SASKATCHEWAN TOWN HALL OPERA HOUSES AND COMMUNITY PERFORMANCE (ca. 1883-1913)

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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By
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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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*via Teleconference*
Abstract

The construction of public spaces is just one mechanism by which a community builds and continually negotiates the idea, or mythos, of its identity. Communities, through their dominant groups (including economic, social, political, and religious), seek to adopt a dominant narrative regarding common community ideals and aspirations. Communities in Canada’s “new” West of the late 19th and early 20th centuries provide good examples of such community building where the construction of public spaces went hand in hand with the negotiation of collective ideology and identity. In particular, Town Hall Opera Houses (constructed early in the development of numerous Saskatchewan towns) were central to the formulation of community mythos and community capacity to achieve collective aspirations.

Public spaces (specifically Town Hall Opera Houses) and their associated performative events are explored paying particular attention to negotiations of community mythos. What possible defining or constructive roles are played by performative events in communities seeking self-definition – culturally, morally, and economically? To what extent do such performances contribute to the cultural, social, and economic hegemony of their communities? What do performance spaces mean to their communities (socially, economically, architecturally, and artistically)? Connected to these questions are recurring themes of settlement and progress, boosterism, enculturation, “civilizing,” British Empire loyalty, gender and generational dynamics, ethnicity, and settlement and immigration. Central to these mythos negotiations are questions of who is included and who is excluded. Delving into such mythos-negotiations allows for the exploration of events as they connect to ideas such as space and place, sense of place, appropriation, substitution, effigying, and other-ness.
Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle are good examples of communities in which the settler-mythos being negotiated reflected more widespread desires to fulfil a perceived destiny within Canada’s “new” West. Within these two communities, three sites of interest are the main focus of this study. The first site, Immigration Hall in Qu’Appelle, is atypical as a Town Hall Opera House form, as it was essentially appropriated by community members to serve as a town hall from 1886 until 1907 (when its replacement, the Qu’Appelle Town Hall Opera House, was completed). The second site of interest to this study, Qu’Appelle’s Town Hall Opera House, was a more typical, purpose-built Town Hall Opera House structure. The final site of interest is the Prince Albert Town Hall Opera House. Built in 1893 and in steady use throughout the period of this study, the Prince Albert site provides a contrast to the two Qu’Appelle sites. The period of main interest to this study will be (approximately) the three decades leading up to World War One – a time of dynamic changes for Saskatchewan, its communities, the prairies, the British Empire, and indeed the world.
Acknowledgement

Without the constant support, encouragement, and inspiring challenges of my advisor, Dr. Mary Blackstone, this work would not have happened. Her example of unwavering commitment to students, scholarship, and excellence is unparalleled and uncompromising. I thank any powers above that she is on my side. My committee members: Dr. William Brennan, Dr. Randy Widdis, and Dr. Wendee Kubik have been very generous sharing their deep knowledge and precious time. Working as part of an interdisciplinary committee offers many unique challenges and I am thankful for everyone’s valuable contributions. My thanks also go to Dr. Harry “Polo” Diaz who, as my thesis coordinator at the Canadian Plains Research Centre, initially welcomed me to the University of Regina. Funding was provided through the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research.

The staff at the Saskatchewan Archives Board (SAB) is crucial to my work. I have spent many hours in the SAB searching for stories. No matter how challenging their days, they work patiently, diligently, professionally, and proudly. They preserve Saskatchewan stories and are eager to share their vast experience and knowledge with a wide variety of researchers (including professional and amateur, academic and corporate). In the future, I hope that the SAB and other archives across the country will be fully supported so that their good work may continue. Equally important to this work are the keepers of local archives and records. Specifically, my thanks also go to the staff and volunteers at the Bill Smiley Archives in Prince Albert as well as (then) Qu’Appelle Town Administrator Carol Wickenheiser. Your generosity, enthusiasm, and knowledge were helpful and appreciated.
Post Defense Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Anne F. Nothof, Professor Emeritus at the Centre for Language and Literature of Athabasca University, for agreeing to serve as the external examiner for thesis. Her participation was well-prepared, challenging, thoughtful, and insightful. She brought out the best of me and my thesis. Her willingness to participate and the rigor with which she engaged in this process is just further proof of her commitment to the advancement of Canadian theatre research and its students.
Dedication

This is for Jennifer, Grace, and Bennet. You are why I do everything. Your support and sacrifices during this process were deep and unfailing. I cannot thank you enough, but I promise I will try to – every day. Mom and Dad (Grant and Joyce) I’m glad that you got to see so much of your grandchildren while I was pursuing this and Jen was working to support us. Your gift of grandparent-time was valuable and greatly appreciated. As for the rest of my extended family – Devota, Kathryn, Allen, and everyone else – your help, humour and support were gifts I cannot match, but I will try to do so in the future.

And, I offer thanks to my fellow denizens of the “quiet room” at the Moose Jaw Public Library, where most of my writing happened. May this work serve as proof that great things can be accomplished given the time, the space, and the knowledge of where the electrical outlets are hidden.
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List of Abbreviations

Town Hall Opera House (THOH)
Saskatchewan Archives Board (SAB)
Prince Albert Historical Society (PAH)
Bill Smiley Archives (SBSA)
Chapter 1: Introduction

The construction of public spaces is just one mechanism by which a community builds and continually negotiates the idea, or mythos, of its identity. The notion of any single identity representing any group of people (or even one person, for that matter) is unsustainable. However, that communities, through their dominant groups (including economic, social, political, and religious), seek to adopt a dominant narrative regarding common community ideals and aspirations is clear from both current and historical evidence. Communities in Canada’s “new” West of the late 19th and early 20th centuries provide good examples of such community building where the construction of public spaces went hand in hand with the negotiation of collective ideology and identity. In particular, the town hall opera houses (THOHs) that were constructed early in the development of many Saskatchewan towns were central to the formulation of community mythos and community capacity to achieve collective aspirations.

This study focuses on public spaces, specifically THOHs. First, it is useful to clarify the terms “space” and “place” as they will be employed. Space – whether a physical description, social construction, or location wherein social processes take place – essentially denotes the locale of observation. Place, however, is infused with the meanings and feelings connected to the social processes/interactions in a space. As Doreen Massey observed:

Social relations always have a spatial form and spatial content. They exist, necessarily, both in space (i.e., in a locational relation to other social phenomena) and across space. And it is the vast complexity of the interlocking and articulating nets of social relations which is social space. Given that conception of space, a “place” is formed out of the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location. And the singularity of any individual place is formed in part out of the specificity of the interactions which occur at that location (nowhere else does this
precise mixture occur) and in part out of the fact that the meeting of those social relations at that location (their partly happenstance juxtaposition) will in turn produce new social effects.¹

This study examines the connection between public spaces and specific communities’ negotiations which can associate spaces with specific meanings as places.

John Eyles argued that such shaping of a sense of identity and ideology – or sense of place – derives from complex interactions of various forces working beneath immediate, surface level life experiences.² The role of the Town Hall Opera House (THOH) in an emerging sense of place can be seen at three levels: ecological, social, and ideological.³ Ecological elements of a place are implicitly important. The environment of the THOH – i.e. the building’s situation within the community, its fixtures, (dis)comforts, and accessibility – is fundamental to an individual’s experience with the space. Space is a social construction; groups of actors negotiate and shape a space, which can then reinforce or shape those same groups in return.⁴ Ecological elements shape social and ideological elements. Eyles identified social elements as the basic material for everyday life, including what is observable as well as what is potentially hidden. Social elements may be people, activities, institutions, and ideas. Built environments, in the case of this study of THOHs, were social places and therefore important for, “if nothing else, place may locate activities and have meaning as an arena for social activities or for the expression of sentiments.”⁵ In the case of the THOH, social elements could include, for example: attendees of social, political, or charitable events; civic leaders, councils and employees; groups dedicated to charity, agricultural and/or business interests; religious

¹ Massey, Doreen, Space, Place and Gender (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 168.
³ Ibid, 83.
⁴ Ibid, 4.
⁵ Ibid, 83.
and/or moral groups. Social elements interact with ideological elements in shaping sense-of-place. Perhaps best described as a “sense of belonging,” ideological elements of a sense of place are somewhat ephemeral. While ideological elements may not always be overtly stated, they can be revealed in sources such as mass media communications (e.g. local newspaper reports, letters-to-the-editor, and editorials); this is especially true when such items concern local people and activities and reference local constructions of memory and reputation. Events in the THOH that inspire comment, or even controversy, as disseminated in the local newspaper are one way of tracking ideological elements in negotiation. Ideological elements arise from everyday, individual experiences as well as dominant local meaning-systems. Social and ideological elements not only coexist, but interact with one another. All three components provide “theoretical chains” concerning place, identity and material existence. They can be tools used to interpret sense of place in relation to the totality of individual lives within a community.

A term that has proven useful to this research has been mythos (e.g. settler-mythos, a community’s founding-mythos, and dominant community-mythos) in connection with attitudes, sense of place, and ideas surrounding THOHs and their communities. Mythos is linked to sense of place. Sense of place is held by an individual. Creating a sense of place, Keith Basso observed, is an imaginative exercise through with locations are appropriated (within social and physical environments). In short, Basso states that, “sense of place – or, as I would prefer to say, sensing of a place –

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6 Ibid, 63.
7 Ibid, 83.
8 Ibid, 132.
is a form of cultural activity.” An individual’s sense of place is at the same time the result of community structures as well as what creates and reinforces those structures.

Since sense of place develops out of shared stories and experiences, it cannot be assumed to be based in, “authentic experience.” But through the process of telling, retelling, and remembering, the story of an event might become part of the wider social beliefs and values of a community. The power of a sense of place (whether consciously developed or even acknowledged) lies in the assumption of constancy:

it is greeted as natural, normal, and, despite the ambivalent feelings it sometimes produces, entirely unremarkable. Experience delivered neat (though not, as I say, very neatly), sense of place is accepted as a simple fact of life, as a regular aspect of how things are; and if one were tempted to change it, which no one ever is, the effort would certainly fail.

Such socially (as opposed to individually) held beliefs, in turn, shape and are shaped by the community-story – or mythos – and become more significant, perhaps, than a “true” or “factually accurate” event-record could be.

While community mythos may be resistant to outright change, it is, however, always in flux. Performances facilitated by the THOH can contribute to changes in individual senses of place and eventually local mythos; they are part of the active and ongoing process of placemaking at work in the THOH’s community. Mythos is especially useful when applied in combination with an interest in the implications of

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10 Eyles, 137.
11 Ibid, 83.
12 Basso, 144.
13 Placemaking also concerns the study of a place or space and its implications and meaning to the people with which it is associated. According to Lynda Schneekloth and Robert Shibley in *Placemaking: The Art and Practice of Building Communities*, any placemaking intervention should occur on three levels: (1) understanding empirically what is; (2) understanding why this particular condition exists; and (3) uncovering underlying structures and critically exploring the implications of that condition (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1995, 5).
community performances. I am employing the term *mythos* in hopes of capturing both the subtle and complex undercurrents of an individual *sense of place* as well as the search for implication inherent in group *placemaking* (Figure 1), to which Basso attributed several functions: “if placemaking is a way of constructing the past, a venerable means of doing human history, it is also a way of constructing social traditions and, in the process, personal and social identities. We are, in a sense, the place-worlds we imagine.”

Identifying possible forces behind the actions, reactions, and relationships of THOH-performances will help determine what is being negotiated with regard to local community-mythos.

THOHs functioned as arenas for such negotiations of community-mythos. The building would provide a meeting place for the community, as well as a place to publicly stage cultural events which gave the community a focus and an occasion to come together. In fact, one of the challenges of this study was identifying the notion of the THOHs’ communities as defined by the area/population which saw the THOH as their “centre.” For example, while the THOH was technically an edifice of the “town,” with

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14 Basso, 7.
its related official administrative boundaries, day to day performative practice ultimately determined the working boundaries of community being defined in the hall. Whether or not the THOH also housed rural-services, the belief of residents in the wider rural region was that they were served by, or part of, the community/influence of the nearest THOH, i.e. the THOH’s community of influence stretched beyond the official town boundaries.

The importance of boundaries, influence, and territory are central to Robert Sack’s observations regarding human territoriality, which he defines as, “the attempt by an individual or a group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area. This area will be called the territory.” The central tendencies of territoriality are classification by area, not type; communication of the boundary/territory; and enforcement and control. Such tendencies, as well as outcomes, will be useful in identifying forces present in the THOH-related territories and places. The power of territoriality as an employed strategy of control – in a top-down, or official way – is undeniable. But for the purposes of this study, territoriality can also provide a means of identifying such tendencies in a more unofficial capacity – in “bottom-up” negotiations of social expectations. Sack’s work also suggests this notion. THOHs are the loci for group negotiations of various mythoi, expectations, territories, and boundaries – both official and unofficial. In the THOH, community sense of place is shaped by such boundaries and related notions of centres and margins (or who is accepted and who is pushed out). This need for a community to

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16 Human Territoriality 26:“Territoriality points to the fact that human spatial relationships are not neutral... human interaction, movement, and contact are also matters of transmitting energy and information in order to affect, influence, and control the ideas and actions of others and their access to resources. Human spatial relationships are the results of influence and power. Territoriality is the primary spatial form power takes.”
establish a site from which to stage the negotiations that would ultimately contribute to
the formation of a community-mythos became especially important in the wider context
of the era of intense settlement and town-building that was occurring in the Canadian
West during the late 18th and early 19th century.

**Context: Saskatchewan Settlement and the Cult of Progress**

During this era, Saskatchewan’s population growth was astounding. In the area
that would become the province of Saskatchewan, as Bill Waiser observed, “the 1891
population (41,522) grew 127% by 1901 (91,279) and another 182% just five years later
(257,763).”\(^\text{17}\) Population growth in specific communities varied between 1901 and
1911.\(^\text{18}\) Otherwise impressive increases in population in the communities of Qu’Appelle
(from 434 to 851 or 96%) and Prince Albert (from 1785 to 6254 or 250%) seemed
pedestrian when compared to other Saskatchewan communities, for example: Moose Jaw
(from 1158 to 13823 or 1093%), Regina (from 2249 to 30213 or 1243%), and especially
Saskatoon (from 113 to 12004 or 10523%).\(^\text{19}\) Already-established communities sought
ways to enhance their attractiveness to progress-minded settlers; new communities sought
ways to create a sense of permanence. As part of the wider built environment of a town, a


\(^{18}\) *Saskatchewan: A New History*, Calgary: Fifth House Publishers, 2005, 499-500: In order to provide a
wider comparison, Waiser also observed that, between 1901 and 1911, Canada’s population as a whole
increased from 5.37 million to 7.20 million people (or 34.18%). During the same decade, Saskatchewan
saw a 440.66% increase in population, from 91 thousand to 492 thousand people

\(^{19}\) Canada, Census and Statistics Office, *Census of the Prairie Provinces Population and Agriculture*
*Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta 1916*, “Table 1: Population of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta by
Districts, Townships, Cities, Towns, and Incorporated Villages in 1916, 1911, 1906, and 1901,” (Ottawa:
King’s Printer, 1918), 64-65; Canada, Census Division, *Sixth Census of Canada 1921, Vol. 1 – Population*,
Table 8, “Population by districts and sub-districts according to the Redistribution Act of 1914 and the
amending act of 1915, compared to the census years 1921, 1911, and 1901,” (Ottawa: King’s Printer,
1924); Waiser, *Saskatchewan* 499-500.
THOH was a substantial means by which a community could enhance its attractiveness and permanence.

This population boom was almost entirely a result of immigration. As Bill Waiser points out, “the immigrants effectively swamped the First Nations population. The 6,358 ‘Indians’ counted in 1906 now represented less than 3% of Saskatchewan’s population.” Overwhelming the local First Nations population was a logical consequence of the settler-mythos which positioned the settlers as the natural inheritors of the west. Newly constructed, architectural elements such as the THOH were displays of the permanence of their new communities.

This preparation for the replacement of the First Nations’ peoples in the North West began with the creation of the territory of Rupert’s Land and continued when that same territory became Canadian, as the North West Territories. As Sack observed, once control of a territory has been established – the area in question has been classified, communicated, and controlled – other tendencies of territoriality can be brought to bear. Tactics such as “neutral space-clearing” can “make way” for the establishment of preferred objects or peoples in the face of otherwise complex interrelationships between activities and territorial relationships. This can lead to “Conceptually Empty Space,” or the assignment of value or lack of value to the artifacts/objects already in a territory, with the resulting determination that it is “empty” – and therefore open to the insertion of controllable (or “valued”) activities/ artifacts/ objects. The most valued settler, to the Canadian government, was a British (Canadian), Christian, farmer. The official

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21 Sack, 32-34.
language of settling even highlights how valued settlers would “improve” their homesteads.\textsuperscript{23} It might be that the building of a THOH was a municipal means of populating, possessing, and even “improving” the new, local and “empty” territories.

Most of the immigrants flooding into what would become Saskatchewan identified as being British. In 1881, residents identifying as British amounted to 10.7% of the population, almost at par with those identifying as French (10.9%), but of little significance numerically compared to residents identified as “Native Indian,” who made up 78% of the population.\textsuperscript{24} Four years later in 1885, the percentages had shifted to British 50.5%, French 2.1%, and “Native Indian” 44.5%. Saskatchewan’s diversity increased as other immigrant groups settled in greater numbers (e.g. German, Russian, Ukrainian, and Scandinavian immigrants arrived in significant numbers, but none of these groups ever rose above 15% of the overall population of Saskatchewan). THOHs could potentially appeal on a combination of Ecological and Ideological levels. The greatest percentage of the province’s residents identified as being British, or British Canadian.\textsuperscript{25} They constructed public buildings familiar to their cultural experiences. Dana Johnson observed that in addition to the architectural expression of aspiration and pride the THOH also provided a chance to “establish quickly cultural institutions that could give shape and definition to a highly mobile and often foreign population.”\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{23} Canada, \textit{Canada West 1914}, Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1914, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35439/35439-h/35439-h.htm: In order to earn patent on a homestead, a settler needed to satisfy several conditions, which included, for example: living “in a habitable house upon the land for six months during each of three years” and ploughing “thirty acres of the homestead, of which twenty acres must be cropped” – although in special cases stock could be substituted for acres ploughed.

\textsuperscript{24} Waiser, \textit{Saskatchewan}, 502.

\textsuperscript{25} The percentage of British-identifying Saskatchewan residents peaked in 1916 (54.5%) – before settling down approximately between 40% and 42% between 1951-1971 (Waiser, \textit{New History} 502).

\textsuperscript{26} Johnson, Dana, “‘For Generations to Come’: The Town Hall as a Symbol of Community,” in \textit{Town Halls of Canada: A Collection of Essays on Pre-1930 Town Hall Buildings}, Eds., Marc de Caraffe, C. A.
value of such permanence enhancing improvements was noted even by the Department of the Interior; settler brochures eventually bragged about the Prairie’s “Homemaking Spirit” as follows:

The most commendable feature in Western development to-day is the ‘homemaking spirit.’ The people are finding happiness in planting trees, making gardens, building schools, colleges, and universities, and producing an environment so homelike that the country cannot be regarded as a temporary abode in which to make a ‘pile’ preparatory to returning East.\textsuperscript{27}

As part of the wider built environment of a town, a THOH was potentially a substantial material and architectural display way by which a community could enhance its attractiveness, permanence, and even “homemaking spirit.”

**Importance of the THOH Form:**

Far from being a local invention, Saskatchewan Town Hall Opera Houses are part of a larger tradition of civic buildings. They share some similar aspects with town halls in England, the United States, and Eastern Canada. Practically, the structures functioned to address basic needs. A. N. Reid observed that the early construction of a town hall in municipalities came as a result of “increase in municipal business, the convenience of officials, local prestige, and the need for auditorium accommodation.”\textsuperscript{28} Essentially, these structures would provide an assembly place (for social, political, or judicial purposes), a council chamber, as well as a workplace and various storage facilities for

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\textsuperscript{27} Hale, Dana Johnson, and G. E. Mills (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch Environment Canada – Parks, 1987), 229.

civic employees. Pre-1870 multi-function town halls sometimes additionally combined market functions. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, town halls were incorporating into their design more civic/governmental service functions such as policing and detention, fire protection, and libraries. These new services often took up the basement and ground floors, pushing the auditorium (opera house) to the top floor, where it could use the roof pitch to provide higher, vaulted ceilings in the performance space. Cupolas to vent the opera-house air pushed the building’s silhouette even higher. High towers were now more common because they were useful for drying fire hoses and housing fire alarm bells. Ecologically, such elements provided the building with a more dominant presence within the town’s skyline.

In rural communities of Central Canada, the earlier model of an open-hall was most often employed before 1870. If the building included spaces for more than governance, the town hall might have included a public marketplace. For the rest of the nineteenth century, and until WWI, multi-function halls became more of the norm; Saskatchewan communities drew heavily on this model, as many of its THOH were built before WWI. The prairies generally, and Saskatchewan specifically, was part of the last wave of THOH-building in North America. After WWI, Canadian town halls were built with a greater focus on administrative functions, with other functions (police, fire protection, theatre space) being moved out into their own, separate buildings.

On the prairies, however, the combined-function THOH is not an evenly-distributed architectural form. Manitoba built few such buildings, with Brandon and Virden serving as exceptions. Similar multi-function halls were built in North Dakota.

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31 Ibid, 143.
(Jamestown, Beckenridge, Lerimore, and Williston), but, “Montana has few of these types of buildings and British Columbia none at all.”32 Alberta cities, towns, and villages couldn’t be incorporated until 1912. In 1908, Saskatchewan passed legislation which allowed for greater community control of borrowing for civic projects. Similar powers were not granted in Alberta until 1912.33 This borrowing power may help explain the greater numbers of multi-function THOHs built in Saskatchewan before the widespread fiscal belt tightening after 1914. Some communities in Saskatchewan, however, were selling debentures to build THOHs earlier than 1908. Saskatchewan town hall construction was less about municipal finances than it was about boosterism and growth.

**THOH as (Static) Symbol:**

Saskatchewan communities during the settlement boom were competing for settlers and investment. THOH construction was a local expression of a provincial example that communities should build for growth. Early priorities of Saskatchewan’s first premier, Walter Scott, were building projects such as the Legislative Buildings in Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. They were physical expressions of the confidence that great and continuous future growth was inevitable. Premier Scott proclaimed that, “the province has yet less than half a million souls and there is plenty of room for at least ten million.”34 In towns, villages, and cities, civic leaders sought to position their community as being at the forefront of progress and development, in the most commercial senses of the words. Local reflections of Scott’s commitment to

32 “Town Hall Study File 536b,” Saskatchewan, Parks, Culture, and Sport, Culture and Heritage (Regina: Heritage Branch), p6.
33 Ibid.
34 Marchildon, 54-55.
governmental and educational edifices were widely evident, as Johnson observed, the school and town hall were two of the most eagerly built structures in a new town.\footnote{Johnson, 229-230: Johnson’s identified reason for such a rush to schools and town halls – that “the West was a region lacking in fixed ideas about itself” – is problematic. In light of the evident regional (and national) commitment to development and increasing settlement, the West did not lack “fixed ideas about itself,” as much as it lacked patience in enacting those ideas.}

In fact, it has since been argued that “the belief in limitless progress was the most marked characteristic in Prairie urban development.”\footnote{Hale, C.A, “Rural, Village, and Town Halls in Canada,” in \textit{Town Halls of Canada}, 238.}

It is important to clarify, however, that what Johnson identified as a \textit{belief in} progress might be better identified as a \textit{commitment to} progress. Specific notions of progress, in turn, were central to boosterism. Alan F. J. Artibise identified boosterism as being “a broad, general conception that had as its central theme the need for growth; the idea that for a city to become ‘better’ it had to become bigger.”\footnote{Artibise, Alan F. J., “Boosterism and the Development of Prairie Cities, 1871-1913,” in \textit{Town and City: Aspects of Western Canadian Urban Development} Canadian Plains Studies Vol. 10, ed. Alan F. J. Artibise (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1981), 212.} It was a complex and pervasive force within developing prairie towns. Paul Voisey observed that whether or not it succeeded in a given community, “boosterism nonetheless represented more than a transparent chapter in western town history. It both shaped and revealed pioneer attitude in a variety of ways. Most often, it expressed the unbridled optimism of frontiers generally and western Canada in particular.”\footnote{Voisey, Paul, “Boosting the Small Prairie Town, 1904-1931: An Example from Southern Alberta,” in \textit{Town and City}, 163.}

To better understand the depth of commercial interests (local, national, and international) involved in Prairie town development, one can first consider the commercial nature of Canada’s acquisition of the North West Territories. The Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) surrendered control of Rupert’s Land to the Dominion of Canada
in 1870 for money and land.\textsuperscript{39} This landholding made them active boosters of town development since, generally speaking, urban land could be sold for more than rural lands (Selwood and Baril 61). As an example of particular interest to this study, in 1879 HBC believed Prince Albert was a likely candidate for capital of the North West. The company had a town site planned surrounding their post at Prince Albert, naming it Goshen (Selwood and Baril 72). It was typical of company town sites which were not designed with an eye for beauty, or even function, but instead “they were produced with the sole objective of making land available for sale as speedily and cheaply as possible” (Selwood and Baril 75).

The CPR had a similar interest in developing town sites for profitable resale. Many prairie towns were created by the CPR, including towns regionally important to this study like Troy(Qu’Appelle), Regina, Indian Head, and Moose Jaw.\textsuperscript{40} To develop these lands, the CPR created a sister-company of sorts, selling vast land holdings – including all main-line town and village sites from Brandon to BC – to the Canada North West Land Company (CNWLC), a group of Canadian and British capitalists. As part of the deal, the CPR would receive one-half of future proceeds from the sale of these lands.\textsuperscript{41} So similar were the aims of these entities that for a time in the early 1880s the HBC, CPR, and the Canada North West Land Company briefly considered combining the management of their lands into one massive settlement and colonization scheme.\textsuperscript{42}

Further widening the pool of powerful stakeholders in some developing town sites, the

\textsuperscript{39} Selwood, H. John and Evelyn Baril, “The Hudson’s Bay Company and Prairie Town Development, 1870-1888,” in \textit{Town and City}, 62: The deal also included the HBC’s surrender of their monopoly on the fur trade. In return, the company gained 300,000, 50,000 acres of land surrounding its posts, and one-twentieth of the land in the region of the Palliser Triangle west to the Rocky Mountains.


\textsuperscript{41} Brennan, 102.

\textsuperscript{42} Selwood and Baril, 80-81.
communities of Qu’Appelle (Troy), Moose Jaw, Regina, and Virden were jointly
developed ventures of the CPR, CNWLC, and the federal government.\textsuperscript{43}

In these communities, external corporate expectations of growing communities
and inflating land values were amplified by local boosters who were also pushing for the
similar goals. Investors with the capital, connections, or sometimes simply the gall to be
identified as a “community leader” were keen to increase the value of their investments.
Paul Voisey observes that some local entrepreneurs used skills learned in “the Midwest
and Inland Empire” and imported to the North West, where “merchants at new townsites
would not wait placidly for the boom to erupt; they intended to ignite it, and, if possible,
sustain it.”\textsuperscript{44} Thus boosterism was generally supported, though to varying degrees, by
commercial classes and other interested parties. For example, farmers often supported
local boosters as they were “anxious for any developments that might further raise rural
land values.”\textsuperscript{45}

Boosterism could enable some positive outcomes; as Voisey argued, “Boosterism
instantly fostered identity, civic spirit, and unity of purpose in new communities made up
of a variety of people lacking common traditions to guide them.”\textsuperscript{46} But boosterism could
also produce negative outcomes, such as imposed conformity (boosters vs. knockers), a
let-down when boosters’ predictions failed to appear, and the difficulties associated with
absentee speculators owning tracks of otherwise viable, developable land in or near
towns.\textsuperscript{47} While boosterism enabled community elites to promote a sense of unity, they
could also quell dissent and exert control in the name of that unity as Artibise noted: “the

\textsuperscript{43} Brennan, 104.
\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Vulcan} 58.
\textsuperscript{45} Artibise, 213.
\textsuperscript{46} Voisey, \textit{Boosting}, 171.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, 167.
myth of a shared sense of community was thus a valuable falsehood for the boosters since it enabled them to implement their programs with a minimum of opposition. The booster ethos was calculated not only to meet immediate needs and insure urban expansion, but also to justify social conformity and maintain the existing social and economic system since only a ‘united’ community could prosper” (Artibise 213).

Constructing a THOH was a useful tool for boosters. Construction of a grand civic edifice was a way to signal (to those within and without) a community’s current and future readiness to grow and therefore prosper. In the fifteen years between 1893 and 1907, seven Saskatchewan THOHs were built: Prince Albert in 1893; Whitewood in 1900, Arcola, Qu’Appelle, Moosomin and Yorkton in 1905; and Rosthern in 1907. After 1908, a similar number of THOHs were constructed, but over only a span of five years: Estevan and Govan in 1909; Davidson in 1910; Saltcoats in 1911; and Battleford, Craik, Hanley, and Melville in 1912-13.

The building of town halls with assembly/performance spaces was widespread enough that in 1908 the Western Municipal News published generic plans for building “a small Town Hall suitable for municipalities, villages, etc.”48 The proposed Town Hall (Figure 2) was of stone or brick construction, which would serve the community-mythos well as its “exterior presents a dignified and neat appearance, and is of a design which would grace any community.”49 According to the magazine’s claim, the building could be constructed for approximately $10,000 (less if materials other than brick or stone were

49 “Plan for a small Prairie town or village hall,” Western Municipal News: Interior design elements were also observed as being important, with “stucco plaster, and painted woodwork, …a very pleasing effect … Great care has been taken to have plenty of light and fresh air.”
used). The multi-functionality, access, utility, and even long-term adaptability of the space was highlighted in the plan-descriptions.

![Figure 2: “Plan for a small Prairie town or village hall,” in Western Municipal News.](image)

The ground-floor auditorium allowed for “sufficient seating accommodation for the average audience,” and a “platform or stage, with two dressing rooms, each with an outside entrance.”\(^{50}\) The dressing rooms appear to have been in lieu of offstage wing-space. The outside entrance, perhaps, allowed for entrance/exits from the stage/platform without passing through the audience. The design even planned for the possibility of the auditorium being re-purposed:

> the ceiling of the Auditorium is two storeys high, and it will be noted that there are upper and lower windows so that should it be desired at any future time to use the building for any other purpose, all that will be necessary in the way of building would be to place in position the floor of the second storey. This is a very convenient arrangement.\(^{51}\)

The Wolseley and Prince Albert THOHs both employed the split-window design in the performance-space (Figure 3, below). Prince Albert’s city council eventually eliminated the auditorium by extending the gallery-level floor to provide additional office space. In Wolseley, however, the Opera House was never split in such a manner.

\(^{50}\) Ibid.

\(^{51}\) Ibid.
The floor plan (Figure 4) indicated the importance of easy public access to the office of the mayor/reeve as well as the ticket office; both were placed on the ground floor. The upper floor included the council chamber and the office of the secretary treasurer. The secretary-treasurer’s office might have been imagined upstairs for the convenience of the council-in-chamber (if not the citizens of town). The Western Municipal News appears to have placed importance on the idea that the mayor was the face of civic government. In Saskatchewan practice, however, it seems that if there was to be only one office on the ground floor, it was the secretary-treasurer’s office.

The basement plans in the Western Municipal News included space for the furnace/heating-plant, fuel, and perhaps even a lavatory. The basement was a place for future projects and best suited for the “Telephone Operating Room, Battery Room, Telephone Work Room, Manager’s Office and Private Office, thus giving ample space to install a municipal telephone system.” These functions were not usually installed in Saskatchewan THOHs, where the normal basement uses included police cells, constable’s office, and equipment storage.
A tower of any sort was another design element not included in the plans. Tower elements, however, seem to have been enthusiastically employed in the design of most Saskatchewan THOHs encountered in this study. In addition to towers, elaborate cupolas of some description were often employed. In THOHs associated with firefighting equipment, a tower was used to hang-dry fire hoses or to house the fire alarm bell. It also was a symbolic high-point of the town. It added to the building’s presence on the street and in the town. A prominent tower was part of Yorkton’s impressively-scaled THOH (Figure 5) which housed the town offices, repair rooms, the opera house, the fire hall, and quarters for firemen.

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52 Exceptions (non-towered halls) include Battleford, Estevan, Melville, Whitewood, and Wapella.
The main structure had two floors, with a vaulted roof on the second floor and tower which combined to extend the building’s visual impact much higher. The tower was three and one-half storeys high.\textsuperscript{53}

The need to \textit{expand} the THOH is not completely unheard-of in Saskatchewan. Govan’s town hall (Figure 6) was originally a relatively modest structure. Built in 1909, it was a two-storey, twenty by thirty foot building accommodating the chemical fire engines, a caretaker’s room, and jail cells. The upper floor was a secondary consideration added to allow for a society room. Atop the structure was a small bell tower. By 1912, this hall was deemed not sufficiently large for the community. A much

larger second structure, measuring sixty by eighty feet, was added across the back of the original structure. The reporter covering the grand opening observed, “the original hall now forms the porch in which is the ticket office,” through which there was a “large stairway leading to the new assembly room. The assembly room has a fine stage whose chief glory is its curtain. This was painted by Mr. S. J. Latta, a talented artist. It represents the citadel of Quebec, lower town, and the river in the foreground—a real work of art of which Govan was very proud.”

The Govan hall was destroyed by fire in 1951.

The town hall plans proposed by the Western Municipal News included elements that already had been (or later were) incorporated into the designs of town halls across the Prairies: the estimated (starting) cost of $10,000; inherent multi-functionality and adaptability; as well as the inclusion of a public space for meetings and performances. By its inclusion, an auditorium space was acknowledged as being important community space. The suggested option of eventually repurposing and dividing such a space into two floors, however, acknowledged that maintaining such a space might not always be a priority to community leaders. The magazine’s plans assumed that telephone exchanges would be important future functions of these spaces. In practice, however, communities were still more likely to include policing and/or fire protection in their town halls. This divergence of functions (between the magazine and practice) led to what was, perhaps, the obvious difference between the proposed plans of the Western Municipal News and many actual Prairie town halls: the tower. The magazine planners might have assumed

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54 “Town Hall Study File 536b,” Govan file, Heritage Branch: S. J. Latta was a teacher and homesteader from Ontario. He served several terms in the Saskatchewan legislature as Liberal often in cabinet and was described by Hawkes as being, among his other accomplishments, “a civil service specialist and a graduate of the Ontario Art School.” The reason for his choice of scene for the Govan drop-curtain is unknown (Hawkes, John, The Story of Saskatchewan and Its People, Volume III (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1924).
that a trend towards separate fire halls would eliminate the functions practically inherent with a town hall tower. Yet towers were still built onto town halls, sometimes regardless of practical need. They enhanced prestige and projected power – if only symbolically. Such symbolic power went hand in hand with these sites’ practical powers (such as governing, policing, and judicial). Projecting power was at least as important to community leadership as was the need (as identified by the Western Municipal News) to build a town hall that was dignified, graceful, and neat.

Generally, the value of choosing the town hall as an object of study has been established. Robert Tittler noted that such study “emanated from a wider interest in the built environment as a historical source” which can contribute to knowledge of “towns in the chosen period: their political and social development, financial and administrative organization, economic activity, and even cultural and ceremonial observances.”\textsuperscript{55} Sociopolitical development, organisation, and cultural ceremonies are all contributors to the negotiation of community mythos. Canadian Town Halls are valuable objects of study: “These early western town halls are particularly interesting historical documents, for they arose from a common cultural impetus – the desire to express community pride and aspirations in monumental and architectural terms.”\textsuperscript{56} The importance of community prestige as related to town hall construction is not uncommon, nor a phenomenon local to the prairies. Tittler observed that the point at which a community often built, renovated, or expanded its town hall was more of a reflection on the community’s political development than of its material prosperity or need for such a space. Tittler’s study deals with historic English town halls, but Canadian town halls were built for similar reasons.


\textsuperscript{56} Johnson, 229.
Large, monumental municipal halls often, “filled two primary functions, regardless of the period in which they were built: they housed the various offices and chambers associated with civic government, and also served as architectural statements of the community’s aspirations and achievements.”\(^{57}\) Multi-function halls, like a town hall opera house, served both practical and propaganda purposes:

in addition to the basic legislative and administrative requirements, other distinct services affecting the public welfare, such as fire and police protection, the administration of justice, and independent cultural and commercial activities, were accommodated within one building to make the town hall economically feasible and visually more formidable.\(^{58}\)

A community engaging in a profound expression of optimism found bigger expressions were better.

Tittler’s observation that town halls were more often built on dreams, rather than the financial realities, is especially true for prairie THOHs. Communities desired a THOH so much that they often assumed risky, large debts in order to construct them. But the settler-mythos being developed was that the THOH would only help speed the town’s inevitable growth (including immigration, investment, development, and a greater number of ratepayers). The THOH was part of the negotiation of a dominant settler-mythos in which failing to grow was rarely considered. To cover loans, it was assumed, the town could always sell lots to cover their shortfall (as it was assumed that the town’s assessment values would hold steady or rise).

Local boosters were able to justify such large debts to ratepayers by labelling them commitments to their communities’ future prosperity. But these debts were viewed less optimistically from outside these communities. A Royal Commission noted that by

\(^{57}\) Hale, 78.
\(^{58}\) Ibid, 86.
1913, western provinces owed 4.5 times more on public buildings and infrastructure than eastern provinces. Local governments “financed these projects with loans based on hopes, not on available assets.” De Carrafe specifically cites Qu’Appelle’s monumental town hall (among others) as an example of “lavish spending” by Saskatchewan and Alberta communities which took their “continually rising” revenues as a sign that, “their prosperity would never end.” A fall in the price of wheat and readjusted municipal land assessments during WWI would provide challenges for many overextended prairie communities.

**THOH as Performance:**

But these halls did more than represent or symbolise community aspirations; they were active participants in the performance of those aspirations. The study of a THOH as being part of community actions, interactions, and self-identification is suggested by performance studies theory, which is concerned with the, “broader and deeper consideration of the phenomenon of performance as a cultural activity.” Performance is broadly defined by Richard Shechner as follows:

A performance takes place as action, interaction, and relation. In this regard, a painting or novel can be performative or analyzed “as” performance. Performance isn’t “in” anything, but between. ... To treat any object, work, or product “as” performance – a painting, a novel, a shoe, or anything at all – means to investigate what the object does, how it interacts with other objects or beings, and how it relates to other objects or beings. Performances exist only as actions, interactions, and relationships.

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59 de Carrafe, Marc, “‘With Our Tax Money’: The Thorny Problem of Town Hall Construction,” in *Town Halls of Canada*, 181: The other examples are Arcola, Battleford, Qu’Appelle, Rosthern, Wolseley, and Medicine Hat.

60 Ibid, 182-3.

THOHs are good sites to observe community (inter)actions and relationships – and their underlying meanings – since “relationships to places are lived most often in the company of other people, and it is on these communal occasions – when places are sensed together – that native views of the physical world become accessible to strangers.” For strangers – removed by time, space and experience – the THOH becomes a rich site for observing various community groups in the process of negotiating a community mythos. As Basso observed, “Relationships to places may also find expression through the agencies of myth, prayer, music, dance, art, architecture, and, in many communities, recurrent forms of religious and political ritual.”

The THOH was a site at which the powers of rite, ritual, performance, and architecture converged.

It is also important to consider the performative nature of these buildings. While the performative nature of events in the THOH is perhaps more easily identified, it will prove useful to approach the building itself as a performance text. The importance of performing community-mythos in such a concrete way becomes even clearer in light of the literacy rates for the population. Literacy in the Northwest Territories was not to be assumed. The population over five years of age that could read and write was 59.61% in 1891 and 67.63% in 1901. Even by 1911, the percentage of the population (over 5 years old) that could read and write varied: the Province of Saskatchewan claimed 86.08%; the District of Prince Albert claimed only 77.99%; while the District of

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62 Basso, 109.
Qu’Appelle reports as much as 90.69%\(^6\). In a community where not everyone can read or write,\(^6\) pamphlets and editorials would not be universally-useful tools of enculturation as would an edifice built to perform the ideals of the community. For residents who might still be learning the community’s dominant language, perhaps the THOH offered opportunities to be exposed to, or participate in, the forces at work in shaping a community-mythos.

**The Davidson Example**

![Figure 7:“Town Building, Davidson,” Saskatchewan Archives Board Architectural Drawing RP 1.6.39](image)

The performance of opening ceremonies of the Davidson THOH in November 1910 reveals the complex web of social interactions that were initiated and facilitated by the hall. Such performances, in turn, reveal the hall’s importance in the construction of a local *sense of place*, or mythos. The THOH made a performative statement on its own. The building was praised for its grand and imposing structure (specifically its brick and

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\(^6\) Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911; Religions, Origins, Birthplace, Citizenship, Literacy and Infirmitities, By Provinces, Districts, and Sub-Districts Volume II*, “Literacy of the People (Tables 28 through 38),” (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1913).

\(^6\) Usually, for the period and communities of interest to this study, illiteracy was defined specifically as the ability to read or write in English.
stone construction, see Figure 7, “Town Building, Davidson”) as well as its well-chosen, prominent site, “fronting on two business streets.”\(^{66}\)

Once the formal program began, local MLA Geo. A. Scott played to the crowd’s pride and optimism for future boom times, saying of the THOH:

> I think it would be a credit to a town twice the size, judging from the audience I do not think it would be large enough for a town twice this size, and I think it may have to be enlarged in the near future. Further I would like to congratulate the ratepayers and citizens of Davidson on the progressive spirit they have shown and worked out by the council of this town in providing a building of this kind.\(^{67}\)

Scott assured the townspeople that the act of building a THOH was progressive and laudable. Within the context of the prevailing cult-of-progress on the prairies, they felt justified in believing that the inevitable and inexhaustible growth of their town would lead to the expansion of this hall, which was presently too big for current needs. Scott even drew on his experience to further the case of inevitable, exponential growth when he observed:

> Some six years ago when I arrived here—not the first comer—I found here only a few buildings and the hall at that time a very good one, large enough to contain all the people who were here then. But a change has come; we demand a larger building.\(^{68}\)

But his prediction based upon these particular six years was perhaps skewed. In truth, few Saskatchewan towns outgrew their THOH, as Scott predicted for Davidson. The general population movement in Saskatchewan since the 1930s has been away from rural communities and into larger urban centres. But Geo. Scott’s prediction fit well into the

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\(^{66}\) “Over Five Hundred Attend the Opening.” Davidson Leader, 17 November 1910, P1: The report further specified: “The new building is a commodious and imposing structure, fronting on two business streets; it is two storeys high and constructed of brick, with stone finishings.”

\(^{67}\) “Over Five Hundred Attend the Opening,” Davidson Leader.

\(^{68}\) Ibid.
overall settler-mythos of Saskatchewan, where the notion of progress was more than a mere buzzword.69

Scott also identified the potential social and ideological impact of the hall on the local community when he observed that “the idea in building this hall has been to provide facilities for the meeting together of the people in order that the aesthetic side of their lives might be developed, in order that we might become more cultured, in order that in our pleasures we might become more refined.”70 This point agrees with Hale’s observation that early prairie halls, generally, “were constructed in a frontier environment, where residents were anxious to demonstrate their sophistication once the quality of life began to improve.”71 This desire for sophistication is also identifiable as a staging, or performance, of what the community wished to present as its story/mythos. Such staging is similar to Marvin Carlson’s definition of “performance,” which encompasses any display of skills, where display might be better described as “recognised and culturally coded patterns of behaviour,” the success of which “can be measured against a standard of achievement.”72

In addition to the THOH serving as a focus of the community’s commitment to sophistication and progress, it is also a tool through which identification within the community can be defined. Scott’s rhetoric skilfully seeks to identify with those who “belong” in the community, i.e. those who support the THOH and the promise of betterment it implies. Scott assumes a unified support of the THOH and its aims and puts

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69 As evidenced even by the name of the Qu’Appelle Progress Newspaper – one of several prairie papers to incorporate the word into its moniker.
70 “Over Five Hundred Attend the Opening,” Davidson Leader.
71 Hale, 102.
himself in that company with the phrases: “in order that we might become more cultured,” “that in our pleasures we might become more refined,” and “we demand a larger building” [emphasis mine]. Through his use of the hegemonic “we,” Scott reinforces the notion that the community seeks refinement and betterment through building/progress. Anyone outside of this comfortable “we” is “not-we” and therefore, presumably an unrefined pessimist. Such rhetorical identification is one example of the way in which hegemony is subtly, imperceptibly negotiated through persuasive tactics. Kenneth Burke has identified rhetorical strategies such as “common ground,” “identification by antithesis,” and the “hegemonic we.” Bruce McConachie proposed that Burke’s theories of rhetoric, in combination with some of the ideas of cultural hegemony advanced by Antonio Gramsci, could be applied to the study of historical performances. Such a study can reveal much about the way “past performances helped to reinforce or undermine existing social relations.” Scott’s address at the Davidson THOH then was one performative contribution to what was an ongoing and broader performative process of constructing a sense of place, a hegemonic community mythos around social and ideological elements connected with the THOH.

Sites of Interest

Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle are good examples of communities in which the settler-mythos being negotiated reflected the local desire to fulfil their part as

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73 “Over Five Hundred Attend the Opening,” Davidson Leader.
74 Burke, Kenneth, Dramatism and Development (Barre, Mass.: Clark University Press), 28.
75 McConachie, Bruce, “Using the Concept of Cultural Hegemony to Write Theatre History,” in Interpreting the Historical Past, eds. Thomas Postelwaite and Bruce McConachie, Iowa City: U of Iowa Press, 1989, 39: Remembering, on an even more basic level, that common language is vital to the effective rhetorical hegemonic of a group.
communities in Canada’s “new” West. This “New West” was presented as being a bastion of British, white, Christian culture. Within this culture, all citizen-settlers toiled righteously in service to the advancement of the cult of progress. Stories of founding and furthering, fictional or not, evolve and dominate community perceptions largely through the inhabitants’ performances of the community mythos. Public buildings were a visible manifestation of this cult and a material form for the projection of collective identity, but they also provided a venue which could facilitate the performance of community, of their stories of founding and furthering. Such spaces facilitate the ongoing public negotiation of what the community meant to its inhabitants, its values and the relative sense of belonging for individuals and groups within it.

The sites of interest to this study were constructed in the communities of Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle. The first site, Immigration Hall76 in Qu’Appelle, is atypical as a THOH-form, as it was essentially appropriated by community members to serve as a town hall from 1886 until 1907, when its replacement, the Qu’Appelle THOH, was completed. The second site of interest to this study, Qu’Appelle’s THOH, was a more typical, purpose-built THOH structure. The final site of interest is the Prince Albert THOH. Built in 1893 and in steady use throughout the period of this study, the Prince Albert THOH will provide a contrast to the two Qu’Appelle sites, adapted and purpose-built. The period of main interest to this study will be, approximately, the three decades leading up to WWI – a time of dynamic changes for Saskatchewan, its communities, the prairies, the British Empire, and indeed the world. The Immigration Hall is this study’s

76 Records of the period, and subsequent histories, show a variety of names for the space. Its most common names were the Immigration Hall, Immigrant Building, or Immigration Building. But the site was also variously identified as the Town Hall, the Opera House, the Immigration Office, even the Barracks (most often in 1885-6).
earliest THOH-space and defines the beginning of the study. The end date will be approximately 1914, as the onset of WWI and the related cooling (if only temporarily) of boom-time dreams and unrelenting commitment to optimism, boosterism, and progress led to the end the THOH as a form on the prairies. Aiding the choice of these dates is the surviving local newspaper coverage, which becomes increasingly undependable through the years of WWI. Choosing 1914 as an end-date for this study also places it neatly into the last years of the “long nineteenth century.”77

Qu’Appelle Immigration Building

The town of Qu’Appelle was an important node along communication and transportation routes in the 1880s. It was established near the site of an earlier HBC trading post. The CPR came through the region in 1881-1882. A post office was built in 1882 and named “Troy” (later changed to Qu’Appelle Station and finally Qu’Appelle).78 Situated at the crossing of the “mail trail” stagecoach road (running north to Prince Albert and south to Wood Mountain) and the railroad, Qu’Appelle town site became a transfer point for freight, mail, and soldiers (in 1885-6).79 The town was also chosen as the Bishopric of the Anglican Church, which afforded the small town the linguistic luxury of calling itself the City of Qu’Appelle when it so wished. In keeping with the dominant

77 Eric Hobsbawm, in The Age of Empire: 1875–1914, specifically cites the “long nineteenth century” as stretching from 1789 to 1914. Specifically, August 1914 “was felt to mark the end of the ‘long nineteenth century’ with which historians have learned to operate” (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987, 6).
79 Amos, F., History of Qu’Appelle & Pioneer Days. Manuscript, Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-E698: As the then-railhead, Qu’Appelle was the site for the camp which oversaw the detraining and dispersion of all eastern troops.
cult-of-optimism, the Qu’Appelle mythos included the speculation that Qu’Appelle stood a good chance of someday becoming a territorial, or even provincial, capital.  

While the community did not build a town hall until 1907, a space was found that was used, and eventually identified locally, as the town hall. The Qu’Appelle Immigrant Hall is an excellent example of complexity, function, location, and meaning. While this building is not a purpose-built Town Hall Opera House (it was constructed by the federal government to house new immigrants while they sought their own land in the region), it emerged as a clear choice as a site of interest for this study. Before the construction of the Qu’Appelle Town Hall Opera House in 1907, the community was in a constant state of incrementally assuming, reshaping, and appropriating the Immigration Building as its defacto town hall. Such physical and public negotiations of community needs foreshadow similar arguments presented before the building of the Qu’Appelle THOH. Users of the Immigration Building each sought to refashion the space as it best suited their aims, which, in turn, contributed to the developing community mythos. 

In many ways, the points-of-negotiation (or arguments) as to the meaning of the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall within the community are readily found. With different factions striving to define and use the space, disagreements were inevitable. The building’s official ownership further complicated these negotiations. Ecologically, part of the building was situated on CPR land, but the Department of the Interior had constructed and still owned the building. Socially, the local community used the site to

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80 Wickenheiser, Carol, administrator: Town of Qu’Appelle, conversation with author, Qu’Appelle Saskatchewan, 30 August 2010: The town plan drawn up in 1883 envisioned a community at least three times larger than Qu’Appelle ever became. The plan is nicknamed Old ’83 and still serves as the community plan. In 1890, the divisional point from which the rail-line would run north to Prince Albert was situated in Regina, which essentially negated Qu’Appelle’s function as a transfer-point for freight and goods. The honours of territorial capital and provincial capital were also awarded to Regina; Qu’Appelle-town never boomed as hoped.
stage a wide variety of community functions/performances. In fact, the community was adopting the building even as the federal government was threatening to sell the structure for scrap. The Immigration Building was a more plastic, malleable space than the later, rigidly (multi)purpose-built Town Hall Opera Houses. The Immigration Building offers the chance to observe community shaping forces at work in a found space. These early disagreements informed the placemaking forces at work surrounding the construction of the community’s later, purpose-built THOH. In fact the Ecological discomforts inherent in the Immigrant Hall space were the initial spur behind the town choosing to build its own space.

**Qu’Appelle Town Hall Opera House**

The cult of progress and related boosterism were prominent points of negotiation when the Qu’Appelle town council contemplated building their own THOH in 1905 as a replacement for the Immigration Building which had been sold by the Federal government and was therefore inaccessible. Despite a town population of less than 800,81 ratepayers approved an initial plan to construct a $10,000 town hall. By the time the hall was built and opened, the cost of the building was $16,000.82 The new THOH replaced the old town hall, while retaining many of the functions of the Immigrant Building-as-town-hall. The new hall was praised, and the old soon forgotten, except when it was mentioned to highlight the new hall’s superiority. The new hall became the town’s “real”

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81 Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Census of the Northwest Provinces Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta 1906, “Table 1—Population by sexes in 1906 and 1901,” (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1907); “Our population.” Progress. 30 May 1901. P8: According to the 1906 census, the Qu’Appelle town population was 778, up from 434 in 1901. To further illustrate the importance of growth to the community mythos, despite the census numbers claiming Qu’Appelle’s population as being 434 in 1901, the Progress proudly declared, in 1901, that the 1901 census “shows the population of Qu’Appelle to be over 500.”

82 “Qu’Appelle No Longer ‘Same Old Town,’” *Progress*, 20 December 1906, P1.
THOH. Within the community mythos, the new THOH was celebrated as an act of creation, which it certainly was, but it was also an act of community substitution.

**Prince Albert Town Hall Opera House**

The Prince Albert THOH is the oldest THOH in Saskatchewan, and a Canadian rarity as a 19th century prairie town hall. The site is interesting for its early construction, continuous and varied use, as well as its place within the community of Prince Albert, which, like Qu’Appelle, was a community of crossings. The town site was a hub for the North Saskatchewan River, the Canadian Northern Railway, and mail-trail wagons.

Prince Albert was first a Presbyterian Mission, founded in 1866 by Rev. James Nesbit near the HBC trading-post (established in 1776).

Fur, timber, and local farming provided much of the regional economy for its first decades. The first train from Regina arrived in Prince Albert in September 1890. Before the train, the city depended on stagecoaches and wagons (sleighs in winter) to bring people and goods north from Qu’Appelle. Also like Qu’Appelle, Prince Albert’s citizens had optimistic plans to become a capital city, of the North West Territories, or later of the province of Saskatchewan. But the community was not situated along the CPR mainline, which is often cited as the main reason that such ambitions were doomed from the start. Residents bought into the cult of progress, however, and the local-mythos was such that other cities (Edmonton, Calgary, and Regina) were seen as potential rivals. In order to keep up with or surpass these rivals, many ambitious civic improvements were made (funded by debentures) between 1893 and 1913. Between 1891 and 1893, Prince Albert built a

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Town Hall Opera House for $13,178. At the time, the community’s population was approximately one thousand.⁸⁵

By 1908, the THOH had been in constant and various use, but there was a push from some community members to replace the building. The arguments were effective enough to have convinced future local historians of their merit; Abrams appears to agree with the notion that the city administrative offices could have used more space: “already the building was too small for the city’s needs, since the second floor was occupied by an auditorium which remained the only room in town suitable for stage plays.”⁸⁶ In this case, presumably, Abrams is separating performance space from the rest of “the city’s needs” or more administrative functions of civic government. To Abrams, the auditorium “occupied” the second floor to the detriment of the other civic functions of the building. His observation that it was the only space for public performances also highlights the importance of the auditorium to the residents of the community and surrounding region.

The early construction of the Prince Albert THOH is one of the reasons why it is important to this study. While the Qu’Appelle THOH was constructed shortly after the creation of the Province of Saskatchewan, the Prince Albert THOH was built in the early 1890s, when the community was vying for prominence with other centres in the NWT. How did this early-construction reflect community members’ aspirations and desires for their new THOH space? To what extent did the structure serve to enable community action, interaction, and relationships as well as serve the wider symbolic needs of a community still negotiating its place within the wider settler-mythos of the North West Territories, Canada, and even the British Empire?

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⁸⁵ Abrams, 101.
⁸⁶ Ibid, 162.
Questions/Complications

By studying early Saskatchewan buildings and their associated performative events, I want to explore the role Saskatchewan THOHs played in Saskatchewan communities. Questions regarding THOH-spaces and their relation to negotiations of community-mythos are of particular interest. This study will explore a variety of performative events not traditionally associated with theatrical performance.

Joseph Roach offers that the study of performances is a means of exploring the complex acts associated with the construction of a community and community memory.87 This tendency to stage community is akin to Rosemarie K. Bank’s observations regarding what she identifies as “theatre culture,” which centres on the multiple roles that people play within their culture.88 Bank observed, “Theatre culture displays historical spaces of production, consumption, change, and appropriation, but also insists upon class as a performance, ideology as creation and the ‘authentic’ as the most compelling deception of all.”89 These THOH-spaces fit into Bank’s observations as spaces wherein such culture could be observed. Within Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle, how complex was the quest for such “new” authenticity? Was the Immigration Hall adopted as Qu’Appelle’s “authentic” town hall? Was the deception always successful? How did the “authentic” status shift to the new Qu’Appelle THOH in 1907? Were there similar issues in Prince Albert?

In all three sites, to what extent did the planning and construction (or appropriation, in the case of the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall) of such buildings serve as

89 Ibid, 8.
an opportunity for the negotiation/affirmation of the local community mythos? How did events in and around the hall facilitate the collective negotiation of social values and aspirations? To what extent did the THOHs contribute to the negotiation of gender roles in these “new” communities? How did the performative environment of the THOH contribute to the negotiation of community ethnic-identities?

A wide and varied selection of texts emerges as important while exploring these THOHs and their associated performative events as mechanisms for the construction of a local community mythos. The physical and figurative place of these buildings as well as their construction, use, and users all become important when considering the local mythos-in-negotiation. Doreen Massey points out that “what gives a place its specificity is not some long, internalized history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations meeting and weaving together at a particular locus.”

These sites are complex in terms of functions, identities, and meanings. Massey rightly observed that places, like people, are complex constructions:

They do not have single, pregiven, identities in that sense. For places, certainly when conceptualized as localities, are of course not internally uncontradictory. Given that they are constructed out of the juxtaposition, the intersection, the articulation, of multiple social relations they could hardly be so. They are frequently riven with internal tensions and conflicts. Places are shared spaces.

This notice of place becomes even more complicated through constellations of social relations which cross over from one space to other spaces (and places):

First, what is specific about a place, its identity, is always formed by the juxtaposition and co-presence there of particular sets of social interrelations, and by the effects which that juxtaposition and co-presence produce. Moreover, and this is the really important point, a proportion of the social interrelations will be wider than and go beyond the area being

90 Massey, 154.
91 Ibid, 137.
referred to in any particular context as a place. Second, the identities of places are inevitably unfixed. They are unfixed in part precisely because the social relations out of which they are constructed are themselves by their very nature dynamic and changing.  

Socially and ideologically, once the Town Hall Opera House was built, it provided a new site for groups to contribute to the shaping of community-mythos. The potential for complexity, if not conflict, in such negotiations might be compounded when one place is used by many groups meeting for apparently diverse reasons. Did tensions rise from rural and town governments meeting in the same space? Similarly, did groups rallying to influence those governments gain or lose influence by meeting in the seat of civic government? Who was accepted or included in these negotiations of community and who was excluded? Regarding a community founding-mythos, how did THOH-performances serve to construct a community-mythos of enculturation, or the transformation of settlers into “proper” British citizens? The negotiation of such a founding-mythos deals largely in questions of ethnicity, since the idea of a new British West required both the substitution, symbolically and physically, of historical occupants of the west with new, preferred settlers as well as the discouragement of new, undesirable settlers.

**Enculturation – The “Civilizing” Agenda**

The negotiation of a civilizing agenda will be closely tied to THOH performances providing proof of advancement of ideas including the previously-mentioned Cult-of-Progress, Britishness, Empire Loyalty, and the assumed supremacy of Christianity. Regarding exclamations of Empire-Loyalty and Britishness, performative events

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surrounding the Boer War and the communities’ reaction to local volunteers fighting in South Africa as well as the development of the Canadian militia movement in the early 1900s will be of particular interest in both communities. The extent to which such military functions were expected, or even trumpeted as triumphs of “civilisation,” will be explored.

Community members (or at least, those deemed socially acceptable within the community) gathered for plays, concerts, lectures, rallies, presentations, and civic meetings. Other performative events, the administration of justice, governance, and public works projects, also shaped meaning in the community. The value of studying community performances and interactions is echoed in Eyles’s observations regarding the ideological element of sense-of-place construction. Eyles explored the “notion that reality is a social construction which acts back on its subjects, sometimes in unseen and taken-for-granted ways.”[^93] Meaning in a space (e.g. town hall opera house) and the community values and beliefs engendered therein are not simply enforced by authority, but rather are collectively negotiated (or perhaps agreed upon, either passively or actively) – and this negotiation can lead to meanings that are neither as simple, or at all, what was originally socially intended.

**Enculturation and Gender/Generational dynamics:**

Within the groups of accepted, mythos-defining community members there were active negotiations regarding expectations and acceptability. Such negotiations were perhaps especially acute at a time in which pioneering automatically brought with it gender and generational biases which were reflected in the construction of local settler

[^93]: Eyles, 4
mythos. Gender roles were often tied to rights and agency. Governments (local, provincial, federal) were male domains. Women were not granted suffrage until 1916 in Saskatchewan. The *Dominion Lands Act* (1872) stated an unmarried woman could not homestead, but could buy an “improved” farm. Western Dower laws were oppressive. A woman had no say in the sale, rent, or mortgage of property, regardless of her investment in the operations thereof. This did not change until the *Saskatchewan Homestead Act* (1915) granted a wife the power to prevent the sale of land without both her and her husband’s signature. Until the *Infant’s Act* of 1920 made mothers the usual guardian of children under 14, a husband had sole custody of minor children and could even offer a child up for adoption without a woman’s consent. women, despite work they might have done within the household or family business (store, farm, etc.), were often listed as having no occupation if the head of the household had a job.

This situation is connected with a broader dominant attitude in the period, but the study of THOHs in Saskatchewan affords an opportunity to see how this situation played out at the grass roots in frontier society. Considering the public and performative negotiations of shared community values, and who was positioned to determine them, how evident was gender-related undervaluation in THOH performances in Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert? While women did not hold political office, they were actively engaged in THOH activities. So, as contributors to the construction of a community-mythos through THOH-performances, to what extent did women possess and use power to affect change and community attitudes? At the grassroots of frontier society what was the relative performative power of men and women in these communities? These THOHs

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are sites for exploring the construction of gender and gender roles within the negotiation of a frontier community-mythos. Local performances, produced by both men and women, offer various presentations of the roles of both “men” and “women” in their community. How do local women’s presentations of men and women differ or concur with local men’s presentations of the same?

It is possible that gender roles in the THOH were also complicated by generational issues. At various points during the settlement-waves of this era, Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert (like the rest of the province) were home to a population that was disproportionately male and young. In communities where young, single men were overly-represented, were concerts, plays, dances and other gender-mixing events performed with this demographic bulge in mind? To what degree did the THOH performances become the occasion for negotiating propriety in the treatment of women and the behaviour of men? Did a need for the monitoring of such propriety lead to intergenerational tensions at such events?

Adding to the complexity of local gender (re)presentations are their relation to imported gender-constructions brought into the community by (usually professional) touring troupes. How do these imported constructions of men and women (whether similar to, or divergent from, local presentations) contribute to the positioning of gender within the community mythos?

**Enculturation and Ethnicity**

THOH construction, as well as other civic building, was a *civilizing* act. To what extent did local THOH performances reinforce a notion of ideal-settler-mythos in their
communities? If Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle follow the wider example, the THOH should be a prime site for such negotiations, even from its point of construction. Johnson observed that, in the face of a migration of peoples bringing various foreign (i.e. non-British) cultural practices (religion, language, etc.), “westerners felt an urgent need to construct a society almost from a state of nature, and traditional institutions—the school and municipal governments are only two of many such agencies—were needed to give definition and meaning to the social order.”

Regarding THOH-construction, to what extent was this evident in Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert?

Johnson successfully draws attention to the importance of the creation of architectural signposts which reflect the prestige to which new communities aspired. Such visual symbols were perhaps especially impactful for new immigrants—many of whom might not have initially fit into the hegemonic dream of a white, British, and Christian West. But Johnson’s observation fails to recognise that this new migration to the region was not being built “from nature.” Western European cultures were displacing the region’s First Nations. Could it be true that “the West” was not lacking a local mythos, but rather it was desperate to replace the history of local First Nations groups with their own “civilizing” settler-mythos? That, in the 1980s, Johnson would still refer to the prairies in the early 1900s as a place requiring a social order to be built “from nature” (implying that social order was only brought to the West, and did not previously exist therein) is a testament to the success of the civilizing ideology of the settler-society

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95 Johnson, 229-230.
96 Here, admittedly, is the first of many instances where the topics of “civilizing” and ethnicity will overlap somewhat.
itself. Sack identified two tendencies of territoriality that make such ideological leaps possible, and powerful. Once settlers – and their governments – adopted the idea that the West was “conceptually empty space,” the path was open to “neutral space clearing,” which ideologically negated any First Nations’ claims on it.

Town Halls in new communities must have influenced, and been influenced by, settlers’ ideas as to what their community-site should appear to be. A construction of stone and brick (or even timber, in some cases), though new, added more of a sense of permanence to a new town, but as observed by Massey, such physical constructions are manifestations of the broader construction of the past of a place:

A large component of the identity of that place called home derived precisely from the fact that it had always in one way or another been open; constructed out of movement, communication, social relations which always stretched beyond it. In one sense or another most places have been ‘meeting places’; even their ‘original inhabitants’ usually came from somewhere else. This does not mean that the past is irrelevant to the identity of place. It simply means that there is no internally produced, essential past. The identity of place…is always and continuously being produced. Instead of looking back with nostalgia to some identity of place which it is assumed already exists, the past has to be constructed.

But with regard to this study, there were original inhabitants present before they were replaced by “original inhabitants” as identified by Massey. Such production of identity of place, though undeniably nostalgic, was also a tool of nation-building; to construct a “new” past, previous stories must be erased or reduced to mythology.

Nation-building and Empire-building were also local, physical phenomena. To what extent did the THOH-related performances of community reflect or support

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97 The tenacity of such ideas is further evidenced by the fact that First Nations people could not become citizens until 1956 and could not vote in a federal election until 1960.
98 Sack, 33, 34.
99 Massey, 170-171.
100 See also the following section: “New West Founding-Mythos: Substituting/Surrogating the Old West.”
dominant national and imperial ideals? In *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers*, Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson noted an agreement (even between newspapers of different political persuasions) on the “idea of Canada,” specifically, “certain ideological assumptions about the inherent value of a nation-building exercise peculiar to the later nineteenth century, a project built on emerging neoliberal capitalism and a burgeoning democracy erected on colonial architecture inherited proudly from imperial Britain.”

To what extent can it be shown that, in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle, residents used their THOH as a base (administrative, physical, and ideological) from which they could contribute to the shaping and negotiation of their community mythos?

It is possible that the struggle to create and maintain a settler-mythos that championed the “civilizing” work of settling in the Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle regions was part of a wider civilizing project in Canada (and by extension the British Empire). The goals of such a project would determine the choices made as to which community members should be included in such mythos-making. The potential political and imperial implications to the construction of such buildings, within the context of a larger, newly-settled and built community should be considered, as should the casting of the new founding stories that were in negotiation. White, Northern-Europeans were the preferred actors of the settlement of the west. For example, note the following postcard (Figure 8) from 1903:

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101 Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, 21.
An assortment of white men identified by label and stereotypical appearance stand in a field of wheat while singing *The Maple Leaf for Ever*, under the guidance of the conductor, “Canada,” who is garbed in a North West Mounted Police/Canadian Expeditionary Force style combination of flat-brimmed Stetson and riding boots. The card is entitled, “Now Then, All Together!”\(^{102}\) The image is a visual reminder of the desired “ideal” settler as envisioned by immigration authorities, specifically a group of law-abiding, white men, with the British and Americans in the front rank. Any visible minorities are not included. Whether this ideal was ever feasible, or obtainable, is another issue altogether. If the preferred mythos-in-construction for a prairie-settler community was that the community was British, white, and Christian; then the founding mythos would need to acceptably account for, explain away, or just remove, other

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\(^{102}\) “Now Then, All Together”: The “Background” description of the card reads as follows: “As part of the advertising campaign to attract settlers to the prairies, the federal government liked to portray Canada as a land that welcomed all. By singing the *Maple Leaf Forever* it also indicated they expected the new arrivals to adapt to the Canadian way of life.”
ethnicities from that vision. Presumably, the group most urgently requiring such
treatment were First Nations peoples.

The New West Founding-Mythos: Substituting/Surrogating the Old West

To what extent were performances in the town halls in Prince Albert and
Qu’Appelle a means of controlling peoples deemed “other” – even if only by either
allowing for, or denying, ideological space within community-narratives? One means of
dealing with such undeniably (though inconveniently, in term of the settler-mythos)
*present* peoples was to set them up as “other” against which the settler-society can
contrast themselves. To this end, the national press had already been working.\textsuperscript{103} Any
local founding-myths were just building upon the already-established discourse, namely
that, “Canadian colonialism... lay grounded in one key assertion: Aboriginals did not own
the land upon which they had lived, loved, and died for thousands of years.”\textsuperscript{104} Taking in
to consideration such assumption on a national scale, to what extent was such a colonial
settler mythos reflected in local community performative events in the THOHs of Prince
Albert and Qu’Appelle?

Enumeration also contributed to the active (re)definition of “citizen” and “other.”
Federal statistics appear to have been employed to create such distinctions. By 1906,
“the chief census officer predicted that Canada would never be bedevilled by ‘the native
problems that affect South Africa and other countries in the British Empire.’”\textsuperscript{105} One
particularly tricky bit of enumeration occurs between the categories “birthplace” and
“origin” in censuses between 1885 and 1911. Various, populations were identified by

\textsuperscript{103} Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, 55.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid, 43.
\textsuperscript{105} Waiser, “Our Shared Destiny?” 9.
“origin,” by “birthplace,” or some combination of both. “Birthplace,” as expected, was tracked by geographical place of birth, but “origin” allowed for a recording of an individual’s racial or cultural background (e.g. “Indian,” “Half-breed,” “Negro,” “Jewish,” etc.).

By birthplace, it might be assumed, anyone born in Canada was a British subject. But it cannot be presumed that the federal government assumed that everyone born in Canada was “British.” For example, in the 1901 Census, on the “Origins of the People” table, the overarching label “British” is provided for the categories: “English, Irish, Scotch, and Others.” The categories of “Half-breeds” and “Indians” are on the table, but not included under the label of British “origin.” Such categorization leaves Canadian-born “Half-Breds” and “Indians” in a citizenship limbo, of sorts; if Canada was a British colony, then being born Canadian should be enough to be considered a British subject. Not being identified as such led to categorical exclusion as being a non-British, Canadian-born outsider. Such active shaping of preferred citizens was noted by Thobani:

The central contradiction of Canadian citizenship, deeply rooted in its earliest stages of development, is that the citizenship rights of settlers, nationals, and immigrants remain based in the institution of white supremacy... Here, the category citizen did not emerge through some internal process within a natural community, with regrettable consequences for outsiders. Citizenship emerged as integral to the very process that transformed insiders (Aboriginal peoples) into aliens in their own territories while simultaneously transforming outsiders (colonizers, settlers, migrants) into exalted insiders (Canadian Citizens). The category citizen, born from the genocidal violence of colonization, exists in a

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106 Canada. Department of Agriculture. Census of the Three Provisional Districts of the Northwest Territories, 1884-5, “Table 3: Origins of the People,” 10-14 and “Table 4: Birth Places of the People,” 14-18, Ottawa: Maclean, Roger & co., 1886, Early Canadiana Online, http://canadiana.org/record/9_08069: Specific to the 1885 Census, information was presented of both the origin and birthplace of residents and paid specific attention to the racial-origins of the Métis population: i.e. their partial European ancestry of (English, French, Scottish, etc.) is noted, but is secondary to their label of “Half-Breeds” or Métis.

107 Generally, while censuses traced who was “British,” no specification was apparent in the tables for a “Canadian” (although “Canadian-born” is sometimes labeled).
dialectical relation with its Other, the Indian, for whom the emergence of this citizenship was deadly, not emancipatory.\textsuperscript{108} Further complicating this preferred settler-mythos of the West was the persistent belief that first nations’ populations were dying out, and thereby inconsequential.\textsuperscript{109} There was a population drop among first nations’ peoples in Saskatchewan (of 15% between 1901 and 1906). But a stabilization, then slight population increase after 1906 did not convince Indian Affairs to re-evaluate the opinion that Indians were (or perhaps should be) a dying race that was to be segregated from the rest of the population.\textsuperscript{110} In fact, as Daniel Francis observes, such an outcome was perceived as a natural course of sorts, as “Canadians believed firmly in Progress, and progress demanded that the inferior civilization of the Indian had to give way to the superior, White civilization. Progress had its price, and the Indian was expected to pay it.”\textsuperscript{111}

Despite the fact that most performances of community in the THOH might have excluded First Nations peoples, there were some representations (or presentations) of such groups on the community stage. Just what part of the community-mythos was in-negotiation at such events will be important to this study. At some events, local white performers would substitute themselves in the role of “Indians,” at fancy-dress balls (along with representations of other “others”—historical figures, fictional characters, marginal others), in tableaux, in displayed artistic renderings, or in dramas. Substitutions

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid, 12: Thobani observes that “the marking of Native peoples as ‘doomed to extinction’ is an example of necropolitics indispensable to the incipient sovereignty.” In the Canadian context, it played out as follows, “The creation of reserves and, subsequently, the residential school system as the sites for the physical and cultural extinction of these peoples points to the long history of the deployment of necropower in the service of the colonial order and the (re)production of the national subject.”
\textsuperscript{110} Waiser, “Our Shared Destiny?” 16.
\textsuperscript{111} Francis, Daniel, \textit{The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture} 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition, Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2011, 73.
are important to Joseph Roach’s approach to studying how communities perform themselves; community and memory are constructed through forgetting and substitution, or effigy. Key to his ideas of a performed community, “the three-sided relationship of memory, performance, and substitution,” is surrogation, or “how culture reproduces itself.” Site-specific exploration of the circumstances surrounding these culturally-approved (re)presentations of “Indians” in performance in the THOH (or Immigrant Hall) will be further explored. What role did these representations play in the negotiation of community-mythos? Does the fact that such performances were created at all speak, in part, to some need for such effigies in the evolving settler-mythos of the west?

The “Indian” occupied a complex place in the dominant psyche, where, “although indigenous peoples were declared as doomed to extinction for the ‘sin-crime’ of indigeneity, they were also simultaneously valorized as sacred in the western imagination.” Roach also notes a similar romantic notion of “new-world” conquest, highlighting “the historic tendency of Europeans, when reminded, to recall only emotions of deep love for the peoples whose cultures they have left in flames, emotions predicated on the sublime vanity that their early departure would not have been celebrated locally as deliverance.” According to Roach, the vanity continues into the future: “the stark polarity of the frontier trope of centre versus margin traps the imagination of historians as well as dramatists in a monotonously self-replicating closure, a monolithic foregone conclusion in which only the victor remains to mourn his vanquished victim.”

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112 Roach, 2.
113 Thobani, 39.
114 Roach, 46.
115 Ibid, 189.
As Roach noted, such substitution is typical of a cultural-amnesia that is required of settler-societies: “memory is a process that depends crucially on forgetting.”\textsuperscript{116} We might expect that this could be especially true of settler societies, like Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert specifically and Canada generally, seeking to create “new” founding myths in their “new” place. According to Roach, “newness” requires a dark amnesia of sorts:

Newness enacts a kind of surrogation—in the invention of a new England or a new France out of the memories of the old—but it also conceptually erases indigenous populations, contributing to a mentality conducive to the partial implementation of the American Holocaust. While a great deal of the unspeakable violence instrumental to this creation may have been officially forgotten, circum-Atlantic memory retains its consequences, one of which is that the unspeakable cannot be rendered forever inexpressible: the most persistent mode of forgetting is memory imperfectly deferred.\textsuperscript{117}

Was this creation of a founding community mythos—born out of the cult of prosperity and agreed-upon forgetting of the indigenous population—active in negotiation in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle’s THOH performances?

This created-sacredness is, on the surface, puzzling considering the wider context encompassing the communities in this study and indigenous peoples. If the dominant Canadian mythos was centred on the “natural-order” of moving Indians (who were a dying race, and not using the land anyway) off of the land, sequestering them away, and building a town, what would be the purpose of creating vague memories and representations to hold them in the cultural memory? One possible way of addressing this question is to use Joseph Roach’s theoretical framework regarding the importance of substitution, surrogation, and mimicry to examine the performance of community. The THOHs included performances of “others” in a community-mythos – by “real” native performers as well as the more common example of white performers in “red-face.”

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid, 2.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid, 4.
Such performances by actual or symbolic others who are not usually welcome in the dominant-community itself is to be expected in societies that, “have invented themselves by performing their pasts in the presence of others. They could not perform their own pasts, however, unless they also performed what and who they thought they were not.”\textsuperscript{118} Roach points to this definition-by-opposition (akin to the rhetorical device of antithesis identified by Burke) effected by mimicry and surrogation in performance as a means by which a community might self-defined their social-order, as well as identify potential threats to that order. Such definition and identification works to ensure the continued marginalization of an identified group: “that is why the relentless search for purity of origins is a voyage not of discovery but of erasure.”\textsuperscript{119} Complicating Roach’s observation is whether or not the framing of – or reception of – such performance-reinventions differs according to whether the performance in question was by a First Nation’s person, or someone offering a surrogation.

Pauline Johnson is of particular interest to this study as she performed in both Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle during her career as a touring elocutionist/poet (Figure 9). Her ethnicity, as a child of a white, English mother and Mohawk father, makes her one of the few examples of a first nation’s performer who was accepted into both communities’ negotiations of who was an includable person in their developing mythos. Johnson’s performances and their reception in both communities will add useful insight into how Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert approached Johnson, as a representation of a generic Canadian “Indian.”

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid, 5.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid, 6.
Johnson’s performances were a mixture of artifice and authenticity. She wrote and performed poetry that ranged from patriotic verses praising Canada and the British Empire, to pieces that expressed anger at the treatment of First Nations people in the face of that empire, and works that celebrated (and often eulogized) first nation’s peoples across Canada. Was her reception in Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert similar to her national popularity? What parts of her performance elicited the most response in these communities, and what does such response say about the community-mythos therein?

**Discouraging New, Undesirable Settlers?**

Within dominant Canadian attitudes in the late 1800s and early 1900s many racial and ethnic groups were treated as “other” within the dominant settler-mythos; the extent to which these stratifications were apparent, or performed, in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle sites might further identify negotiations of communal ethnic acceptability. In THOH performances in both Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert, some ethnic groups faced
exclusion or symbolic inclusion via substitution. This was especially true if tensions existed within the wider community. Despite one disastrous incident, Doukhobors in Prince Albert were excluded from performances of community in the THOH, with the notable exception of accepted community-members at fancy-dress parties entered in the “comic costume” category.\textsuperscript{120} In Qu’Appelle, “Germantown” residents were “othered” within the wider community and largely excluded from THOH-related events. How could these enacted surrogations (and reactions to them) be part of local mythos-building agendas? What community ideals are being negotiated in such staging of ethnicities in the THOH?

Surrogation and substitution in the performance of a community are components of what Roach refers to as “effigying.” Seeking to move beyond (without ignoring) the connection to the noun-form of effigy, Roach explains that:

\textbf{When effigy appears as a verb, though that usage is rare, it means to evoke an absence, to body something forth, especially something from a distant past (OED)....Effigy’s similarity to performance should be clear enough: it fills by means of surrogation a vacancy created by the absence of an original. Beyond ostensibly inanimate effigies fashioned from wood or cloth, there are more elusive but more powerful effigies fashioned from flesh. Such effigies are made by performances. They consist of a set of actions that hold open a place in memory into which many different people may step according to circumstances and occasions.\textsuperscript{121}}

While some effigying on display in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle may be related to active tensions between current community inhabitants, the same possible reasoning does

\textsuperscript{120}“The Carnival,” \textit{Advocate}, 28 March 1899, P1: Some of the winning and mentioned costumes included several versions of Scottish costume (e.g. Gordon Highlanders, Highland Lassie, Scottish dress, etc.) as well as a Klondyker and an East Indian Princess. In the “comic” category, the following costumes were listed: Jester, Doukhobor, Aunt Dinah. Other costumes of note included: “Josie Brooks; Gentleman Nigger, Percey McLellan; Indian Girl, Mabel Kidd... Indian, Sioux, Harry Maveety; Newsboy, Willie Marr; Midshipman 17th Century, Fred Agnew; Indian Squaw, Lena Kidd; Belgium Peasant, Maud Coombs; Jack Tar, Jim Shannon; Maid, 17th Century; Sambo, Willie Richardson; Topsy, Gertie Brooks; Queen of Hearts, May Agnew; Mr. Speaker, Hillary Agnew; Speaker’s Chair, Tommy Agnew; Sailor, Buttercup, Greek Peasant, Nigger and a number of others.”

\textsuperscript{121}Roach, 36.
not explain the popularity of another performance of racial-substitution in both communities – that of white community members performing black-face minstrel shows.\textsuperscript{122}

Various histories of Saskatchewan communities depict local white men performing black-face minstrel-shows as late as the 1930s. The form as present in the Canadian North-West seems far from its origins in the pre-emancipation American South where it was likely a means by which the white community could self-define by opposition. The performances, Roach contends, could have been inspired by slave-auction performances of value.\textsuperscript{123} But minstrel shows were rapidly and enthusiastically performed and accepted in Canada. The minstrel show would have been familiar to settlers who were exposed to it in Central and Eastern Canada. There was cross-settlement between the USA and Canada; Americans, as well as Canadians who had previously lived in the United States were relatively common in the west, (and sought-after settlers in both Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle). Roach cites minstrel shows as being part of a tradition of mimicry and surrogation in performance of community.\textsuperscript{124} Just how, or why, the minstrel show as a form became so popular in communities like Prince Albert

\textsuperscript{122} Patinkin, Sheldon, “No Legs, No Jokes, No Chance”: A History of the American Musical Theater, Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2008, 35-38: The traditional format of a minstrel show was made up of three parts. The first part saw stock characters Bones (who played the bones), Tambo (who played a tambourine), and Interlocutor (usually, the only character not in black-face who served as a straight-man/master of ceremonies) exchange various jokes and witticisms (between a music and dance number which opened and closed the act. The second act, or olio, was typically a selection of variety acts. A drama or farcical burlesque closed the show.

\textsuperscript{123} Roach 214-215: When slaves were auctioned they were stripped of clothing to show both fitness and a lack of whip-marks, which were indicative of previous punishments. In addition to this, Roach notes that: Slaves on the block were sometimes expected to dance in order to show at once their liveliness and their docility. They also had a motive: the more valuable the slave, the less willingness on the part of the master to inflict harm... Here resides a plausible, yet relatively unexplored, genealogy of performance. With music, dance, and seminudity, the slave auction, as a performance genre, might be said to have anticipated the development of American musical comedy. It certainly had important linkages to the black-faced minstrel show, which enacted the effacement of the cultural traditions of those whose very flesh signified its availability for display and consumption.

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid, 6.
and Qu’Appelle is more nebulous. If the minstrel shows were a means of community self-identification by opposition (or defining community by displaying what it is not), then were Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert pre-emptively identifying as “not black” (in addition to being, for example, “not aboriginal”)?\(^\text{125}\) Whether specific, local conditions behind such performances were greatly different from wider Canadian attitudes at the time is worth considering. What aspect of community-mythos was being negotiated by performances of black-face mimicry in communities like Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle, with no black residents? Thobani points to the discouragement of black settlement in general and the legislated attempts at excluding Chinese settlement as prime examples of negotiations of who was ethnically “in” and who was “out.”\(^\text{126}\)

In 1911, one black couple is recorded as living in the Qu’Appelle district under the category “Negro.”\(^\text{127}\) Before the 1911 census, none of the racially-concerned categories in the census (e.g. “origins”) accommodated African-Americans. With regard to black immigration to Canada, federal policy was to discourage it. For example, the Department of the Interior pulled advertising in black communities in the United States and even sent agents to dissuade potential black immigrants.\(^\text{128}\) The federal campaign culminated in the Wilfrid Laurier government’s 1911 drafting of an order banning black immigration for one year.\(^\text{129}\)

But the lack of African-American residents did not deter performances by African Americans (and Canadians, in the case of the Ball Family Singers) in Saskatchewan

\(^{125}\) While this study has identified examples of “red-face” performance in the sites of interest, evidence of a “red-face” minstrel style show has not yet been found.

\(^{126}\) Thobani, 91-92.

