatically, topographically, and pedologically uniform region rendered the work geographical. Innumerable maps affirmed this pedigree; they summarized spatial patterns of phenomena, or combinations of phenomena, and provided the "skeletonized frameworks" of "instantaneous cross-sections of area". Additional maps and discussion of patterns of change provided an interpretation of these past geographies. And because this inquiry bridged three centuries, it was "self-evident" that it was historical. Thus "geographies, interpreted from the changing patterns" were "studied as dynamic, rather than static, entities".<sup>81</sup>

Almost all of Clark's subsequent work was shaped, to some extent, by this methodological template, although its form blurred with time and changes in the emphasis of geographical inquiry. The legacy of the 1950s was clearly apparent in Clark's two studies of post-Confederation Nova Scotia published in the 1960s, which carefully mapped sequential patterns of "Old World Origins and Religious Adherence" and the "Sheep/Swine Ratio" as indicators of the changing geography of the province.<sup>82</sup> At the end of the decade *Acadia* also bore the stamp, but more lightly, in its combination of chorology and chronology. While the cross-sections were more fragmented than those of the Island study, reflecting to some extent the dispersion of Acadian settlement and the difficulties of the sources, the same precise and detailed descriptions of settlement, livestock, and crop-production patterns marked both *Acadia* and *Three Centuries*. In *Acadia* (as in Clark's earlier study of "New England's Role in the Underdevelopment of Cape Breton" and his later, more general, treatment of the same theme), however, the "dynamic" interpretation of these distributions came, in part, from consideration of their "changing functional interconnections through space".<sup>83</sup> This approach, Clark emphasized, reflected the geographer's deeply rooted interest in questions of absolute and relative location, an interest then being explored by those who saw geography as an abstract, model-building, law-finding science. Time was also treated differently, for it was more clearly recognized in the chapters of the later book, most of which encompassed the distributions of a few dozen years in chronological sequence and began with a brief

81 Clark, *Three Centuries*, pp. v, 222.

82 "Old World Origins and Religious Adherence in Nova Scotia", *Geographical Review*, 50 (1960), pp. 317-44; "The Sheep/Swine Ratio as a guide to a century of change in the livestock geography of Nova Scotia", *Economic Geography*, 38 (1962), pp. 38-55.

83 "New England's Role in the Underdevelopment of Cape Breton Island during the French Regime, 1713-1785", *Canadian Geographer*, 9 (1965), pp. 1-12; "Contributions of its Southern neighbours to the underdevelopment of the Maritime Provinces area of present Canada, 1710-1867" in R. A. Preston, ed., *The Influence of the United States on Canadian Development* (Durham, N.C., 1972), pp. 164-84.

discussion of "the course of events". The result, according to Clark, was a "regional exposition of historical human geography".<sup>84</sup>

Regional historical geography was Andrew Clark's *métier*. He often stressed the importance, and the satisfaction, of knowing a region thoroughly, of getting under its skin. In his mature judgment, the geographer studied "the interwoven phenomena of the world of man" to reveal the character of places or regions; his aim was to make the fullest possible synthetic interpretation of an area that the evidence allowed.<sup>85</sup> This was, undoubtedly, a difficult commission. If it did not condemn geographers to the Herculean task of dealing with everything, it did offer them the Sisyphean prospect of being interested in almost anything. Resolution of such complexity required a personal interpretive judgment, the product of a broad training, skill, knowledge, experience, and reflection sharpened by a finely honed curiosity. In the final count it was subjective, because geographical, like historical, interpretation was an art. Yet the geographer remained distinct from the historian, set apart by his "concern with locations, places and areas; with comparisons, contrasts and interconnections through territorial space; and with environmental or ecological circumstances in which human activities are carried on".<sup>86</sup>

Paradoxically, Clark's substantive work fell short of the mark he established by his retrospective musings on the geographical enterprise. But this discrepancy reveals, in a nutshell, the predicament confronting Andrew Clark as an historical geographer in the 1950s and 1960s. Striving to legitimize historical geography in an essentially hostile environment, he was shackled by an intellectual context that he was never quite able to surmount. Valuable as his early training was, it cast his view of the subject in a limited mould. Innis' empiricism implanted a suspicion of broad generalization that was re-inforced by a personal inclination toward "scholarly prudence".<sup>87</sup> Perhaps, too, the influence of Innis — economic geographer as well as historian — was reflected in Clark's recurrent and often dominant interest in the spatial patterns of *economic* activity.<sup>88</sup> Neither Innis' orientation toward the past ("filled with beaver and cod rather than people"<sup>89</sup>) nor the reified view of culture Clark encountered at Berkeley fostered a sensitivity to the nuances and complexities of human societies or encouraged a dialectical sense of culture as an evolving context shaped by

84 Clark, *Acadia*, pp. 393-4.

85 A.H. Clark, "First Things First", in R.E. Ehrenberg, ed., *Pattern and Process: Research in Historical Geography* (Washington, D.C., 1975), pp. 12-3.