\(^{127}\) Canada, Census 1911 vol. II, “Table X: Origins of the People, male and female, by districts,” 332.

\(^{128}\) Waiser, Saskatchewan, 75.

\(^{129}\) Ibid 74: The order declared that the “Negro race ... is deemed unsuitable to the climate and requirements of Canada.” When it was clear that blacks had essentially stopped trying to settle in Western Canada, the unused order was repealed after two months.
THOHs. How were THOH performances by these black “others” accepted in the community? The performers in such shows were appearing onstage in touring performances of Jubilee groups, gospel singers, ever-present and popular variations of Uncle Tom’s Cabin, and occasionally minstrel shows. They were itinerant workers of a sort, not immigrants. Did the THOH stage afford them a space that was considered acceptable and controllable within the dominant community mythos? As such, what was their impact on the community? What was the nature of these performances of blackness? What can similarities or differences in community reaction to these shows tell us about the similarities or differences in the contributions to local mythos being negotiated in each community?

Sources

In order to better understand the negotiation of community-mythos connected to the THOHs in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle and their related performances, a wide variety of source material will be examined. Evidence relating to the physical presence of the buildings, the demographic composition of their communities, as well as records of THOH-related performative events must be considered.

The physical buildings, with the exception of the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall, are still standing and have been visited, for inspection and to access records in the case of

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130 Filewod, Alan, *Performing Canada: The Nation Enacted in the Imagined Theatre*, Textual Studies in Canada Monograph 15, Series ed. James Hoffman and Katherine Sutherland, Kamloops: University College of the Caribou, 2002, 28: The relative fascination with performances of Uncle Tom’s Cabin in Canada, the prairies included, has been well-identified. Filewod notes that while the show paralleled the growth of popularity of the minstrel show, and exerted similar American hegemonic pressures, it soon became as popular as a vehicle for theatrical spectacle. In addition, the show was also blessed with a reputation of morality: “Uncle Tom’s Cabin was from its earliest theatrical adaptations a worthy, safe, socially acceptable way to enjoy the transgressive pleasures of the theatre. Carrying a reputation of Christian value and the imprimatur of Harriet Beecher Stowe, it was the kind of play—perhaps the only kind of play—which a respectable Toronto woman might be willing to be seen to attend.”
Qu’Appelle THOH. Further documentation of the physical halls is available in a range of collections of photographic and artistic representation, from souvenir postcards to photograph collections. These are available, physically and (increasingly) digitally through the Saskatchewan Archives Board (SAB) as well as the University of Saskatchewan Archives. Floor plans for both sites were found. The Qu’Appelle municipal offices hold the original blueprints. In Prince Albert, the Bill Smiley Archives collection held a set of planning sketches of the THOH dating from its late 20th century conversion into an arts complex.

Town and rural council records for Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert are, for the most part, available through the SAB. Town and rural council records for Qu’Appelle are relatively complete (if rarely detailed as to the community feelings/mythos surrounding decisions). In Prince Albert, the early council minutes are somewhat more erratic (at both the SAB and Bill Smiley Archives). But between the archival coverage, as well as the practice of publishing council minutes in the newspaper, in both Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle, a fairly comprehensive collection of civic records is available.

While census records and reports, as well as census returns, are available, they are not always specifically applicable to the communities of Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert. Prior to the 1906 and 1911 censuses, specific data for the town of Qu’Appelle and city of Prince Albert is not plentiful. But population statistics on a District and Sub-district level are still useful in examining the community-mythos in negotiation in both the

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131 Due to the changing nature of the census boundaries between 1885 and 1905, it is easier to find overviews of the general make-up of the region’s population during this period. Further challenge occurs due to the fact that the Qu’Appelle District of 1906 was comprised of over 50,000 people and included the city of Regina. While it can provide a very general overview, it is difficult to apply information locally to Qu’Appelle. By 1911, the district of Qu’Appelle, though still very large, did not include Regina, and was comprised of just over 35,000 people.
Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert THOHs. The buildings were used by groups and individuals from both town and country. Town and rural councils met in the THOHs. Commercially, socially, and governmentally, the communities were, for lack of a better term, rural service centres. While the information collected in the census might be empirical, it is not to be assumed impartial. The aforementioned use of origin and birthplace to specify ethnicity and otherness is an example of agenda-driven enumeration; the government’s choices as to census classifications might give clues as to what types of “origins” merited special monitoring.

Local newspapers have been crucial to this research as records of (and participants in) THOH-centred community mythos-building. THOH-related events were extended beyond their original participants through reports in the local newspaper; the newspaper, in turn, extends public performance of negotiation. Coverage on the front-page, the editorial/opinion pages, advertisements, and especially the “local-news” (or society/gossip columns) are all useful resources for learning about THOH events. Reportage of participants (and by extension non-participants or “others”) and community reactions to events are important. While the archival coverage for newspapers is not complete (ranging from a missing edition or two to lost years), the papers are still a crucial record of THOH-events and the related negotiation of community-mythos. Such events were performed for the wider community, those who attended as well as those who read the coverage of such events in the local newspaper. This local media served to extend the performances of community from the site of performance into the wider (literate and interested) community. The paper served as a disseminator of—and contributor to—the performance of community.
These local newspapers are laden with editorial biases and agendas, many of which were (almost refreshingly) overt. Like gossip, a bias can further solidify the mythos-as-presented by the paper to its community. In Prince Albert, there were two main local newspapers for the period of this study: The Saskatchewan Times (later the Prince Albert Times) and the Prince Albert Advocate. The Prince Albert/Saskatchewan Times self-identified as Conservative. Its format of only four pages somewhat restricted column space for local content. The Advocate was a self-identified Liberal-sympathiser. It was an eight-page paper, and as a result appears to have used some of its greater column-length to expand upon local events and happenings, i.e. reviews of local performances are more likely to be detailed accounts in the Advocate, whereas briefer notes appear in the Times. In Qu’Appelle, the Qu’Appelle Progress (later simply the Progress) was the only paper in town. It was an actively traded entity throughout the 1890s before settling into the ownership of Roscoe E. Law in 1898. The paper’s editorial stance varied according to the current owner/editor’s opinions. Politically, it was variously indifferent about Liberals or Conservatives; pro-Liberal-Conservative; or pro-Territorial and/or Provincial Rights. A near-constant editorial stance of the paper was defending the development of the NWT. The paper was often pro-Temperance.

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132 For the sake of clarity, in citations and references the paper will be referred to simply as the Progress.
133 “Valedictory,” Progress, 16 January 1891, P1: Editor James Weidman observed, “there is little or no difference between the Conservative and Liberal parties of the Dominion.”
134 “Readers of the Qu’Appelle Progress,” Progress, 4 January 1894, P1: The new owner of Progress (and the Qu’Appelle Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.) was W. Syme Redpath. His stated vision for the paper was to promote Territorial interests through a Liberal-Conservative view, but without pandering to those politicians with a pro-NWT stance.
136 “Valedictory,” 1896: One new owner’s view promised, “a firm independent attitude in politics,” watchful for any anti-NWT policies or, “any maladministration retarding or seriously checking the prosperity and development of the Northwest Territories will not be disregarded.”
137 “Valedictory,” 1891: James Weidman promised that the paper would promote “Prohibition First in Politics.”
but not always. Overall, the Progress was usually an eight-page paper with a robust interest in reporting events in the surrounding communities as well as in Qu’Appelle itself. Some troublesome gaps occur in the archival record of the Progress itself (largest ones being from 1901 to 1904 and most of WWI).

Eyles cites newspapers as valuable sources especially when they offer a record of community disagreement or dissent, which can allow for the identification of often hidden ideological elements shaping sense of place. The argument that newspapers also reveal more overt expressions of dominant hegemony in a society was advocated in Anderson and Robertson’s Seeing Red. The foci of their study were two major papers (The Toronto Globe and Montreal Star), which received wide national distribution. In Seeing Red, Anderson and Robertson observe that newspapers are as much a reflection of reader bias as they are a shaper of it:

Insofar as the content of newspaper imagery derives from a larger culture in which its readers participate, one might reasonably expect a consonance between press content and pre-existing reader bias. The result is that the news constitutes a kind of national curriculum, which emerges organically, as if nothing were more natural. In short, as curriculum news images do not present new material so much as they simply reinforce the status quo.

The extent to which this observation proves to be true on a local-scale in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle (with regard to THOH events and the coverage thereof) will be explored in this thesis.

While local newspapers can provide insight into THOH performance-events in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle and then-contemporary community mythos-negotiation,

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138 “Greeting,” Progress, 22 January 1891, P1: Some owners thought it unwise to oppose Temperance, but G. S. Davidson & Co. offered to “report public attitude on Prohibition.”
139 Eyles 83.
140 Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, 8.
and related reactions and attitudes, local history books can provide insight into how such
attitudes and reactions were remembered in those communities. Local history
chronicles\textsuperscript{141} rely on personal memories, and sometimes inherited (handed-down)
memories and can be useful as a gauge of the impact of or legacy of memory connected
with a community event, especially when compared to news coverage at its time of
performance. Interpretations and re-interpretations of historical news coverage,
combined with memory – usually through the filter of some kind of gossip – all result in
a distilling of individual social values and ideologies into an overall community mythos.
As Postlewait observed, or perhaps warned, “We are always rewriting and rereading
history.”\textsuperscript{142} Postlewait, in using the terms \textit{writing} and \textit{rewriting}, recalls Roach’s
observations regarding the convergence of memory, performance, and substitution. In
fact, Roach sees gossip as being crucial to examining past performances, since “the status
of evidence required to reconstruct performances depends on the success of two
necessarily problematic procedures: spectating and tattling. This is not a disclaimer.
Often the best hedge against amnesia is gossip.”\textsuperscript{143} Local history chronicles, as well as
archival collections, are in many ways a record of community-mythos, where memory,
storytelling, and substitution are reaffirmed. Local newspapers are an early-draft of the
same cycle of surrogation and mythos-building. Explored in combination with available
statistics, such resources provide gossip and records enough to explore mythos

\textsuperscript{141} For this study, I will use the term “Local history chronicles” to specifically identify the community
history books assembled by a local history committee, or history book committee. Groups in many
Saskatchewan communities created such local history books circa 1980, Saskatchewan’s Diamond Jubilee
year.
\textsuperscript{142} Postlewait, Thomas, \textit{Historiography and the Theatrical Event: A primer with Twelve Cruxes},” \textit{Theatre
\textsuperscript{143} Roach, 30.
negotiation in Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert – especially in cases where more than one possible interpretation of meaning in a THOH performance can be found.

When studying historical performative events, the event is not accessible directly; all that is left are traces of the event, which are subject to layers of potential meanings and interpretations. Bruce McConachie noted the variety of potential sources available to the study of an historic performance-event, including: theatrical production materials such as scripts, scores, designs, and personal accounts of participants; community (audience) information such as reviews, audience reactions, advertisements, and socio-cultural and economic indicators of the community in which the performance took place. Whenever possible, performance-texts of the performative events held in the THOHs will be consulted. Some performances by local and touring groups were of popular plays whose scripts are still available. Such scripts provide a basic understanding as to the material being performed in the THOHs, if not the style, skill, meaning, or subtleness of their actual performance. In a similar way, surviving lyrics of popular songs, stories, and poems also provide a useful starting-point as to what was being negotiated in a performance in the Qu’Appelle or Prince Albert THOH. Where a script is not available (which is often the case for locally-created performances) exploration of the event will depend upon descriptions of the performance as well as community reaction to it often found in coverage such as local newspaper reviews, advertisements, and pre-show announcements. Special attention will be paid to the comments made regarding audience reaction to the performances. If some performances garner enough reaction to survive in

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144 Postlewait, 160.
local folklore until recorded in the local history books, that record is also of interest (especially when compared to news coverage at the time).

When considering the community interpretation of performances in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle, and how that interpretation might, in turn, inform the community-mythos being negotiated, the nature of the texts themselves becomes important. The degree to which a community-audience member might accept or challenge a performance in their THOH can depend upon how the performative-event is presented. Here, Catherine Belsey’s observations regarding how open or closed a text is to negotiation will be helpful. Belsey identified “three kinds of texts, declarative, imperative and interrogative.”146 These labels are not mutually exclusive, often overlapping within a performative text. They do, however, provide a means of discussing possible interactions between the text and reader. Reminiscent of THOH lectures in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle, declarative texts are stabilizing, “imparting ‘knowledge’ to a reader.” (Here, the term “reader” is applied to one reading a performance, e.g. an audience-member.) Imperative texts however are more akin to propaganda. Imperative texts cast the reader in a role of struggle against a real, outside force. The interrogative text, however, challenges a reader to think about the fiction they are witnessing and answer questions posed in the text.147 Identifying whether, for example, response to Pauline Johnson’s poetry performances (laden as they were with both patriotism and cultural criticism) were more in line with an audience expecting a declarative, imperative, or interrogative experience might provide clues as to the community-mythos in-negotiation when she performed in either Prince Albert or Qu’Appelle.

146 In Critical Practice: New Accents, Catherine Belsey also notes that while the terms are not mutually exclusive, the labels are useful (London: Routledge, 2002, 83).
147 Ibid, 83-85.
Generally, the challenge in studying performative events and their relation to community-mythos construction in Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert is that any performative event is itself a combination of action, reaction, and memory. The challenges to this study are really those identified by Roach as the challenge of performance studies scholars in studying traces of events through the broad range of performance-evidence. Performance studies deals with varied sources (textual and others) and include “gesture, song, dance, processions, storytelling, proverbs, gossip, customs, rites, and rituals... produced alongside or within mediated literacies of various kinds and degrees.”

Roach observes that literacy and orality are not in opposition, but “these modes of communication have produced one another over time and that their historic operations may be usefully examined under the rubric of performance.” In the case of this study, the use of source material will blur the lines between literacy and orality in an effort to better understand the role of performance in and around the THOHs in the negotiation of community-mythos.

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148 Ibid, 85.
149 Roach, 11-12.
Chapter 2: Making-Do Placemaking – The Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall

The Immigration Hall in Qu’Appelle was initially a “found” space for the community which served many different functions. Examination of local adopting and adapting of the structure, as well as the performative events held therein, can reveal some of the powers at play in Qu’Appelle’s early mythos negotiations. These negotiations took place in an era in which Qu’Appelle rapidly morphed from a regional community of influence and power, to a relatively small community under the influence of the capital city of Regina. Within the community, this site is especially interesting because community groups seeking to utilize or change the building are often overt in their opinions as to how such uses/changes would benefit the community.

Town Basics (ca. 1885 -- 1905):

Between 1885 and 1905 the town of Qu’Appelle was a regional hub of commerce and transportation as well as local government and justice. The townspeople were portrayed as optimistic and hungry for economic growth. In this period Qu’Appelle’s prominent residents bought into the cult of progress; this was, after all, before the town was increasingly by-passed by the railways and outshone by its perceived regional rival, Regina (the territorial then provincial capital).

In 1885, the town was still recovering from a 13 May 1883 fire, remembered in Qu’Appelle’s local history book as having been started when “a careless smoker threw a cigarette under the CPR platform. The Immigration sheds, freight sheds, CPR station, three general stores, two hardwares, an implement agency, and the McMannus Hotel were all destroyed by what undoubtedly was the most devastating fire ever experienced
by the town.” The fire came just as Qu’Appelle was on the verge of success: “During the summer of 1883, Qu’Appelle had burst into an active important centre. Important government offices were being established here, among them the Immigration Office.” Part of the prominence of the town site came from its location as a hub for freight, as “the Town became the transfer place for all freight for Prince Albert, the Fort, Touchwood, and other places, and a steady stream of wagons and Red River Carts hauled by horses, oxen, and mules, took their loads from the CPR and travelled north.”

An observer for the Winnipeg Sun admired the advantages of the town site, and perceived the aspirations of Qu’Appellites, on a trip through town in 1886. He wrote:

I found myself, at the early hour of two o’clock in the morning, standing on the platform of the depot at Qu'Appelle. The cool morning breeze was most refreshing and the grey dawn of another approaching sultry day revealed to my enquiring gaze the most picturesque townsite to be found on the long route from Brandon to Calgary. Houses peeped out from the dark green foliage of the surrounding trees, while the tall spires of the churches pointed heavenwards, giving to the embryo city that beauty of peace and rural homeliness so rare in the broad boundless prairie of the west... The principal streets built on at present run north from the line of the railway and contain some fine stores, printing office (where the excellent sheet the Progress is published), hotels, etc., besides churches and schools. The churches represented are the Episcopal, the Methodist, the Presbyterian and the Roman Catholic, all of which have overflowing congregations every Sunday, especially the former, owing, I am told, to the popularity of His Lordship the Bishop of Qu'Appelle (the Rt. Rev. The Hon. A. Anson, D. D.) The principal streets have all well-laid plank sidewalks and taking it on the whole the city of Qu'Appelle presents to the mind of the incoming stranger, that inward feeling that it may be well enough now but intends to be more ambitious by-and-bye.

Ambition, or the expressed desire for “progress,” is a constant theme that recurs in Qu’Appelle. Settlers assumed that their town, given the chance, would become a major

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151 Amos, History of Qu’Appelle & Pioneer Days.
152 “The Qu’Appelle Valley; Winnipeg Sun Correspondence,” Progress, 29 July 1886, P1.
urban centre. The grand town plan of 1883 envisioned a community at least three times larger than Qu’Appelle ever became.\textsuperscript{153} But at the close of the nineteenth century, the dominant mythos was that of ambition, economic growth, and increased settlement.

To further these goals, the Qu’Appelle newspaper, the \textit{Progress}, relentlessly promoted Qu’Appelle as a place for new settlers and new businesses. In 1900, the following inventory of Qu’Appelle’s “advantages” was printed in the \textit{Progress}:

- **Situation:** Qu’Appelle Station is 324 miles from Winnipeg, 32 miles from Regina on main line of C.P.R., and 18 miles from the famous summer resort, the Qu’Appelle Lakes.
- **Business Places:** Qu’Appelle contains 3 general stores, 3 implement firms, 2 hotels, 1 drug store, 1 lumber yard, 2 harness shops, 1 hardware store, 1 furniture store, 1 blacksmith shop, 2 shoemakers, 1 bakery, 2 grocery, fruit and confectionery stores, 1 meat market, 1 printing office and a number of other business enterprises.
- **Advantages:** Qu’Appelle contains 1 3-room school taking high and public school work, 3 elevators with combined capacity of 65,000 bushels, 1 creamery producing 16,000 to 20,000 pounds of butter per year, 1 flour mill, capacity 125 bbls. per day, and 4 churches. It is surrounded by beautiful farming land, well wooded and watered. It is suitable for mixed farming and grain growing. It is the shipping point of the northern ranchers and from 2,000 to 4,000 head of cattle are shipped annually. It has well-paved streets and good roads leading in all directions from the town. It is the headquarters of the government telegraph system. You can get good homesteads of 160 acres for $10 within 20 miles of the town. Men and women find ready employment in the district at good wages. It is noted for its beautiful situation and well sheltered homes.\textsuperscript{154}

The piece is a blatant outward expression of what the unnamed \textit{Winnipeg Sun} correspondent identified in 1886 as a general internal-ambitiousness.\textsuperscript{155} Interestingly, the list of town assets does not include the Immigration Hall, which was a hub of activity in the town for various groups: governmental, judicial, religious, and performing. Before the

\textsuperscript{153} The plan is nicknamed “Old ’83” and still serves as the community plan (Wickenheiser, 2010).
\textsuperscript{155} “The Qu’Appelle Valley; Winnipeg Sun Correspondence,” \textit{Progress}. 
new THOH was started in 1905, however, the Immigration Hall would become linked to
the town’s prosperity and chance for “progress” – even in the pages of the local
newspaper.

**Population:**

For most of the Immigration-Hall period (1885-1906), census data is available for
Qu’Appelle only as part of its District, Assiniboia (later Assiniboia East). While
population statistics are increasingly more specific after 1906, overviews are available of
the general make-up of the region’s population between 1885 and 1905. In 1885
(according to Birthplace\(^{156}\)) approximately 97% of the sub-district’s people were born in
Canada or British possessions.\(^{157}\) But the “Origins” of the residents of the District of
Assiniboia told a slightly different tale (Figure 10). British-origin still dominated, more
than doubling the population separately-identified as “Indian”. Métis (5.97%) and
various groups of other Non-British peoples made up approximately ten percent of the
population.\(^{158}\)

\(^{156}\) This assumes, of course, that being born in Canada in 1885 made one a British Subject, which (as stated
earlier) might not always be assumed; census categories separated British and indigenous Canadians.
Options for “Origin” presented British and Non-British, but not Canadian.

\(^{157}\) Canada, *Census 1884-5*, “Table 4: Birthplaces.”

\(^{158}\) Canada, *Census 1884-5*, “Table 3: Origins.”
By 1891, in Assiniboia East, 62.35% of the population was Canadian-born. Most of those residents were born in the Northwest Territories or Ontario. Of foreign-born residents, most were born in Britain or British possessions. The percentage of residents of Assiniboia East born outside both Canada and other British possessions increased to over ten percent for this census (Figure 11). Unsurprisingly, regardless of the percentage of British-identified people in the region, most performances in the THOH presumed “British” was the local default cultural position.

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159 Canada, Department of Agriculture and Statistics, *Census of Canada 1890-91*, “Table V. Places of Birth of the People,” Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1897, 362: Most of those residents were born in The Territories (28.98%) or Ontario (25.26%). Manitoba (4.01%) and Quebec (2.25%) were the next largest regions represented.
The relative number of residents identified as being of British-origin continued to fall in the region over the next decade. In 1901, Qu'Appelle and Qu'Appelle South (Figure 12) most residents identified as being British (54.49%) or “Indian” (34.19%).

![Figure 12: Combined “origins” for the Districts of Qu’Appelle and Qu’Appelle South, from Canada, Census of Canada 1901, “Table XI -- Origins of the People.”](image)

Regarding gender and generational dynamics, the population of the Qu’Appelle region was fairly typical of a settler, or “frontier” society, i.e. very young and very male. This was especially true in 1885 when there were approximately 3 men for every two women in the Qu’Appelle and Regina sub-district (Figure 13).

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160 The decision to combine the two censuses for the purposes of this overview was made due to the regional use of the Immigration Hall by the local area by individuals and organizations such as the South Qu’Appelle Agricultural Society, the South Qu’Appelle rural council, etc.

161 Canada, Department of Agriculture, Fourth Census of Canada 1901, “Table XI -- Origins of the People,” Ottawa: S. E. Dawson, 1902, 398-399: Much smaller percentages of the population identified as French (2.2%), German (1.23%), Russian (2.84%), Austro-Hungarian (3.27%), and “Half-Breeds” (1.5%).
When considering the age demographics between 15 and 40 years of age, the ratio climbs to two men for every one woman in the sub-district. The urgency of competition for unmarried women seems particularly acute when considering the sex ratio of unmarried adults: for every two females there seven males. By 1901, in the larger District of Assiniboia East, men were still outnumbering women (Figure 14). Such gender imbalance might have led to the prevalence of local and touring performative events that featured, if not promoted, young women as a draw.

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In the Sub-Districts of Qu’Appelle and Qu’Appelle South, however, the overall sex ratio (male: female) was almost even. In fact, in 1901 the town of Qu’Appelle reported 22 more females than males living in town (male 206 vs. female 228).\footnote{163}

While census-records report the 1901 population of the town of Qu’Appelle as being 428,\footnote{164} the Progress reported that the 1901 census “shows the population of Qu’Appelle to be over 500.”\footnote{165} The inflated local newspaper numbers, and its call for more development in town, could have been further evidence of residents’ impatience regarding the pace of development of Qu’Appelle. Specific education statistics are not always easy to come by, or compare for the town of Qu’Appelle and surrounding region. In 1885 in Assiniboia, sub-district Qu’Appelle and Regina, 188 residents out of 9540 reported they were attending school (110 males and 78 females).\footnote{166} Qu’Appelle did build a high school by 1906, but formal literary pursuits were not always greeted with

\footnote{163}{Canada, Census 1906, “Table 1: Population by sexes in 1906 and 1901,” 48.}
\footnote{164}{Ibid.}
\footnote{165}{“Our population,” Progress, 30 May 1901, P8: The Progress writer also complained that the population would be higher, but for “a scarcity of vacant residences of any description.”}
\footnote{166}{Canada, Census 1884-5, “Table 10: Going to School, Deaf and Dumb,” 45.}
enthusiasm. In 1900, it was noted (but not overtly lamented) that, “after several ineffective efforts to organize a Literary Society in town the project has been abandoned as insufficient interest was shown by the people.”  

Literacy could not always be assumed among the regional population, which made performative events important tools of mythos negotiation.

Regionally from 1885 to 1901, religious affiliation reported in the region shows a consistently significant percentage of people identifying as Church of England (Qu’Appelle was then a Bishopric). The Presbyterian Church of Canada, Methodists, and Roman Catholics also claimed significant support in the region (Figure 15). Despite the contemporary mythos that the “Indians” of the region were in inevitable decline, was the nearly one-fifth of the population indentified as “Pagans” (including “unspecified” religious affiliation) in the Assiniboia East Sub Districts of Qu'Appelle and Qu'Appelle South. Since local religious groups held various events in the Immigration Hall, it might be expected that each religious group would be active in the space (with the noted exception of “pagans”).

167 “No Literary Society,” Progress, 13 December 1900, P8.
168 Canada, Census 1901, “Table X – Religions of the People,” 274-275: combined by author.
Figure 15: Religions Qu’Appelle Region, from Canada, *Census 1884-5* “Table 2: Religions of the People” 6-10; *Census 1891*, “Table IV: Religions” 328-329; and *Census 1901*, “Table X -- Religions of the People,” 274-275.\(^{169}\)

**Physical Hall: Immigration Hall, Qu’Appelle**

Qu’Appelle’s Immigrant Building was constructed by the Department of the Interior for the purpose of housing Immigrants and their effects while in the process of securing other housing or a homestead. The building was built for utility and was not intended to serve as an architecturally grand community-elevating edifice. Photographs which include the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall (Figures 16 and 17) identify it as an unassuming two-story building with a peaked roof.

\(^{169}\) Intended as a basic “snapshot” for basic understanding of the most populous regional religions. The areas included vary according to the specificity and availability of statistics through the various censuses.
Small windows are barely visible to delineate an upper floor. The ground floor contained two large rooms that were used for community events (such as dances and performances). At least one door on the lower level was large enough to admit road scrapers and other implements when occasion demanded. This design appears to be a fairly standard one for Immigration Halls in prairie towns (Figures 18 and 19).

The construction date of the original Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall is unclear, but the structure of interest to this study was erected after the Qu’Appelle fire of 13 May 1883, when “A. J. Baker, Immigration Agent, rebuilt Immigration Hall just west of where Main (Qu’Appelle) Street met the CPR tracks. In it were facilities for Immigrants, the
Municipal Office, a police office and cell for prisoners, as well as a concert hall.”¹⁷⁰ The haste with which the hall was rebuilt, was interpreted by Qu’Appelle residents (and later remembered in the local town history book) as a tribute to the growing regional importance of Qu’Appelle. Baker remained in control of the building through the winter of 1888-89; a local performance by Mrs. and Dr. Guerin noted that they performed in the hall “by the kind permission of A. J. Baker, Esq.”¹⁷¹ Baker appears to have been the last local Immigration Agent in Qu’Appelle. In the spring of 1889, he was transferred to Brandon. No successor was appointed in Qu’Appelle.¹⁷²

While the uses of Immigration Hall were eventually similar to the uses of Town Hall Opera Houses in other centers, the building was not used initially for all of the services it eventually performed (i.e. Military Barracks, immigrant facilities, municipal offices, police office and cells, concert hall, etc). It was adapted and adopted to meet those roles over its first few decades.

The first group to live in the hall was the soldiers who remained stationed in Qu’Appelle after the 1885 resistance. “B” Battery lived in and started physically re-shaping the Immigrant Building into a performance space for plays. Just before Christmas in 1885, plans were in place to start performances:

It is proposed to have the first of a series of entertainments next week... the very amusing farce, “Area Belle,” will be put on the boards. Major Short is now building a stage in the non-commissioned officers’ and men’s recreation room, where during the winter minstrels, farces, plays, etc., will entertain the citizens of this town... leading amateurs are taking part.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Qu’Appelle Historical Society, 9.
¹⁷¹ “Mrs. Guerin, assisted by Mr. Guerin and J. P. Jones,” Progress, 21 December 1888, P8, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/QPP/1888/12/21/8/Ar00801.html
¹⁷² “On Monday Morning Last,” Progress, 5 April 1889, P8, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/QPP/1889/04/05/8/Ar00804.html
¹⁷³ “Area Belle,” Progress, 11 December 1885.
Within days of the soldiers’ first show on their new stage, the space was used by local performers. The “ladies and friends of the Presbyterian church” hosted an oyster tea and entertainment on 29 December 1885. While tea was served in the HBC store, it was planned that the attendees would “repair to the Government immigrant buildings, where an excellent program will be given, consisting of music, speeches, recitations, etc.” Presumably the soldiers had relinquished the NCOs’ recreation room for the evening, as well as their theatrical scenery. The event review noted, “the stage and scenery is the work of the men in B Battery. They are very neat and tastefully got up.”

After the “B’ Battery left Qu’Appelle in 1886, the Immigration Building was open to resume its purpose as a point from which the Federal Government could offer immigration services. Mere weeks after the soldier’s departure, the previously-mentioned writer for the Winnipeg Sun noted his experience in the building as part of a larger piece on the town of Qu’Appelle. He wrote:

Seeing on one corner of the building the words “Dominion Land Office,” I entered and found the government agent very willing and anxious to afford any information regarding the country that might be required; it would appear that the class of immigrants requiring the government accommodations arriving at this point since the opening of the office has been very small indeed, and as to the future it remains problematical; till lately there was also an assistant in the office, who was removed in the opening of the season to Calgary, where it may be surmised he had as little to do as he apparently had here; however, things may change before long as there is talk of a line of railway being opened from this point to the coal fields near Wood Mountain. Then immigrants wishing to locate along the new line would be enabled to secure good accommodation in the sheds. The building has been found to be very useful to the citizens of Qu'Appelle in times past, whether as a temporary church for the various denominations, assembly rooms for a little recreation and in various other

175 “Tea and Entertainment,” Progress, 1 January 1886: A hint at the capacity of the hall is provided by the attendance at the pre-show meal, where “one hundred fifty people sat for supper, raising seventy-four dollars.” It appears that two people ate for free, if the pre-advertised charge of fifty cents per person was in effect.
ways, and from all accounts it would seem that the only public use for which it has been made available has been as a temporary barracks for a few troops. 176

This reporter picked up on the view of some Qu’Appelle residents: that as long as the Dominion Government was not using the building, the Immigration Hall was a site best used by local residents for local purposes. In fact, immigration traffic through the hall remained slow enough that even the federal government used the space as a barracks again in the winter of 1886, when fifty members of “B” troop, North West Mounted Police (the Moose Mountain detachments) used the Immigration Hall as winter quarters. 177

While local entertainments were usually well received, the hall itself often bore the brunt of criticism. An otherwise glowing review for an entertainment and social hosted by the Ladies of the Presbyterian Church on 10 October 1889 (in aid of the choir fund) noted that “a word must be added about the decoration of the otherwise dilapidated looking room, which was excellent.” 178 In three years, the hall deteriorated from “good accommodation” for immigrants to being “dilapidated” for social functions. This event is also further development of the building’s expanding functions; it was also a banquet-room. Before this social, if an event included a meal, the practice appears to have been that the meal was served across the street at the Queen’s Hotel. After the repast, the participants would cross the street for the entertainment. The Presbyterian Church ladies,

176 “The Qu’Appelle Valley; Winnipeg Sun Correspondence,” Progress: The writer also observed, with some confusion, that the Dominion Intelligence Office was physically separate from the Immigration Agent, in fact located “at a distance from the [Immigration] sheds in a private building, why not in the sheds—as there appears, even with the occupation of the soldiers, to be plenty of accommodation—seems a mystery.” This separation could have been due to the mixed federal-commercial business that the Intelligence Officer conducted, as “The intelligence officer, who is also an agent for other land and loan companies, was very anxious to do the services of his office, either to settle me on Government sections or sell lands improved or unimproved belonging, I suppose, to the land company or private individuals.”


178 “Presbyterian Social,” Progress, 18 October 1889, P8.
however, used the upstairs rooms of the Immigrant building for serving food and the
ground-floor as the entertainment space.

Utilization of the upstairs rooms during entertainments would evolve further. An
Agricultural Society benefit for the Medicine Hat Hospital on 12 February 1892 was
promoted as offering more than just dancing, for “the room on the ground floor is to be
fitted up for dancing, and the upstairs thoroughly furnished with all kinds of drawing
room and parlor amusements for those who do not wish to trip the light fantastic.
Refreshments will also be served upstairs.” The addition of a space for refreshments
and games within the hall not only expanded the types of activities that could be hosted in
the building, but also offered more ways to fundraise within the hall itself, potentially
increasing revenue for event organizers. Many future event-planners would arrange the
space in a similar fashion.

The stage was renovated in 1890 for a performance of the Qu’Appelle
Philharmonic Minstrels who were led by Corporal Purches, a local NWMP officer. The
Minstrels built, “a well arranged stage with convenient side wings and all other
necessaries had been built by the Philharmonic Society for that and other occasions when
it may be required.” The pre-show announcement for the Qu’Appelle Philharmonic
Minstrels proudly declared that the performance would be “given in the Opera House
(Government Hall), on the 8th January.” This reference, tongue-in-cheek or not,
appears to be the first use of the term “Opera House” to describe the Immigration Hall.

179 “The social entertainment for Friday evening,” Progress, 11 February 1892, P4.
180 The show also went on to play in Indian Head and Ft. Qu’Appelle (“The Qu’Appelle Amateur
Dramatic Society,” Progress 10 January 1890, P8; “The Qu’Appelle Amateur Dramatic Company,”
Progress 17 January 1890, P8).
181 “We would remind our readers of the entertainment of the Qu’Appelle Philharmonic Minstrels,”
Progress, 27 December 1889.
Despite the local popularity of Purches’s stage-improvements, they were a point of contention to some building overseer. The staging effects were advertised for sale from the hall in late 1890. It is unclear as to whether this attempt to remove the staging was a decision of the Immigration Department or the Minstrels themselves. The *Progress* carried the following notice in November: “The undersigned will receive Tenders up to Monday, the 17th inst., for the purchase of the Stage, Scenery and Fittings, now in the Government Building at Qu’Appelle Station. For further particulars apply to Corporal Purches, NWMP – Harold Jagger, Regina. 10th November, 1890.”

Jagger, a manager and cast-member of the Philharmonic Minstrels’ from Regina, appears to have been responsible for the notice, as well as the attempted sale of the stage-effects. Editorial reaction was swift; the *Progress* entreated “surely there is enterprise sufficient in town to secure it for public use.” Three months later it appears that some of the staging was stolen. While Jagger and Purches had received no tenders for the staging, they requested (through the *Progress*) that “the parties who took the curtains belonging to the stage in the Immigrant sheds will oblige by returning them to Mr. Jagger, at once.”

The evolution of the town’s use of the hall and its furnishings brought out a wider discussion of ownership of the hall itself. The Immigration Department seemed eager to off-load responsibility for the hall to any local group willing to take over the insurance premium. The *Progress* noted “that some time ago Commissioner Herchmer was here to hand over the Immigrant Sheds to the Municipal Council or Board of Trade on condition that they have the building insured.”

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183 “By advertisement elsewhere,” *Progress*, 14 November 1890.
184 “The parties who took the curtains,” *Progress* 5 February 1891, P4.
185 “We understand that sometime ago,” *Progress* 5 February 1891, P4.
the Commissioner’s deal and investigated other opportunities. The South Qu’Appelle
council reviewed the following three options for securing their meeting room for the
1891 fiscal year: “(1st) We can get the immigrant hall for the sum of $30 per annum.
(2nd) We can have the use of the town’s schoolhouse every Saturday free, with one
exception, which is to find the wood for our use. (3rd) Mr. A. M. McLane offers us the
hall in which we now meet at an annual rent of $30.” The council chose to stay in
McLane’s Hall. By doing so, the council refused to accept official responsibility for
control of the Immigration Hall. The Progress predicted that failing to claim the
Immigration Hall would result in a loss of Qu’Appelle’s best suited site for public
meetings. A Progress editorial urged, “Some action should be taken to secure the
building formerly used for immigration purposes for all our public meetings.
Considerable difficulty is experienced in getting the use of it at present.” The hall was
no longer locally identified primarily as a place for the housing of immigrants by the
Immigration Department. This shift might help explain the local frustrations that met the
federal governments’ future uses of the hall for its original purpose (of housing
immigrants).

Community activities (including lectures, concerts, and performances) resumed in
the Immigration Hall and continued through the 1890s. But the space was by no means
an organized public meeting place. Some groups found surprises. People arriving for a
lecture found that “the sidewalk had been partially broken up, and the platform of the

186 R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes 1884 – 1897, 2 February 1891, SAB, R-2.740, No. 1; “Council
Minutes,” Progress, 12 February 1891, P4.
187 A local hall affiliated with the hotel, not to be confused with a hall in the Town of McLean.
188 “We understand that sometime ago,” Progress, 5 February 1891, P4.
189 “Some action should be taken,” Progress, 5 Mar 1891, P4.
building was strewn with lumber.”

Other groups learned to adapt to the challenging conditions of the hall. Potential attendees of a December 1890 public meeting with the Bishop of Qu’Appelle were advised that “as it will be necessary to provide a stove and other things to make the hall more comfortable than it was last week, a collection will be made after the meeting to defray expenses.”

Even happy events in the hall only seemed to highlight how current events paled when compared to past frivolities. When people filled the hall and danced to violin accompaniment until 5:30 am in December 1892, the event reviewer described how “the company assembled in the building so frequently used for the same purposes at the time of the rebellion, but now devoted to the storage of implements.”

The hall’s shortcomings as a performance space were often noted when professional touring troupes played the hall. In September, 1892, the Carra Dramatic Company’s “management explained the disadvantage under which they labored owing to the small stage,” which, perhaps, caused the reviewer to take it easy on the show, writing that “in view of this and other drawbacks we refrain from criticism.”


The performance experience was not extraordinary to the reviewer, however, who noted that “from frequent applause we would conclude that the people were at least amused. The stage in our hall is not first class, and does not give a company

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190 Akehurst, Henry S., “To the Editor of the Progress,” *Progress*, 17 Oct 1890, P8.
192 “A dance was arranged for Friday night last,” *Progress*, 29 December 1892, P4.
a chance.”

In 1899 the Harold Nelson Stock Company was scheduled to perform, *Under Two Flags* as a benefit for the Qu’Appelle Polo Club. Upon arriving at the building, however, they changed the play to a comedy, *A Crazy Idea, or All the Comforts of Home*. The local reviewer explained that *Under Two Flags* “was impossible to stage in such a small hall.”

The inadequacy of the hall for touring performers was emerging as a matter of town pride. A final straw, of sorts, was dropped on the community’s injured pride in 1905. Andrew McPhee’s Big Company was performing the eagerly-hyped show *Red River; a Drama of the South* which promised to be “the big dramatic event of the season.” The performance was not reviewed as a critical success: “The company is weak in histrionic powers, and failed to do full justice to the parts assayed.” In the opinion of the players, however, the hall failed to do justice to their efforts, as was made clear when “Mr. McPhee took occasion during the evening to roast the town for having such a poor hall, and offered a small cash contribution and a drop curtain if a new one were built.” McPhee’s rant and promise to aid in furnishing a new hall enhanced his reputation among Qu’Appelle playgoers. When his company returned in January 1906, the community came out in great numbers to see his show, and support his company. By the time of this return performance, Qu’Appelle’s new Town Hall Opera House was being planned. The review of his show was, for the most part, glowing:

Packed House - A. McPhee will no doubt be glad to show in the new town hall the next time he comes around. The present apology for a hall is not big enough to hold the crowd. It was literally packed on Saturday night when McPhee’s company played *The Hand of Man*. Barring a few coarse

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197 “Polo Club Concert,” *Progress*, 12 Jan 1899, P8.
198 “Andrew McPhee’s Big Company is coming for one night, Jan. 16th,” *Progress* 12 January 1905, P8.
expressions that could well be expurgated the play was good and well put on. Mr. McPhee has promised to supply the new hall with a fine drop curtain, and to interest himself in securing a complete outfit of scenic curtains for which the Qu’Appellites are duly thankful. Andy will always be popular with this town.\textsuperscript{199}

For the promise of a curtain, McPhee sought to buy years of advertising and good will in Qu’Appelle. By this time in Qu’Appelle, widespread derision of the Immigrant Hall appears to have been a by-product of the community members’ pride in their new Town Hall Opera House project, which was then in the planning stages. The \textit{Progress} was also sure to take any opportunity to remind Qu’Appelle residents (and perhaps Mr. McPhee himself) of the curtain promise. McPhee kept his word. When the new Town Hall Opera House was nearing completion two years later, McPhee sent along the promised curtains.\textsuperscript{200}

But for the last decade of the Immigration Hall’s use as a town hall, municipal leaders were slow to provide leadership with regard to the building’s maintenance and improvement. In early 1894 the South Qu’Appelle Municipality did take a greater leadership role in maintaining the building. The council appears to have moved their council chamber to the Immigration Building in January.\textsuperscript{201} Council soon formed a committee to oversee renting out, and thereby refurbishing, the hall “which was at that time in a most dilapidated condition.”\textsuperscript{202} Fundraising and renovation duties were turned

\textsuperscript{200}Qu’Appelle Historical Society, 25.
\textsuperscript{201}\textit{R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes}, 5 May 1894; “Council Minutes,” \textit{Progress}, 17 May 1894, P1: The minutes noted that they paid rent for their meeting room in McLane’s Hall to the end of January 1894. At meeting in March, the minutes show a motion – beside the marginal notice “not for publication” – instructing the clerk to write to the councils’ lawyers, Johnson and James, and “submit all the facts of the claim of A. M. McLean against the Munic. for the rent of McLanes [sic] hall. Notice having been sent him in leaving or vacating his hall” (\textit{R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes}, 2 March 1894). Eventually, the matter was settled when the council decided, “that the rent of McLanes [sic] Hall for the year ending in January 1894 for $30.00 be paid.”
\textsuperscript{202}Raymond, Angus, “In Answer to Miss Boyce,” \textit{Progress}, 29 November 1894, P4.
over to a new community group, the “Quadrille Club.” Their initial efforts were appreciated: improvements in the hall were being celebrated by the Farmer’s Reunion in March. It was noted that the “Public Hall,” as it was being labeled for this upcoming event, “has been entirely renovated and improved. It is now under the hands of Mr. ‘Tony’ Hollingshead, our worthy knight of the brush, and that it will receive justice at his hands goes without saying.”

The Progress also praised the specific efforts of Quadrille club organizers as well as the supervising municipal councillors, “Messrs. Warner and Raymond.”

But Councillor Raymond also faced criticism regarding his overseeing of access to the hall. Qu’Appelle resident, Kate Stanley Boyce highlighted her frustrations regarding access to the Immigration Hall in a letter to the Progress:

I should feel much obliged if you could inform me as to certain points in hiring the Agricultural Hall. Having had to do with the hiring of the building on several occasions, I have been much annoyed with the uncertain terms on which it is leased. On one occasion the price being $3 for the evening with the building swept and in order, lighted, and fuel found; on another $5 is the price, exclusive of lighting and cleaning, the building in a fearful state, no lights, nothing prepared; in fact everything in a dreadful muddle after the last travelling company. Second, who is authorized to receive payments for the hiring of the hall? Early in the year, after a social, when payments were being made, I was sent to three different people, each one sending me on to another, and finally when I had paid the third, I was told I should have paid for it to the first.

Boyce continued to identify more concerns regarding issues as basic as getting the hall opened before an event, Boyce asked and observed that, “if this Agricultural Hall is for the benefit of the town, surely everything should be made easy on occasions when

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203 “Among the great many causes,” Progress, 22 March 1894, P4.
204 Ibid.
205 See APPENDIX A: The Boyce Letters.
206 Boyce identified the space as the Agricultural Hall. The name reflected the community’s identification of the connection between the Immigration Hall and the South Qu’Appelle Agricultural Society which used the hall for fairs and events.
townspeople wish to hire it, and some publications of terms, etc, would be satisfactory for future guidance.”²⁰⁸ Boyce’s letter sparked a public debate over community expectations regarding access to the hall. For several weeks, various contrasting viewpoints were expressed through the editorial letters columns of the Progress.

The following week, Councillor Raymond’s letter of response stated, “I am much pleased that your correspondent, Miss K. I. [sic] Boyce, has drawn attention to the subject of renting the Immigration Building, as it enables me to explain some matters in connection with the same about which there has been a good deal of uncertainty and no little dissatisfaction felt and expressed.”²⁰⁹ Raymond identified access to the hall as being an active topic of negotiation throughout the community. According to Raymond, the uncertainty over renting the hall came from both the council and Qu’Appelle Quadrille Club having been responsible for leasing out the hall over previous year. The changing rates and accommodations found in the hall, therefore, were a result of changing practices and policies of the Quadrille club and the municipal council. Raymond included an account of hall rentals for the previous months as well as the statements of the Quadrille Club, which he claimed was generally unsuccessful in its fundraising events.²¹⁰

Rather than clear the air, however, Raymond’s letter only fueled more backlash and muddying of the issue. An anonymous letter to the editor followed wherein the writer (or writers), identified as “Outsider,” disagreed with Raymond’s letter nearly point-by-point. Raymond had argued that the rental of the Hall was never intended to include light, fuel, and cleaning. “Outsider” countered that other council members

²⁰⁸ Ibid.
²⁰⁹ Raymond, “In Answer to Miss Boyce.”
²¹⁰ See APPENDIX A: The Boyce Letters
believed that the rental of the hall should have included such services. Regarding the hall’s cleanliness, “Outsider” asked, “if Mr. Raymond thought that his five dollars did not include cleaning the hall, why did he tell a gentleman the reason the hall was not cleaned under his orders on that occasion was that he was too busy to see about it?”

“Outsider’s” letter also took particular umbrage over Raymond’s assertions that Quadrille club events were not successful or well attended. For example, the writer(s) felt that:

> Mr. Raymond is certainly mistaken when he says that no entertainment took place on the 21st February last; on the contrary, I have been told by those present that it was a most enjoyable affair and the greatest success of any of the entertainments given by the committee, and considering the success and the expenditure of $20.35 incurred, the public might well ask why the entrance money was refunded to those who so enjoyed themselves, and the fund unnecessarily burdened with a loss of $20.35. Mr. Raymond's statement that the committee's entertainments were not patronized is refuted by the figures given by him in his letter--they clearly show that the efforts of the committee were a great success.

The issues of public access and management of the Immigration Hall were keenly felt among its user groups. Throughout 1894, the council continued to make moves to improve the hall’s condition, including finding alternate storage for the municipal road scrapers and other such equipment. The citizens of Qu’Appelle were remaking the Immigrant Building; the community had essentially appropriated the space as their own. The hall was being used for public meetings, dances, concerts, touring shows, and South Qu’Appelle Agricultural Society exhibitions.

Meanwhile, the Department of Justice also had a claim to the building, as it was the site of local Supreme Court sessions."213  The Department of the Interior, however,

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211 Outsider, “A Criticism of Mr. Raymond’s Reply to Miss Boyce,” Progress, 29 November 1894, P1. SAB.
212 Ibid.
213 Due to the nature of the Progress’s reporting, the actual location of specific court cases in this era – especially before 1893 – cannot always be assumed to have been in the Immigration Hall. For example, the Progress of 14 January 1892 (P4) reported that the Supreme Court was held in Qu’Appelle, but did not
still assumed ownership of the building despite the additional complication of the CPR owning some of the land underneath it. Conflict over the building became increasingly intense leading up to 1895. The Federal Government increased its attempts to communicate with the council. A series of letters were noted as being received and “filed” by the South Qu’Appelle Council, “from G. S. Sparks, for Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior, re: the lease of the Immigration Building.” The letters appear to have received no further attention from the council. But the Department of the Interior appears to have caught the council’s attention when it ran advertisements offering the building up for sale: “purchaser to remove building within thirty days. Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted. By order John R. Hall, Secretary, Department of the Interior, Ottawa, 21st Sept., 1895.”

A Progress editorial used the Supreme Court’s presence in the building as an example of why the building, if removed, needed to be replaced for the sake of the town’s prosperity:

Qu’Appelle Station is cited as a rising town, full of energy and go, and to have that all-important building removed wherein justice is administered to all who have occasion to seek it, is a crushing blow to a town that had hitherto done, and is still doing its level best to keep ahead with the times. Surely the government will see fit to set right that which is, as matters stand, not only a great wrong to the rising town of Qu’Appelle, but short-sighted policy in those in authority. If the government and the CPR desire young towns like Qu’Appelle to prosper, they must not throw stumbling blocks in their way.

specific in what building. Court cases from 3 March 1892, however, were listed as having taken place in McLane’s hall. In addition, when the Supreme Court cases were reported, there was not as much detail as in the THOH era. As such, the extension of the courtroom events into the wider community through the Progress was for the most part limited. For example:

“The fall session of the Supreme Court was held at Qu’Appelle on Tuesday, Mr. Justice Richardson presiding. The docket was very light and was soon disposed of” (“Supreme Court,” Progress, 3 October 1901, P8).

Any copies of the letters themselves have not yet been found in the council’s correspondence files (R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes, 3 September 1894; “Council Minutes,” Progress, 6 September 1894, P1).

“Tenders for Purchase of Building,” Progress 3 October 1895, P1.

“In another column,” Progress, 3 October 1895, P1.
The building was being presented as a symbol of the present and future prosperity and progress of the town. Loss of the building might mean loss of the court sittings in town, which would lead to a loss of prosperity and prominence. The Progress’s next editorial challenge was to encourage the local council to continue to fight to preserve the building, stressing that it was of “the greatest importance that we should have a suitable building wherein our supreme court can be held, our council meetings proceeded with, and other business transacted, all tending towards the public good.” Public good as well as convenience trumped noted shortcomings of the hall, as it was noted, “If the building were sold to be demolished, extreme inconvenience, to say the least of it, would result. The council are doing all they can to stay the hand of the despoiler and to have the building stand as it has hitherto done.” Eventually, the council succeeded in staying the despoiler’s hand. The Department of the Interior temporarily dropped its threats to sell the building, which soon became more popularly known as the Town Hall.

Intermittent reminders of the council’s lack of ultimate control of their space might have bred local insecurities. Even before the incorporation of the Municipality of South Qu’Appelle in May 1896, councils had been working to refurbish the hall. This might have been an effort to increase their comfort, but it also could have been meant to demonstrate figurative, if not actual, local control of the space. A committee for furnishing the council chamber went on a comparative purchasing spree over the next few years, including the installation of book cupboards and the approval of a new stove.

217 “The means the government has adopted,” Progress, 10 October 1895, P1.
218 For example in May 1894, council paid for improvements, including, “J. B. Robinson’s work on the council chamber, $38.22” (R.M. of South Qu’Appelle, Minutes 3 May 1897; “Incorporation of Municipality of South Qu’Appelle,” Progress, 7 May 1896, P4).
219 Which was created in May 1897 (“Council Meeting,” Progress, 10 June 1897, P1).
and lamps for the council chamber in late 1898.\textsuperscript{221} The height of technological improvements in the council offices came in 1901 with the purchase of a duplication machine for the Sec.-Treas. J. C. Starr.\textsuperscript{222}

Governmental battles over access to the Immigration Hall would not rest, however. Any sense of a truce with government powers in Regina was broken in 1904 when federal authorities took abrupt, physical control of the space. By this time, the hall was home to both the South Qu’Appelle (rural) Council and the Town Council of Qu’Appelle.\textsuperscript{223} The story of Sheriff Duncan is particularly revealing. The \textit{Progress} introduced the events of Monday, 28 November 1904 as follows:

\begin{quote}
Council Chamber Closed – Sheriff Duncan Ejects the Secretary
Some time ago, Sheriff Duncan came down from Regina and padlocked the door of the council chamber. The next day, on instructions from the councils, Secretary Starr removed the lock and continued his work. In the meantime an effort was made to find out on whose authority the sheriff acted, but no information could be obtained.

The lock was an obvious attempt by Duncan to enforce control over the hall. The councils, by instructing Starr to remove the lock, sought to re-establish their control of the space. Starr endeavored to proceed with business as usual, but Duncan obviously felt an example needed to be made:

On Monday morning last Sheriff Duncan again appeared on the scene, and finding Mr. Starr in possession, undertook to forcibly eject him, at the same time using abusive and profane language toward the Secretary. He again refused to give or show his authority and the members of South Qu’Appelle and Qu’Appelle councils look upon the matter as a most high handed proceeding.\textsuperscript{224}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{221} “Council Minutes,” \textit{Progress}, 13 October 1898, P1.
\textsuperscript{222} It was an “Elam’s Duplicator” which cost \$13.50” (\textit{R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes}, 6 May 1901; “Council Meeting,” \textit{Progress}, 9 May 1901, P1; “Council Meeting,” \textit{Progress}, 6 June 1901, P1).
\textsuperscript{223} Starr served as secretary-treasurer to both councils.
\textsuperscript{224} “Council Chamber Closed – Sheriff Duncan Ejects the Secretary,” \textit{Progress}, 1 December 1904, P1.
The story further explained that, despite the complicated ownership of the building, the councils had letters of permission to use it from the Immigration Commissioner and Justice Richardson. Further highlighting the lack of local influence and control of the building, the reporter speculated that Starr might not have been the target of the lockout. Starr – and by extension the councils – could have been a pawn (or inadvertent victim) of a greater territorial conflict. The report continued, “It is presumed that there is some friction between the immigration department and the department of justice, and that the sheriff’s action is due to instructions from the latter department.” Locally, however, no reason could be found to justify, or “excuse the sheriff’s assault or vile language.”

The Progress and local councils promised to uncover the reasons for these events. The South Qu’Appelle council unanimously passed a motion stating, “that the Solicitor be instructed to take action against Sheriff Duncan for assault and ejecting [the] Secretary from Council Rooms on Monday, Nov. 28th & interfering with the business of council.” But the town council meetings at this time contain no further reference to any legal action. Other than the secretary returning to work in the hall as before, neither further explanation, nor further action is to be found. To the main local users of the building (e.g. the councils who met therein), the eventful visits of Sheriff Duncan must have served as a stark lesson in their lack of control over the space as well as the amount of consideration they could expect in the future. This might have been especially

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225 To date the proof of such written permission has not yet been discovered, but such letters may have indeed existed.
226 “Council Chamber Closed – Sheriff Duncan Ejects the Secretary,” Progress.
227 R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes, 6 December 1904.
228 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes 1904 – 1931, Town of Qu’Appelle Minute Book, SAB, R 2.996, No. 1.
difficult for the Town Council, which still oversaw the booking of the hall to local and touring groups.

By the spring of 1905, the Immigration Hall’s time as a public hall was ending. Planning for Qu’Appelle’s new Town Hall Opera House project was under way. Such plans may have finally allowed for “federal authorities” to clear the hall without local resistance, as they “notified the councils and the court to vacate the immigration building.”

A May 30th performance by the Regina Concert and Opera Co. was billed as being “the last opportunity Qu’Appellites will have to attend a concert in the old hall.” Meetings continued in the hall as long as it was available, but the Immigration Department eventually realized its goal of selling the structure.

Eleven years after the building was first offered for tender, the following sales notice was printed: “The old town or immigration hall has been sold to the Moore Milling Co. We understand the price was not high, and that only one tender was put in. We are informed that the building will be moved north of Mr. Moore’s residence and converted into a terrace.” The hall would thus be removed from its contentious location straddling both town and CPR land (see Figure 20). In 1905, the Moore’s lived on Pacific Avenue.

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230 “A grand ball will be held,” Progress, 18 May 1905, P8.
231 Terrace being another word for a row of joined housing units, or row-houses (“The old town or immigration hall has been sold to the Moore Milling Co.,” Progress, 26 April 1906, P1).
No further notice is available to confirm the final location of the Immigration Hall after it was converted into terrace housing; however, a photographic tourist pamphlet of Qu’Appelle shows a building described as “The Terrace” situated beside the Church of England’s Deanery on Walsh Street (Figures 21 and 23). The southern facade of the Terrace does look very similar to photos of the same face of the Immigration Hall, which faced east when the building sat on Pacific Avenue (Figure 23). If it is the same building, it appears to have been divided into four housing units. Four gables and four chimneys appear to have been added during the conversion.
Other prairie Immigration Halls were renovated and repurposed in a manner similar to the hall in Qu’Appelle, for example the Pembina Hotel in Entwhistle, Alberta (Figure 24).

**Mythos-Building**

The Immigration Hall was a found-space, as opposed to a purpose-built THOH site for civic governance, services, public meetings, and other events that can eventually contribute to negotiations of community mythos. While the Hall was not an imposing structure, it still became a space in which social and ideological values were being negotiated and affirmed. For settlers, these negotiations centered on their developing (or presumed) identity as good Christian citizens of the Empire who behaved as respectable men and women in the community.
**Gender:**

Expectations of proper behaviour for males and females in this society were often in negotiation during performative events in the Immigration Hall. Even when the Hall was used as a barracks, various gender roles, male and female, were being negotiated through performative events in the Hall. Dances, balls, and non-commissioned officers’ dramatic performances welcomed female involvement. Local community events, however, always stressed the importance of the inclusion of male and female community-members, albeit in specifically generationally and gender-coded ways. At such dances “patronesses” were often appointed to oversee the propriety of an event. This was especially true of a “select” event, such as the farewell ball for Mr. Arthur Empy, which was organized by “a number of his bachelor friends.” For their first stop, they “accordingly organized with Mrs. Osler and Mrs. Empy as lady patrons.”

233 This tradition of patroness, in both the capacity of symbolic supporter as well as protector was ingrained in Qu’Appelle for propriety’s sake.

This theme of potential suitors and protected femininity is echoed in the plot of *Area Belle* (performed in late 1885 by members of the B Battery and local amateurs from the Anglican Church). *Area Belle* is a one act play by W. Brough and A. Halliday. It was first performed in London in the spring of 1864, running for 128 nights at the Adelphi Theatre. The show remained popular fare in London (and elsewhere) for decades. 234 In the play, Penelope’s truest and noblest suitor, Chalks the Milkman, loves

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233 “It having been known that Mr. Arthur Empy,” *Progress*, 16 Sept 1886, P6.
her dearly. He offers to propose, but Penelope declines, encouraging him to find, “some one [sic] in your own walk of life which will ‘ave you, Mr. Chalks, and very proper too.” Penelope sees herself as better than Chalks, who she calls both, “rather plain,” and, “a low person.” Undaunted, Chalks accurately assesses Penelope’s current objects of interest a policeman and a soldier, when he warns, “I see what it is. It's that policeman, or that soldier, that I have seen lounging about the area; it's the uniform. But let me tell you, Miss Penelope, fine feathers don't make fine birds!” Penelope, however, remains undeterred.

She alternately welcomes her suitors Pitcher (the policeman) and Tosser (the soldier) – on evenings when her boss, Mrs. Croaker (“The Missus”), is away from the house. Mrs. Croaker would disapprove of Penelope receiving suitors due to the disgrace and moral stigma it would cast on Croaker’s house. Croaker serves as a “patroness” for Penelope, both by providing a means of earning a living as well as by protecting virtue, even if Croaker only does so to protect her own reputation. One fateful night, both suitors end up visiting Penelope and Mrs. Croaker unexpectedly returns home. Croaker’s return inspires much confusion. The suitors attempt to hide. Pitcher takes refuge in a laundry kettle, which eventually results in what the Progress described as being, “the sensation of the piece... a scene in which a man, one of two rival lovers, seemed about to be boiled alive in a copper only to be rescued in the nick of time.” The suitors are discovered and Croaker takes action:

236 Ibid.
237 In this case, the term “copper” was referring to a copper pot. Presumably its alternate meaning as slang for a policeman was an intended pun.
Mrs. C.: My Mutton! (seizing mutton from Tosser) [This is the(?)] way you take care of the place in my absence! You leave the house this moment, without warning, and without a character.

Penel.: (crossing to c.) Pitcher--Tosser! (crying)

Mrs. C.: Oh! no doubt they'll stand your friends.

Toss.: (aside) The dear creature's got the sack – no more nice suppers!

Penel.: Oh, Tosser! (turning away)

Penel.: Pitcher!

Pitch.: Penelope, you have brought a blight upon this domestic hearth; I resign up to Tosser.

Mrs. C.: (r.c.) And these, girl, are your true lovers!

Chalks: (l.c.) No mum, they're not; but I can tell you where to find the genuine article.238

Penelope forgets her earlier assumption that she was above Chalks’ station and has a rather convenient change of heart: “Oh, Mister Chalks, something always whispered to me that you loved me for myself alone,” to which Chalks promises (not directly to Penelope, but to her patroness, Mrs. Croaker), “I'm no cupboard-lover, mum – I never had a bite or sup in your house, mum – I’ve a comfortable home of my own, which I can offer to Penelope.” Penelope, in turn, declares, “Pitcher and Tosser, I despise you both! Walker Chalks, you're a trump!”239 Croaker, far from being amused, ejects them all from her house and the play ends.

Despite the humour of the play, it could easily have been read as a moral lesson regarding the dangers of falling for a man in uniform, who might be inconstant. The wiser choice of spouse for Penelope – and presumably other young women – would be a more constant local man – however plain – for his, “smock frock covers a heart as warm as ever beat under a red jacket.”240 The lesson of the play became especially acute when produced by soldiers (under the auspices of the Anglican Church) who were temporarily

238 Brough and Halliday, 13.
239 Ibid.
240 Ibid, 4.
stationed in Qu’Appelle. Within months, these soldiers would leave Qu’Appelle. Upon the soldiers’ departure, local dignitaries observed, “Great though your valor was in the field, we find that since your residence here there have been far more fatal wounds caused by the darts of Cupid among our fair citizens than those caused by your Gatling Gun when pouring forth its deadly fire in the face of the insurgents.” First, one must press past the disturbing, grisly comparison that equates falling in love to scything down human beings with a machine-gun. If the observation itself was accurate, though, it appears that some locals were in the same trap as Penelope because of not having heeded the moral lesson of Area Belle. Perhaps such dangerous, youthful feelings were what older chaperones, or patrons/patronesses, were installed at dances to prevent.

The dangers of combining dashing men in uniform and free-spirited women survived in local folklore in the story of an 1883 ball in the Immigration Hall. The event featured a woman with the architecturally inspired alias “Miss Bungalow.” Whether or not this story is entirely true, it survived in local memory long enough to be recorded almost a century later in Qu’Appelle’s local history book, Footprints to Progress (in

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242 There was at least one other reminder in the Immigration Hall that the soldiers were, by occupation, potentially violent men. Gunner Murphy was sentenced to one year at hard labour in Winnipeg jail after his court martial for, “having bitten off the ear of one of his comrades last Christmas Day” (“On Tuesday last, B Battery, R.C.A.,” Progress, 5 February 1886, P6).
243 See APPENDIX B: The Bungalow Affair. Miss Bungalow is unidentified and there is no immediately clear option for a likely candidate to be found ca. 1883. But there is a possibility that the ball described was in fact a conglomeration of more than one event that merged in the retelling over a century. If so, an admittedly long-shot possibility is that Miss Bungalow might have been connected to the Boyce’s of Qu’Appelle – who came to the region from India in the 1890s. The Boyce family named their Qu’Appelle residence, “The Belatee Bungalow,” after a building near the Government Building in Calcutta. James and Annie Boyce lived with their five daughters. The local paper also reported various guests staying at the bungalow, for example in 1897, when the local news page reported that, “Miss Gordon, of Regina, is spending a few days with Mrs. J. H. Boyce at the Belatee Bungalow” (“Miss Gordon,” Progress, 28 October 1897, Local and General, Page 4, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/QPP/1897/10/28/4Ar00403.html). Any of the Misses Boyce or one of their guests might have at least inspired the pseudonym, even if they were not the woman in the story itself. But this only becomes a possibility if the account of Walsh’s ball in 1883 was later combined with other gossips’ tales to create the enduring, mythos-shaping rumour.
1980). The account suggests that events at the hall inspired ongoing negotiations of social values regarding male and female behaviour. The ball was organized by Major Walsh. Despite guests coming from Regina, Walsh was unable to overcome the demographics of the community. At the dance, men reportedly outnumbered women eight to one, making the ball an even more acute representation of the regional shortage of women in Qu’Appelle and Regina. Into this charged atmosphere came a lightening rod of excitement:

A lady known as Miss Bungalow made a great sensation and attracted to her side many of our guilded [sic] youth. One of the most prominent figures from Regina was Mr. Hunter from the Bank of Montreal, who danced once with Miss Bungalow, and that lady declared that she had never danced with a man who went on a lighter step around the room.

Miss Bungalow seems to be cast as a femme fatal, bewitching local youths. The dancers were not without moral guardians, however, as “Sergeant Bliss and Pringle well supported their officers,” and that while “Captain Steele and [the] Provost of the Mounted Police were the only officers present... there were any amount of troopers and they danced well and behaved well and their red coats made the room look picturesque.”

The presence of “only” two officers seems to be presented as a potential shortcoming of the evening, the officers representing a higher class of participant than mere troopers. Troopers were tolerable, though, as long as they fulfilled expectations of proper male behaviour, i.e. that they could dance, behave, and look picturesque in their red coats.

The night was not without incident, as is evidenced in the telling of the fight between a banker and a merchant from Regina: “What heart could resist the fascinating

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244 If the event was indeed organized by Walsh, it likely happened before his retirement from the NWMP in May, 1883 (“Major Walsh has resigned from the NWMP,” Edmonton Bulletin, 12 May 1883, Page 4, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/EDB/1883/05/12/4/Ar00401.html).
245 Qu’Appelle Historical Society 250-251.
246 Ibid.
St—n whose bow was a circumstance of the evening. He danced with everyone and there was a desperate and deadly struggle between this young banker and one of Regina's merchants, the manly Tims.”

Specifically how desperate, or deadly, this struggle could have gotten in a room full of policemen is unclear, but elevating the misunderstanding to a “deadly struggle” serves to glorify the event. The report does not tell of him being censured for his fighting.

Perhaps there was an acceptable, or expected, level of violence that a vibrant male was expected to show, within acceptable boundaries. The offending banker is tastefully unnamed, lending an air of exclusivity to the story, as only those present might know upon whom the gossip is focused. Further recrimination fell upon the mysterious Mr. S. as the gossip of the evening condemned him; “there was a whisper that S. had left a lady behind him who should have graced the scene. It is the old story of men's careless selfishness.”

This lesson of the dangers of a handsome man of careless affections, even if his “bow was a circumstance of the evening,” recalls Penelope’s harsh lesson of Area Belle.

Miss Bungalow’s greatest scandal of the evening came after she had “seen at least 40 masculine and ruby lips glued to the nasty necks of those horrid bottles.” Apparently Bungalow was pro-temperance, for she proposed an alternative to drinking that was deemed too risqué for the event, and by extension, the wider community:

> With a bewitching toss of the head and an angelic smile coupled with a whole battery of irresistible love missives she turned with sparkling eyes to the now agitated countenance of our handsome young barrister and in her sweetest manner said, “Let us two just for fun play rubies to rubies instead of rubies to crystal.” Just then a man of authority appeared and

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247 Ibid.
having remarked that such games were not strictly on the Q. T. drew the
gloved hand of the lovely Miss B. within his arm and led her away. 248

Bungalow’s offer to trade drink for kisses was a powerful expression of female freedom
in the hall, especially when accompanied by her “battery of irresistible love missives.”
The target of these missives, the young barrister, was not remembered as being opposed
to Bungalow’s offer, though it did result in his “agitated countenance.” Her expression of
female freedom was deemed too powerful; her proposition was curtailed by the
intervening “man of authority.” The man of authority, if not an officer, might well have
been an older man of town fulfilling the role of dance-patron. So Bungalow was saved
from her nearly-lewd behaviour. The community’s social and ideological expectations
were reinforced. Whether the account was accurate or not, its survival and acceptance in
the memory of later generations speaks to its resonance and importance. It transcended a
negotiation of individual morality and became part of the negotiation of wider
community mythos in Qu’Appelle.

In addition to being central features of balls and dances, women were critical to
the volunteer-pool that kept events running smoothly in the Immigration Hall. Success
was assured for the Qu’Appelle Brass Band’s inaugural fundraising ball when they
secured “a most energetic ladies committee.” 249 In 1900, a public meeting was called “to
arrange for the getting up of an entertainment to defray the expenses of putting a new
floor in the town hall,” but it was particularly clarified that, “ladies are cordially invited
to attend.” 250 The notice, if more rooted in the reality of the community, could have more

248 Ibid.
249 “Brass Band Ball,” Progress, 2 August 1889, P8.
accurately read, “ladies’ involvement is essential.” The event review pronounced “the entertainment ... a success, socially, financially and numerically.”

Physically, certain spaces within the building became more specifically defined by gender during certain events. The upstairs rooms were often chosen to serve as the dinner/refreshment rooms – which were often in the charge of a local group’s version of “a most energetic ladies committee.” Descriptions of the South Qu’Appelle Agriculture Society Fair in 1892 detailed the outdoor livestock displays, as well as the competitions and displays within the Immigration Hall. But this time, gendered spatial divisions of the hall for such events was routine. It was observed that “as usual, the Immigration Buildings were occupied with grain, roots, and vegetables on the ground floor, and the room upstairs was devoted to the display of ladies’ work, bread, butter, etc.” The assumed dichotomy is that the ground floor was for male work, specifically exportable raw materials (grains and produce). The upper floor was occupied by materials in a more refined and processed state (bread, preserves, butter, etc.). Even the poultry upstairs could be processed and dressed-up: “On arriving in the upper room attention was arrested by a couple of dressed chickens that reposed on a snow white cloth. The large size of these birds and the excellent appearance of their dressed state excited general admiration.” This point also aligns with the (sometimes problematic) dichotomy that Massey observed, i.e. opposing the male/global with female/local.

First there is the argument of an association between the feminine and the local because - it is said - women lead more local lives than do men; it is an argument which clearly relates to that about the public/private division. Like that argument, however, it should be treated with caution. Most evidently, the whole purpose of the argument here about place has been to

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251 “Successful Ball,” Progress, 3 January 1901, P8.
252 “South Qu’Appelle Agricultural Show,” Progress, 6 October 1892, P1.
253 Ibid.
problematize the distinction between the local and the global; if each is part of the construction of the other then it becomes more difficult to maintain such simple contrasts.\textsuperscript{254}

At local fundraising events, a similar gender-based division of labour could often be observed; the upper rooms/supper rooms were almost universally the responsibility of female community members. Specific groups entertaining in the hall often published notices directed at “the women,” “ladies,” “wives,” and sometimes “daughters” of their groups either to thank them for their work at past events, or ask for donations of refreshments at upcoming ones. In addition to being primary providers and organizers, women were often the centre of attention at concerts and balls held in the hall, which all speaks to the value of the contribution of female community members to the capital-building (social, physical, etc.) events within the Immigration Hall.

The scale of female contribution was not always matched by influence over the space, however. After the removal of Federal Immigration Agent Baker, the hall fell into the custody of the South Qu’Appelle Council – a body of men, elected by men. In 1894, the South Qu’Appelle council accepted some oversight of the maintenance of the Immigration Hall, including its rental to local groups as well as non-local touring performers. The management of the space was a source of frustration to some residents. Kate Stanley Boyce’s previously-explored month-long war of editorial letters over the management of the hall was a rare example of a young, unmarried woman publically calling upon the council for greater accountability. Apparently unable to get satisfaction through more conventional administrative channels, Boyce sent a letter outlining her concerns to the editor of the \textit{Progress}. Her letter was therefore more a public, performative act than a letter or presentation directly to the council members, who

\textsuperscript{254} Massey 9.
presumably might have been able to mitigate the impact of her complaints earlier. In her initial letter (as published in the Progress) Boyce expressed her frustration regarding the changing rates for hall access, the confused process by which access to the hall was granted, the unready state in which the hall was found, and even the ability of caretakers to unlock the hall for events.\(^{255}\) In Boyce’s account, she is organised and capable, while the men in charge of the hall are disorganized and incapable, especially with regard to one event in particular:

I must bring up another irregularity which caused excessive annoyance and trouble: For the synod in June, all arrangements had been made for the use of the hall beforehand, but on the day when all the delegates, etc., were awaiting [illegible] one of the officials would not deliver the key as he said the payment for the last entertainment had not been made. This was inaccurate, as I held the receipt for it in my possession.\(^{256}\)

Boyce further speculated that any confusion might be the result of inattention or under-communication within the council regarding the hall. Boyce made sure to remind the council that it should be easy for townspeople to hire the hall, as the Building was, in her opinion, “for the benefit of the town.”

Mr. Raymond’s direct answers to Boyce centered on his assertion that she did not understand the terms under which she had rented the hall.\(^{257}\) Raymond presented figures and other explanations that he trusted would satisfy what he identified as numerous people dissatisfied over the hall’s operation. Boyce expressed her belief that the hall was for the use of the town and that the council – as the hall’s custodians – was not operating the hall in a transparent, responsible manner. Raymond presented the ideas that the hall was being run more as a strictly profit/loss investment, rather than a service, or benefit, of

\(^{255}\) Boyce, “Seeking Information.” (See APPENDIX A: The Boyce Letters)
\(^{256}\) Ibid.
\(^{257}\) Raymond, “In Answer to Miss Boyce.”
the town and region. He cited Boyce’s ignorance of the changing rules of access to the hall, which might be seen as his pointing out her exclusion from the political process. But Raymond’s acknowledgement of Boyce’s complaints being widespread makes this assumption problematic.

The exchange sparked by Boyce’s letters seemed to resonate through the collective memory of the council for some time. When Boyce sent another letter to the council four years later, it was reported sparsely in the council minutes as follows: “That the communication of Miss Boyce be laid on the table for enquiry, and that Sec.-Treas. be instructed to reply expressing regret and stating that an investigation will be made. Carried.”

The council appears to have learned better than to engage Boyce and her supporters in public debate (via letters in the *Progress*). Boyce is an example of a woman getting accountability from her civic government, despite not having a vote to cast for or against them during elections. Boyce was able to influence the exclusively-male local governmental structure in an era when female influence in the hall was usually exhibited in more publicly performative ways.

While many local women worked to organize concerts and performances in the Immigration hall, fewer women developed a reputation as a local producer/director of theatrical events in the Immigration Hall era. Perhaps the earliest but certainly the most recognized female director in the Immigration Hall was Angelica Guerin. Angelica M. Guerin came to the North-West with her husband, John Francis Guerin. J. F. Guerin was a dental surgeon based in Whitewood who toured his practice throughout the North West.

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259 See APPENDIX C: The Guerins.

Territories. Throughout the late 1880s and 1890s, the Guerins (and, later, their children) became known in the Assiniboia district and beyond for performing selections from current plays and popular music. The Guerins came to Canada with London stage experience; as the Progress reported, “Dr. J. F. Guerin had appeared with the D’Oyly Carte Company and Mrs. Guerin had been active in English theatre.” Mrs. Guerin gave freely of her theatrical experience in Qu’Appelle, donating her services to groups such as St. Peter’s Sunday school, the Royal Templars of Temperance, the Qu’Appelle Reading Room, and others.

A widely appreciated and locally influential project undertaken by Guerin was her direction of the 1889-1890 production of Our Boys by H. J. Byron. In 1882, M. E. James declared that, “the enormous run of this play (considerably over a thousand nights) renders it useless to describe it; the inference being that almost every man, woman, and child in England, has already seen it, and laughed over Mr. David James's personation of the Buttermann.” The popularity and long run in London served as a selling point in Qu’Appelle, where pre-press for the show stressed the British credentials of the script, citing the play’s long London run. Its first performance was a benefit for the Qu’Appelle Cricket Club on 30 December 1889. This performance was such a success for the local cricket club, that the show was repeated in the town hall, Regina on 17th January 1890.

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262 James, M. E. What shall we act? George Bell & Sons, York Street, Covent Garden, London: 1882. 80-81: Byron’s plays enjoyed several performances by various groups in Qu’Appelle, e.g. the NWMP Dramatic Club’s performance of Uncle and Borrowed Plumes (“N.W.M.P. Dramatic Club Performance,” Progress 5 Feb 1896, P1).
263 “Don’t forget the theatrical performance,” Progress, 27 December 1889, P4: The anticipated audience seems to be larger than normal, as numbered tickets to this performance were sold by seat diagram at two stores owned by prominent local merchants, Caswell and Beauchamp.
for the joint benefit of the Regina and Qu’Appelle cricket clubs. The Regina NWMP barracks also hosted a performance the following evening. Both shows received glowing reviews.

*Our Boys* offers many examples of tensions which can arise from expectations based on class, age, and gender. Guerin’s treatment of the show’s characters was singled out for praise. The local review of the Qu’Appelle show specifically identified excellent local casting, observing that “the personnel of the company was local and remarkably well chosen, each one being particularly well adapted for performing the part taken.”

Guerin cast herself in the small, “but effective,” role of Belinda, “a comical maid-of-all-work,” or “the slavey.” Belinda only appears in the third act. Such a small, but effective part would allow her freer rein to direct and manage the other actors.

The show’s two fathers needed to carry a lot the action of the play. Local J. P. and municipal councillor Syme Redpath played “Butterman,” also known as “Perkyn Middlewick... a retired butterman ignorant and coarse in manner, but kind and generous of heart.” Butterman is representative of Britain’s newly rich merchant class. His dialect instantly identifies him as common while his wealth – and the image he can present with it – awards him status.

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265 League teams appear to have been Regina, N.W.M.P. Barracks, Pense, Grenfell, Ft. Qu’Appelle, Whitewood, and Moosomin (“By special request, Our Boys will be repeated,” *Progress*, 24 January 1890, P4).
266 “Qu’Appelle Cricket Club,” *Progress* 21 March 1890, P4; “The Qu’Appelle Amateur Dramatic Society,” *Progress*, 21 February 1890: The name of the performing group seems to be a bit of a moving target. On its first performance in Qu’Appelle, the group was unnamed and presenting a “theatrical performance.” By the time they played Regina, they were dubbed “The Qu’Appelle Amateur Dramatic Society.” After being praised as the best thing onstage, professional or otherwise, the group returned to Qu’Appelle under the moniker, “the Qu’Appelle Dramatic Company” (“Don’t forget the theatrical performance,” *Progress*; “By special request, Our Boys will be repeated,” *Progress*; “The Qu’Appelle Amateur Dramatic Society,” *Progress*, *Progress*).
267 On the 6th inst, the Qu’Appelle Amateur Dramatic Company,” *Progress*, 21 February 1890, 8.
268 Byron 3.
269 Ibid 3-4.
Mr. R. Dundas Strong was cast as “Sir Geoffrey Champneys, a county magnate proud of his birth and position and tolerating Middlewick only because of his wealth.”

James’ summary of the play added that “Sir Geoffrey, the other Roman father, proud, stiff, narrow minded, but soft-hearted to his boy, is an excellent study from nature, and requires a good actor.” The two father-characters open the play awaiting their sons’ return from an extended European trip. The boys met in Paris and are now travelling together.

Guerin cast local Tom Winter as, “Charles Middlewick, a bright and dashing young fellow... overflowing with enthusiasm at what he has seen, and most demonstrative at meeting his old dad again.” Chas. Middlewick is presented as one ideal of masculinity: fashionable, vital, bold, and good-looking. Sir Geoffrey’s son Talbot (played by A. H. B. Sperling) is a foil for Charles in many ways, being “rather plain in looks, dull, very near-sighted, greatly over-dressed and, to use his own expression, somewhat of a muff – but withal good-hearted and not without common sense.” The male presented by Talbot is one who must overcome physical and fashion shortcomings with his sense and good-heartedness. James was more unforgiving of Talbot’s style, but not his substance, describing him as “being a washed-out youth, with a limp look generally, and a namby-pamby manner. In adversity he turns out an uncommonly good fellow. His ‘spoony’ scenes with Mary are very good.” Dashing Charles and plain Talbot present themes similar to those expressed in both Area Belle and the Bungalow-affair – such as

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270 Ibid.
271 James, 80-81.
272 Byron, 3-4.
273 Ibid.
274 James, 80-81.
the importance of good-looks and fashionable clothes (or uniforms) as opposed to good-hearted, if more ordinary, men.

The show also offered differing points of view regarding negotiation of gender roles through the characters of Violet and Mary. In Qu’Appelle, Miss Winter played Violet, the noble-born and wealthy heiress with whom Sir Geoffrey has arranged an engagement with his son, Talbot. James, in summarizing the role, raised the importance of class in casting, as he felt Violet was, “not a very interesting character; but it could probably be made more of by an amateur actress, used to society, than it was on the stage.”275 Violet’s cousin, Mary, was played by Mrs. Ridsdale.276 Through the lens of other characters of the play, the character of Mary is unconventional, if not subversive, to the patriarchal order of things. Sir Geoffrey defines her according to his expectations as being, “pretty – penniless though. Mischievous, too, as a girl can well be. And no taste – goes to sleep when I read the debates. Wakes up when it's time to say ‘goodnight,’ and wants to play billiards. A very dangerous young woman.”277 When Violet reminds Mary that “yes, you like to do a great many things you shouldn’t do.” Mary replies, “So does everyone. If one's always to do what's proper and correct, life might as well be all rice pudding and toast and water. I hate them both, they're so dreadfully wholesome.”278 Mary might have shared Miss Bungalow’s fondness for challenging local social values regarding what is expected of young women. When Violet claims to support the idea that

275 Ibid.
276 Ridsdale would in fact take up directing herself in Qu’Appelle. In June 1891, she directed (or “managed” in the parlance of the times) the four-act comedy School by a “Robertson.” Ridsdale’s show received a glowing review. The proceeds were donated to “clearing off the remainder of the debt on St. Peter’s church.” Just how much Ridsdale learned from, and/or contributed to Guerin’s success with “Our Boys” is unclear, but they did share this play before Ridsdale produced her own benefit (“School,” Progress, 4 June 1891, P4).
277 Byron, 15.
278 Ibid, 16.
marriage is more about vanity and security than it is about love, Mary claims to seek love, regardless of wealth. Mary, in stating that she does not seek a handsome man to marry, explains to Violet that, “Oh, handsome men are like the shows at the fairs, you see all the best outside.” 279 This echoes Chalks’ warning to Penelope in Area Belle that, “fine feathers don't make fine birds!” 280 The characters are expressing how their personal, internal values may or may not agree with the values of their wider community, or more external values. There is an interesting dichotomy set up when Ridsdale – a married woman who would assumedly be eligible to act as a virtue-guarding patroness at Qu’Appelle dances – was playing a character that might be seen as a girl who would bear close minding at dances. The contrasting opinions of Violet and Mary offered community members a choice as to which character they most agreed with. This choice gives the text a somewhat interrogative quality. These negotiations surrounding gender construction have broader applications regarding more general hegemonic community values surrounding class and generational differences.

The main conflict of the play centres on the potential marriages of the four young characters. Violet Melrose and her poor cousin Mary Melrose have been travelling in mainland Europe, where they have met Charles and Talbot. Charles loves Violet. Talbot loves Mary. Initially, the fathers forbid these pairings. Middlewick thinks that Violet feels he is too uncultured for her company. Sir Geoffrey does not want Talbot marrying a commoner like Mary and cannot understand his son’s disobedience regarding wedlock. He fumes: “My father commanded me to love, and I was too dutiful a son not to obey

279 Ibid, 25.
280 Brough and Halliday, 4.
him on the instant. I loved madly – to order.”\textsuperscript{281}

Highlighting the generational differences between father and son, Talbot desires more independence, especially concerning marriage. Specifically, Talbot wants to decide his own fate regarding if, when, and to whom he will be wed. Wanting to strike out on his own, he fumes against his father’s attempt to dictate his life:

Talbot: \textit{(aside)} Married whether I like it or not. Not if I know it. I'm going to “go it” a bit before I settle down. I have gone it a bit already, and I'm going to “go it” a bit more. It’s the governor’s fault: he shouldn’t have mapped out my career with compass and rule. A man's not an express train, to be driven along a line of rails and never allowed to shunt on his own account. There’s Charley’s father let him have his fling and no questions asked. The governor’s had his hobby – let him pay for it – he can do it.\textsuperscript{282}

Butterman and Sir Charles turn out their sons, in a bet to see whose parenting system is better. The boys go to London to prove their fathers wrong and make something of themselves for their loves, as Charley promises Violet and Mary “we’ll prove ourselves worthy of you by our own unaided exertions, and will neither of us ask you to redeem your promise till we’ve shown ourselves worthy of your esteem. We can get our living in London, and rely upon it you’ll never hear of our distress should we suffer it.”\textsuperscript{283} Act two closes with the fathers congratulating themselves on their fortitude and firm hand, while the women despise the fathers for the same.\textsuperscript{284}

In Act Three, the boys are discovered, seven months later, in London, living rough, but under the watchful eye of their boarding-house servant, Belinda, who Middlewick describes as being “the very image of the gal as waited on me when I lived

\textsuperscript{281} Byron, 15. 
\textsuperscript{282} Ibid, 14. 
\textsuperscript{283} Ibid, 34. 
\textsuperscript{284} Ibid, 33-34.
in a [sic] attic in Pulteney Street. It's my belief as nature keeps a mould for lodging-house
servant gals and turns ‘em out ‘olesale like buttons. She's the identical same gal – same to
a smudge.”

During the boys’ London exile, they encounter a problem that might have been familiar to the male-skewed population of the Qu’Appelle region. The play deals comically with the idea that un-channelled frustration faced by virile young men bereft of female company can be dangerous. The very mention of their abandoned women is enough to drive Charlie to distraction:

Char. But our governors must have discovered by this time that our
determination was no empty boast, and Violet and Mary have
never heard a word from either of us. No one can say we’ve shown
the white feather.

Tal. One minute—I must clean my boots, (takes up boots, and brings
blacking-bottle from corner with a bit of stick in it, and boot
brushes)

Char. Why on earth do you always begin to —

Tal. (blacking boot) Always begin to clean my boots when you talk about
Violet and Mary? ’ Because I feel it's necessary at the mention of
their names to work off my super abundant and irrepressible
emotion. I feel if I don’t have a go in at my boots, I shall do some
awful — (begins to brush violently) Now go it!

Char. Do you know, Talbot, I could almost swear I saw Violet to-day?

Tal. You don’t say so!

Char. And I vow I saw Mary.

Tal. Hah! (brushing with tremendous violence)

Char. I don’t think they saw me, but

Tal. (at the boot) What a shine there’ll be in a moment!

Presumably Talbot’s frustration is reminiscent of the Qu’Appelle barrister’s “agitated
countenance,” which was observed when he found himself the target of Miss Bungalow’s
“love missives.”

Luckily enough, the fathers, the ladies, and Aunt Clarissa have all travelled to

286 Ibid, 37-38.
London to check on them. Mrs. Osler287 played the “amusing character” of Aunt Clarissa, also known as “Miss Champneys, an elderly spinster, good-hearted, but with very transparent designs on the Butterman’s hand and heart.”288 The play, being a comedy, ends happily. Love is tested and affirmed. Fathers break down and beg their sons to return. Eventually they agree. Marriages ensue.

Coincidentally, the potential social pitfalls of pairing across social classes would be echoed in later years in the Guerin’s personal experience. Several young European noblemen settled briefly in the Whitewood area. None stayed and for the most part they confirmed low expectations regarding the ability of gentlemen to adjust to settler life.

Sullivan summarized:

The daughters of Guerin seem especially coveted. May Guerin was courted by de Jumilhac, but he was much older than her and she declined his advances. Comte de Soras was engaged to her sister Elsie, “but his mother, the Countess in France forbade it and ordered him home to France or she would cut off his income.”289

Had the character of Talbot folded to his father’s will as did the real-life Comte de Soras, Our Boys would have been a shorter play.

The men in the show appear to be directly part of the cricket-club (Vice-captain Sperling; Treasurer Strong; committee member W. S. Redpath) or at least closely affiliated with the club.290 They were not singled out by the club for special recognition with regard to the fundraising performances. The women involved were, however, specifically lauded by the club when at their spring meeting they moved the following:

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287 Osler had also performed in the “B” Battery officers’ performances of Cool as a Cucumber and Turn Him Out (“Garrison Theatricals,” Progress, 12 March 1886, 6).
288 James, 80-81.
290 “Qu'Appelle Cricket Club,” Progress, 21 March 1890, P4.
“That a vote of thanks be tendered by the club to the following ladies, viz.: Mrs. W. Ridsdale, Mrs. Guerin, Mrs. Osler and Miss Winter, for their invaluable assistance in taking part in the performance of Our Boys for the benefit of the club, which proved so great a success financially and otherwise.” Osler was indirectly affiliated to the club via her husband, cricket club committee member F. Ll. Osler. The names of other club members were not published; it is hard to assume connections to the club among other female actors. It is clear, however, that Guerin was brought in specifically to oversee the show. She was publicly thanked by the club, and her own performance was used to reward her, as it had rewarded local cricket teams. The group repeated the show in the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall, “for the benefit of Mrs. Guerin who has always proved herself not only willing to help all denominations, but able to amuse all alike both grave or gay.” The performance was to reward and thank Guerin for her fundraising work in the community. When it came to Guerin, the “lady’s involvement was essential.”

In addition to the above examples of groups’ performances and performance texts, there are also various examples of individual performances in the Immigration hall that indicate what specific values were praised as being good examples for females and males in Qu’Appelle. For females, grace, ease, and bearing seem to be commonly-held values regardless of type of performance, or whether a performer was local, or from elsewhere. For an 1895 Presbyterian “Christmas Tree” event, several children and young people performed, but one youth was singled out for individual praise. The reviewer noted the: club swinging by Miss Rosa Day. The grace, ease, and self-possession with which this young lady went through a variety of club exercises was as surprising as it was delightful to behold, there was a kind of fairy

291 Ibid.
292 “By special request Our Boys will be repeated,” Progress, 24 January 1890, P8.
enchantment about it. Other young ladies ‘go ye and do likewise,’ your health, and bearing, physically, will be the better for it.293

The direct encouragement for “young ladies” to emulate Day’s example seems to advocate athletic training for girls at a time when it was not necessarily common. It is an endorsement of the activity, club swinging, and the attributes it engendered: grace, ease, and confidence.

Female ideals of grace and ease were also sold as the main attractions at a church fundraiser that promised a specific female type as an attraction, especially in contrast with local male expectations. In 1900, an event billed as both a “Jap Tea Party”294 and a “Japanese Concert” was held in the Immigration Hall. The show promised that “numerous War Scenes will be shown by means of a magic lantern.”295 But of particular interest, was the tea served by women in Japanese costume. Prepress for the show assured, “this unique entertainment... bids fair to be a great success. The Japanese attendants with their dainty ways and charming costumes are sure to win hosts of admirers among the sterner sex. Go and see them.”296 The dainty, charming appearance of the female attendants contrasted with the war scenes – presumably neither dainty nor charming on the whole – as well as with the potential male audience, expected to be the “sterner sex.” The review of the event only mentioned the costumed attendants: “The entertainment was a decided success, the Japanese costumes being especially attractive.”297 It appears that they were more worthy of description than the war-scenes.

294 “Jap Tea Party,” Progress, 10 May 1900, P8.
295 “Entertainment,” Progress, 3 May 1900, P8: A Magic Lantern was, essentially, an early slide projector that projected photographs and other graphic works on prepared slides.
Female performers from out-of-town were also held up to similar ideals of female-performance as was Miss Rosa Day. Miss Agnes Knox, who made several appearances in the Immigration Hall, was a hit almost before she appeared onstage. The prepress for her shows described her previous performances in glowing terms, praising her style, class, skill, physique, and bearing: “Miss Knox is tall and stately and has a very pleasing appearance. Her voice is clear and well cultivated and [with] much compass.”

These physical attributes were seen as compliments to her acting and presentation: “Her queenly appearance and clear mellow voice, gives [sic] her an advantage that, added to her proficiency in the art of elocution and her ability to enter into the spirit of the recitation, gives her a foremost place in her profession.” Knox’s performance was praised as being unequalled, “a Qu’Appelle audience never before enjoyed such excellent elocation.” In addition to her well-chosen pieces, particularly successful was “her easy and graceful naturalness in every character which she represented... Miss Knox’s powers of heart eloquence are such as to stir the deepest emotions of her hearers while her great abilities are so well trained as to make her a queen of elocutionists.” This combination of innate ability and sensitivity, in combination with diligent training, seems to be regarded as a model for success as a female elocutionist.

Male elocutionists were somewhat rarer in Qu’Appelle and received less attention regarding their training. They were more often judged, it seems, on their performances’ content and audience enjoyment. As an example, when Rube Allyn performed in 1893,

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299 Ibid.
300 “On Friday evening last, Miss Knox,” Progress, 1 August 1890, P4.
301 “On Friday evening last, Miss Knox,” Progress: The precise meaning of the phrase, “powers of her heart eloquence” is unclear but it seems to be referring to her evoking sympathy through emotional performances.
his elocutions were appreciated (for example, he “gave an impressive account of an
ancient chariot race”302), and “amusing.” The chariot race seemed to be a popular
standard for elocutionists, both male and female. Sara Lord Bailey was also praised for
her description of the “Chariot Race” from Ben Hur.303 The story was perhaps non-
gendered, in some ways. Rube Allyn was singled out in praise for his character sketches
in which he “portrayed in a surprisingly realistic manner the smirking fatuous female, the
innocent little boy, the stupid rustic lover, the laughter-convulsed old man, etc.”304
These sketches may have been more gender-dependant than other elocutionary pieces.
Allyn’s cross-gender performance, of his “fatuous female,” is an example of a male
elocutionist portraying a female character (in an admittedly negative representation). It is
not matched by an example of a female elocutionist portraying a male character (other
than children). More examples of male performers portraying female characters exist in
the performances of plays in the Immigration Hall.

Cross-dressing and Gender Expectations:

Instances in which performers play cross-gender characters are another means by
which gender roles and expectations were negotiated in Qu’Appelle. The available
evidence of cross-dressed casting (male playing female in these cases) in performances at
the Immigration Hall shows an almost universal appreciation of the performance. Rarely

303 “Sara Lord Bailey, elocutionist and dramatic reader, of Boston,” Progress, 9 November 1893, P4: Any one source for the chariot race, possibly a story of Ben Hur, is difficult to prove. It might have been drawn from Lew Wallace’s Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ (1880). Whether elocutionists performed from the text, from various “player’s editions” or from their own preparation of the text is unclear.
was it mentioned that a male playing a female in itself was part of the farce of the performance, although it certainly might have been so.

In Geo. Purches’ *Nonsensical Darkey Entertainment, Fun in A Loonatic Asylum, Or, Wanted a Manager*, Perkyn Jones played three characters: “Mary Anderson (A stage-struck female, an inmate), Slugger Jackson (Thinks he's John I.), and Prof. Miller (Looking for Green).” The farcical nature of the show was noted, as was a specific amusing scene by Jones as Mary. But it was the situation and scene itself described as being notable, not the fact that Jones was playing a female. The Advocate reviewer noted that the play

abounded with ludicrous and extravagant scenes, which kept the house in a state of merriment for upwards of half an hour. No doubt a few in the audience felt sorry because Mary Anderson came on the stage in such a hurry as to prevent the new manager of the asylum, Sam Johnsing, from getting even a sip of the beer he had taken so much trouble to obtain by telephone.

Such non-mentions of the humor of a male-as-female performance could show an appreciation for the convention itself. This convention would have been part of some of the “B” Battery performances in the hall years before Purches wrote his show.

For an 1886 soldiers’ production of the farce, *Deaf as a Post*, the reviewer observed that “Driver Midden and Br. Fellows, as Miss Sophy Walton and Amy Templeton, acted their parts in a very charming and ladylike manner.” No mention is made of any parody in the men’s performance of femininity. In the script, the characters

305 “Qu’Appelle Opera House Program of the Qu’Appelle Philharmonic Minstrels,” *Progress*, 3 January 1890.
307 *Deaf as a Post* was written by John Poole (1786?-1872) in England (1823) and was performed and published in the US shortly thereafter (Poole, J. *Deaf as a Post, a farce in One Act*, Philadelphia: E. B. Clayton, [1833?]. http://ia700604.us.archive.org/35/items/deafaspostfarcei01pool/deafaspostfarcei01pool_bw.pdf).
do appear to be generally caring, kind and well-intentioned young women who are trying their best to survive a long journey and a nincompoop of a potential fiancé named Tristram Sappy. While entertainment and laughter may very well have been derived from their male interpretation of “charming and ladylike manner[s],” such a performance is not evidenced in the review and this could suggest an expectation, or acceptance, of a male actor’s ability to play a “straight” female part onstage.

It is also possible that these fine ladylike performances were simply overpowered by the impression made by the two other female roles, assumed by two more soldiers, “Br. Fellows as the fussy landlady, Mrs. Plumply, and Gr. Wheatly, as the talkative ‘Sally Mag.’” The reviewer continued, noting how these “were the exact counterpart of those [charming and ladylike] dear creatures one often meets.” Herein lay further layers of questions as to the performance of “woman” onstage in this farce. If it can be assumed that Sally and Plumply were played in a farcical manner (the play was a farce, after all), it cannot be assumed that the unladylike behaviour referred to was only because of males playing the parts. Plumply is an innkeeper always on the lookout for a way to make more money, with a talent for exaggeration and outright lying. Sally never misses an opportunity to gossip. These might have been the unladylike characteristics to which the observer referred. Regardless, all of the female impersonators played for laughs in whatever manner was acceptable; it was noted that “the scene when the four ladies are on together was simply immense.”

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309 Poole.
310 The listing of two “Br. Fellows” does not appear to be an error. Later in the review, both a “Fellows” and a “W. Fellows” are listed as taking part in the Minstrel part of the program. Presumably, the Progress’s abbreviation “Br.” was meant to indicate “bombardier,” a Royal Artillery rank basically equivalent to “corporal” in other branches service (“B. Battery Dramatic Club,” Progress).
311 Ibid.
undesirable role models for females. The text is in some ways interrogative, for it provides a choice for the audience members (male and female) as to which model they might appreciate, emulate, or adopt into the community mythos.

**Country and Empire:**

Expectations regarding male participation in the mechanisms by which the British Empire waged war made a considerable contribution to the negotiation of acceptable male-behaviour within the Immigration Hall and, by extension, the wider community. Simply put, local men were expected to be active, fighting defenders/upholders of their community, and by extension the British Empire, against threats local and international. Within such expectations, Guerin’s production of *Our Boys*, with its theme of the consequences of sending sons away to prove themselves, appears to have lingered in the Qu’Appelle region’s zeitgeist. When four local young males volunteered for the Boer War, they were celebrated with a party later dubbed, “*Our Boys*: the send off.”

Despite the potentially fatal results of their volunteering, overall the event was presented as the happy confirmation of young males fulfilling community expectations. The program in the hall began after approximately two hundred people partook of “an oyster supper of many relays,” after which Reeve Smith opened the program with a toast to The Queen, followed by a rendition of *God Save the Queen* which caused the reviewer to note how “enthusiasm and patriotism of all present seemed fired to fever heat.” In addition to the Queen, toasts were also offered to “the boys” as well as the Army and Navy. Religious leaders rose to speak to the righteousness of the current

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312 “Our Boys; the Send Off,” *Progress*, 4 January 1900, P1.
313 Ibid.
cause. Mr. Dickson, in a toast to “The Qu'Appelle Boys for the Canadian Contingent,” observed that the “boys” were about to face “no picnic,” and as such “we should value all the more the pluck and patriotism of those who had volunteered for the Canadian contingent to go forth in the name of Canada and do and dare what duty calls for the Empire.”

After the toast, the crowd broke into a hearty and spontaneous chorus of *For They Are Jolly Good Fellows*. In response to this outpouring of appreciation, the volunteers took turns thanking the assembly for the evening and their good wishes, for example: “Mr. Parker thanked all present for their kindness in giving them this send-off and said he felt sure that he and his fellow volunteers would do all they could do to maintain the honor of Qu’Appelle where ever duty called them.”

In response to the toast to the “Army and Navy,” however, Archdeacon Sargent, father of volunteer J. B. Jack Sargent rose in the following surprisingly impersonal response.

> In thanking the assembly on behalf of the army and navy [he] said it was a unique thing in the history of the Empire for Colonies to send troops outside their own boundaries to fight for the Empire but that it was only a part of the patriotism for unity of the British Empire which enthused it from end to end to-day.

In this public forum – at the Immigration Hall – the Archdeacon chose to raise the historic and patriotic nature of the volunteers’ action rather than speak about being the father of a soldier who was soon to risk dying for the purportedly enthusiastic “patriotism and unity of the British Empire,” which he valued so highly. This send off was an actual life-and-death echo of Sir Geoffrey and Middlewick in *Our Boys*, where British fathers

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314 Ibid.
315 Ibid.
316 Ibid.
are determined to live up to a stoic ideal, regardless of what paternal instincts might interfere.

Other religious leaders voiced their support for “the cause” of the Boer War. Rev. M. Hoskin enthused that “he was proud as a Canadian to be present to wish God Speed to those who were joining the Canadian contingent from the North-West; that though war was terrible, it was sometimes necessary as peace might be purchased too dearly.” The Rev. Mr. Thompson also accepted the premise that for a British citizen war was needed and necessary as “British blood had often been shed before as it was being now, in the cause of freedom and justice.”

There was no apparent, official public dissent expressed in Qu’Appelle over the community celebration of potential local sacrifice.

To close the formal part of the program, “Mr. Holt sang, by request, a verse of The Soldiers of the Queen, the audience taking up the chorus vigorously, after which he sang ‘Tis Hard to Say Good Bye.” The Soldiers of the Queen became a favourite theme-song of sorts to Canadian Boer War soldiers and their supporters. Later in January, the Ladies’ Aid of the Presbyterian Church hosted an entertainment in the Immigration Hall, where “the contralto, Miss Elizabeth Ferguson won the decided appreciation of the audience when she sang Soldiers of the Queen.”

As a final cap for the soldier’s send-off, “God Save the Queen” was once again sung before people danced through the night. Determined to see the boys onto the early-morning train, the participants extended the event directly to the station, as it was reported that “there were a good many present to see the boys off by the 5 o’clock express. A hearty cheer was

317 Ibid.
318 Ibid.
given as the train pulled out of the station. We shall miss the boys, but we will think of them and we know that we shall be proud of them.”

The Progress account mentioned that the boys were “all well known and general favourites.” But the Qu’Appelle soldiers were more thoroughly introduced in a Winnipeg Free Press story after the volunteers’ train stopped in at Winnipeg on the way to Ontario for training. The men were described as follows:

F. E. Parker, son of Colonel Parker, formerly of Her Majesty's forces, who served in the Crimea, an old Cheltieham boy, expert footballer, and has been in the North-west for five years. J. B. Jack Sargent, son of Archdeacon Sargent, formerly of H. M. 62nd foot, now the Wiltshire regiment, has been 20 years in the North-west, and is a good horseman and a good shot. Milton Talbot, son of the late Chas. H. Talbot of Qu'Appelle Station, and brother of the well-known Miss Talbot, engaged in educational work in Winnipeg, has had many years experience of western life. Ben Near, a young Englishman some years in the country, and accustomed to prairie life, is the fourth man.

The first three volunteers are introduced by their lineage and athletic/physical accomplishments. Unable to find appropriately boastful family or athletic prowess for Ben Near, the writer seeks to offer as his merit-able points the fact that he is English and “accustomed to prairie life.” The inference being, perhaps, that his experience with the hardships of prairie-life would make him a worthy and able soldier/sacrifice for the Empire.

While the soldiers were gone local supporters tried, with various degrees of success, to raise a patriotic fund for the soldiers and their families. It is unclear how much was raised, but the soldiers, upon their return in 1901, were treated to another

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320 “Our Boys; the Send Off,” Progress.
321 Ibid.
322 “Qu’Appelle’s Quartette,” Progress, 11 January 1900, P1.
323 “Patriotic Fund Meeting,” Progress, 15 February 1900, P8.
oyster supper in the Immigration Building. At this return event, each man was presented
with a letter from the municipal council which read as follows:

We, the Reeve and Councillors of the Municipality of South Qu’Appelle,
desire to express our appreciation of your patriotic conduct in so bravely
volunteering your services towards the safety of the Empire during the war
in South Africa.
We take this opportunity of congratulating you on your safe return, and
proving yourself to be a True and Loyal Canadian.324

The Oyster Supper and Reception which celebrated the soldiers’ return was more
restrained than the send-off celebrations. The supper was “hailed as an unqualified
success,” but the sense of gusto reported in the send-off supper was gone. This welcome-
back affair was “daintily served in the town hall which was beautifully decorated in red,
white, and blue.”325 There were the requisite songs, speeches, and toasts, but if anything
these were more thoughtful and less blindly patriotic than before. At the safe return of
his son, Rev. J. P. Sargent allowed himself “a touching address.” This emotional speech
contrasts with his fact-laden, restrained speech at the send-off event.

Where the send off was a blatant celebration of British warrior maleness, this
return event seems more reflective of the mixed background of the community of
Qu’Appelle. For example, local merchant “J. P. Beauchamp rendered a French song in
excellent style.” The send-off celebrants proudly sang God Save the Queen twice during
the night. In February 1901, however, it was noted that “the progaam [sic] closed with
the National Anthem, after which the floor was cleared for dancing.”326 The National
Anthem referred to was God Save the King; Queen Victoria had died within the past
month. Perhaps the term National Anthem was merely used out of respect for the late

325 Ibid.
326 Ibid.
Queen or unfamiliarity with the King. It might be, however, that there was a slight shift toward a primarily Canadian outlook expressed in the Immigration Hall and by extension in the more widely-developing community-mythos. This shift might have been slight, and only for this event.

**Religion in the Hall:**

The Immigration Hall was used by several denominations in the community for performative events such as socials, concerts, and religious ceremonies. For example, Catholic Church services under Rev. Fr. Onagnan were held in the hall as the church was being established in Qu’Appelle. In essence, the church used the hall as it was intended, as a place for settling before more permanent lodgings could be procured, albeit by a church group as opposed to an immigrant or immigrant group. The Immigration Hall was also the site in which churches could hold events that included people beyond the limits of their congregations. The Anglican and Methodist churches held a joint-thanksgiving service in November, 1888. The well-attended interdenominational service was a significant enough event to merit being singled out for attention in the town history book almost a century later.

Churches, when using the Immigration Hall as a site for performances, also invited the general public to their events, which were often reported as being well produced and well attended. This was especially true for Christmastime entertainments. These performances often took the form of Sunday School Christmas Tree events with a program of songs, etc. and the distribution of gifts. Sometimes these events took the

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328 “There was a large attendance,” *Progress*, 16 November 1887, P8; Qu’Appelle Historical Society, 171.
form of a more formal dramatic presentation. The quality and success of such entertainments was a source of pride for the churches involved as a review of a “Conversazione” by the Presbyterian Church exemplified when it observed how the “Presbyterians of Qu’Appelle have won the name of successfully entertaining in every respect and this entertainment maintained their reputation.” Such events were a mechanism for churches to vie for attention and influence in the community.

While such examples of religious denominations sharing space and coexisting were favoured, ideological differences did arise within the community. For example, the public letter exchanges inspired by Kate Boyce’s initial complaint about access and administration of the Immigration hall also highlighted some religious tensions in the community. Raymond’s description of the entertainment during the Synod of the Bishopric of Qu’Appelle as “the church of England People” and “Misses Boyce’s Friends” might have been read as somewhat dismissive. The event was reported as attracting visitors from throughout the region, including the Bishop, the Rev. H. S. And Mrs. Akehurst, the Rev. W. G. Lyon, and other clergy from Fort Pelly, Moosomin, Medicine Hat, Regina, Grenfell, and other parts. Mrs. Cameron, Miss Winter, some of the students and pupils of S. John’s College, Mrs. Strong, Mr. L. Strong, Mr. Burbeck from Moose Jaw, Mr., Mrs. And the Misses Sheppard, Mr. and Mrs. Edmunds, Mr. Weal, Mrs. Caswell, Mr., and Mrs., Clarke, etc.

Raymond’s reply piqued some anonymous letter-writer(s) to voice displeasure. The letter accused Raymond of misrepresenting council decisions, losing track of Quadrille Club events and accounts, and other mistakes, if not falsehoods. But it was the last line which proved the most inflammatory, asking, “is not the action of Mr., Raymond, in

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330 “Conversazione at the Town Hall,” *Progress*, 4 June 1891, P1.
331 See APPENDIX A: The Boyce Letters.
refusing the hall to Miss Boyce and her friends on account of his, too often expressed, antagonistic feeling towards the Church of England?“  

Raymond, in turn, responded only to the accusation that he was anti-Church of England. But in denouncing the “cowardly and base assertion” of the letter to the editor of the Progress, he also took a swipe at the Church of England, writing:

The Church of England in this town cannot be congratulated on numbering amongst her adherents such narrow-minded, intolerant and untruthful bigots as those who conceived, labored with, and finally brought forth the production signed by “Outsider” in your last issue.  

Raymond, in taking umbrage with the suggestion that he is anti-Anglican, succeeded in both attacking his accusers and slighting the Church.

In the autumn of 1890, there were two specific issues causing religious tension in the community which were centered on events in the Immigration Hall. In September, the Local News section of the paper contained a one-sentence observation that “What with baptismal immersion and apostolic succession our town, at present, is being somewhat controversially and religiously stirred up.” The first issue, apostolic succession occupied most of the commentary and editorial pages of the Progress for approximately three months.

At the beginning of October 1890 the succession issue was gaining prominence in the local news and editorial pages of the Progress. The paper published a folksy,

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332 Outsider, “A Criticism of Mr. Raymond’s Reply to Miss Boyce,” Progress, 29 November 1894, P1.
333 Raymond, Angus, “Reply to Outsider,” Progress, 6 December 1894, P1.
334 “What with baptismal immersion and apostolic succession,” Progress, 26 September 1890, P4.
whimsically spelled, and humorous essay by an anonymous correspondent identified as “The Croaker.” In the midst of wider-ranging observations, Croaker made the following summary of state of local religious dialogue:

Say, Boss, and now I’m going to touch on a skeery subject. Don’t you think the Gospellers are going it too strong? You don’t, eh? Well, it seems to me I heard of you argifying as well as the rest. You say that is the way to get at the truth. You say that is the way to get at the truth, providing it ain’t done in a vindictive spirit. Mebbe so; but I read long ago about argifying that ended in persecution. Is man better now than he was then? You say he is; I’m glad to hear it. But ain’t there danger of somebody’s feelings being hurt? You say they ought to be hurt if they are perverting the truth or ain’t doing their duty. Mebbe so. Now just look at those apostolic succession fellows; it seems to me some folks are too hard on them. It don’t hurt them to think as they do. Yes, it hurts the other preachers, but I don’t think they ought to care. I have thought results was the best standard by which to measure any church or sect. Can we not call those the true successors of the apostles who inherit their Pentecostal power?336

The matter was undoubtedly important within the community. With a creative rebuke, Croaker was questioning the value of an increasingly pedantic and acrimonious public debate over what was a specific, even obscure, point of religious dogma. Croaker’s observations highlight that potential damage to the locally developing ideology: specifically that in Qu’Appelle various Christian sects were cooperating and happily co-existing in the town. Such accord would have made a better case for potential settlers and investors that Qu’Appelle indeed was a happy, progressive, and enlightened place.

The succession issue itself appears to have erupted out of one of Rev. Mr. Ferry’s337 series of lectures on “church history” held in the Immigration Hall on 24

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336 Croaker, “The Croaker Talks,” Progress, 3 October 1890, P4: Croaker’s main points were regarding the religious tensions in town. These religious issues were raised after complaints about the road crews grading/ploughing too deeply when close to the town sidewalks, but before comments on the Legislature being called back and the current good harvest weather after recent poor weather.

337 John Ferry (48), his wife Isabelle (42), and their eight children were enumerated in Qu’Appelle in the 1891 census. Ferry was listed as a Presbyterian clergyman. John and Isabelle were born in England; their children were born in Ontario and the NWT (Canada, Department of Agriculture and Statistics, Census of
September 1890. Ferry continually asserted during his series of lectures that he “would not be drawn in to any controversy.” But Ferry’s topic appears to have been designed to court the same. The Progress reported that:

On Wednesday evening, Rev. Mr. Ferry gave his eighth lecture on church history. His subject was ‘broken links in the chain of apostolic succession’ an [sic] it attracted much interest. There were present besides the Presbyterian congregation a number of Methodists and Episcopalians. It is well known the latter claim that their clergy hold their commissions in unbroken succession from the Apostles of our Lord. Mr. Ferry deduced facts from the New Testament and church history and quoted high Episcopal authorities to prove that there was no real succession, and that such had not in truth been established but was a mere assumption. The lecturer put his points so strongly and forcefully that the successionists appeared hard hit, as one of their number asked the privilege of reply, which of course under the circumstances could not be granted. The gentleman then stated he would reply at another time and place, which THE PROGRESS will be pleased to give notice of.

It appears that Rev. John Meeser, of St. John’s College (Anglican), was the reportedly “hard-hit” successionist who was denied the opportunity to reply to Ferry’s arguments immediately and in person. Meeser was, however, happy to reply via the Progress. His first criticism was of the Progress’s description of him as being “hard hit.” He argued, “If I should have been beaten, would I have cared to ask the lecturer to allow me to reply? It seems to me that the fact that he did not allow me to reply is sufficient to prove that the lecturer was aware of his weakness, and afraid to be beaten.”

Meeser was not the only respondent to Ferry’s lecture. Henry S. Akehurst, a clergyman of the local Anglican Church also took advantage of the Progress as an

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338 Ferry, John, “Apostolic Succession,” Progress, 24 October 1890, P2.
339 “On Wednesday evening, Rev. Mr. Ferry gave his eighth lecture on church history,” Progress, 26 September 1890, P4.
340 Meeser, John, “To the Editor Qu’Appelle Progress,” Progress, 3 October 1890, P2-3.
341 Henry Stephen Akehurst (26) born in England. His religion was identified as being “Church of England.” His employment was listed as clergyman and surveyor (Canada, Census 1890-91, East
extension of Immigration Hall events into the wider community. In fact, Akehurst felt so strongly that he was replying even though he was not actually present at Ferry’s lecture and was responding according to what he had later heard/read of Ferry’s lecture.\textsuperscript{342}

Akehurst and Ferry continued to respond to each other through the \textit{Progress} correspondence columns for the next three months. In fact, the \textit{Progress} editor also responded to Meeser’s (and Akehurst’s) challenge of the meaning behind their need to reply, arguing that their affront must have been great to overlook Ferry’s repeated public wish that he “would not permit controversy.”\textsuperscript{343}

The letters between Ferry, Akehurst, Meeser, and eventually Adelbert Anson, Bishop of Qu’Appelle, were full of many detailed citations regarding various opinions on the issue of apostolic succession through approximately 1800 years of Christian history. What are of particular and direct interest to this study, however, are: a) the accumulated arguments between Ferry and Meeser that were directly inspired by Ferry’s lecture and Ferry’s refusal to permit Meeser’s counter-argument, in the Immigration Hall; and b) how the Immigration Hall was the site of the eventual culmination and de-escalation of the subject in Qu’Appelle, when Bishop Anson and Ferry met there to close the issue.

The exchanges between Ferry and Meeser in the \textit{Progress} were lengthy, but not without urgency. Their exchanges in the \textit{Progress} offer an opportunity to glimpse into the individually expressed, but group-identified negotiations of community religious values in the Immigration Hall. Meeser opened with a bold statement regarding his greater command of the intellectual territory in comparison with Ferry: “The reason why

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\textsuperscript{342} Akehurst, Henry S., “Apostolic Succession,” \textit{Progress}, 3 October 1890, P2.

\textsuperscript{343} “We would remind our correspondent,” \textit{Progress}, 3 October 1890, P4.
I wished to reply was simply to show the lecturer that he was quite ignorant of the subject on which he tried to lecture.”

Meeser even observed that he might have helped Ferry to better inform his audience.

Ferry, rather than being grateful for such offered assistance, countered, “Let me ask this ‘wise man’ from the east whether it is best to be ignorant or presumptuous? Ignorance is to be pitied. Presumption ought to be ignored.” Just how Ferry meant to undermine Meeser by naming him a “‘wise man’ from the east,” is unclear. It might be that Ferry was hoping to slight Meeser’s parentage. While Meeser was an Anglican clergyman teaching at St. John’s College, his parents were Jewish. But this slight might not have worked. In at least one instance, Meeser’s upbringing was cited as an advantage for the religious community of Qu’Appelle. For his lecture on “the Talmud and Jewish sects and ceremonies,” the Progress stated, “We look forward to a very interesting and instructive evening, as Meeser is well qualified to speak on these subjects, being of Jewish parentage and well versed in Hebrew.”

Meeser reveled in Ferry’s attempted slur, saying, “As for my being a wise man from the East, I beg to state that I rejoice in the wisdom of the East, because it is that wisdom which has overthrown all other wisdom.”

Ferry also repeatedly slighted Meeser’s youth, attempting to capitalize on possible intergenerational tensions in the community, his assumption presumably being that “older” people of Qu’Appelle might identify with Ferry if he cast himself as a wise elder.

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344 Meeser, John, “To the Editor Qu'Appelle Progress,” Progress, 3 October 1890, P2-3.
345 Ferry, John, “To the Editor Progress,” Progress, 10 October 1890, P5.
346 “A lecture will be given in the Government Hall,” Progress, 10 October 1890, P8.
347 Meeser, John, “Apostolic Succession,” Progress, October 17, 1890, P5.
being challenged by a brash young upstart. Meeser is unfazed and observes that, “it is quite amusing to notice that your correspondent has lost his temper and wishes your readers to regard me as a youth. I never knew before that I may still be classified as a youth notwithstanding having already passed my thirtieth year, and therefore feel greatly flattered by it.”

The controversy seems to have been good for attendance at religious lectures in Qu’Appelle. Ferry insisted that “I have no desire for controversy. My desire is to disseminate knowledge drawn from Scripture and reliable history.” Ferry challenged Meeser to stage his own lecture. Meeser did so in October at the Immigration Hall. While promoting this event, Meeser added a particularly cheeky invitation, saying that he did “hope to make it instructive and interesting to all parties, whether Episcopalians or non-Episcopalians, they shall be welcomed.” The publicity seems to have worked. A review of the event reported, “The hall was fairly well filled with an intelligent and appreciative audience.”

But more than anything, Meeser and Ferry argued over the content of Ferry’s Immigration Hall lecture. Meeser, citing his notes and other community members as witnesses, asserted that Ferry rested his argument on whether St. Peter had actually been the first Bishop of Rome. Ferry countered that dogma, not St. Peter, was the main point of his lectures, specifically any “doctrine that teaches that all ministers of other

348 Ferry, J., “To the Editor Progress,” Progress, 10 October 1890: Ferry opined, “Now, I do not think our young friend intended to write a known falsehood; but I do think he has in his letter manifested far more conceit than knowledge.” Later Ferry adds an argument, “in reply to the positive statements of this youth” (italics original).
350 Ferry, “To the Editor Progress,” Progress.
351 Meeser, “To the Editor Qu’Appelle Progress,” 3 October 1890.
352 Ibid.
354 Ferry, “To the Editor Progress,” 10 October 1890.
denominations are heretics and schismatics.”355 This point appears to have incited Bishop Anson to enter the letter-writing fray. Anson observed: “Mr. Ferry again boldly returns to his attempt to prove that our church does not hold the necessity of Episcopal ordination for a valid ministry, and that therefore those who so teach are ‘traitors within the camp.’”356

Bishop Anson seems to have been initially reluctant to enter the succession debate. The first report of his involvement in the issue was a printing of a sermon entitled, “By What Authority?”357 The sermon was delivered in his church, not the Immigration Hall and did not address succession. In answer to community members who thought religious debate was too important a subject to be held in the local newspaper, Anson identified the value of the newspaper as a suitable resource for such a religious argument. The Progress was being used to extend the debate started in the Immigration Hall. Making a point similar to that of Anderson and Robertson regarding how newspapers shape and reflect reader bias, Anson observed:

Newspapers are, in these days, our chief means of intercommunication, indeed with many people they are the only form of literature that is read. Subjects connected with our religion even though dealt with in the form of discussion, are certainly more likely to give wholesome, instructive, edifying matter for the minds of readers to dwell upon than very much of the trash and gossip that, unfortunately, too frequently fills the pages of the public prints. Moreover, newspapers are almost the only means through which most people can have the opportunity of hearing or reading more than their own side of religious questions. Few people will read books or even tracts other than those that set forth the views of their own community.358

355 Ibid.
357 “By What Authority. The Sermon of the Bishop of Qu’Appelle,” Progress, 24 October 1890, P5.
358 Ibid.
Anson refers to one’s religious community interacting with a different religious community in the relatively “open-space” of the correspondence columns of the local paper. In fact, Anson only began participating in the newspaper succession discussion after giving this sermon.  

Ferry answered Anson’s sermon with another lecture on the Succession question. But this time he did not choose the Immigration Hall as the site for the event, instead lecturing from what he identified as “my church.” Ferry’s use of the phrase “my church” gives him a personal power he cannot command in the Immigration Hall (perhaps “our hall”) or that of the wider community. His event “attracted a full house,” but it was not able to bring any closure to the debate.

The succession issue could be raised, continued, and further entrenched through newspaper exchanges and events in individual churches. However, the only means by which the succession question could be laid to rest in Qu’Appelle was through more public meetings in the Immigration Hall. For the first meeting, on 4 December 1890, “his Lordship the Bishop of Qu’Appelle delivered a lecture in the government hall on the subject ‘What do we mean by Apostolic Succession?’ The Bishop announced that he would answer questions arising out the lecture. A number were asked, but the time being limited another evening was subsequently arranged for [in order] to answer questions.” For this second evening, Ferry and Anson negotiated the rules governing the dialogue in a manner that was reported with a tone more akin to international diplomacy than a local interdenominational discussion:

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360 “Apostolic Succession,” Progress, 14 November 1890, P2.
361 “Rev. Mr. Ferry’s lecture on church history,” Progress, 21 November 1890, P4.
The Rev. Mr. Ferry wrote to the Bishop after his lecture on the above subject last week, asking him if he would have another meeting to answer further questions, the questioner to have one minute, the Bishop five minutes for his reply on each question. The Bishop has consented to have such a meeting for the purpose of answering questions, on condition that he should be informed of the chief questions at least two days before the meeting. The questions arising out of the answers immediately connected with the subject.363

When the evening arrived, the questioning proceeded along the lines previously agreed upon, with Ferry identified as “the chief questioner [sic].” The Progress report accurately predicted it was likely “that the meeting will end the discussion on ‘apostolic succession,’ as both Mr. Ferry and his Lordship succinctly stated their positions at the end of the meeting.”364 Bishop Anson and Rev. Ferry closed the divisive public discussion during a meeting in the Immigration Hall, the community’s “neutral ground.” The Immigration Hall was an important place for the exchange of ideas in Qu’Appelle’s faith communities’ mythoi. The performative nature of these events, were granted an even wider audience with the Progress acting as a disseminator of Immigration Hall events into the wider community.

The second point of religious tension in Qu’Appelle was that of immersion baptism. It was not nearly as extensively covered in the Progress as succession; however there are traces of some conflict. Baptists formally organized their church, and held its first meetings in the Immigration Hall, in the fall of 1890.365 No reports of hostility toward the group appear in the Progress. In fact, the church’s meetings were often praised in advance, e.g.: when the guest preacher, a Mr. Grant from Winnipeg, was touted as follows: “Mr. Grant is considered one of the very ablest men in the Northwest, the

churchgoing portion of the population will do well to hear him if at all possible.”366 The Baptist meetings also featured full-immersion baptisms, which were apparently a source of tension between some religious groups.367

“The Croaker,” in his same essay that addressed the inflation of the issue of succession, identified an active community negotiation about types of baptism as follows: “Then we have the plunge and sprinkle notions of baptism. I like the fire, zeal and earnestness of the much water folks, but ain’t there danger of thinking more about the water than the Spirit?”368 Rather than choose a side of the debate, Croaker appears to be criticizing the notion that the issue is worth fighting about at all, as Croaker continued “I ain’t much of a judge, but as far as my reading of church history goes I find that in all ages, in proportion to the importance made of form and ceremony there is lack of life and power.”369 No further identifications of the actual negotiations surrounding the issue of baptism are found, but perhaps this is a matter of the population-density of Baptists in the region. The population of the Qu’Appelle district that identified as Baptist in 1891 was less than 3%.370 Baptists, as a congregation, had a relatively small presence in the community, although if coverage of their meetings can be believed, they found at least a few new converts to baptize at every event.371 Though their events in the Immigration Hall were reported as controversial to some in Qu’Appelle, the controversy appears to

366 “This evening (Friday) Rev. A. Grant,” Progress, 12 September 1890, P4.
367 “Baptist Meeting,” Progress; Croaker, “The Croaker Talks.”
368 Ibid.
369 Ibid.
370 Canada, Census 1891, “Table IV: Religions”: Three percent is a total of the sub-categories of “Baptist” – of which there were 190 “Baptist” and 14 “Free Will” – in a total district population of 6808. Of the total population, other religions were represented as follows (rounded to the nearest whole percent): Catholic 15%; Church of England, 22%; Presbyterian Church of Canada, 20%; Methodist, 18%; and “Pagans” 11%.
371 For example, ten converts were baptised at the 23 September meeting (“Baptist Meeting,” Progress).
have lacked the personalities, population, and will to reach the heights of conflagration attained by the succession-debaters.

**Creating and Perpetuating Founding and Settler Mythoi**

The dominant, developing community settler-mythos seems to have centered on the notion that residents were settlers establishing a “new” community in an “empty” west. But the notion of an “empty” west was complicated by the continuing existence of First Nations people in the region. Examples of performances of First Nation-ness in the Immigration Hall are few, but important. The framing and reception of such performative reinventions differ according to whether the performance in question was by a First Nation’s person, or someone offering a surrogation. The establishment of a new founding-mythos for a settler-community was essential as it laid the groundwork for the construction of community enculturation – the transformation of Preferred Settlers into British Citizens.

**First Nations:**

In the Immigration Hall there were some culturally-approved (re)presentations of “Indians” in performance. Even the name “Immigration Hall” suggests that it was not a place for First Nations people. The near-total lack of any representation of local indigenous culture within the Immigration Hall reinforces the idea that the Qu’Appelle region was dominated by white, British, and Christian groups and that this domination would only become more complete as time passed. While this domination was socially true, numerically the population of the region shows a steady population of “Indians” in the Qu’Appelle region. Keyes offers an apt summation of Sunera Thobani’s observation
regarding the widespread idea that an “‘imaginary Indian’ in invader-settler culture is part of a ‘phantasmogoric project’ that embraces colonialism as inevitable and desirable by ambivalently positing First Nations as part of a doomed race to be mourned or as noble savages requiring ‘forceful subjugation.’”

Local opinion appears to have accepted such a doctrine of forceful subjugation. The Immigration Hall of 1886 housed soldiers who were brought to the region for that very purpose. When it was announced that the soldiers’ would be removed from the region, the local editorial opinion argued that their removal was premature:

The presence of artillery in the Northwest is a wholesome deterrent to reckless spirits among the Indians, and as the stream of immigration is now flowing into our country, they should be retained here at least for the season, to inspire confidence among such newcomers as may be timid for want of knowledge of the true state of affairs, especially after having heard of the rebellion of last year, and being perhaps somewhat apprehensive on consequence.

The editor’s reservation appears to be that the artillery was needed as a symbol of security, to guard against the idea that the region was unsafe. Such a symbol seemed unnecessary, though, as the enactment of the physical removal of local First Nations groups was being carried out by the local NWMP, who were being utilized to force First Nations people back onto reserves. Close to town was too close, as it was reported that “the mounted police stationed here have been instructed to order back to their reserves the several lodges of Indians that are located in the vicinity of town.”

As the First Nations people in Qu’Appelle were physically removed from the town and surrounding region, their chance of being involved in events in the Immigration Hall became remote. One temporary, symbolic presence was fashioned, however, for

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372 Thobani, 58.
373 “Although it was reported that ‘B’ Battery was to be ordered east,” Progress, 11 June 1886, P6.
display within the hall. The “B” Battery’s dramatic performances in March 1886 were the first showings of a painting by Captain R. W. Rutherford. It made a positive impression on the audience:

The new stage is a great improvement and the drop curtain, painted by Capt. Rutherford, is one of the prettiest things we have ever seen in that line. The scene represents the big powwow at Battleford, of Poundmaker and his chiefs and head men before General Middleton. Most of the figures are portraits specially those of the old General, Poundmaker, and others. The grouping is quite artistic and the whole picture stands out with marvelous reality, and has brought back to those who were present the most vivid recollections.  

Rutherford’s drop-curtain painting (or a later draft of it) appears to have become part of the National Archives of Canada (Figure 25). Rutherford continued to work on the drop-curtain scene while he was stationed in Qu’Appelle. When Lt. Governor Dewdney and Mrs. Dewdney attended the Garrison Theatricals performance of 9 March 1886, the reviewer noted that the curtain “had been retouched and made still more handsome.”

375 “B. Battery Dramatic Club,” Progress.  
376 (“Garrison Theatricals,” Progress.) The National Archives lists the place of creation as “unknown” for the work. The inscription on the canvass, “R.W. Rutherford/’87,” as well as the information on the back of the canvass, “Poundmaker's/ last/ Pow-wow” and “R.W. Rutherford./The Citadel./Quebec,” suggest that, at the very least, the Qu’Appelle drop curtain was a first-draft of a later painting that Rutherford executed after his return to Quebec with the “B” Battery. The more exciting prospect, in terms of the history of the Qu’Appelle Immigration Building, is that this painting is the very canvass created by Rutherford while he wintered in the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall. In the building it was first displayed as an added feature of a night of amateur drama (Rutherford, Robert W., The Surrender of Poundmaker to Major-General Middleton at Battleford, Saskatchewan, on May 26, 1885, 1887, Oil Painting (1887), National Archives of Canada, C-2769. http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec_nbr=2837188&rec_nbr_list=2837188).
The painting is a mixture of triumph and tribute. It was unveiled as part of entertainments that offered a night of culture (British plays for a British crowd) and distraction (as part of an activity to keep soldiers and civilians gainfully occupied and thereby out of Miss Bungalow-esque moral troubles). The scene was described in terms of its reality, artistic merit, and accurate portraiture. It is an effigy, of sorts.

Roach uses the term “effigying” to describe a performance of substitution that “fills by means of surrogation a vacancy created by the absence of an original.” This effigying process often fails, since the substitution cannot match expectations established by the original. But such failure is less likely in the case of the few First Nations’ effigies that were performed in the Immigration Hall. If such effigies are enacted to commemorate and/or eulogize indigenous people while also celebrating their absence, perhaps the effigy succeeds. The painting succeeded for its audience in the Hall precisely because it offered a construction of the settler’s ideal founding-mythos, i.e. that the

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377 Roach, 36.
378 Roach, 2.
previous inhabitants of the land had been physically and symbolically removed. This idea was identified by Keyes as the importance of “a desire to integrate into the Canadian context a pliable, nostalgic image of the ‘noble native’ that excludes the narrative of colonization and invasion.”

A painting of Poundmaker was acceptable in the Immigration Hall, but any local First Nation’s person was not permitted near town. This specific exclusion does not seem a concern for Rutherford and his audience of settlers, soldiers, and other representatives of white-settler culture in the 1886 Northwest “barracks.” The painting provided both surplus and deficit; it wasn’t the real thing – which might have been precisely what the settlers needed.

The only proven example of an “authentic” First Nations person who performed inside the Immigration Hall is E. Pauline Johnson. She was welcomed and celebrated as an “Indian,” but there existed several qualifying layers of identity that augmented her acceptability within the community. Travel abroad sanctioned her to the Qu’Appelle audience; the Progress noted that “she has visited the chief cities of Great Britain, and America, all of which endorse and applaud her.”

She was not from the prairies, or any prairie first nation group, but as her audience did not distinguish beyond her being “Indian,” this was not a barrier to her being welcomed. Her first show in Qu’Appelle in 1898 was a critical and popular hit:

Miss Johnson's entertainments consisted of recitations of her own compositions, and deal principally with legends of her race, the Indians. Her introductory remarks are always interesting and often humorous [sic];

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380 “Miss E. Pauline Johnson,” Progress, 10 February 1898, P8.
though not professing to be an elocutionist, she has few equals, and certainly no superiors in many of her recitations.\textsuperscript{381}

Typically, Johnson presented a program wherein her appearance was as much performance-art as it was elocution of her poetry:

Her costume consisted of a buckskin dress, fringed at the hem to reveal a lining of red wool and decorated at the neck with silver brooches, buckskin leggings, and moccasins. Later she added a necklace of ermine tails. At her waist she carried a hunting knife and an authentic Huron scalp inherited from her great-grand-father. A red wool cloak hung from one shoulder. One sleeve was a long piece of fringed buckskin, attached at the shoulder and the wrist; the other was a drape of rabbit pelts. Johnson seems to have come up with this polyglot costume herself. She wore it during the half of her program devoted to Indian poems. For her non-Indian material, she wore a simple dinner gown.\textsuperscript{382}

In her physical presentation, Johnson performed an amalgamation of authentic and invented “Indian” costume followed by a change into “civilized” evening wear. In her recitations, Johnson ranged from works of unflinching patriotic fervor (e.g. \textit{Riders of the Plains}) to pieces highlighting mistreatment of indigenous people by white settlers (e.g. \textit{As Red Men Die}). In her poem \textit{Wolverine}, Johnson speaks as though retelling an old trapper’s story of his time in the Northwest, which he describes as being:

\begin{quote}
``Wild? You bet, ’twas wild then, an’ few an’ far between
The squatters’ shacks, for whites was scarce as furs when things is green,
An’ only reds an’ ‘Hudson’s’ men was all the folk I seen.''
\end{quote}

As if answering a listener’s negative comment about “Indyans,” Johnson, through the character of the old trapper, corrects:

\begin{quote}
``No. Them old Indyans ain’t so bad, not if you treat ’em square.
Why, I lived in amongst ’em all the winters I was there,
An’ I never lost a copper, an’ I never lost a hair.''
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{381}``Miss Johnson’s entertainments,'' \textit{Progress}, 17 February 1898, P8.
\textsuperscript{382}Francis 128.
\textsuperscript{384}Ibid, ll. 10-13.
To further make the point, “the trapper” tells the story of how the “Indyan, ‘Wolverine’” saved his life courageously, while asking nothing in return. Later, Wolverine is killed by white settlers, which the trapper described as follows:

“They said, ‘They’d had an awful scare from Injuns,’ an’ they swore
That savages had come around the very night before
A-brandishing their tomahawks an’ painted up for war.

“But when their plucky Englishmen had put a bit of lead
Right through the heart of one of them, an’ rolled him over, dead,
The other cowards said that they had come on peace instead.

“That they (the Whites) had lost some stores, from off their little pack,
An’ that the Red they peppered dead had followed up their track,
Because he’d found the packages an’ came to give them back.’

“Oh!’ they said, ‘they were quite sorry, but it wasn’t like as if
They had killed a decent Whiteman by mistake or in a tiff,
It was only some old Injun dog that lay there stark an’ stiff.’

“I said, ‘You are the meanest dogs that ever yet I seen,’
Then I rolled the body over as it lay out on the green;
I peered into the face—My God! ’twas poor old Wolverine.”

The story, told by Johnson through the character of a white trapper, is a rare performance in the Immigration Hall that stands in direct opposition to the developing settler mythos that most often cast “Indians” as aggressors and settlers’ violent acts towards them as justified.

If all of her pieces performed in the Immigration Hall that night made similar points about the injustices wrought upon the Northwest’s indigenous peoples, it would be easier to identify a singular goal for Johnson and her poetry. But she also performed Riders of the Plains, which champions a symbol of British dominance in the Northwest, the NWMP (who were at various times stationed in, or users of, the Immigration Hall).

385 Ibid, ll. 46-63.
The poem was noted as having been “written since her last visit here.” A footnote to the title explains the inspiration of the poem as being the result of an American dinner party conversation:

At a dinner party in Boston the writer was asked, “Who are the Northwest Mounted Police?” and when told that they were the pride of Canada's fighting men the questioner sneered and replied, “Ah! Then they are only some of your British Lion's whelps. We are not afraid of them.” His companions applauded the remark.

That Johnson used the phrase “the pride of Canada's fighting men,” to primarily define the NWMP is telling of how predominant the paramilitary nature of the force was. It was a force for subduing – not only policing – the Northwest. Johnson penned a very patriotic response to her dinner companion over five verses, each ending with the words “they keep the peace of the people and the honor of British law.” The third verse specifically alludes to the Métis resistance:

These are the fearless fighters, whose life in the open lies,  
Who never fail on the prairie trail 'neath the Territorial skies,  
Who have laughed in the face of the bullets and the edge of the rebels' steel,  
Who have set their ban on the lawless man with his crime beneath their heel;  
These are the men who battle the blizzards, the suns, the rains,  
These are the famed that the North has named the "Riders of the Plains,"  
And theirs is the might and the meaning and the strength of the bulldog's jaw,  
While they keep the peace of the people and the honor of British law.

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386 The works she chose for this abbreviated show were Ojistoh, Wolverine, The Riders of the Plain, as well as two other selections identified as Mrs. Stewart's Summer Party and My Girl (which were possibly the short stories The Saucy Seven and The Barnardo Boy respectively, but the review is too unspecific to be certain). Her piece based on local legend, The Legend of the Qu’Appelle, was yet unfinished, though Johnson planned to premiere it at her next evening’s show in Fort Qu’Appelle. The Ft. Qu’Appelle show was cancelled; a doctor ordered Johnson three weeks of bed-rest (“Miss Johnson’s entertainment,” Progress, 15 September 1898, P4).


388 Ibid.

389 Ibid.
The heroic ballad recited onstage depicts a specific experience with the NWMP that most audience members would appreciate more, perhaps, than would local First Nations living in the Qu’Appelle region.

Both of these poems were performances that explored the notions of law and lawlessness that were being redefined as settlers took over the region. Thobani observed that “Claims of legality in Canada... rest historically upon one elemental ‘truth’: Europe was lawful, Indians were not. European powers claimed sovereignty over the Americas through the power of their law, pronouncing as lawless, anarchic, and even despotic the conditions of existence in the ‘savage’ worlds that Europe was discovering.”

Wolverine seems to directly challenge such an idea, casting the European settlers as lawless aggressors. In contrast, Riders of the Plains praises the very representatives of the European law by which the Northwest was being overtaken. But perhaps these contrasting views presented in the context of Johnson’s savage-to-civilized performance, fit into the overall notion that the west was being “won.”

Another layer complicating Johnson’s performances is their acceptance as being somehow authentically “Indian” as well as supportive of the romanticized notion of the “noble savage.” Keyes points out how Johnson has been read as part of a popular trend among Canadian artists of the time: “British Columbian painter Emily Carr and Métis poet Pauline Johnson recoil from European modernity (characterized by colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, etc.) to embrace ‘aboriginal modernity’ as a utopian

390 Thobani, 39.
alternative.” 391 Within such cultural eddies and community-mythoi the Immigration Hall performances of Pauline Johnson were locally both anticipated and successful.

Upon her return in the fall of 1898, Johnson was hailed in Qu’Appelle as being “Canada’s greatest poetess.” 392 Her poems and performances were hailed for having “depth of feeling, purity of thought and power of expression.” 393 But Johnson’s power of expression was somewhat taxed on her September 1898 show, as it was observed that “Miss Johnson had just returned from Prince Albert, and the trip had been so tiring that she did not appear at her best. Every selection, however, was well given and well received.” 394

Johnson’s performance of “Indian-ness” in the civilizing, built environment of the Immigration Hall would have been read in stark contrast to the outdoor performances of local Cree circa 1897-1901. In the spring of 1897, the Progress recorded that “a band of Crees treated Qu’Appellites to a ‘Hungry Dance’ on Tuesday afternoon. Some of the bucks wore little but nature’s garb freely decorated with paint and feathers. The musical part of the programme was all that could be desired.” 395

391 Keyes, 33.
392 “Everybody talks of going to see Pauline Johnson tonight,” Progress, 8 September 1898, P4.
393 “Miss E. Pauline Johnson’s,” Progress, 8 September 1898, P4.
394 “Miss Johnson’s entertainment,” Progress, 15 September 1898, P4.
The dance, and dancers, were admired in their street performances, but not welcomed
into the Immigration Hall itself for performances, other than by approved-substitution, or
effigy. Other first nations people were documented in the town but not necessarily noted
as being welcome. For example, the inscription on the above postcard (Figure 26) was
potentially cryptic: “Please write and let one know how you like this.”

Regionally, the dance and the postcard were within the timeline of events that led
to the arrest and imprisonment of Chief Piapot. Beginning in the late 1890s, Piapot
organized and conducted spiritual ceremonies in the region, against the wishes of federal
authorities. The situation came to a head in 1901, when he “was imprisoned for two
months in a Regina prison for participating in a Give-Away Dance and encouraging six
others to resist arrest.”

Constance Backhouse offers an estimate (due to gaps in the
archival records) “that between 1900 and 1904 there were 50 arrests and twenty

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396 Backhouse, Constance, Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900-1950 (Toronto:
University of Toronto Press Scholarly Publishing Division, 1999), 68-69: Backhouse summarised Piapot’s
history of arrests related to spiritual dances: “In the late 1890s, he was incarcerated for performing the
piercing ceremony for approximately twenty young men at a Thirst Dance, but the official charge was
apparently ‘drunkenness,’” eventually the “Department of Indian Affairs removed Piapot from his position
as chief for these transgressions... In protest, members of Piapot's community refused to elect another chief
until after his death” (Backhouse, Constance. Extended Endnotes, Colour Coded: A Legal History of
Racism in Canada, 1900-1950, (Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History: 1999), 91,
convictions for dancing in contravention of the Indian Act.”397 Johnson, a celebrated member of Canada’s “great primeval race now so rapidly vanishing,” honored the enactors of the “might, meaning, and the strength of the bulldog's jaw,” and how they were used to “keep the peace of the people and the honor of British law.” The NWMP, in turn, were doing their part as enforcers of the founding mythos that demanded a narrative that the “Indians” (their culture/traditions) were vanishing, leaving empty a cleared-territory which was rightfully claimable by preferred settlers.

Identification and Discouragement of Undesirable Settlers

By 1900, earlier calls for more British settlers for the Qu’Appelle region had been almost completely trumped by the desire to attract American settlers. Americans were sought after because they usually came to the region with capital (equipment, effects, and cash) as well as dry-land farming experience. Specific reservations were held concerning the usefulness of English “gentlemen.” Expressions of such sentiments were not new. Our Boys highlighted the matter comically and poignantly on stage in the Qu’Appelle Immigrant Hall. While Charles and Talbot were struggling to make a living on their own, Belinda noticed, “I’m sure they're gentlemen ‘cos they can’t do nothing for a living.” Charlie also finds that they are not considered good prospects for finding work abroad either. He reports that “I’ve had an interview with the agent for emigration to Buenos Ayres – he rather pooh-poohed us as emigrants. They don't want gentlemen.”398 Such a line might have played very well in the community of Qu’Appelle, where a

397 Backhouse, Colour-Coded 69.
398 Byron 36.
frontier-mythos was developing that settling the “new-west” needed a work-ethic that was unfamiliar to the upper-classes of old-Europe.

Darker expressions regarding just what kind of immigrants were to be welcomed into the Immigration Hall as preferred settlers peaked in 1901. Until that year, the Immigration Hall had not been notably used by potential immigrants. The community might have become complacent in assuming access to the space, as irritation seems to have been the initial reaction when it was announced that a planned Band Dance in May had been “postponed indefinitely. This action is due to the arrival of immigrants who have occupied the hall.”\textsuperscript{399} The writer’s word choice betrays some prejudice as to the presence of the newcomers in the Immigrant Building. The immigrant group arrived and \textit{occupied} the hall, more than merely engaging the space, the word \textit{occupy} evokes its military definition (“under enemy control”). The fact that the immigrants were expected arrivals of the Immigration Department is left out.

Municipal Secretary-Treasurer J. C. Starr had also been appointed an Immigration Consultant for the Qu’Appelle district in March 1901.\textsuperscript{400} Considering his apparent efficiency – he would later concurrently serve as Sec.-Treas. for both the South Qu’Appelle Municipal Council and the Town of Qu’Appelle in addition to selling mortgages and insurance – perhaps it is fitting that the first evidence of immigrants being housed in the Immigrant Building comes on Starr’s watch.

Initially, reception for the group was welcoming. When the \textit{Progress} investigated the situation it reported that as of 30 April 1901, the Immigration Hall was home to “60-70 Roumanian [sic] immigrants from province Moldavia.” Soon after their arrival, it was

\textsuperscript{399} “Dance Postponed,” \textit{Progress}, 2 May 1901, P8.
\textsuperscript{400} “Council Meeting,” \textit{Progress}, 7 March 1901, P1.
observed that “Two prospecting parties started out on Wednesday to look for land. One went south and the other north to the File Hills district. These immigrants compare very favourably with the Galacians [sic] of whom two carloads went through Tuesday.”  

Further evidence of the initial positive reaction to this group of immigrants was found in the Progress’s stated belief that this group was somehow “better” than the “Galatians” who had passed through town earlier.

But the perceived desirability of the immigrants in the town hall changed dramatically once Progress Editor E. E. Law learned that the immigrants were Jewish. Immediately, the Progress launched a prolonged campaign of anti-Semitic tirades which highlighted how Jewish settlers were not fit for the Qu’Appelle region. In an editorial, entitled “The Class We Want,” Law opened by observing the increasing number of American settlers who were looking to sell their farms and move north, bringing with them capital and experience. Law claimed that such well-financed and experienced settlers were the kind to pursue for Qu’Appelle. His arguments shifted from the realm of economics in the second half of his editorial, however, moving into the realm of stereotypical bigotry with the following opinions:

We are not enamored of the prospect of filling up the south with a lot of Roumanian [sic] Jews. They are not of us nor ever will be. No matter what attempts are made to make them one in interests with Gentiles, they remain aloof. Jewish Agricultural settlements in the Canadian west have not usually proved successful. The people soon tire of farming and go back to their traditional barter, trade and money lending. It were better to let the land remain vacant than fill it with undesirable settlers.”

Law’s disgust turned to delight, if only temporarily, when more rumours surfaced regarding the immigrants in the hall. He opined:

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401 “Immigrants,” Progress, 2 May 1901, P8.
We are delighted to hear that a mistake was made in allowing the Roumanian [sic] Jews to choose land in this municipality. According to the terms on which they were brought out they have no choice of location and must go north to File Hills where land has been allotted them or forfeit the assistance they are to receive, according to rumor, from Baron Rothschild. Their inate [sic] love of trade would probably have caused them to soon leave their farm lands and strike for Qu’Appelle, the nearest town where with their begging and trading they would have proved a source of annoyance and of little benefit to anyone. They are a class we do not want in the neighbourhood, and it were better to let the lands remain vacant rather than fill them up with people whom a better class of settler would not care to live near.  

This claim that lands were better left vacant was on the same page as a criticism of council for not filling vacant lands near town, and the immigration agent for not pressuring the Immigration Department to direct American settlers moving north toward the Qu’Appelle region. 

Tracking gossip surrounding this group of Jewish settlers can illuminate community reservations regarding their presence in Qu’Appelle. There was a keen interest to report their connections with out-of-Qu’Appelle agents: they were visited by Mr. W. T. R. Preston, inspector of Immigration in Europe; more locally, the Progress reported that “Mr. D. H. McDonald, of Fort Qu’Appelle, has charge of these people.” Perhaps the most damaging, and longest lasting gossip surrounding the settlers was reported in The Progress of 16 May 1901. The initial report declared, “No Smallpox Here – A rumor spread through the town last week that there was a case of smallpox at the Immigration Hall. We have it on official authority that there is not one jot or tittle of truth in the report and all interested are requested to contradict the rumor whenever

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403 “We are delighted,” Progress, 16 May 1901 P4.
404 “There are a class we do not want,” Progress, 16 May 1901, P4.
heard.” Fears of disease in the region were already elevated. When combined with Anti-Semitism, rumours became especially, if erroneously, fearful.

After the first group of Jewish settlers left the Immigration Hall, the Progress reported that, on 27 October 1901, “another contingent of German Russians, nineteen in number arrived in town on Sunday and will take up land in South Qu’Appelle.” While articles continued to appear arguing against the group’s fitness to settle in the region, their overall numerical influence (outside of raising Law’s ire) was not obvious. Regarding the overall longer-term impact of such settlers on the demographics of the region, the 1906 census shows that in the district of Qu’Appelle (population 51,453) 428 people (or 0.8 percent) identified as being born in Rumania. This is a greater percentage of Rumanians than other census districts in the new province of Saskatchewan (Assiniboia West 0.3 percent, Humboldt 0.005 percent, and Saskatchewan 0.1 percent). In comparison, almost nineteen percent of the population of the Qu’Appelle district identified as being American by 1906. Whether it was because of local resistance or their lack of numbers when compared with other groups, the “Roumanian Jews” were hardly the hegemonic-shifting bogeymen against whom E. E. Law fear-mongered.

Unfortunately, there is a break in Progress newspaper coverage from 4 November 1901 to November 1904, so it is unclear just what was reported regarding a possible

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407 Throughout the winter of 1900-1901, the Qu’Appelle region suffered from several fatal cases of smallpox and diphtheria. These cases were present well before the arrival of the immigrant group staying in the hall. By April 1901, four children in the Qu’Appelle district had died of diphtheria (“Death from Diphtheria,” Progress, 18 April 1901, P8; “Memorial Service,” Progress, 25 April 1901, P8). Another rumour of smallpox in nearby regions in June of 1901 may also have fired the imaginations of the scared (and perhaps bigoted) community. The tone of the coverage in the paper did little to calm readers. It read, “Smallpox is coming nearer to Qu’Appelle. It has broken out at Cottonwood, north of Regina, and also in the Moose Mountain District. There is no knowing when it will be in our midst” (“Smallpox is coming,” Progress, 13 June 1901, P8).
409 Canada, Census 1906, “Table V – Birthplace of the people by districts.”
second group of immigrants to stay in the town hall. An unusually similar combination of Jewish immigrants, sickness rumours and the Immigration Hall surfaced in the Qu’Appelle locally produced history book, *Footprints to Progress*, in the recollection that “During the summer of 1902 a large number of Russo-German Jews were detained at the Immigration shed owing to an outbreak of diphtheria and measles, from which six people died.” There are common threads of Jewish settlers and diphtheria (with the new addition of measles). Considering the 1901 context of the false rumours and press-fuelled anti-Semitism, it is easy to assume that there were community members eager to link any rumours regarding the sickness to the undesired immigrants in the town hall.

**Black, Blackface, Minstrels, and Jubilee**

The community did not need the *presence* of possible non-preferred immigrants in the Immigration Hall to begin pre-emptively defining and undermining their identity as possible settlers to the region. The tradition of blackface/minstrel shows established another level of race and ethnicity based effigy in the Immigration Hall. Performances of minstrel entertainments in blackface were as rapidly adopted in Qu’Appelle as they were in other parts of Canada. The reasons for this racist/racially charged entertainment’s adoption (an imported effigying of sorts) could involve the general inflow of entertainment into Canada from the United States as well as a less specific fascination for the foreign and exotic. Given the census data for the region, it is likely that whites performing blackface minstrel shows were the most pervasive exposure to – and even only reference for – any idea of black culture. While some companies of “real” black performers did play the Immigration Hall, minstrel shows – especially *local* minstrel shows – were the more often performed substitutions. Before the 1911 census, the census
tables concerning “origins” made no accommodation for African-Americans. In 1911, one couple is recorded as living in the Qu’Appelle district under the category “Negro.”

This lack of black immigration is not at all surprising, given Canada’s previously-mentioned anti-black immigration practices and policies. Despite the lack of desire to encourage black immigration, a fascination with black culture, and caricatures of it, persisted in Qu’Appelle.

When the “B” Battery staged minstrel entertainments, the audience was not only familiar with the form, but also capable of comparing them to Canadian “masters” of it. Two performers were singled out for their professional-grade performances: “Gr. Mitchel's song of *Major Gill Feather*, Driver Clement's song, *Hot Corn*, were two of the best things of the evening. They would be a credit to any professional troupe, and we doubt much if Cool Burgess ever sang many better songs.”

Cool Burgess (1840-1905) was a Toronto-born actor famous for his blackface performances and minstrel shows.

One of the most widely-publicized local minstrel shows in the Hall was the Qu’Appelle Philharmonic Minstrels of 1890. Corporal Purches (NWMP) co-founded the Qu’Appelle Philharmonic Minstrels. This troupe performed in Qu’Appelle as well as further afield, in Indian Head and Fort Qu’Appelle. The performance appears to have played into the community’s continuing fascination with minstrel shows and similar entertainments. It was billed as being a two part minstrel show followed by a

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411 “B. Battery Dramatic Club,” *Progress*.
412 Burgess was famous for his blackface shows, but was by no means a Canadian innovator of the field. By 1840 (his birth-year) “the black community of Toronto first petitioned against the caricatured depiction of blacks on stage and in circuses” (Gardner, David, s.v. “Burgess, Colin (Cool),” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, 1901-1910* Volume XIII, University of Toronto/Université Laval; 2000, http://biographi.ca/en/bio/burgess_colin_13E.html).
“Nonsensical Darkey Extravaganza written by Geo. Purches, entitled Fun in a Loonatic Asylum, or, Wanted A Manager.”

The three-part program (Figure 27 above) consisted of black-faced singing, dancing, and generally racist caricatures that appear to have fit into the community’s expectations and definitions of good minstrel entertainment. The three stock characters of Interlocutor, Bones, and Tambo quipped and mugged between song selections such as Oh! Those Room-at-ics, I'se Gwine to Alabama, and Gin Me Dat Watermelon. The songs

414 “Qu’Appelle Opera House Program of the Qu’Appelle Philharmonic Minstrels,” Progress, 3 January 1890, P4.
were interspersed with “excellent jokes, many of which were good local hits.”
The art of impersonating “coloured posture” was appreciated in the performances, as it was noted that “Mr. George Robinson sustained fully the title of ‘The champion of coloured posture and sand dance artist’; his step dancing to the muffled strains of the mouth organ in one of the side wings by Mr. J. Hallet, elicited the admiration of all.”

There is evidence that Purches did have considerable performing skill. In addition to his scriptwriting, he played violin for the opening acts of the evening, as well other stringed instruments, for example: “his banjo song *Gib me dat watermelon* and the encore provoked roars of laughter.”

The third part of the evening was Purches’ farce: *Nonsensical Darkey Entertainment, Fun in A Loonatic Asylum, Or, Wanted a Manager*. The cast list alone obliterates any lingering doubts as to cultural sensitivity associated with the depictions, with both black and aboriginal effigies being present: Poorus Plyaster (“Owner of the Asylum”) was played by Harold Jagger; Sam Johnsing (“A much-abused Darkey looking for a place”) was Chas. A. Lindsay; Perkyn Jones was engaged playing Mary Anderson (“A stage-struck female, an inmate”), Slugger Jackson (“Thinks he's John I.”), And Prof. Miller (“Looking for Green”); Dr. Bolus Lancet (“A crazy doctor”) was played by F. Whiting; A. Clements played Unkerpapa (“An Aborigine off his base”); and various Ghosts, Villains, and Bummers are played by unnamed members of the company.

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417 Ibid.
418 “Qu’Appelle Opera House Program of the Qu’Appelle Philharmonic Minstrels,” *Progress*: Any explicit reference to a tradition of “red-faced” minstrel-style performances has not yet been found in these sites at this time. References to characters such as “Unkerpapa” suggest this would bear further inquiry.
play itself was an audience-pleasing hit. After the entertainment, the evening properly closed with “God Save the Queen.”\footnote{“The Minstrels,” \textit{Progress}.}

Most “authentically” African-American entertainments in the Immigration Hall were a stark contrast to the locals in blackface minstrel shows. Though rare, these were eagerly attended. In Qu’Appelle, “Fisk” was the label used by black performers singing in a non-minstrel-show manner. The Fisk Jubilee Singers were a touring group of singers from Fisk University, Tennessee. Formed by George L. White in 1871, they would eventually make popular tours of North America and Europe. The group was initially greeted with “surprise, curiosity and some hostility,” because they were “young black singers who did not perform in the traditional ‘minstrel fashion.’”\footnote{Fisk Jubilee Singers, “Our History,” fiskjubileesingers.org, Web, 2 April 2012.} Most references to black touring groups passing through Qu’Appelle used “jubilee” to distinguish their entertainment from a minstrel show. Touring companies were eager to connect themselves to the original Fisk Jubilee Singers as assurance of a high-quality show. Such was the case in fall 1890 when a Fisk-related group came to Qu’Appelle:

The original company of famous Fisk Tennesseans under the direction of B.W. Thomas gave one of their unique entertainments under the auspices of the Methodist church... As this company has a splendid reputation Government Hall was crowded full with an audience who expected something unusually excellent, and they were not disappointed.\footnote{“The original company of famous Fisk Tennesseans,” \textit{Progress}, 3 October 1890, P4; B. W. Thomas was billed as being, “formerly of the original Fisk Jubilee Singers” (“Fisk Jubilee Singers,” \textit{Progress}, 26 September 1890, P4).}

While the connection to the Fisks lent an air of authenticity, it did not always free a performance from racist stereotypes. On 5 December 1896, a performer going by the moniker Prof. McKanlass played Qu’Appelle. The \textit{Progress} published glowing preshow announcements: “We consider McKanlass the greatest violinist living – Chicago
Conservator,” and “the only man that plays two B flat cornets at once is McKanlass, the phenomenon of the 19th century.” After his company’s performance, praise for McKanlass continued, as the review reported:

The program consisted of violin and banjo solos, negro melodies, bone solo and dancing, winding up with a humorous sketch. The Prof. is possessed of a rich and powerful baritone voice, and his singing and musical laugh carry one back to the Sunny South, to the days ‘befo’ de wah.’ His Banjo and violin playing was far above the average.”

While the praise for his skill was great, there is a persistent and troubling need to connect him, and his performance, to the pre-war American South, where for slaves things were far from “sunny.” In his show, the audience was exposed to a range of performances of substitutions and effigies as well as authenticity.

The Progress was also careful to link McKanlass to previous cultural standard-setters, assuring that “Prof. McKanlass has been connected with some of the best musical organizations in America, one of which was the original Fisk Jubilee Singers with whom he visited Europe. Should he visit Qu’Appelle again we can predict for him a bumper house.” In two sentences, the reviewer connected McKanlass, via the Fisks, to acceptance by European audiences, which also seems to be an important qualifier for what is “good’ entertainment in Qu’Appelle.

Black performers of minstrel shows faced direct comparison – if not competition – from local white performers’ minstrel shows. When Lew Johnson’s Refined Colored Minstrels came to Qu’Appelle in the fall of 1890, they were anticipated politely. It was noted that “the press generally speaks highly of the excellent and refined character of

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424 Ibid.
their renditions.”

After their performance, the Progress reviewer noted that “some of the jokes were good but the singing was very poor.”

Though the jokes were “good,” it was also observed that “the Negro Minstrels who showed here on Saturday have caught on [to] some of the jokes that did service for our local minstrels last winter.”

Though their show was billed as being excellent in character and refined – as opposed to rough and meager – Lew Johnson’s Refined Colored Minstrels were judged based upon the standard of minstrel performance set by local white performers. The local effigy of black-performance had become the standard for black performers. In order to gain acceptance into the community as performers, a certain amount of playing into expectations might have been needed, before the change to expand such expectations could be attempted.

**Conclusion:**

The Immigration Hall was a site for the expression and negotiation of community values. Individual social and ideological beliefs shaped by (and contributing to) group experiences could eventually shape the overriding community mythos being formed. Notions of who was acceptable and who was not, who was included and who was on the margins, and who controlled town hall space and who did not were central to these negotiations. Questions of propriety, defined along both gender and generational lines, were literally played-out on the stage and the dance floor in the Hall. Religions – or at least those deemed acceptable, usually variations of Christianity – used the hall as a site for socialising and fundraising, as well as neutral ground when events warranted.

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The need for the community, and by extension community members, to function as part of not only Canada, but also the British Empire was developed in Immigration Hall performances. The reinforcing of Anglo-conformity and assimilation had to do with self-identifying as a loyal part of the British Empire. It is possible that this Anglo-identification was partially a cultural import from Central Canada (specifically Ontario). To say that the local mythos in Qu’Appelle was entirely transplanted from Ontario is oversimplification, but it is clear that dominant community groups were seeking to establish and define “culture” (and therein what was acceptable and unacceptable) based upon familiar values. If such values were similar to those of settlers from Upper Canada, then perhaps commitment to the advancement of Britishness in Qu’Appelle was actually an extension of similar patriotic expectations – previously imported directly from Britain – already established “back east.”

“Back east” also dominated local performance traditions. While not always “British” in nature, influences from elsewhere are clear. In this case, “back east” included Upper Canada as well as the Eastern United States. In many ways, such performances were admired as examples upon which local performance ideals should be modelled. Any specific examples of locality in performance – developed through local events and stories – were more likely found in non-theatrical events such as meetings, agricultural fairs, or rallies. Even the few examples of locally written and produced theatrical works are influenced by the existing traditions and ideals from “elsewhere.”

Surrogation, substitution, or effigying were also forces working constantly within, and upon, the Immigration Hall in Qu’Appelle. Such reproductive forces are constant, as Roach observes, but not always satisfying as they can fail to meet or even exceed
expectations. But in the Immigration Building, the surrogation can succeed, if the expected outcome is to confirm a vacancy. If the surrogate is present primarily to support the settler mythos that indigenous people are an honourable, but passing, race then the surrogate would be better than an actual, uncomfortably non-extinct Cree.

As for the surrogation of black people in the community, they were welcome as entertainers, but unwelcome as immigrants. Local white performers eagerly produced minstrel shows, even setting the standard for them in some cases. While these performers may have been seeking to revive a tradition to abate some of their longing for a homeland, these performances also create, or reinforce, the notion that only temporary places were available for African-American/Canadians in the community. Some groups, like Jewish immigrants, were not even afforded the opportunity to be in the hall; they faced unrelenting anti-Semitism upon arrival. Frustration arising out of the complicated issue of control of the hall itself only added tension to the situation.

Such ideas remained in negotiation, because the community was in flux. Substitution was constant within the population and the physical structure of the Immigration Building. The building was constructed by the Immigration Department over the boundary between two territories: the CPR’s land and the R.M. of Qu’Appelle’s (later the Town of Qu’Appelle’s) land. A dominant community mythos was important to a new community seeking to establish traditions and permanence. The ideas developed in the Immigration Hall would outlast the hall itself. When the Immigration Hall was moved and recycled as housing, the negotiation of community mythos continued in the newer, more permanent, and more valued edifice of the Qu’Appelle Town Hall Opera House.

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428 Roach, 2.
Chapter 3: A Sense of New Permanence – The Qu’Appelle Town Hall Opera House

The Qu’Appelle Town Council began planning construction of a THOH when it became clear that the Immigration Building (the old, adopted town hall) was no longer available to the town. As a replacement for the old space, the new structure would retain many of the functions of the Immigrant Building, while improving upon identified shortcomings of the previous space. Despite the physical differences between the two halls, many community groups continued using the THOH as they had been using the Immigration Hall. Negotiations of community mythos begun in the Immigration Hall continued in the new THOH. The most profound difference between the old and new town hall spaces was that the town council had ultimate control over access to the new THOH. For the first time, the community could design, decorate, and define its own space free of external influences from the CPR or government departments of Immigration or Justice.

Town Basics:

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Qu’Appelle had not achieved the dreams of growth imagined by its early residents. The town’s prominence as a regional hub diminished when Qu’Appelle was taken off all through-train routes in 1910, with only locals stopping in town. Qu’Appelle also did not keep pace with other Saskatchewan communities’ population booms. Despite nearly doubling in the first

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decade of the 1900s, the town of Qu’Appelle’s population started falling through the 1910s and 1920s.⁴³⁰

Some working generalizations regarding the makeup of Qu’Appelle and the surrounding area during the first years of the THOH can be made. The community was still mostly British – specifically British-Canadian. Of those Canadians, most were born in Ontario and Saskatchewan. However, a sizable German population existed. Approximately one-third of the population was non-British, with about half of those non-British residents indentifying as American. Christianity was still the religion of choice, with Catholics, Anglicans, and Presbyterians being the most numerous of the various Christian sects in the region.⁴³¹

The THOH as Static Symbol:

The construction of the THOH was a performative act. This performance included not only the actual erection of the structure, but also the pre-construction phases such as community negotiations regarding its functions, funding, design, and location. Such issues usually could be reduced to various incarnations of the question, “What would this THOH mean?” As early as December 1900, Progress editor E. E. Law observed that “the people of South Qu’Appelle Municipality should begin to consider the question of building a new town hall. The Government may at any time use the present

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⁴³⁰ Canada, Census 1916, “Table 1: Population... in 1916, 1911, 1906, and 1901,” 64-65; Canada, Census 1921, “Table 8: Population... compared to the census years 1921, 1911, and 1901”: Qu’Appelle was overshadowed by nearby Regina’s astounding population jump – from approximately 2200 residents to over 30,000. As Regina’s metaphorical shadow grew, Qu’Appelle struggled to attract immigrants. Qu’Appelle’s population would fall to 722 by the 1916 census and to 688 by 1921.

⁴³¹ In 1911 Christianity was still the overwhelmingly reported religion in the town with the three biggest denominations being Roman Catholic (33%), Presbyterian (23%), and Anglicans (26%) (Canada, Census 1911, “Table 2. Religions of the People”).
building for housing immigrants.” The Progress also published its version of an assessment of the town of Qu’Appelle’s needs in the 1900s. A new town hall headed the following list:

Qu'Appelle's Wants—What the New Century Should Bring this Town.
A new town hall.
A farmers' elevator.
The farmers to prosper.
An electric line to the Fort.
The people to deal at home.
Fire apparatus and a fire brigade.
The town lit with electric light.
Lower freight rates, east and west.
More settlers on adjacent vacant lands.
A few more manufacturing enterprises.
Thorough and persistent advertising.
More unity between town and country.
A good jeweller and watchmaker to open out here.
A winter as well as summer run for creamery.
A better market furnished for the farmers' products.
Tree planting on our streets and strict protection of same.
A good Brass Band and its hearty support by the town.
Business sufficient to support another bank, preferably chartered.
Several large, brick business blocks with offices and stores to rent.
Fifty to sixty thousand pounds the annual output of butter at the creamery.

The Progress noted that, thanks in part to the local efforts of Councillor Doolittle and an increasing number of citizens, the town hall cause soon gained momentum. Community members who championed the new town hall were “progressive;” those who did not were petty or uncaring. After the final sale and closure of the Immigration Hall in 1905, necessity inspired the community members, including those previously identified as cheap and apathetic, to get behind the new town hall cause. It was soon

433 “Qu'Appelle's Wants, What the New Century Should Bring this Town,” Progress, 10 January 1901, P1.
declared that, “there is now little doubt that the movement will be carried to a successful issue[sic].”

The possibilities of a new town hall building and its potential place within the community were soon up for debate. The initial negotiations centred on cost. A petition to build a structure for $7,000 was circulated among ratepayers, “but met with strong opposition on the grounds that the sum was inadequate.” A revised proposal increased the projected cost to $10,000 and was “met with [a] warmer reception, being signed by nearly every ratepayer.” The ratepayers of the community put stock in not appearing to be cheap in their public buildings.