86 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

87 Meinig, "Andrew Hill Clark, historical geographer", p. 16.

88 Indeed the aphorism "Economic history with maps" has been applied to much historical geography written in this period.

89 R. Whitaker, "'Confused Alarms of Struggle and Flight': English Canadian Political Science in the 1970s", *Canadian Historical Review*, 60 (1979), p. 3.

humanity. Nor did Clark's own predilections render this an uncomfortable legacy, for he was essentially a liberal, believing in consensus, accepting the progress of American society, and working within the framework of American achievement. Moreover, the struggle to establish a temporal perspective in a discipline set so resolutely upon the study of area exacted its price. Despite a growing enthusiasm for imaginative synthesis, Clark never succeeded in ridding his work of the Hartshornian mantle designed to provide a distinctive cloak for geography. In essence, geographical orthodoxy constrained Clark's view of historical geography by insisting upon the study of area, and by setting history and geography apart by reference to their concern with time and space. Although Clark described historical geography as a bi-disciplinary subject, and acknowledged that history studied "human society in its various facets" through time, he severely limited the historical dimension of his hyphenated geography.<sup>90</sup>

In his thinking about the field, Clark shared with Hartshorne and other geographers the notion that history was past time. Clark placed no clear limits upon the temporal range of the historical geographer's inquiries; he was free to delve as far into the past as his interest and competence allowed, and the division between past and present was equally blurred. After all, the geography of a region today would be historical, in some small degree, tomorrow. Historical geography was past geography. Even though Clark argued for the study of change rather than of simple cross-sections of the past, his central concern was to embrace the passage of time. Because geographies were continually changing entities, "the changing patterns of phenomena and relationships in and through area" should be examined.<sup>91</sup> Characteristically, Clark's studies were built on maps depicting the distribution of particular features at different times. They were descriptive, or morphological, functional or structural.<sup>92</sup> And they were clearly "geographical" in their emphasis upon areal differentiation. Revealingly, Clark divided scholarly responsibility for the past. It was the geographer's task to study the *geography* of change; it was for the historian to examine change in society, culture, or economy".<sup>93</sup>

This division of responsibility led to severe criticism of historical geography in the late 1960s, when few geographers paid much heed to the circumstances that had moulded Clark's approach to the subject. Hartshorne's description of

90 Clark, "Historical Geography", p. 72.

91 Clark, "Geographical Change", p. 611.

92 Morphological: concerned with the form of features; functional: considering patterns of activities; structural: dealing with the organization and interdependence of forms and functions. H.C. Prince, "Real, Imagined and Abstract Worlds of the Past", *Progress in Geography*, 3 (1971), p. 23, voices a similar criticism of much work in historical geography, suggesting that documentary evidence does not allow any other form of treatment. What follows suggests my disagreement with him over the cause of this admitted shortcoming.

93 Clark, "Geographical Change", p. 613.

geography as a chorological subject had always embraced two foci. On the one hand stood the integration and synthesis of regional geography; on the other was the more abstract study of spatial patterns and spatial relations. In Clark's view, historical geography was inescapably regional; even when spatial patterns and relations were emphasized, they were treated in a regional context. But during the late 1950s and 1960s geography moved decisively away from regional study toward the development of spatial theory. Mathematics and computers were turned to the analysis of data in the quest for spatial laws and theories of human behaviour. Abstraction, generalization, and "scientific respectability" were common desiderata. To many in this environment, "traditional" historical geography seemed only shabby and dull. Harsh criticisms were levelled at Clark's *Acadia* for its failure to offer more than "the clearest possible record of what happened".<sup>94</sup> The historical geography that the book stood for was condemned for its failure to adopt the conceptual frameworks and techniques embraced by other geographers; the study of "geographical change" was dismissed as a cul-de-sac; and the "inadequacies of inductivism" were pointed out.<sup>95</sup> Bitterness and argument resulted.<sup>96</sup>

In retrospect the critique had some justification. Certainly, Clark's limitation of the geographer's interest in the past blinkered historical geography. It encouraged an emphasis upon artifactual elements of cultures at the expense of interest in the "sociofactual" and "mentifactual" dimensions of society — although curiously, given his pleas for field work, Clark wrote little about the *landscapes* of the Maritimes.<sup>97</sup> Arguably, by ignoring Marc Bloch's dictum — "it is men that history seeks to grasp" — Clark's work, with its emphasis on changing patterns, also fell short of providing a truly historical perspective on Maritime Canada.<sup>98</sup> It lacked a clear measure of the historical significance of "the facts". And it failed to deal with *processes* of change, an understanding of which requires analysis of the social, economic, technological, and institutional forces initiating and mediating change. Nonetheless, the magnitude of Andrew Clark's contributions cannot be denied. His efforts established a place for historical geography in North America and much of his writing was judged favourably by historians impressed not only by its meticulous detail, but also,