The location of the new THOH was a significant issue in Qu’Appelle, despite the small size of the community. Judging by the coverage in the Progress, location was especially significant to the business elite (particularly landowners and speculators). The layout of CPR towns (like Qu’Appelle) made for easily identified high-value, high-demand commercial properties: “The CPR townsites typically featured two wide streets for commercial purposes: one parallel to the tracks for grain elevators, warehouses, and station, and another for retail businesses. Merchants competed with speculators for possession of these limited properties, especially corner lots.” If the Qu’Appelle Town Hall were built on one of these streets, it could have made a profit for whatever landowner or speculator held the property. It might have also increased the value of adjoining properties. The THOH was also expected to be a dominant piece of

436 Ibid.
437 Voisey, Vulcan 57.
architecture in Qu’Appelle. Boosters saw THOH as the best way to visually impress visitors with the confidence and “progressiveness” of the town.

Two possible locations were presented as being the logical options for the town hall. One site was a block on Caswell Street, then occupied only by the school buildings. The other site proposed was an undetermined location on the main business street, Qu’Appelle Ave. The first site was not a favourite of the Progress. An editorial opined that this Caswell street site “might permit beautifying the grounds in front of the building, but would be unsatisfactory in other respects.” The inspirational impact of the town hall would be lost if it was placed on Caswell Street, which was far from the train station (where arriving, potential investors would first glimpse the town) as well as most of the town’s businesses. The Progress warned that it would be “an indiscretion to place a public building of this nature on a back street where it would be unobserved by businessmen and others visiting the town.”

There were few critical reflections regarding the multi-functional character of the building. The THOH form was reasonably well-established, being a way to practically increase the efficiency by which they were adding civic services (police, fire protection, meeting space, performance space, etc.) as well as increasing the scale of the building, and therefore its prominence in the town and surrounding region. The only debated issue regarding the functions of the building was whether spaces for businesses and professional offices would be included to increase the building’s potential rental revenues. The Progress advocated that the new civic building should be “A Business

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439 Ibid.
Proposition.” As such, the Progress (and perhaps some business-owners in town with property on south Qu’Appelle St.) favoured the business-street location. The suggestion was that the Qu’Appelle town hall should include commercial-rental space, as did the THOHs in Davidson and Hanley, for example (Figures 28, 29, and 30). Building a business block and a town Hall would satisfy two of the Progress-identified “wants” in Qu’Appelle.

![Figure 28](image-url)  
Figure 28: (left) “Hanley Town Hall Opera House North Elevation,” in Binder T2 - Subject: Town Halls, “Appendix D: History and Plans of Hanley Town Hall,” Saskatchewan, Parks, Culture, and Sport; Culture and Heritage, Regina, Saskatchewan.  
Figure 29: (right) “Hanley Town Hall Opera House West Elevation,” Ibid.  
Figure 30: Davidson Town Hall Opera House, 1910, in “Over Five Hundred Attend the Opening,” Davidson Leader, 17 November 1910, P1.

Such a building could have required an even more expensive investment, for it was argued it might have been “better to purchase lots on Qu'Appelle street, spend even as high as $15,000, and include in the structure either a handsome store or suites of offices, the rentals of which, with those from the use of the public hall, would go far toward paying all running expenses and the interest on debentures.” The Progress summed up the argument with a plea for practicality, as follows: “By all means let us have a

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440 Ibid.  
municipal building, but let it be a credit to the town. At the same time combine business with necessity and erect a structure that will bring an income to help relieve taxation."**442**

In the lead-up to the June 1905**443** ratepayer vote regarding the town taking on a $10,000 debenture for the town hall project, the *Progress* presented an opinion poll of sorts, with the *Progress* defining the major stakeholders and community leaders worth considering. Interviews were undertaken with what were described as “representative men with property interests in the town,” among whom there was reportedly “almost unanimous support of the project.”**444**

Town Councillor Caswell – who was a merchant with a store on Qu’Appelle Street – was reported as recognising “the urgent need of a hall and municipal offices, and was unequivocally favourable to the erection of a building for the purposes proposed... He also strongly advocated the erection of the building on the main street (Qu’Appelle) as being the most advantageous, and the best advertisement for the town.” The Town Hall was already presented as being more than a collection of its various functions; it was a symbol of confidence in the town’s future progress. Caswell’s imagined “advertisement for the town” would be showcased on the south end of Qu’Appelle Street (Figure 31 and 32) – near the railroad and stores, including his own.

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**442** Ibid.

**443** “Local News,” *Progress*, 1 June 1905, P8: The vote, initially set for 26 May 1905, was delayed until 23 June 1905 due to needed corrections being made to the posted/advertised by-law.

**444** “Bylaw Will Carry – Marked Unanimity Among Supporters,” *Progress* 18 May, 1905, P1.
W. J. Craig agreed, advising that the Qu’Appelle street location would place the new hall “where it would be convenient and prominent.” Other businessmen were identified as supporting the location: “A.M. Webster (Blacksmith); W. H. Hunter, W. K. Wilson, C. K. Hamilton, C. T. Bailey, A. MacKenzie, J. P. Creamer, D. Browne (Qu’Appelle Hardware Store) and a number of others were also called upon and were unanimously in support of the proposition.” Councillor Doolittle was “one of the prime movers in this matter.” A champion of the project, but not the location, “he was not insistent on a Qu’Appelle street site so long as suitable lots could be obtained elsewhere.”

The lone noted exceptions to the above-reported unanimity of preference for the business-street site were F. J. James and J.A. Longpre. Both argued for frugality. James noted he would “prefer a town hall with offices or store in connection, but realize[d] that $10,000 is insufficient to include these,” and advised that the hall should be built on “a portion of the school property.” The most absolute of the dissenters was Longpre, who “realized that a town hall was required but felt that $10,000 was more than the town could afford to spend.”

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445 Ibid.
446 Ibid.
Ultimately, the council agreed with James and Doolittle regarding the location of the THOH – against the advice of the *Progress* and its reported majority of local business-leaders. It was built on the same block as the high school (also completed in 1906). The Qu’Appelle School Division sold the lots to the Town of Qu’Appelle for $450.00. The town hall created a structure of similar scale and ornamentation as the school on the same, uncrowded block. The THOH would not be in danger of crowding by adjacent buildings, as it would have been on the main business street. The disadvantage was that the THOH would not be, as W. J. Craig noted, “convenient and prominent” for businesses on the town’s major street.

The bylaw allowing the council to borrow $10,000 for the THOH needed a vote of over one-half of the ratepayers of the town. The town council proposed that revenues (specifically from the sale of town lots and expected revenue from rental of hall) would be sufficient enough to repay debentures without raising taxes. Once the hall was operating, however, the hope that the auditorium would generate any great amount of income was soon dispelled. At the end of 1907, the THOH having operated for over one year, the Town Hall committee chair, Councillor Vicars, reported that, since opening, the cost of maintaining the building was $955.40, or “$340 more than receipts.” This deficit was not seen as a problem, however, as it was assumed that “this expense was larger than it should be, by the extra cost of heating last winter, on

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447 Specifically, the site of the THOH is the North West corner of the intersection of 9th Avenue and Walsh Street.
449 “A By-law to raise the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars for the purpose of acquiring a suitable site for, and of the erecting thereon, a Town Hall within the Town of Qu’Appelle, in the District of Assiniboia,” *Progress*, 4 May 1905, P4; The loan was repayable in twenty yearly installments of $500, towards the principle and six percent interest.
450 “Bylaw Will Carry – Marked Unanimity Among Supporters,” *Progress*.
account of the building being unfinished.”

In subsequent years, the town hall receipts were harder to track, as they are included in the town’s catch-all “general fund.” This could be a result of the auditorium becoming more accepted as part of the greater assets and infrastructure of the town itself, than as a revenue stream.

Despite its initial promotion of the Qu’Appelle Street location for the THOH, the Progress maintained steady support for the town hall project on the school property. The “Local News” page of the Progress on 18 May 1905 was peppered with pro town hall pleas. Appeals to property owners were made, citing growing equity, since “improvements mean money, money spent and money to be made by increasing property values.” The fear of not keeping developmental pace with other towns in the region was evoked: “Your vote in favour of a new town hall means progress. This town must not be the only standstill town in the West.” The new town hall was a chance to increase the significance of the town, symbolically and architecturally. The Progress even invoked a nickname for anyone with insufficient vision to vote yes, arguing “it’s up to every property owner in town to see that the town hall by-law passes on May 26th. We need such a building. Don’t be a ‘knocker.’”

The ratepayers’ vote was set for 23 June 1905. The Progress urged support for the project as time was of the essence, since “even as it is it will keep a contractor busy erecting it before the concert season opens.” Some grumblings about the chosen THOH site might have been surfacing in the town, however. In answer to such, an

452 Ibid.
453 For example in May 1908, the council advertised for an employee that could single-handedly fill “the combined offices of street overseer, cemetery and town hall caretaker and constable, at $50.00 per month” (Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 May 1908; “Town Council,” Progress. 4 June 1908, P1).
455 Ibid.
editorial entitled “Rise Above Selfishness,” appeared in the *Progress*, presenting the following opinion:

> At this stage all that should be required of the press in connection with the vote on the town hall by-law is to remind voters that the poll takes place tomorrow. This is all that is necessary for the broad-minded, public-spirited portion of the citizens, but unfortunately there are in our midst some who are so fearful and pessimistic that they are shy at shadows. Some there are who, although they helped to select our council, have little faith in their business acumen and interest in the town’s welfare, and fearing lest the site to be chosen for a hall may not suit them, will try to prevent it being built at all by voting against the proposition tomorrow. Our council is just as public spirited a body of men, regarded as a whole, as can be found here, and can surely be relied upon to choose a site advantageous to the town. Therefore this point need not deter anyone from voting for the bylaw. There are those who signed the petition more or less opposed to the scheme. We appeal to the sense of honor of these and ask them whether they can justly oppose the by-law after what they have done? They cannot deny the necessity of a hall and should be willing to sacrifice their own opinions for the public weal if for no other reason.\textsuperscript{456}

The notion that expressing dissent over the location of the THOH project was against the “public weal” seems to be a move to quell debate, rather than foster it. The negotiation of community values on display only fostered the local pro-progress mythos. The refrain of progress above all else was vigorously repeated:

> The selfish spirit which prompts some of our citizens to “knock” every improvement, public or private, which may directly or indirectly affect their pockets or trade is a reprehensible and disgraceful one. “United we stand; divided we fall.” Let “Onward” be the watchword of Qu’Appelle, and with united effort let the citizens promote the welfare of one of the most beautifully situated towns in Western Canada.
> Vote FOR the by-law tomorrow.\textsuperscript{457}

Such strenuous editorial-advocating might have indicated that the by-law was indeed at risk. But voting was decidedly one-sided; the bylaw passed thirty-nine votes for and five against, with barely half of eligible ratepayers voting. The reasons offered for the low

\textsuperscript{456} *Progress*, 22 June 1905, P4.
\textsuperscript{457} Ibid.
turnout was that some ratepayers were not residents, some residents were absent, and some ratepayers abstained. The five “knockers” were a topic of gossip. The Progress noted that “considerable speculation is going on as to who were the antagonistic five but the names, if known, would matter little since it is evident that the populace are strongly in favor of having a hall.” After the vote, the Progress – despite having fostered the idea of a possible ratepayer’s refusal of the THOH project – published an about-face which admitted that “while little discussion of the project has been heard on the streets, some there were who feared that a quiet opposition had arisen against the by-law. It is pleasing to note that this fear was wholly groundless.” But the fear, however groundless, was eagerly spread by the Progress and offered a juicy story for the paper.

**W. M. Dodd and the Architecture:**

The town hall project had cleared the social and ideological hurdles of popular opinion, ratepayer vote, and council approval. Attention next shifted to negotiations and decisions surrounding the physical construction of the Hall. W. M. Dodd was chosen as the project’s architect. Dodd’s design for the Qu’Appelle THOH fit into the Romanesque Revival style that was popular in Canada by the first decade of the twentieth century.

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458 “$10,000 Town Hall – Little More Than Half the Vote Polled,” Progress, 29 June 1905, P1. The ratepayer number seems surprisingly small compared even to the population of Qu’Appelle town which was 778 persons in 1905 – an increase from 434 in 1901 (Canada, Census 1906, “Table I: Population by sexes in 1906 and 1901”).

459 “$10,000 Town Hall – Little More Than Half the Vote Polled,” Progress.

460 Ibid.

461 “Monumental Town and City Halls in Canada,” 61: G.E. Mills cites Toronto City Hall and Court House (built 1888) as a trendsetting example of the style in town and city halls in the 1890s and 1900s, inspiring other THOH in Canada, Regina, Calgary, Hamilton, Chatham. This Romanesque Revival style in Canada had distinctly American roots. As an example of these inspirational roots, Mills singled out Henry Hobson Richardson in Boston, designer of Boston’s Trinity Church in the 1870s for whom Richardsonian Romanesque, its own specific sub-style of Romanesque Revival architecture, was named.
The THOH boasted a fortress-like silhouette, with tower crenellations, corbelled cornice, and earthen ramp leading to the fire-hall entrance (Figures 33, 34, and 35). Elaborate brickwork decorated doorways, windows, and roundels. Inside the building, moldings, woodwork, and other finishing effects were designed to provide a lasting sense of quality. The scale of the building, as well as its hip roof and towers, made it a compliment to the High School building on the same block (Figure 36).

Dodd’s fondness for this style of building can be seen in his larger and smaller scale buildings, e.g. the Calgary City Hall, Regina City Hall (Figure 37), and Calgary’s Salvation Army Barracks (Figure 38).

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463 “SK File: MHP 379” Saskatchewan.
The top floor was taken up by the auditorium space (Figure 39). The hardwood floor served as a dance-surface as well as audience seating area. The raised stage area included a performance space and dressing room areas what would have traditionally been set aside as wing-space (Figures 40 and 41). The vaulted ceiling was decorated with ornamental stamped metal tiles (Figure 42). The plans included a five-tier balcony opposite the stage and above the stairway. To save construction costs, the balcony was not built.\footnote{Dodd, W. M. (Architect) and E. C. Hopkins (Associate), \textit{Specifications for a Proposed City Hall to be Erected at Qu’Appelle, Assa., N.W.T}. Regina: ca. 1905, P2: The gallery was to be included as a separate tender with the initial THOH tender bids, “so if this part is left out, this price can be taken off the Tender for the whole of the building.”}
The ground floor (Figure 43) was designed to serve several functions. It housed the council chamber (Figures 44 through 47), which also served as the judicial court and, on at least one occasion, as “a ladies’ cloak room.” The west end of the building housed the town’s fire equipment/department.

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Figure 41 (left): “Opera House Stage,” Qu’Appelle Town Hall, photograph by author, 30 August 2010. Figure 42 (right): “Opera House Auditorium,” Qu’Appelle Town Hall: the rear of auditorium plans originally called for a balcony. Currently, scaffolding helps support the roof and corner tower.

Figure 43: (left) Qu’Appelle Town Hall Blueprints, Ground Floor, from Dodd Town Hall at Qu’Appelle. Figure 44: (right) Detail of Qu’Appelle Town Hall Blueprints, Plan of Ground Floor, from Dodd Town Hall at Qu’Appelle (Highlights added).

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465 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes 1904 – 1931, Town of Qu’Appelle Minute Book Mar. 15, 1904 – July 22, 1909, Minutes of meeting 27 December 1907, SAB, R-2.996, No. 1; “Council Closes in Harmony,” Progress, 3 January 1907, P 1,4; It was used as such on 3 January 1907, but the South Qu’Appelle Ag. Society needed to secure permission in advance from town council or using the chamber for such a purpose.

466 The fire hall construction was not finished until January 1909 (“W. K. Wilson & Co. have finished their work on the fire hall, Progress January 21, 1909, Local News).

467 Dodd Town Hall at Qu’Appelle Saskatchewan.
The main floor also housed the entrance hall and staircase to the upper floor (Figure 47). Offices were located on the north side of the main floor (Figures 48 and 49). The council clerk’s office included an open counter to the “Public” room through which the public were to access the services of the clerk; and another “office,” presumably to allow for the municipal council of South Qu’Appelle to have office space in the hall. This second office was used by the municipality whenever an agreeable solution could be reached between the town and rural councils regarding the space.

The basement plans (Figure 50) included the police office and cells, the boiler room and fuel storage, accommodation for a caretaker, and a kitchen area. Most of the interior dividers were done away with during construction in order to save money or the
upper floors, leaving the much of the basement open. This cost saving measure had unintended consequences in January, however, when it was reported that “during the first of this week a carload of coal was delivered at the town hall. The dust raised by dumping it into the basement covered everything with a pall, and prevented Secretary Starr occupying his office... We understand the council will have a portion of the basement walled off for fuel as soon as possible.”

![Figure 50: Qu’Appelle Town Hall Blueprints, Plan of Basement, from Dodd Town Hall at Qu’Appelle.](image)

The basement space was never be fitted out as living quarters for a caretaker. It was initially furnished as a dining room for events in the upper hall. This dining area also would end up serving more diverse functions, e.g. a club room, gymnasium, and even shooting gallery (Figure 51). Only the police office and cells were constructed (Figures 51 through 55).

![Figure 51: “Basement,” Qu’Appelle Town Hall: the Club room, dining room, and current furnace room. The Kalsomining is still visible on some of the stones.](image)

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468 “During the first of this week,” Progress, 17 January 1907, P8.
Contracts were signed for materials, which began arriving at the construction site in August 1905. The Progress added the cautious observation that “the season is rapidly advancing, and as it is, some tall hustling will have to be done to have it completed this year.” Indeed the speed of work would have to be miraculous to finish in 1905, as tenders for the construction contracts did not close until mid September. The basement was started in September 1905. The Progress continued to tout the unrealistically optimistic expectation that the building would be completed by New Year’s. The winning tenders for the THOH were not announced until March 1906, the $9,985 bid of McDougall & Ireland of Virden beating out the next lowest bid of $10,447 by A. M. Fraser & Co., of Indian Head.

By April, the Progress reported, “The contractors for the town hall have begun work, and soon the handsome structure will be rearing its walls skyward.” In May, E. E. Carver (architect and representative of Dodd and Hopkins) visited the site. Carver’s

———. “Jail Cells,” Qu’Appelle Town Hall, Qu’Appelle SK, photographs by author, 30 August 2010.
470 “The contract has been let,” Progress 17, August 1905, P8.
473 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes 1904 – 1931, Town of Qu’Appelle Minute Book Mar. 15, 1904 – July 22, 1909, Minutes of 21 March 1906, SAB, R-2.996, No. 1; “Town Council,” Progress, 29 March 1906, P1: The other bids considered were J. E. A. Haw: $10,490; and Geo Harris: 10, 870.
visit coincided with the town council’s realization that more money was needed to finish the hall. Accepting of tenders for installation of the heating system was suspended pending another ratepayer vote on further debentures.\textsuperscript{476} In the lead-up to the vote, the "\textit{Progress}" felt the need to chide: “Every properly qualified ratepayer is expected to turn out and record his vote.”\textsuperscript{477} This vote, regarding the borrowing of $5,000 more to finish the hall, inspired only twenty-three ratepayers to cast ballots. All were in favour of the further debentures.\textsuperscript{478}

\textbf{The Hall’s Wider Community Impact}

The decision to build a THOH, moving from the found-space of the Immigration hall to a purpose-built space was part of (if not a catalyst for) a wider Qu’Appelle building spree. The Qu’Appelle school building had been completed in 1906 on the same block as the THOH. The construction of the THOH brought trades-people and contractors to Qu’Appelle. Geo. Harris (the local representative for McDougall and Ireland) started work on the THOH. Within one week, the "\textit{Progress}" reported gossip regarding new buildings in town: “the air is full of rumors of new business blocks and new stores to open this year, but little definite information can be obtained.”\textsuperscript{479} The degree to which Harris inspired, or merely responded to, the desire to build in Qu’Appelle is unclear. But by year’s end, Harris had secured contracts to build business blocks in Qu’Appelle for W. H. Hunter, H. F. Harmer, and A. T. Whiting – in addition to

\textsuperscript{476} Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 30 May 1906; “Town Council,” \textit{Progress}, 7 June 1906, P1.
\textsuperscript{477} “Every properly qualified ratepayer,” \textit{Progress}, 19 July 1906, P8.
\textsuperscript{478} “By-law Carried Unanimously,” \textit{Progress}, 26 July 1906, P1.
\textsuperscript{479} “The air is full,” \textit{Progress}, 26 April 1906, P8.
winning tenders to construct the THOHs in both Wapella (Figure 56) and Wolseley (Figure 57). 480

The flurry of building activity that occurred throughout 1906 was looked back upon with satisfaction in Qu’Appelle. The 1906 Christmas edition of the Progress boasted on the front page “Qu’Appelle No Longer ‘Same Old Town’ – Phenomenal Growth Only the Beginning – Proud Record for 1906.” The article, dutifully connecting growth to progress, identified how Qu’Appelle’s growth was perceived as lagging behind other regional rivals:

For 20 years the growth was steady but not sufficient to create much comment in the outside world. Commercial travellers visiting this point were wont to remark that it was ‘the same old town’ meaning that its advancement was not parallel with other points along the railway ... A cycle of lean years combined with an inclination of many citizens to leave civic affairs alone and look after their own private business was no doubt accountable for the partial stagnation. 481

Other reasons identified as driving the pro-building mentality in the town were the town’s recent incorporation, an upturn in the economy, and a surge of public spirit. This local progress-mythos was described as follows:

With a beginning of a period of fat years, so far as crops were concerned, and the influx of new settlers about six years ago, a change for the better

480 “Geo. Harris has secured the contracts,” Progress, 9 August 1906, P8.
481 “Qu’Appelle No Longer ‘Same Old Town’,” Progress, 20 December 1906, P1.
was apparent and when, three years ago the town became incorporated, a healthier public spirit replaced the former partial indifference. Then a little leaven of progressive endeavor began to affect all citizens. ‘Onward’ became the watchword both in civic and private affairs, culminating in a development this year that few if any towns of the size in Saskatchewan can excel.\footnote{Ibid.}

The new schoolhouse and town hall were two possible inspirations for increased building in Qu’Appelle in 1906. But a fire in March also necessitated new construction on the business streets of town. The fire occurred in the early hours of 21 March 1906. It destroyed R. A. Hardy’s bakery (in a building owned by J. R. North), the Qu’Appelle Furniture Co. store (building owned by J. Doolittle), G. A. MaGurk’s residence, Lee Wing’s laundry, and A. M. Webster’s blacksmith shop.\footnote{“Big Fire in Qu’Appelle; Two Families Made Homeless—Five Buildings Cleaned Out,” \emph{Progress}, 23 March 1906, P1.} Of the building owners who lost property in the fire, only two were listed as builders in the year-end review of the great building boom of 1906. In its end-of 1906 building review, the \emph{Progress} printed the “list of buildings erected or improved with the estimated cost of each,” which read as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New School</td>
<td>$23,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Hall</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. P. Beauchamp &amp; Co.’s block</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. E. Harmer &amp; Co.’s block</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Bank block</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Bank Block</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. T. Whiting’s Block</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. R. North’s Block</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian church</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. H. Hunter’s store</td>
<td>2,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. E. A. Haw’s residence</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Bunt’s residence</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Densmore’s residence</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. J. James’ residence</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Macdonald’s</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. D. Burman’s residence</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
S. Peters’ parish room 1,200
C. E. Butler’s residence 1,000
Blakely & Booth’s block 800
Dr. Martin’s block 300
J. Doolittle’s residence 300

These sites were part of what the writer claimed as being an estimated $132,300 that was spent on buildings in Qu’Appelle in 1906, with a further estimated $30,000 worth of buildings being erected in the surrounding region (for examples see Figures 58 and 59).

But the Progress was sure to emphasize that Qu’Appelle was not content to rest, observing that “this was an extremely good showing, but evidences all point to a continuation of this progressive development next year. Already plans for about $50,000 worth of new buildings for 1907 are projected and this figure will no doubt grow before next midsummer. This is Qu’Appelle’s growing time. May the good work go on.”


Such a boom in building – as it might be assumed within the developing community mythos with regard to growth and progress – would be signs of confidence and forward-thinking that would inevitably bring settlers and their business to town. Community

484 “Qu’Appelle No Longer ‘Same Old Town’,” Progress.
485 Ibid.
boosting pieces by the *Progress* – and other groups such as the Board of Trade – continued to boast that the town was blessed with buildings:

> Its stores, banks and other businesses are fully equal to [illegible] in towns of its size and in some cases far excel those of towns nearly twice the size. Possessed of a High and a Public school, an excellent teaching staff and a magnificent school building it had educational advantages that cannot be too highly extolled. Qu’Appelle’s town hall is also a credit to the town and the scene of many a pleasant entertainment. Nor is religion being neglected, there being three Protestant and one Roman Catholic church in town.\(^{486}\)

By 1911, boosters in Qu’Appelle would routinely argue that these amenities (as well as the low cost of land, low cost of living, and an ever-expected regional production boom) gave Qu’Appelle an advantage over regional rivals.

### Opening Night: The Community Begins Moving into the Hall

The first public performance in the THOH auditorium was a starting point from which the wider community began to engage directly with the space. The Grand Opening event of the THOH was a concert on Saturday, 3 November 1906. The *Progress* headline bragged “Qu’Appelle Town Hall Ready – A Treat in Store – Will be Auspicious Occasion [sic].”\(^{487}\) The entertainment was cited as a North American hit “the famous Polmatier Sisters have been engaged for the occasion and judging by press comments from all over Canada and the United States, the aggregation will be one of the most attractive of the season.”\(^{488}\) The concert would begin after Mayor Henderson addressed the crowd while in front of the new curtain. The quality and uniqueness of the entertainment were presented as the selling points of the Polmatier Sisters’ show. The

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\(^{486}\) The piece also notes that the town enjoyed, “excellent railway accommodation lying as it does along the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway” ("Qu’Appelle," *Progress*, 7 January 1909, P4).

\(^{487}\) “Grand Opening,” *Progress* November 1, 1906, P1.

\(^{488}\) Ibid.
sisters sang and played instruments with the promise that “the sisters whether in the orchestra or in their individual parts possess accomplishments far above the ordinary,” and it was assumed “that late comers will find standing room only.” This concert was hyped as being the first chance to show the potential of the building as a public gathering place as well as a place for high-class entertainment.

The program was well received, but the Progress observer expressed some disappointment at the attendance, noting that although “the concert ... was undoubtedly a high class performance,” it “merited an even larger attendance than it was favoured with.” However, it does happen to have been well received by the 200-300 people present whose “frequent applause recalling the performers marked the sincere appreciation of the audience.” Part of the attendance problem may have been ticket prices. The concert tickets sold for one dollar each at Hunter’s Drug Store. In the years after the THOH grand opening, the Progress would repeatedly chide performing troupes who charged more than fifty or seventy-five cents for a ticket. The Progress’s common term for tickets that cost less than fifty cents was “popular.” Mayor (Dr.) Henderson would later report a profit of $44.05 from the concert.

The concert-goers who did attend were treated to a good show. Both the entertainment and the auditorium lived up to expectations. According to the Progress reporter, the sisters made a positive impression for several reasons, namely “their ready response to encores, combined with their charming manners and musical skill [which]

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489 Ibid.
490 “High Class Concert Saturday Evening.” Progress 8 November 1906, P1.
491 “Grand Opening,” Progress.
won for them a high opinion among concert goers here.”493 Praise for the hall continued to serve as an extension of town boosterism with the final observation that “there are many finishing touches to be put upon the hall but when completed we doubt if there will be a hall in any Saskatchewan town of the same size to compete with it in comfort, acoustic properties or attractive appearance.”494 That the hall/performance-space is, simply by existing, in a competition with any other hall in a similarly-sized town in Saskatchewan reinforces the ongoing contest for settlers in the West.

The day after the hall’s grand opening concert, the Canadian Order of Foresters (COF) Local Court Poplar Bluff held their grand ball, where again a good time and large crowd was reported: “The only objection raised was that the room was not large enough for the big crowd present. This however, did not prevent the good natured throng from having an enjoyable time and duly appreciating the hospitality of the members of Court Poplar Bluff as well as the excellent music of Wolseley Orchestra.”495 The unfinished state of the hall did not go completely unchallenged by the COF, however, as they did successfully petition the town council, who “decided to allow a rebate of 50 per cent of the hall rent to the C.O.F. on account of the hall not being completed on the night the order occupied it.”496

Once the Town Hall Opera House was built and operating, its meaning within the community continued in an official capacity (formally identified uses) as well as unofficial capacity (the other defining uses to which the space was put). The town offices officially moved into the building weeks after the entertainments in the hall began. The

493 “High Class Concert Saturday Evening,” Progress.
494 Ibid.
496 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 December 1907.
Progress reported, “J. C. Starr is now established in the new council chamber. Later, when his office adjoining is completed, he will be in a position to handle municipal business most expeditiously.”\textsuperscript{497} The combination of governmental and performative functions in this space provided a new focus for community-mythos negotiation – specifically through the definition of the uses and meanings of the THOH space.

One of the main aspects up for negotiation within a dominant community mythos is a sense of “who we are” and sometimes, more pointedly, “who we are not.” A sense of who should be included and excluded is a major part of such negotiations. The town council began shaping such negotiations with regard to the THOH prior to the first performance by setting rates for access to the spaces. These rates varied according to what type of group sought access, immediately establishing a preferred order of access. This is in some ways akin to a system of deciding who was in, who was out, and who was part of the community’s inner-circle. The town council did seek to secure the South Qu’Appelle council as tenants in the THOH, offering half-rate rent ($45.00) for the year 1907. The Qu’Appelle Board of Trade, by contrast, was offered free use of the Council Chamber for their monthly meetings. General per-night fees for renting the Town Hall were set as follows: “For concerts and plays, not local, $20.00; For dances to continue after midnight, 20.00; For dances up to twelve o’clock, 15.00; For private dances, 15.00; Local Concerts, 10.00; Church entertainments 10.00.”\textsuperscript{498} The council was charging rental fees for events in the performance space, but the terms and specific arrangements were still a point of negotiation. Travelling troupes were to be charged a license fee as part of the hall rental fee. All users were required to provide a twenty-five percent deposit upon

\textsuperscript{497} “J. C. Starr is now established in the new council chamber,” Progress, 22 November 1906, P8.
\textsuperscript{498} Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 24 October 1906.
application for the hall and the balance of the hall rental fee “not later than 6 o’clock of
the day is to be used and that no exception be made to this rule.” Some local groups,
for example churches and local concerts, got charged a discounted rental fee. Other local
groups were privileged enough to receive free use of the space, but only by applying to
council. For example, Mrs. Pott’s entertainment for the Indian Head Hospital was
granted free use of the town hall, while her church concerts were not. Even non-local
troupes could gain temporary inner-circle status if the cause was deemed worthy. In
1908, when the Indian Head Dramatic Club performed Caste as a fundraiser for the
Indian Head Hospital, the troupe raised $83.00 for the hospital and was forgiven the
rental-fee for the hall. Two years later, however, the troupe returned to Qu’Appelle to
produce a show. This show was not a fundraiser for charity. The group received good
reviews, but only a “fair” house. The town council refused to allow the group a rebate
on the THOH rent for the event, deciding that the council “could not allow a precedent of
this nature to be established for private interests.”

Since local entertainers were the most likely people to influence their town
council regarding rental rates, it is likely that local groups were responsible for the
creation of lower summer rental rates for local entertainments. Rates were adjusted to
accommodate more complex and seasonal hall use (e.g. nominal fees for rehearsals were
included, use of dishes cost one dollar, and the THOH cost less to rent when heating

499 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 December 1907; “Council Closes in Harmony,” Progress.
501 “In presenting ‘Caste’ to a Qu’Appelle audience,” Progress 10 December 1908, P1.
503 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 25 August, 1909; “Council Minutes,” Progress 2 September
1909, P1.
504 “The council has fixed a summer rental rate,” Progress, 2 July 1908, P1: The Progress reported a fee
for “Use of Dishes, $1” which is not mentioned in the council minutes, but it is possible that this was a fee
established at a previous meeting.
Fees for using the hall without heating it were substantially lower for local groups, and the choice of whether or not to pay to heat the hall could be critical to an event’s success. Liberal party organizers discovered as much in the fall of 1908. Befitting from summer rates that were available until the first of November, they staged an event touted as the “Opening Gun of the Campaign.” It failed to live up to hopes of being a Liberal mass rally, however, for although “the hall was decorated with mottoes... only fifty men and fifteen ladies were present. Little enthusiasm was in evidence, and the chill atmosphere of the room made it uncomfortable for both speakers and audience.” Paying for a heated hall became a selling point for later events. The local Conservatives, in advertising their next meeting, smugly boasted that the “room will be warmed if necessary.” The move was advertised so that the Conservatives could avoid such jibes as were being levelled at their Liberal rivals, for example: “some of the Liberals had cold feet Friday last.”

**Furnishing, Decoration, Ornamentation**

Local council decisions regarding access and furnishing of the THOH were significant in defining the space within the community. But users and user groups also played a role shaping negotiations of the space. Outfitting the town hall was a big project

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505 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 29 June 1908: “Not local” events paid $20.00 per night all year long. From May through October, “local entertainments” (without heat) paid $5.00/night – unless the event went after midnight, then the rate was $10.00. Rehearsals could be booked in three-hour blocks ($2.00 with light, $1.00 without). Local events paid “winter rates” November through April as follows: “Dances to continue after midnight $20.00 per night; Dances up to 12 o’clock $15.00 per night; Private Dances 15.00; Local entertainments 10.00; Church entertainments 10.00; Rehearsals $3.00 for three hours.”

506 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 29 June 1908.

507 “Opening Gun of Campaign,” *Progress*, 1 October 1908, P1.

508 Ibid.

509 “Turn out to the Conservative meeting,” *Progress* 1 October 1908.

510 “Some of the Liberals,” *Progress* 1 October 1908.
for Qu’Appelle, especially during its first years in operation. Individuals and groups were eager to add something of “their own” to the environment of the THOH – perhaps adding a more personal sense-of-belonging, or stamp of ownership. One of the building’s first donated decorations was a flag, which Mayor Henderson “had much pleasure in presenting to the town.”

Furnishings and decorations for the hall were purchased, where possible, from local businesses. Local supply made sense to help local businesses benefit from the new market for their wares that was the THOH. The fact that members of the council were often also local business owners – essentially ordering from themselves – might today be viewed with more skepticism. In 1907, then-Mayor Harvey oversaw the following standing committees: Finance – Beauchamp, Caswell and Harmer; Public Works – Caswell, Doolittle and Vicars; License – Doolittle [owner of Qu’Appelle Furniture Co.], Harmer and Browne; Hall and Cemetery – Vicars, Beauchamp and Browne.

The accounts show involvement from the (perhaps expected) variety of council-member/entrepreneurs as well as representation from local trades, labourers, and service-people. Various parts of the community could see something of themselves in the new space – albeit to varying monetary benefit. The council, as the driving force behind improvements worked almost continuously to finish and improve the hall. Purchasing recommendations were put forward by the various committees (and sub-committees such as “the special committee on purchasing dishes.”) By January 1907, it was reported

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511 “Mayor Henderson announced,” *Progress* 22 November 1906, *Local News*: Such a display of Empire loyalty, though welcome, did succeed in riling the etiquette-aficionados of Qu’Appelle. Someone made a pointed observation in late 1906: “A query going the rounds is why were flags flying over the town hall and several other buildings on Christmas?” (“A query going the rounds,” *Progress*, 27 December 1906, P8)

512 “Qu’Appelle Council Sit,” *Progress*, 17 January 1907, P1; See APPENDIX Q: Qu’Appelle THOH-related purchases/expenses December 1906-April 1907 (select).

513 (Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 December 1907; “Council Closes in Harmony,” *Progress*).
that “the southern portion of the basement is being fitted up as a banquet hall. Couns. Browne and Beauchamp were appointed a committee to see to furnishing same.”

Options for local purchasing were somewhat limited in Qu’Appelle. There may not have been a perceived conflict of interest with local merchants outfitting the hall from their own stores. Being on the town council did not hurt one’s business prospects. The councillors’ businesses made money outfitting the THOH; consider, for example, the following items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business/Item Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayor B. Harvey [Insurance, etc.]</td>
<td>$156.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauchamp, J. P. [&amp; Co.]</td>
<td>$101.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, S. H. [&amp; Co.]</td>
<td>$58.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmer, F. H. [&amp; Co.]</td>
<td>$44.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicars [&amp; Morgan, fuel]</td>
<td>$253.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doolittle [Qu’Appelle Furniture Co.]</td>
<td>$211.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browne, D. [heating plant contract]</td>
<td>$771.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, W. K. (contractor/builder)</td>
<td>$740.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morden &amp; Co. (Carbide, etc.)</td>
<td>$490.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In April, the fire hall was outfitted with an engine, a “new Waterous twin cylinder chemical engine.” P. Surgeson was appointed engineer. By the fall, the drive-through fire hall was no longer deemed necessary, and it was decided that the “north door of the fire hall be closed and that a closet be enclosed in the north end of the fire hall.” In addition to these improvements, the fire hall was also lathed and plastered by W. Lowings for $160. These improvements accompanied the official appointment of a town fire chief, P. Surgeson. Surgeson was appointed to oversee the fire engine and fire-
fighting “so citizens at fires in town will be relieved of the heavy strain of giving conflicting orders.”519 Payment for the position of fire chief was informal, it appears. Council moved that Surgeson “be donated $25.00 for his services in the last Two Fires and be that further remunerations will be considered by council from time to time.”520 Essentially, the town decided to pay firefighters per fire fought.521

The relative buy-in regarding the THOH as a symbol of Qu’Appelle’s pride and progress seems to have rekindled the council’s faith in ratepayers’ willingness to borrow for community-pride’s sake. By September, the council sought public permission to issue another $10,000 in debentures for “public improvements.” The vote, 27 for and 3 against, was reported as being proof “that the ratepayers are almost unanimous in their desire for improvement.”522 The turnout, 30 ratepayers, was reported as being barely half of the possible vote. Whether the other (approximately) thirty ratepayers failed to vote out of apathy, disinterest, or as a silent protest is unclear. While the ratepayers’ “desire for improvement” was noted, it appears their desire had limits, according to the opinion of the Progress reporter, who noted that as the councillors had reached “about the limit of their borrowing power for the town, the council will, it is expected, be very careful in their expenditure for a few years at least.”523 The specific limit of borrowing is unclear,

519 “It’s Capt. Surgeson now,” Progress 3 October 1907, P8.
520 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 25 September 1907.
521 The completion of the most of the fire hall space appears to have occurred by January 1909. The work included weather-proofing of the fire hall (storm doors) as well as locker space needed for firefighter’s personal gear and effects. The fire hall was more functionally defined as a place for community fire protection and less merely an indoor place to park the chemical engine (“A Recent Visit to the Town Hall,” Progress, 4 February 1909, P1).
522 “By-Law Carried,” Progress 26 September 1907, P1.
523 “By-Law Carried,” Progress.
as by March 1908, an auditor’s report was presented to the town council that estimated they were still within their absolute borrowing limit.524

At the annual ratepayers’ meeting, chaired by W. H. Hunter, the message was that the town’s finances were very healthy in 1907.525 The initial approved cost of $10,000 for the new town hall had nearly doubled over the course of its planning and construction. This did not seem to bother the council. The best face was put on the 1907 debentures, especially when it was reported that “Councillor Beauchamp considered the town fortunate in disposing of the $10,000 debentures at par to the Northern Bank, as money has since gone up.”526 However willing the town council and ratepayers were to keep investing in their THOH, some questions regarding the debts must have lingered in the community. More than a year after the debenture purchase, the Progress printed a detailed account of the loan and its use, explaining that “there appeared to be difficulty in obtaining a clear statement re this loan and the uses it was put to.”527 In the interest of greater transparency, the following accounts were presented:

524 “Town Council,” Progress 5 March 1908, P1: The limit was defined as follows: “The auditor’s report shows assets to the value of $56,663.11. This amount includes arrears of taxes, $2,832.34; credit balance at bank less outstanding cheques, $2657.99; and approximate value of unsold town lots, $18,009.00. Liabilities, $30,350.00. Excess of assets over liabilities, $26,253.11.” The report suggests that Qu’Appelle enjoyed a cushion in excess of $25,000 of assets over liabilities, but over two-thirds of that cushion was based upon the value of unsold town lots, which could be an example of hope-based borrowing practices councils fell victim to in the west). The Town Council minutes of 26 February 1908 note that the auditor’s report was received and filed, but it was not included in the minutes.
525 “Qu’Appelle Ratepayers Harmonious,” Progress.
526 Ibid.
527 “$10,000 Loan of 1907 – How it Was Applied and for What Purposes,” Progress, 12 November 1908, P1.
Despite the speed with which the THOH was being fitted out there were soon concerns arising regarding the refinement with which the work was being done. As its first year of use progressed, dissatisfaction was being more freely expressed in relation to the town hall. One year into the life of the performance space, the audience was reportedly less forgiving with the perceived inadequacies within the hall. After a Thanksgiving evening benefit performance by the Kenny-Harvey Entertainers in October 1907, the following complaint was reported in the *Progress*:

> Everyone who attended performances in the town hall has recognised the crudeness in connection with the hanging of the drop curtain. We draw attention to the matter with the hope that the council may devise some better plan of hanging, or perhaps some of our readers can suggest a practical improvement. As it is the curtain bids fair to soon be a thing of rags and tatters.\(^{528}\)

This drop curtain was a particular source of pride for Qu’Appelle. On the surface, a community still eager to prove its progressiveness in the newly-booming West would not stand having tattered curtains in their new hall.

But these curtains were specifically linked to town pride. They represented the town’s answer to an external challenge to improve its public performance space. These were the curtains from the touring Canadian showman Andrew McPhee. It was McPhee who denounced the Immigration Hall as being inadequate for performances. Perhaps to temper his criticism, he then promised to provide Qu’Appelle with a drop curtain if only the town would build a decent hall. In December 1906, the promised drop curtain arrived with several other drapes to outfit the stage. The *Progress* praised McPhee and his gift:

Many months ago A. McPhee, the Canadian showman, promised this town a drop curtain when they erected a new hall. Mr. McPhee has been as good as his word and better, there having arrived on Monday, carriage paid, a drop curtain, rear and side curtains, a drape for the front at the top. The latter bears a fine picture of King Edward VII. The curtains are not yet placed but from what we have seen and can learn they will form a handsome staging. Mr. McPhee deserves the hearty thanks of this community and, no doubt, when he comes again will be given a splendid ovation.\(^{529}\)

The next summer, however proved that curtains alone were not enough to guarantee the lasting loyalty of the Qu’Appelle audience. In June 1907, McPhee’s company played several nights in the Qu’Appelle THOH.\(^{530}\) Whether or not the anticipated “splendid ovation” occurred, the show was poorly attended, according to the local paper. The *Progress* reviewer chastised its readers for not supporting McPhee with the following rebuke:

McPhee’s company showed to poor houses here on Thursday and Friday last. It is hard to say what was the reason of the small turnout particularly on Friday. On both nights the company put on as good plays as seen here, that of Friday, “The Great Diamond Robbery” being even better than “For Her Brother’s Sake.” When Mr. McPhee’s shows appeared in the immigration hall even standing room was at a premium. Now that he has proved himself even more than a man of his word and generously

\(^{529}\) “Many months ago,” *Progress* 27 December 1906, P8.
\(^{530}\) Thursday was *For Her Brother’s Sake*; Friday was *The Great Diamond Robbery* (“Local and General,” *Progress* 20 June 1907, *Local Items*, P1; “Local News,” *Progress* 20 June 1907, P8).
presented the town with stage scenery and curtain it is little less than
shabby to turn the cold shoulder. This company deserves good houses and
we sincerely hope that the squarest showman on the road will meet with a
more cordial reception at other points.531

Thanks to the gift of a curtain, the reputation of the community and its new opera house,
in the opinion of the reviewer, was linked to its treatment of McPhee. There were a
couple of excuses offered for poor attendance on Friday. The following Monday was
July 1st; Qu’Appelle residents might have been travelling for the long weekend. There
were at least three other shows playing in Qu’Appelle within a week of McPhee –
although none had as well-reviewed a show or a proven relationship with the
community.532 The assumption seems to have been that McPhee, by personally investing
in Qu’Appelle’s THOH, also bought into the community space. He should therefore be
treated with greater loyalty than was shown to other touring troupes who had not made
such a contribution.

By springtime, local groups were making full use of the town hall facilities for
their fundraising events. The THOH was being outfitted to suit an expanding number of
roles. On Easter Monday 1908, the Methodist Ladies’ Aid put on a concert in the
auditorium and dinner in the basement banquet-hall (or “the grotto”).533 The town
council’s “Special Committee on Purchasing Dishes” had outfitted the dining room in the
empty basement room (the space not taken up by the heating plant or the police office
and cells).534 After the grotto-dining experience, patrons proceeded upstairs, where “the

531 “McPhee’s company show to poor houses here on Thursday and Friday last,” Progress, 4 July 1907, P1.
532 For example, a tent show came to town and met with criticism: “Eiler’s King of the Cattle Ring Co.
showed here on Friday last to a fair crowd. The play was coarse, the acting poor and expressionless. The
fewer we have of such shows the better” (“Eiler’s King of the Cattle Ring Co,” Progress, 11 July 1907,
P1).
533 “Methodist Ladies’ Aid,” Progress, 23 April 1908, P1.
534 “Council Closes in Harmony,” Progress, 3 January 1907, P1: In a rare instance of detailed purchases
being entered into the minutes of the town council, the committee ordered the following items from local
concert hall was well filled. The programme was varied, interesting, and instructive, and one gentleman was heard to remark that it was the best concert he had heard in Qu’Appelle. 535 Women and girls of the Methodist Ladies’ Aid performed songs, recitations, precision-drill, as well as tableaux, named “living pictures,” during which the audience was able to appreciate the hall’s “varicolored lighting.” 536

The interior spaces of the THOH were being ever more specifically decorated and redefined by its community of user groups. The basement dining room, for example, was reshaped by several local user-groups. The local Masons kalsomined the walls before their annual ball; a “grotto” was not their desired dining place. The new dining-basement was a feature of the evening which received at least one rave review:

Never since its erection has Qu’Appelle town hall presented such an attractive and artistic ensemble as it did on the occasion of the Masons’ Ball on the evening of February 3. Evidently both time and energy had been expended in draping the windows with curtains and decorating the auditorium and banquet hall as well as in providing accommodation for the many invited guests. With excellent judgement the management committee had engaged H. E. Dorval’s orchestra from Sintaluta and much of the enjoyment of the evening was due to the well tuned and harmonious strains of this aggregation. 537

For such events, the community-shaped THOH spaces were being internally defined more specifically, and starting to function cohesively together.

But the basement dining room was not limited in function. By the spring of 1909, the definition of the same room expanded to include Militia Club room, armoury, and

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535 “Methodist Ladies’ Aid,” Progress.
536 Ibid.

businesses: H. F. Harmer & Co. 12 doz cups & saucer; 12 d. Small plates; 2 large bowls; 6 sugar bowls; 6 cream pitchers; 6 milk pitchers; 6 sugar bowls; Beauchamp & Co. 16 jugs; D. Browne; 1 stove; 1 pail; 1 boiler; 1 dipper; 1 tea kettle; 1 coffee pot; 1 water pail; 9 doz. Spoons; Caswell & Co.: 1 large basket (Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 26 December 1906).
gymnasium. Initially it was “decorated by the 16th Light Horse.” Soon, the 16th Light Horse Militia and Cadet Corps installed equipment in the rooms for winter training. The Rifle Association was also delighted that the exercise equipment included a sub-targeting rifle training apparatus. Within a year, the military club users were granted permission to use a .22 calibre target pistol “in the basement of town hall provided an officer of the club be in charge at all times it is in practice and that the club will be held responsible for all damage done to the building.”

While the improvements to the basement were portrayed as being largely due to the work of the Masons and the militia, the town had been preparing the basement for months. In the autumn of 1908 the town council began diverting funds to an “armoury account.” This seems to have been a somewhat delayed local answer to the federal program to increase size of the Militia across Canada in answer to the 1905 recall of British troops from Canada. The armoury funds represented further opportunities for the council to support local businesses and for those businesses to contribute to further shaping the environment of the hall.

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538 “A Recent Visit to the Town Hall,” *Progress* 4 February 1909, P1.
539 Qu’Appelle Historical Society 215.
542 In 1905, the federal government spent almost $4 million to build up the Canadian militia in hopes of bolstering the Canadian army make up for the withdrawal of British garrisons at Esquimalt and Halifax. It included: “44,200 men in authorized establishments, 37,212 men with at least 12 days of training, 2,280 men with less than 12 days of training, and 4,708 men with no training at all” (Statistics Canada, “Building the Militia,” (2009), *Canadian Statistics in 1905*, Canada Year Book Historical Collection, http://www65.statcan.gc.ca/acyb07/acyb07_0006-eng.htm).
**R.M. vs. Council in the THOH**

The Qu’Appelle town council was established in 1904. The fledgling town council needed to come to terms with the town’s original governing body, the South Qu’Appelle Council. By early 1905, the two councils had negotiated some agreements settlements regarding disputed funds and local plots of land. The new town council was confident in its financial situation, as evidenced by the town’s aforementioned eagerness to borrow for civic improvements like the THOH. General confidence in the town’s creditworthiness was buoyed by the 1906 revised assessment roll of Qu’Appelle, which totalled $265,840.00. After the construction of the THOH, both the town and rural councils enjoyed the use of the building – especially the council chamber for meetings and the office spaces for administration. This was a convenient, if complex, arrangement since J. C. Starr served as secretary for both councils.

For the period leading up to the construction of the THOH, as well as the first few years of its existence, J. C. Starr occupied the THOH offices in many roles. Starr was the “Town Secretary and Treasurer, Secretary and Treasurer Rural Municipality South Qu’Appelle, Secretary Board of Trade and School Board.” He sold “General Insurance.” He also often served as election officer. Starr was a single point-of-service for the community in the context of (rural, town, education, commerce, and political) affairs (Figure 60).

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544 “Dispute Settled Amicably,” *Progress*, 4 May 1905, P4: For example, it was agreed that the town would be granted the cemetery and a lease of the exhibition grounds, which remained property of the rural municipality. The R.M. was also granted the grain elevator, and future associated costs thereby associated.
His position of civic and financial authority would put him at great advantage (if not also in conflict of interest) in seeing clients for his insurance and loan business, which he also ran from his office at the THOH. Instances where communications are sent between the rural council, town councils, or the board of trade take on an almost surreal tone when it is considered that, for the most part, Starr was acting as the administrative representative of all of these organizations at once. Essentially, he was sending communications to himself.

But Starr’s combinations of employment are understandable given the terms of his various employments. Neither of the councils claimed that the secretary-treasurer job was a full-time position, so one person could make one full time job out of the two. This position would also attract a person with some education as well as financial standing (or backing). For example, when the South Qu’Appelle Council moved to McLean, they demanded that their potential new secretary-treasurer would be able to “furnish guarantee bonds to amount of $5000 if appointed to the office.” In 1907, as the secretary-treasurer for two councils, Starr must have been able to furnish at least as much in guarantee funds. His influence would only have been increased by his active involvement (as secretary) in both the school board and board of trade.

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545 R.M. of South Qu’Appelle, Minutes 1897-1913, By-laws, Minutes of 6 March, 1911, SAB, R-2.740. No. 2.
Starr was also the usual choice for returning officer in the THOH. This function only increased his immediate influence over voters, as the greatest actual political influence wielded by community members was their franchise and the THOH was a polling station for every level of elections. It was also a site where community members gathered to await the results. While federal election results would have had to arrive at the town hall by wire, local election results provided more entertainment value. The 1908 mayoral race was decided by one vote. Starr’s vote-tallying inspired a retelling of how “the candidates had tied until a ballot was found folded among the rest. With silent and tense anxiety those present awaited the announcement of the vote on this ballot and finally J. P. Beauchamp was declared to be the winner.”\textsuperscript{546} Regardless of who won what election in Qu’Appelle, in this era J. C. Starr would be their administrator.

When the THOH was first built both the town and rural councils desired to meet, and operate offices, in the hall. The town council sent Councillors Vicars and Harmer “to interview [the] rural council with full powers to make any settlement re headquarters.”\textsuperscript{547} While the rural council paid for access to their meeting room, they did not technically pay rent for their office space, or the heating and lighting thereof. Such an oversight might have arisen out of the fact that the town and rural secretary-treasurer were the same man, who only needed to occupy one office. But some friction soon surfaced with town ratepayers regarding this arrangement. At the 1908 ratepayer’s meeting in the hall, the question arose as to whether the rural council should pay to rent office space within the hall itself; ratepayers were questioning who was \textit{in} and who was \textit{out}. At the meeting, the following decision was made:

\textsuperscript{546} “Municipal Elections,” \textit{Progress}. 17 December 1908, P1.
\textsuperscript{547} Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 22 May 1907.
The reports of the Finance, Public Works and Hall Committees were duly presented and a vigorous discussion ensued with regard to allowing South Qu’Appelle municipality free use of offices and heating and lighting thereof. In view of the fact that the hall is a source of heavy expense it was felt by many that a rental should be charged for the rooms. A motion was made to this effect and it was deemed advisable to wait until the new council was installed and then circulate the petition. The ratepayers were evidently not unanimous on this decision.548

One possible conclusion regarding the question being raised at all is that town ratepayers were anxious to immediately start recuperating operating costs from their town hall.

Even the provincial and federal court-system was re-examined for its ability to support the town coffers. By 1909, the town council discovered that the town was able to apply for fines imposed by the police court in the THOH. Until this time, any fines imposed by Qu’Appelle Justices of the Peace were forwarded to provincial and federal authorities.549

There also appears to have been some increasing pressure for the rural council to relocate their offices to McLean. A petition was received from McLean-area ratepayers in January 1909 proposing such a move, but the rural council decided to lay aside the petition “for one month until such a time as the Town Council wait upon this council with reference to use of offices.”550 Within weeks, a delegation from the town council met with the rural council regarding a rental rate for their access to the THOH. The town council eventually agreed to an initial, per annum rent of $100.551

548 “Councillors Report to Ratepayers,” Progress, 3 December 1908; “Municipal Elections,” Progress 14 December 1908, P1: Perhaps not coincidentally, the ratepayer who was voted to chair the meeting was J. R. North, who ran against the sitting mayor, J. P. Beauchamp, in the December elections. The race between Beauchamp and North was literally as close as possible; Beauchamp won by one vote. The votes for mayor totaled 89.
551 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 January 1909 and 24 February 1909; “Council,” Progress 18 February 1909, P1: In the council minutes, there is an unrecorded communication from rural council, “re rent of offices.” But in minutes of meeting of 27 January, the hall committee was empowered to make arrangements with rural council regarding such rental.
agreed, but the rental rate kept climbing. By 1910, this rate was raised to $150.00 per year. These rental increases might have been a contributing factor to the South Qu’Appelle Council’s eventual move out of the THOH in 1911.

South Qu’Appelle Council Moves to McLean

The decisions leading up to the rural council’s leaving the THOH began at the first meeting of the South Qu’Appelle council of 1911 (3 January 1911). An almost inconspicuous communication was entered into the minutes as received from “McLean committee, re McLean town hall.”\textsuperscript{552} The council members present at this first meeting were the Reeve, R. S. Johnston, as well as councillors B.S. Ross, Wm. Nicholls, J. H. Anderson, Jas. Rogers, and W. Spencer.\textsuperscript{553}

But events and arguments soon took on the spirit of a coup/counter-coup. The next meeting of the rural council was 6 February 1911. Amid the usual business of road diversions, gopher poison, and wolf bounties, the council members began the process of moving out of the Qu’Appelle THOH. This meeting of the council was attended by five members. Reeve Johnston as well as Councillors Ross, Spencer, and Bengert were recorded as present in the minutes, but the minutes also record the participation of councillor Rogers. Councillors Bengert and Spencer put forward a motion to “purchase the McLean Hall for $500.” The motion was contested by Ross and Rogers who offered, “In amendment – that this council is not justified in purchasing the hall at McLean without first having an offer submitted for the purchase of same.” Perhaps hoping to delay this decision until more councillors were present to vote, the two councillors also

\textsuperscript{552} R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes, 3 January 1911.
\textsuperscript{553} Ibid.
moved to hold over the discussion until the next meeting. Both the motion to delay discussion and the amendment were voted down: Councillors Ross and Rogers voting for both motions and The Reeve and Councillors Spencer and Bengert voting against them. The motion to purchase the hall was voted on and passed by the Reeve and Councillors Spencer and Bengert with Ross and Rogers voting against it.\textsuperscript{554}

The councillors seem to have expected little trouble with the logistics of the move. But J. C. Starr was not willing to commute between Qu’Appelle and his work for the town and McLean for his work for the R.M. The next motion passed was to post an advertisement for a new secretary-treasurer. As for the rest of the municipality’s physical presence in the THOH, the plans were simple enough: “that we have safe, etc. moved to McLean on or before the first day of April. That a committee composed of the Reeve and couns. Spencer and Bengert be appointed a special committee to superintend the removal of council effects to McLean.”\textsuperscript{555}

Opposition to moving the South Qu’Appelle Council to McLean was not limited to councillors Ross and Rogers. The rural council appears to have not anticipated the swift ratepayer reaction to the council’s move. Before the end of February, a ratepayers’ meeting was “ordered,” as follows:

\begin{quote}
NOTICE - Public Meeting of the Ratepayers of South Qu’Appelle Rural Municipality will be held at the Town Hall, Qu’Appelle, Saturday, February 25\textsuperscript{th}, at 2 o’clock 2 p.m. TO PROTEST against the expenditure of public funds re purchasing McLean Hall also the removal of council chamber to McLean, until such acts are sanctioned by the direct vote of the ratepayers. Members of the council and all ratepayers urgently invited to attend by order of CITIZENS’ COMMITTEE, South Qu’Appelle.\textsuperscript{556}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{554} R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes, 6 February 1911.
\textsuperscript{555} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{556} “A Public Meeting of the Ratepayers of South Qu’Appelle Rural Municipality,” \textit{Progress}, 16 February 1911: The notice was dated February 13th, 1911.
The citizen group, a self-identified committee, were setting themselves in opposition to the recently-elected council (as elections were held every December). In presenting their case, they would be engaging in a genuine negotiation as to what constituted their community and the nature of their community identity.

The meeting was reported as a triumph of the protest group, as the headline summed up, “Public Protest against Removal of Council to McLean and Purchase of Hall – No Opposition.” While the attendance was described as large, it was noted that “McLean supporters were conspicuous by their absence.”

This connection between absence and any lack of conviction by McLean supporters, however, ignores the circumstances of the meeting. Specifically, it is illogical to assume that any McLean supporters would travel (presumably from McLean and beyond) to Qu’Appelle in February to attend a meeting which was called to protest their cause (if it could be called a “cause” at all). Had any McLean supporters attended the meeting to defend their perspective, they would have encountered a lonely and unfriendly environment. The prominent attendees of the meeting were, for the most part, rural ratepayers from Qu’Appelle and other interested individuals.

The featured speaker of the evening was Councillor Ross “who gave a brief account of the momentous council meeting of Feb. 6.” Ross recounted how, in 1910, McLean trustees had voted to offer the hall to the rural municipality for purchase. He told of his efforts to stop, or delay, motions to move the council to McLean. Ross

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558 For a specific comparison of the attendees of this meeting against the ratepayer roles for the Rural Municipality of South Qu’Appelle, see APPENDIX H.
claimed that the McLean hall was a “second class building for public purposes,” and that “the measure should not be acted upon without the consent of the electors.” While Ross confessed he did not know who owned the hall, “he quoted from the ordinance to show that the purchase of the hall by the council was illegal.” Later in the meeting the current ownership of McLean Hall was explained by ex-Councillor Carroll: “the hall, he stated, was originally purchased by public subscription and the lots bought from the C.P.R. Co. at a low figure on condition that the hall was for public use. Later the property was transferred to the Canadian Order of Foresters and Orange order together. He believed the title was now in their hands.”

The rural council’s two main reasons for moving were presented as follows: “First, economy, they could save $60 mileage per year. Second, the majority of ratepayers were in McLean district and this was an issue on which reeve Johnston was elected.”

Throughout the rest of the meeting, these reasons were variously disputed. Councillor Ross tried to use election returns to prove that councillors voting to move the council did not represent a majority of South Qu’Appelle ratepayers. Ross’s definition of majority was left unspecified. F. G. Whiting disputed the claim that Reeve Johnson even mentioned the possibility of the council’s removal to McLean during the election. If Johnson mentioned his moving plans while campaigning, they did not make it into print. The issue was not raised at the reportedly well-attended annual ratepayers’ meeting of 1910 (held before the election). The meeting was “a rousing one,” where “those attending were on the whole good natured but did not hesitate to express themselves.

560 Ibid.
561 Ibid.
openly.”

The then-upcoming election was predicted to turn – not on the issue of moving the council – but rather on the matter of the Rural Council seeking a $60,000 debenture for improvements as well as questions over a lingering 1910 issue dubbed, “the Egg Lake drainage question.”

Immediately after the election, the Progress reaffirmed that the debenture was the issue of note by reporting “of the councilors elected, three are at present members and favor the $60,000 bylaw.”

The ratepayers were presented with Ross’s estimates of what the move to McLean would cost the rural council: $1,325. The figure was detailed as follows: “building, $500; lots, $200; cartage, freight and repairs to hall, $200; extra salaries, $100; fuel, caretaking, heating, insurance, etc., $250; 6 months’ rent here, $75.” This cost was compared to the $150 that it would cost the rural council to stay in Qu’Appelle for the year. The fee for moving the rural council’s safe from Qu’Appelle to McLean eventually cost $115.

At the public meeting, the strongest sentiments expressed against the move related to how the ratepayers saw themselves – and by extension their council – as being identified with the community of Qu’Appelle. Councillor Ross opposed the motion not only because “banks and other [financial?] facilities were all in Qu’Appelle,” but also “on the ground that it changed the custom of things.”

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562 Both a high or low attendance could be spun as a positive thing. High attendance was described as indicative of engaged ratepayers, low attendance as satisfied ratepayers (“Ratepayers Are On – More alive to Municipal Affairs Than Ever,” Progress, 8 December 1910, P1.)


566 Paid to J. L. Craig, “for removing safe, etc.” (R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes, “Minutes of the Council Meeting June 5, 1911 in the council chamber, McLean”).

seat of rural government would change the centre of the ratepayers’ civic lives. The ratepayers took what action they could to record their displeasure. The participants unanimously passed three motions. The first motion stated, “That we, the ratepayers of South Qu’Appelle, denounce in unmistakable terms the untenable and indefensible resolutions of Councillor Spencer re removal of effects of council to McLean.” 568 The second motion was aimed at preventing any such moves in the future: “That we, the ratepayers of South Qu’Appelle, assembled in public meeting, vigorously protest against the expenditure of $500 of public money for the purchase of McLean hall or any other building for municipal affairs; and further, that the resolution of councillor Bengert meets with our unanimous disapproval.” 569 Thomas Bray (who, in the previous election, had run unsuccessfully in Ward Two against the pro-move councillor Walter Spenser) 570 rose to promote this second resolution by arguing in defence of the reputation and safety of the R.M.:

Speaking to the resolution Mr. Bray in a rousing speech stated that he wished to save the municipality from discredit and disgrace. The motion in council referred to was establishing a dangerous precedent. The council has not the right to go into real estate deals in that way. The motion might involve the municipality in litigation. Capricious legislation would damage the municipal credit. The removal of the safe and valuable effects to an unprotected building would advertise for crooks, and the rights of ratepayers should be respected. 571

As to the comparative safety of the Qu’Appelle THOH over any other building, current Qu’Appelle town administrator Carol Wickenheiser is able to point out the scars from

568 Ibid.
569 Ibid.
various break-in attempts on the town safe, which was identical to the R.M. safe and has never been outside of the THOH.572

Mr. Nicholls argued, “McLean would never be so good as Qu’Appelle especially after the new railway had diverted so much trade. Additional expense would have to be incurred through necessity of special audit before the sec.-treas. could be released. Qu’Appelle had always been the home of the municipal offices and was still recognized as the most fitting seat of municipal government.”573 Tradition, reputation, transportation, and frugality were at the centre of his argument. Such arguments closely resemble those used by Qu’Appelle’s boosters for the purposes of attracting new residents, businesses, and investment to the town. For years, boosters had advocated that Qu’Appelle was the natural place for the region’s governments, commerce, transport, and cultural activities.

The motions were carried and a petition set in motion. Everyone at the meeting was urged to sign as well as to “induce their neighbours to do so.”574 A deputation of prominent people, later described as “consisting of ex-reeves, ex-councillors and others,”575 were appointed to present the petition and motions of this ratepayers’ meeting when the rural council next met.576 Despite the group’s confidence in the righteousness of their cause, a backup plan was also provided for when it was moved: “That in the event of the council refusing to carry out the wishes of the ratepayers as outlined in the

572 Personal Interview, Carol Wickenheiser, Town Clerk, Qu’Appelle, 30 August 2010.
574 Ibid.
575 R.M. of South Qu’Appelle 6 March 1911; “South Qu’Appelle Council,” Progress, 9 March 1911, P1,8.)
resolution and emphasized by the deputation, that Messrs. Bray, Howden, and A. E. Nicholls be a deputation to place the matter promptly before the deputy minister of municipal affairs and take any other action they deem necessary to safeguard the interests of the municipality.”

The efforts of the ratepayers at their meeting were depicted as being sober and serious. There was at least one person, however, who found some humour in the rural council’s decision to move and the subsequent outcry. An anonymous letter to the editor, penned under the pseudonym “Nil Desperandum,” offered an alternative reaction on the rural council's decision to move and the resulting backlash. After offering poetic, satiric praise of the Reeve and councillors for their faultless lives and decision making, the writer highlighted the unnecessary excursion required in moving the safe (Figure 61) to McLean. Nil Desperandum proclaimed, “Reeves and councillors make the world as merry as a cricket. Don’t carry wrong impressions gentlemen, they will prove to be a burden. Even Bill Sykes never breaks his back carrying the safe. He just takes the contents and is satisfied.”

Figure 61: “Safe,” Photograph by author at Qu’Appelle Town Hall: The 5,000 lb. Town of Qu'Appelle safe, beside which sat a matching safe of the Municipality of South Qu'Appelle (before its subsequent moves).

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577 Ibid.
Comparing the actions of the reeve and rural council to a notorious bandit – however humorous – indicates a diminishing level of trust regarding the council’s motives. The council was not stealing money, but they were proposing to unilaterally renegotiate regional mythos regarding traditions of governance as well as tenuous, newly-created feelings of permanence and authenticity.

The ratepayers’ “deputation” attended the next rural council meeting, but their impact was negligible. The minutes recorded their visit as follows:

A deputation of ratepayers of the municipality of S. Qu’Appelle consisting of ex-reeves, ex-councillors and others to the number of twenty waited on council and submitted the resolutions passed at the ratepayers meeting in the town hall, Qu’Appelle, on Feb. 25; protesting against purchase of hall at McLean and moving council office and effects to McLean. After hearing the views of the members of the delegation it was moved by Councillor Ross, Seconded by Councillor Rogers, that the motion of Councillor Bengert re purchasing hall at McLean be and is hereby rescinded and that the council will not purchase the hall for public office without the consent of the electors. Yeas and nays were called for by Councillor Ross. Yeas, Ross, Nicholls, Rogers; Nays, Spencer, Bengert, Anderson and reeve. Yeas, 3; nays, 4. The Reeve declared the motion lost.

Two councillors next tried to buy more time for the THOH as their meeting site. Nichols and Rogers moved “that the council chamber remain at Qu’Appelle for the balance of 1911.” The motion lost by the same margin as the previous motion. After this last effort, “the deputation then withdrew.”*579 The council then set in motion the search for a new secretary-treasurer before adjourning.*580

The ratepayer group’s last attempt to preserve their municipal status-quo was performed when “Messrs. J. Howden, A. E. Nicholls and T. Bray went to Regina Wednesday to consult the municipal commissioner re moving the municipal capital to

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579 R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes 6 March 1911.
580 Ibid.
McLean.”\(^{581}\) In spite of this action, the council moved to McLean and appears to have operated there until 1916, when the Qu’Appelle town council granted “a five years lease of office to Rural Municipality of South Qu’Appelle at $150.00 per yr such office to be the second door to the right from East Entrance.”\(^{582}\) Though it took five years to prove so, Nil Desperandum appears to have been correct.

Despite the unity and satisfaction of a great public protest, the only political expression that had any actual influence on the council was the election of November 1910, which had elected the Reeve and council. But the THOH did serve as a place for the electors and interested parties to gather and express not only their dissent, but also their ideas regarding some aspects of their sense of place in the THOH and the community of Qu’Appelle. The power of these ideas, expressed in (and perhaps even represented by) the THOH obviously remained strong enough to rural ratepayers that the South Qu’Appelle council moved their offices back to the THOH within five years.\(^{583}\)

**Hobos, Traders, and Old, Known Offenders:**

In the council chamber, the rural and town councils negotiated through their own struggles with the ideas of transience and permanence, inclusion and exclusion. Similar issues arose in the same room when it was functioning as the police court. The councils used the space as a place of governance; the police court was a place of enforcement. Cases being adjudicated often centred on the issue of acceptable versus unacceptable – with regard to behaviour and people – in the community. On the surface, the police court dealt mostly with cases involving issues such as drunkenness, physical assault, verbal


\(^{582}\) Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 23 March 1916.

\(^{583}\) The eventual fate of the McLean hall itself is unclear.
abuse, and wage disputes. In doing so, the court-space was the site for performative displays of the enforcement of local community-mythos regarding who belongs and often who does not. The *Progress* newspaper provided detailed accounts of the police court cases in the new THOH. Such extensions of court events into the wider community added a wider reach to these performative events at which ideological and social standards were being negotiated and applied.

When locals were before the court, the *corrective* nature of sentencing seems foremost. Fines and costs were the most common sentences. C. L. Paine was fined $10.80 and costs for such serious-sounding offences as “using abusive language, threatening to shoot, and assault,” as well as “damaging a pocket book.”584 One morning another local man, Peter Wagman, was convicted of “attempting to assault Anton Kombeitz... [and] fined the costs of the court, $6.65, and bound over to keep the peace for one year.”585 However, he had not learned his lesson, for “during the recess at noon Peter so far forgot himself as to address some insulting remarks to Mrs. Kombeitz and consequently had to face another charge in the afternoon, that of using abusive language on the streets. That being proven by three witnesses, Peter was further assessed $10.00 and $5.00 costs or one month in gaol.”586 Being a local, he was offered the option to pay a fine and stay in town. But his offence, to a woman and in public, warranted the threat of jail time, if only to enforce community standards of proper behaviour for local residents.587

585 The other case heard with Wagman was “Gordon Elliott also appeared to answer a charge of illegally taking his cattle out of a pound kept by William Cannon and was fined $2.00 and costs, $6.95,” (“Police Court Items,” *Progress*, 2 July 1908, P1).
586 “Police Court Items,” *Progress*.
587 “Police Court News,” *Progress*, 21 October 1909, P1: In fact, Wagman’s language toward Mrs. Kombeitz was dealt with slightly more severely than a local incident of road rage: i.e. the case of the
The most serious cases were sent on to Regina. In a few cases, however, an accused would face a preliminary hearing in Qu’Appelle. H. M. Roper was brought to the THOH to be charged with murder and the case was covered extensively in the local paper. But the event was very much outside of Qu’Appelle. The victim and accused (his hired man) lived near Edgeley. Roper was arrested in Winnipeg. After a hearing, Roper stood trial in Regina. The Qu’Appelle court room (and police cells in the basement) became less about securing a danger within the community than about preparing that danger for export outside of the community.

If local, accepted residents were corrected by the court, transients were removed by it. Transients were, if not a threat, then a great concern in the Qu’Appelle region. Perhaps homeless people did not fit into the town’s proclaimed ethos of being a progressive place, ripe for industry and investment. Many times the town court became the site of banishment of someone whom the town authorities deemed unwelcome. Just being a “hobo” was enough to get someone sent out of town, as when “Victor Anderson, a hobo, got two months” or when “three more hobos appeared before the court receiving terms varying from 30 to 50 days hard labor.” The only explanation offered for the sentence was the label “hobo.” It is unclear as to whether the difference in sentencing was due to some variable, sliding scale of hobo-ness or some other factor.

Adams-Bunn drive-by whipping, in which: “On Saturday, the 16th, Joseph Adams appeared before F. Amas on the charge of striking Leslie Bunn with a whip. It appears that Leslie Bunn was driving along a grade with a binder loaded on a waggon [sic] when the defendant [sic] met him and because he did not give him all the road he struck him. The result being Adams was assessed in fine and costs $13.85 or 14 days. The fine was paid.”

588 “Shot in the Head,” Progress 2 September 1909.
590 “Police Court Cases,” Progress 2 June 1910, P1.
591 Being a hobo was enough to get someone sent out of the community but being a suspicious hobo brought forth an even wider range of penalties. The court events of 26 September 1910 are one example. Mounted Police Sergeant Dubuque and a Detective Dundas (presumably of the CPR Police) “arrested four
While hoboes were by definition transient “old offenders” were declared transient – in that they were quickly removed from town by the police court. Old offenders usually had criminal records and were not welcome in Qu’Appelle. This attitude is explicitly shown in the case of two men charged with vagrancy, Chas. Foster and Chas. Wright. They were sentenced to thirty days and ten days hard labour respectively. But Wright eventually got another thirty days when he “on being escorted to the cells raised a disturbance.”592 This outcome viewed as a victory for the town, as the Progress reported, “the town constable is to be congratulated on the arrest of Wright as he is an old offender having served 4 years for horse stealing.”593 This chance to banish a threat to the community was encouraged. Another man from Wolseley was arrested for various offences related to a drunken night spent in Qu’Appelle’s drinking establishments; when he was recognised “as an old acquaintance” and was heavily fined because “the court thought it was time that outsiders understood that if they want to make a general nuisance of themselves they had better keep clear of Qu’Appelle.”594

The case of Sarah Mathewson is one of the relatively few examples of a vagrancy charge being brought up against a female. The NWMP had particular interest in removing her from the community, as she was “a well-known character in the police courts... She was given 6 months in Prince Albert and a recommendation was made to inquire into her sanity.”595 The inquiry into someone’s sanity, while potentially a valid

592 “Police Court Cases,” Progress.
593 Ibid.
course of action, also seems to be a coded way of labeling someone as not fitting into acceptable norms of behaviour for the community.

The inability to fit in and questions of sanity were not only reserved for “old offenders” in Qu’Appelle, however, as is illustrated by the case of Kate Lynch, who was charged with “attempted self-murder” in October 1907. Her hearing was reported as follows:

Kate Lynch is a good looking young girl 18 or 20 years old [who] was brought out under contract from England about August 1st by Immigration Agent Pipe, of Wapella, to work for Mrs. F. J. James. After remaining here a short time she became dissatisfied and left, afterwards engaging with Mrs. Heber Ellis at Edgeley. She bore a good reputation and was well liked by those who knew her. On Thursday last on being told to do some work, she refused and immediately went to her room, where, as it afterwards transpired, she took a dose of carbolic acid. It was not until Friday that her attempt at self murder was discovered. Dr. Bourns was summoned and found the girl suffering but in no danger. At first she refused to take anything to relieve the pain, repeatedly expressing the wish to die. At last she promised to take the medicine he was to send, but when it arrived she again refused.

On Tuesday Sergt. Dubuque brought her into town and conducted the prosecution of the case before R. C. Macdonald, J. P. She remained silent throughout the trial, giving no reason, excuse, or evidence for her act, and Mr. Macdonald had no alternative on the evidence adduced against her but to send her to Regina to stand trial at the next sitting of the Supreme Court. The case is a sad one, as there seems to be no reason for her act. It is supposed that the deed was committed during a period of temporary insanity.596

The key to the perception/reception of this event is in the description of Lynch. She is described as a good-looking, well-liked young girl of “good reputation.” This image of a girl with everything going for her (looks, popularity, and reputation) is presented as being incompatible with her actions, refusing to do the work she was asked, drinking carbolic acid, and then refusing treatment. Her wish to die was the most sensational aspect of this account; “I Want to Die,” was the headline of the article. Lynch’s actions appear to have

596 “I Want to Die,” Progress, 3 October 1907, P1.
stumped the actors in this event (i.e. participants and observers). They concluded that
“there seems to be no reason for her act.” Her suicide attempt was dismissed as an act of
temporary insanity. No curiosity was apparent nor inquiry made into Lynch’s life leading
up to her suicide attempt. No exploration was reported as to the situation in England that
found her “contracted” through Wapella, Saskatchewan, Canada. No explanation beyond
vague dissatisfaction was offered as to why she left her first employer, Mrs. F. J. James.
Her dissatisfaction seems to have developed into severe depression, but the community’s
response was to send her away. Lynch was sent for trial in Regina, where she
encountered some greater sympathy. After pleading not guilty, Lynch declined a trial by
jury. The crown offered evidence, but the case was dismissed.\textsuperscript{597}

Though the court acted upon individuals, it was on at least on occasion a tool
whereby an entire family was removed from town – one member at a time. The Shebers
were, undoubtedly, a dysfunctional, suffering family that could not find a way to fit into
the community of Qu’Appelle. Their story in the court record begins with their oldest
daughter, Lena Sheber, who was first named in the court reports in spring of 1908: “A
case also came up on Saturday before magistrate North and Amas. Lena Sheber was
charged with stealing a book at Qu’Appelle school, the property of a pupil. She was
brought up under the juvenile offenders’ act and on pleading guilty was fined $2.00 and
costs.”\textsuperscript{598} While this case may seem fairly innocuous, it becomes more revealing as

\textsuperscript{597} According to the report, Judge Newlands arraigned lynch who chose trial without jury. After being
charged, she pled not guilty. Though the crown offered evidence, Lynch was “discharged” (N.W.T.
Criminal Court (Criminal docket NWT), Sept. 1 1901 to #686 of 1907, P 414, Case No. 695, “Kate Lynch.
Charge: Attempt to commit suicide at Edgeley on 26 Sept. 1907, Oct 4, SAB, R-1286).
\textsuperscript{598} The same report included the case of a Thos. Browden, who “appeared, charged with deserting and
stealing articles of clothing from Lebret Industrial School. He was let off on suspended sentence on his
promising to return and behave himself” (“Court News,” \textit{Progress}, 19 March 1908, P1).
Lena’s encounters with the town court – as well as those of the rest of her family – continue.

Two months later, two boys were “brought before justices.” One boy was identified as John Sherber [sic],” a brother of Lena, who “under the provisions of the Neglected Children’s Act... was committed to the care of the Children’s Aid Society,” and “sent to the reformatory.”599 Just how his being sent to the reformatory would result in rectifying the situation that led to his being a Neglected Child is unclear. Another unnamed boy was also “made a ward of the Society and will be sent to the Home at Regina.”600 The court account closed with a call for citizens to become members of the Children’s Aid Society for 50 cents per year.601 The Society advertised itself as a means of saving (via removal) children from an unacceptable situation. It also removed troubled or abnormally behaving children from the community itself.

By August, Lena was before local magistrates again for stealing plants from R. C. Macdonald, who was himself a local Justice of the Peace.602 As this was cited as “her third conviction,” she was “sent up for three months.”603 Where she was “sent” is not explained, but the most suspiciously puzzling aspect of this case is why Lena stole from the local J.P. if she did not intend to get caught. Was she looking to get away from home? Any typically criminal malevolence is not evident in her choice of stolen objects: a schoolbook and a plant.

The Shebers – Max and Barbara as well as their children John, Lena, Peter (and their baby born in Canada) – were from Hungary (immigrated in 1904) and lived in

599 “Police Court Cases,” Progress 2 June 1910, P1.
600 “Police Court Cases,” Progress.
601 Ibid.
602 Though he did not adjudicate her case.
603 “Before Magistrates Amas and North on Monday,” Progress, 20 August 1908.
“Qu’Appelle South.”604 The lack of a street address implies that they might have been part of the “Germantown” population. Perhaps the clearest insight into Lena’s home-situation appeared almost eighteen months later, in February 1910. She was again brought into the Qu’Appelle courtroom. After her day in court, Lena’s father and mother also faced charges. The ensuing day was recounted as follows:

On the 22nd inst. before F. Amas, J. P., Max Sheber was charged with creating a disturbance at the C.P.R. station. It appears that earlier in the day the daughter of the accused had been charged with illegal desertion of employment and, as Lena was only a child she had been allowed to go on paying the costs. Lena’s employers wanted her back and she wished to go stating to the court that she was afraid to go home. It was arranged that a constable would see her safely off on the west bound local. Shortly before the arrival of her train the accused and his wife arrived on the scene and the former proceeded to make himself a general nuisance using all kinds of vile and filthy language towards constables Trigg and Jessett and inciting his wife to violence upon which she promptly kicked the constables and using her baby as a club proceeded to strike the police. All the accused could say in extenuation of his conduct was that the police had not given him any money of his child’s wages and that he had not received any for seven months. The witnesses also testified that the accused was lazy, did not support his family, and was generally worthless. The magistrate in convicting informed the accused that instead of the child contributing to his support he should keep her and send her to school and that such conduct as his could not be tolerated, he would be sentenced to three months at hard labor, and was advised to move elsewhere when his time was up. On account of the children the woman was not proceeded against.605

The court appears to have sympathised with Lena’s misgivings about returning to her family home. She was let off relatively easily and provided with an escort to the train station. Lena’s parents were presented as displaying unacceptable behaviour, both as parents and as community-members. Max Sheber’s actions at the train platform –

604 The Shebers arrived from Hungary in 1904. In 1906 their household was enumerated as follows: Max Sheber was 37; his wife Barbara was 33; 11 year old John was 11; Lena was 9; and Peter was 6. (Canada, Census 1906. Schedule No. 1, Saskatchewan, Qu’Appelle, District 15, Subdistrict: 33, P.8 ll. 38-40, P.9 ll. 1,2. “Sheber,” http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/e/e049/e001210234.jpg).
unacceptable language, inciting violence, and general nuisance-making – were perhaps secondary offences when compared to his greatest deviation from acceptable behaviour: laziness and failure to provide for his family. Max tried to use the fact that his daughter had not sent any wages home to the family as the reason for his unacceptable behaviour. The magistrate’s strongest condemnation of Max addressed his failure to live up to the community-norm for male behaviour: to be a provider and protector of his family. Witnesses added moral judgement to Max’s case, labeling him lazy and worthless. The court, it appears, assumed that the hard labour would be a fitting punishment for Max.

But the chance that Max would learn any lessons from his hard-time were slim, as evidenced by the court’s encouraging him to leave the community after serving his sentence. Whether or not he was expected to take his family with him was unreported. How Max was to live up to his expected male role of provider for his family while he was banished is unclear.

The expectation that males act as providers was regularly enforced in the courtroom – at the time, opportunities for women made this a necessity. For example, when Norman Marr “attempted to clear out on Saturday and leave his wife and child a charge on the town,” his refusal to provide for his family was regarded as being on the same moral level as stealing the town’s charity account money. He was arrested the next day and “charged with neglecting to provide for his wife and family. He was given the choice of three months or supporting his family. He chose the latter.” Marr, it appears, was presumed capable of staying and fulfilling his expected male role of family-

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606 “Norman B. Marr attempted to clear out on Saturday,” Progress, 12 May 1910.
607 Ibid.
provider; he was treated as a *local* in the police court. Max Sheber, however, was sent away and encouraged never to return.

Barbara (Max’s wife and Lena’s mother) seems to have been set up to fail. She did not face charges, the court apparently feeling that she had to remain to care for her children while her husband was in jail. Financially, it is unclear whether or not Sheber and her children would become, as Marr’s family could have been “a charge on the town.” Physically and emotionally, it is also unclear how she was expected to care for her children alone. Ward of the town or not, the Shebers were not long for Qu’Appelle.

In September 1910, several trains were pelted with stones while passing through Qu’Appelle. Windows were broken and a woman injured. Sgt. Dubuque quickly closed the case:

> The guilty parties were three German Boys Mike Schmidt, Max Hilsingtirer and Peter Sheber. Peter was brought before F. Amas, J. P. and pleaded guilty to the charge of throwing stones at passing trains, but claims he was urged to do so by the older boys. He was cautioned by the magistrate and let off on suspended sentence but was later charged with being a habitual truant, under the Children’s Aid Act, and was committed to the care of the Children’s Aid Society, who are sending him to the reformatory at Portage la Prairie. Schmidt and Hilsingtirer came up before F Amas, J.P. on Monday when the former was fined $5 and the latter $2, with costs in each case.  

So, on a surface-level and according to the punishments handed out, the stone-throwing appears to be a lesser offence than truancy. The family history of Peter Sheber might have also informed the court decision, as he was cautioned for throwing rocks, but taken into the custody of the Children’s Aid Society for truancy – and sent to the reformatory, as was his brother John in 1910.

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608 “Complaints recently reached the RNWMP,” *Progress*, 15 September 1910, P8: Peter was identified as being one of three German Boys, despite his not being German. Perhaps identifying the boys as being from Germantown was more important than accurately reporting their “origins.”
One week after Peter was sent to the reformatory, his mother Barbara was again in the Qu’Appelle town hall courtroom facing a public questioning of her mental capacity. Sheber’s sanity assessment was summed up as follows:

A sad case came before F. Amas, J.P. on Friday last when Mrs. Sheber was up for investigation as to her sanity. Medical and other evidence went to show that she was demented and not safe to be at large and the proper steps were taken to provide for her. Previously two of her children had been taken in charge by the Children’s Aid Society and her removal necessitated similar action regarding the rest of her family.\(^{609}\)

The case, in a manner similar to Lynch’s, was reported with an acknowledgement of its sadness, but with no sense of responsibility – or even curiosity – as to the circumstances of Barbara’s life in Qu’Appelle that might have contributed to her distressed mental state, for example: potential physical/mental abuse, her poverty, and the loss of her children. These conditions would fuel the social ostracism that she faced as a poor, immigrant woman married to a “worthless” husband with lawbreaking children. The court was a tool by which the family was removed, one by one, from Qu’Appelle. It appears that after his jail term, Max did not return to Qu’Appelle nor did his family members.\(^{610}\)

\(^{609}\) “A sad case came before F. Amas, J.P.,” *Progress*, 22 September 1910, P5.

\(^{610}\) Canada, Census and Statistics Office, *Census of the Prairie Provinces Population and Agriculture Maniota, Saskatchewan, Alberta 1916*, Schedule No. 1 Population by Name, Personal Description, Etc., Saskatchewan, Last Mountain, Sub-District Description: Townships 27 and 28, ranges 1, 2, 3 and 4, west of third meridian, including the village of Bladworth – p. 8, l. 42, “Sheber, Peter,” http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/006003/t-21938/jpg/31228_4363967-00067.jpg.; Canada, *Census 1916*, Schedule No. 1, Saskatchewan, Regina, Sub-District Description: Township 18, ranges 18 and 19, west of second meridian – p3, l. 43, “Sheber, Lena,” http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/006003/t-21943/jpg/31228_4363972-00745.jpg: The Sheber’s are not listed in the Qu’Appelle in the 1911 Census Returns. Peter and Lena appear to have stayed in Saskatchewan. The returns of the 1916 census, however, show Peter Sheber (16) living in Bladworth as a labourer and lodger at John and Grace Richardson’s house. He lists his country or place of birth as Hungary, his religion as Roman Catholic, nationality Canadian, and “racial or Tribal origin” as Hungarian and his other spoken language as Hungarian. Lena Sheber (20) was unmarried and as one of five domestic servants of Norton and Jessica Bell (farmers in Sherwood). Like her brother, Lena lists her religion as being Roman Catholic, but her “racial or tribal origin” was listed as “Jewish.” Perhaps the family converted, or chose not to identify as being Jewish while they were in Qu’Appelle.
The police court, in addition to executing the law in Qu’Appelle, was a site for the application, or enforcement, of community values upon individual community members. More often than not, these court decisions hinged not only upon law and lawlessness, or even sanity and capability, but also upon whether an accused was deemed permanent (or accepted) or transient (or unacceptable).

**Enculturation and Empire:**

In the Qu’Appelle THOH, performances and expressions of local desires for permanence are often linked to demonstrations of an attachment to, as well as longing for, Britain as a “homeland.” Such longings for a British ideal of “home” were not necessarily based upon the direct experience of Qu’Appelle residents, sometimes the British homeland connection came from their previous experiences as residents of, for example, Ontario. In the district of Qu’Appelle in 1906, just over half of the population in the region identified as Canadian-born British. Of these people, one-third were Saskatchewan-born and almost half were born in Ontario. Of the British population born in the British Isles, the majority (70%) were from England and almost one-fifth were from Scotland. Of the foreign-born population, almost half were born in the United States. The next biggest group of foreign-born residents were from Austria-Hungary (approximately one-fifth). By 1911, almost two-thirds of the town’s and region’s population identified as being of British “origin.” But by birthplace (and ignoring the previously-identified troublesome census-practice of identifying First Nations people as Canadian born, but not explicitly British subjects), the district claimed over 80% British-born people, with 60% of those being Canadian-born. Of the Canadian-born, 30% were

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611 Canada, *Census 1906*, “Table V – Birthplace of the people by districts.”
born in Saskatchewan, but only 20% were born in Ontario. If local settlers were to be truly accepted within the community, they were expected to express themselves as loyal Empire supporters, helping to define Qu’Appelle as a loyal outpost of Empire.

**Qu’Appelle as Outpost of Empire:**

Local citizens of British origin held strong attachments to a homeland – even if they were years or generations removed from it themselves. For example, in 1911 in the town of Qu’Appelle 126 of the 851 residents identified their origin as Scottish. Though this was the third-largest group after English and German, great attention was paid to promoting performances as being specifically Scottish. Some performers even traded on their Scottishness in order to endear themselves more quickly to townspeople eager to champion any kind of British cultural performance.

Singers identified as Scottish were usually well received. In 1907, Miss Nannie Strachan was welcomed to her second performance in Qu’Appelle as if she was a long lost daughter: “this welcome little lassie won for herself a marvellous reputation with her clear, sweet, musical voice, well adapted to the old Scotch Melodies, so dear to the sons and daughters of the land of the hill and heather.” By the following year, Nannie Strachan and her company were well established favourites in Qu’Appelle. When a Scottish concert did not draw a full house, the Progress chastised local concert goers for failing to support it. For example, the popular and heavily publicised Miss Jessie

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612 Canada, *Census 1911*, “Table 7: Origins of the People by sub-districts, Qu’Appelle Town” and “Table 8: Origins of the People by District.”
613 “Miss Nannie Strachan,” *Progress*, 17 January 1907, Local Items, P8.
McLauchlan performed in 1910, but the throng anticipated by the *Progress* did not show up:

> Just what kind of a concert appeals to a Qu’Appelle audience would be hard to determine. That of Tuesday evening was undoubtedly the best without exception given here this season yet the attendance was not large. Miss McLachlan maintained her proud position as ‘Queen of Scottish song’ and showed that in no respect has she lost the mastery over her wonderful voice or the power to charm an audience.

The article contains a hint that her age might have been a potential hindrance to her performance. But the *Progress* reviewer appears to have been more appalled by the community’s apparent indifference to the show. The reviewer might have been expressing frustration over a local lack of appreciation of fine art. But the writer’s frustration might also have been heightened by the fact that extensive pre-show newspaper coverage did not translate to a large crowd. Such a lack of response to advertising would have reflected poorly on the *Progress*’s local influence.

When C. P. Walker sought to establish Qu’Appelle as a subscriber based stop on his touring circuit, the first Walker touring show to play Qu’Appelle was *The Bonnie Briar Brush* by Ian McLaren. Advertising for the show gushed about the high quality of the show, the story, the cast, as well as the show’s authentic Scottishness. But the claimed authenticity of the scenery highlights several degrees of substitution. The *Progress* described the show’s “scenic enframement” as being “the beautiful

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615 For her previous show, it was noted how “the hall was crowded to the doors, [with] many coming from Fort Qu’Appelle, McLean and other neighbouring towns” (“It will be remembered,” *Progress*, 13 January 1910, P8).
617 For more regarding the C.P. Walker touring circuit within the wider context of prairie performances see, for example: Anthony John Louie Vickery’s 2001 Ph.D. thesis *The Logistics and Finances of Touring in North America, 1900—1916* and Stuart, *The History of Prairie Theatre*.
618 A performance script for this play is proving elusive; it’s likely based upon a novel of the same name.
representation of Scotch glens and cottages... painted from photographs and sketches of the exact locality from which the stories were taken.”

This boast to authenticity presented more levels of substitution than a theatrical production would usually offer. The locations (from the plot, which was taken from a work of fiction) were photographed and sketched. The photographs and sketches were then copied and those copies incorporated into a set-design. These sets were then painted from the design and toured across North America and celebrated as an authentic experience. The scenes presented both a way to return “home” as well as way bring that “home” onto the stage, if only for the duration of a show. The play was a temporary illusion of home presented by transient groups of performers in the newly created permanence represented by the Qu’Appelle THOH.

Gymnasium/Militia

The desire to fulfill Qu’Appelle’s position as an outpost (in the more militant sense) of Empire was performed as the Qu’Appelle militia claimed spaces within the THOH in 1908. The Qu’Appelle Troop, “C” Squadron, 16th Mounted Rifles was created in the summer of 1908 and consisted of seventeen men. Before the year was out, the Militia Department in Ottawa would change the name to the 16th Light Horse. The territorial intricacies of the Militia Department claiming control of part of the Town Hall Opera House – if only temporarily and occasionally – are interesting as points of negotiation surrounding expectations regarding patriotism and militarism in the community. The group’s meetings, practices, and drills also served as rehearsals for the

621 Thus adding the functions of “headquarters” and “armoury” to the site.
622 “By Militia Order,” Progress, 10 December 1908, P1.
martial displays in the Town Hall Opera House itself. For example, the “armoury” was the muster point for parades that took the troop from the town hall to the train station, from which the troop would depart for summer manoeuvres at camp Sewell. On many a summer Sunday, the troop would embark on church parades. After forming up in full uniform at the Town Hall Opera House, the troop would parade to a town church where the sermon would be appropriately jingoistic and militarily inspired.

In addition to extending such performances into the wider community, the Progress also became the troop’s main disseminator of information and orders. These orders were usually reminders of the twice-weekly drill at the town hall, now also the Drill Hall during the winter months. A typical example read as follows:

The Troop will parade at Drill Hall on Tuesdays and Fridays at 7:30 p.m. commencing Tuesday, Jan. 5th. Dress: Greatcoat. Regulation uniform with jack spurs, bandoliers (no belts to be worn). Dress trousers and spurs are not to be worn without special orders. N.C.O.’s and men must attend one drill a week, both if possible. By order A.C. Garner, O.C. Qu’Appelle Troop.

In early 1909, a civilian Military Club was organized to operate in conjunction with the 16th Light Horse. The Progress reported the undoubted future success of the club, noting how “all present appeared to enter heart and soul into the project.” Civilian town leaders took active roles in the club. Mayor Beauchamp chaired the inaugural meeting, embracing the organization as a town representative. At Captain Garner’s suggestion, the club’s executive was made up of Mayor Beauchamp and two other prominent businessmen, B. Harvey and W. K. Wilson, as well as Sgt. Pott, Corp.

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623 “Qu’Appelle Troop 16th Light Horse Orders,” Progress, 31 December 1908, P1: The ceremony was not diminished, it appears, by the fact that the troop would then be dismissed for several hours before the actual departure – due to the train schedule being inconveniently timed for a formal rally.

624 An advertizing square on the front page was reserved for militia “orders.”

625 “Qu’Appelle Troop 16th Light Horse Orders,” Progress.

Whiting, and Corp. Merritt. Religious connections to the four main churches in Qu’Appelle were maintained by “making Very Rev. Dean Sargent, Father Sconer, Rev. W. B. Tate and Rev. W. H. Cotter honorary members.”

627 The Military Club was a civilian organization – then comprised of 51 members – that would allow for non-militia members to participate in socialising in the Military Club Room, as well as use the gymnasium equipment. Garner traced the inception of the Military Club as follows:

The club was first formed for the purpose of decorating and making a portion of the basement of the Town Hall (the use of which was very kindly granted Qu’Appelle Troop for drill purposes by the Town Council early in the winter) attractive to the N.C. officers and men so that after drill a sociable hour or so could be spent together, and was also intended that members of the troop should invite their friends and those of the citizens who would be interested to join the club. Those of the citizens who have attended the entertainments held in the town hall of late will possibly have observed that the club room is comparatively attractive to what it was, the decorations have been furnished by the troop, the kalsomining having been by the Masons for their Masonic Ball held earlier in the month.

628 The basement gymnasium was well equipped (for its day) and operated under the auspices of the Military Club.629 The overtones were clear, that this was a place for male bonding and body-training. This training, in turn, was to ensure that the fit males could take their place among loyal men of the Empire in the British Army. It was determined that – like the 16th Light Horse – the Military Club would meet two nights per week, but it was clear that “gymnasium work... [was] always to be secondary to and give place to

627 Ibid.
628 “To the citizens and members of Qu’Appelle Military Club,” Progress, 25 February 1909, P1.
629 Garner, A. C., “To Members Qu’Appelle Military Club,” Progress, 11 March 1909, P1: Members could access the equipment, “Tuesdays and Fridays of each week from 7:45 to 10:15 pm until otherwise advised. Gymnastic exercises will commence at 8 p.m. sharp and members wishing to take part are requested to be punctual.” In addition to punctuality, members had to read the posted rules and “wear gymnasium shoes when taking part in gymnasium exercise.” These exercises included the parallel and horizontal bars, vaulting horse, boxing, punching bag, “Indian” clubs, and dumbbells.
military drill when necessary.” As the Light Horse’s O. C. Garner attested, “Personally I am proud (and I think the members of Qu’Appelle Troop are also) of belonging to the ‘Active Militia’ which forms a part of the national defence of Canada and although now at peace we are assisting the Empire by showing that Canadians are ready not only to defend their own country, but other parts of the Empire if need be.”

Through the addition of a rifle-simulating sub-targeting apparatus, the club members could engage in rifle practice (Figure 62). Garner noted that “there is also a Sub-target Machine, a part of the military equipment, which may be used under the direction and charge of a military instructor. This machine gives an excellent idea of rifle shooting.”


633 Garner, A. C., “To the citizens and members of Qu’Appelle Military Club.”
634 In Britain, the Sub-Targeting machine was being embraced by senior military and political agents as a means of acquainting every male British subject with rifle shooting, without the need for live rounds. While blanks could be used, the company booklet advised that, “this serves no purpose beyond that of accustoming the user to the noise of the discharge.”
The Military club also possessed “an Easdale Galley Target, which ... may be used under the guidance and charge of members appointed to this branch... a .22 calibre rifle only being used.”

In winter months, such equipment allowed for competitions that would continue at the club’s outdoor range in spring. Shooting practice and competitions were a particularly public exhibition of adult male prowess in Qu’Appelle. While the club admitted young men (15-17 year-olds) starting in the fall of 1909, these members were “Junior” members and were not allowed to participate in rifle or pistol practice until they were 18, at which point they became men, able to engage in the manly practice of shooting. The first Souvenir Button Contest was held from January 21 to March 25, 1910. Weekly winners wore gold and silver buttons which were later permanently awarded overall winners to the contest. As a way of increasing interest in the community, weekly scores were published in the Progress and occasional special-prizes were soon offered to encourage shooting practice (Figure 63). Such rewards were a useful incentive. It was not always easy to get shooters to practice, especially once spring came and other distractions and responsibilities arose.

635 Garner, A. C., “To the citizens and members of Qu’Appelle Military Club,” Progress: Despite the galley target’s presence in 1909, it took a year for the council to sanction live-round target-shooting in the basement (“Town Council,” Progress, 3 February 1910, P8).
638 “Rifle Scores,” Progress 24 February 1910, P8: For example, after the button-prize shooting session reported for Friday, 18 February 1910, a special practice session was held on the following Tuesday. The prize on Tuesday was one pound of tobacco, donated by G. E. Pepper. By contrast, other local events/games such as euchre and bridge were not reported so faithfully.
639 In April 1910, the button contest was over and the rifle practice had moved to the range outside town. Participation dropped off: “Only two turned up at the rifle butts last Thursday. They had a practice and made big scores but they’re modest and fear to make the others jealous by reporting their record” (“Only two turned up,” Progress, April 28, 1910, P8).
Using the THOH armoury/headquarters as their rallying point, the militia did occasionally extend their presence out from the THOH to other parts of the town and countryside. For most of Victoria Day 1909, the troop engaged “in drill and a sham battle.” For the troop’s first church parade, they mustered at the THOH, marched to S. Peter’s Cathedral, partook of the service, and marched back to the THOH, their “armory” for such occasions. The troop was rewarded with “much commendation on account of their smart appearance, upright bearing and correct military movements.” Above all, these soldiers were seen as an example of the community’s ability to produce fighting males for the Empire should they be called upon. This idea of the local soldier as an export is different than the previous incarnations of the fighting male presence in Qu’Appelle, when the NWMP or the “B” Battery were stationed in Qu’Appelle as local protection against potential uprisings and lawlessness – the threat of which was presumed to be the local indigenous population.

The militia enjoyed almost universal support in maintaining its role of contributing to the developing local mythos that Qu’Appelle was a loyal outpost of Empire. The Militia system, however, did not always inspire such local support. On 17

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640 Bell, L. G. Jr., “Qu’Appelle Troop, 16th Light Horse,” Progress, 27 May 1909, P8.
641 “The first military church parade held in Qu’Appelle,” Progress 29 April 1909, P8.
August, 1910 a Mr. Salt of the 16th Light Horse was fined $65.35 for failing to attend militia camp and failing to arrange for a replacement to attend in his stead.\textsuperscript{642} The amount of this fine, and the message that it sent, inspired a contrary view from Marcus Pott. Pott wrote the \textit{Progress} to express his disappointment with the amount of the fine, as well as the organization of Canada’s militia system:

Let me say that I think it quite right that Mr. Salt should be fined, but why might I ask should Mr. Salt be made an example of, when there are thousands of men who refuse to go to camp every year, and no notice is taken of it? Every year it is the same bother to get men to camp, and unless the law is enforced, Canada will go on wasting money over the militia, which it seems to me, being run as it is now, is hardly more than an army of recruits.\textsuperscript{643}

Pott even questioned the value of sending substitutes for militia training at all, since doing so defeated the purpose of improving the overall training and readiness of individual soldiers. Pott closed by offering a way to ensure that the fines imposed on Mr. Salt would not be seen as unfair example-setting, but rather as the new standard by which such offences are judged, writing, “the fines should bring in a huge income if they are all fined on the same scale.”\textsuperscript{644} Pott’s local questioning of the effectiveness of the Canadian militia was a reflection of similar, nationally expressed concerns.\textsuperscript{645} Despite local support for the militia, it was hard to translate that support into well-attended summer training camps. As such, the local militia groups were in danger of becoming little more

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\textsuperscript{642}Pott, Marcus, “To the Editor of the \textit{Progress},” \textit{Progress}, 21 July 1910, P1.
\textsuperscript{643}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{644}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{645}Statistics Canada, \textit{Canada Year Book 1910}, Second Series. (Ottawa: C. H. Parmelee, 1911), 407, modified 2009, http://www66.statcan.gc.ca/eng/acyb\_e1910-eng.aspx; “Leaning on a Broken Reed,” \textit{Progress} 9 June 1910, P1.5: After five years, the militia program was not living up to what at least one military editorialist saw as the need for 2 million trained troops in Canada to protect itself from invasion. In 1910, the Militia reported their strength as follows: “Total: Officers, 4,874; Non. Com. Officers and men, 52,820; Horses, 11,520.” The lack of support was acutely felt in summer, when training camps were organised, if not always enthusiastically attended. Brynton Payne noted, “Not only is it difficult to secure men in sufficient numbers, but in numerous instances employers refuse to allow their employees to attend camps of instruction.”
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than marching versions of local military clubs. Such lack of enthusiastic summer support was chided but, as Pott pointed out, the organisation of the Militia might not have been effective enough to warrant greater support. Such dissatisfaction, presumably, could result in less participation, which would further disrupt the developing desired local ideal of British citizens ready to patriotically bear arms as part of serving their Empire.

**Race/Ethnicity/Origins:**

Part of the urgency behind showing the narrative that Qu’Appelle was a loyal outpost of Empire came from the need to continue the established mythos of a new British West required the symbolic and physical substitution of historical occupants of the west with new, preferred settlers as well as the discouragement of settlers deemed undesirable. The negotiation of such a founding-mythos dealt mostly with issues of race, ethnicity, and “origin.”

Representations of anyone of First Nations “origin” are difficult to find in the THOH. Most of the region’s local indigenous population was either centered in the Piapot reserve, or at the Lebret Industrial School. But some interactions between Qu’Appelle residents, local Sioux, and local Cree did occur in the region. At least one non-THOH event was even recorded as being friendly: the 1910 Catholic Ladies’ Aid Society’s “Monster Picnic.” Various sporting events took place before the highlight of the day took place: “the football match... played between Qu’Appellites and a team of...

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646 Canada, *Census 1901*, “Table XI -- Origins of the People”; Canada, *Census 1911*, “Table VII: Origins of the People by sub-districts”: By means of rough comparison, in 1901 no “Indians” were enumerated in the South Qu’Appelle District, but in the bordering Qu’Appelle District 637 “Indians” were enumerated. They were 34.19% of the combined population of Qu’Appelle and South Qu’Appelle. In 1911, no “Indians” were enumerated in Qu’Appelle town, but in the Qu’Appelle District, 927 “Indians” were counted. In 1911, “Indians were only 2.6% of the Qu’Appelle district’s population.
Sioux and Cree,” which was scoreless “until just before time was called when the home team took a goal.”

The “home team” referred to the team of Qu’Appelle residents rather than the region’s original “home team,” the Cree and Sioux.

In the THOH, it was clearer just who was included on the “home team.” During the era of this study, almost all reported appearances of local First Nations people in the THOH came from the police court. Such depictions cast the local First Nations’ populace in the same role as other groups identified as being undesirable to the community. In 1908 Thos. Browden, identified as being a student of the Lebret school and therefore of aboriginal “origin,” appeared in the Qu’Appelle town court room “charged with deserting and stealing articles of clothing from Lebret Industrial School. He was let off on suspended sentence on his promising to return and behave himself.”

“Deserting” is a decidedly military term. Its use suggests that Browden, by being out of his assigned place, was not only misbehaving, but perhaps even dangerous. The compulsory promise “to return and behave himself,” leaves no room to question his right to be anywhere else.

In Progress police-court reports, the practice of identifying the accused by ethnicity/origin was almost exclusively used to identify people deemed outside of, and undesirable to, the community. The graver the charge, the surer was the ethnic identification. When an accused rapist was held over in Qu’Appelle before facing trial in Regina, the report published read as follows: “Nahnepowisk, an Indian from Piapot’s reserve, was up before F. Amas, J.P., last week on a charge of rape. He was remanded in

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647 “Qu’Appelle’s Big Picnic Excels All Previous Records,” Progress 28 July 1910, P1: The results of the picnic’s sporting events included several First Nations individuals as prize winners. Some such participants were named, e.g. Strong Eagle won the “Indian Pony” horserace; others remained anonymous, e.g. the second-place finisher in the “1/2 mile open” footrace listed only as “an Indian.”

648 “Court News,” Progress, 19 March 1908, P1.
custody for eight days." The observer felt it important to make clear exactly who the accused was, in terms of his “origin.” Two weeks later, the identification as “Indian” was so important that Nahnepowisk was not named in the Progress when it reported, “The Indian charged with rape was again before the magistrate on Thursday last for Trial. The case was dismissed.” Ethnicity was a determining factor of one’s desirability as a preferred settler/community member in Qu’Appelle.

The practice of identifying specific ethnicities and origins when reporting court happenings was also often applied to individuals identified as Jewish. In Qu’Appelle, Jewish people had faced unabashed anti-Semitism, specifically in the local press (the Progress). Unsurprisingly, by 1911, none of the town of Qu’Appelle’s residents identified their origin as Jewish. In fact, these identified accused were often doubly-labelled as undesirable to the community, i.e. as a transient and as Jew. For example, in 1906, there was a case in which a travelling salesman was charged with operating without a vendor’s license for the town of Qu’Appelle. The Progress reported that “a Jew peddler named Sam Assam was summoned on Monday for doing business without a license. He pleaded guilty and was ordered to pay the license fee and the costs of the court.” The term “peddler” implies transience. Assam’s religion seems only to have significance because the reporter reports it. The labelling of Assam as a “Jew peddler” appears to be playing to any negatively charged, anti-Semitic stereotypes. Two years later the term was still in use by the Progress, when it was reported that “Zi[___]?

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649 “Nahnepowisk, an Indian from Piapot’s reserve,” Progress, 21 April 1910, P8.
650 “The Indian,” Progress, 5 May 1910, P8.
651 For example, see the Immigration Hall chapter concerning the much-publicized 1902 example of when the town had a group of Jewish immigrants housed in the Immigration Hall.
652 Canada, Census 1911, “Table VII: Origins of the People by sub-districts”).
653 “A Jew peddler named Sam Assam,” Progress, 29 March 1906, Local Items, P8.
Natarshon, a Jew pedlar from Brandon came before J. P.’s Macdonald and Amas on Friday last on the charge of assaulting Amelia Bengert, a little girl 5 years old, at St. Peter’s colony. The case lasted all afternoon and part of the night and was tried in camera... Natershon[sic?] was convicted of common assault and fined $20 and costs or two months in gaol.”

Even with the simple case of a horse thief pleading guilty and being sent to Regina for trial the Progress needed to note that the thief was “a Jew.” Whether this is a reflection of a pervasive anti-Semitism in Qu’Appelle at the time, evidence of the Progress (E. E. Law, editor) seeking to shape opinion against Jewish people, or some ongoing negotiation between these views and others in the community is unclear.

Perhaps the most Qu’Appelle-specific example of the community exploring ethnicity in the THOH comes from community members themselves assuming another identity and wearing it to the THOH. A fancy dress ball was a chance to engage in a sanctioned exploration of a fascination (or even fetish) with otherness, or the exotic—through substitution and/or effigy. On a shallower level, such an event was also “a

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654 “Zi__ Natarshon, a Jew pedlar,” Progress, 30 July 1908, P1: Further details are difficult. The case was tried in camera on 24 July 1908 and the accused was convicted of common (as opposed to criminal) assault. A criminal case might have been tried in Regina and left at least a docket-entry in the Provincial Court records.

655 Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911*, Schedule No. 1, Population and Live Stock, Saskatchewan, Qu’Appelle 15, Subdistrict 32, p. 30, ll. 1-10, “Bengert,” Collections Canada. Microfilm T-18360. http://data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca/1911/pdf/e002101974.pdf: She was from a family that self-identified as being German (origin), who had immigrated from Russia, and was Roman Catholic. Henry Bengert was enumerated as follows: country of origin, Russia (1891); Racial Origin, German; Religion, Roman Catholic; Nationality, Canadian. The household was also made up of the following people: wife Marie Effoe, age 43; son John, 17; son Charles Joseph 14; daughter Amelia 8; son Marquis 6; son Anthon 4; son Andrew 7 months (born October 1910); daughter Octovo 1 (b. July 1909); mother-in-law Mary Josephine Saphas (widow) age 87.

656 “Court,” Progress, 19 November 1908, P1.
pleasing variation from the regular dances." It included an admired effigy of “Indian”-ness enacted by a local (non-native) M. L. Seymour; “He was dressed as an Indian chief, and was by many considered to bear out the character as well, if not better, than any other gentleman there.” This event is a small-scale recreation of the wider Victorian-Canadian narrative which championed the removal of the indigenous peoples from the region in order to replace them with white settlers. Qu’Appelle was infused with this narrative, as a self-promotional piece in the Progress of 1906, during the THOH’s construction, which lauded the progressive accomplishments of the region, the town, and its people with the following:

The belief, long prevalent in many parts of the world, that the Canadian West was the home of ice and snow, that the aborigines subsisted on blubber and fish oil, has passed away. Today settlers are crowding in by the thousands, and are sending back to their friends the news that they have found the healthiest country and the richest soil in the world.

The belief that, in Canada, the “aborigine” had been relegated to the past in the name of progress was often reinforced. Seymour’s effigy was enacted in the auditorium, a space from which any “authentic” first nation’s people were essentially excluded and thus unable to participate in any negotiations that could participant, interact, and negotiate community values.

The fancy dress ball reviewer did express a preference for Euro-centric styles, noting, “the costumes for the most parts were elegant and tasteful, many representing the court fashions of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.” A list of costumed participants “so far as obtainable” was provided and reveals a wide variety of costumes:

1910 Fancy Dress Ball costumes

**Male**
- B. Newland, Toreador
- W. L. Wait, dude
- A. E. Nicholls, Duke of Gloucester
- W. Vicars, Duke of Clarence
- A. D. Dickson, brigand
- Mr. Crowther, Indian waiter
- E. W. Miller, polo
- W. Caswell, Lord Chesterfield
- C. S. Pidcock, Miss Pleasant
- H. F. Pulford, Polish Prince
- Mr. Grey, black and white
- Mr. Martin, wireless telephone
- A. Mackenzie and L. Scott, sailors
- J. Mattick, cowboy
- G. Snyder, Turk
- A. Henley, W. Indian Planter
- A. F. D. Lace, gentleman of the XVI century
- H. Jack, Scotchman
- H. Greenbank, sailor
- Mr. Stocker, French cook
- Mr. Neuton, prince
- R. C. Sumner, executioner
- F. L. Dunlop, Napoleon
- R. Kirk, Knight of Malta
- H. Mills, French cavalier
- A. C. Garner, “Pierot.” [sic]
- M. L. Seymour, Indian chief

**Female**
- Mrs. Newland, Roses
- Mrs. Wait, nurse
- Mrs. Nicholls, Dame Rumor
- Mrs. Vicars, Dolly Varden
- Mrs. Dickson, Music
- Mrs. Crowther, nurse
- Mrs. Miller, bride
- Mrs. Caswell, Summer
- Mrs. McNaughton, Red Wing
- Mrs. Simmonds, Jap
- Mrs. Henderson, A. D. 1534
- Mrs. Whitting, nurse
- Mrs. Lawson, Jap
- Mrs. C. Wilson, Dolly Varden
- Mrs. Pott, Queen of the Ballet
- Miss McEwan, Tambourine Girl
- Miss I. Fyffe, Night
- Miss Caswell, Little Denmark
- Miss McCusker, Dolly Varden
- Miss Carroll, star
- Miss Kajewski, Jap
- Miss R. Dale, Dresden
- Miss L. Moore, Dutch Girl
- Miss Doolittle, Queen Elizabeth
- Miss Fraser, Scotch Girl
- Miss E. Morgan, Monte Carlo
- Miss Henley, early Victorian
- Miss Thompson, Martha Washington
- Miss McKinley, milk maid
- Miss Evans Scotch lassie
- Miss Jelly, Ireland
- Miss Weaver, Colonial dame

Within this list of costumes is a cross-sampling of some of the wider negotiations as to community identity occurring in other places in the THOH, as well as at other times within the auditorium itself. The various dukes, dames, queens, ladies and gentlemen are representative of a longing for cultural advancement as well as a nostalgic view of past
European-based glories as achievements of “civilization.” Nostalgia for a lost “homeland” in the British Isles can be found in the Scottish Dress, the personification of “Ireland,” and even the three Dickens-inspired “Dolly Vardens.” Amy Blanche Pott, local theatre creator, promoted herself to “Queen of the Ballet” for one night. A smattering of labour/work costumes (waiter, sailor, nurse, milk maid, etc.) are – in addition to being fairly easy costumes to create – a celebration/romanticising of “honest labour.” Some costumes take this theme of labour and layer it with ethnic overtones. British colonization and exoticness were celebrated with the costumes of the Indian waiter or the West Indian planter. One male-as-female is presented, C. S. Pidcock as “Miss Pleasant.” A touch of Americana is represented by the Martha Washington costume. There are dark-face costumes in the hall (West Indian planter, Indian waiter, and the “Black and White” persona) there is no “minstrel” or “Negro” costume. This event was in many ways a chance to explore diverse and exotic identities and, as such, it was a release from set roles. This desire was also expressed in other performative THOH events, sometimes with the same costumes. This fancy dress ball features several costumes that had, or would later, appear in performances. For example, the costumes of gypsies and “Japs.”

The willingness to embrace diversity expressed in THOH performative events, however, did not extend to the community at large. Opinions regarding the restrictive nature of wider negotiations of who was acceptable and who was not were sometimes blatant. For example, when a CPR work-gang was camped near Qu’Appelle during

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661 It is difficult to conclude whether or not such American-themed costumes are evidence of any increasing cultural Americanization over local performances. American theatrical and cultural influences had pervaded the region (as in other parts of Canada) for some time. For example: the Walker Touring Circuit was based in Chicago. There were also a significant number of settlers who hopped and re-hopped the Canadian/American. American cultural influences were always present.
enumeration for the 1906 *Census of the Prairie Provinces*, the *Progress* reported that “it is satisfactory to know that the CPR gang of Galicians [sic] and Italians was not included in the census of Qu’Appelle.” But when a sizable population of potentially-undesirable settlers were already near, but not officially of, the community, more nuanced negotiations, and renegotiations were eventually necessary.

By 1911, 194 of the town of Qu’Appelle’s 851 residents identified their origin as being German. Many of these enumerated in Qu’Appelle town would have been recently relocated into the townsitie proper, after having initially lived in an area to the south of the railway, popularly identified as “Germantown.” On this land settlers had set up houses and households outside of the accepted system of formal surveys or deeds, and thereby without formal agreements allowing for payment of taxes or rents. This led to tensions between Qu’Appelle residents and “Germantown” residents. On the surface, these tensions were often expressed as frustrations regarding the costs of infrastructure, schooling, policing, fire protection, etc. But these frustrations were only part of deep, lingering bitterness and mistrust. Memories of this cultural divide were important to the Qu’Appelle History Book Committee, who recalled the following:

> Considerable dissatisfaction was felt by the taxpayers of the town because although many of the pupils came from German families, a large number of these people lived on the C.P.R. land half a mile south of the tracks and paid practically no rent or taxes. This settlement of squatters in white washed sod houses trimmed with blue surrounded with gardens, though very picturesque, had been a source of complaint for the taxpayers for many years.

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662 “After all it is satisfactory,” *Progress*, 23 August 1906, P8.
663 Canada, *Census 1911*, “Table VII: Origins of the People by sub-districts, Qu’Appelle Town”: This was the biggest discrepancy between “origins” of people in the Qu’Appelle District and Qu’Appelle Town. In 1911, Qu’Appelle town reported that just over 22% (194) of its residents were of German origin. This was a much higher percentage than the Qu’Appelle district (13.25%).
664 Qu’Appelle Historical Society 340, 343.
The notion that this community (adjacent to, but not quite “of” Qu’Appelle) was full of “squatters” who burdened the town without paying their fair share was persistent. But the history book story belies more complicated negotiations of transience, permanence, and community belonging. These negotiations led to Germantown residents being eventually accepted officially as rate-paying or rent-paying members of Qu’Appelle town.

Initially, school taxes were a focus of conflict. By 1905, the inclusion of children from “Germantown” in the school system was a point of frustration for some Qu’Appelle residents. No solution was readily available, however. At a 1905 meeting (in the Immigration Hall), ratepayers came to the following non-conclusion regarding the education of Germantown:

The perennial question of taxing the Germans for the education of their children came up and brought forth expressions of both approval and disapproval. The majority were apparently in favor of both approval and disapproval. The majority were apparently in favor of some form of taxation, especially when it was shown that one room was devoted wholly to the education of these children, and that the annual cost therefore was about $700 per annum. No plan was found wholly acceptable, however, and the matter was again left in abeyance.\(^665\)

The status quo remained in place when the new Qu’Appelle school opened in 1906.\(^666\) One year later, the school was reorganised when Qu’Appelle became a high school district and Standards were replaced by Grades, the prevalence of “non-English” students was still worth mentioning. Thirty-nine of the fifty-eight children in grades one and two were “German or French.”\(^667\) (But the French pupils were not identified as being a

\(^{666}\) Qu’Appelle Historical Society 340.
\(^{667}\) Ibid: According to the Qu’Appelle History Society, in 1907 grades one through four had approximately thirty students in each grade – with as many as two-thirds of them speaking French or German as their first language. The number of students enrolled for grades five and beyond dropped off considerably, “since
Despite the assumption that Germantown was separate from the town of Qu’Appelle, their children were being sent to get an “English” education, if only for a few years. Complaints about the cost of educating Germantown children were outweighed by the realization that the alternative (not educating) those children, was a worse option.

The town council’s frustrations grew out of a lack of territorial control; the inability to collect taxes from the Germantown residents highlighted their lack of enforceable control of the railway property upon which they lived. The Town Council had been trying to gain some control over such lands in town even in 1904 when the council decided to “write [to] the C.P.R. Townsite Trustees and Canada North West Land Co. & Scottish American Land Co. requesting them to give the Council written permission to prevent squatting on Lots owned by the above Companies in this town.”

The town council tried to curb the *spread* of the “squatter” problem in 1906 by passing a motion to send the constable through town advising “all persons squatting on town property or streets” that they were breaking the law. But the town by-law was only applicable to town-owned lots – not the railway land of Germantown. The council took eight more years to find a solution that was more satisfying: “That all squatters be notified to pay rent for the lots upon which they are squatted equal to the amount of taxes

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668 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 23 November 1904.
669 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 June 1906.
670 While the town council passed bylaws which were bold sounding, if limited in application, it appears that the Rural council was either more inclusive, or perhaps pragmatic, with regard to the German population. The Rural Council routinely ordered German-language copies of by-laws and other important notices for the region. For example: an order to publish 200 copies of the rural herd bylaw in German was placed with the Saskatchewan Courier of Regina; and the council advertised in both English and German language newspapers notifying landowners about the claims process for road diversions in 1910 (R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes, 4 May 1910; “South Qu’Appelle Council,” *Progress*, 19 May 1910, P4).
the property would pay as assessed in [an] ordinary way, or remove buildings without further notice. 671 Collecting taxes appears to have been the council’s main motivator.

The socially excluded nature of the Germantown population was highlighted by their near-total exclusion of from social events in the THOH. But social exclusion from the THOH did not necessarily mean social exclusion in town. For example, local businesses did not appear to complain about the purchasing power of these residents. There were, however, social events outside of the THOH at which Germantown and Qu’Appelle residents mixed. Such events, while not unusual, were still atypical enough to warrant comment. After a 1905 “German” dance (at an unspecified location) it was observed, “funny, isn’t it, how few English speaking people admit they were at the German Ball on Monday evening. Dancing was kept up until 6 a.m., and all report a good time.” 672 The event appears to have been a guilty pleasure for “non-German” residents in Qu’Appelle. Three years later, however, a lesser degree of stigma was assumed for a similar event which was positively reviewed: “the young Germans in town held a dance in the Odd Fellows’ hall on Tuesday night. The attendance was good, and the evening’s amusement was strictly up to date, comparing favourably with any dance given in town.” 673 The condescending assumption that the young Germans would be unable to throw a modern dance undermines an otherwise positive review. A more subtle distance is created in this observation, with the use of the phrase “in town.” The Odd Fellows’ hall was in the town, but it was not the THOH – which is why it was compared to dances “in town.” The dance, being “German,” is set up as being outside of the town,

671 Town of Qu’Appelle Council, 28 October 1914; “Council Minutes,” Progress, 5 November 1914, P4.
672 “Funny, isn’t it,” Progress, 9 February 1905, 8. Note: There are no pre-1910 Saskatchewan Courier issues in the SAB to cross-check.
673 “The young Germans in town held a dance,” Progress, 8 October 1908, 8.
socially as well as ideologically. Germans in the Qu’Appelle region, some of whom had been living there since the 1890s, were not yet accepted as being of Qu’Appelle.

The Progress repeatedly identified Germantown residents in at least one THOH space: the town’s police court. Like many non-preferred groups in the community, the “German” or “Germantown” origin of an accused person in the courtroom was deemed an important detail. Sometimes the names of the accused or victims are unmentioned (or less important) than their Germantown connection. For example, in September 1906, a magistrate heard “A Case of Assault in which two German families were interested.”

In 1910, another court report described cases concerning “two German women [who] had a scrap,” as well as the cases of three other people who were not identified by ethnicity/origin (“A local youth,” “a tramp,” and “Tom Klyne”).

The Progress was also quick to identify, albeit in slightly more coded terms, any possible connection between “foreign” residents and serious diseases. During an outbreak of Scarlet fever in 1911, blame was placed directly upon Germantown residents by stating “the practice particularly prevalent among the foreign element of not reporting diseases apparently infectious or contagious, is likely to be dealt with strenuously by the

674 This extra-community standing was still evident in 1910, at a “Monster Picnic” held by the Catholic Ladies’ Aid Society. Amid the results of the sporting events was the note following note: “The tug-of-war between Canadians and Germans was won by the former.” No mention of what level of Canadian-ness (Birth, citizenship, or acceptable ethnic origin) was required to pull for Canada. If citizenship was all that was required, some of the Germans would have undoubtedly been technically able to chose either side of the rope – but custom and community values determined otherwise (“Qu’Appelle’s Big Picnic Excels All Previous Records,” Progress, 28 July 1910, P1).

675 Immediately previous to this announcement was the notice the “Qu’Appelle has its usual quote of J, P’s. The gentlemen honored by appointment are J. Fyffe, F. Amas, and R. C. Macdonald. Mr. Macdonald tried his first case yesterday” (“A Case of Assault in which two German families were interested,” Progress, 20 September 1906, P8).

676 “The Police court was unusually active last week,” Progress, 14 April 1910, P8: The full report read: “The Police court was unusually active last week. Two German women had a scrap. Charge and counter charge were made. One woman was fined $1.00 and costs. The counter case was dismissed. A local youth was up for vagrancy and let off on suspended sentence and a tramp on a similar charge got $5 and costs or one month. Tom Klyne was paid $10 to look for a horse and failed to do so. He had to put up $10 and $7.35 costs.”
South Qu’Appelle council this year” (italics added).677 The impression left by the 

*Progress* was that such diseased foreigners were not, nor should be, accepted as part of the community.678 The South Qu’Appelle Council (rural) ordered a printing of health bylaw information in both English and German.679

The end of Germantown as a settlement of “squatters” came in 1911, when local real estate agent, M. A. Leet, bought the land.680 The *Progress* was eager to report on the resulting kerfuffle:

M. A. Leet recently purchased the C.P.R. land south of the track. On this land are 34 homes of German Squatters who are somewhat excited over the event.

A *Progress* representative interviewed Mr. Leet regarding the matter but could get no information save a confirmation of a report of the deal.

Several of the residents on the land were seen who stated that Mr. Leet had notified them of the transfer of the land and demanding a small rental fee per year from each. Apparently their excitement is due to the question of ownership of the houses. They claim the right to remove their houses from the land while, they state, Mr. Leet claims to have purchased the land. They are seeking legal advice thereon.

Considerable discussion is heard on the street but simmered down it amounts to this: Mr. Leet made a legitimate purchase and as land lord he has a perfect right to fix a rental, which, if reports are true, is merely nominal. On the other hand these Germans or those they secured the houses from have been residing there for years, paying rent to the C. P. R. only once, two years ago. They have also been almost free of taxes. When they built on land not their own, or bought the houses they did so knowing the risk they ran. As to the ownership of the houses that is a matter between them and Mr. Leet on which we cannot express an opinion.681

Germantown residents had been buying and selling the *houses* in which they lived (not the land under them). In so doing, they essentially established their own unofficial

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678 This note was on the same page of local news where it was reported that, “Two more homes were quarantined for scarlet fever last week” (“Two more homes,” *Progress* 5 January 1911, P8).
679 R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes, 13 March 1911.
680 In the years that followed this purchase, there were some rumours that Leet’s purchase of the CPR land was motivated by the Germantown residents’ participation in the defeat of the local option by-law, but this is difficult to prove – but it will be explored in the upcoming “local option” section.
681 “Germans Are Excited,” *Progress*, 26 January 1911, P1.
housing market that was outside of the official land title laws. This system was so respected by its users that they felt uneasy when Leet bought the land within officially accepted laws. The town council also acted to bring more Germantown residents into the official (legal, taxable) boundaries of the town, if not as Leet’s renters, then as landowners. The town council offered Germantown residents lots on the east side of town. 682 The lots came at a special price: one dollar per lot, with the option to buy up to two more lots at fifteen dollars each. 683 The town was offering three lots for approximately 75% of one lot’s value. 684 The offer was taken by some, but not all, of the Germantown residents.

The situation was stable by March, as the Progress reported: “matters have now quieted down in connection with the Leet property south of the track. Some Germans have removed from the settlement but others are remaining and are content to pay the rent required.” 685

The land offer by the council could be viewed as an attempt to assimilate (if not divide-and-conquer) the Germantown residents. But Germantown residents who bought town land were now ratepayers with potentially more say in civic governance. These owners – as well as Leet’s renters – were now within the official boundaries of the community. Once the ability to control the territory of Germantown was communicated

682 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 25 January 1911.
683 The motion read: “That the following lots be set apart for the German Settlers: Lots 11 to 25 Block 151; Lots 11 to 40, Block 150; Lots 11 to 32 Block 149 (Providing arrangements could be made with Mr. Barratt) and lots 11-24 Bk. 148. On condition that they erect a habitable house and reside on the premises within six months from April 1st, 1911. Not more than three lots to be sold to one person at the above price” (Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, January 1911).
684 In order to offer a solid block of land in town, the council had to back out of a previously made purchase agreement with G. H. Barratt, who was refunded the $125.00 he had put down on block 149. Also a Joseph Oxman, in taking part in the town’s land discount, bought a fourth lot, “Lot 8 Blk. 151 at the regular price of $40.00.” The ease with which the price of town lots could be decreased could be an indication as to the unstable, or created, value of town lots – upon which the town depended to pay off debts incurred building the THOH (Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 1 March 1911).
685 “Matters have now quieted down,” Progress, 9 March 1911, P8.
and enforced, community tensions resulting from the previous lack of definition and control of the territory began to dissipate.

The Germantown experience, specifically the boundaries involved (official and unofficial as well as social and ideological) suggests a stratification of the community according to identified origin. Anderson and Robertson suggest a more widespread racial hierarchy of bigotry in Canada, as discovered in their study of newspaper coverage, consisting of:

three groupings, loosely identifiable by skin pigmentation and geographical location. The first and best case, white Europeans such as the French and Scottish stood above all others. A second category included Turks, Chinese, Japanese and Persians. They occupied a mid-level damnation. And then, third, non-white Aboriginal peoples from anywhere on the planet constituted the sorriest and most deplorable bunch.686

The status of Chinese people within this hierarchy is, to some extent, evidenced in Qu’Appelle. The arrival of two local men of Chinese origin was praised, but not out of altruistic commitments to diversity. The arrival of Wing Lee (26) and Henry J. Lee (29) was heralded as follows: “we are glad to be able to announce that Qu’Appelle has at length secured two good Chinamen to open a laundry. Make it permanent by patronizing it.”687 A laundry, specifically a Chinese laundry, was a sign of progress and prestige; it was a service befitting a town of Qu’Appelle’s size. The Lees acceptance into the THOH was basic; they washed the THOH linens.688

686 Cronlund Anderson and Robertson 47-48
688 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 24 April 1907.
Anderson and Robertson argued that in Canada there was an accepted and nationally pervasive hierarchy based upon race (or “origin” for the purposes of this study). Local of this hierarchy are evident in the Qu’Appelle THOH. Perhaps the most explicit example was a campaign speech made during the 1908 federal election by Liberal candidate J.T. Brown. The Progress, an often conservative-friendly paper, reported the attendance as being approximately sixty-five people (fifty men and fifteen women).  

After addressing other points typical of a stump speech Brown moved on to the topic of how not only “the Liberals have made the West,” but that also “they have made Canada.” His comments touched on Qu’Appelle’s (as part of Canada’s) problem of balancing the desire to both maintain selectively racist immigration policies while still attracting more immigrants. Brown, in criticising Borden (the federal Conservative leader), cited Borden’s insensitivity, recounting how Borden had dealt with recent racial tensions in British Columbia, recalling “what a noise there was with reference to the influx of the yellow man from the East to British Columbia and Western Canada. You all know how suddenly a great many Hindoos, Japanese and Chinese came into the province of British Columbia and Western Canada apparently under contract with railway companies.” Brown claimed that Borden “inflamed the forces already on fire” in British

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689 That fifteen women attended Brown’s rally was an important point since political rallies – with the possible exception of the Local Option rallies – were a set of performative events in the auditorium to which women had not been well-integrated. For the first rallies/meetings of the campaign, both the Liberal and Liberal-Conservatives specified that “Ladies are invited.” Another standard inclusion in such notices announcing political rallies was to invite the opposition candidate, or a representative, to debate issues at the meeting. The challenge never seems to have been accepted, but the invitation remains if only for appearances. By the end of the campaign – whether due to the constraints of column space, or by unnoticed happenstance – inviting women to meetings was merged with the token invitation to opposition candidates, for example: “Ladies and opposition candidate or representative invited” (“Opening Gun of Campaign,” Progress, 1 October 1908, P1; “Local News,” Progress, 22 October 1908, P8).

690 including corruption accusations, Post Office criticism, timber limits, custom duties, and the Manitoba Grain Act.

691 “Opening Gun of Campaign,” Progress.
Columbia when he travelled there in response to “how the people of B.C. rose in fever heat and demanded that B. C. and Canada as well be saved as a white man’s country.”  

While Brown appeared to oppose using racism to rally supporters, his description of his own Liberal government’s policies on settling the prairies spoke directly to their inherent racism. Employing the hegemonic “we” as often as possible, Brown sought to gain credit for prodigious, yet careful, prairie settlement:

Only last year there were over 260,000 people [who] came into Canada from other countries. The efforts of the Immigration Department are directed more to the United States and British Isles and to those countries of the north of Europe, and not so much to the south of Europe. We find today a careful, select immigration policy. Every precaution is taken to keep out the man who is diseased, criminals, etc.

Brown’s terms identifying undesirable immigrants as unsafe, diseased criminals reflects similar codes used in Qu’Appelle to label local undesirables (such as Germantown residents or “old offenders”).

Such intolerance and fear had been surfacing, and would continue to surface, for years in the governmental and judicial practices in the Qu’Appelle police court (and its performative extension-tool, the Progress). In the THOH, some labels of “origin” are more notable for their absence than inclusion. People of some “origins” were almost exclusively identified by origin when exhibiting socially surprising, or even deviant, behaviour. Failing to similarly identify people of white European (or equally

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692 Ibid.
693 Ibid: Yet in an apparently counter-argumentative summation to his points on immigration, Brown also emphasised that being selective was the key to letting the right people into Canada, there was a danger of being overly-selective, claiming that the Conservatives would “get back to the state of affairs where we were so select and exclusive that we did not get anybody at all; we even lost our own boys and girls.”
694 Brown, who sat as one of the first MLA’s of SK, was narrowly defeated by R. S. Lake; Lake’s margin of victory was 0.3% (Parliament of Canada, “Qu’Appelle, Saskatchewan. S.C. 1907, c.41,” History of Federal Ridings since 1867, Library of Parliament, (accessed 1 August 2012), http://www.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/FederalRidingsHistory/hfer.asp?Include=Y&Language=E&rid=576&Search=Det).
“acceptable”) origin shapes the negotiations of who would be accepted, who would be marginalized in the community.

**Black Entertainers:**

If the courtroom was usually unwelcoming to people deemed “unacceptable,” the auditorium was one space in the THOH where a degree of diversity and transience was not only expected, but often welcomed. Black entertainers were often welcomed on the town hall stage, although the prevailing attitude toward African-American settlement of Canada in general, and the West specifically, was decidedly unwelcoming. In the 1911 census of the over 35,000 people within the Qu’Appelle district, only two listed their “origin” as being “Negro.” The census form offered no option for an “American” origin though it is perhaps their likeliest “origin.”\(^695\) While politicians eagerly sought American farmers as settlers to the Canadian West, they did not desire African-American settlers.\(^696\) Waiser points out that such reaction was not surprising from the Anglo-Canadian population who were “already uneasy about the influx of continental European immigrants and were not about to share the region with visible minorities. After all, it was supposed to be ‘white man’s country.’”\(^697\)

\(^695\) Canada, *Census 1911*, “Table II: Religions of the People” and “Table VII: Origins of the People by sub-districts”: although there is a chance they could have been from Eastern Canada.

\(^696\) Waiser *Saskatchewan: A New History* 75: For example, following Canada’s immigration advertising campaign in the Midwestern states, a small group of black settlers from Oklahoma settled near Rosetown and Maidstone. Soon afterwards, the press attacked the notion of attracting more such immigrants. In Saskatoon, the *Daily Phoenix* repeatedly argued Canada, specifically Saskatchewan, needn’t import America’s “Negro problem” (Shepard, R. Bruce, “Plain Racism: The Reaction Against Oklahoma Black Immigration to the Canadian Plains,” Gregory P. Marchildon, Ed. Immigration & Settlement, 1870-1939; Volume 2 of History of the Prairie West Series, University of Regina Canadian Plains Research Center, CPRC Press, 2009).

While it would have been harder for these performers to be welcomed as settlers into the community, temporary acceptance onstage was possible. The transient nature of touring performers in the auditorium might have given them a relatively open, but temporary, access to the community during their performances. But from this temporary acceptance, it is hard to gauge to what level acceptance, or tolerance, existed toward African Americans in Qu’Appelle. Community residents were informed by a wide variety of performances of blackness. Variations and evolutions of the touring minstrel show (and the associated cultural stereotyping) were eagerly anticipated and usually appreciated by Qu’Appelle opera-house goers, as were “Jubilee” shows.

As was the case earlier in Qu’Appelle, “jubilee” companies – especially those familiar to Qu’Appelle residents from previous tours – were inevitably compared to the accepted standard for Jubilee shows, the legendary Fisk Jubilee Singers. For example, before the Dixie Jubilee Singers played Qu’Appelle, their pre-show announcement in the Progress labelled them “one of the best troupes of Jubilee Singers since the time of the Fisks.” After the show, a reportedly appreciative reviewer marked the group’s improvement before recapping the event itself:

The Dixie Jubilee Singers had a fair house on Saturday night and they deserved it, for their programme was long and good from start to finish. Mr. and Mrs. Williams furnished the humour; at the same time not forgetting to show their ability as singers. Mrs. Williams possesses a sweet clear contralto which, combined with her acting, captured the audience. In G.L. Johnson, tenor, and Mr. Crabbe, baritone, the troupe has two able vocalists, while Mrs. Greene easily makes good the claim to being a prima donna with her clear, well-modulated soprano. There was not a dissatisfied patron when the concert closed with the national anthem.

698 “In the Dixie Jubilee Singers,” Progress, 10 October 1907, P8.  
The skill of the singers, as well as the length and quality of the programme led to the positive local review. What these reviews lack, however, is any explicit mention of the race of the performers. While it can be assumed that some of these performers would be African American, it is possible that some troops, especially those promoting a minstrel style component to their show, could have had some white performers in blackface.

Greater diversity and more pervasive levels of transience were even more explicit in the numerous touring troupes presenting *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in Qu’Appelle. There was a sense of permanence to the idea of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. The show was accepted as a North American “standard” for performance, especially touring performance. Many *Uncle Tom* shows toured through Qu’Appelle, but the consistency of content between touring shows was impossible to assume. Identifying any one script with any one performance is problematic. Stowe never personally endorsed any one script or stage version of her work. In fact, dramatic treatments of her *Uncle Tom* story were being staged even while Stowe’s novel was still being serialised. Beginning in the 1850s, innumerable performances offered wildly varying treatments of Stowe’s material. Eric Lott observed that the shows, born of a turbulent era in American history, were rife with complexity; “Not only were there versions of the play written from anti-slavery, moderate, and proslavery positions – the lot of them informed by the devices of the minstrel show – but they all took up in their formal structures the sectional division, based on competing economic systems, that would soon culminate in civil war.”

Florence James recalled that, in 1931, she interviewed a woman who had played Tospy in an *Uncle Tom* touring show for over twenty-five years and claimed that, in her

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experience, “there was no script. The play was really some kind of scenario. The actors in the touring company made up lines and business to suit themselves, and to fatten their parts.”

All *Uncle Tom* companies might not have been as improvisational, but the notion that any one script was an authoritative representation of Stowe’s novel is extremely unlikely.

The transient nature of the performance texts contrasted with the overall sense of permanence that came with the predictability of touring *Uncle Tom* shows coming to Qu’Appelle. Predictability came with variety, however. In Qu’Appelle, the show could range from one company playing in the THOH as a conventionally-styled stage drama while other companies performed in Qu’Appelle under canvas with huge casts and bigger spectacles. For example, “Downie’s Big Mammoth Spectacular Pavilion” boasted a more dog and pony hippodrome style show which included two bands, street parades through town, including “50 people, white and colored... 23 ponies, dogs, and donkeys;” a pack of “Siberian Bloodhounds;” and even an ox cart for Uncle Tom.

Some companies also presented their diversity as a drawing card. Local favourite A. D. McPhee boasted a multi-racial cast when his company’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* played Qu’Appelle in June 1907. He promised “a wonder, clean, spectacular, and well put on.” The notice for Mason Brother’s show in the Qu’Appelle THOH (Figure 64) made many promises:

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701 Another one of Florence James’ discoveries while interviewing black performers for her 1930s remount was the usual race of the performer in the title. She recounts that, “I know of no Negro actor who has ever played the role of Uncle Tom. I believe it was always played in blackface.” (James, Florence, *Fists Upon a star*, Unpublished manuscript. CPRC).


703 While McPhee boasted a multi-racial cast, it was not specified which actors played what roles. Blackface, minstrel-style performances of Uncle Tom Characters were common from the shows’ earliest performances. How widespread this tradition was, geographically or across eras, is unclear. Lott concluded that the use of blackface and minstrel tropes were unavoidable, considering the shows’ origins in the 1850s,
The producers advertised the “original” nature of the company and the multi-racial cast (“White and Colored”). The Progress’s pre-show notice also praised how “This company is said to be the best ever organized to present this time honored drama. The theatre goers of this town will have the treat of seeing the historical play just as it was written.”\textsuperscript{704} The notice appeals to a local desire for traditions and permanence

\textsuperscript{704} “Mason Bros.’ World’s Greatest Uncle Tom’s Cabin Co.,” Progress, 17 November 1910, P8.
without specifying which tradition was being exalted. The claims of script accuracy by the Mason Brothers might be more about impressing an audience hungry for an “authentic” Uncle Tom experience over and above any connection to Stowe.\textsuperscript{705} The press does not mention that the novel is the true source of the story. Instead, the tradition of the play-in-performance for generations of audiences becomes the supposedly “true” source of the story.

Since there were so few black people living in the Qu’Appelle region, virtually all personal, local experiences with black people would have been through the THOH stage. Uncle Tom shows, minstrel-style shows, and the occasion jubilee tour would have been the foundations upon which local, personal opinion would be based. Perhaps the shows were opportunities to change prevailing attitudes and promote recognition and even support for other races and ethnicities besides Anglo-Saxon Caucasians in Qu’Appelle. Alternatively, such performances also had the potential to – indirectly or otherwise – support racism and exclusion within the community. Community expectations in Qu’Appelle would have been shaped by these shows which were often marketed by trading upon nostalgias for an imagined “Old South” – often as imagined by people not of that place, time, tradition, or other connection. There appears to have been a tension between the desire to keep black settlers out and curiosity regarding the exotic – perhaps even a desire for more diversity. In the face of such tensions, these performances could have been a way people came to terms with their racism. By accepting performances by

\textsuperscript{705} The idea that this play was History was a common feature of the press of any Uncle Tom show on Canadian tour-stops. Despite blatant changes to the story (for example, presenting it “with all of the objectionable features eliminated”) the Mason Brother’s tent show in the 1920s proclaimed that, “Millions have witnessed Uncle Tom’s Cabin and millions will witness it in the future, as the new generations grow from babyhood to manhood, and why? Because it is the grandest, purest, and most interesting, instructive and moral show on earth.” (“Mason’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin Company,” \textit{Red Deer News}, 27 July 1921, P5, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/RDN/1921/07/27/5/Ar00503.html.
black performers, the audience members (or insiders) could feel good about themselves; in their minds, they remained good people because they attended plays that condemned the practice of slavery. But the ideal of social equality and actual inclusion of blacks or other races was a different matter; an inclusive attitude might not have made people feel “good” if it was not socially coded as a virtue.

Perhaps by attending performances by blacks or other races in the THOH, community insiders could have been aroused, however minimally, to the possibility of that inclusiveness might be an issue worth considering. Initial expressions of inclusiveness were specifically couched within the safe confines of “pretend.” Such impulses were displayed when the community staged its own versions of acceptably adventurous exoticism by donning costumes at their fancy-dress balls. The primary “safety” mechanisms of these events are that they remain contained in the hall, and that they have a predefined end-point. After the ball people went home, removed their costumes, and became themselves again. After the show, black performers left the hall, got on the train, and went to the next town. The THOH offered a safe, transient space for these explorations.

**Gender: Male and Female Roles in the THOH**

In 1901, in the town of Qu’Appelle, there were actually 22 more females than males (male 206 vs. female 228). But by 1906, the overall sex-ratio was 115.5 (approximately 6 males for every 4 females), a near reversal of the 1901 sex-ratio of 90.4 (or approximately 9 men for every 10 women). In the larger Qu’Appelle district, however, males starkly outnumbered females. While the town had relatively balanced
male to female populations, the region was still overwhelmingly young and male in 1906 (Figure 65). Over all ages, the sex ratio was 1.49 (approximately 3 males for every 2 females). Considering the population between 15 and 65, however, the ratio climbs considerably, to 1.8 (or approximately 9 men for every 4 women).\footnote{Canada, \textit{Census 1906}, “Table I: Population by sexes in 1906 and 1901.”}

![Figure 65: Population Pyramid Qu’Appelle District 1906, from Canada, Census 1906, “Table I: Population by sexes in 1906 and 1901.”](image)

**Role of women as local dramatic producer, director, and author:**

The THOH main floor spaces were almost exclusively dominated by men. Men voted in elections, sat on councils, presided from court benches, and served as police constables. Upstairs in the auditorium, however, was much more of a female domain – especially with regard to locally produced events and entertainments.\footnote{This is not to say that either space was entirely only male or only female, or that any of the spaces within the THOH (or the individuals associated with those spaces) were simply defined. As Massey observed, places are complex, shared spaces (137).}

In the time of the Qu’Appelle Immigrant Hall, local entertainments were occasionally produced by men. By the time of the THOH, however, it appears that the
organising, writing, producing, and managing of local entertainments and performance-
events had become almost exclusively a female pursuit.\textsuperscript{708} Such efforts usually enabled 
females to pool resources in order to raise social and financial capital within various 
community-groups. To such ends various women’s church groups fundraised in the 
THOH. These groups took seriously their reputation for entertaining. For example, the 
“ladies of the Methodist church” entertainment of spring 1908 promised to present “the 
crowning event of the season and no pains will be spared to make it, as in the past, a 
brilliant success.”\textsuperscript{709} Once again, the \textit{Progress} served as an extension of the event into 
the wider community. In the paper, such local events were usually praised, and dramatic 
directors received credit, even if it was somewhat condescending, as when it noted that 
“much credit is due to Mrs. Law as manager and directress in the little drama, \textit{The 
Trained Nurse}.”\textsuperscript{710}

Lilyan Smith (later to be known as Mrs. Dave Ramsay), began her theatrical 
appearances as a performer in various local concerts in the Qu’Appelle Immigration 
Hall.\textsuperscript{711} By August 1907, Smith was featured as a performer and director of concerts in 
town.\textsuperscript{712} Post-show reviews credited her management: “Mrs. [sic] Smith’s concert on 
Thursday evening last was given to a crowded house and pronounced good.”\textsuperscript{713} Smith 
also acted as a site-manager, arranging for some touring companies to stop in 
Qu’Appelle. After a glowing \textit{Progress} review for a performance of the Dixie Jubilee

\textsuperscript{708} With only the rare exception, such as Military Club concerts. That cultural events in the 
THOH were largely handled by women is really a reflection of the prevalent situation throughout the community (for 
example church socials, town picnics, and other social events).

\textsuperscript{709} “The ladies of the Methodist church are arranging,” \textit{Progress} 2 April 1908, P1.

\textsuperscript{710} “Successful Entertainment,” \textit{Progress}, 25 April 1907, P1.

\textsuperscript{711} For an event on February 16, 1905, she opened the second act of the concert with a song, “Melody 
Divine” (“Popular Proposition – Hospital Concert Strikes Sympathetic Chord,” \textit{Progress} 9 February 1905, 
P1).

\textsuperscript{712} “Don’t fail to attend the concert,” \textit{Progress}. 25 July 1907, P8.

\textsuperscript{713} “Miss Smith’s concert,” \textit{Progress} 15 August 1907, P8.
Singers, it was noted that: “Miss L. Smith, who engaged the singers, gave a little dance at
the close of the concert.”

Smith also innovated. Private, invitation only concerts in the THOH were
extremely rare, but Smith might have been the first, or even only, local person to engage
the hall in order to perform for her invited guests. The night was reported as being “a
huge success. Those who were present report an enjoyable time.” The motivation
behind her staging the concert was unreported. In what may or may not have had any
bearing upon the brevity of her by-invitation-only, solo-performance career, by the next
summer (1909) Lilyan Smith had married Dave Ramsay.

As the newly renamed Mrs. Dave Ramsay, her entertainments continued, for
example her August 1909 event, which promised to “be rendered by the best local talent
obtainable and... present many unique features.” Ramsay’s productions continued to
evolve in intricacy and scope. Fifty performers (local adults and children) were
participating in the event, which promised, “Fifteen numbers, each a specialty and a
novelty, special in costume and never given in this town before.”

Most of the pre-
show notices were promoting female roles such as the “three modest Quakeresses,” the
“Japanese girls,” as well as “the Fairy Queen.” Another attractive feature promised for
the evening was the, “chorus of Cowboys in costume.” The cowboys were also
employed as ushers. The pieces were pre-advertised as being novel and almost floral in

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715 Hers is the only example of such a private concert found to date (“Miss Lilyan Smith,” Progress, 26
November 1908, P8).
716 “The musical entertainment given by Miss L. Smith,” Progress, 3 December 1908, P8.
717 “Mrs. D. Ramsay (nee Lilyan Smith),” Progress 8 July 1909, P8.
presentation: “Nearly every number will be a color revelation.”

The show’s receipts totalled almost $150.00. Community support appears to have been robust. A likely attendance of between 250 and 350 people can be assumed after taking into account the price of tickets: 75c reserved, 50c general admission, and 25c for children. The performance was a triumph for Ramsay, her cast, and the wider community. The *Progress* review reflected this pride in homegrown talent:

> The programme was a varied one brightened by pretty costumes, abundance of music and dancing. The talent was purely local and showed marked ability and also careful training. While every number pleased, those by the little tots perhaps appealed most strongly to the audience. Altogether the concert afforded most enjoyable entertainment for a packed audience and we desire to congratulate Mrs. Ramsay and her able supporters on the deserved success. Mrs. Ramsey intends donating the surplus funds to Knox church.

Events such as this one were the foundation of Mrs. Dave Ramsay’s reputation as a bankable producer of successful, quality shows for local causes. A participant in some of these shows, Clifford Peart recalled his experiences:

> If Mrs. Ramsay was in support of any type of entertainment then everyone knew that it was going to be tops and everyone looked forward to the performance; that is why we solicited her help and that is why we had to perform for three nights to sell-out audiences. As a matter of fact our effort ran for a week or more because we travelled to neighboring towns — McLean, Indian Head, Fort Qu'Appelle, Edgeley, Avonhurst... We rehearsed for months; we went over and over certain parts until Mrs. Ramsay and Mrs. Rawlinson (a very versatile pianist) were satisfied; we elocuted, we enunciated [sic], we announced and pronounced until everything was just as it was meant to be. They were fun, those musical plays. Then there was the added thrill of the romances behind the scenes. No matter what we were doing we never missed a cue, tho'; Mrs. Ramsay saw to that! She was a darn good sport but would tolerate no nonsense.

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721 “Close to a one hundred and fifty dollar house,” *Progress*, 5 August 1909, P8.
722 “Local News,” *Progress*, 29 July 1909, P8: Each of the fifty performers presumably had friends and relations eager to support and enjoy their performance, thereby providing a sure source of presold tickets.
723 “Close to a one hundred and fifty dollar,” *Progress*.
724 Qu’Appelle Historical Society, 249.
This memoir makes explicit mention of a perhaps assumed – but perhaps unexpressed – benefit of participating in local shows, i.e.: the potential of the backstage space as a setting for atypically non-chaperoned male-female interactions. In some ways, by condoning such behaviour – as long as it did not interfere with the onstage product – Ramsay might have been somewhat of an anti-patroness.

Another of Qu’Appelle’s amateur theatre dynamos was Amy Blanche Pott (more widely known simply as Mrs. Pott). Mrs. Pott (b. 1875) was married to Frank Pott (b. 1870). Both were English and had moved to Qu’Appelle in 1903. Their farm was proudly named, “Qu’Appelle Poultry Farm, South Qu’Appelle, Breeders of Plymouth Rocks (Barred and White)”. Pott’s career as a local entertainment producer started with her work for the Willing Workers of St. Peter’s church. Pott’s involvement was initially as part of a team of stage manager/directors, who produced popular entertainments that garnered praise and good reviews. Typically, an event in March 1908 was praised for its “careful preparation, the play and drills were well staged and the solos and choruses gave evidence of considerable musical talent.” This review praised both Pott and a Mrs. Harvey for their management of the play (now they would be referred to as directors) as well as choreographing the drill. But Pott would soon assume

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726 “Qu’Appelle Poultry Farm,” Progress, 18 November 1909, P1.
728 “S. Peter’s Willing Workers,” Progress, 5 March 1908, P8.
greater control of these events; she began writing, directing, and producing ever-more-spectacular shows.

![Figure 66: Pott's entertainment, 1909 from Progress, 16 December 1909, P1.](image)

From 1909 to 1914, there was an Age of Extravaganzas\(^\text{729}\) of sorts, which saw Potts and Ramsay creating, producing, and directing large local shows for the benefit of various groups in Qu’Appelle. In 1909 Potts produced a program in aid of St. Peter’s Parish Room.\(^\text{730}\) The event consisted of twelve tableaus and a two-act drama entitled: *Extravaganza, Love’s Stratagem, or the Prince and the Gypsy* (Figure 66). The programme was so popular that repeat performances were staged to benefit more groups in the region. For example there was a January 1910 benefit performance for the Indian Head Hospital.\(^\text{731}\)

The event promised “Pretty Dances, Charming Dresses, Catchy Music.”\(^\text{732}\) Pott’s reputation was touted as a reason to trust the entertainment value of the show: “Every play produced by Mrs. Pott has been marked by many novel features and has received general appreciation. This one will be no exception to the rule so come and spend a

\(^{729}\) My title.

\(^{730}\) “Don’t forget the Extravaganza and Living Statuary,” *Progress*, 16 December 1909, P8.


happy evening.” Pott’s reputation held. The event resulted in “a full house, generous applause and receipts amounting to over $200 [which] express the popularity of the entertainment. Artistically, the event was praised for how “it eclipsed all previous local entertainments and those responsible therefore have every right to feel proud of their efforts.” Mrs. Pott’s abilities as a writer/composer/director were not assumed to be well known in the community, as the following potential surprise was mentioned in the review:

To many the play will afford new interest when they learn that it was written by Mrs. Pott, who also acted as stage manager and assisted in planning the costumes. To her and Mrs. Dickson fell the credit of painting the scenery. The music of the songs, “Just wearying for you,” “Making Hay” and “The Eaglet” was composed by Mrs. Pott.

The evening began with twelve tableaux (living statuary). While all of the scenes were reported as being well-received, several were singled out for special mention, (though not for special description) in the event review:

The draping and pose of the statuary and the effect in general were extremely artistic and expressive, each scene requiring three or four presentations to satisfy the appreciative assembly. Among the most striking were Compassion and the Divine, War, Peace and Qu’Appelle (who calls). The music, vocal, violin and piano was also heartily encored.

After an interval, the audience received Pott’s two act composition “Extravaganza, Love’s Stratagem or, the Prince and the Gypsy.” The scene for the play was set in the “mountains of Belgravia,” where the following events were imagined:

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733 “Don’t forget the Extravaganza and Living Statuary,” Progress.
736 “A Brilliant Success,” Progress.
737 Ibid.
738 “Town Hall Dec. 28th, 1909 – Programme,” Progress, 23 December 1909, P8: Items included the following: 1. The Golden Age; Violin Solo, Mrs. J. Newton; 2. Love the Road Finder; 3. Jealously Cruel as the Grave; 4. Compassion the Divine; Song, Waltz Song, Mrs. Court.; 5. For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow; 6.
Carlotta, queen of the gipsies, together with her maiden followers, vows to remain single, but becomes enamoured of the handsome Prince of Belgravia, Alphonso, and her followers likewise accept in secret the attentions of neighbouring brigands. Alphonso joins the brigand band to be near the gypsy queen, is suspected of being a spy, is driven out but Love finally conquers and the maids are absolved from their vow. 739

The show’s themes of virginity, frustrated love, a rich male willing to sacrifice all for his love, as well as the eventually requited and therefore soon-to-be-consecrated love must have contributed to the romance of the storytelling. The visual effects were good, especially the costumes, which were “a marvel of art and pretty fancy, no two alike yet all in accord with gipsy temperament and brigand taste.” 740 The reviewer’s (or audience’s) direct experience with the taste and temperament of either gypsy or brigand is unknown, but is assumed to be lacking. Nevertheless, the imagined exotic setting could have served both as a device to provide greater room for fun in the storytelling, as well as a means by which to free performers (at least somewhat) from some of the restrictions of their everyday modes of expected behaviour for males and females within their community.

Pott followed up her 1909 triumph with another extravaganza, The Proving of the Princes, in 1910. 741 With this show, Pott continued to build her reputation as a dynamo of dramatic production, social-capital creation, and molder of community values and morals. Her efforts benefitted the local Agricultural Society. The play drew a full house,

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739 “A Brilliant Success,” Progress: The reviewer seems cover all possibilities regarding the spelling of “gypsy.”
741 Qu’Appelle Historical Society, 25.
was hailed as surpassing her previous effort, and declared an “Unqualified Success.”

In this show, Pott – and her “company,” as it was now being identified – explored themes that would be familiar to locals who were following local politics and public tensions, i.e. wealth, power, corruption, and the redemptive power of love. Pott’s show culminated with “a battle between Good and Evil.”

It was a morality play delivered as a whimsical lark with light and laughable moments: “The plot, while sufficient to hold the play together, does not prevent the introduction of many lilting songs and choruses, local hits without a sting, and fancy dances.” The reviewer summarised the action as follows:

The play consisted of three sets. The theme is the conquest of good over evil. Mr. A. Rawlinson as Prince Leopold de Montmorence and Mr. Jos. Henley as Prince Hubert de Calavra are contestants for a kingdom, the latter being the rightful heir but the former by a pact with the Spirit of Evil (Mrs. Frank. Pott) obtains the title, wealth and power. In doing so he sacrifices his memory and his better nature, forgets his engagement to Princess Imogene (Miss Henley) and sues for the hand of Princess Nadine (Miss Sumner), who loves Prince Hubert. Complications follow and a struggle between the good and evil spirits ensues in which the former finally win. Prince Leopold by a good deed escapes the thrall of evil, regains his memory and honor and restores the kingdom he has usurped.

Thematic connections to local issues seem clear. For example, the show was performed after the much-publicised, Temperance-driven Local Option vote was defeated. Prince Leopold’s bargain is reminiscent of Temperance-group warnings regarding the evils of alcohol. As a result of his poor choice, Leopold sacrifices his memory and “his better nature” before eventually leaving his fiancé to chase another woman.

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743 Ibid.
744 Ibid.
745 Ibid.
Local in-jokes were especially appreciated. For example, Pott cast local men-of-prominence, W. Reeve and L. Stocker, as a corrupt King and Queen who appear to have acted as a comic chorus throughout the show:

King Unfortunatus (Mr. W. Reeve) and Euphemia, his wife (Mr. L. Stocker) occupy a prominent position throughout, their humorous remarks and antics portraying none of the depression expected of bankrupt rulers...

A Palpable and timely hit was made when the King (Mr. Reeve) and Queen arrived in their automobile which broke down and gave the king much trouble. Finally he remarked, “It won't run for Reeve.”

It is unclear whether or not this great local joke was in reference to a story of a stalled car, Reeve’s name (although that might have been a happy pun to take the sting out of a specific jibe), or the ineffectuality of municipal government, or more generally local politicians. Pott might have been highlighting the local council’s recent borrowing spree that left them happy, but poorer – like the rulers in the play. Whatever the target, that Pott was addressing local politics in her shows is significant.

Another insight into the tastes of Pott as a performer comes in her choice to cast herself as the “Spirit of Evil.” Personifications of abstract concepts were familiar character choices for Pott – e.g. her costume for a 1910 fancy dress ball was that of the “Queen of the Ballet.” Pott was praised for “her painstaking efforts in rehearsal, for her labors in planning and arranging the beautiful costumes and scenery and for her expressive portrayal of her own difficult part as the Spirit of Evil.” Essentially, Pott’s character is a temptress/devil, offering a prince wealth and power in exchange for what amounts to his soul.

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746 Ibid.
Demand for Pott’s *Princes* resonated widely in Qu’Appelle. The edition of the *Progress* which contained the show-review was soon a collectable, with some willing to pay a nickel for it.749 The South Qu’Appelle Agricultural Society presented Pott with a silver tea service as thanks for her efforts.750 A remount of the show was soon in the works, its advertisement touted: “Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pott will give a REPEAT PERFORMANCE of the Extravaganza *The Proving of the Princes* (Proceeds in aid of S. Peter’s Pro. Cathedral) in the Town Hall, Qu’Appelle on Thursday, January 5th, 1911.” After Mrs. Pott’s widespread adulation, Mr. Pott’s name had also become attached to the show. Whether or not this was theatrical bandwagon-jumping is unclear. The advertisement continued, in a professional-troupe-styled move, to quote the *Progress*’s earlier review of the show, repeating that “The scenery and costumes were worthy of unstinted praise, excelling anything ever put on here, professional or otherwise, while the players took their parts with an ease and smoothness seldom obtained on first night by a professional troupe.”751 By the summer of 1911, Pott’s reputation was securely established as a provider of good entertainments. In July 1911, as part of the South Qu’Appelle Agricultural Society’s Exhibition, it was advertised that “Mrs. F. Pott and her well-known company of artists will give a Grand Concert, in aid of the Society, in the Town Hall.”752

Fairy-plays and pantomime traditions would be familiar to Pott, given that she was from England and apparently well-versed in English theatrical traditions. Her successes with such shows might have inspired imitators. St. Peter’s church also

750 “Mrs. Potts received Silver Tea Service,” *Progress*, December 29, 1910, P8.
produced a fundraising show that was staged in the THOH between Pott’s productions of *Prince and the Gypsy* and *Proving of the Princes*. Pott’s involvement was not mentioned, but her influence is clear. The show was put on by the St. Peter’s Women’s Guild and the Junior Women’s Association. The entertainment offered “songs, music, a children’s fairy play entitled *The Christening of Rosalys* and dances by fairies and pixies.” The play was credited as giving “scope to the juniors for some charming acting and dancing of fairies and pixies in costume which delighted the large audience.”

Pott’s impact on local performances was notable, but briefer than Ramsay’s. Soon after the outbreak of World War One, Pott took her talents home to England. Her departure was noted as follows: “Mrs Frank Potts [sic] left Fort Qu’Appelle Sunday night for England where she will offer her service to one of the many volunteer societies.” The values which she helped mold in Qu’Appelle took her back to fulfill her expected role as a subject of Britain. Pott was following her husband, who was also making his expected male sacrifice to England. Frank had been taken on strength as a Captain (Due to his seventeen years experience in “Imperial Service”) in the 10th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force.

There is a discrepancy between census records and attestation papers with regard to the year of Frank Pott’s birth. The 1911 census return lists his birth date as 1870.

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754 “The Thanksgiving supper and concert,” *Progress*, 3 November 1910, P5.
755 “Mrs. Frank Pott,” *Progress*, 1 October 1914, P8.
757 Canada, *Census 1911*, Schedule No. 1, SK, Qu’Appelle S., District 19, p.30, ll. 45, 46, “Pott.”
His attestation papers, however, list his birth date as 1875.758 If this was a deception, claiming to be thirty-nine might have served to better ensure his acceptance into service. As a forty-four year old, Frank would have been within one year of the upper age limit of enlistment (then forty-five).

Figure 67: Frank Pott759

He was killed (and later buried) at Ypres on April 22, 1915 (Figure 67).760 A record of Amy Blanche Pott returning to Qu’Appelle after his death has not yet been found. She died on the Isle of Wight in 1954.761

The ephemeral nature of the auditorium space in the THOH gave it an amount of power and flexibility when compared to other THOH spaces. Combining this notion with the observation that some spaces in the THOH were quite specifically gendered suggests

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758 Collections Canada. “Attestation Paper, Canadian Expeditionary Force, (Capt) Frank Pott,”
that females discovered a power in the auditorium that they were traditionally denied in other THOH spaces.

**Performances of Gender Roles**

The auditorium of the THOH was the site for plays, concert, dances, and other such explicitly performative events. Often these events were a means of displaying male and female action and interaction. These actions and interactions, in turn, were chances for the negotiation of gender roles and expectations in the THOH. These negotiations were, by extension, carried into the wider community through reports in the *Progress*.

Even when such events were identified as being primarily focused upon either males or females, most successful events acknowledged the essential contributions of both sexes. For example, when the 16th Light Horse (a very male organization) held their major entertainment and fundraising functions in the auditorium, female involvement was necessary. In the spring of 1910, the troops performed military skills as part of an entertainment offered at the “Military Concert and Dance” in the THOH. The night’s entertainment consisted of a standard offering of what was considered “first class” performers from the Qu’Appelle region. Throughout the evening, performances by males and females were presented. The biggest names in local entertainers were involved. The concert was declared, “varied and entertaining, consisting of a duette [sic] by Mrs. Harmer and Mrs. D. Ramsay, a solo by each of the said ladies, an appropriate reading by Mrs. F. Pott, several violin solos by Mrs. F. J. James, Regina, solos by R. Morgan, and selections by the Whitewood orchestra.”

female, with the sole exception of Mr. Morgan.\textsuperscript{763} The troop’s contribution to the entertainment was a display of their gymnasium exercises and drill practice, or “physical exercises and bayonet drill by members of Qu’Appelle troop.”\textsuperscript{764} This event exhibits a near-total delineation between the performance of maleness and femaleness in the THOH for this event. For the most part, females provided the various musical and literary entertainments while males provided a display of physical vigor and force.\textsuperscript{765}

The following year, the performance-based entertainment at the event was entirely male-centered, unfolding as follows:

Features of the evening were the calls by Sergt. trumpeter Butterfield before the dances, the songs of Messrs Dickson and Stuart at intervals during the evening and the exhibition given by the local troop, under Corporal Sampson, of the physical [sic] drill and the bayonet exercise in attack and defence. These were given to show a portion of the work under taken by the troop and were fully appreciated.\textsuperscript{766}

While female roles at this event were more related to supplying provisions, they were valued as an essential part of the event’s overall success. It was reported that “supper at midnight was provided by the ladies and was of unusual excellence and abundance.”\textsuperscript{767}

The most apparent experiences of females in the THOH are those of providing cultural or charitable work therein. Often the production of culture and charity were mutually served by the same event. Many fundraising events and entertainments would not have happened without the tactical and practical support offered by, for example, “the ladies who assisted so kindly in providing eatables and at the hall.”\textsuperscript{768} In one case, even

\textsuperscript{763} Morgan and Mrs. James were noted as being, “apparently the particular favourites” (Ibid).