94 W.A. Koelsch, Review of *Acadia, Economic Geography*, 46 (1970), pp. 201-2.

95 Prince, "Real, Imagined and Abstract Worlds of the Past", pp. 22-4.

96 A.R.H. Baker, "Rethinking Historical Geography", and A.H. Clark, "Historical Geography in North America", both in A.R.H. Baker, ed., *Progress in Historical Geography* (Newton Abbot, 1972), pp. 11-28 and 129-43.

97 This convenient if not entirely satisfactory classification is borrowed from W. Zelinsky, *The Cultural Geography of the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1973), p. 73. Artifacts include tools, weapons, the shelter system and other man-made objects, property holding and land-use systems, and food and drink production, etc. Sociofacts include kinship and family systems. Mentifacts include ideological baggage, superstition, religion, folklore, etc.

98 M. Bloch. *The Historian's Craft* (New York, 1953), p. 26.

perhaps, by the fresh perspectives brought to bear upon familiar ground by the geographer's approach. In 1969, the Beveridge Award Committee of the American Historical Association cited *Acadia* as the best historical study on Canada during the previous year.

Today, the "intellectual crisis" discerned by critics of historical geography in the late 1960s seems chimerical. After two decades of debate about the necessity for, and the possibilities of, a spatial analytical geography, the discipline has become much more eclectic than many thought possible twenty years ago. As the achievements of "theoretical geography" fell short of its proselytizers' claims, common assumptions of their work were recognized as too simple. Behavioural variables were added to the equations of spatial economics in an effort to refine analyses. More radical shifts in perspective were encouraged by those who considered abstract spatial theory irrelevant to the pressing social problems of the day. Some rejected geographers' claims for the autonomy of space as a subject of study. Others criticized science as dehumanizing and sought completely new paradigms of inquiry.<sup>99</sup> Contemporary historical geography mirrors these circumstances. There is no single approach to the subject. Indeed, there are hardly recognizable mainstreams. The proliferation of philosophies and methodologies has given modern geography such a pluralistic cast that there is no longer a disciplinary orthodoxy against which to measure work in historical geography. Thus the struggle to fit the field within the established canons of geographical inquiry has been abandoned. Yet most historical geographers would agree that their interests lie in the evolving character of places, regions, or landscapes, and in the past interrelations of people and their environments. So defined, historical geography is "rooted in the basic stuff of human existence".<sup>100</sup> In North America, where European experience has been so fundamentally tied to the occupation of a continent, the subject offers — as Andrew Clark recognized in many a reflective moment — an essentially humanistic perspective on man's experience with his land.<sup>101</sup> Much as the work of W.F. Ganong and A.H. Clark reflects the contexts of its creation, it is still relevant to inquiry in this vein. Although Ganong was essentially a fact-finder his studies will remain a fundamental source of information on early New Brunswick. Likewise, Clark was an empiricist, seldom given to speculation about patterns, processes, and changes beyond those clearly confirmed by the data he so painstakingly collected. But his careful discriminating use of sources

99 R.J. Johnston, *Geography and Geographers. Anglo-American Human Geography Since 1945* (London, 1979).

100 D.W. Meinig, "The Continuous Shaping of America: A Prospectus for Geographers and Historians", *American Historical Review*, 84 (1979), p. 1191.

101 Clark, "The Whole is Greater"; A.H. Clark, "Praemia Geographiae: The Incidental Rewards of a Professional Career", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 52 (1962), pp. 229-41.



yielded a formidable factual inventory, and his studies provide "an impressive object lesson in a skillfully controlled and basic, if austere, kind of historical geography".<sup>102</sup> Now the challenge is to build on these foundations in addressing questions at the heart of North American existence;<sup>103</sup> the prospects for such study by historical geographers seem especially propitious in Maritime Canada where, for generations, settlers have wrestled with a tough environment and development has depended so heavily upon the natural resources of land and sea.

102 W.D. Pattison, Review of *Three Centuries and the Island*, *Geographical Review*, 50 (1960), p. 129; R.L. Gentilcore, Review of *Acadia*, *Geographical Review*, 60 (1970), pp. 451-3.

103 R.C. Harris, "The Historical Geography of North American Regions", *American Behavioural Scientist*, 22 (1978), pp. 115-30; G.Wynn, "Essays on European Settlement and North American Development", *Acadiensis*, 9 (1979), pp. 104-13.