\textsuperscript{764} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{765} Although occasionally, drill (precision marching) was a female performance in the hall, though to different effect: “The drill by a number of the girls brought forth much praise, being carried through with splendid precision” (“Methodist Supper and Concert,” \textit{Progress}, 23 April 1908, P1).

\textsuperscript{766} “Qu’Appelle Troop Ball,” \textit{Progress}, January 19, 1911, P1.

\textsuperscript{767} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{768} “Seed Fair and Reunion Ball,” \textit{Progress}, 16 January 1908, P1.
when a man was paid to do the work, there appears to have been a distinct separation of female and male work in the hall. Charlie Legg was the Qu’Appelle town constable (whose various duties included caretaking of THOH). In 1915 his monthly salary was augmented by two dollars for scrubbing the hall before events. But residents remembered that it was actually Myrtle, Legg’s wife, who washed and waxed the hall floor “on her hands and knees.”

In addition to providing volunteer labour to ensure an event’s success, women also had to fill ceremonial and decorative roles at events. The Mason’s Ball of 1909 is an especially good example of such a variety of female roles engaging to enhance the event (for an all male-organization). Certain women were celebrated as event “patronesses,” and welcomed arriving guests. The rest of the women in the hall were praised as being part of the decorative aspects of the evening: “A pleasing feature was the artistic ball gowns ranging through the fashionable colors and shades. In happy contrast were the black and white of the gentlemen’s attire, relieved here and there by the regalia of the brethren.” Women were pleasing, fashionable, and colourful; as they were again days later at the Military Ball. The term fashionable implies an expectation, if not pressure, for females to wear something original, new, and in-fashion. Males, however, had less

769 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 28 April 1915.
770 Personal Interview, Carol Wickenheiser, Town Clerk, Qu’Appelle. 30 August 2010.
771 “Masons and Friends Foregather,” Progress, 11 February 1909, P1: Specifically they were, “Mrs. J. P. Creamer, Mrs. D. Browne, Mrs. Geo. Ellis, Mrs. A. D. Dickson, Mrs. J. P. Jones.” The naming of hostesses to add prestige was established practice in Qu’Appelle. Another example was the Bachelor Ball of 1907. The organizers bragged, “The bachelors of Qu’Appelle will give a dance in the town hall on Monday evening next, Feb. 11, the Regina orchestra has been engaged therefor [sic]. This will be the last ball before Lent and the only one since the Farmers’ re-union and will no doubt be welcomed by all who indulge in this pastime. The hostesses will be Mesdames Henderson, Harvey, Browne and Caswell.” (“The bachelors,” Progress, 7 February 1907, P8).
772 Ibid.
773 Although for this occasion, the Progress reporter used the adjectives charming and beautiful in addition to fashionable (“The Military Ball on Tuesday,” Progress, 13 February 1909, P8).
novel expectations with regard to fashion. They could be happy monochromatic contrast (black and white). Or, they could be presented in uniform, either in regalia at the Mason’s ball (accents worn over evening wear), or in 16th Light Horse kit at the Military Ball (where they “appeared in uniform”).

Gender and Cross-casting

Some of the most obvious expressions of community expectations regarding male and female behaviour occur in the THOH when a performer is cross-cast (or cast “in drag”). Examples of such performances in the THOH in this era appear to have been rare. Even rarer, however is that Progress reviews of such performances often pay less attention to fact that men are cast as women and vice-versa and more attention to the quality of their performance. For example, when Mrs. Pott cast Mr. L. Stocker as the Queen in her Extravaganza, The Proving of Princes, there is no explanation, or any mention of his being a male actor in a female role. The review of Stocker’s performance dealt exclusively with his comedic acting and ignored his appearance or characterization of femaleness. The tone of this performance seems to tap into some of the local traditions of cross-dressing performances, but also into older English pantomime traditions. Stocker’s performance is one of very few reported examples of male performers appearing as female characters in the early years of the THOH.

Another notable example of a male as female performance – this time in a professional touring company – occurred in 1907. The Qu’Appelle hockey team booked

774 “The Military Ball on Tuesday,” Progress.
776 Taft, Michael, s.v. “Mock Weddings,” Encyclopedia of the Great Plains, Web, ed. Wishart, David J., http://plainshumanities.unl.edu/encyclopedia/doc/egp.fol.028: For example, mock weddings, pantomime, and even garrison-style theatricals were men were routinely cast in female roles.
the International Entertainers for a benefit concert. The entertainment was anticipated to be of good quality and the cause – the expenses of the local hockey team – was dubbed worthy of support. The Progress preshow announcements promised that “This troupe is a good one, Mr. Eaton being a host in himself... The boys are at heavy expense in the league and as they are winning, deserve generous support.” The most notable performance of the well-received show was by Mr. Eaton as an unnamed female character: “S. Homer Eaton as the fashionable lady in the Farcette presented the best. His make-up was perfect. We sincerely hope that the company will come again soon.” Eaton’s performance was “the best characterization ever seen in Qu’Appelle.” His fashionable lady representation was aided by perfect make-up, but it is unclear what else about his characterisation earned this accolade. The review denotes a departure from perhaps expected reaction to previous male-as-female performances in Qu’Appelle – which typically referred to the farcical or ridiculous nature of the performance. This reception is especially different in tone from earlier performance reviews in Qu’Appelle (e.g. in the Immigration Hall where soldiers dressed in drag onstage for farcical effect).

Generally, professional touring troupes presented different expectations and gender roles than were found in local entertainments. Most noticeably, the way in which women were advertised as drawing features of a show differed greatly between professional touring productions and local community (usually church) groups. Unsurprisingly, young and attractive women were advertised as a selling-feature for touring shows playing the town hall. A particularly strange combination of performance fetishes came together in arrival of the “Minstrel Maids” tour in April, 1908. The show

778 “The best concert of the season,” Progress 17 January 1907, P8
779 Ibid.
was advertised as being part of both a “minstrel” tradition as well as the “juvenile” tradition of young performers – it shared management with the “Juvenile Bostonians.” The troupe promised to provide musical comedy with “A bevy of pretty girls in the latest songs and dance hits of the day.”

In January 1910, the Juvenile Bostonian company itself played Qu’Appelle. They were appearing under the auspices of the local Heather Curling Club. Local playgoers where encouraged to attend in support of the curling club, but also for the quality of the show since “The little ones are sure to please as they do whenever they appear.” The Bostonians were presented as the class of the juvenile show-genre: “Those who have never seen a group of juveniles in a play should not miss hearing the Juvenile Bostonians tomorrow night.” Their reviews were certainly positive across Western Canada for the 1909-1910 troupe, which consisted of 20 girls between the ages of twelve and eighteen. Several of the young women were playing breeches roles, which must have been popular in overwhelmingly young and male settler populations of the west, like the Qu’Appelle region.

The *Indian Head Vidette* testified to the company’s reputation and excellence:

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780 “The best attraction that will visit this town this season,” *Progress*, 16 April 1908, P1.
783 A “breeches role” is historic, theatrical shorthand for a role which requires female actors to dress in male attire. This was especially popular when exposing the outline of female legs and hips would be especially risqué, fascinating and titillating audiences.
784 The Bostonians continuously updated their casts to ensure an overall impression of being a youthful, or juvenile, company. As to whether this particular aggregation (of 1909-1910) was reaching critical mass with regards to how many young women (at or near the age of 18) were in the cast is not clear, but one reviewer did notice a change in the overall youthfulness of the company. A commenter for the *Coleman Miner* (of Coleman, Alberta) noted that, while the girls were unquestioningly welcome: “It might be added that they are a little larger, a little older but a little better” (“Juvenile Bostonians Coming,” *Coleman Miner*, November 5, 1909, Page 5, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/CMM/1909/11/05/5/Ar00505.html).
They have long been the established standard to which all Juvenile companies have unsuccessfully aspired. Babe Mason, that petite comedienne, who has endeared herself to the hearts of her audience, will positively appear and her capricious actions and funny self will more than bring back memories of loving ties that bound the little folks to the heart strings of the public long ago.\textsuperscript{785}

Babe Mason, a child actor from Seattle, is presented as an endearing, whimsical, and even provoking young woman (Figure 68).

\textbf{Figure 68:} “Babe Mason with the Juvenile Bostonians,” from “Juvenile Bostonians Coming,” Coleman Miner.

The troupe was a critical success in Qu’Appelle, even if the audience was only described as being of a “fair” size. Their chosen show was “Berta’s Billion... a musical comedy with little plot but much music and many funny situations.”\textsuperscript{786} The notable performers were “Babe Mason and ‘Berta’... though ‘Tom’ is the leading singer.”\textsuperscript{787} Mason and her cast mates put on a show largely centred around “catchy numbers” from popular musical shows, for example: \textit{Gee, There’s a Class to a Girl Like You}; \textit{The Boogie O-o-gie Man}; \textit{I Wonder Who is Kissing Her Now}; \textit{Hello People}; \textit{How Did That Bird}

\textsuperscript{785}“Speaking of the Bostonians,” \textit{Progress}, 6 January 1910, P8.
\textsuperscript{786}The \textit{Progress} never mentioned that the company was entirely female, so the inclusion of the name “Tom” might be misleading. A Calgary review (reprinted in Wetaskawin) noted that, “Miss Thom Helen sang her way into the hearts of everyone, and her acting in the difficult part of Pedro was something to remember” (“The Bostonians entertained a fair audience,” \textit{Progress} 13 January 1910, P1; “Juvenile Bostonians,” \textit{Wetaskawin Times}, 20 October 1910, Page 5, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/WKT/1910/10/20/5/).
\textsuperscript{787}“The Bostonians entertained a fair audience,” \textit{Progress} 13 January 1910, P1.
The Cigar Went Out was a song from a 1908 musical, *Havana*. In the original musical, the male protagonist, Jackson, sings the piece with a backing chorus of cigarette girls. The first verse gives a sample of the tone of the piece:

[Jackson:] As I sit in my hammock, smoking and smoking,  
And watching the blue rings curl,  
They seem as they rise  
full of faces and eyes,  
And each is a beautiful girl!  
One pretty, piquante, provoking,  
A model for man to paint,  
Who gracefully sat for the face and all that,  
As Venus or else as saint!  
Ma petite Adèle,  
Sweetly your lips could pout,  
But you kissed me before  
I could say: "Ah, Je t'adore!"  
And so that cigar went out!  
[Girls:] Ma petite Adèle,  
Sweetly your lips could pout,  
[Jackson:] You kissed me before  
I could say: "Je t'adore!"  
And so that cigar went out!

Jackson’s reminiscences of love continue to complete a European tour-d’amour through Germany and Italy. The Bostonian’s performance of the song in Qu’Appelle would have offered several layers of complexity. In addition to the sexual titillation, the presentation of young women smoking would have been especially risqué. The combination of worldly sexual adventures and performers hyped as youthful and childlike must have created the comic, if perhaps disturbing, punch to pique the interests of audiences. Females presented in the song are foreign and exciting. The remaining verses praise

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788 “Speaking of the Bostonians,” *Progress.*  
790 Ross and Stuart, “And then that cigar went out.”
more women from Europe. Gretchen is a young, stout, blue-eyed German for whom Jackson cries, “Liebes Kind, sei mein!” (or, “Dear child, be mine!”). Giovannina, from “Italy fair and far,” is black-eye’d with “passionate mouth, like a fruit of the South.” The song’s male protagonist sings of his female conquests in terms of flowers or fruits. Topping off the innuendo, Vesuvius is anthropomorphised (“Beside the blue bay where Vesuvius lay/ Still smoking his old cigar!”) as a “smoldering” man with a smoking cigar of his own, combining the potential of eruption imagery and phallic/cigar references in one verse. This song seems to be an especially pointed example of how the show might have appealed to the young, male, single audiences in Qu’Appelle.

While local volunteer groups were not shy to use women as enticements to boost interest in an event, such enticements were delivered with a decidedly more prudish tone. One of Ramsey’s entertainments boasted of the attractiveness of the “three modest Quakeresses.”791 A Grandmother’s Tea and Concert for Knox Church was praised as successful, with “the pretty waitresses dressed as grandmothers forming an attractive feature.”792 Whether grandmother’s garb was to accentuate, by contrast, the youth of the waitresses’ forms or the waitresses youthful forms were to contrast their aged garb is unclear. Possible local fetishes aside, this was a very different type of enticement presented by local performers than touring shows. Such presentations suggest an encouragement to read a performance considering both the character and actual performer being presented; it was all part of the fun.

When The Fax Concert Company played the town hall in late 1908, the show was well attended and generally praised as “good, clean, high class entertainment.”

791 “Be sure to see the three modest Quakeresses,” Progress, 22 July 1909, Local News, P8.
male actor, Jasper Fax, was appreciated for his material. It was specifically noted that
“his repertoire is always new, always choice, and always welcome. Among his hits were
*Mither and I, Hooligan’s Fancy Dress Ball, and International Toasts.*”

Female standout performer, Miss Florence Galbraith, was praised for a different aspect of her
performance:

Galbraith was a reader possesses [sic] high dramatic talent an innate
sympathy with her characters and a vulnerability that was well illustrated
by the pathos in the story of Mary Eliaz, both the beggar girl and the
comic scenes in “popping the question,” and the lady at the baseball
game.794

Galbraith’s sympathy and characterizations of vulnerability were praised, perhaps
because of how well they matched up with her audience’s expectations of female
characters onstage.

Where Galbraith shone as a performer, other female performers were utilized
more for their form than their performance. When it was announced that the Allen
Players were making another stop in Qu’Appelle, the *Progress* assured that the new slate
of plays to be presented were “all first class productions and should please everybody.
The Allen’s deserve packed houses.”795 This proclamation might have been regretted, as
the company did not live up to this hype. In a mixed review, it was observed that “The
leading artists maintained their reputation but one or two of the other players were
decidedly amateurish, weakening the general affect. Considering the busy season the
attendance was good.”796 The show’s pre-press announcement consisted of a first-page

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793 “The Fax Concert Company,” *Progress*, 12 November 1908, P1.
794 Ibid.
795 “Word has been received that the Allan Players,” *Progress*, September 23, 1909, *Local News*, P8: The
touring company’s new plays were: *Mrs. Dane’s Defence; Caprice; Tennessee’s Partner; Under Two
Flags; The Truth; and The Westerner.*
ad which featured a photograph of “Miss Verna Felton, leading lady of the Allen Players, who are opening at the Opera House for two nights, commencing Friday, October 1st.”\textsuperscript{797} There is no description of the plays to be performed or her roles in them. Her image and title of “leading lady” are considered a sufficient draw for the company (Figure 69).

![Miss Verna Felton](image.jpg)

\textit{Figure 69: “Miss Verna Felton,” Progress, 30 September 1909, P1.}

When the McPhee Company played Qu’Appelle they received generally positive press. This was especially true while memories of McPhee’s donation of curtains to the THOH were still fresh. One of McPhee’s shows seems to have sufficiently caught imaginations (in the community or the \textit{Progress} office, perhaps in both) to warrant an extensive published review. \textit{Woman Against Woman} played to full houses for a week starting from 17 November 1909. The show, while showcasing women characters, presents fairly basic characterizations of women as being saints or sinners, schemers or saviours with no room for characters in between. Reaction to the performers and characters was relatively detailed:

Florence Grantley was played by Millie la Lena and she was at her best. The audience grieved and rejoiced with her; she possesses the power of moving them to tears or laughter at her own [___?] pleasure. Her

\textsuperscript{797} “Miss Verna Felton,” \textit{Progress}, 30 September 1909, P1.
costumes were beautiful. Louie Ramsdell, as Harry Grantly played the part in a mannerly way. Miss Belle Little as the romantic novel reading maid was a scream from start to finish. Mr. Bertrand caused roars of laughter in the part of M. [sic] T. Muggs. Atha Ramsdell as Blanche Sterling, the scheming adventuress, made the part exceptionally realistic. Mr. Roberts as Uncle Bert was good.798

The audience’s empathy, and perhaps the implied vulnerability, of la Lena’s characterization are irresistibly linked to her beautiful appearance. Atha Ramsdell as the female antagonist, Blanche Sterling, however, was praised for her authenticity.

The review’s plot summary offered more insight into the title conflict between women, as well as the nightmarish consequences for men of such conflict:

The story of the play shows the struggle between a fond loving wife, and a scheming adventuress who is already married and has had her husband confined in a lunatic asylum; he is discharged as cured, and finds employment at the home where his wife has been received as an honored guest. He threatens to denounce her and she defies him, and with the aid of G. T. Mugs, a broken down museum manager, has him sent back to the asylum from which he is released three years later and returns to confront her; meanwhile she manages to make Florence Grantley jealous, and the Grantleys separate, he is going to Europe and she retires to live with her uncle. Grantley secures a divorce and returns to marry Blanche, but he loses all fortune, and as soon as Blanche learns this fact she refuses to become his wife, and places the cottage, the summer home of the Grantleys on the market to be sold. Florence buys her old home and orders Blanche to leave. A reconciliation is reached between Florence and Harry, and the play ends happily.

Blanche is a ruthless villain dedicated to breaking up a marriage to secure a fortune. Of particular interest is her treatment of her husband, whom she repeatedly commits to an asylum in order to free herself to seduce Harry Grantley. Blanche’s villainy is typified by her willingness to use such a tool as a committal to get rid of her husband. This situation is an interesting mirror of the local instances in the police court, where J.P.’s (all men)

sent male and female defendants away to institutions “for inquiry into their sanity” because their behaviour was outside of socially acceptable norms. In the police court, committal is viewed as a tool for local betterment; upstairs in the auditorium, committal is a machination of villainy. Court reports do not sympathise with the transient sent away for committal; the auditorium relishes in the nightmarish prospect of being committed. The police court events are permanent, real world applications which are mirrored in the auditorium’s transient explorations of social and ideological values.

**Enculturation – Liquor and the Local Option**

The THOH had the potential to serve as the site for groups to gather in an attempt to renegotiate community morality, but such forces did not always succeed. That was the case in 1910, when the Local Option temperance movement came to Qu’Appelle. The “local option” fight was a movement spearheaded by temperance groups that sought to influence councils to implement a by-law that outlawed the sale of alcohol within the limits of a council’s jurisdiction. Importing alcohol for private consumption would be legal, but the commercial sale of alcohol within the district, e.g. in stores, bars, etc., would be banned. Rather than succeeding in provoking a change in the local sense-of-place regarding the sale of liquor in town, the local option by-law vote failed. It was an attempt to renegotiate community morality that failed to garner enough public support to become law.

As has been previously explored, individuals were often being brought into the THOH courtroom to face the consequences for acting outside of the town’s accepted norms (in the form of bylaws, laws and ordinances). The Qu’Appelle police court dealt
with many alcohol related charges: e. g. being drunk and disorderly, drinking while interdicted, etc. The Justices of the Peace in Qu’Appelle were well-acquainted with such cases and quite comfortable punishing drunks for the greater social good (to the town and the drunk). By reporting such cases, the Progress reinforced the community’s moral stand against over-indulgence. But some cases were reported with an especially moralising tone. For example, Louis Gunville was presented as an “unfortunate who cannot keep himself away from a cup or a bottle that inebriates.”\textsuperscript{799} After his eighth conviction and one month in jail he was described as being “almost continually in a state of alcoholic embarrassment and the magistrate decided that three months with hard labor would just about fit his case and help him to straighten up.”\textsuperscript{800} The moralizing power of work is prescribed as a “fix” for Gunville. The three month jail term, a temporary banishment, could also be a “fix” for the town.

The main advocates on the side of temperance were the local newspaper and the local Social and Moral Reform Council. The Qu’Appelle Social and Moral Reform Council started holding meetings in the THOH in late 1909, after Frank Amas had successfully petitioned the town council for the use of the THOH’s council chamber as a meeting room.\textsuperscript{801} When the local Social and Moral Reform Council met in the courtroom/council chamber, their president, Local J.P. Frank Amas, held doubled authority within the room; it was the chamber was where he also sat to hear court cases.\textsuperscript{802} Perhaps the group’s use of the THOH was a natural fit; although the THOH was

\textsuperscript{799} “Louis Gunville is one of those unfortunates,” Progress 10 February 1910, P8.
\textsuperscript{800} “Louis Gunville is one of those unfortunates,” Progress.
\textsuperscript{801} Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 25 August 1909; “Town Council Meets,” Progress, 2 September 1909, P1: Amas’s original purpose for attending this council meeting was to report to the council regarding their reclaiming police court fines back from the provincial and federal courts.
\textsuperscript{802} Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 28 December 1910: 1910-1911 might be seen as a time of diminishing moral influence for Amas, In addition to the lost local option vote, Amas, was relieved of his
not an explicitly “dry” venue, evidence of alcohol being served at THOH is not readily available. By 1910, the Social and Moral Reform Council was acting in concert with local religious leaders, the *Progress*, as well as the wider, provincial temperance community. This coalition sought to present a vision of the town free from the evils of commercially-sold liquor. The town’s temperance forces continued to fight completely unaware of, or unconcerned with, the unpopularity of their cause. The Social and Moral Reform League sought to legitimise themselves and their cause by staging events in the THOH. The pro-temperance *Progress*, in turn, served to extend the performative events in the town hall into the wider community.

The Local Option movement was not an exclusively female pursuit in Qu’Appelle, but the local chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was obviously prominent in the organization and staging of events. While some local men championed the Local Option cause, no specifically male-identified *group* in Qu’Appelle emerged as prominently as did the WCTU

Local events were organized in the THOH to present the local option to voters. These performances were usually made up of a mixture of oratory and music. One WCTU rally was cross-promoted as being both a chance to hear the “world’s greatest woman speaker, Mrs. Almena Parker McDonald, on the advantages of local option,” as well as being “a good opportunity of hearing some of Regina’s best musical talent.”

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803 It would be surprising if the Military Club Room was always a strictly “temperate” space, but no evidence has yet been uncovered to prove this.

804 “Don’t forget to hear Mrs. Almena Parker McDonald,” *Progress* 20 October 1910, P5: The fact that no opposition was in attendance, or invited to speak, seems to have been no hindrance to the triumph of her oratory, which was “banked by her ten years experience in the fight against the liquor traffic she was able to show that many of the arguments put up by the opposition were groundless.” Local credit was gained by the chair of the meeting, local WCTU, President Mrs. J. Doolittle.
The Saskatchewan Social and Moral Reform Council made an evening stop at the THOH during their province-wide auto tour throughout which speakers orated and the baritone Mr. Duncan Marshall performed.\footnote{“Social and Moral Reform Council of Sask,” \textit{Progress}, 9 June 1910, P8.}

In May 1910, the \textit{Progress} began promoting the upcoming speech by Regina’s Rev. Jos. Oliver, which was to be the feature of a “temperance mass meeting in the town hall.”\footnote{“The musical service,” \textit{Progress}, 12 May 1910, P8.} All were encouraged to come, regardless of opinion: “No matter what view you may have of this live subject, it will be worth your while to hear him. Mr. Oliver was recently sent by the temperance forces of Canada to present the Canadian temperance attitude in England.”\footnote{“Rev. Jos. Oliver,” \textit{Progress}, 5 May 1910, P8.} This attempted reshaping of community morals was thus tied to England, the Empire’s centre. \textit{Progress} readers were encouraged to attend the rally if only to hear the music since “The musical service of the united choir in the town hall... will alone be worth hearing. Hear them and also the able speakers.”\footnote{“The musical service,” \textit{Progress}.} Such musical inter-church agreement was cited as evidence of widespread community support for local option. The review of the music was unable to match the enthusiasm of the pre-event coverage; it began with somewhat mitigated praise: “The united choirs of the Protestant churches under the leadership of Mr. R. Morgan rendered very acceptable music during the evening, Mrs. D. Ramsay accompanying on the piano.”\footnote{“The united choirs,” \textit{Progress} 19 May 1910, P1.}

The event (and its subsequent summary in the \textit{Progress}) can be read as an attempted enculturation on several fronts. On behalf of the Protestant church specifically, Rev. E. A. Davis (brought in from Indian Head for the occasion) and Rev. J. A. Doyle addressed the “the business of the church,” which was to produce good citizens, of good
character, and strong faith, which included a ban on drinking. The closing speech, was a call to action to such good citizens, parents, and churchgoers by Rev. Joseph Oliver of Regina. Perhaps as an indication as to the already-converted nature of the crowd present, Oliver’s speech was well received, though it offered, “few new arguments in favour of the cause but his spirited remarks were listened to carefully and brought forth many expressions of approval.” In a marked departure from God Save the Queen, the usual closing song at public-events, the local-optioners added both militaristic and religious tones to their fight when they closed their meeting with Onward Christian Soldiers.810

The local option fight even found its way into other organizations meeting in the THOH. By presenting as many community groups as possible in support of local option, perhaps the goal of the temperance forces was to inflate their perceived moral influence within the community. If such a ploy had proved successful, it might have inspired obedience – as Burke observed, re-education can result in the dominated individual’s belief that his or her only hope is to contribute, or act along with, the disempowering authority.811

Local liquor dealers were targets for the Qu’Appelle Social and Moral Reform Council. At one meeting, guest speakers, J. K. McInnis and C. B. Keenleyside told the group “that they were not personally antagonistic to the liquor dealers but were avowedly opposed to the business.”812 In practice, however, local option success would lead to business closures. In the midst of these events, the Provincial License Commission (which met at Indian Head in 1910) denied the licence renewal of R. Kirk’s liquor store

810 Ibid.
in Qu’Appelle, giving him two months to close.\footnote{813}{“The License Commission sat at Indian Head,” \textit{Progress}, 30 June 1910, P8.} It is unclear whether Qu’Appelle reformers exerted any direct influence at the commission meeting, or whether the commission was responding to wider concerns.

As a local businessman, presumably Kirk could have found support from the Qu’Appelle Board of Trade, which also met in the council chamber of the THOH in Qu’Appelle. Indeed, less than a week after Kirk’s store was denied a license, the Board of Trade met in the THOH – in the same room used by the Moral Reformers). In addition to the regular discussion-points of the board\footnote{814}{For example, the insufficient train and mail service to Qu’Appelle and other local points as well as the promotion of an upcoming Farmers’ Market on August 6 ("Board of Trade,” \textit{Progress}, 14 July 1910, P4).} \footnote{815}{Ibid.}, “F. D. Lace gave notice that at the next regular meeting he would introduce a motion regarding the refusal of renewal of license to the wholesale liquor store.”\footnote{815}{Ibid.} Lace was recently arrived in Qu’Appelle. His job at a local bank was possibly less celebrated than his transfer into local militia unit. In June, 1910, the \textit{Progress} noted that “Lieut. A. F. D. Lace, Manager of the Northern Crown Bank, Qu’Appelle, has obtained his transfer from the Governor General’s Body Guard, Toronto, and has been appointed officer commanding a Regina Troop of the 16\textsuperscript{th} Light Horse.”\footnote{816}{Ibid.} Lace’s exposure to the local option movement in Toronto might have been limited. It appears that his first reaction in Qu’Appelle was to raise the issue with the Board of Trade.

The \textit{Progress} billed Lace’s intention to discuss the license refusal as exciting, writing that “The prospects are for a lively discussion over the refusal of renewal of license to the wholesale liquor store. Everybody turn out.”\footnote{817}{"The next meeting of the Board of Trade,” \textit{Progress}, 14 July 1910, \textit{Local Items}.} If the “everybody” in this
invitation was intended to include only the Board of Trade members, the paper was seeking to ensure full participation by the Board of Trade members. But if the term “everybody” was intended to include members of the wider public it could be read as a call to action/protest by the pro-temperance press against the chance that a community group would speak outside of their sought-after moral dominance.

The temperance community was swift to provide written reaction to the potential of the Board of Trade discussing local option. In an anonymous letter to the editor regarding the Board of Trade and the liquor licence issue, an anonymous letter writer identified as, “Ruralite,” wrote:

In your issue of July 14th you state that the Board of Trade will discuss the wholesale liquor license question on Aug. 2nd. I take it to mean that some business men on the board of trade will throw down the gauntlet to the temperance people of Qu’Appelle and district. Only one argument can be put up for the granting of a license, viz, business for the town, in a word cash. Let the temperance people accept the challenge. We can fight the question out on a cash [basis?]. Let the gentlemen record their ayes and nays and we shall know how to act.\(^8\)

For “Ruralite,” Morality (represented by the local option crowd) stood against Greed and Commerce (represented by the Board of Trade). The threat of a boycott is presented in an effort to reinforce the social and moral boundaries sought by the region’s “temperance people.” Ruralite was attempting to rally anyone sympathetic to the temperance supporters against the “business interests” of town. The Board of Trade, as Ruralite accused, might indeed have been primarily a commerce and cash organization. But the Board of Trade harboured some pro-local optioners; L. G. Bell Jr. was the Secretary-Treasurer.\(^9\)

\(^8\) “To the Editor of the Progress,” Progress, 21 July 1910, Local Items.
\(^9\) “Directory – Municipal,” Progress, 29 September 1910, P4: Bell also found himself convicted before local Justices of the Peace because he wrongfully signed a petition calling for a local-option plebiscite. He
Whether possible sanctions threatened the Board of Trade into inaction, or some other unknown forces were at work, the Board of Trade altered its course regarding addressing of liquor license denials. In a coy summary of a Board of Trade executive meeting, the liquor license issue was avoided altogether, as the Progress reporter noted, “The meeting from all accounts was more marked by what it omitted than what it did. The greater part of the time was taken up with discussion over the train and mail service. The market day question was not even broached.”\textsuperscript{820} It eventually came to pass that the Board of Trade backed away from rising to the Local Optioners’ bait.

As for Lace’s much anticipated liquor license question, it appears Lace found more power in avoiding the issue altogether. The meeting minutes recorded that “An inquiry of W. A. Reeve elicited a ruling that in Mr. Lace’s absence from this meeting his notice of motion re withdrawal of wholesale liquor license lapses but that he or anyone else may make motion under the order of new business at the next meeting.”\textsuperscript{821} Perhaps this was counted as a “win” for the local option groups, but in the long run, it was not a loss for the Board of Trade. While the initial reading of the situation might cast doubt upon Lace’s conviction or dedication to the Board of Trade, other forces were at work upon him which might have kept him from the July 19\textsuperscript{th} Board of Trade meeting. In the first week of August, Lace returned from a journey to Ontario with his new bride, to whom, it was reported, “Qu’Appelle extends a hardy welcome to Mrs. Lace and wishes her much joy.”\textsuperscript{822}

\textsuperscript{820} “The Board of Trade executive met on Tuesday,” Progress, 21 July 1910, P8.
\textsuperscript{821} “Board of Trade,” Progress, 4 August 1910, P8.
\textsuperscript{822} “Mr. A. F. D. Lace,” Progress, 11 August 1910, P8.
While the Board of Trade sidestepped the question, other local groups did not. When the Farmers’ Institute met in the town hall in November (under the auspices of the South Qu’Appelle Agricultural Society) there was a timely alteration in the meeting’s content. In addition to the usual reports and presentations on subjects such as the Dry Farming Congress in Spokane, etc., G. C. D. Edmunds delivered an address entitled, “farmers and their enemies.” These enemies were listed as being “crows, black birds, noxious roadside weeds and intemperance.” The birds and weeds were actually a means of getting to his prime point, specifically that “Intemperance was one of the worst enemies the farmer had and now that the local option fight was on he hoped that every farmer would vote the right way as they have the remedy in their own hands to free the district from the evils of the bar-room.”

In addition to trying to influence the farmers present, Edmunds argued “a good way to encourage agitation in reference to the above subject would be for the leading farmers to write letters to the newspapers thereon.” Some letter-writing had already taken place, if not with the desired zeal. The Progress published a letter from “An Old Subscriber,” who sought to temper the anti-temperance arguments, clarifying that “The Local Option law does not prevent a private individual importing and keeping wine and spirits in his house for private use. No permit is required. If carried, the law prohibits the sale.” While this is technically a letter that supports the local option, it also shows that temperance might not be the end goal for everyone advocating for the bylaw.

The campaign brought residents to the THOH for several more meetings and rallies which culminated in a mid-November Local Option rally that was staged as the

823 “Farmers Convene,” Progress, 10 November 1910, P1.
824 Ibid.
official, definitive meeting of the Local Option supporters. The *Progress* reported that a large was expected. The event was billed as both a “monster meeting in the town hall,”826 as well as “A monster mass meeting of the citizens of Qu’Appelle and district.”827 The terms “monster” and “mass” imply a “crowd” of great size and unstoppable momentum. The phrases also infer that the majority of the “citizens of Qu’Appelle and district” supported the local option fight and were willing to come out in droves to support it. Fairness was assured as it was offered that “The opposition will be given opportunity to speak... Everybody heartily welcome.”828

The review of the event was unsurprisingly pro-local-option. While a “monster” number of supporters did not appear, the *Progress* observer noted that the event “drew almost a full house.” Four men of assumed moral standing led the meeting: Mr. J. H. Fraser, Rev. W. Colter, Rev. W. B. Tate, and Rev. A. E. Henry. The reporter noted how Henry “claimed that the trend of the age was against the liquor traffic and use.”829 The *Progress* did not publish any detailed evidence proving Henry’s claim, but the reporter assured readers that:

> He gave facts, figures, and quotations from great authorities to substantiate his arguments. The voice of the best medical experts, the testimony of science, the action of the railroad and other corporations, of the miners, the fraternal organizations, the refusal of liquor advertisements by many leading magazines, domestic life, all were quoted or freely drawn upon to show the growing opposition to the liquor business.830

Henry next introduced the local option’s main opponent: businessmen. A social divide was presented, positioning the aforementioned authorities, experts, and social leaders in

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826 “Remember the monster meeting,” *Progress*, 10 November 1910, P1.
827 “A monster mass meeting,” *Progress*, 3 November 1910, P5.
828 “Remember the monster meeting,” *Progress*.
830 Ibid.
opposition to greed and business. Henry claimed that liquor traffic hurt the country economically. Overall, the *Progress* praised Henry for being “well worth hearing independently of the principles he advanced. His speech was fluent, logical and calculated to arouse no personal antagonism being gentlemanly throughout.”

Local governments were also in the sights of the local optioners, who presented petitions to both the South Qu’Appelle and Qu’Appelle town councils. The South Qu’Appelle Council, when presented with the local option petition signed by sixty-five people, reacted swiftly. Before the meeting was over, a bylaw was introduced regarding the possible adoption of the temperance by-law, and a related committee was already able to report on the local option matter. After receiving a petition with thirty signatures, the town council also prepared to implement a local option bylaw, pending a successful plebiscite.

Evidence of opposition to the local option movement is – perhaps understandably – hard to find in the *Progress*, but some instances did occur. One anonymous speaker rose at the “monster mass” assembly to argue against local option, but was summarily dismissed. Despite the *Progress’s* pro-temperance reputation, editor E. E. Law welcomed input – especially if it involved paid advertising – from either side of the local option debate. He promised, “The news columns of The *Progress* will be open, without prejudice, to both parties and our advertising columns are also available.” His newly expressed appreciation of balance on the issue was printed in the editorial columns of the

831 Ibid.
833 R.M. of South Qu’Appelle Minutes, 3 October 1910; “SQ Council Minutes,” *Progress*, 13 October 1910, P8: The petition was “signed by L. C. Smith and 63 others.”
834 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 26 October 1910.
835 “Temperance Mass Meeting,” *Progress*.
same edition of the paper upon which a large (expensive) front-page, anti-local option advertisement appeared (Figure 70). The advertisement encouraged readers “DO NOT VOTE FOR THE BY-LAW And, because YOU do not like liquor, prevent OTHERS having it! BE TEMPERATE.”

![Image of the advertisement](image_url)

Figure 70: “Remember When You Vote on the Local Option By-Law” Progress, 20 October 1910, P1.

As there was no other example of a public outcry against the local option, and the pro local option press coverage was so favourable, it might have seemed that the outcome of the vote was a foregone conclusion. The local option group appear to be unstoppable. But local option was voted down. Local voters decided to keep their liquor traffic unchanged and unimpeded.

The Progress did not print the outcome of the vote. Perhaps the Progress abandoned the story because it had failed to influence enough readers to vote for local option. The only mention of the outcome of the vote was a passing reference within a related story concerning twenty-nine protested ballots. The Progress reported that “The

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837 “Remember When You Vote on the Local Option By-Law” Progress, 20 October 1910, P1.
838 Perhaps the extra Christmas advertizing was taking up too much space to allow for coverage of the vote.
hearing of the cases arising out of the 29 protested ballots in connection with the local option vote in town has been called off. As the majority against local option cannot be affected by these ballots it is probably that there will be no appeal and in time the protested ballots will be destroyed without being opened.839 While there was sufficient support from temperance leaders in town to bring forward cases regarding the twenty-nine votes, it is apparent that local option was defeated by at least thirty votes and the costs of such hearings would be deemed unreasonable, as the outcome of the vote would not be affected.840

Whether or not one specific section of the community was to blame for the defeat of the local option by-law, rumours lingered that Germantown residents were responsible for the outcome of the vote. The gossip was powerful enough to make the rumours an accepted part of the community settler-mythos by 1980:

It is said that it was the vote of the people of this area in connection with the liquor plebiscite of December 1910 that caused the Prohibitionists to retaliate by forcing these families off this land. When Mr. M. A. Leet, a real estate agent, bought the land in January 1911 many of these thirty-four families moved to the east end of town where they bought lots at $31 each, while others remained and paid rent.841

Any retaliatory aspect of Leet’s purchase is not entirely clear. This assertion seems to have been fostered in the decades between the plebiscite and the local history book committee’s work. Factually, the event is misremembered in the history book; the lots

840 Though the information is not directly comparable, one way of getting a sense of the civic engagement in the Qu’Appelle region is to examine the polling station returns the federal election of 11 October, 1911 as printed in the Progress. Qu’Appelle (polling station 12) returned 38 votes. Qu’Appelle South (polling station 72) returned 71 votes. The chart offers a glimpse of the comparative federal voting influence of the rural areas and towns within the federal riding of Qu’Appelle. For example, the following areas returned the following total-votes: Moosomin town, 251; Moosomin rural, 158; McLean, 99 votes, Indian Head, 276. The riding went Liberal (Thompson) over Conservative (Lake) by a reported majority of 422 out of 8172 votes counted, although the reported numbers give Thompson 4298 and Lake 3874, leaving the margin 424 (“Returns for Qu’Appelle,” Progress, 19 October 1911, P1).
841 Qu’Appelle Historical Society 340, 343.
were sold for $1.00 each, with the option to buy up to two more lots for $15.00 each, not for $31.00 each. Neither *The Progress* nor the council minutes suggest that the move was connected with the outcome of the plebiscite. It seems unlikely that the *Progress* would pass up a chance to vilify a liquor-loving, “foreign element” over a loss of the local option bylaw.

The council was also loath to lose the Germantown residents, making lots available at a 225% discount (or a three-for-75%-of-one lot price). The town would collect taxes on the Germantown land from Leet. In addition to the land itself, Leet got rent from remaining residents. If it was a revenge-purchase, it appears to have caused little more than brief uncertainty among Germantown residents. The issue of the twenty-nine contested ballots from the plebiscite also lingers. In the under-reporting of the local option bylaw’s defeat, it has proven difficult to find a reason as to why the votes were contested. If these were “Germantown” votes (29 votes being a possible turnout from the 34 families in Germantown) they were not counted and did not affect the outcome.

The impact on the local mythos (via gossip) is worth noting. Decades later, the surviving local story connects the relocation of some of the Germantown residents with the backlash over the lost plebiscite. Perhaps blaming Germantown was easy after years of Germantown being portrayed as being a place where people lived irresponsibly without paying their way, ignoring fire codes, and failing to report scarlet fever.

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842 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 25 January 1911: Previously mentioned in the council-chamber section.
843 *Progress*, 9 March 1911, P8: “Matters have now quieted down in connection with the Leet property south of the track. Some Germans have removed from the settlement but others are remaining and are content to pay the rent required.”
It is true that Leet was a temperance supporter. He signed the local option petition. In December 1911 Leet married Miss Ray Doolittle, daughter of WCTU president Mrs. J. Doolittle and local town councillor, merchant, and member of the board of trade, Mr. J. Doolittle. The local WCTU gave the couple a fine “set of cut glass.”

The local option fight saw an organised movement of local as well as outside forces striving to gather people in the THOH to change minds, but they were unsuccessful in swaying enough people to change the town’s liquor laws. The THOH was a site where they could organize and express dissent, yet it appears not to have played a great role in legitimising their views. On the contrary, the THOH was a site to which the community came to vote down the local option by-law. The rallies in the town hall auditorium depended heavily upon speakers from outside the community, from churches in Regina and the provincial, national, and international (in the case of Mrs. Almena Parker McDonald) temperance movements. While such imported actors helped to raise the profile of the temperance events, they did not seem to help sway opinion in the community. Local option represented a shift in the social and ideological values of the town. While some townspeople were supportive of the change, the majority were not.

844 “Won and Lost,” Progress, 17 November, 1910, P1: He was challenged in court over whether or not he had resided in Qu’Appelle enough to qualify to sign the petition. See APPENDIX J: Local Option Legal Cases re: petitions and vote.


846 “A December Wedding – Doolittle-Leet,” Progress, 5 January 1911, P1: The glasses were, presumably, for drinking water. The gift list in the Progress is indicative of the Doolittle-Leet’s comparative affluence as well as their powerful political friends and relations: “The happy couple were the recipients of very many valuable and useful presents including a baby grand piano from the father and mother of the bride, a set of furs from her brother [Miller Doolittle], a set of cut glass from the WCTU and many other presents from friends both east and west, including a handsome gift from Lieut. Governor Bulyea and his wife, of Alberta.
Conclusion:

The Qu’Appelle THOH was a focus of performative events where the local hegemony was constructed, or impacted, by local and outside forces which confirmed, reinforced, or even resisted local hegemonic forces. Coverage in the Progress extended THOH performances into the wider community. The new THOH in Qu’Appelle was a physical and symbolic statement of its community’s desire for permanence and prominence. In many ways, the THOH was an affirmation of the community’s commitment to establish itself as being at the forefront of progress. As if to celebrate their absolute control of the spaces within their new hall (control which was lacking in the old Immigration Hall) the community energetically supported the decoration, renovation, and definition of the hall’s interior spaces.

Qu’Appelle sought to entice settlers by fostering the image of a community that would forever expand, with a population that would always increase, property values that would ever rise, and building (both civic and private) would always be booming. Within the Qu’Appelle region, the THOH was part of an increase in the construction of commercial and private buildings. The idea of permanence was as important as progress when it came to attracting immigration and investment and the THOH was an important symbol of permanence.

The new THOH itself reaffirmed the community’s place as a regional centre of governance, justice, and commerce. When a system of bureaucracy is established (either a small group like a council or an individual like sec.-treas. J. C. Starr), it acts as the Town, the R.M., or the police court. A few officials in the town hall, by assuming that symbolic representation, can speak for the community, essentially speaking as the
community. But when a large enough group of community members gather in the town hall, they reassume the power of being, and speaking for, their community – as was the case of the protest over the moving of the South Qu’Appelle Council from Qu’Appelle to McLean. While such groups are empowered while they are gathered in the THOH, it can be true that their power lasts only so long as the meeting. After the meeting, the normal balance of symbolic power (or reification) in the THOH resumes and empowers the power-brokers of town who, by default, occupy the hall. The site was both a place for, then symbol of, authority itself. The THOH was a place for and a contributor to mythos negotiation in Qu’Appelle. It was such a powerful statement of the town’s permanence and power that the South Qu’Appelle (rural) council soon left for McLean. The move, and the reaction against it, highlights the urgency that the majority of the rural council felt to re-establish itself and its influence outside of the town of Qu’Appelle. Even further confirmation of the importance of the Qu’Appelle THOH as a site for not only local, but regional influence came with the South Qu’Appelle council’s subsequent decision to return to the site.

In Qu’Appelle, the Immigration Building had been a transient space; the Qu’Appelle THOH was a permanent space. The THOH was the focus of various events in which the struggle of transience versus permanence was played out. Transience suggests someone (or something) that stays only briefly in any one place; it does not specify whether the transience is voluntary or not. Transience can be a matter of not desiring to settle or, more sadly, being unable to find a place in which to “fit in.” Germantown caused tensions largely because its residents were in many ways outside of (or perhaps between) official boundaries, and therefore the control, of the town and rural
councils. Their perceived transience was threatening. When their situation was redefined (whether they moved into town or not) as more normal, permanent, and controllable, the related tensions eased. In the courtroom, transient people were singled out for a variety of offences against social norms – ranging from criminal to psychological as well as social – and expediently removed from the community. Those accepted as permanent residents, however, were usually first offered a chance at corrective discipline. The THOH was also a site in which community negotiations were played out regarding just what kind of people would be welcomed as part of the community (a permanent resident) and which settlers would be excluded, marginalized, or even removed from the community.

Eyles speaks to the social elements of a sense of place being formed, in part, by the expression of sentiments in a place. In the Qu’Appelle THOH, space was made for the expression of sentiments that were negotiations of community values and beliefs. Some community members, longing for their homeland, desired to bring pieces of that homeland to Qu’Appelle in some way. Often such sought after pieces of home were British in origin, which could explain the zeal with which such performances were often supported. But as part of the Empire Qu’Appelle was British: “being British” was both an imported, and local identity. Performative events in the THOH were occasions where individual ideas of social and moral expectations regarding patriotism and Empire

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847 When compared to the amount of performances celebrating Empire attachment, there does appear to be relatively precious few performances that celebrate local identity (aside from the more practical and apparent – e.g. expressions relating to municipal and rural governance, etc). The extent to which local performances fostered specifically local identity is difficult to explore. Descriptions exist of local writers/ producers (e.g. Pott and Ramsay) including local in-jokes and topical references in their shows. These shows might indeed have intensely fostered local culture, humour, etc., the evidence of which only survives as descriptions of the shows. Without access to, or the existence of, the scripts/manuscripts of the performances it is hard to judge their precise content.
loyalty, gender roles, ethnicity and diversity, and even temperance could be expressed and explored.

The transient nature of performances in general could both help and hinder their impact on the negotiation of local mythoi. For example, black performers were accepted into the THOH in a way that black settlers would not necessarily have been welcomed into the region. On the other hand, the power of the ratepayers seeking to keep the rural council in Qu’Appelle lasted only as long as their meeting. The power reverted to their council as soon as that council reclaimed control of the meeting space. The gatherings of the Local Option supporters, though reportedly large and enthusiastic, were similarly unable to convert the turnout at their meetings and rallies into lasting influence. Their rallies were numerous and reportedly well attended, but they also relied heavily on speakers and attendees from outside of the community. Despite local involvement, perhaps the issue was regarded as being mostly an “outside” issue, being argued by too many outsiders. Hegemony only succeeds when there is sufficient support from the population. The Local Option Movement rallies could have been viewed as being too temporary and too transient to make a lasting change in community opinion or policy.
Chapter 4: A Mythos of Prominence – The Prince Albert Town Hall Opera House

Town Basics

Prince Albert was a regional hub of settlement, trade, transportation, and religion. When governmental and judicial roles were added to the community, its place as the centre of various economic, governmental, legal, and faith groups increased its regional influence. Prince Albert’s influence (and that of its THOH) extended beyond the literal boundaries of the town/city. The community was a symbolic, if not literal, “centre” for the surrounding region. Unlike Qu’Appelle (which had to deal with the nearby colossus of Regina) Prince Albert was a community without similarly nearby regional rivals for prominence. In Prince Albert, the THOH was added to a townscape which already boasted religious and governmental buildings (and would soon boast more). As in Qu’Appelle, the construction of the Prince Albert THOH was an opportunity to provide needed spaces for civic government, local policing, and cultural expression. Also, being a significant and elegant structure, it provided a boost to civic pride – which was also a consequence of the hall in Qu’Appelle. But in Qu’Appelle, the THOH was heralded as playing a vital, starring role in the town’s pursuit of growth, prosperity, and progress (at least in the public debates that occurred before its construction). In Prince Albert, however, the THOH appears to have been born with less breathless desperation and with more determination to provide space and services to the community.

The regional population surrounding and including Prince Albert was very young and very male. In 1885, overall, the Sub-District of Prince Albert’s total male and female

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848 That is until Saskatoon began to boom in the early 1900s. But by then the battle for critical points of contestation such as the locating of territorial then provincial capitals, university, and a penitentiary was completed.
populations were fairly even. But for 15 to 50 year olds there were three males for every two females. By 1901, the District of Saskatchewan, Sub-District of Prince Albert reported a significant increase in people under the age of fourteen. Most of the extra males in the region were between the ages of twenty and forty. This discrepancy became even more acute as the prairie settlement boom began in earnest. Between the censuses of 1901 and 1911, the population of the City of Prince Albert increased by 250%. Most of these incomers were men. In the city of Prince Albert in 1906, there were approximately 5 males for every 4 females. In the wider district of Saskatchewan, within the population between twenty and forty years old, males outnumbered females of the same age 5 to 3 (see Figures 71 through 73).

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Figure 71: Population Pyramid, District of Saskatchewan, 1885 from Canada, *Census 1885*, “Table III -- Ages of the People by Sex,” District of Saskatchewan, 80-85: This table included a significant percentage of “Age not given” respondents: (14.86% male and 17.55% female)

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849 Canada, *Census 1884-5*, “Table 5: Ages of the people”: Male 2831; Female 2542 – Ages do not include, “Not Given.”

850 Canada, *Census 1911*, “Table XIII: Population of cities, towns and incorporated villages in 1911 and 1901 by provinces and electoral districts, and increase in the decade,” Electoral District, Prince Albert—c., 526: From 1,785 in 1901 to 6,254 in 1911.

851 Ibid.

852 Canada, 1906 Census “Table III -- Ages of the People by Sex,” District of Saskatchewan, 80-85.
Figure 72: Population Pyramid, District of Saskatchewan, 1901 from Canada, Census 1901, “Table I -- Ages of the People by Sex,” District: Saskatchewan: the young-male “settler-bulge” has somewhat smoothed out and a regional baby-boom appears to be in effect.

Figure 73: Population Pyramid, District of Saskatchewan, 1906 from Canada, Census 1906, “Table III -- Ages of the People by Sex,” District of Saskatchewan, 80-85: with a new influx of settlers, the aforementioned young, male “settler-bulge” is again apparent.

According to records of the birthplaces of the people, the District of Saskatchewan was overwhelmingly British: 98% of the population was born in the
British Empire or in British holdings in 1885 (Figure 74). By 1901, most residents of the Saskatchewan District were still British-born, although their majority was not so overwhelmingly so as it had been in 1885.

By 1901, most residents of the Saskatchewan District were still British-born, although their majority was not so overwhelmingly so as it had been in 1885.

Figure 74: Birthplace of the People, Prince Albert Sub-District from Canada, Census 1884-5, “Table 4: Birth Places of the People,” 14-18.

By the 1911 census, the British-born population of Prince Albert District was almost 75%, but the percentage of the population born in Canada decreased (Figure 75). Of the greater foreign-born population, even more residents identified as having been born in the British Isles (almost 60%). Of the region’s “Foreign Born” population (under 30%), there was a significant increase in the number of American-born residents.

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854 Canada, Census 1901, “Table XIV. Birthplace of the People by Districts,” Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, 447: Of the total population in 1901, 71% identified as being British-born, with 68% born in Canada, and 49.5% born in the Territories. Foreign-born residents made up almost 28% of the total population.
855 By approximately 10% to 58% from the 1901 census to the 1911 census.
856 Canada, Census 1901, “Table XIV. Birthplace of the People by Districts,” Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, 447: An increase from approximately 10% to 13%.
857 Canada, Census 1901, “Table XIV. Birthplace of the People by Districts,” Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, 447; Canada. Census 1911, “Table XV: Birthplace by Districts,” Prince Albert, 423: From less than 4% in 1901 to almost 11% in 1911.
The previously identified and troubling census labels concerning “Origins” show a complex layering of official identifies in the Prince Albert region. A person born in the British Empire, presumably, was officially a British subject. In the census, however, “British” was also offered as a choice of origin – as was “Indian” and “Half-Breed.” Further confusing the issue, according to the Birthplace statistics, these “Indians” and “Half-Breeds” were born in Canada therefore technically “British” subjects. In 1885, the total indigenous population – including “Indians” and “Half Breeds” – accounts for roughly three-quarters of the regional population (Figure 76).\textsuperscript{858} This was in stark contrast with Qu’Appelle’s home District of Assinibioa, which reported that “Indians” and “Half Breeds” made up only one third of the district’s population in 1885.\textsuperscript{859}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure75.png}
\caption{Figure 75: Prince Albert District Birthplaces (select) 1911, from Canada, \textit{Census 1911}, “Table XV: Birthplace by Districts.”}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{858} Canada, \textit{Census 1884-5}, “Table 3: Origins of the People.”
\textsuperscript{859} Ibid.
The population “origins” in the 1911 census differ significantly between the Prince Albert District and the City of Prince Albert. The city of Prince Albert was still mostly British in origin (almost 65%). In the Prince Albert District, however, almost 45% of the population was of British “origin.” It is also of interest to note that the relative percentage of the “Indian” population of the Prince Albert District was much higher than it was within the city of Prince Albert (Figure 77).\footnote{Canada. Census 1911, “Table 7: Origins of the People by sub-districts,” 324-325 and “Table VIII: Origins of the People, male and Female, by Districts,” 340-341: 12.73\% in Prince Albert District; 2.17\% in Prince Albert City.}
With regard to the religious makeup of early Prince Albert, the three major religious groups, Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian, remained the three major denominations for the period of this study (Figure 78).

![Bar chart showing the percentage of population by religion in Prince Albert from 1885 to 1901.](image)

**Figure 78: Religions, Prince Albert, from Canada, Census 1884-5, “Table 2: Religions of the People,” District Saskatchewan, Sub-District Prince Albert; Canada, Census 1891, “Table IV: Religions” District Saskatchewan, Sub-District: Prince Albert; Canada, Census 1901, “Table X – Religions of the People,” District Saskatchewan; Sub districts Prince Albert E, W, N (combined stats for regional overview).**

Approximately 11% of the population was identified as being of “Unspecified” religion, but suspiciously, no “pagans” (typically the term for indigenous religious practitioners) were ever reported in the region. By 1911, the top-three religions held a nearly balanced number of followers in Prince Albert City: Anglican (25%) Roman Catholic (23%) and Presbyterians (25%). These religious groups, to varying degrees, made use of the THOH for performances, fundraisers, etc.

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861 Canada, *Census 1891*, “Table IV: Religions,” 328.
862 Canada, *Census 1911*, “Table II. Religions of the People,” 140-141.
Town Geography:

Prince Albert’s era of most rapid growth coincided with the early 1900s settlement boom in Saskatchewan. But the community was being built-up as early as the late 1880s and early 1890s as a town of churches, jails, and merchants. Boosters pinned great hopes on future prosperity, seeking to create Prince Albert as a hub of the North West. The THOH was constructed on Central Avenue in 1893 (Figure 79). At the time of its construction, it was close to the centre of town, many businesses, the railway, and the ferry crossing (see map, Figure 80 below).

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863 The first big booster-project of the Prince Albert Board of Trade was to sell the community as a superior staging point for prospectors travelling to the Yukon for the gold rush.
864 Its modern address is 1010 Central Avenue.
Figure 80: “Map,” a layered look at the modern city which has been overlaid with a depiction of the city in 1907 – though not an exact match which provides an approximation of the city by 1907 compared to modern streets, etc., from Abrams 146 overlaid on modern Google Map of Prince Albert with labels added by author.

By the 1890s, Prince Albert boasted a NWMP detachment as well as a gaol, which made it a centre of regional justice. Since several buildings in Prince Albert are referred to as a “court,” a brief explanation of some of the town’s other buildings is useful. Generally, by the 1880s in the NWT, prisoners serving less than two year terms were detained in NWMP barracks with guardhouses, such as Prince Albert’s. Prince Albert’s first jail and courthouse was constructed in 1886 and began to receive prisoners in 1888. Located on Central Avenue between 18th and 19th Streets (close to the site of the later Provincial Courthouse, built in 1927), it was demolished in the 1920s.

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consisted of the courthouse proper and an attached two-story wing containing twenty cells (Figure 81).\textsuperscript{868}

Figure 81: First Provincial jail and courthouse, Prince Albert Photo Taken ca. 1907, Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-B368.

The courthouse-jail’s location, specifically its distance from downtown, led to an additional function being added to the THOH. A judge’s chamber, with space for his clerk, was created in the THOH in 1899. The provincial courthouse and jail was deemed too far from the town centre for the convenience of townspeople needing access to the provincial court. The distance (and perhaps the climb south up Central Avenue) was such that the \textit{Advocate} noted, “the court house is too far from the centre of business for this purpose and practically has never been used for this purpose, the judge heretofore giving up a room in his residence for chambers, while the clerk, Mr. Delagorgendiere, transacted public business at his home.”\textsuperscript{869} This situation changed again in 1905, when


\textsuperscript{869} “The quarters recently occupied,” \textit{Advocate} 16 October 1899.
plans were announced to construct a federal building in downtown Prince Albert that would house various offices, including a “Post Office, Customs House, Dominion Lands and Registration Offices, Court House and offices for the various officials together with a library.”

It was completed ca. 1908 (Figure 82).

Prince Albert’s High School was constructed in 1910, at “1st Ave West at 22nd Street, not far from the court house” (Figure 83).

Prince Albert was also home to the Saskatchewan Penitentiary, built one kilometre west of town in 1911. Another Provincial Courthouse was built in 1927 on Central Avenue (Figure 84). Near the site of the 1880s court and prison, it also had a commanding view of downtown.

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870 “Government Buildings for Prince Albert,” *Saskatchewan Times* 19 January 1905, P1: It promised to be, “a handsome structure and will reflect great credit upon our city.”


872 “High School, Prince Albert, Sask. after 1910,” Prairie Postcards, Peel’s Prairie Provinces, PC012826, accessed 2 September 2012, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/postcards/PC012826.html: “Collegiate Institute in Prince Albert, SK. Institute was built in 1910 & is located on 1st Ave West at 22nd Street, not far from the court house.”

873 Driedger, Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan, s.v. “Corrections.”

874 Knafla, Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan, s.v. “Law and Justice.”
The Physical Hall:

The Prince Albert THOH (Figure 85) was built to impress. But the negotiations surrounding its creation seem to have been more focused on necessity than prestige. The town council was established in 1885, “without fanfare and in crippling poverty.”

Council met in such spaces as it could find. Several plans for obtaining a town hall of any description fell through. Buying and converting the old Presbyterian Church (then on...
the same block as the current building) was defeated because the asking price of $3,500 was considered too high.\textsuperscript{877} In 1891, the town council sold $10,000 in debentures to put toward building a town hall. Pundits of the day wryly pointed out that the town needed a new hall so that citizens could attend civic meetings “without fear of suffocation.”\textsuperscript{878} The Town Hall Opera House was completed in 1893, its final cost listed as $13,178.\textsuperscript{879} Given the town’s population of 1000, the debt seems a significant “bet” (or statement of optimism) on future growth and economic good times.\textsuperscript{880}

The building’s prominence and power in shaping early community mythos in Prince Albert was still evident a century after its construction. At the “Commemoration of the Former Prince Albert City Hall,” on 20 February 1990, former Prince Albert city commissioner Joe Oliver spoke to the history of the building, outlining the physical spaces and functions of the building (e.g. that it served as a town meeting space as well as the site of civic governance, administration, and police service).\textsuperscript{881} Oliver then celebrated the building’s less-tangible impact on the community:

> I did not see it in its pristine glory but I imagine that the opera house was a thing of beauty. Inside was a soaring space two stories high, with three windows in two walls, about twenty feet high. The other two walls had arched openings, one being the proscenium and stage and the opposite one the balcony – the Gods. Buggies decanted ladies and gentlemen in evening dress under the porch at the side door, the atmosphere sparkled and, for a moment, this outpost of Empire took on the culture of the “Old Country.”\textsuperscript{882}

\textsuperscript{877} Abrams 91.
\textsuperscript{878} “Two Bylaws,” \textit{Times} 5 Aug 1891, P2; Abrams 101.
\textsuperscript{879} “Prince Albert’s Finances,” \textit{Times} 22 Dec 1893, P3.
\textsuperscript{880} “File: PHP 355,” Saskatchewan Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation Heritage Resources Branch, Regina, SK.
\textsuperscript{881} “Manuscript of speech attributed to Joe Oliver, former PA city commissioner,” Prince Albert Historical Society Bill Smiley Archives, File b76, possibly 20 February 1990 – the Commemoration of the Former Prince Albert City Hall: Joe Oliver was a Prince Albert City Commissioner. He started working at the Town Hall Opera House, as a “go-pher” when he was boy.
\textsuperscript{882} “Manuscript of speech attributed to Joe Oliver, former PA city commissioner,” 20 February 1990.
These memories were not Oliver’s, but had been passed down to him by previous generations of Prince Albert residents. The overall tone of the THOH stories – as well as their survival in Prince Albert for a century – shows the power of the symbolic and ideological place the THOH in occupied in Prince Albert.

The review of a 1901 event in the THOH supports Oliver’s imagined theatrical evenings. The sparkling atmosphere accompanied longings for an “Old Country.” The audience had gathered to celebrate English culture; a group of local performers were staging a production of Our Boys, which was a renowned and long-running play in London. The event shows the wide geographical range of users of the THOH, as it drew people from far beyond the specific town-limits. The community of influence of the THOH included people from “all the town and country.” This performance attracted a mix of “old gentlemen with silver locks, staid matrons, engaged couples and other couples who would like to be engaged, pretty girls galore – because Prince Albert seems to have a monopoly in female youth and beauty, bashful young men whose hearts went pitter-pat at the sight of the aforesaid feminine loveliness; all were there.”

The THOH, as a social hub of the community, was also a site through which the young and ambitious (in this case socially and/or sexually) residents of Prince Albert and district could gather.

Community ideals surrounding youth, progress, and ambition were often being negotiated at THOH events, strengthening the building’s symbolic connection to such

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883 Whether such a longing was for an experienced and lost “Old Country” or an imagined, idealised cult of Victorianism is fodder for a section of this chapter.
884 “Our Boys” Advocate 12 August 1901: The local paper noted its popularity as follows: “Henry J. Byron’s well known comedy entitled “Our Boys”. This charming dramatic creation was first produced at the Vaudeville Theatre, London in 1875, and “caught on” in the great Metropolis so thoroughly that it had a continuous run of over 1500 nights.”
886 Ibid.
ideas. When the THOH hosted the celebration of Prince Albert’s incorporation as a city in 1904, the local commitment to progress and optimism was foremost in the remarks for the day. Rev. L. W. Patterson was reported to have affirmed:

The fact that we had attained to the rank of a city was not all that was to be desired – the strength of our manhood and character was of far greater importance, and looking round, seeing the happy merry faces of the school children, we had no reason to fear for the future of our city. Character determined the future of a nation, and he prophesied a great future for Canada. The greatest men and women often rise from the humblest ranks, and he felt that this babe of a city gave promise of a bright and healthy maturity.887

The THOH was a structure that was a site for the expression of local aspirations as well as being a physical symbol that those aspirations were worthy and attainable.

**Description: Rastrick and the Architecture**

The building is grand and elaborate. The aspirational nature of the design was still evident to those commemorating the site almost a century after its construction. The building was notable for how it “expressed the community leaders’ hopes that Prince Albert would develop into ‘the hub of Saskatchewan's northern two-thirds.’”888

Physically, the building was (and still is) praised for its most notable design features: its overall symmetry; its skylights (which originally shone over the auditorium space – see Figure 86); and details such as brackets, decorated chimney caps, the arched entrance portal, and cast-iron rails that implied a balcony above the main entrance. The monumental tower and adjacent porte-cochere, or carriage drive-through, are other

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887 "The City Celebration," *Advocate* 5 December 1904, P1: The speech was summarized, not reproduced.
888 Program: *Commemoration of the Former Prince Albert City Hall*, 20 February 1990, PAHSBSA, File 676.
noteworthy features." The building is faced entirely in locally-produced brick. The tower, rooflines, elaborate windows, and iron-work details are described as being a combination of “late-Victorian eclecticism with an Italianate style.

One of the most commented-on details of the building is the north opera-house entrance. Those arriving by carriage at the North Entrance would drive under, “the porte-cochère – a covered portico where ladies, gentlemen, and visiting dignitaries were delivered to attend the gala evenings of the opera.” The flowery vocabulary of later appreciators of its architecture may belie the practicality of this feature; the portico/porte-cochere was only ever referred to as the “carriage porch” in the building’s original contract. This feature was omitted from a sketch of the building ca. 1897. Published in an edition of the Advocate, the sketch shows a view from the north of the building (Figure 87).

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889 Ibid: Specific references to the balcony being used for speeches are, to date, proving hard to find. The balcony is, based upon photos, basically a railing installed under the large, central window on the second floor.
890 Saskatchewan, Order to Designate as Provincial Heritage Property under The Heritage Property Act, 3 April 1991, Saskatchewan Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation Heritage Resources Branch, SK File: PHP 355,
891 Order to Designate as Provincial Heritage Property under The Heritage Property Act, 1991.
892 A. Goodfellow and The Town of Prince Albert Town Hall Contract,” PAHSBSA, File b76, 16 January 1892, P6.
Figure 87: “Town Hall, Prince Albert,” Advocate December 14 1897, P1: sketch of PA THOH without “carriage porch” entrance.

As the carriage-porch appears consistently in other depictions of the building, it might have been a design feature that was not included in the original construction. The building’s tower was altered after construction. The original tower (Figure 88) was raised and a cupola added to allow for the installation of a bell (Figure 89).893


893 “Prince Albert Adds Its Mite,” Times, 26 April 1906, P1: The tower was strengthened and raised to accommodate a Fire Bell in 1906. The decision was made in April, but due to a flaw in the original bell’s construction, the bell wasn’t mounted in the tower until later that year (“Committee Are Anxious,” Times 7 June 1906, P1).
The architect of the Prince Albert THOH is identified in most sources as an F. J. Rostrick. This appears to be a tenaciously repeated typographical error. A diverse collection of sources for information does not exist for an F. J. Rostrick. F. J. Rastrick, however, was a well-known British-born architect who practiced in Ontario in the late 1800s. Rastrick had extensive training, including a four-year sketching-tour of Europe, Asia Minor, and Egypt. He articled with Sir Charles Barry (architect, Houses of Parliament in London). His early works included buildings for the Bank of Upper Canada and the Canada Life Assurance Company. Both structures are noted for their Italianate styling, as is the Prince Albert Town Hall Opera House.

Plans for the building have proven elusive, even to subsequent city administrations of Prince Albert. The only floor drawings of the building so far available are from the 1970s renovation of the site (which prepared the site for use as a community arts centre). These sketches are described in a City of Prince Albert Memo as being “a copy of the only plans which seem to be available.” This was well after the auditorium had been split into two floors and the stage converted to a meeting room. The basic dimensions and layout are still discernible, despite the added notations regarding remodeling proposals and somewhat erratic scale.

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894 Otto, Stephen A. s.v. “Rastrick, Frederick James,” Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 1990, 16 November 2010, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/rastrick_frederick_james_12E.html: His later life did not live up to his early successes. Passed over as Hamilton's architect in the Department of Public Works, Rastrick was also hit hard by an economic depression that began in 1857. He was financially undone when his design for the Hamilton Custom House was rejected, then later heavily copied by another architect. He would fight for the rest of his life for compensation, which was never paid. Rastrick designed some notable houses, but he earned his living as a “Land, House and Commission agent” as well as a contracted building inspector. He returned to Hamilton in 1870, practicing architecture with his sons after 1879 (as "F. J. Rastrick and Sons") until he died in 1897. The firm continued into at least the 1920s. In 1923, a fire destroyed their office, which housed most of Rastrick's records and drawings. As the commission for the Prince Albert Opera House was in the early 1890s, and in a decidedly Italianate-meets-Victorian-Central-Canada style, I feel comfortable asserting that Rastrick’s firm designed the building.

895 City Commissioner to Parks and Recreation Technical Committee, Re: Old City Hall, 15 July 1970, PAHSBSA. File b76.
Basement:

In addition to the building’s heating plant, the basement of the THOH held the office of the town constable (which also served as the local police court) as well as the holding cells (Figure 90). It appears that parts of these spaces were originally used by the Imperial Bank until sometime before 1899.896

Justice in the greater Prince Albert region was carried out by the local detachment of the North West Mounted Police utilizing the Prince Albert barracks, gaol, and courthouse. For the first years of the THOH, the town of Prince Albert rarely had more than one constable assigned to keeping the peace in the town.897 It appears that the town

896 “The quarters recently occupied,” Advocate, 16 October 1899, P8: The floorplan-sketch of the basement does note a “Vault” space that might have been for civic and the early bank offices and the magistrate offices were noted as being fitted out in “the quarters recently occupied by the Imperial Bank in 1899.
897 “The volume of business at the Prince Albert police court,” Advocate, June 25, 1900, P8; Prince Albert Urban Municipality Town Council Minutes Jan. 19 1891 – Oct. 3 1904, City Council Minutes Oct. 11 1904 – Aug. 2 1905, Minutes 2 June 1900, SAB. Microfilm 4.4, Reel 2: By the turn of the new century, council saw a need to advance the cause of civic order as police court volume was increasing, largely due to drunk
cells were most often used as a drunk-tank. In the THOH, though, the facilities for the Justice of the Peace in the basement were unpleasant. A *Prince Albert Times* editorial of 1908 described the conditions of both the police court and police cells as inhumane.\(^{898}\) Gary Abrams (writing in 1966) was blunter, noting that “the police court in the basement was a dark, damp, unsanitary pit, and the cells were stuffy holes in the ground.”\(^{899}\) No immediate action appears to have been taken to improve this situation.

**Main and Upper Floors**

The main floor contained the town offices as well as the main auditorium. The offices were situated off of the hallway, one to each side of the building’s main entranceway (Figure 91). The same shuttered window and counter that allowed citizens to access the town clerk during business hours also served as a ticket window for performances in the auditorium space.\(^{900}\) The Auditorium space dominated both the ground and upper floors of the building. The proscenium stage opening was located in the east wall.

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899 Abrams 162
900 After 1904 these became the *city* offices (clerk, commissioner, etc). The number of officials in the office would depend upon the size of the civil service of the day.
During the day, the hall would be flooded by natural light, thanks to the large banks of windows on the north and south walls as well as the skylights over the auditorium space. The stage could accommodate an upper-limit of approximately 60 performers, as observed in a review of the 1909 production of *Temple of Fame*: “It is not an easy matter to handle a crowd of about sixty people... in such cramped quarters as they have in the wings of the stage.”

In the auditorium itself (Figure 92), newspapers of the day generally described a comfortably full-house as being between 400 and 500 people (for performances, or seated events). The memorial service for Queen Victoria was reported to have packed over 600 people into the hall before the authorities started turning people away. The hardwood floor was able to accommodate dancing and other pursuits when the chairs were stacked away in the second-level balcony or gallery as it was more popularly called. Eventually,

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901 Order to Designate as Provincial Heritage Property under the Heritage Property Act, 1991.
this gallery space was fitted out with seating for 50, and became a sought-after and prestigious place to sit.\footnote{\textit{The Town Hall galery [sic],} \textit{Advocate}, 8 April 1901, P8: Though in use before 1901, the gallery was not a premium-destination for performances until it obtained seating, when it was reported that, “The Town Hall galery [sic] has now been seated, with a capacity for about fifty occupants, and accommodation there will be at a premium for performances. All gallery seats will be reserved.”}

The gallery was touted as the preferred, premium seating for performances in the THOH for several reasons. The sightlines were good. Gallery audience members could enter the north (porte-cochere protected) entrance of the building and climb directly upstairs to the gallery (all without having to enter the main auditorium of the Opera House). During the memorial for Queen Victoria, the gallery was originally set aside for the NWMP and Citizen’s band (presumably so they could exit the building quickly, via the staircase that led downstairs almost directly to the north entrance, in order to take their position at the head of the parade that followed the service). Due to the overwhelming demand for seating, however, the gallery became more inclusive, housing a “detachment of mounted police, members of the Citizen’s band, and as many of the
general public as could gain access.”

The gallery’s royal symbolism continued after Victoria’s reign. During a Bachelors’ Ball in late April a new addition to the hall was unveiled: “a large picture of His Majesty King Edward VII [which] beamed down on the dancers from a point of vantage in front of the gallery.”

The gallery entrance was directly across a small hallway from the THOH’s council chamber. This room served as a meeting room, as well as the THOH’s banquet-room. This chamber was furnished to enhance the prestige of the mayor and council. In 1897 it was noted that a, “raised platform has been built in the council chamber, upon which the mayor’s desk is placed, and the council board desks placed in a semi-circle around it. This gives the board a more business-like appearance.”

The new decor also emphasized the performative nature of the council meetings held therein; the new desks and platform became pieces of the council’s set on its stage. Some exchanges in the council chambers were dramatic enough to warrant wider distribution via the local newspapers. While the publication of the council meeting minutes was routine, detailed (i.e. word-for-word) verbal exchanges were rarely included in such minutes and therefore not usually more widely published. One particularly dramatic exchange – recorded in the minutes and published in the Times – occurred in 1907. It was October, and the meeting was getting too long for some council members. After a vote, it was recorded that “Ald. Noble left with the Mayor’s permission. Ald. Homes objected to the fire and light committee and the Fire Brigade deputation holding a conference and taking up the time

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905 “In Memoriam,” Advocate, 4 February 1901, P1.
906 “Bachelors’ Ball,” Advocate, 22 April 1901, P1.
907 Prince Albert Urban Municipality, Minutes 2 January 1897: The Council Minutes merely mention, “That the chairman of the Board of Works be instructed to arrange for the proper seating of the new council for 1897.” The Council Chamber was also ordered Kalsomining (“Town Council Meeting,” Advocate, 2 February 1897, P1; Prince Albert Urban Municipality, 2 February 1897).
of the Council.”\textsuperscript{908} Holmes’ impatience only grew thereafter. The record of the following events is easily converted into script-form as follows:

Ald. Holmes: I’ve got other business and if Ald. Donaldson can leave without permission, I’m going too.
The Mayor: Ald. Donaldson had permission.
Ald. Holmes: \textit{(jumping up and reaching for his coat)} I’m going whether I get permission or not.
\textit{(The chairman of the Board of works departed in a hurry with a parting good-bye from Ald. Noble.)}
The Mayor: This is one way of conducting the city’s business.
Ald. Noble: I should say!
The Mayor: I think there is something in the city’s bylaws covering the case where an Alderman jumps up and leaves without permission or reason.\textsuperscript{909}

At this point, Holmes ruined his dramatic exit when he “returned, volunteering the remark that he had forgotten his pipe or else he wouldn’t have come back. Having collected this necessary part of his wearing apparel he retired.”\textsuperscript{910} The drama continued the next week, thanks to Donaldson, whose departure from the previous meeting appears to have sparked Holmes’ impatience. Seeking clarification, Donaldson wondered if Holmes needed to ask permission to return to the council, as, “Ald. Holmes had left the board without permission. Mr. Donaldson asked if Ald. Holmes had asked permission to come back.”\textsuperscript{911} While Mayor Cook could have required such permission, he instead let the prodigal-Holmes return, reasoning that “the Mayor wasn’t required to deal with the matter unless he considered that disrespect had been shown to the chair. The Mayor preferred not to consider it as such.”\textsuperscript{912} By \textit{preferring} not to see disrespect to his office,

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\textsuperscript{908} “Ald. Holmes Was Warm,” \textit{Times}, 16 October 1907, P4.
\textsuperscript{909} Ibid: Italics and some punctuation added to simulate the separation of dialogue from action.
\textsuperscript{910} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{911} “Who Brought the Police,” \textit{Times}, 23 October 1907, P1.
\textsuperscript{912} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
Cook appears to have decided that the potential for future ill-will on council was not worth further embarrassing Holmes for his moment of rudeness.

Regardless of the level of dignity being enacted on the council “set,” the council furnishings were meant to provide an air of respectability to the proceedings. Despite this symbolic importance, the council’s regard for their new furnishings was not always shared by the room’s other user groups. The council soon found it necessary to ban other THOH users from using the council furniture.913

The Council Chamber was used by several, civic, religious, and fraternal organisations. Some groups used the council chamber until such a time as they were able to secure their own club rooms – or buildings – outside of the THOH (e.g. the Independent Order of Foresters and the Ancient Order of United Workmen). Ladies’ church groups often used the club room, with or without the opera house space, for events like fundraising dinners, bazaars, and sales-of-work. Some organizations were deemed of such significant civic-benefit or importance that they were given preferential rights to the council chamber for some time. These included the citizen’s band, the Lorne Agricultural Society, the Board of Trade, and the Victoria Hospital Ladies’ Aid.

The Hospital Aid staged twice-monthly entertainments for years. But the Hospital Aid’s rent-free access to the THOH led to some questions among the town council. At a council meeting in 1904, in response to a request by the Hospital Aid for two nights’ use of the THOH for free, “Coun. Kidd thought once a month quite sufficient for free use of hall.” Some councillors argued that some community groups should be

913 “Town Council Meeting,” Advocate 9 March 1897; Prince Albert Urban Municipality, Minutes 1 March 1897:
A more specific request (announced in the Local Items of the Advocate) was that cigar stubs not be placed upon the piano, “cigar ends and ashes fall into the instrument and cause no end of trouble” (“Parties are requested,” Advocate, 2 February 1897, P8).
given more grant money from the council, so that it would be able to charge every user group. Use of the hall and its furnishings seemed a sticking-point for, “Coun. Agnew [who] said great damage was done to seats by throwing them around for dance after entertainment.”914 The Ladies’ Aid retained access to the THOH for two evenings a month under the condition that it was “distinctly understood that these evenings do not conflict with any outside or other entertainment.”915

Despite the widespread community use of the THOH by the community, there were calls for its replacement by 1908. The Times identified a new city hall as “badly needed.”916 The most deteriorated space in the THOH was the previously-identified problematic basement. The police court, constables’ office, and holding cells were described as, “a dark, a small, evil-smelling place that the health officer should condemn. The cells are worse and the society for the prevention of cruelty should step in and save the poor unfortunate inebriates and minor offenders from being incarcerated there.”917

Even the needed auditorium space was experiencing structural problems by 1910: “the city hall had a crack in its rear wall so large that in winter it was popularly called ‘the city’s cold storage plant.’”918 The chill was bad enough that it was concluded that “one matter that would have to be taken up in the near future was the building of a city hall. It

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914 “Town Council,” Advocate, 8 February 1904, P1, 5.
915 Prince Albert Urban Municipality, Minutes 5 February 1904.
916 “The Police Court,” Times 2 September 1908, P2.
917 “The Police Court,” Times: Times proceeded with more description and advice, i.e.: “The police court and cells are quite sufficient in themselves to defer the most ordinary criminals from putting themselves within reach of the law. Those, however, who are unfortunate enough to get within touch of the police should not be compelled to stay in such a place. The police too deserve consideration. There isn’t a business man in the City who would ask his employees to stay in such quarters. The magistrate would be quite justified in refusing to hold court in such a place and should use the Council Chamber ‘til suitable quarters are provided.”
918 Abrams, 162.
was impossible to heat the present building.”919 This problem was a feature of event reviews as early as 1904: “The concert was both begun and ended by Mr. Wallace, whose ‘Toreador’ was successful in warming up the audience disposed to be critical from the effects of a chilly atmosphere, and the inevitable absence of excitement that awaits the first number. His courage deserved its success.”920 The stage itself was also beginning to fall short of the ambitions of local performers. The 1909 production of Temple of Fame noted that the stage and wings were cramped once nearly sixty people were involved in a production – especially when the performers were “nearly all ladies” and begowned.921

Despite some calls to replace the building, “the hall was merely patched up in 1910... in an apparent belief that the period of rapid growth then beginning would make its replacement an easy matter.”922 The anticipated period of rapid growth, however, turned out to be a period of economic adversity and crippling civic debt. These adverse conditions made replacing the THOH an unaffordable luxury. While other communities used optimism for an imagined, impending boom-time as the inspiration to build a THOH, Prince Albert’s THOH survived early replacement due to such unfulfilled hopes.

**Mythos-Building**

**Introduction to Main Texts:**

Examining negotiations of community mythos via THOH related performative events requires a variety of sources. This is especially true of locally-produced events

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919 “A Few Electors Greet Council” *Times*, 2 December 1908, P1: The argument continued that, “The crack in the wall had been repaired a year ago, but it had opened up again. The hall could not, however, be built until money got cheaper.”
920 “Hospital Entertainment,” *Advocate*, 19 December 1904, P5.
922 Abrams, 162.
which may or may not leave behind traditional blueprints of performance, such as a published script. Reviews and descriptions are useful in discovering the performance text of such events. Community reaction is also an important aspect of determining mythoi-in-negotiation. Some specific texts performed in the Prince Albert THOH have proven especially rich tools for discovering the intricacies of Prince Albert’s ongoing self-definitions in the early decades of the THOH. Many locally produced performative events were staged by local groups working to build social and financial capital in the community. These performances also appear to have either affirmed or challenged attitudes and expectations of their community regarding such issues as the following: Prince Albert’s place in the British Empire; the roles that race/ethnicity/origin played in determining acceptance within the local “accepted” community; and expectations regarding gender-roles. The exploration of performative events in the Prince Albert THOH which follows will benefit from a brief introduction to some of this chapter’s more often referred to texts and performances.

One excellent example of the confluence of such community-building and reflecting occurred on August 29, 1901, when a local recreational group, gleefully self-identified as the Coney Island Canoe Club, staged a fund-raising performance for the Victoria Hospital. This event can be framed as an example of the community’s ever-developing sense-of-place by studying the evidence of their performance. This performance, as well as reaction to it, allows a glimpse into the dominant, if ever-shifting, ideas as to who or what was accepted, excluded, or exalted in this time and place. Advance notice for the show presented the event as worthwhile for both its entertainment value and its social importance to the community. The show notice read:

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923 Inasmuch as it can be gathered from reviews, audience descriptions, and editorial opinions.
The most novel and amusing entertainment ever seen here will be presented by the Coney Island Canoe Club members. The stage decorations are entirely new and alone are worth the price of admission. Parties are coming from outside places and a full house is assured. Every person should patronise this popular club and give a helping hand to the Hospital. Proceeds are for that worthy institution.924

It is important to note the advertised assurances of the popularity of the club and its members within the community. There is a suggestion that by supporting this club’s event some of that popularity, or mutual sense of belonging, can be shared. The last line of the announcement, specifying that the proceeds are going toward the hospital, speaks to the potential for actual community-building that this event could support. The performance has the potential to turn social capital into physical capital, specifically the hospital. The Coney Islanders were one of several local groups who performed to raise hospital capital. By participating in such performances, as a volunteer or as a spectator, community members were engaging in the negotiation of local social values. They were supporting the idea that this was a progressive and caring community that was interested in bettering life for its members, as well as enhancing its prestige, by building the new hospital. While a script for their 1901 performance is not available, a glimpse into the performance-as-text itself can be gleaned from the event’s review in the Prince Albert Advocate. The review reinforces the welcome nature of the entertainment, as well as the performers. A large and enthusiastic audience awaited the popular club-members.925

Another popular local amateur actor, director, and theatre producer was T. S. Jones. A bookkeeper by day, Jones appeared in many performances and concerts in the

THOH. He was a founding member of the Prince Albert Dramatic and Operatic Society, formed in September 1903. The society almost immediately began petitioning the town council for permission to, or assistance in, upgrading the THOH stock scenic backdrops. A string of successful shows ensued. Jones’s local reputation was solidified by 1907, when the *Times* declared, “We have always noticed that Mr. Jones will not produce a play, unless he is sure it is a better one than that preceding.” Jones’s involvement became an assurance of quality, as it was still being noted later that year, “Mr. Jones[sic] successes in the past will ensure a good show, and a crowded house.”

As his reputation grew, Jones appeared eager to match increasing expectations with projects of ever-greater scope. For example, the *Times* boasted of his plans to stage a play called *Mexico* “for which he has had three complete sets of scenery and specially painted by the leading scenic studio in Chicago, at the cost of $300.00. As magnificent costumes are to be worn in the production, this enterprise is such as has never before

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926 *Census 1911*, Schedule No. 1, Saskatchewan; District Prince Albert, Sub-district 31 (Prince Albert), p19, ll. 10-14, “Jones” Collections Canada, http://data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca/1911/jpg/e002100151.jpg; Canada, *Census 1906*. Schedule No. 1, Saskatchewan, District 16, Subdistrict: 34 (City of Prince Albert, Prince Albert Jail), p. 23, l. 10, “Jones, Thomas S.” Microfilm T-18361, Collections Canada, http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/e/e049/e001211114.jpg.; Canada, *Census 1901*, Northwest Territories, District Saskatchewan (205), Subdistrict Prince Albert (East/Est), p. 23, ll 32-35, “Jones,” Collections Canada, Microfilm T-6553, http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/1901/z/z004/jpg/z000182767.jpg: Jones, Thomas S. (b. 1863 – Ireland, emigrated 1880) was listed as a clerk in the general store in 1901. By 1906, his household included wife Kate (b. 1869, ON) and sons Cyril (b. 1894, SK), Clarence (b. 1897, SK) and Frederick (b. 1904, SK) as well as “grandma” Alpha Rountree (b. 1825, Ireland). In 1906, a Thomas S. Jones was also included in the enumeration of the Prince Albert Jail. He was the same age, and though his title was mostly illegible, it might read bookkeeper (“bkpr”). He is listed immediately following the Warden (F. Kerr) and his family and immediately preceding the “turnkeys.” In 1911, Kate and Grandma are no longer listed, and Thomas’s new wife is listed, a Liliane (b. 1888, Scotland).

927 “To Form a Dramatic Club,” *Advocate*, 31 August 1903, P3: The foundational meeting was held at Jones’s house with the following specific goals in mind: “The objects of the society are the purchase of properties, such as wigs, scenery, etc., to properly stage the different plays the club intend to produce from time to time.”

928 Jones, T. S. (President, Prince Albert Dramatic and Operatic Society) To the Mayor and Council, Town of Prince Albert, Letter, 23 November 1903, Bill Smiley Archives, File 224b.


been attempted in Prince Albert, either by Amateurs or Professionals.”931 Triumphs for Jones and his group included productions of shows such as *Charley’s Aunt* in 1907 which was well received enough in Prince Albert to play two nights to packed houses in the THOH.932 The show also toured to perform shows in Melfort and Saskatoon.933

Jones often produced shows to help local groups in need of fundraising. Such was the case with the 1908 production of George Broadhurst’s *What Happened to Jones*, a well-received play which was a fundraiser for the local fire brigade. The play was recommended as being of the best quality; in fact it was “too well known to require comment. Like *Charley’s Aunt*, it is a play that is being constantly reproduced by all the leading theaters in London and New York.”934 The Times, despite assurances that the play required no further explanation, did offer a synopsis for the local audience. Set in New York City, the play begins with family patron Ebenezer Goodley attending an illegal boxing match with his soon to be son-in-law, Richard. The match is raided by the police. Upon fleeing home, the men find themselves in the company of a hymnal and sports-card salesman named Jones. Rather than risk being exposed to the law, and more importantly the women of the house, the men decide to let Jones pretend to be an expected relation, a Bishop from Australia. What ensues is a convoluted collection of deceptions and mistaken identities involving mistaken affections, contrasting expectations of proper behaviour for males and females, and even an escaped patient from a nearby asylum.935

931 “Amateur Dramatic Show,” *Times*.
932 “‘Charley’s Aunt’ A Great Show,” *Saturday Times*, 6 October, 1907, P1.
933 “Charlie’s Aunt by Local Talent” *Times*, 2 Oct 1907, P1.
934 “Funniest Show Ever Produced.” *Times*, 16 December 1908, P1.
The show was well positioned for success due to Jone’s involvement and the show’s popular local beneficiary, the fire brigade. Further quality was assured with the participation of the project’s stage manager, Dr. P. W. Shelbey. Shelbey was doubly impressive, as it was noted that he “had a good deal of experience in matters theatrical, in England.”\footnote{\textit{Funniest Show Ever Produced}” \textit{Times} 16 December 1908, P1.} Not only was he experienced, but he was experienced in England, which seems of equal importance. The resulting show was generally praised. For example, the \textit{Times} observed, “In truth the show was away ahead of the plays given by travelling troupes who visit Prince Albert. It was enjoyable every minute and Tom Jones and Tom Collins are just as good as any professionals who have ever visited Prince Albert.”\footnote{“Tom Jones at His Best,” \textit{Times}, 23 December 1908, P. 1, 4.}

In 1894, the local Freemasons\footnote{Specifically the Kinistino Lodge of the A.F. and A.M. (Ancient Free and Accepted Masons).} performed two short plays, advertised as “the melodrama \textit{The Spirit of ’99, or The Coming Woman}, followed by the screaming and side-splitting farce entitled \textit{Who Stole the Pig}.”\footnote{“As it may be seen,” \textit{Times}, 18 December 1894, P3.} The main-effort, or “the piece of the evening [was] \textit{The Spirit of ’99}.”\footnote{“Entertainment,” \textit{Times}, 31 December 1894, P1.} The play was a re-titled version of the Ariana W. Curtis parlor-drama, \textit{The Spirit of Seventy-Six}.\footnote{Curtis, Ariana Wormeley, \textit{The Spirit of Seventy-Six; or The Coming Woman, a Prophetic Drama}, Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1869, University of California Libraries, \url{http://www.archive.org/details/spiritseventy00curtrich}: The author’s note takes pains to specify that the play “was not written for the stage, nor with any view to publication, but simply for amateur performance.”}. In the script, the male hero, Carberry, returns to Boston from a ten-year absence in China, where he finds the male-dominated world he knew has been taken-over by women. As Mr. Wigfall summarizes:

\begin{quote}
My dear fellow, you’re behind the age. You went away in ’66, before this infernal business of women’s voting came up. That was the beginning of it all. At first they voted for their favourite generals and ministers, they got that idea from the Fairs they used to have in the war-time, but they soon gave them up, and began to elect each other. And now we are overrun by
\end{quote}
them. They’re lawyers, ministers, tax-gatherers, everything that’s disagreeable.¹⁹⁴²

One particularly powerful example of the titular Coming Woman is the character of Wolverine Griffin, who sums up the emancipation of women as presented in the play:

Fellow-Sisters. Woman now stands on the apex of the social Pyramid. Man is a mummy. The successful agitation of the Great Idea of Woman’s Rights has worked results far transcending the fondest hopes of its originators. They demanded for Woman simple Equality with Man, but Equality conceded, became the point up on which, resting the lever of her intellect, Woman has moved the world. She has succeeded where old Archimedes broke down. A hundred years ago it was thought a fine thing for a few American men to throw off the British Tyrant’s yoke, but that was a trifling achievement, compared to the new Revolution, in which twenty millions of ladies have thrown off all restraint, and now plant their victorious feet on the neck of the Male Oppressor! (Immense cheering.)¹⁹⁴³

The play offers opinions that seem to provoke different reactions from individual audience members; it also serves as a good example of an interrogative text in performance in the THOH.

Another program featuring female performances – but with a decidedly different tone and scope – was Temple of Fame, produced by the Young Women’s Guild of St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church in January 1909. The show was part of a then-contemporary pageant tradition. Other centres advertised performances of the same name that offered various presentations of famous women and allegorical personifications. Performances of Temple of Fame varied somewhat between communities. In the case of Prince Albert, the event sought to feature women as role models, specifically “women famous in Poetry,

¹⁹⁴² Ibid, 25.
¹⁹⁴³ Ibid, 30-32.
Art, Music, Philanthropy, Literature, Society, History, and the Home.”

It was also a huge production, boasting a cast of over fifty people.

**Founding-Mythos and Local First Nations**

Prince Albert residents were negotiating their founding mythos in a way similar to Qu’Appelle and indeed other newly-settled western towns and cities. As such, the residents were seeking to substitute themselves – physically or symbolically – into the landscape, usually at the expense of the local indigenous population. What resulted was the creation of a space wherein local performers – or preferred settlers – established for themselves senses of permanence and authenticity. The Coney Islanders’ entertainment offers several instances of the depiction of First Nations people onstage which evoke Joseph Roach’s idea of physical surrogation, or “effigying” an absent original. Local, white performers were casting themselves as indigenous people, for example, when in the camp-scene it was noted that “Admiral Wilson was in charge of the war canoe and all the aquatic braves.” To get picky, if not less significant, even the canoe is a stretch for the Coney Islanders. This performance could have been the only time most the group-members were in a canoe. They were more noted for spending summers going on entertaining bicycle and steam-boat excursions in the Prince Albert region. But on this imagined riverbank, the Coney Islanders have cast themselves into an imagined, sanitized, and romanticized representation of the First Nations’ presence in the North-

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945 Ibid.
946 “The Canoe Club At Home,” *Advocate*, 2 September 1901: Some of these trips resulted in mishaps which became part of the community inside-humour, as the unknown event alluded to in the scene where “Scout Ross kept his eyes open that the man of wars didn't collide with a sand bar, an iceberg, or a Saskatchewan crab, so that a second Islander disaster would not have to be recorded.” The first disaster is lost to us, but was apparently a marvellous inside joke to the audience.
West, since the region’s actual First Nations presence no longer fit into their Western-European-Victorian view of their new community.

In 1901, less than 10% of the population of the Prince Albert were identified as “Indians,” with almost 30% of the population identified as “Half Breed” This was greatly reduced from the 1885 percentage, where the area then defined as Prince Albert identified roughly thirty percent of the population as “Indian,” with a further 40% of the population identified as “Half Breed.” This statistical (if not necessarily numerical) reduction was part of the dominant Prince Albert community’s sense of place. The narrative accepted or promoted by the dominant group in Prince Albert was that Indians were in permanent decline and western Europeans were replacing them. That the city of Prince Albert – a civilized outpost – reported a markedly lower indigenous population (percentage) than did the surrounding region – perhaps considered an even less civilized wilderness – might have reinforced this notion.

This replacement of indigenous peoples was layered over white Christian ideas that converting heathens was the first step in enculturation. Long before the Coney Islanders’ show, the Town Hall Opera House had been a site for presentations of other, starker expressions of this ideal of dominance over local indigenous peoples. One of the earliest performative events in the THOH was a lecture by Archdeacon Winter regarding his experiences with religious conversions of the First Nations in the York Factory area.

Holding up the missionary enculturation work accomplished there as a preferred

947 Canada, Census 1901, “Table VII -- Areas, Houses, Families, Population, Sex, Conjugal Condition” and “Table XI -- Origins of the People”; Canada, Census 1884-5, “Table 1: Areas, Dwellings, Families, Population, Sexes, Conjugal Condition” and “Table 3: Origins of the People”: The referencing between census years is problematic as the size of census districts and sub-districts differ as do the identifiers of origin, etc. However, for this purpose, the census numbers for the Prince Albert Region is of some comparative use, as those numbers would have contributed to the sense of place of the of the region’s inhabitants.
example, he praised “the triumphs of the gospel in that region.” Winter proposed conversion, or replacing “Indian” culture with “civilization.” But Prince Albert performative events seem to have offered a system of ignoring and replacing local indigenous populations, in the THOH and the town itself.

The THOH was also a place where expressions advocating ideological (or perhaps theological) extermination were often linked with the threat of physical extermination. Negotiations of the dominant ideal of physical control and extermination of “uncivilized Indians” in the region did play out at the THOH. Four years before the Coney Islander’s entertainment, the Town Hall Opera House was the site from which volunteers were rallied to join the various groups assembling to kill Almighty Voice and the two men with him. Twenty-nine volunteers from Prince Albert were accepted and approximately as many were turned away. Prince Albert volunteers assembled at the Town Hall Opera House before riding off to join a group comprised of the Duck Lake police force and volunteers, thirty NWMP members from Regina, and two field guns (a seven and a nine pounder). The headline of the Advocate on 1 June 1897 summed up the event as “A Small Rebellion – Three Whites and Three Indians Killed and Several Wounded – Gang of Indians, Headed by Almighty Voice, defy a Small Army – Participating Indians Are Exterminated.” The term “exterminated” exposes the dominant community groups’ attitude towards three Indians operating outside of the dominant group’s laws.

948 “The Last Place in the World,” Advocate, 28 November 1894, P1.
One of the few examples of a performance by someone self-identifying as being of First Nation origin was Pauline Johnson. She appeared twice in 1898 presenting what the Advocate summarized as being “the Famous Elocutionist in her unique, pathetic, dramatic, and quaintly humorous Indian stories and poems.”

Though Johnson was an accepted aboriginal performer (she appeared under the auspices of the Church of England, with positive reviews from the national press), her audiences were prepared for her performances with reminders of the white-Victorian view of her race. Specifically of interest was how she could “express, both in action and in word, all the wild passions of the race from which she is sprung. Her forte lies in portraying the unflinching bravery and the unquenchable hatred of the red man... it is with difficulty that the listener can persuade himself that she is not really possessed of the feelings she portrays.”

Johnson’s performance was hailed as “a real success.” But her performance was more than just a poetry reading. The reviewer noted that “this lady proved herself to be a capable and forceful elocutionist and portrayer of the Indian character in its various phases.”

Johnson, as one of few accepted First Nations’ performances in the THOH is not only presenting her work, but is being received by the Prince Albert audience as being the singular representative of all aspects of “the Indian Character.” The review of her first night of performance, however, moved past Johnson’s portrayals of Indian-ness to the variety of her material, of which “each selection had its own peculiar bearing upon

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950 “Miss E. Pauline Johnson,” Advocate, 1 February 1898, P2.
951 “Miss E. Pauline Johnson, the famous Indian elocutionist,” Advocate, 25 January 1898, P8.
953 “Miss Johnson concluded,” Advocate, 22 February 1898, P8.
the humorous, the patriotic and thrilling side.”  

In fact, Johnson’s performances of her patriotic poems were very popular.  

While none of the performed poems were named, it was reported that Johnson was welcomed and popular: “her efforts were fully appreciated by the large audiences assembled to hear her. She was ably assisted by home talent each evening – St. Alban’s church made $25 as share of proceeds.” This admirable performance happened despite Johnson’s battling illness and exhaustion. When Johnson returned to perform in the Prince Albert THOH in the fall of 1898, it was noted that she would perform an all-new program, “and as Miss Johnson is in much better form physically, all who attend may expect a treat.” Her exhaustion during a busy cross Canada touring schedule might have reinforced the idea that she was a lonely representative of a dwindling race. This, in turn, would fit into the local mythos that settlers were taking over lands that would otherwise be empty, as original inhabitants faded away.

When Johnson returned to Prince Albert in 1904, she was touring with Walter McRaye. McRaye, a Canadian of Irish origin, who specialised in presenting impressions of French Canadians. He was most specifically identified with “his leading piece, Drummond’s Habitant. For his faithful rendition of this, he has been complimented by Dr. Drummond.” This endorsement was important to note, though it raises more issues regarding cultural substitution. W. H. Drummond was British, not a francophone. He wrote – in English – poetry that sought to imitate the speech of his friends and

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954 “Miss Pauline Johnson,” Advocate, 15 February 1898, P8.
955 Francis 136.
956 “Pauline Johnson,” Advocate 22 February 1898.
957 “Pauline Johnson,” Advocate 30 August 1898.
958 “Miss Pauline Johnson, the famous authoress and elocutionist,” Advocate 8 February 1904, P8.
acquaintances in rural Quebec, for example in what is perhaps his most-famous poem,

Habitant:

We leev very quiet 'way back on de contree
Don't put on sam style lak de big village,
W'en we don't get de monee you t'ink dat is fonny
An' mak' plaintee sport on de Bottes Sauvages.

But I tole you—dat's true—I don't go on de city
If you geev de fine house an' beaucoup d'argent—
I rader be stay me, an' spen' de las' day me
On farm by de rapide dat's call Cheval Blanc. 959

Drummond claimed to write such verse out of admiration and respect; he declared,

“Having lived, practically, all my life, side by side with the French-Canadian people, I
have grown to admire and love them.”960 McRaye was able to earn acclaim performing
Drummond’s works, perhaps fulfilling English-speaking audiences’ expectations
regarding les habitants. In Canada, at least, McRaye’s performances were reviewed as
being honest and not caricatures: “In his specialty, that of depicting the French-Canadian,
he stands unrivaled, having won his way step by step, into an enviable popularity,
through his polished and unhackneyed delineation of the ‘Habitant’ of historic
Quebec.”961

Before Johnson and McRaye performed in Prince Albert, much of the pre-show
press focused on their successful tour of England. Of particular importance were
descriptions of Johnson’s London successes. She played various venues from sold-out

960 Drummond, The Habitant and Other French-Canadian Poems, “Introduction”: In his introduction to his
book, The Habitant and Other French-Canadian Poems, Drummond wrote that he was eager to share his
love and life among the French-Canadians with English-speaking Canada. He confesses that he obtained
the stories for his poems by, in his words, “having my friends tell their own tales in their own way, as they
would relate them to English-speaking auditors not conversant with the French tongue,” The works was
approved, as it were, by an important French-Canadian of letters, “Dr. Louis Frechette, Poet Laureate.”
961 “Great Iroquois Indian Poetess,” Times 19 Sept 1907, P3.
theatres to drawing rooms for England's notable, noble, and influential people. Her show in Prince Albert would be as it was in England. The press promised that “Miss Johnson will appear in native Indian buckskin costume, presenting her own poems and legends of the Red Indian life” all of which critics approved: “Theodore Watts said of her in the London Athenaeum, ‘The most interesting English-speaking poetuse now living.’”

Perhaps such stories provided Prince Albert audiences with a sense of pride in their country-woman. It also might have helped to remind potential Prince Albert audience members that they were seeing a show of their new country that had been accepted – even endorsed – in “the old country.”

There is something notable in the fascination with these performatory representations of Indian-ness and French-Canadian-ness among both English audiences and audiences in English Canada – especially in a time when French and English were popularly viewed as the two founding nations of Canada, and First Nations were being actively moved, assimilated, and substituted away.

To her frustration, Johnson’s performances were usually read by white audiences as a representation of all that was “Indian.” She pointed out that identifying her as “Indian” was as culturally specific a label as calling someone “European” – but she heard few people singled out for representing all European-ness. Regardless of the degree to which her performance was read as being universally representative of “Indian-ness,” in Prince Albert Johnson was almost unique in being welcomed into the THOH as a First Nations performer. Her acceptance, however, came with a certain level of substitution; she performed in place of local First Nations people, who were almost entirely absent from the THOH stage, and once her performance was finished she moved on to her next...

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962 Ibid.
963 Ibid.
964 Francis, *The Imaginary Indian*, 131.
venue elsewhere. She would not be participating in or making an ongoing contribution to a competing and pre-existing local community mythos on nearby reserves. In short, she represented no threat. McRaye, in turn, was earning renown as an Irish-Canadian who portrayed *habitants.* Whether McRaye’s depictions also inspired local connections to the Métis/French population was not evident, but cannot be discounted.

After these presentations and representations, McRaye and Johnson then performed a starkly contrasting piece for the second half of the show: an English society sketch called *Fashionable Intelligence* which was “written especially for Miss Johnson and Mr. McRaye.” This sketch was a chance to perform in a more English mode, to trade the buckskins and *bottes sauvages* for Victorian evening dress. This was for Johnson, perhaps, a chance to show a wider range of her creative abilities; she did express some concern that too much pandering to fans of her image as Indian

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965 “The Famous Indian Poetess,” *Times*, 2 October 1907, P7: The pre-press for the show printed several reviews of the show from other points along the tour (providing the outline of the program of two parts: elocution and readings for the first, then *Fashionable Intelligence*). But local reviews of this performance are as yet unfound, as various political activities appear to have claimed column-space.

966 Canada, Department of Agriculture, *Census of Canada 1880-81*, vol. I, “Table 3: Origins of the People,” 300-301, (Ottawa: MacLean, Roger, 1882), Early Canadiana Online, http://canadiana.org/record/9_08061; Canada, *Census 1884-5*, “Table 3: Origins of the People”; Canada, *Census 1901*, “Table XI -- Origins of the People,” 404; Canada, *Census 1911*, “Table VII: Origins of the People by sub-districts,” 340-341”; Another question to explore would be whether such a connection would be nostalgic (assuming a past loss) or current (acknowledging the present population). The identification of Métis is complex in the region, and it changed with time and censuses:

1881: In the NWT Sub-District of Prince Albert 25.5% were identified as “French.”
1885: In the Saskatchewan district, Sub-District Prince Albert 1885, 1.6% were identified as “French” while “Half-Breeds—Métis” identified as “French” were 21.6% of the total population (”Half-Breeds/Métis” were 40% of the population)
1901: In the Saskatchewan District, an aggregation of Prince Albert sub-districts (East, North, and West) identifies “French” people at 5.6% and “Half-breeds” at 27.7% of the total population
1911: There was no label for any variation of “Half-Breeds” or “Métis.” In the Prince Albert district, “French” were 13.5% and “Indians” were 12.7%; in Prince Albert City, French were 11.1% and “Indians” were 2.2%

Princess/Poet could prove restrictive.\textsuperscript{968} But those fans and their expectations were what made her popular.

Johnson’s performances were generally popular in the Canadian West. Her style and material were readily welcomed into the THOH in Prince Albert, a venue where few First Nations performances were welcomed (other than substitutions or effigies). Perhaps Johnson’s acceptance was a local, ideological expression of what Daniel Francis observed as a wider Canadian motif: “Civilization had conquered the West... it was no longer necessary to mobilize public opinion against the frontier’s original inhabitants. Having successfully subdued the Indians, Whites now could afford to get sentimental about them.”\textsuperscript{969}

Such sentimentalism did nothing to end performances of “Indian-ness” that were mired in layers of caricature and substitution. In \textit{What Happened to Jones}, the character of “Bigbee” is a white male who is an inmate in an asylum who thinks he’s an Indian. Bigbee acts and speaks as a caricature, wanting to kill and scalp men before taking their “squaws” for his own, thus reinforcing Victorian expectations regarding lustful, murderous, colonial “savages.” The character is further labelling “Indians” as other since the character, a white man, is expressing such caricatured Indian-ness as a manifestation of his madness.

The simplification and substitution began with the playwright’s description of the character. Broadhurst betrays his ignorance of any subtleties of inter-tribal cultural differences when he describes Bigbee’s costume: “Wig facsimile, and has three red feathers in it. His face is marked in black after the fashion in which Indians mark

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{968} Francis, \textit{The Imaginary Indian}, 139. \textsuperscript{969} Ibid, 136.}
In Bigbee’s biggest scene, he has escaped the asylum and encounters the Bishop. Bigbee introduces himself as “Hop-pole Jim, chief of all the Indians,” to the Bishop, whom he calls “Ghost-dance Charlie.” Bigbee places a feather in the Bishop’s hair and paints his face with ink, in a style that Jones would later refer to as being “dressed a la Sitting Bull on the half-shell.” Bigbee tries to lead the Bishop out of the house. The bishop, naturally, refuses, asking:

BISH. May I ask where you are going?
BIG. To wigwam, to squaw, to papoose.
BISH. (up c.) If it’s all the same to you, I prefer to stay here.
BIG. Here, (throws BISHOP to R. of him) with Pale-face?
BISH. Yes. I want to see my brother.
BIG. Good! (grabs BISHOP by hand) You here with Pale-face, me there, (points to window) wait. When Pale-face sleep, you come, tell. Then capture heap squaw; old squaw for you, young squaw for me.
BISH. But I don’t want any squaws.
BIG. Good! (goes to window) Big chief have all.

Broadhurst specifies that ideally, the actor playing Bigbee “plays the scene in a serious, though semi-burlesque way.” But the character’s behaviour highlights his separation from other “sane” characters in the piece. Bigbee also provides an underlying threat, despite the farcical tone of the piece.

Curiously, though Bigbee had the potential to be read as a great comic moment, the reviewer made minimal note of the character or his big scene, saying only that “A. Thomson as William Bigbee hadn’t a great deal to do, but he did what he had well.”

This characterisation – essentially a local white actor plays white man, who is in turn

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970 Broadhurst, What Happened to Jones, 3
971 Jones has temporarily stolen the Bishop’s identity. The Bishop is currently being confined in Goodley’s house.
972 Broadhurst, What Happened to Jones, 70.
973 Ibid, 81.
974 Ibid, 70.
975 Ibid, 69.
976 “Tom Johns At His Best,” Times, 23 Dec 1908, P1.
“playing Indian” – underlines prejudices and assumptions onstage and within the audience. The reviewer felt no need to explain the role at all, which could be some indication as to the degree to which such a representation was normal, or expected, locally.

**Founding Mythos - Empire/Patriotism**

While “real” First Nations performers were rare in the THOH, some were welcomed into the THOH under specifically contrived and controlled circumstances. In 1902, the community gathered for a performance by the students and staff of Emmanuel College, which was described as being “almost altogether an Indian Training School.”

This performance and the reaction to it reinforced the community’s notion of just what, by then, constituted an acceptable presence of First Nations people in their community. The performance was staged under the patronage, and thereby the watchful eyes, of several levels of authority, specifically Mayor J. F. Stull, Member of Parliament Thomas Davis, and the NWMP’s commanding officer, Captain Cuthbert. Female students exhibited physical skill and discipline to the appreciative crowd: “The girls’ marching, drilling, and dumb bell exercise, were loudly applauded and encored by the audience – their fancy costumes looking very neat and adding much to the effect of their graceful and active movements.” Male students were called upon to exhibit their potential military prowess. The reviewer observed:

> The appearance of the boys, dressed as they were in military uniform and equipment with rifles and bayonets, and the execution of their drills in such a soldier-like manner, suggested the idea, that if the red man of the

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977 “Emmanuel College Band Concert,” Advocate, 3 February 1902, P1.
978 Ibid.
west, if trained as these cadets are, might also be called upon to take up arms for king and country. is [sic] required. The tableaux, known as “The Last Stand,” presented by the cadet corps, under a flash of red light and accompanied by the soft and sad tones of “Just Break the News to Mother,” was very realistic, and was received with intense silence by the audience.979

The performance brings together an extraordinarily complex web of potentially clashing meanings. The nature of the performance text could have been understood very differently by the performers onstage and the audience members in the hall.

The initial issue to address is the performance text: the last stand. The reviewer did not note which (if any) specific historical incident was the inspiration for this performed last stand. Several possible incidents might have informed the tableaux, assuming that the performers were representing army troops, as their cadet-uniforms suggest. Geographically, perhaps the closest, most famous last stand was Custer at Little Big Horn (1876). While there were Americans settling in the Prince Albert Region by 1902, British peoples were by far the dominant immigrant group. The boys’ scene was accompanied by the song Just Break the News to Mother which was a popular song written by American C. K. Harris. The song was written during the Spanish-American War, but is not explicitly identified as being inspired by that war.980

It seems more likely that the scene in the THOH was inspired by Britain’s wars. There are several likely candidates from then-recent British military history of “last stands,” several of which inspired artistic reproductions. For example, in 1879, Zulus routed British forces at the “Battle of Isandlwana.” Lieutenant-General Lord Chelmsford

979 Ibid.
and his 1700 troops were outmaneuvered and overwhelmed by Zulu King Cetshwayo’s 25,000-strong army, with the result that “the [British] troops were forced to form several small squares, and fought to the death.”\textsuperscript{981} In Victorian Britain, live performances of scenes from paintings were “common phenomenon of the nineteenth-century stage,” and represented “the merging of the arts of painting and stage production to incarnate the age and the historical moment in a striking, living image.”\textsuperscript{982}

An event popularly known as the \textit{Last Stand of Captain Wilson} is, perhaps, the most likely inspiration of the cadets’ scene. It was a British expedition of more recent history, and reproduced in multiple media (painting, stage, and film). Captain Wilson and 34 soldiers were surrounded and killed by Matabele near the Shangani River (in what is now Zimbabwe) on 4 December 1893.\textsuperscript{983} The painting, by Allan Stuart (1865-1951), does show details consistent with reports and histories of the event – which were constructed almost entirely from the only surviving witnesses to the event, the Matabele (Figure 93). The outnumbered and surrounded British soldiers fired from behind a makeshift barricade of their dead horses,\textsuperscript{984} until they ran out of ammunition, at which point they stood up, shook hands, sang \textit{God Save the Queen}, and were all killed.\textsuperscript{985}

\textsuperscript{981} National Army Museum. \textit{The Battle of Isandlwana, 22 January 1879}. Oil on canvas by Charles Edwin Fripp (1854-1906), accessed 11 August 2012.


\textsuperscript{984} Creswicke, Louis, \textit{South Africa and the Transvaal War} Vol. 1/6, (Edinburgh: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1900), 124, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23692/23692-h/23692-h.htm: one story celebrated, “Some of these might have escaped, but they preferred, though largely outnumbered, to fight side by side with their comrades till the last!”

\textsuperscript{985} Booth, “Soldiers of the Queen,” 15.
This event was the direct inspiration for a scene in an 1895 stage-play entitled *Cheer Boys Cheer*. The show debuted at Drury Lane and was also a popular touring show. Act Three, Scene Five was entitled “The Last Stand.” The surrounded English await inspiration from their officer, Chepstowe. Michael Booth concisely summarizes what follows:

Chepstowe addresses them: “My men, you see how it is with us – we’ve got to die – and we’re going to do it like Englishmen and sell our lives as dearly as we can. Our fathers have died that our country might be great – it’s our turn to-day.” The soldiers write letters home as the music of *Home, Sweet Home* plays softly in the orchestra. The Matabele attack. When the ammunition is gone, the survivors rise and sing *God Save the Queen*; the natives respectfully cease firing. Another attack comes, and only George and Chepstowe are left alive, both wounded. At this moment “Loud ‘Hurrah’ off — scattered MATABELE rush in from R. A charge of CAVALRY sweep across the stage ‘God Save the Queen’ fortissimo from the orchestra.” Chopin’s *Funeral March* succeeds *God Save the Queen* and Chepstowe considerately expires.

Booth cites Stewart’s painting as a possible source of inspiration for the scene. The event was further popularized, or effigied, in an 1899 short film, which ran as part of a live

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986 The title was taken from a song by Henry Russell (Booth, “Soldiers of the Queen,” 15).
show entitled *Savage South Africa* (by the Warwick Trading Company).\(^{989}\)

Regardless of the specific incident that inspired the cadets’ tableaux in Prince Albert, the fact that it was identified as a “last stand” is significant. Any of these possible historical “last stands” can be essentially reduced to the following story. A colonial power assumes itself to be superior due to the power it derives from its technological advantages and its “advanced” state of empire/nationhood. Armed representatives of that power are, despite their assumed superiority, slaughtered by the very “savages” over whom their technology and advancements are supposed to prevail. The soldiers fight and die for their Queen/country/Empire, in what is presented as being a brave and heroic manner.

But the tradition of last-stand commemoration becomes more complex and interesting in the Prince Albert performance. The cadets were, for the most part, members of what was typified as being – according to Victorian ideology – members of a “savage” race themselves; the cadets’ relations and ancestors had been the source of fear and fear mongering locally since at least 1885. If not for several accidents of historical timing and geography, these cadets themselves might have easily been recast as the attacking hordes of an actual “Last Stand” – later to be effigied on canvass or in performance. The audience saw the armed cadets performing in uniform, in formation, and with British-style drill and discipline. They had been trained in the “advanced” techniques of warfare, with the dominant technologies that Victorians saw as the key to defeating the “savages” of their empire. The reviewer observed that their performance, “suggested the idea that the red man of the west, if trained as these cadets are, might also

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be called upon to take up arms for king and country.” But the audience – having bought into a founding mythos that they had claimed their country from its previous, noble-though-primitive occupants – might have been capable of imagining a scenario in which these boys could take up arms against king and country. Some menace might have been seen in the ease with which the cadets adapted to the British modes of war training and technology. The residents of Prince Albert, if they did not recall it firsthand, would have been well-versed in stories about when, in 1885, Prince Albert barricaded itself against the relations and forebears of the young cadets, out of fear that the town would be attacked. Even more recently, the town of Prince Albert had been shaken by the nearby “last stand” of Almighty Voice. The story of that event – that sixty men and two cannons were needed to subdue Almighty Voice and his two companions – might have been lingering in the minds of the audience members and performers.

Various options for the staging of the scene are possible. Precise staging of the piece was not described in the review, only that the boys were dressed in cadet uniforms, red lights shone, and a sad song was played. The possible staging options for this piece are fascinating and might provide insight into why the piece elicited such intense silence from the audience. The tableau could have been moving (a speaking/moving piece akin to a masque performance) or a still (a “living painting” of posed, unmoving actors positioned for dramatic effect). The foe against whom they were “last standing” might have been depicted onstage. In this case, the boys would have been cast as both imperial soldiers and overwhelming “savages.” For the performers, they would have been acting either “heroes” or “savages.” They would have been cast as either a soldier of a colonial power trying to kill indigenous people, or an indigenous warrior killing the soldier.
Which role fit the “hero” category would entirely depend upon personal opinion and experience. If the Emmanuel College boys were cast as “overwhelming savages,” the roles would have been a chance to perform acts of revenge against a stand-in for colonial oppression. That the soldiers would have also been played by their fellow (equally subjugated) classmates only adds further complexity to the situation.

Since the review mentions only the boys’ cadet uniforms (no other costumes) the more probable option would have been to stage the boys in a defensive position against an imaginative foe. The way to stage this for greatest dramatic effect would be to have the boys, arms in hand, facing out toward the audience. The presented image would be that of First Nations youths standing against representatives of the people who had displaced and replaced them. For the audience members, the scene could have recalled stories of soldiers standing valiantly against “savages.” Closer to home, however, it might have evoked memories of other, closer “last stands,” specifically Almighty Voice in 1894, or the Métis at Batoche in 1885. This time, however, the “savages” were trained, armed, and equipped like “Redcoats.” An accepted part of Victorian mythos was the belief that it was such superior military technology and knowledge that had allowed them to overcome “savages” in the first place. The reported “intense silence” among audience members might have been a result of any combination of such uncomfortable memories and realizations.

Reviews of similar Prince Albert THOH performances by other groups (made up of “accepted” community members) do not report similar audience responses. An 1897 performance by the Prince Albert “Citizen Band boys” promised that “Battle scenes, in
the shape of tableaus predominate."990 Their triumph of the night, a tableau entitled
“Comrades,” was praised as being “really magnificent in point and in the working out of
details."991 This tableau was appreciated as being a technologically detailed
performance. The Emmanuel College boys’ performance evoked deeper emotional
responses than can be accounted for by a merely successful bit of tableau.

Enculturation and Empire

THOH negotiations of the community’s place in the empire – as well as
performances of male expectations therein – were not limited to theatrical performances.
Beyond tableaux, in Prince Albert military training and service were presented as an ideal
of maleness. Previously mentioned marching and drilling exhibitions by schoolchildren
and fraternal organizations were seen as key to building good men.992 Prince Albert was
keen to uphold such ideals. When a cadet corps was organized in town, it was presented
as necessary for turning local boys into productive men; it would provide “the physical
and moral training of the boys who are so soon to be the men of our town, and from
whose ranks our future business men, Councillors and Mayors will be chosen."993 These
boys, militarily trained in the THOH, were expected to grow into men who would serve
their town, country, and empire in various acceptable ways. When an opportunity arose

991 “The Band Entertainment,” Advocate, 23 February 1897, P1.
992 In fact, marching and drill might be similar to dance and theatre than some realise. Group cohesion and
even euphoria can result from such shared experiences. As Alan Filewod writes, there is a “deep
relationship of the embodiment practices in military and theatre culture.”
- Filewod, Alan, Performing Canada: The Nation Enacted in the Imagined Theatre, Textual Studies in
Canada Monograph 15, ed. James Hoffman and Katherine Sutherland (Kamloops: University College of
the Caribou, 2002), 22.
for men to actively serve in the military, many eagerly took up the chance to fulfill their roles as military men of the Empire. Public patriotic displays of support for these ideals of maleness, usually enthusiastic, reach a fevered-pitch in wartime.

When twenty local men volunteered to fight with the Strathcona Horse in the second Boer War, they were honoured in the THOH. This public celebration of Empire – and the local men willing, or expected, to die for it – was organised for 8 February 1900, when “the large hall was packed to the doors with all classes of citizens, eager to do honor to those going to the front to assist in upholding the supremacy of the empire.” 994

The program began in a theatrical manner: “When the curtain rose it disclosed the stage, tastefully decorated with the Union Jack and upon it, just back of the footlights, a large, handsomely framed portrait of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, which was immediately greeted with cheers by the large audience.” 995 The silent effigy of the Queen (and her banner) received cheers, but local dignitaries served as her voice during the event. The evening was chaired by “J. F. Betts, ex-speaker of the North West Assembly,” and Justice McGuire offered a speech that sought to argue, inspire and mourn:

His Lordship [McGuire] proceeded to: show the righteousness of Britain's cause, the necessity for the triumph of the British arms, the gravity of the crisis, the extent to which Canadians would be affected by the success or failure of Great Britain, and the obligation that rests upon every loyal citizen to rally to the support of the empire. He eulogized in glowing terms the valor which prompts our young men to lay down their lives, if need be, for the honor and glory of their native land; and with touching pathos, which drew tears from an over-full heart, reminded his hearers that occasions of this kind are marked by sadness as well as by pride. He felt sure that the young men going from Prince Albert would do honor to their country and their native town, and that their return, would be hailed with greater enthusiasm than their departure. And if Fate willed that they should not return, then with heartfelt earnestness he commended them to the God of the patriot

994 “Prince Albert Part of the Empire,” Advocate 12 February 1900, P1.
995 Ibid.
"And how can man die better
than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
and the temples of his Gods."

McGuire quoted a stanza from Thomas Babington Macaulay’s poem *Horatius* about a self-sacrificing Roman officer.996 The choice of this material for inspiration stresses the local expectations for a loyal young man of the Empire, that he die for dead men and the institutions of his ideological homeland (a Britain with which he may or may not have had any firsthand experience), as opposed to more immediate matters such as saving his loved ones, or his actual homeland of Prince Albert, Canada. But any such doubts were not then welcome in the THOH. The evening closed with songs, a dance, and the collection of funds for a “smoking concert” to be held at the barracks the next evening. After the smoking concert, the volunteers were merrily escorted to the train and left for war. It appears that such celebratory send-offs were often endured by volunteers across Canada. In a letter home, Prince Albert volunteer Sgt. Hooper [recently of the NWMP] wrote:

We are thoroughly impressed with the fact that we are Tommy Atkins, Soldiers of the Queen, and absent-minded beggars. I am squadron S. M. [sergeant major] of a squadron, and it suits me down to the ground. Soldiering was always my strong point. I never was cut out for a swivel eyed detective. We came here through an array of banquets, and bottles of every brand, through which we have survived gloriously. We have about seven hours drill a day. I am glad to find that I can still shine as an instructor, though my voice has almost completely gone. We are made much of in Ottawa, and are apparently the pets of Canada. We are not even allowed to pay car fare, and refreshments are as grasshoppers in the land.997

996 “Then out spake brave Horatius,/The Captain of the Gate:/To every man upon this earth/ Death cometh soon or late./ And how can man die better/ Than facing fearful odds,/ For the ashes of his fathers,/ And the temples of his gods.” (Macaulay, Thomas Babington, “Horatius,” in *Lays of Ancient Rome*, Riverside Literature Series issue 45, The Cambridge Press: Cambridge, 1890, stanza XXVII.)

997 “With Strathcona’s Own,” *Advocate*, 12 March 1900, P1.
It is also of interest to note that Hooper prefers being a soldier to being a police officer.

While he does not deny patriotism as a factor in his volunteering, for Hooper, job-satisfaction was also an important factor.

Within the THOH there appears to have been no expressions of dissent to counter the celebratory nature of the volunteers’ send-off. The only possible outlet for such an expression appears to have been the local newspapers. The same venue that extended the THOH celebration-event into the wider community also provided an opportunity for reaction to such events. At least one voice spoke out against the gleeful sacrifice of local males. This opinion was not offered in the THOH itself, but through the editorial page of the Advocate. In response to the concerts, dances, and send-offs in Prince Albert, Rev. A. E. Smith wrote to the Advocate the following counter-celebratory opinion:

We are at war. This is no time for levity and jokes and smoking concerts as mediums of the expression of patriotism for a whole community. Let those who can enjoy these things have them, but not in the name of patriotism or as expressions of public spirit. These things are not in any degree calculated to imbue the minds of “our boys” who go to the war, nor their fellow citizens who remain at home, with the right ideas of patriotism, viz., the consciousness of a high purpose under the Supreme Being, sympathy with the sorrowing, and rock-like national character. The danger of adversity is to become despondent, and the danger of prosperity, is to become forgetful.

*The tumult and the shouting die,*  
*The captains and the kings depart,*  
*Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,*  
*A humble and contrite heart;*  
*Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,*  
*Lest we forget--lest we forget.*  

Smith evokes Kipling’s *Recessional* (a caution against Imperial hubris) in answer to McGuire’s quoting of *Horatius* (which glorifies blind sacrifice). But Smith is not against the war. He merely objects to the tone under which it is being presented in Prince Albert.

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998 Smith, Rev. A. E., “We are at war,” *Advocate*, 19 February 1900, P1.
At least one young man seems to have rethought his position regarding his place in the war. The town council accepted the refund of their $10 award from a Strathcona Horse volunteer “who proceeded only to Regina and then returned.”

Overall, local support appears to have been strong for the empire at war—and presumably local volunteers by association. The Advocate published an apology to Jas. Stewart, for not having the space to publish his article “wherein he proves by Biblical teaching that Britain is right in the present struggle with the Boers and is the chosen people of God, who have been providentially saved from disaster on many notable occasions and must triumph now.”

Despite the rhetoric of noble sacrifice, the first (and apparently the only) Boer War death Prince Albert experienced was that of Pvt. C. R. Dandy, who drove a water-cart in Prince Albert before enlisting. He died of typhoid fever in South Africa, not “facing fearful odds/For the ashes of [his] fathers.”

Despite Rev. Smith’s call for gravitas in the face of war, the capture of Pretoria resulted in another enthusiastic celebration, dubbed “an appropriate celebration of the news.” Community members gathered in front of the THOH. Before an impromptu parade made its way through the streets of town, various groups were arranged to celebrate as follows:

A detachment of mounted police in full uniform came down from the barracks to assist, the town band turned out, and the public school children were massed in front of the town hall, where the crowd assembled. Mayor

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1000 “A well written and exhaustive article,” Advocate, 19 March 1900, P8.

1001 “Private Dandy Dead,” Advocate, 24 December 1900, P1: The only other notice of casualty or capture from the PA volunteer found was regarding Willie McLeod, son of the local M.L.A. S. McLeod, was captured, held, and released between August-September 1900 (“For Queen and Empire,” Advocate, 23 July 1900, P1; “Willie McLeod Released,” Advocate, 24 September 1900, P1).

1002 “Pretoria Falls,” Advocate, 4 June 1900, P1.
Spence opened with an excellent patriotic speech. The band lent its inspiring strains, and the school children and several rousing choruses with fine effect. The Hon. Mr. Justice McGuire then delivered a stirring address in his usual, able and eloquent style. In the meantime a huge bonfire had been prepared and at the conclusion of the speaking this was touched off, and Paul-Kruger was ignominiously burned in effigy amidst great excitement.\textsuperscript{1003}

Kruger’s was not the only effigy/representation presented to community residents during the Boer War. Onstage in the THOH fundraising events were quick to offer patriotic fare. Tableaux had long been a part of local entertainments, but with the war such presentations took on a greater poignancy. A Hospital Ladies’ Aid Penny reading in the spring of 1900 was noted specifically for its conclusion: “an excellent tableaux, \textit{Britain, Army, Navy, and Colonies}, which showed up excellent advantage under calcium light.”\textsuperscript{1004} A later Penny Reading was most notable for its tableau, \textit{The Soldiers Return}, which “was much appreciated by the prolonged applause which was in evidence while the curtain was falling.”\textsuperscript{1005}

Women were called upon to present tableaux in support of the war effort, which in turn was part of more general support for the empire. But their tableaux were decidedly different from those of male groups. Males were presented in performances such as battle-scenes and last-stands. Women were much more often called upon to present allegorical representations such as Britannia, Victory, Canada, and Mother. Such allegorical tableaux (and associated forms of murals and pageants) were popular across North America in the early 1900s.\textsuperscript{1006} Such performances were particularly useful tools in

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  \item \textsuperscript{1003} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{1004} “Penny Reading,” \textit{Advocate}, 11 June, 1900, P8: The hop followed and as usual was largely attended. Mayor Spence occupied the chair.
  \item \textsuperscript{1005} “Penny Reading,” \textit{Advocate}, 11 June 1900, P8.
the negotiation of community ideals, in part because of their accessibility. Writing about murals and pageants, Trudy Baltz observed how they “conformed to the widely held educational theory that visual images could more successfully educate the public than written words.”

In a community like Prince Albert, with a significant portion of the population reporting limited literacy in English, there was more power in a visual image onstage than a well-argued essay in a local paper.

Such images were an opportunity for the community assembled in the THOH to see – perhaps even help create – personal values that could become part of the negotiation of local mythos. Tableaux and similar enacted images – when created by a community group for an audience of community members – can visually employ a sense of rhetorical common-ground:

For one thing, it suggests the desire to rediscover together who they are, with the understanding and security that there is a common denominator. If ritual recreation, re-enactment, or reproduction of experience is presented in a way that everyone accepts as true and imbued with meaning, then group recreation is a kind of social ritual. Ritual imposes order on the problematic flux and ambiguity of everyday existence, and it establishes the presence of a more fundamental, meaningful reality. For a ritual to work, the whole community must agree that it embodies an underlying truth.

Women presenting allegorical tableaux offered a direct contribution to the ongoing negotiations of social and ideological values in the community. The desire to create a

1007 Baltz, “Pageantry and Mural Painting,” 220.
1008 Canada, Census 1911, “Table XXVIII. Literacy of total population 5 years of age and over,” 466: The District of Prince Albert in 1911 was somewhat behind the provincial average regarding the percentage of people (over five years of age) who could read and write; Prince Albert District reported 78% compared to 86% reported provincially. The relatively high percentage of illiterate residents could show the importance of performative events for reinforcing and negotiating community mythos, when over 20% of the population might not be able to consume local print media (such as the newspapers). Consequently, Prince Albert district also had a higher percentage of the population (over 5 years old) who could neither read nor write (22% in PA District, 13% in the rest of Saskatchewan). Before 1911, gleaning specific information regarding educational levels specifically within the Prince Albert region is difficult.
1009 Baltz, “Pageantry and Mural Painting,” 228.
local, underlying sense of symbolic permanence was especially important as Prince Albert – like other Western communities – was beginning to see an influx of non-British settlers:

at the turn of the century, allegory provided a stylistic security enabling people to embrace an array of identities they would have shunned had they not believed that underneath it all there was some kind of unity, some kind of stability. Each participant could confidently project his own interpretations and meanings onto a symbol without destroying the stylistic integrity of that symbol... allegory made a profound participatory experience accessible to a broad cross section of people who could then feel one with a collective whole.  

By offering images such as Britannia, Victory, and Canada, the performing women of Prince Albert could reinforce their community’s establishing mythos of being a local outpost of empire, as well as inform newcomers of the importance that Prince Albert residents had agreed to place on such indentifying stories.

Successful touring troupes, ever sensitive to what their potential audiences would pay to see, adjusted their repertoire to reflect local mythoi. In the fall of 1900, the Clara Mathes Company played a ten-night engagement in Prince Albert which boasted, among other shows, “a patriotic play, South Africa,” in which, “the boys in khaki and the lasses in red cross uniforms presented a picture of love and war, plots and counter plots, refreshing and entertaining to the audience, who were really delighted with the presentation.”  

The play, while “refreshing and entertaining,” offered pleasant, and palatable images of people at war – characters engaged in plotting and hi-jinks, as opposed to getting shot or dying of typhoid halfway around the world from their home. The glee with which the play was received was more in line with previous war-related

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1010 Ibid.
1011 “Clara Mathes Co,” Advocate 12 November 1900, P8: A script of a play entitled South Africa has proven elusive. Searches for same have only yielded references to a novel of the same name, which may or may not have been the basis of such a play.
public demonstrations in Prince Albert. While local social critic, Rev. Smith, had advocated for sober reflections on war and sacrifice, there are few, if any signs of this position in performed material in the THOH.

Empire: The THOH in Mourning

The THOH itself became a character in a funeral masque, of sorts, when Prince Albert staged a memorial service for Queen Victoria in January 1901. On this occasion, the building not only housed, but personified, Victorian mourning. As news of Victoria’s death arrived in Prince Albert, “a solemn hush and gloom had spread over town.”

Flags were immediately lowered to half-mast. Within days it was reported that the town’s public buildings – including the THOH and the courthouse/jail – were to be draped in black cloth “with artistic effect.” It was immediately decided that the THOH would serve as the best venue for the memorial service, to be held mid-afternoon, during which all the businesses in town would close. The service became an opportunity for the community to display, or affirm, its commitment to being a loyal outpost of empire. The hall, packed with over 600 people, was deemed acceptably decorated, being “chastely draped for the occasion.” The descriptor chaste suggests an attempt to personify the THOH. It could be that the THOH, draped in mourning, was

1013 “The public buildings here,” Advocate, January 28, 1901, P8: The draping was not inexpensive; D. A. McGregor was paid $37.30, “in connection with draping the hall for memorial service.” No further displays of public mourning were foreseen in the near future, however, so the council decided that, “draping in town hall be disposed of to best advantage by the Mayor” (“Town Council Meeting,” Advocate 11 February 1901, P1.) It was mentioned, with less detail, in the council minutes of the 4 February 1901 council meeting. No specific live item for the $7.30 was included in the Cash Books (Prince Albert Urban Municipality, Minutes 4 February 1901; Prince Albert Urban Municipality, Reel 9, “Cash Books, 1889-1907”).
1015 “In Memoriam,” Advocate, 4 February 1901, P1.
in some ways an effigy of Queen Victoria herself. After the death of the town’s namesake (Prince Albert) Victoria had spent the last forty years of her life in mourning dress. By dressing the THOH in black, it symbolized – if not personified – the original Victorian-in-mourning, Victoria herself.

In addition to the over 600 mourners present, there was a choir on the stage, two organs to accompany them, the Mayor and council, speakers, a detachment of NWMP, and the Citizen’s Band, who opened the service “with muffled drum, rendering the Dead March in Saul.” To remove any confusion, the Mayor clarified what those present should feel regarding their recently deceased monarch, specifically “the loss that every right minded citizen felt on the death of a good Queen, a good mother, and a respected sovereign.” To not feel, or at least show feelings of loss, was to fail at being a “right minded citizen.” The mayor proclaimed the officially expected public period of mourning – as he read it from a telegram – as being eighteen days. Citizens would be able to decide for themselves, however, how long they would wear “the usual tokens of mourning.” Hymns were sung, church representatives of the Protestant and Catholic congregations gave speeches. The virtue and greatness of the late Queen was balanced with assurances that her son would be a suitable king. Rev. A. E. Smith spoke last. His address not only memorialized Queen Victoria, but also attempted to affirm of the justness and righteousness of the Christian, British Empire. The Advocate summarised how Lee confidently pictured the power of Great Britain as resting on a foundation of Christianity which with a sacred home life, formed the true foundation for national superiority and greatness. He showed how the Roman, the Spanish, and the French nations were leading powers in the world in turn, and then came Great Britain’s chance. She was now supreme, and looking
down the vista of time, and down ages yet to come, he could see her still at the head, ever striving for what was good and noblest in the world. 1016

Then God Save the King was sung for the first time in Prince Albert. 1017

In addition to the Queen’s service, two other memorial services were held in the THOH. However, the next service contrasted greatly in scope when compared to Queen Victoria’s memorial. In 1904 George Garner, the engineer of the town’s electric plant, was electrocuted on the job. He was brought directly to the THOH and laid out in the council chamber before his funeral was held in the auditorium. 1018 The funeral itself was a small, sad affair. 1019 But the 1908 funeral of Mayor Cook rivalled the monarch’s memorial in scope, pageantry, and scale of performance.

Prince Albert’s then-serving Mayor R. S. Cook died on Tuesday, 27 October 1908, succumbing after a three week bout of typhoid fever. The council met all day that Tuesday to plan the services in the town hall, which all citizens of Prince Albert were “expected to attend.” 1020 The physical decoration of the THOH for Cook’s service is

1016 Ibid.
1017 Ibid.
1018 “Shocked to Death,” Advocate 14 Nov 1904, P1: In November of 1904, the soon-to-be-chartered city of Prince Albert had just taken over the electric plant. Six days later the plant’s engineer, 58 year old widower George Garner, was electrocuted on the site, while working there with his teenage sons. The switchboard operator “was the first to notice anything amiss by seeing smoke coming from behind the switchboard.” One of Garner’s sons threw off the main switch to release his father’s literal death-grip on the fuses. Rather than being taken to a coroner, doctor, undertaker, or some such professional, “the body was brought up to the council chamber, and laid out, the corporation taking charge of the funeral arrangements.” The body was laid out in the council chamber on the day of his accident (Saturday). The funeral was Monday afternoon. The body had a funeral in the THOH and burial in St. Mary’s cemetery.
1019 “City Council,” Advocate, 14 November 1904, P1; “Shocked to Death,” Advocate: The motives behind the THOH-specific treatment of Mr. Garner’s body remains unclear. Did the council have some feelings of guilt, or at least responsibility for Garner’s death? When the city council took over the electric plant, they demanded overnight electric service (hitherto not offered). The council apparently did not, however, increase the staff of the plant. Six days later, Engineer Garner “for some reason grasped the wires with both hands.” How tired he was when he did so was not mentioned. On the other hand, it may have been a kindness not to lay Mr. Garner out in his own home. He lived there with his two teenage sons. Considering the nature of Garner’s traumatic demise, the scent of the accident must have filled the chamber. Laying him out at the THOH, as opposed to the family home, may have been an effort to save Garner’s sons further trauma until their uncle (Geo. Garner’s brother) could arrive from the United States.
1020 “Mayor Cook Laid To Rest,” Times 28 Oct 1908, P1.
reminiscent of Queen Victoria’s memorial. The flags were at half mast and the THOH was again dressed in mourning garb. The *Times* reported:

> With the flag at half mast and the city bell tolling mournfully, all that was mortal of the late Mayor, R. S. Cook, was borne slowly through the streets and reverently laid to rest in St. Mary's cemetery. The funeral was most impressive and a sorrowing city expressed its gratitude for the work on its behalf the deceased Mayor had wrought in his life time.\footnote{1021}{Ibid.}

Onstage overseeing the event was a collection of city councillors, clergy representing various Christian denominations, and clerks.\footnote{1022}{Ibid: “At 12:30 a memorial service was held in the City Hall over which Ald. Andrew Holmes presided. The building was all draped in black. On the platform were Ald. Holmes, His Lordship Bishop Newnham, Reverend A. D. Dewdney, Rev. M. McLean Goldie, Rev. J. H. Toole, Rev. T. Mm Marshall, Rev. C. G. Young, Ex-Mayor William Cowan, J. E. Bradshaw, M. P. P., J. F. Betts, W. Y. Davis, C. O. Davidson, S. J. Donaldson, M. P. P., Ald. J. B. Stirton, Ald. Chas. McDonald, Ald. Andrew McDonald, Ald. E. J., Coster and Robert Young. Mr. H. Hutt, assistant city clerk, presided at the piano.”} The ceremony resembled the mass public memorial for Victoria, but it was adapted to suit the late Mayor. It was an interesting performance of moral instruction as to what makes an ideal citizen. The memorial was staged as the performance of a last council meeting, of sorts, for Mayor Cook. The event proceeded based upon the rules that governed city council meetings. In a kind of sombre parody, the council opened the ceremony with a motion of regret and sympathy from the citizens to Mrs. Cook and family which was duly and solemnly moved, seconded, and then passed by the council assembled on the Hall. Councillors praised Cook for his commitment to progress, evident since Cook’s arrival in Prince Albert in 1885. Mr. William Cowan praised Cook for his commitment to the Hospital. The clergy used their time to both praise Cook for his moral uprightness, and use Cook as a model to which citizens could aspire. Bishop Newnham (Church of England) noted Cook's presence in church every Sunday, despite his busy life. Rev. Colin Young praised Cook as being good to all, even those who were not Anglican, saying “He had declared
that he would become a total abstainer, not for his own sake, but for those around him.\footnote{Ibid.} After the funeral, the THOH was a mustering place for a funeral procession.

The scale of Cook’s funeral rivalled Queen Victoria’s. The stature of Mayor Cook in the city was definitely a factor. He died suddenly and unexpectedly, which could have resulted in an even greater need for community members to come together to express grief. But as the community afforded the Mayor the same decorations and service as they had their monarch, perhaps there is something else being negotiated in the THOH. When Victoria was memorialised, Prince Albert was a town eager to show it was part of the something greater, the British Empire. The THOH acted as a symbol of that connection. By 1908, Prince Albert was a city in a new province. Perhaps the need to honour their head of civic government was also an exercise in civic pride. Queen Victoria’s memorial was an exercise in proving the town’s ability to properly behave as part of the British Empire. The memorial for Mayor Cook was as much about the community mourning as it was about the community living up to the hope of its potential greatness. Producing a properly significant display of mourning for the Mayor was one means of the community expressing confidence in the power and progress of their new city.

**Nostalgia for Home, real or imagined:**

The desire to present Prince Albert as a loyal outpost of empire is often connected to a nostalgia for a homeland. This home – whether real or imagined – is often expressed as being Europe – if not specifically Britain – or Eastern North America – if not specifically Ontario. Expressions of longing for a constructed homeland are conflated
with desires to redefine, or appropriate, the performers’ *current* homeland in their desired homeland’s image. To further complicate matters, such expressions are also tied up with arguments seeking to prove that the new home is better, in some ways, than the identified homeland, which might, in turn, validate a settler’s choice to leave.

The Coney Islanders’ performance abounds with such complicated notions. The night began with “the Canadian Boat song,” performed by Miss Kerr and her canoeing chorus of twelve other young ladies. The review praises the performance as well as the truthful depiction of the song itself: “Had Thomas Moore, the sweet singer of old Erin, and author of that poetic gem been present, he would have been charmed by the realistic rendition of Canada's Boat song.”1024 Here, the review reveals more about the listener’s expectations, and aspirations, than the performed text itself.

Canadian Boat Song was composed by the Irish poet, Thomas Moore. Moore was inspired by a voyageur boat-song that he heard while he was on a boat-ride from Kingston to Montreal in 1804.1025 Moore’s text is much more strongly evocative of a York boat than a canoe. Take for example the verse:

Why should we yet our sail unfurl?  
There is not a breath the blue wave to curl;  
But, when the wind blows off the shore,  
Oh! sweetly we’ll rest our weary oar. (6-10)\textsuperscript{1026}

There is an incongruity between Moore’s verse-inspiring incident and the performance-text almost a century later; i.e. where a dozen young Victorian women sing in a canoe,
which is beached onstage for an amateur theatre performance in Prince Albert, North-West Territories.1027 The reviewer’s observation does show an earnest desire to heap praise upon the performance. There is also a note of longing to associate, and therefore validate, this cultural event with European culture (even if it is by way of central/Upper Canada and the Eastern-Seaboard States). The praising of things European (most often specifically British) in Prince Albert almost surpasses nostalgia and approaches obsession.

In the Coney Islanders’ performance, one expression of this homeland-longing is an overlaying of European culture onto the Prince Albert region. During one scene, a character is found lost in reverie: “Commodore Wagner once more imagined himself at home upon the banks of the classic Rhine.” The North Saskatchewan River is now surrogate for the Rhine. This is more than a mere homesickness. The Rhine is “classic,” and therefore somehow better. The North Saskatchewan is merely “new.” Wagner’s longing and isolation is highlighted in the lyrics of his performance of “the Canoe Club song with canine accompaniment.” The lyrics are as follows:

Life on the ocean wave,  
Home on the rolling deep;  
Where the pollywog wiggles his tail,  
Till a tear rolls down his cheek. 1028

The richness of the clash of open-ocean nautical references and the parkland reality of the Coney Islanders’ lives is pointedly highlighted. The satirical lyrics of the song underline a real sense of displacement, not unlike the more somber tone struck by the opening boat

1027 There might have been some tweaking of the lyrics to better suit the Canoe Club’s performance, but if such alterations occurred, they went unremarked by the reviewer.

1028 “The Canoe Club At Home,” Advocate, 2 September 1901.
song. The expanses of the North-West may have justifiably evoked the Coney Islanders’ comparisons to being at sea.

Performances often highlight the tensions between longings for a more “civilized” place of origin and an attraction to frontier life – which is portrayed as being better, freer, and even more morally pure. For example, during a Hospital Fundraising concert in 1904, a performance of *Bonnie Doon* by “The Misses Kerr” evoked strong homeland-longings in the event’s reviewer, who admitted “being ‘frae the auld kintra,’ your reporter went outside before it was finished; there are some feelings too deep for words and some songs are beyond criticism, as in this case.”

Despite the yearnings for his homeland, the reporter also commented on how the West was in fact a better place, especially regarding manners:

> A dance followed which seemed to be much appreciated. To an observer from the older civilization of Europe the “wild and wooly west” could give points in manners as well as measures to many exalted gatherings he has seen where diamonds and dress suits were no guarantee of decorum and the rowdy style of romping took the place of graceful dancing. Prince Albert knows how to enjoy herself with grace and dignity.

The notion that the West was somehow a less corrupted place than the East was evident in the review of the local production of *What Happened to Jones*. In the play, a policeman named Holder tries to pocket money he found during an investigation. This moral lapse, instead of being read as a failure of one character, was read as being more

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1029 “Hospital Entertainment,” *Advocate*, 19 December 1904, P5: Whether or not the reviewer left because the performance was good enough to be overwhelming or bad enough to drive one from the room – out of love for the song – is unclear. But due to the usual praiseworthy performances reported of the Misses Kerr, presumably the singing was good on this occasion.

1030 “Hospital Entertainment,” *Advocate*. 
widely representative. The character’s behaviour was reported as having “illustrated several of the failings of the members of the forces in eastern cities.”\textsuperscript{1031}

*Jones* also presented contrasting insights into eastern and western expectations regarding moral female behaviour. Throughout the script, the character of Cissy – while not behaving immorally – is referred to as being dissatisfied with the staid expectations placed on women in New York. As Cissy’s aunt, Mrs. Goodley, explains, “She has been our ward since she was a little girl, but several years ago we let her go West in search of health. ...But since she returned she has seemed dissatisfied.”\textsuperscript{1032} Cissy expresses her frustrations vocally and physically. She is introduced while hiding “French novels” and playing cards in the piano. These items have been deemed contraband by Mrs. Goodley. Goodley’s rules and Cissy’s frustration lead to the following clash:

CISSY (*alone*) French novels and a deck of cards! If Mrs. Goodly only knew I had them, I wonder what she’d do? I’m just about tired of this, anyway. If I’d never known anything better, I suppose I’d be satisfied. But after San Francisco, dear old San Francisco, to be cooped up here makes me feel (*slams keys of piano viciously three or four times*) That’s the way it makes me feel! (*bangs keys again*)

(Enter MRS. GOODLY R. 3.)

MRS. G. (*up c.*) What is the matter, Cissy?

Cis. I want something to break the monotony. (*sits at the piano. Thumps keys*)

MRS. G. I am afraid it wasn’t a wise move of the Professor’s to send you to San Francisco for your health.

Cis. (*swinging around on stool*) I’m sure it wasn’t, if he expected me to return and live like a cloistered nun. (*still seated*)

MRS. G. (*up c.*) And yet, my daughters don’t complain.

Cis. (*rises, comes down L.*) They don’t know any better.\textsuperscript{1033}

This is in sharp contrast to the moral expectations placed on males in the piece. When Cissy challenges the moral expectation placed upon females in the Goodley household, it

\textsuperscript{1031} “Tom Jones at His Best,” *Times*, 23 December 1908, P1, 4.
\textsuperscript{1032} Broadhurst, 40.
\textsuperscript{1033} Ibid, 16-17.
is explained away by her travels “West.” Male characters, however, need no such excuses. They just need to pretend to meet the moral expectations of their associated female characters. Marjorie, Richard’s fiancée, praises Richard’s moral appearance, claiming, “He doesn’t drink, nor smoke, nor swear, nor gamble, nor spend his money foolishly in any way.” But before the play ends, despite Richard’s facade, he has displayed a penchant for all of these vices. Jones, a travelling salesman, counts on such male duplicity for his trade. He offers either hymn-books or playing cards, depending upon the place in which he finds himself. He explains, “If the town is dead, hymnbooks; if it’s alive, playing-cards. I catch em coming and going.” Jones also provides the play’s main running gag – posing as an Anglican Bishop from Australia – which offers many opportunities for him to exploit the appearance of morality that hides his underlying misbehaviours.

Cissy enjoys far less latitude in her apparent misbehaviour. In the script, she only talks about breaking rules and expectations. In addition to her love of novels and cards, she longs to dance and go courting. She brags about having tasted Kentucky bourbon. She even complains to Jones about how local men are “so slow that they make New Year’s calls on the Fourth of July.” In Prince Albert, reaction to this comparatively free-wheeling character with worldly Western experience was positive. The review complimented the performer as follows: “Miss Tait as Cissy, the professor’s niece had a part requiring considerable skill. Miss Tait, however, proved herself a very clever actress and added to the play that charm that a bright young girl always gives.”

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1034 Ibid, 11.
1035 Ibid, 25.
1036 Ibid, 47.
1037 “Tom Jones at His Best,” Times.
clever, charming, and bright and her character’s behaviour evoked no moral backlash.

The key seems to be in the balance Cissy strikes between talking fast, and acting within moral expectations. For example, when Cissy finds Jones sipping from a flask, she expends great effort convincing him to let her also drink. Eventually Jones surrenders the flask. Though Cissy “smiles at him triumphantly,”\(^\text{1038}\) she returns the flask without drinking, saying:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{CISSY: Thank you.} \\
\text{JONES: But you didn’t (Bus. of drinking)} \\
\text{CISSY: (quietly) Did you really expect me to? (JONES silent) Oh, no!} \\
\text{Girls say a great deal more than they mean, nowadays (crosses R. to table).} \\
\text{JONES: I’ll remember that.}\(^\text{1039}\)
\end{align*}
\]

The key to Cissy’s moral acceptability seems to lie in how she is wise, but not morally “loose.” In the script, Cissy is described as being “about twenty-two. Knowing, but not fast nor tough.”\(^\text{1040}\) Cissy uses the hint of impropriety without enacting any improprieties. Her free-behaviour seems to be a show, but still irks her aunt, who is more staid. That same worldliness is what gives Cissy her intellectual advantage over other characters in the play. Of all the female characters in the script, Cissy is the only one to see through Jones’s Bishop-dissembling.\(^\text{1041}\)

Victorine, another frustrated female character in *The Spirit of ’99*, is a stark contrast to Cissy. While Cissy was restricted by the Eastern rules placed upon her newly-acquired Western-independence, Victorine’s restrictions were a result of new female

\(^{1038}\text{Broadhurst, 144}^{1039}\text{Ibid.}^{1040}\text{Ibid, 3.}^{1041}\text{Ibid, 99: Jones was far from convincing. When Jones asks Cissy what gave him away, she replied, “Several things. Do Australian bishops generally carry flasks of ‘cold tea?’; Do they dance fancy steps, (does so) and above all, do they speak with an American accent?”}

freedoms in her world. These new freedoms result in the powerful women in Victorine’s life demanding she take on more responsibility than she is interested in exercising.

Challenged to join the female-dominated world hierarchy, Victorine balks, longing for simpler, earlier days. She says, “I think it must have been pleasanter then for the girls, but mamma and Aunt Wolverine say I don’t appreciate the blessings of emancipation. I don’t. I should hate to vote... and I’d a great deal rather keep quiet, and be asked to dance, or to... anything.”

Where Cissy tried to hide her novels, Victorine never had them, for “all the old novels were burnt, you know, by order of the Ladies of the Legislature, because they represented Woman in her degraded state. They say there used to be a few at Loring’s Library once, but he only keeps philosophical and scientific works now, and Mr. Putnam’s Cookery Book.”

In some ways, Cissy is another expression of tensions between longing for a civilized place of origin (e.g. the eastern USA or Canada) and the attraction of the independence of frontier life. In New York, Cissy led a comfortable but boring life. It seems unlikely that audience members in Prince Albert – a western city like that depicted as being corrupting to east-coast female expectations – would view Cissy in the same way as would an eastern audience. In Prince Albert, perhaps, female residents could consider their perceived (if relative) freedoms as being a benefit. An Eastern view – as presented by Eastern characters in the play – of such freedoms was less positive. This dichotomy might have played very well in Prince Albert, especially to Western women, who could laugh at their freedoms compared to eastern women (whether or not they were real or imagined).

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1042 Curtis, 18.
1043 Curtis, 19.
This idea that barrier-breaking potential was greater in a frontier society than it was in an older, settled society was also established in *The Spirit of ’99*. Wolverine cheered the successes of women in the “new world,” and identified the “old world,” as being the ground for their next victory: “Yes, fellowsisters, the tocsin has sounded, the Great American Principle of Female Supremacy is spreading like wildfire, and the bloated old potentates of Europe shake on their rotten old thrones.”\(^{1044}\) In ’99, any old-world nostalgia is absent. The old-world is presented as a place of oppression, to all but those who long for such oppression to continue.

**Male and female roles: the Trouble with Courting**

The theme of the old and established oppressing the young and establishing is also evident in a variety of THOH events. Oft-repeating themes in THOH events highlighted difficulties that surrounded courting. Plays especially offered many variations of young people trying to find love, but needing to overcome the restrictive influence of older, staid community members. This dynamic played out on the stage, and in the audience. As the previously-noted review for *Our Boys* observed, both groups were watching the play: the older oppressors, “Old gentlemen with silver locks, staid matrons, engaged couples” – as well as the young and oppressed, or “other couples who would like to be engaged, pretty girls galore... [and] bashful young men whose hearts went pitter-pat.”\(^{1045}\)

Onstage, popular dramas presented similar domestic aspirations and frustrations. One such play was *Sarah’s Young Man*. The piece was part of an evening of

\(^{1044}\) Curtis, 30.
\(^{1045}\) “Our Boys,” *Advocate*, 12 August 1901.
entertainments put on by local performers in September 1900, once again in aid of the hospital.\textsuperscript{1046}  

Sarah’s Young Man was written by W. E. Suter in 1856 and first preformed at Haymarket in London. The play is a rollicking farce involving love, mistaken identities, and varied hilarity that hinges upon a white hat.\textsuperscript{1047}  An older, established, and married couple named Mr. and Mrs. Moggridge employs Sarah Tibbs. Sarah is young, single, and longing. Sarah secretly loves Sam Sloeleaf. Their wooing is obstructed. Sarah faces a problem very similar to that of Penelope, the Area Belle.\textsuperscript{1048}  

The Moggridges’ prohibit Sarah from receiving male visitors, especially while they, her employers, are away from the house.\textsuperscript{1049}  Sarah’s domestic situation resembles a lockdown, but she tries to deceive the Moggridges regarding her intentions:

\begin{quote}
Moggridge: Sarah, mind that during our absence you keep all the doors and windows fast. We shall return tomorrow; and don’t for one moment forget that which you thoroughly understood when we hired you.
Sarah: No followers allowed; -- I ain’t forgot it, sir.
Mrs. M.: That’s right.
Sarah. Don’t want no young scamps arter [sic] me. Don’t think I shall ever marry; but if I should, I’ll have a nice elderly man. I see how happy missus is, and I almost envies her.\textsuperscript{1050}
\end{quote}

Sarah spends most of the play trying to avoid being fired whenever Sam comes to visit her. Everything eventually works out for the best for Sarah and Sam. They overcome obstacles, eventually agree to marry and live in London – where Sam’s tea-shop is located – and thus embark upon their own journey toward becoming an established, staid couple in their own right.

\textsuperscript{1046} “Sarah’s Young Man,” Advocate, 17 September 1900, P8.
\textsuperscript{1048} As explored in the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall chapter.
\textsuperscript{1049} Suter 3
\textsuperscript{1050} Suter 7
But there were times when groups overtly sought to use the power of the young and single – especially single women – to their fundraising advantage. The biggest attraction of a Charity Ball in 1899 was “the fact that the ladies alone are the entertainers, is a double incentive why the young men, particularly bachelors, should postpone all other engagements and cheerfully contribute towards such a noble cause.”\textsuperscript{1051} In addition to all-female entertainments, further enticement was offered to a specific fetish with the promise that “A feature of the evening will be a number of young ladies in regulation nurse’s costume, in which they will look prettier than usual, which is to say a great deal. Already it is said their programmes are in demand at a premium.”\textsuperscript{1052}

Such commoditization of the pursuit of women is reflected in \textit{The Spirit of ’99}, albeit with the traditionally represented male and female roles reversed. Carberry finds himself the object of aggressive and unwanted sexual attention from women, specifically Miss Badger and Miss Griffin. They bully and threaten Carberry, backed by new bylaws which discourage bachelorhood. The possibility that he might find himself forcibly claimed in marriage drives him to lament “I arrived here yesterday, so innocent and so happy, and I find everything upset and topsy-turvy, with all this voting, and assessing, and judging, and dreadful old maids swooping down upon one, like hawks, and widows, like roaring lions!”\textsuperscript{1053} Longing for a more “ladylike” existence, Victorine presses Carberry for information as to the way wooing used to be:

\begin{quote}
CARBERRY: A lady is never so charming as when adorned with modesty, of which I see the emblem in your violet eyes. \\
VICTORINE: How pretty! Is that the way gentlemen used to talk? Do go on.\textsuperscript{1054}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1051} “The Charity Ball,” \textit{Advocate}, 11 September 1899, P1.
\textsuperscript{1052} “The Ladies Hospital Aid,” \textit{Advocate} 18 September 1899, P8.
\textsuperscript{1053} Curtis, 65-66.
\textsuperscript{1054} Ibid, 18-19.
Carberry finds Victorine an oasis of his idea of proper femininity in a sea of powerful women out to dominate, bully, and trick him into marriage. Faced with marriage to Griffin, Carberry is forced to abruptly propose to Victorine:

**CARBERRY.** You alone seem to me an innocent dove, a thousand times more charming by contrast... and... I’ve got to marry somebody... I mean, I love you passionately... only I shouldn’t have told you so for months, under happier circumstances... I’m a shy man naturally... but now I’m goaded to desperation!

**VICTORINE (crying).** O! Mr. Carberry, why didn’t you say so sooner?

**CARBERRY.** Sooner! I hadn’t a chance! I’m a slow man naturally, I’m not used to these railway methods, and how could I ever have dreamed that your terrible aunt would mark me for her own!^1055

Despite initial pressures, Victorine and Carberry were eventually cleared to marry each other, which was a happy enough ending for those two characters’ story.

The struggle to find a spouse also inspired another locally created show in 1900. *The Old Maid’s [sic] Convention* was a Hospital Fundraiser in 1900. The show was not only popular, but also fascinating in concept and content. Some popular society ladies of Prince Albert played man-desperate spinsters, of whom it was observed that “the chief aim in life... was to secure ‘a man.’”^1056 These desperate spinsters awaited their turn to be run through a makeover machine that would make them better able to pursue, and secure, the aforementioned man. Miss Coombs played Prof. Makernew who, it was promised, “with his wonderful machine, will perform astonishing feats of rejuvenation.”^1057 One by one, characters such as Minty Cloverton, Desire A. Man, and May Haverman were

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^1055 Ibid, 64-65.
^1056 “The Old Maid’s Convention was a drawing card at the Town Hall,” *Advocate*, 31 December 1900, P.8.
processed by the machine, which changed “old maids into new and lovely beings, to suit their individual tastes.”

Similarly styled *Old Maids’ Convention* performances were created in communities across the West. The theme of mechanically processing Old Maids was constant, but the specifics of how the transformation was accomplished varied between communities. For example, in Bow Island, Alberta special praise was directed to “Archie Hoagan, who performed his task of turning the crank with the utmost vigour and relish.” Strathmore’s show was centred on an “Electric Transform(h)er.” An Edmonton performance of an old-maids show included men in drag as some of the old maids until “finally one of the old girls proved too much a morsel for the mechanism. It smashed to pieces and the show was over.” While the specifics of each show varied, the theme of industrially improving women was constant.

In Prince Albert the show was popular enough that it inspired a sequel, *Breach of Promise of Marriage*. Where the *Convention* was a town-organised affair, *Breach* was specifically identified as being produced by “country talent.” Both shows raised money for the hospital. The eagerness to distinguish between town and country talent also shows that a level of competition, if not rivalry, existed between such groups over performance-fundraisers. In this country production, women were not being rebuilt. Instead, the character Barney O’Lafferty is being sued for “breach of promise of marriage.” O’Lafferty appears to have been an old man with marriage problems –

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1058 “The Old Maid’s Convention was a drawing card at the Town Hall,” *Advocate*.
1061 “An Evening With Lilliputians and Old Maids,” *Saturday News* (Edmonton), 18 September 1909, Page 10, Peel’s Prairie Provinces. Item Ar01003.
presumably of his own making. The play took the form of a trial, which ended when “the jury found that ‘old fools were the worst fools,’ and left the case to the committee of ‘The Old Maid’s Association’ to settle amicably.” Whether by coincidence or not, it is not surprising that country women answered their town-rivals with a play that challenged men to change for marriage as opposed to women. The Breach performance leaves “old maids,” untransformed, even wielding a measure of power, whereas the Convention played into other stereotypes of desperate spinster-seeking men.

Expressions of tensions surrounding courtship and marriage in Prince Albert seem to have been more widespread across the west. At least one travelling expert on mate-selection stopped in Prince Albert as part of her western tour. Mrs. Jean Morris Ellis visited Prince Albert for almost a week in 1897. Ellis lectured in the THOH on various topics connected with her main lecture: “Matrimony from a woman’s standpoint.”

One lecture was meant exclusively for women and dealt with the topic of “dress reform,” in which she discussed “the rational and irrational mode of dress, and other vital and important questions.” Based upon her early presentations, the Advocate reviewer thought the rest of her lectures would be worthwhile, since “Many sound, sensible arguments, from a reasoning standpoint, will be made, and perhaps an unseen pitfall pointed out, which, stumbled into, might be regretted during a lifetime. This address should be heard by all who can possibly attend.” The basis of Ellis’s theories on spouse-choosing was phrenology – in which she offered private, for-fee consultations when she was not lecturing. Her lecture Matrimony promised to end with “Couples mated on the stage at the close of the lecture. Match-making – scientific, amusing, not-

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1063 “Mrs. Jean Morris Ellis,” Advocate, 25 May 1897, P4, 8.
1064 Ibid.
1065 Ibid.
binding.” After offering advice regarding whom one should marry, based on temperament and phrenology, “two young ladies were invited on the platform, and Mrs. Ellis proceeded to pick from the audience two husbands suitable for the ladies, from a phrenological standpoint. The selection was the cause of much merriment amongst the audience.” The actual match-making was presented as being “all in good fun.” But the earnestness with which Ellis’s advice was received shows the underlying tensions felt by local couples seeking courtship.

**Gender and Governance:**

Gender roles regarding power and influence in the community were almost always in negotiation at the THOH. Expectations for male and female residents differed, but were not necessarily unchallengeable. For example, in *Spirit of ’99*, Victorine’s mother, Judge Wigfall, rejects the thought that marriage is a noble enough pursuit for a woman:

> I tell you, love is as obsolete as a line-of-battle ship. Wives rule their husbands, and the memory of woman runneth not to the contrary. But do as you like. For my part, I disapprove of marriage altogether. I consider it a waste of time for any intelligent woman; but you will never be able to earn your salt in any decent calling, and you must either marry or be sent to Congress.\(^{1068}\)

The only more indecent calling than marriage, for Wigfall, is politics. But not all of the new women agree; Griffin bolsters her friend Miss Badger to continue their fights in the political sphere, saying:

> Badger, we are Stateswomen and Patriots. Let us rather renounce mankind and live for ourselves, marching in the Van of the great Feminine Army of

\(^{1066}\) Ibid.  
\(^{1067}\) “Mrs. Jean Morris Ellis lectured,” *Advocate*, 1 June 1897, P8.  
\(^{1068}\) Curtis, 42.
Progress, onward and upward forever! And when our mission is accomplished, and Woman of every colour, size, and shape reigns supreme from Pole to Pole, then shall the names of Griffin and Badger be transmitted to future generations, as great and glorious examples of the new SPIRIT OF SEVENTY-SIX.1069

At this moment, the curtain falls. But the show itself is not over. A final, interrogative challenge is issued to the audience. Judge Wigfall directly addresses the audience as if it were a jury, saying: “it remains for you to find accordingly, divesting yourselves, as far as possible, of all individual bias, either for or against the defendant, MAN, and this Court will protect you in the performance of your duty.”1070 The audience left the THOH with an active challenge to deliberate on the ideas raised by the show.

The Spirit of ’76 (or ’99 in Prince Albert) presents the idea that women who would take power from men would need to adopt male-ideals in order to keep control. This is a result of thinking similar to that which Massey identifies as being the pitfalls of definition by dichotomy, i.e. identification in terms of “A” and “not-A.” She writes that “within this kind of conceptualization, only one of the terms (A) is defined positively. The other term (not-A) is conceived only in relation to A, and as lacking in A.”1071 Massey argues that, in relation to time, space, and gender, certain ideals are weighted as against each other. Traditionally male-claimed concepts of “History, Progress, Civilization, Science, Politics and Reason, portentous things with gravitas and capital letters” are set up as against “the other poles of these concepts: stasis, ('simple') reproduction, nostalgia, emotion, aesthetics, the body.”1072

1069 Ibid, 73.
1070 Ibid.
1071 Massey, 257.
1072 Ibid.
The women of *The Coming Woman (Spirit of 76/99)*, in order to drive society (change, movement, history) would have to cast off their feminine virtues such as nostalgia and emotion. This provokes a strong reaction in Carberry, who declares: “I never would have left China, if I’d had any conception of this! Women legislating, and robbing, and murdering! It has no parallel in history! Draco and Robespierre were kittens, compared to them!”

Carberry observes that women not only adopted the worst behavioural examples set by males in power, but then they surpassed them in ruthlessness.

In this text, there also appears to be no notion that males and females could work together to create a new governing order. The “A, not-A” dichotomy presented in this specific interrogative text, presents a choice between the past male mode of society/governance and the imagined female mode. The choice of which absolute is preferable – for a compromise is not offered as an option – is up to the individual audience member. But the male characters in the play present universal displeasure at the current state of government, as evidenced in Carberry’s reaction to recent events:

CARBERRY: How appalling! I can’t comprehend it, for when I went away, the trouble was, that the women were entirely given up to extravagant dressing.

MR. WIGFALL: I know, but times are changed. Then we lived under a Millinery Despotism. I wish we had it back!  

This connection between the rule of women and their clothing is a common trope, with various connotations present in Prince Albert performances. Carberry credits fashion as what distracts women from seeking political power. In *What Happened to Jones*, fashion symbolises the rule of women, on a household level; the Times noted that “Miss

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1073 Curtis, 51.
1074 Curtis, 25.
A. Graham as Mrs. Goodley gave a splendid interpretation of the careful wife and showed that petticoat government was in force in the Goodley Household.” The presentation of the character of Mrs. Goodley was reviewed well, but the term careful, not oppressive or tyrannical, is interesting. Her ruling the house was not viewed as abnormal, but the women ruling in Spirit of ’99 might have been. In fact, Mr. Goodley suffers throughout the play for daring to break with her rules. When Richard seeks to convince him to attend the illicit boxing match, his last reservation is fear of his wife (and thereby his daughters) finding out. Jones however, as a single man, is less impressed by petticoat rule. He begins the play by mocking Ebenezer Goodly’s fear of his wife’s rules:

Jones: The man who lives at peace with his wife never tries to explain.
Ebenezer: Then what am I to do? (*RICHARD has dropped down a little up R. of EBENEZER*)
Jones: (*comes c.*) Has it ever dawned on you that it might be possible to deceive her?
Ebenezer: What! Lie to my wife!
Jones: Certainly not. The man who would lie to his wife is a poor, weak creature; it’s so easy to fool her without it.

Throughout the course of the play, however, Jones learns better. He falls for Cissy who is clever enough to see through his attempts to fool her. Jones hopes to submit to Cissy’s governance, if only at home.

While the sphere of women’s actual control and/or governance as expressed in the THOH was usually limited to the domestic and charitable spheres, examples of male governance were by no means universally inspiring. For example, in 1901, the THOH was the site of accusation, investigation, and disciplinary action against the sitting Mayor

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1075 “Tom Jones at His Best,” *Times*.
1076 Broadhurst, 14.
1077 Ibid, 35.
Agnew as a result of his interfering in police court cases. These actions took place largely as actions in committee meetings, and the scope of their performative nature would have been limited. Coincidentally, however, the Victoria Hospital still benefitted from these events; the list of donations to the Hospital for August 1901 includes the following entry: “Mayor Agnew, his share of Police Court fees, $3.70.”

In an earlier case the then-mayor Dr. Spence resigned in January 1900, reportedly because of rumours “that proceedings to unseat him were being taken by a prominent citizen, but whether this had anything to do with the resignation is not known.” Spence was returned to the mayoralty the next month, by acclamation. Whether women would have fared better in government was never tested. While women were welcomed into the electoral process in the THOH, it was with certain provisions. Planners of a political meeting on 6 November 1900 made pains to “cordially” invite the public to partake as “the live issues of the campaign will be discussed.” But women, though welcome, were encouraged to self-segregate. Presumably under the assumption that the ferocity of the event’s politics might prove too intimidating or coarse, the event organizers were thoughtful enough to assure beforehand that “the gallery has been reserved for the ladies.”

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1079 Prince Albert Urban Municipality, Minutes 9 August 1901: The council launched a, “special committee to investigate charges brought by Magistrate Stewart against His Worship the Mayor with regard to the method of handling Police Court Cases” (Prince Albert Urban Municipality Minutes 2 July 1901). All that was recorded in the minute book was that the committee’s (unrecorded) report, “re: Magistrates’ Court be adopted and that the suggestions on keeping track of cots [sic] and other suggestions be complied with.”
1080 “Victoria Hospital Donations,” Advocate August 26, 1901 Town and Country.
1081 “Mayor Spence Resigns,” Advocate 15 January 1900, P1: The council accepted the resignation of both Mayor Spence and Councillor Goodfellow on 5 February 1900. A special election was arranged. Mayor Spence returned to his seat for the 5 March 1900 meeting. Goodfellow was replaced by the new Councillor Bradshaw (Prince Albert Urban Municipality).
1082 “Town Council,” Advocate, 12 February 1900, P8.
1083 “A Public Meeting,” Advocate, 5 November 1900, P8.
Despite this segregation/separation which was symbolic of females’ official near-exclusion from electoral politics in Prince Albert, they still exercised considerable influence, especially in the area of fundraising which was almost exclusively a female domain. Particularly in the context of the Victoria Hospital project, for instance, a group of Prince Albert women prioritized the need for a Hospital in the Prince Albert region in the early 1890s and set about to raise the money for it. Fundraising for this cause, as with most charity works in the region, was almost exclusively labeled as female-work. Throughout the 1890s, the Hospital Ladies’ Aid of Prince Albert had been spearheading efforts to raise funds for the first hospital in the Prince Albert region. It was years before the men of town (or “Town Fathers” by popular label) caught up. An editorial in the *Advocate* in June 1897 chastised the men’s lack of vision, noting the following:

> The ladies of Prince Albert have for several years been collecting an [sic] hospital fund, and have now on hand in the neighborhood of $1,200. While this is not sufficient of itself to warrant the opening of even a modest cottage hospital, yet it is a good nucleus round which the men could, if they would only interest themselves, build up a fund sufficient for the purpose, and that without materially feeling the effort financially.

When the first Victoria Hospital opened on 7 November 1899, the Hospital Aid continued to fundraise, holding penny readings every two weeks as well as soliciting donations. A new, larger Victoria hospital was built only four years later in 1903. For operating capital, this new hospital also depended upon donations and fundraising efforts of the community. The THOH continued to be the site of high-profile fundraising events (galas, suppers, balls, etc.) as well as regular penny readings, all under the auspices of the Hospital Ladies’ Aid.

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1085 “The Victoria Hospital is now finished,” *Advocate*, 6 November 1899, P8.
The role of local female community builders was not only reinforced, but celebrated. The most extravagant example of such a performance/celebration was the *Temple of Fame*. The show was a presentation of famous female figures drawn from historical, allegorical, or literary inspirations. These characters formed a parade of impressive women, who made presentations to the character of the Goddess, or Queen of Fame, played by “Mrs. Colin Young, who held her court with dignity and grace.”

The presentations – assuming that this *Temple of Fame* followed in a tradition as old as Chaucer – would have been centered on the questions as to whether or not a candidate was worthy of fame and praise. The allegorical characters featured in the Prince Albert show were similar to representations staged in previous tableaux, for example: Miss Canada, Mother and Children. But the inclusion of a character named “21st Century Girl” highlights the inspirational nature of the performance. The night was meant not only to celebrate past female role models, but also inspire future accomplishments. Depictions of queens from history were numerous (Victoria, Isabelle of Spain, Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, Cleopatra, and even the Queen of Sheba). But they were by far outnumbered by characters of more ordinary birth, including, for example, celebrated sopranos Albani and Calvé and folk heroines such as Laura Secord and Grace Darling (the heroine of Longstone Light). Even Harriet Beacher-Stowe was depicted, with her creation Topsy. Characters were also drawn from more ancient sources such as the Bible (Miriam and Ruth) and the Iliad (Helen of Troy).

The show was a success on several levels. Logistically, it was a triumph of costuming, rehearsal, and stage management. It was noted that “all the ladies are to be...”

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congratulated on the excellent manner in which their several parts were prepared.”

Despite challenges, “everything went off without a hitch under the direction of Mr. T. S. Jones, who, besides taking the part of the herald, was also the stage manager.” The show was also an opportunity for various faith groups to work together for a common cause. The scope of the show was so great that a community wider than the Presbyterian church was needed to produce it, as it was acknowledged that “Among those taking part will be noticed several from outside the Presbyterian Church to whom the Young Women’s Guild are grateful for their valued assistance, as they also are to the ladies of the city generally, who generously responded to the calls made upon them for dresses or anything else that was needed in the making up of the characters.”

The show was also a success in terms of attendance. The THOH was so full for the evening performance on Friday night that people were eventually turned away at the doors. The next afternoon, the show was remounted. This second show drew new audience members, as well as repeat attendees, which the local reviewer interpreted as high praise, observing that “no greater compliment can be paid than the presence of a number at the Saturday matinee who were there the night before.” While all performers were praised, the selection of specifically praised performances might suggest the continued power of British-ness on local imaginations. The review singled out the representations of the Royal Family as being “exceptionally good, vix.: Mrs. Mary

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1088 “Temple of Fame Great Success,” *Times.*
1089 Ibid.
1090 Ibid.
1091 Ibid.
Montgomery as Queen Victoria, Mr. C. O. Davidson as King Edward, and Mrs. Geo. Will as Alexandria.”

With regard to characters representing the fight for Women’s Rights, the show turned to fictional characters. The review loved the comic material offered when “Samantha (Miss Ruby Stewart) and Josiah Allen (Mr. J. A. Walker) kept the audience in roars of laughter.” While Samantha’s and Josiah’s roles in this piece appear to have been for mostly comic effect, the character of Samantha was also a powerful mouthpiece for women’s rights. “Samantha Allen,” a creation of the humorist Marietta Holley, was famous for her malapropism-laden accounts of travels with her husband, Josiah. These excursions often offered Samantha many opportunities to argue for women’s suffrage—sometimes in a forceful, serious manner, as in Samantha on the Woman Question, in which she demands:

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did you ever in your born days see a bad man that wuzn't opposed to Woman's Suffrage? All the men who trade in, and profit by, the weakness and sin of men and women, they every one of 'em, to a man, fight agin it. And would they do this if they didn't think that their vile trades would suffer if women had the right to vote? It is the great-hearted, generous, noble man who wants women to become a real citizen with himself—which she is not now—she is only a citizen just enough to be taxed equally with man, or more exhorbitantly, and be punished and executed by the law she has no hand in makin'.
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In some ways, Samantha might have also been at home in the Spirit of ’99, which had also offered praise to famous women of the past, albeit in a more revolutionary tone. Whereas Temple sought to glorify famous women, Wolverine Griffin in ’99 sought to highlight the heroines of the long fight for female freedom:

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1092 Ibid.
1093 Ibid.
Ancient Woman had immense opportunities, but unhappily she did not know it. Bowed to the earth as a sex, the few individuals who stood up were very conspicuous. Semiramis and Cleopatra both stood up in their day, and might have accomplished much, if they had kept clear of entangling alliances with men. Boadicea stood up, in her chariot... Joan of Arc stood up in her day, in armour, cap-a-pie, and it worked well, till they made it too hot for her. Eventually, Wolverine attributes her greatest praise for “the illustrious name of Mrs. Bloomer, the last of her sex who stood up entirely alone. She sowed the dragon’s teeth which produced armed women from Cape Cod to Alaska. To-day all stand up, and notoriety is getting to be next to impossible.” While the tone of the argument differed between the two plays, the inclusion of pro-female-suffrage sentiments in performances onstage in the THOH, from 1894 onward, shows that the issue was, if not dominant, certainly present in the negotiation of community values.

**Male/Female cross-dressing/casting:**

Perhaps the starkest negotiations of expected roles of males and females in the community happen when cross-gendered casting occurs in performance at the THOH. Males performing female characters were a fairly common, though usually remarked upon, occurrence in the THOH. In the Coney Islanders’ performance, special recognition was awarded the local butcher for his cake walk: “Norman Russell in a Mother Hubbard gown, of latest Parisian cut, gave a cake walk that touched the audience almost to giving another quarter for the show.” The satire of fashion and style is rich; the burley Russell bedecked in a dowdy Mother Hubbard gown was being sent-up as the hottest thing out of Paris. That the feminizing of the butcher, a then-traditionally male-

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1095 Curtis, 31.
1096 Curtis, 32.
associated occupation, was such a comic hit speaks volumes as to the rigidity of expectations regarding gender construction in the community. The bigger and more manly the man, the greater is the potential for laughter as he is feminised. Also, the greater his comfort is in going along with the joke in order to offer the expectedly cartoonish performance of femininity.

Folklorist Michael Taft explored cross-dressing within the tradition of mock-wedding performances on the prairies and noted the “exaggerated, mincing impressions that make a mockery of femininity by emphasizing the performer’s own masculine characteristics – hair, muscles and swagger.” Taft observed that in a society of such rigidly-defined gender roles, only a man secure in both his masculinity and his place within the community would engage in this type of cross-dressing in performance. I’m assuming that for the local butcher, participating in such a drag-performance would be a way of further securing his status in the community, even making for livelier discussions with patrons in his shop in the following days and weeks.

One of the few examples found of a female performer presenting a male character in the THOH was Miss Coombs as Professor Makernew in the Old Maid’s [sic] Convention. Coombs, as Makernew, promised to “with his wonderful machine... perform astonishing feats of rejuvenation.” Makernew is a man who is physically reshaping women to make them more likely to secure “a man.” Having a female play Makernew allows for the character to be “in on the joke” in a way; highlighting the unrealistic, or hypocritical male expectations to which the shows old maids were conforming.

1099 Taft, s.v. “Mock Weddings.”
1100 “A company of Local Amateurs” Advocate, 24 December 1900, P8.
In *Jones*, another example of cross-casting is found. Mr. J. A. Walker¹¹⁰¹ played Helma, “An Observant Scandinavian Servant.”¹¹⁰² The comic performance was praised as follows: “Miss Artie Walker as Helma, the Swede servant, was inspiringly funny and her every appearance on the stage was the signal for a laugh. Miss Artie’s grace of movement and wizsome smiles were winners.”¹¹⁰³ Here, the reviewer took the unusual step of extending the joke of the cross-casting beyond the THOH and into the community. First, Walker is identified as “Miss” Walker. Next, the reviewer shared how, after the show, “one of her admirers donated a bouquet of cabbage leaves which the charming Helma received with becoming modesty merely remarking that she was not surprised that at least one of her audience had lost his head.”¹¹⁰⁴

Having a male actor play the already caricature-based Helma was likely a means of increasing the comedic impact of the character for the local audience. In many ways, this performance functioned similarly to Norman Russell’s performance with the Coney Islanders. There are also possible discriminatory overtones, however. In the Prince Albert District, slightly more than 10% of the population reported being of Scandinavian origin.¹¹⁰⁵ If these residents were already seen as others, cross-casting Helma could have accentuated any perceptions of otherness. The script does not specify that Alvina be cross-cast. It is, presumably, decidedly unflattering for her. Broadhurst describes Helma


¹¹⁰² “Funniest Show Ever Produced,” *Times*, 16 December 1908, P1.

¹¹⁰³ “Tom Jones at His Best,” *Times*, 23 December 1908, P1, 4.

¹¹⁰⁴ “Tom Jones at His Best,” *Times*, 23 December 1908, P1, 4.

¹¹⁰⁵ Slightly higher than the city’s almost 7% (Canada, *Census 1911*, “Table VII: Origins of the People by sub-districts,” “Table X: Origins of the People, male and female, by districts”).
as a “Swedish servant girl, about twenty-eight years old. Face is absolutely devoid of expression, and not once does she show a glimmer of intelligence.” Helma speaks in a distinctive manner, meant to replicate a stereotypical Swedish (or perhaps more general Scandinavian) accent. For example, when Helma grows frustrated trying to keep the men’s secrets and deceptions concealed, she attempts to leave:

HEL. (up L. 3) Ai naver say hum come in, Ai never see hum go out, hut yust der same, Ai yump my yob.
EBEN. You do what?
HEL. Ai yump my yob.
Cis. She means she s going to leave.
HEL. Huh, huh.\textsuperscript{1107}

A more obvious example of discriminatory cross casting in the THOH appears to have occurred in Temple of Fame. Harriet Beacher Stowe appeared onstage with her creation Topsy, who was played by a male actor.\textsuperscript{1108} Stowe’s Topsy had, since the novel was first dramatized, been increasingly performed as a confluence of wild-child stereotypes and minstrel-show characteristics (Figure 94).\textsuperscript{1109} Such caricature would already mark the character as being “other” in the eyes of the local, white audience. Adding a male actor in the role of the young girl would only serve to make the character even more outside of the bounds of expectations of what was normal/acceptable. It could serve to shape expectations regarding who should be acceptable, or “in” and who was unacceptable, or “out” in the community.

\textsuperscript{1106} Broadhurst, 4.
\textsuperscript{1107} Ibid, 74.
\textsuperscript{1108} “Temple of Fame,” \textit{Times}, 13 January 1909, P1; “Temple of Fame Great Success,” \textit{Times}, 13 January 1909, P1: The name listed was “Tommy Stalker” in preview advertisement, but “Tommy Graham” in event review– either way, Topsy was portrayed by a male actor.
Settler Mythos: Who we are; who is in and who is out

Performances in the THOH are at the forefront of the construction of who is identified with the community, and who is not. The Coney Islanders’ entertainment raised issues of ethnicity and acceptance in Prince Albert. It’s noted that Mr. Wagner’s costume was well-constructed, wonderfully ugly, “and seemed to be a cross between the garb of a newly arrived Doukhobor and a Weary Willie.” Here, praise for the costumer mixes with a display of discomfort, and outright intolerance, of the region’s Doukhobors. To the Victorian-era play-going public of Prince Albert, the Doukhobors’ unfamiliar dress, customs, and beliefs – specifically surrounding their various means of protest (e.g. hunger-strikes, marches, and nakedness) – led to them being othered and scorned. Media framing of Doukhobors often mixed scorn and fear. Newspaper articles focused on the need for control of the Doukhobors, even suggesting that they were a security risk that would warrant the formation of militia brigades in the region.1110 The dominant community-groups seem to have chosen scorn as the preferred device to disperse any

perceived threat from the Doukhobors. Masquerade parties in Prince Albert usually list at least one participant in costume as a Doukhobor, entered in the “comic costume” category. ¹¹¹¹ In the context of the Coney Islanders’ entertainment, the reviewer mixes stereotypes further by associating the Doukhobor with “Weary Willie.” In 1901, Weary Willie was a character best known in music-hall and cartoon-strips for being a buffoonish, thieving tramp.¹¹¹²

Even when the Doukhobors themselves participated in a community-building event at the Town Hall it became an opportunity for their further exclusion. On September 6th, 1900 – almost a year before the Coney Islanders’ took the stage, a chorus of eight Doukhobor singers took part in a hospital fundraising concert. The Advocate reviewer of that day observed that “their song, or rather their humming was a repetition without variation from first to last, it became somewhat monotonous before the curtain was run down.”¹¹¹³ While language might have been a barrier to understanding the performance, this review suggests a lack of understanding, or even curiosity, as to the content of the entertainment offered. It is possible that the singers were uninteresting. It seems more likely that dominant anti-Doukhobor sentiment was reflected in the audience. Audience expectations, insofar as they reflect hegemonic views regarding what was

¹¹¹¹ “The Carnival,” Advocate, 28 March 1899, P1: Some of the carnival costumes deemed winners and worth-mentioning were several Gordon Highlanders/highlanders/Scottish dress, a Klondyker, an East Indian Princess. The “comic” category included a Jester, Doukhobor, and Aunt Dinah. Others costumes of note included the following: “Highland Lassie, Josie Brooks; Gentleman Nigger, Percey McLellan; Indian Girl, Mabel Kidd... Indian, Sioux, Harry Maveety; Newsboy, Willie Marr; Midshipman 17th Century, Fred Agnew; Indian Squaw, Lena Kidd; Belgium Peasant, Maud Coombs; Jack Tar, Jim Shannon; Maid, 17th Century; Sambo, Willie Richardson; Topsy, Gertie Brooks; Queen of Hearts, May Agnew; Mr. Speaker, Hillary Agnew; Speaker's Chair, Tommy Agnew; Sailor, Buttercup, Greek Peasant, Nigger and a number of others.”


¹¹¹³ “Town and Country,” Advocate, 10 September 1900, P8.
good-and-worthy art, intermingled with prejudices and ignorance in such a way as to ensure that the Doukhobors did not send another group to perform at a Hospital Aid event. Such exclusion could, in turn, have denied them a chance to feel equally part of the constructed hospital—which led to this group being not only outside of, but also in conflict with, the included-community’s sense of place. Unwanted settlers were discouraged.

There is something to the idea that in Prince Albert, locally produced effigies of absent ethnic groups were more accepted than those groups could ever have been. Prince Albert’s reception of McKanlass and his Alabama Warblers is one example of such behaviour. Leading up to his performance in Prince Albert, he received positive press, the Advocate noting that “McKanlass, a negro musician of ability, is billed to appear before a Prince Albert audience.”

His troupe was also eagerly anticipated, based upon reviews of other cities:

The “Alabama Warblers” is the name of the colored organization of ten people, under the management of McKanlass, which will appear in the Prince Albert town hall on February 7th next. They are singers and humorists, six men and four women, of whose performance the Toronto World says: “McKanlass with his Alabama Warblers is without doubt the finest colored organization travelling, a better show or finer singers has never been heard in town.”

Other towns and cities looked forward to his company performances, and received them happily. In Qu’Appelle, McKanlass received positive reviews, with the exception of one

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1114 Doukobors continued to live near Prince Albert as work in town. The newspapers make several observances about local Doukhobours. Such reports were usually framed to highlight their otherness, or cast them as the butt of a local joke, for example: “Tuesday, at 12:30, the bell on the city hall pealed a few peals. Some Doukhobours who were digging a trench on Central avenue [sic] were eating their lunch. They quit in a hurry and went to work again. When the bell rang again at one o’clock, the Douks had a pained expression on their faces and looked as if they had been buncoed” (“Tuesday, at 12:30,” Times, 23 October 1907, P8).
1115 “McKanlass, a negro musician of ability,” Advocate 2 February 1897, P8.
occasion in 1910, when the troupe cancelled a scheduled performance due to their inability to provide a deposit to secure the hall. But no mention of the quality of show or morality thereof was made. In other western towns, he was almost universally praised. For example in Didsbury, Alberta he was called back for three encores.

But in Prince Albert, the review of the Warblers’ performance was uniquely scathing. It blasted the morality of the content of the show, the high price of tickets, but not McKanlass’s skills as a performer:

The “famous” Alabama Warblers struck town last Friday morning and a hot bunch they proved themselves to be. The performance given in the town hall Friday evening was something of the Bowery order. It commenced with a rag-time musical selection and wound up near midnight with a 25 cent lecture – to men only – when the houchie couchie and other high-class, select performances were given. Some of the performance should not be permitted on a Canadian stage. With the exception of one or two vocal selections and McKanlass’ performance on the violin, which were really meritorious, the performance was, to use a vulgarism, “on the hog.” The prices of admission, 75c, and $1.00 for reserved seats, were altogether too high, and as a consequence, there were an abundance of empty seats.
The most amusing part was the way some of our “leading citizens” hustled their wives and sweethearts home from the concert, and the celerity they displayed in getting back to the hall. They didn’t want to miss the lecture, you know!
A couple of printers hadn’t the necessary quarter to stay and went to borrow it. Their credit was so bad and it took them so long to procure the needful, that when they returned the show was over.

The reviewer’s claim of many empty seats belies the next claim that many gentlemen returned for the midnight show. Also, if the show “should not be permitted on a Canadian stage,” why did the reviewer also complain that the price of admission was too

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1119 “The ‘famous’ The Alabama Warblers struck town,” Advocate, 10 February 1902, P1.
Another example, in another community, of such a scathing review addressing the morality of McKanlass’s performance has not yet been uncovered. Other reviews do not mention the late-night for-men-only show, but it could be that other newspapers remained discreetly silent on the issue. The situation recalls the male dilemmas encountered in What Happened to Jones, when males try to escape moral scrutiny, specifically by females of their household. The reviewers (presumably one of the “printers” mentioned as being unable to secure a quarter for the late-night show) seem to provide a rather weak alibi for the late night show. Unable to both pan the moral content of the performance and then admit to attending the same, he offers the rather weak alibi of returning to the hall after the second show.

Reputedly scandalous content was not automatically deemed unacceptable in the THOH. For example, in 1901 the Clara Mathes Company performed Sapho, which had caused moral uproar in New York. The play centres on a woman’s affairs with two men. At one point in the script, a lover carries her up to the top of a staircase – suggesting, presumably, imminent adultery. This scene became the base upon which protest grew until the leaders of Sapho’s original New York theatre company were arrested and charged with corrupting public decency. But in Prince Albert, when the Clara Mathes Co. performed the play at the end of their ten nights run in town, all that was noted was how “This play was out of the ordinary, and as produced not objectionable to a critical audience.”

1121 “The Clara Mathes Co,” Advocate, 25 November 1901, P8: The staging and text, however, could have been toned down from that presented in New York.
It is hard to prove that McKanlass offered a bawdier show than other companies touring Prince Albert. McKanlass's shows were far more sedately promoted than, for example, *The Hottest Coon in Dixie*, which played Prince Albert's THOH in 1905 (Figure 95). This troupe blatantly offered “The Jolly Jingling Travesties. Full of fun, Music, Action and Pretty Octoroon Girls... Costumed In the Latest Fancies of Inventive Genius.” But despite the advertised titillation and presumably “hot” nature of this show, the reviewers recorded no moral outrage, reporting only that “The *Hottest Coon in Dixie* Co. appeared before good houses in the City Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday evening when a very creditable show was given.”

![Image of Opera House advertisement](Image)

**Figure 95: The Hottest Coon in Dixie,** *Times*, 19 October 1905.

There are several possible reasons behind this company being spared the moral outrage leveled on McKanlass. Despite prepress to the contrary, McKanlass might have in fact

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1122 *The Hottest Coon in Dixie,* "*Times*, 19 October 1905, P8.
offered a truly more outrageous show. Or, perhaps the Hottest Coon company was better at preparing its audience for its “hot” show – thus its reviewer was better informed. Civic pride might also have been a factor. Prince Albert was now a city and perhaps less eager to appear backwards or unworldly. But there is also the possibility that – as appears to be the case in Qu’Appelle – the mythos being negotiated was that black performers were unacceptable as potential settlers, but welcome as performers. Any deviation from accepted/expected behaviour onstage would be viewed as potentially threatening, which led to complex, contrasting responses to the representations, performances, and substitutions which were performed in the THOH.

Figure 96: “Deacon Brown” cartoon, from Advocate 19 January 1897: one of various examples of the local print press reinforcing minstrel-show mode stereotypes.

Perhaps black performers onstage were more threatening to the residents of Prince Albert than they were elsewhere. Like other Canadian communities, the local newspapers bore no burden of cultural sensitivity regarding racial tolerance (for only one example
Figure 96). Certainly locally-produced blackface shows were very popular and universally well-received. The glee with which they were anticipated was sometimes at odds with other events in town. As an example, Rev. J. H. Hector preached two sermons and gave three lectures for the Methodist Church in Prince Albert during 1901. Hector was the Windsor-born son of escaped slaves who, after serving in the Civil War, toured giving lectures – most often on Temperance. Even the placement of the coverage of Hector’s visit belies a lack of sensitivity – as well as racist stereotyping. One article announcing his upcoming visit shared the front page with a review of the latest benefit concert for St. Patrick’s orphanage which praised how “The presentation was full of funny mix-ups, from the Coon town to heavy tragedy, from the statuesque to a cakewalk.” It is unclear whether or not prevalent attitudes, press coverage, or other factors affected local support for, or interest in, Hector’s speeches. It was noted that Hector would have moved his last two lectures to the THOH “if attendance warrants.” Hector’s presentations were praised and popular enough that the church needed to turn away a “large number” of people seeking to hear his Friday lecture. But his lectures remained in the church, despite attendance appearing to warrant a move to the THOH.

Other shows by local groups commonly presented blackface performances to good reviews. The previously mentioned cross-cast Topsy in the 1909 Temple of Fame was one example. The reviewer of the St. Alban’s Church Women’s Auxiliary concert

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1124 Abrams 29: The first travelling minstrel show in Prince Albert was in 1879. In 1880, a short-lived local minstrel troupe, the “Prince Albert Christy Minstrels,” performed for appreciative audiences in the Prince Albert Restaurant.
1125 “Rev. J. H. Hector, the famous negro lecturer,” Advocate, 14 October 1901, P1.
1127 “St. Patrick’s Orphanage,” Advocate, 21 October 1901, P1.
praised how “the character song, *Little Alabama Coon*, by Miss O. Davidson, and brother, was splendidly given, quite laughable, and brought down the house.”\(^{1130}\) A Prince Albert Band concert celebrated the combined effigying of race and gender in their entertainment where “the farce, *The Happy Couple*, displayed good acting on the part of Messrs. L. E. Valade, as colored servant, and F. J. Flanagan and Jas. McKay as Mrs. and Mr. Brown, while the Negro song in character by Oakden and Crory kept the house in roars of laughter. The performing elephant was also good, and “the Big Injun” scored quite a hit.”\(^{1131}\)

**Conclusion**

The Prince Albert THOH was a site of community defining performative events of various types, including cultural, judicial, political, martial, and charitable. Such displays were especially useful in a community where literacy could not be expected – especially among new community members who were being transformed from settlers into preferred citizens. These early decades of THOH related performance highlight the social and ideological forces working to shape overarching community ideas of belonging, longing, and belief.

The THOH was built in a community that was optimistic as to its future growth. In Prince Albert, the debate over the specific type, placement, and design of the THOH was not as publicly reported as it was in Qu’Appelle. Some specific needs of the community members are apparent, however. Practically, the offices and meeting spaces

\(^{1130}\) “The Concert given in the town hall,” *Advocate*, 26 January 1897, P8.

\(^{1131}\) “The Band Entertainment,” *Advocate*, 23 February 1897; “The Citizen’s Band boys,” *Advocate* 9 Feb 1897, P8; The “Big Injun” character was particularly popular, it was a performance repeated from an earlier “smoking concert.” It is unclear whether the character was achieved by a performer in “red-face,” a caricature mask, a stag sized puppet, or some other device.
had to be large enough to comfortably accommodate council, civic employees, and ratepayers. The performance stage and dance-hall/auditorium were designed to house approximately half of the then-population of the town, if needed. Police cells and court were included. The same spirit of optimism and progress that led to the THOH construction nearly led to its destruction. By 1910, opinions were expressed that the town needed a new town hall. The THOH was repaired, however, since it was thought that a replacement town hall would be an easy matter during the expected upcoming early twentieth century boom, and when those boom years did not materialize, the THOH remained in use.

Symbolically, the wants of the community were evident in the act of THOH construction. A less-expensive structure – such as a repurposed old church – was deemed unacceptable; the hall would be a new structure in young community. But the THOH also needed to compete with federal and clerical buildings in the town. The design was entrusted to Rastrick, who came with “old country” connections, being both of England and Eastern Canada (which was already taking on an “old country” status of sorts in the West). The building’s success as representing “old-country” connections was made more complete when it performed (symbolically) as a mourner for Queen Victoria. Regardless of old-country nostalgia, however, the town’s skyline needed a symbol that was its own, not the product of forces outside of the community. The establishment of new traditions in Prince Albert – based in, but not beholden to, old-country traditions – was evident in the local pride and reverence displayed at the funeral of Mayor Cook.

Physically, the THOH was a gathering place for accepted, or “in” community members. It was also a place for delineating groups or classes of community members.
The gallery, remembered as “the gods” by Oliver, was a place for preferred citizens to enjoy preferential seating at events. But it was also a utilitarian space, where for example at Victoria’s memorial, the band and NWMP could be situated to afford them easy exit to assemble for the parade through town. In addition, the gallery could also be a place of exception, as when it was “set aside” for women at political events. The carriage-porch was also a possible elegant delineation-point. People entering the THOH from carriages would be sheltered, unlike people arriving on foot – thereby creating a separation of horse-drawn classes from the pedestrians. Adding to the potential population delineations within the THOH was the presence of the basement police cells, where inebriates and other socially unacceptable, and punishable, people were literally held beneath the accepted people.

Lasting memories – or constructed, negotiated mythoi – were handed down through generations to show what the THOH meant to the Prince Albert community-users. Formal, performative events could reinforce as well as challenge the developing local mythoi of permanence and transience, often associated with the present and the past. Coney Islanders, presently new settlers, cast themselves into the role of original inhabitants. By doing so, they reinforced the ideas that they are permanent inhabitants and that any indigenous inhabitants were past and transient inhabitants of the region. Pauline Johnson and Walter McRae were welcomed to celebrate “past” characters – as well as to accentuate the new, preferred settlers in the THOH and surrounding community. In doing so, local expressions of homeland nostalgia developed alongside a sense of life being better here in the new homeland.

In the Prince Albert THOH performances presenting indigenously themed
material were relatively rare. Performances by First Nation and Métis performers were even more so. This was true despite their significant numbers in the community/region (especially in the early years of this study). This rarity does suggest that exclusionary forces were at work. Yet performances of (and related to) indigeneity are more readily found in the Prince Albert THOH than they are in Qu’Appelle’s town hall spaces. There are several possible reasons for this variation. Regional population differences could be a factor. The most striking difference between Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle was their regional proportions of First Nations and Métis people: one-third in Qu’Appelle and three-quarters in Prince Albert. But perhaps another reason is the relative remoteness of Prince Albert itself. Qu’Appelle was blessed (and in some ways cursed) with proximity to other communities – most notably Regina. It also enjoyed a location on the CPR mainline which gave it more reliable transportation in, out, and through Qu’Appelle than Prince Albert could claim. Perhaps, in Qu’Appelle, such connection and proximity to greater numbers of settlers and settler communities made for a more complete illusion of local First Nations’ displacement. In Prince Albert, despite the influx of new settlers, this illusion of displacement would have been harder to establish, and therefore harder to ignore in community performances.

THOH performances highlight the extent to which public performance and participation were integrated into the core of civic life in Prince Albert. Perhaps the most complete example of this was the Coney Islanders’ performance. The event was a success on several levels. It was new. It was novel. It raised approximately three times more money than the usual penny reading concerts held by the Hospital Ladies’ Aid

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1132 This was also a likely a factor in the previously explored (in the Immigration Hall chapter) differences between Qu’Appelle’s and Prince Albert’s nostalgia regarding the 1885 Métis resistance, and the relative perceived threats in both communities.
Society. The Coney Islanders capped off their summer with a boost to their morale and prestige, and the audience spent an enjoyable evening. Social and ideological forces were at play, simultaneously expressing and shaping community members’ senses of place. This event is a specifically focused version of wider community negotiations regarding the ever shifting sense of what was acceptable and unacceptable, as well as who was included and excluded in this place.

The dominant social groups’ reinforcement of imported European cultural ideals resulted in conformity or exclusion of other, non-dominant groups. Within accepted social groups, enthusiastic participation became a way to raise one’s social standing within the community. The more outrageous – or perhaps uproarious – the performance, the greater the potential gain for the immediate cause as well as the participant. The popularity of such performances encouraged wide participation – albeit within the admittedly narrow definitions of accepted or “in” community members. Entertainments such as these are community-reflecting, as well as community-defining. Participants define, by their presentations and reactions, the dominant community norms. By supporting such efforts, participants can also build social capital. Members of Prince Albert’s mercantile class seem to have been keen participants in such entertainments. They were often singled out for participating, and in doing so supporting their club, their hospital, and frankly their own interests (social, artistic, business, or otherwise).

While the reaction to the Coney Islanders’ performance might have been predictable, some performances offer a more complex range of possible community reactions. The intense silence that followed the Emmanuel College students’ *Last Stand* provided, perhaps unintentionally, a moment of reflection on the place of new settlers in
their recently claimed land. The Boer War volunteers’ celebration might have been an event of unquestioned patriotism, but Rev. Smith did offer criticism at the celebratory tone surrounding their youths’ sacrifices.

Negotiation of presumed male and females roles as well as expectations of the young and the old were in near constant display in THOH performances, whether to support or challenge community expectations. Old, “classic,” plays that portrayed young people’s struggles with older people’s rules were welcomed. *The Spirit of ’99* dealt with the issue of male and female roles in society and provoked the audience to agree or disagree with the play’s presentation of women attaining power. Further opportunities for community explorations of local social values and ideological beliefs were inspired by such provocations as the “town” produced *Old Maids’ Convention* and its answering “country” production, *Breach of the Promise of Marriage*. The different points of negotiation between the two events show some of the diversity of opinions between THOH related community groups, which included town and country people as participants onstage and in the audience.

The THOH was also a site for the negotiation of who was acceptable or unacceptable (who was “in” and who was “out”) in the community. The ideal of creating preferred British citizens from settlers was often tied to ethnicity. This was especially evident in the identification of groups to be excluded from the THOH community (e.g. the Doukhobors who were openly mocked and dismissed). Some groups were accepted or rejected according to context. Like Qu’Appelle and other Canadian towns of this era, Prince Albert, was not welcoming to black *settlers*. However, some black *performers* were welcomed as long as they were temporary or transient. Some unease existed in
Prince Albert even with this arrangement, however, as was evidenced by the reaction to McKanlass, who was deemed too “hot” for this town. These exclusions and exemptions were, as bigotry generally is, based in ignorance, fear, or some combination thereof. But the apparent speed of their implementation suggests that, at some level, such prejudices where imported from an “old country” and found useful for preferential identification in the “new country.” These exclusions could also reflect the new settlers’ struggles to overcome the destabilising notion that they were still relatively transient inhabitants of their new home community. These new settlers, however preferred, sought stability by building their THOH, (re)establishing “homeland” traditions, and by preferring themselves socially in the process of establishing as many rungs as possible beneath them on the social ladder.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

The construction and utilization of public spaces – and the performative nature of such activities – are important mechanisms through which communities negotiate social and ideological values, which in turn help shape community mythoi. Such mythoi, in order to be accepted, must be formed from a base of local senses of place, stories, beliefs, and customs. The town hall sites of interest to this study contributed to such negotiations in their home communities, despite differences such as time, space, and design. Overall, these sites provided their communities with a local focal point for community building in various forms, for example: physical, social, ideological, governmental, and judicial. To the dominant groups within a community, such community-building was undoubtedly beneficial to the community as a whole, and certainly was beneficial to such groups. It is important to remember, however, that it was not necessarily universally beneficial to everyone within the range of influence of the community, or indeed everyone seeking access to or acceptance within it.

There is a power inherent in mythos building. In many ways mythos building is akin to sense of place, especially when considering its potential social power. Regarding the power inherent in the creation of a sense of place, Basso observed how “fuelled by sentiments of inclusion, belonging, and connectedness to the past, sense of place roots individuals in the social and cultural soils from which they have sprung together, holding them there in the grip of their shared identity, a localized version of selfhood.”1133 Basso focuses on the positive aspects of group cohesiveness, but by extension individuals excluded from such a sense of place would not feel part of the local socio-cultural soils

1133 Basso 145-6
from which a sense of belonging might sprout. Exclusion (or a sense of not belonging) and disconnectedness can lead to people with no place in the local selfhood.

**THOH as a Static Symbol:**

Before considering the significance of the performative functions and events held within these spaces, it is important to recognize their physical impact on the developing local mythos. In many ways this study’s town hall sites do physically meet many of the expectations of town halls as previously identified. The practicality of combining several civic functions in one building also allowed the community to erect one visually-dominant structure instead of several, smaller ones. In the North-West these buildings came to communicate a town’s influence, pride, aspirations, and commitment to the dominant cult of progress. The THOHs in Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert were built with great emphasis on community prestige as well as the hopes and desires of attracting future wealth to the community. They were not built because either community had a ready supply of surplus capital to spend, which also fits into Tittler’s observation that the construction or renovation of town hall spaces was more often a function of political development rather than need or prosperity. These sites were built because their communities felt they were essential, not because they were affordable.

In general, the Prince Albert and the Qu’Appelle THOHs – and to some extent the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall – share many similarities (of forms, functions, and roles). But while the communities of Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert shared economic, political, cultural, and social characteristics, they were in many ways quite different places. This leads to the question of whether the THOHs in both these communities are representative
of all THOHs across Canada, or at least in the Prairies, during this period. The simple answer is yes, based on these case studies and the (admittedly limited) wider study of town hall spaces in Canada and Western Canada. The function, performance, and intention of the forms are similar to those in other locations despite locally specific differences based upon location, spaces, and functions. Did similarities of THOH spaces grow out of similarities of their communities (for example town demographics)? In other words, were THOHs only built in towns predisposed to create them? Communities desiring THOHs at this time on the prairies might have desired similar things. They in turn imagined, built, and performed similar sites in different places. Such creation of similar modes of community expression leads to wider questions of the role of theatre and performances in these communities. In these THOH sites, performances were never free of the wider forces (social, cultural, geopolitical) in their community. Such external forces were particularly observable at the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall. But various local influences could have been even more acute in a THOH site, which would have carried inherent ties to various powers (cultural, political, and judicial) from within the community and beyond.

Despite their similarities, the sites also differ in some ways. The Immigration Hall was not a THOH but was for all intents and purposes re-developed as one. The Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert THOHs were built to serve identified, specific needs in their communities, such as: a meeting/performance space, a home for civic governance, police control, and even fire protection – especially in Qu’Appelle. The shed-like, wooden, and utilitarian Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall (built ca. 1883 and used as a defacto-THOH from ca. 1886 on) was adopted when the community was hopeful of
future greatness. The adopted hall was defended as being essential to the town’s progress. User groups attempted to assert control over the space, but ultimately such control could not be enforced. This lack of control as well as its physical deficiencies for the uses demanded of the space highlighted the need for a proper THOH. In Prince Albert, the more elaborate and Victorian-Italianate styled THOH (ca. 1893) was built when its community was also vying for prominence (political, economic, and even symbolic) against other centres in the Northwest Territories (Edmonton, Calgary, Battleford, and Regina). The fortress-like Romanesque revival THOH constructed in Qu’Appelle (ca 1906) was built after the community had been passed over as a territorial and provincial capital. The rampart-like roof details might have seemed especially appropriate in a community determined to communicate that they could, and would, enforce their control over this new place – something they could not do in the Immigration Hall. The THOH was also designed to compete for prestige with other communities that were considered regional rivals. When these THOHs were constructed, the towns’ populations were either approaching, or had just surpassed 1000 people. When, by 1906, Prince Albert’s population had grown to over 3000, the THOH was regarded by some as being insufficient for the city’s needs. Qu’Appelle residents, however, with a town population of almost 800, expressed no such frustrations with their new THOH.

Despite any physical or temporal differences, the sites’ similarities are striking when considering the following: 1) their symbolic place in their communities’ mythoi; 2) the hoped-for community benefits attached to these buildings; and 3) the physical, symbolic, and performative contributions made by these sites to the construction of their
communities. At the time of their construction, these town hall spaces were identified with community aspirations for future prosperity, growth, and prominence. But it is useful to challenge the presented – apparently accepted – propaganda of the day in order to determine the extent to which such arguments were workable plans for the town’s future, or merely hopes for the same. The THOHs’ direct impact on the actual growth of the towns – especially by inspiring outside investment – is not readily evident. Decisions by external actors had far more impact on growth than did a suitably impressive THOH. Resource markets and commodity prices affected local economies and the rate of possible local investment. Federal and provincial governments determined the locations of the capitals of the Northwest Territories and the provinces. Both levels of government favoured neither Qu’Appelle nor Prince Albert when considering the locations of territorial and provincial capitals. Railway companies also helped determine the importance of a community: from some towns’ very existence and layout to the extent of service provided by their train routes. Because Prince Albert was not on the CPR mainline, it had notoriously unreliable train-service and was in constant battles with the federal government and railway companies over train routes and rates of work on the incoming roads.1134 Early Qu’Appelle, on the other hand, was a creation of the CPR, Canada Northwest Land Company, and the federal government. Initially, it benefitted greatly from being the hub of freight, mail, and passenger traffic over train and trail. That advantage ceased when the divisional point was moved. In hindsight, the touted economic reason for building a THOH in both Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert— that it would inspire external investment—seems to have been equally ill-founded.

1134 Or “tracks” if term is preferred.
But this divergence from such dreams of inspiring external investment should not diminish the many benefits – both tangible and intangible – that these sites brought to their communities. What becomes clear in the course of this study is that these sites immediately became a focus for direct local investment of money, time, and labour. Businesses benefitted from the construction and decoration of their halls. Local church and charitable organisations benefitted from having a place in which to raise their profile and fundraise through performative events. In many ways, these town halls were an investment by their communities that facilitated further in-community investments. These sites are valuable built-environment sources for the historical study of a community’s cultural, social, political and financial development. While such direct investments are easily identifiable, the indirect benefits that came to these communities as a result of having THOH-spaces are of equal, if not greater, importance. For example, the importance of the THOH serving as a focus of community pride and optimism is hard to measure, but it is vital to understanding the development of a local community-myths. The performative nature of these sites and the events staged therein has garnered a better sense of the impact of such indirect THOH-benefits on a community. These places and events are examples of the communities’ wider negotiations of community-mythoi.

Studying these THOHs and related events as performances has proven a useful way of exploring these less-tangible community impacts. These sites facilitated what Massey has identified as a constellation of social relations. They became loci for action, interaction, and relation. The sites are the focus of community performative events as
well as performances for the community. In exploring the THOH-as-text, various rhetorical tools intersect with Belsey’s observations regarding texts as being *declarative*, *imperative*, and *interrogative*. These buildings can be read as being, variously, all three. They declare (or impart) both a physical and symbolic territory-of-influence, which is definable both through each site’s physical presence and as well as its various user groups. In some ways, this aspect of the THOH use and construction is akin to rhetorically finding *common ground*. Such common ground is crucial if a group/community is ever to believe in the idea (or sense, if such a notion is not overtly expressed) of a local *hegemonic-we*.

These sites can also be read as inherently imperative – which casts an audience in a role against an outside force and is in turn akin to *identification-by-antithesis*. Pro-THOH people were identified as *progressive*; anyone perceived as being anti-THOH (or even just not enthusiastic enough about it) were *knockers*. The progressives and knockers were labelled such by local newspapers which were extending negotiations into the wider community. It was unimportant that the knockers did not have power enough to prevent the THOH project; their opinion was a point against which THOH support could be rallied. Given the context and the dominance of pro-THOH opinion – editorially and otherwise – the *Progress* could not but engender more supporters of the project to come forth. Once built, the THOH also offered a place where a community (or community group) could assemble in opposition to any group or entity not therein represented. Two groups in Qu’Appelle met under such circumstances – the local option group and ratepayers fighting the relocation of the rural council to McLean. These groups were

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1135 Specifically, these buildings and events transcend to a degree, language barriers and varying levels of literacy.
unsuccessful, but they showed a belief in the power of gathering in the THOH to express their dissent.

These new community-identifying brick-and-mortar structures also created an imaginative space into which a sense of permanence could be invested. Once this process took hold, new settlers could identify themselves as being the rightful, if recent, occupiers of their lands – as opposed to local First Nations, the previous occupiers of the same places. Regionally, these sites were cast as being not only a symbol of hope for future prosperity for their community, but also a symbol of hope that their community would compete against regional rivals. Nationally, these sites served as a focus or stage for expressions of Empire-loyalty, from static presentations of flags and bunting to more interactive rallies in opposition to enemies of Empire abroad and closer to home.

While it might be easy to read these sites as being mostly imperative in nature, there are examples of these sites also performing in interrogative ways. This is especially evident in the sites’ construction, renovation, and decoration phases. The Prince Albert Council carefully furnished and renovated their chamber in order to elevate their own dignity. The Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall was targeted by various community groups who were intent upon renovating and decorating their way to influence over the space. Similarly, the Qu’Appelle THOH – its shape, location, and function – was a matter of public debate (thanks to coverage in the Progress.) The decoration/renovation of these spaces was also a way of questioning and reimagining the spaces. On at least one occasion – the case of A. McPhee’s curtain-gift – contributing to the furnishing of a hall was a means by which a transient outsider gained a certain amount of inclusion as a defacto-community member.
These town hall sites soon came to be symbolic of the authority held by some of their user groups – local government, police, magistrates, and Provincial courts – in what Sack identifies as reification. But user groups could not always expect to benefit by association from such inherent authority. The power projected by the THOH did not always transfer to the event(s) held therein. Perhaps this was due to the complex situations that could arise when, in both Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle, the THOH-space is seen as both the place of civic governance as well as a place in which the community could meet to express dissent. For example, the Qu’Appelle local option supporters hoped to inherit some of the THOH’s authority, only to have their plebiscite soundly voted down. By contrast, in Prince Albert, though public dissent was also possible it was not easy to find in the THOH itself; Rev. Smith’s rebuke of THOH-celebrations surrounding the celebratory nature of the Boer War volunteers’ embarkation was possible in the editorial pages of the newspaper, but not in the THOH itself. The local papers provided extensions of THOH performances into the wider community, that ideological extension-zone might also have been a place where the wider community could express reactions to events in the THOH, dissenting or otherwise (and at the discretion of the local newspaper editor).

Enculturation: Performing the Civilizing agenda:

The similarities of performative-contributions to mythos-negotiation between these sites are not surprising, considering their place in the wider context of the developing settler-mythos in Canada’s “Last Best West.” In their town halls, these communities were creating sites supporting performances of social and ideological values

1136 A tendency of territoriality (Sack 33)
that would, in turn, shape local mythos. Bearing in mind Carlson’s definition of performance as being displays of “recognised and culturally coded patterns of behaviour,” it is essential to acknowledge the role of the THOH itself in shaping the culture that encodes such behavioural patterns in communities. These inherently performative buildings also provided stages for various types of community-defining performative events including the political, cultural, martial, and charitable spheres. The performances at these sites offer insight into various aspects of the local senses of place regarding such intersecting topics as the following: 1) local expectations regarding religious practices; 2) the presumed superiority of British culture and the connected desire to be a loyal outpost thereof; 3) locally acceptable/expected gender and generational roles; and (4) who was locally acceptable and unacceptable – who belonged. The ideas surrounding the acceptability of potential and previous local residents were often interwoven with a larger, more deeply pervasive – if not often acknowledged – negotiations regarding race and ethnicity.

Within these communities, the impact of such performances could be even further disseminated through the local newspapers. The role of the local press in extending a performance-event into the community was invaluable – for both widening the social impact of an event as well as allowing access to such events for this study. In Qu’Appelle, Bishop Anson observed the importance of newspapers for the dissemination of ideas regarding community self-identification. Anson was speaking specifically of religious communities, but the observation is apt for settler communities also. Newspapers were then (often) a person’s only locally produced (and consumed) media.

As such, a newspaper had great power to shape and reflect dominant local ideology to its readers. Anson noted the power of newspapers to expose readers to opinion divergent with their own. The negotiation of such ideas came about through editorial opinion as well as published letters. What is also crucial to remember is the editorial bias – and commercial interest – of these newspapers in order to better understand the forces behind their dissemination of ideas and performative events in these communities.

**Who is In and Who is Out?**

The community members who had the most clout in such performative events in the town hall space were those people deemed acceptable, or preferred. Conventions and norms were established very early in the story of these sites that normalised expectations of acceptability. The preferred members of the community partook in governing and cultural events in the hall, while undesirable residents were permitted only if summoned (for example, to court or to perform a task or deliver goods). Whether spoken or merely inferred, social boundaries negotiated within the THOH made central those who were *welcome* in the town hall, marginalized those who were *unwelcome*, and tolerated those who were merely required (for example, people of Chinese “origin” who were needed to do the laundry).

In the THOHs, town/city councils were usually the accepted final authority regarding the space. But the Immigration Hall brought with it a collection of complications, control of access being the most acute. Uncertain access by the local councils led to open questioning as to who had the right to grant or limit local access to the hall – as the Boyce letters highlight. The most evident exercises of such social
control, especially in the well-documented reports from Qu’Appelle, were the results of
the judicial and detention functions of these town hall spaces. The THOHs were sites
where police and justice functions shared a hall that also hosted other performative
events. In order to attend these events, one must not only be accepted, but also feel so,
i.e. to feel “in” or welcome in performances of community. A negative experience with
the local constable, or court, could impact one’s inclusion in important mythos-defining
events in the THOH. This power to define “in” and “out” could be even more overt in
determining a person’s ability to stay in the wider community. For example, the police
court’s war on vagrancy and old-offenders in Qu’Appelle as well as the constant
overlapping police, penal, and judicial systems in Prince Albert efficiently processed and
excluded unwelcome elements.

Religiously, in both communities, the variety of local Christian denominations
that were also THOH-user-groups would suggest that they were usually all welcome in
the halls. All three sites-of-interest saw extensive performative activity by various
church groups seeking to enhance their church’s prominence (or influence and capital) as
well as contribute to the community negotiations identifying the acceptable local
religions. Despite the few examples of inter-denominational discord, the accepted local
assumption was that Christianity was the only religion to choose. The one space which
appears to have been the site of most intense religious negotiation was the Immigrant
Hall in Qu’Appelle. The Immigration Hall was a space that was symbolically more
uncertain than the THOHs – it was used by the community, but was not entirely of the
community. This uncertainty also might have been a factor in the more earnest
expressions of religious difference and/or disagreement in the Immigration Hall than was
ever apparent in either of the THOHs in this study. This might have been why it was deemed a fit place for the public airings of the Apostolic succession speeches, debates, and interviews. It was a relatively neutral ground for such discussions, as it was a plastic site, committed to no permanent group, denomination, or authority.

The Immigration Hall was also connected with incidents of the community’s more blatant expressions of anti-Semitism – specifically aimed at groups of potential Jewish settlers staying in the hall. The Progress newspaper eagerly published anti-Semitic editorial pieces – aimed at the specific group in the Immigration Hall as well as at Jewish people generally. But it is difficult to point to the newspaper as being the sole inciter of bigotry. Anti-Semitism by the owner/editor could run unchecked. Looking back to the coverage, editorial bias might have created the perception of a more widespread bigotry in the community, but since the newspaper is both a tool for reflecting the community to itself, as well as shaping the local mythos, the local bigotries must have had some base. Upon taking over the Progress in 1898, owner/editor Roscoe E. Law promised that he did “believe a paper of this kind should be published for and in the interests of the people... though we may not always agree with all our readers, we shall strive to treat them in a just, fair and liberal manner, advocating what we consider to be the greatest good to the greatest number.”1138 If Law’s anti-Semitic opinions garnered any backlash, it was not published in his newspaper. His opinion – that the group of Jewish settlers were bad for the region – fit into his role as a self-declared guardian of the “greatest good” locally.

The perceived threat posed by these incoming groups might have been intensified by the community’s lack of control over the Immigration Hall – and by extension the

community itself. Perhaps it was more threatening to the dominant groups in Qu’Appelle because these settlers were ushered into the community hall – the symbolic heart of the accepted settler class – by the Immigration Department, an external authority. It highlighted the lack of control the community had over this space. This act bypassed the regular, local hegemonic controls in place that established who was “in” and “out” in the town. Such a situation did not arise in the Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle THOHs, however, because the “in” groups had more complete control over the space, its use, and access to it.

**British/Empire-loyalty:**

In performative events at all three sites of interest, one of the most constantly advanced themes is a dedication to the local affirmation of the propriety – even supremacy – of British culture. This developing empire-mythos was expressed in many ways – beyond the important and near-constantly displayed effigies of the monarch and British-themed-bunting. When local performers were choosing plays to produce, scripts from Britain were often preferred. This might have been due to the previous cultural experiences of local performers, but these shows must have resonated in the local settler-culture being negotiated.

*Our Boys* is an excellent example of this mythos-in-performance that was produced by local groups in both Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle. The script was well-known and popular in London – which was one of the main features of pre-show press in both communities. Though the play is set in England, themes explored throughout the show seem to have been apt for these two frontier communities. The play is deliciously
interrogative, presenting contrasting characters, opinions, and values while leaving the audience members to decide for themselves which they prefer. This assumes that any are the correct choice, since every character in the play seems to find, in the end, a relatively happy ending through a modicum of compromise.

The show’s young and frustrated lovers who are temporarily foiled by older, paternal influences would have been familiar to young people in both communities where matrons and other arbiters of decorum patrolled dance-floors as a nod to propriety. Both communities were familiar with stories – sometimes true and local – depicting old matrons/patrons seeking to quash the romantic hopes of young lovers. The failures of these romance-quashing characters were welcome and inevitable. The local story of Miss Bungalow still caused a sensation in Qu’Appelle, despite matronly oversight; the perfectly proper Professor Mason soon fell out of favour in Prince Albert, eventually running out of students. And above all, the heroines of the melodrama – more often than not – ended up thwarting their patrons and matrons in order to marry their romantic interests. Such was the case in Our Boys as well as in Sarah’s Young Man. Despite assuring Moggridge that for marriage “I’ll have a nice elderly man,” Sarah ends up betrothed to Sam Sloeleaf. Sam, in turn, is determined to make his fortune in his tea shop.

The goal of upward mobility through entrepreneurial success is also discussed in Our Boys. Socially, the play raises questions as to the most proper way to gain respect in society – something that would be of keen interest to audiences in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle who were the standard bearers in the front lines of the Northwest’s cult of progress. Is Sir Geoffrey’s the best example of respectability, being born into a title, old
social restraints, and older money? He could be read in these settler towns as the
personification of old-world prestige based upon name, fame, and standing? Or, is
Butterman – who worked for his new-money fortune and remains coarse, passionate, and
fresh in manner – a better model of social success? Butterman might have been read as
being representative of new-world progress, colonial money, and earned standing. In
these two towns brimming with young, single men looking to establish themselves with a
Butterman-like fortune, such ideas would be familiar, even if the play’s settings were not.
But the titular Boys of Our Boys also might have resonated well with these settler-audiences. The boys’ attempt to “resettle,” or fend for themselves in the wilds of
London, fails. This failure comes after several particularly pointed remarks about their
uselessness – since they both come from English-money. In the play, immigration agents
refuse the boys on the grounds that they are gentlemen, and thus useless. Such sentiment
would agree with the developing local settler-mythos. Progress-minded settlers preferred
to see themselves (truthfully or not) as part of a movement of independent, righteous, and
hard working men who worked for wealth rather than inheriting it.

The show’s young women discuss the merits of marrying for love, looks, title,
money, or even some combination of such merits. Such a discussion might have been
poignant in communities where young women were outnumbered by the regional surplus
of bachelors, as was the case in Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert. Violet, the heiress, claims
marriage is about vanity and security; Mary, a penniless ward, claims marriage should be
for love above looks and money.1139 Mary can be read as being relatively modern in her
commitment to self-determination. But Mary could also have been read as a subversive
female character. Sir Geoffrey identifies her disinterest in his political opinions and her

1139 Although she eventually marries for love and money, thus avoiding the choice altogether.
fondness for billiard playing as dangerous. Mary has much in common with Cissy in *What Happened to Jones* (also produced by Prince Albert amateurs); her relatively modern and unconventional (or more-typically-male) behaviours – in addition to her general cleverness – are viewed as threats to established order. In *Jones*, Cissy gained the confidence to use these powerful attributes from the women of America’s Western “frontier.” This must have gained her sympathy from an audience with everyday experience as, or with, such western women. Other female characters in the play are portrayed as more closely adhering to gender expectations associated with Eastern American gentrified city life.

British cultural performances were eagerly welcomed into the community, but the zeal with which these communities exported their young men back to fight for their Empire is perhaps the strongest evidence as to the power of the local ideology that sought to prove their community was a loyal outpost of British Empire. The potential sacrifice of young men was – according to the related giddy festivities – apparently universally condoned by civic and religious leaders. Any dissent was not evident – or recorded. The only published objection to the project was from Rev. Smith of Prince Albert. But he only objected to the joyous *tone* of the soldiers’ send-offs, not the fact that they were sent. The lack of significant dissent, however, speaks to the long-building preparations for war in these communities generally, and the town hall spaces specifically. All three of these sites were places which contained local infrastructure dedicated to training cadets and militia. The decisions to dedicate public, THOH spaces for military/militia purposes would not be made without ideological support, i.e. obviously enthusiastic support for such organisations was proper, expected social behaviour.
Both communities identify good practices for manhood (rifle associations, cadets, and militias). There were, however, some differences in the local implementation of these groups. After the departure of the “B” Battalion in Qu’Appelle, local soldiers and militia-members in Qu’Appelle are viewed as being ready-for-export – in order to show the community’s willingness to contribute to their empire. But before the formation of a local militia in Prince Albert there were calls for the creation of a rifle association; such a group was directly linked to the possibility of armed unrest from local threats such as First Nations and Doukhobor groups. These distinctions between the two communities seem to stem from differences in local community mythoi as they were shaped by the memories of 1885. In Prince Albert, the memories of 1885 were dominated by the perceived threat to the town and people in it; the “siege” became a large part of the local mythoi-negotiations. The Prince Albert THOH, however, was later a site where local First Nations’ youth performed as British cadets – to understandably complicated reactions. By contrast, in Qu’Appelle, 1885-6 was seen as a mini golden age, of sorts. The town was bustling with activity and investment while troops were encamped there before being recalled east. First Nations’ foes – or rebels – were already being effigied on canvass in the Immigration Hall. The painting was part of a wider ideological substitution which was relegating First Nations into the past (or memory) as opposed to remaining current Territorial occupants. This was remembered as a time of prosperity, security, dances, dramas, and other vigorous activities. The troops even produced plays with local actors. Their production of Area Belle provided a fascinatingly intricate spectacle: soldiers performed a play which warns young women about the fickle nature of the affections of a man in uniform. The production occurred mere months before the
soldiers were ordered home, reportedly leaving many broken hearts in their wake. The removal of these troops was perceived as being at least as much a socio-economic loss to the town as it was a loss of security. With the start of the Second Boer War, however, the militias of both Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle were seen as a source of exportable Canadian troops who could prove the communities’ places as loyal, contributing outposts of British military might.

These military performances, almost exclusively a male pursuit, were one of many ways that male-expectations were performed in these town hall sites. Male expectations (of the acceptable, included community) as performed in the THOH were fairly constant between the two communities. A man was to participate in local governance and business-groups (councils, boards of trade, and fraternal organizations), make money, provide and uphold symbols of local and regional authority (police, police court, and supreme court in Qu’Appelle), and force (military, militia, rifle association).

The prevalence of males in power in these communities is unsurprising, given wider social expectations of gender at this time. Such inequities might have been more acute in a settler-culture that was very male and young, where formal governing structures were mostly controlled by men. These town hall spaces and events, however, offer a glimpse into the relative performative power of men and women in these communities at a grassroots, everyday level. Various female-led groups were early users of these public spaces in order to raise funds, gain social capital, and exercise some power in town-life. The THOH sites were places where local expectations of female behaviour were negotiated, but the spaces were also where female power could be exercised.
The town hall spaces were sites for male and female cooperation as well as some instances of an active negotiation of male vs. female control of the space. Examples of such negotiations are found in the Kate Boyce letters (written by and inspired by her) that were printed in the *Progress*. To a lesser extent, a similar negotiation is found in the Victoria Hospital Ladies’ Aid’s initial struggle to gain interest from the town council. Male and female temperance group members worked together in Qu’Appelle. Agriculture societies had active male and female membership. But control of these spaces, when divided along gender lines, was often smoothly ceded according to the event in question. To risk over-simplification, events such as charity dinners, balls, concerts, socials, and other such functions were almost exclusively the domain of female organization and endeavour. These spaces created a place in which female-labour could be pooled in order to create more capital for the community: a new hospital or new church buildings for example. Male-organised events shared some of these qualities of community-development, but they were staged with more focus on regional influence and power (through, for example, governments, boards-of-trade, militias, and/or fraternal organisations). Overall, however, any fundraising activities undertaken by these “male” community groups were dependent upon female involvement. In addition to the capital/labour investment in the event, social activities were also bettered by female participation. This was due in no small part to the local scarcity of young females in relation to males. Female involvement – especially young female involvement – became a main selling-point for many of these charity events.

1140 Although any “women’s society” members often worked separately and held separate “women’s work” exhibitions as part of any agriculture fair.
Female power and agency in these town hall spaces was considerable, if often socially complex. The Immigrant Hall saw a steady progression of regional female theatre producers, most often working for various local charities (Guerin, Pott, and Ramsay). K. S. Boyce also stood as an example, if not role model, that young females could expect accountability from older, male governance. But the legend of the Miss Bungalow affair also speaks to the lasting power of propriety in the hall. Miss Bungalow was presented as a glamorous, powerful creature. Her story evolved into a morality-tale warning against disruption to authority – specifically male authority – that can be wrought by an overly-free female at a ball.

While Bungalow was eventually and successfully contained in Qu’Appelle, Prince Albert also exhibited undercurrents of the threat to society posed by powerful females as grotesquely highlighted in Spirit of ‘99. ‘99 was interrogative in nature – the play ends with a call from a character to judge what they have seen after the play ends. Even a play like the Old Maid’s Convention in Prince Albert was perhaps more complex than it appeared. The unacceptability of the Old Maids being presented was never up for negotiation – by the characters or the audience. The arbiters of acceptability were Professor Makernew and his machine, which ruthlessly processed females into a more socially acceptable shape. But since Professor Makernew was played by a cross-cast female performer – making her “in on the joke” – perhaps the character of Makernew was also a chance to mock male expectations and definitions of female age and youth, beauty and ugliness. One month later, Breach of Promise of Marriage was performed “in answer to” the Old Maid’s Convention – literally prosecuting an old, male character over his presumptions regarding his marriage. That both plays were well received, and
attended, suggests that mutual expectations of males and females were popular fodder for performances and social values-related negotiations in the THOH.

It is also important to note that similar negotiations and performances of community ideals regarding acceptable and unacceptable community behaviour are found in the policing and justice areas of the THOH. In Qu’Appelle, the local newspaper provides a good record of the dissemination of police court cases into the wider community – thanks to the Progress’s editorial interest and attention. Police court accounts often present tragic warnings for people who fail to measure up to community expectations. The accounts betray the editorial position which was likely (but not necessarily) reflective of wider community opinion: people failed in the community but the community did not fail people. Personal responsibility, or capability, was highlighted; collective responsibility (any local social safety-net) was not. Anyone incapable or irresponsible was identified as being unacceptable and sent from the community as in the cases of Kate Lynch who found little empathy after her suicide attempt and Barbara Sheber, who was obviously overwhelmed by her domestic situation.

**Race/Ethnicity:**

Across these three sites, performative events helped shape memories, or negotiated authenticities, which created a fertile ground for dominant hegemonic desires of an agreed-upon, future local mythos. Negotiations of who was considered “in” and who was considered “out” often hinged on issues relating to origin, race, and ethnicity. Performances in these town hall spaces were complicated by substitutions and effigying while contributing grist to the local mythos-negotiations as to which origins were locally
acceptable and unacceptable. These three sites were stages upon which preferred settlers performed the role of indigenous peoples or undesirable settlers. In doing so, they defined both groups as existing outside of the accepted/acceptable community.

In both Qu’Appelle and Prince Albert similar, frequent substitutions were enacted with regard to performances of blackness. It is hard to identify these performances as being effigies, since there were, and had been, almost no African-American people living in these regions at this time. Initially, the local fascination with minstrel shows and blackface might seem puzzling – unless it is considered in a wider context. In this era, there was a certain amount of settler border-hopping between the USA and Canada.\textsuperscript{1141} American minstrel show traditions had already been established in Eastern Canada. It is not surprising to see such performances maintaining popularity among a settler population keen to remember where they are from by recreating familiar performative experiences in their new home communities. Such performances also served to pre-determine social and ideological expectations regarding who might be accepted into and rejected from their new settler communities. Traditions of blackface performances were vigorously imported to these communities, thereby engendering a kind of preventive aversion to the acceptance of black settlers. In the Qu’Appelle Immigration Hall, for example, local minstrel shows and other Geo. Purches’ events helped establish expectations of black performers to the point that when a troupe of black performers played the town, they were compared to Purches’ example. In some ways, the local substitution of white performers in blackface was even preferred.

In Prince Albert, while there was some negative reaction to the lewdness of McKanlass’s troupe’s performance in the hall, this seems not to have been a generally applied objection. In fact, “mixed-race” companies marketed themselves successfully in Prince Albert with promises of titillation, excitement, and exoticness. One such case in point was *The Hottest Coon in Dixie* show that promised, among other things, sexy “octoroon” girls, etc. Perhaps the local objection to McKanlass was born of misplaced expectations; his past touring with the respected and respectable Fisks was a feature of the pre-show press. The community seems to have room in the local mythos for such performances in the THOH by outside actors. But when Rev. Hector came to preach and lecture in town, his presentations—though well-attended—were not deemed popular enough to move from the Methodist church into the THOH itself. Hector’s race could have been an issue that affected attendance at his performative events. It might also be, however, that within the community members’ experiences, there was not enough (if any) previous experience with a black pro-temperance preacher to have created a social niche for Hector to step into—even for his brief stay.

Such defining of an event as being outside, or not included in, the community-mythos also extends to other identifiable groups in both communities, for example the Doukhobors in Prince Albert and Germantown residents in Qu’Appelle. But the public scale of conflict seems to have been different in the two communities. There does not appear to have been a territorially-defined Germantown-style conflict in Prince Albert over the Doukhobors. Perhaps this was because most Doukhobors lived in their own communities, only coming into town for work and/or trade. Expressions of Doukhobor-related intolerance were plentiful in the THOH and the community media; but without
the same level of expressed frustration over their physical place in the town or lasting impressions in community stories that were recorded in Qu’Appelle. By contrast, in Qu’Appelle the more constant and intense conflicts over Germantown seem to stem from the perceived transient nature of the Germantown site. It was, like the Immigration Hall, on CPR land; the CPR was mostly an absent, inattentive landlord. The Germantown residents were living near Qu’Appelle, but the council and other power-brokers had less control over this territory than they did over the rest of town. This lack of control might have been at the root of the uneasiness over the Germantown residents who constituted a large segment of the town’s population outside the community’s developing ideological mould regarding preferred settlers. Further complicating the issue (from the point of view of the dominant groups in Qu’Appelle) was the fact that the residents of Germantown did not appear to be working to reshape themselves into a more “acceptable” form. These tensions seemed to disappear when Germantown residents were more formally assimilated into the town – either as tenants of their new landlord, Leet, or as landowners in the townsite proper. Such area specific tensions and negotiations as these in other locations, or eras, would benefit from further study.

But before any defining or shaping of current and future settlers could truly succeed, these communities had to establish a local “New-West” founding mythos. To succeed, such a mythos required an ideological substitution, or surrogation of the “old” West. The most pervasive performances of substitution or effigying in all three of these sites were related to performances of First Nations peoples. Such presentations were part of the wider negotiation, establishment, and reinforcement of the developing settler-mythos. In order for the developing settler mythos to attain new, if created, authenticity,
the community origin-story would need to acceptably account for, explain away, or remove the local First Nations from that vision.

As Thobani observed, transforming insiders into outsiders and vice-versa, or the creation of a class of new, exalted insiders required a home with a sense of permanence. This transformation resulted in what Roach identifies as imperfectly-deferred memories of previous inhabitants of the region. The THOH was part of the performance of wider civic developments – or “improvements” – that can be read as a kind of community-scale homesteading. A settler had to “improve” a homestead over time in order to secure official claim (via benchmarks such as acres-ploughed, woods cleared, or buildings erected). Like homesteaders, these communities used civic improvements, including their THOHs, in order to establish claim as much as to provide for citizens’ wants and comforts.

The most accepted presence of First Nations peoples in these sites were as socially-acceptable effigy, e.g. the substitution of white settlers to represent the local indigenous population at the Canoe Club performance in Prince Albert and costumes at fancy-dress balls in both Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle. Pauline Johnson, an “authentic” First Nation performer, appeared in both communities under some layer of effigy. To the settler-audiences in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle, Johnson was a representative of a generalised, Canadian “Indian-ness.” Even her most ardent admirers praised her in blatantly racialised/racist terms, privileging her English ancestry while identifying her Mohawk lineage as a connection to a dying race. Theodore Watts-Dunton in his introduction to the 1917 edition of the collection of Johnson’s poetry *Flint and Feather* predicts:
that Canada will, in future times, cherish her memory more and more, for of all Canadian poets she was the most distinctly a daughter of the soil, inasmuch as she inherited the blood of the great primeval race now so rapidly vanishing, and of the greater race that has supplanted it.\textsuperscript{1142}

The only ambiguity is whether Watts-Dunton applied the term “greater” to white people generally, or those of the English “race” specifically. The Biographical Sketch in the book seems to prove the latter:

E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake) is the youngest child of a family of four born to the late G. H. M. Johnson (Onwanonsyshon), Head Chief of the Six Nations Indians, and his wife, Emily S. Howells, a lady of pure English parentage, her birth-place being Bristol, England, but the land of her adoption was Canada.\textsuperscript{1143}

That her English ancestry was described as “pure” highlights the esteem with which the biographer held such lineage, in keeping with Victorian attitudes which accompanied the expansion of the British Empire.\textsuperscript{1144}

Modern opinions regarding Johnson’s place in the performance of Canadian culture are complicated. Johnson’s “complex self-positioning” leaves modern scholars of mixed opinions “because Johnson’s role in Canadian literary and cultural history satisfies a variety of positions related to racial identity from princess to pawn to self-professed promoter of Aboriginal culture.”\textsuperscript{1145} In her lifetime, however her identity was clearer with regards to national news coverage “while much coverage centred on her partial

\textsuperscript{1142} Johnson, E. Pauline. \textit{Flint and Feather; Collected Verse}. Release Date: June 24, 2004. Project Gutenberg EBook #5625, Produced by Andrew Sly, http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/5625/pg5625.html: The Etext producer noted: “Printed copies of this title from the 1917 edition onwards have had the misleading subtitle "The Complete Poems of E. Pauline Johnson" which has been omitted here.”

\textsuperscript{1143} Watts-Dunton, Theodore, “Introduction In Memorium: Pauline Johnson,” in Johnson, E. Pauline, \textit{Flint and Feather; Collected Verse}.

\textsuperscript{1144} R.B. Shepard, \textit{Deemed Unsuitable} 74-75: Bruce Shepard, in exploring racism in Canadian immigration policies, observed that such feelings of white superiority was widespread in the British Empire, as “The Victorian era was a particularly negative one for the development of race relations. The worldwide expansion of the British Empire, made possible by technological superiority, served to confirm British views of their own racial supremacy.”

\textsuperscript{1145} Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, 102.
Mohawk roots, the press, in a disciplining role as champion of and cheerleader for colonialism, offered readers an uncluttered vision of Johnson. She was Canada’s Indian poetess princess—she belonged to Canada.”

In performance, she presented herself first in “Indian” costume and then in a Victorian dinner-gown delivering her “Indian” and “non-Indian” according to which costume she wore. Her costume change would have been read as a welcome character progression. Her transformation fit into the dominant settler-mythos, in that it “served as an effort to visually affirm her cultural evolution (and reify the central tenets of Canada’s colonial dream): the transformation from Mohawk princess to patriotic Canadian.”

Her performance proved very successful with white audiences, who “love[d] these ‘authentic’ Indian props. They thrilled at the war whoops, the dangling scalp, the name they could not pronounce, the poems of torture and war. She enjoyed immense popularity.” The audiences found her performances of Indian-ness acceptable, perhaps, because they were read as nostalgic stories of the past, reinforcing the local mythos that settlers were replacing a disappearing First Nations’ presence. Such substitution and forgetting had to happen for these sites to become read as having the authority begat of new-permanence.

Lingering tensions surrounding the veracity of this aspect of the developing settler-mythos surfaced in Prince Albert, during the Last Stand performance of the cadets from Emmanuel College. This performance appears to have created an unsettling dichotomy for the audience as the cadets were filling the roles of British warriors in a last stand while, under their uniforms, still being “savages” – who were usually cast as

1146 Ibid.
1147 Ibid, 104-105.
1148 Francis, 128.
attackers of such warriors. Insight into what may have inspired the “intense silence” with which the audience greeted the scene can be gained through thorough investigation of the cultural, local, and regional context surrounding the performance. Though the community appeared to have successfully substituted away most first-hand First Nations’ performances and participations in the THOH, the tenuous nature of their created settler-mythos still could surface.

**Wider-explorations:**

This study focussed on two communities and three sites, but a similar study can, and should, be undertaken more widely. This method of study is directly transferrable to the study of the mythos-negotiation in other rural communities, their associated public spaces and/or buildings, and other factors surrounding their community’s hopes, plans, and circumstances. The extent to which these sites benefitted their communities – and whether these benefits matched the original hopes for the site – can only be determined through similar examination of other communities, including those within and outside of the socio-economic context of these western-THOHs. As some incidents connected to the Immigration Hall showed, there is great value to a community in having a symbolic home that is secured by, and for, local use. Uncertainty over such spaces might play a role in shaping a community’s tolerance to changes, or challenges, to the current local-mythos regarding who belongs and who does not.

The dynamic and changing nature of these THOH spaces, physically and symbolically, also merits closer study. This study explored changes such as the shifting role and significance of the THOH within the regional as well as local power structure
If this exploration were extended (for example even through WWI and beyond) then a more pronounced transformation of the spaces could be studied. A wider comparative study of similar prairie spaces and associated places that were more drastically changed would allow for more pointed discussion of the dynamic meaning of these spaces in their communities. For example, while the THOHs in Prince Albert and Qu’Appelle have not yet been demolished, other communities have lost their THOHs. The spaces were lost for various reasons: fire (Govan and Davidson); demolition (Hanley, Regina, and Rosthern); or even renovation so drastic as to change the nature of the structures themselves (Duck Lake and Moosomin). This study focused on the THOH-related mythos created in an era of building and growth, the beginning of these spaces. But close study of the THOH-related mythos that came out of the end of these spaces would yield valuable insights as well.

These complex and dynamic spaces might also provide useful sites for proxemic study in the vein of Edward T. Hall (and others). Such a study would depend upon a site being found with sufficient data to support proxemic study. For example, more specifically detailed accounts of the motions and interactions of people in the spaces. Proxemic ideas such as the identification of the fixed, semi-fixed, and dynamic nature of spaces could reveal community points of negotiation or tensions surrounding differing cultural expectations. Once proxemic study is a possibility, then work based upon it is

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1149 In these two spaces, the upper-floor auditorium spaces were eventually removed from the structure.
possible. For example, performances in THOHs and similar spaces could be examined through reflections on “embodied space” in performative events.  

More broadly, the identifiable development of settler-mythos that emerged throughout this study points to the need for a continued exploration of early performative events that set the stage for local and national negotiations regarding settler interactions – or lack thereof – with local indigenous peoples. How were the presence and absence of First Nations peoples performed in other sites and communities, of various eras and contexts? Were such performances of settler-culture and indigenousness of greater or lesser prominence in other Northwest (or “New West”) sites? If not, to what extent did it – or does it still – play out? Identifying such initial substitutions, or whiting-out, could be crucial to understanding subsequent and currently-accepted social and ideological assumptions regarding local and regional history.

The performative natures of spaces – particularly public spaces – are layered, complex, and rich resources that provide glimpses into the negotiations that underlie a community’s mythos-development. The study of such spaces and their related communities (however variously defined) can provide a wide scope of texts and contexts from which to discover social and ideological forces underlying the local community-mythos. Better understanding such forces can help to challenge, or confirm, assumptions about the accepted local-mythos.

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1151 Low, Setha M., “Embodied Space(s): Anthropological Theories of Body, Space, and Culture,” *Space and Culture* 2003 6:9 (1 Feb 2003), 10, www.sac.sagepub.com/content/6/1/9: Setha Low described “embodied space” as growing out of various lines of study including proxemics, phenomenological understandings, spatial orientation, and linguistics. Embodied space, to Low, “is the location where human experience and consciousness takes on material and spatial form... Embodied space is presented as a model for understanding the creation of place through spatial orientation, movement, and language.”
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APPENDIX A: The Boyce Letters

Kate Stanley Boyce and her sisters, known collectively as “The Misses Boyce,” were identified with events in the Immigrant Hall. They were often included in the reviews of Anglican Church concert, as well as other local events. They were the five daughters of James H. Boyce (b. 1825) and his wife, Annie (b. 1830). James was an agent for New York Life, and a local Justice of the Peace. James and Annie, as well as most of their daughters, were born in India. Their daughters were Florence E. (b. 1851), Constance Edille (b. 1861), Kate Stanley (b. 1870), Nora (b. 1874), and Annie Margaret (b. 1875). Kate was their only child not born in India; she was born in England. She also appears in the 1881 census of England as a pupil at a Ladies College in Hammersmith, England. In addition to her performance-related activities, Kate was also well-rounded enough to win prizes for ducks and pigeons in at least one regional agricultural fair: “Miss Kate Boyce” won the “Pair Pigeons” category and placed third in the “Pair Ducks” category at the Pheasant Forks agricultural show on 27 September 1888.

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1154 “An Assault and Battery Case.” Progress (Supplement), 16 August, 1894.
1155 Canada, Census 1890-91, “Boyce.”
1157 The other prize winners in her categories appear to have been men. “Pheasant Forks” Qu'Appelle Progress, October 12, 1888, Page 1, Item Ar00110. pp. 1,5.
By 1901, Kate was living in Nanaimo, BC with her husband, Hartley Gisborne (Superintendent of Government Telegraphs\textsuperscript{1158}) and their children: Em. Florance (b. 1896), N. H. J. Fredrick (b. 1897), M. Margret (b. 1899), and C. S. Robert (b. 1901).\textsuperscript{1159} Kate and Hartley had two more children together: a son, Kynaston H. (b. 1905) and a daughter, Mary N. H. (b. 1907). The 1911 census, however, lists only 5 Gisborne children; Margaret Maud Gisborne had died in 1903 at age four.\textsuperscript{1160} Kate’s parents, James and Annie Boyce, had moved to Toronto by 1901 with the four remaining Misses Boyce.\textsuperscript{1161}

**Full Text of the Boyce letters:**

K. S. Boyce “Seeking Information” from the *Qu’Appelle Progress* on 15 November 1894:

To the Editor of The Progress:

SIR—I should feel much obliged if you could inform me as to certain points in hiring the Agricultural Hall. Having had to do with the hiring of the building on several occasions, I have been much annoyed with the uncertain terms on which it is leased. On one occasion the price being $3 for the evening with the building swept and in order, lighted, and fuel found; on another $5 is the price, exclusive of lighting and cleaning, the building in a fearful state, no lights, nothing prepared; in fact everything in a dreadful muddle after the last travelling company. Second, who is authorized to receive payments for the hiring of the


\textsuperscript{1161} Canada. 1901 Census of Canada Returns. Ward 4, Toronto (West), ONTARIO, District 118, Subdistrict Number: b-47, Archives Microfilm: T-6500.
happened? Early in the year, after a social, when payments were being made, I was sent to three different people, each one sending me on to another, and finally when I had paid the third, I was told I should have paid for it to the first. I must bring up another irregularity which caused excessive annoyance and trouble: For the synod in June, all arrangements had been made for the use of the hall beforehand, but on the day when all the delegates, etc., were awaiting [illegible] one of the officials would not deliver the key as he said the payment for the last entertainment had not been made. This was inaccurate, as I held the receipt for it in my possession. An apology, however, was made to me for the mistake. If these mistakes are the outcome of changes in the town council, or whatever it may be, and if this Agricultural Hall is for the benefit of the town, surely everything should be made easy on occasions when townspeople wish to hire it, and some publications of terms, etc, would be satisfactory for future guidance. – K. I. [sic] Boyce, Qu’Appelle, Nov. 12.1162

Counsellor Raymond “In Answer to Miss Boyce” from the Qu’Appelle Progress of 22 November 1894:

To the Editor of The Progress,

Sir—I am much pleased that your correspondent, Miss K. I. [sic] Boyce, has drawn attention to the subject of renting the Immigration Building, as it enables me to explain some matters in connection with the same about which there has been a good deal of uncertainty and no little dissatisfaction felt and expressed. In the first place, at the suggestion of Mr. S. H. Caswell who represented the town in the municipal council, a committee of two took charge of the building, with the authority to rent the same at a rate of $3 for each entertainment, the parties renting to provide their own fuel, light and attendance, the proceeds to be devoted to repairing and decorating the building, which was at that time in a most dilapidated condition. To this end the Qu’Appelle Quadrille club was organized and the building taken upon the terms and conditions suggested. They procured a caretaker and provided light and fuel, and after each meeting had the room swept and put in order for the next. On the 14th of April last, in the interval between the quadrille club meetings, the Church of England people required the hall and of course got the use of the fuel, light, etc., that had already been paid for by the quadrille club. Thus Miss Boyce and her friends secured as a favor from this club what she erroneously thinks she was entitled to as a right from the hall committee. The quadrille club not meeting with the encouragement they had a right to expect, nor the appreciation they deserved, decided to cancel their engagement and declined to have any more to do with the renting of the hall. It was about this time that Miss Boyce experienced the difficulty in finding a person authorized to accept payment [illegible] and I felt it my duty to refuse the building for another

occasion until Miss Boyce produced a receipt for the payment which at once set
the matter to light.

During the summer I tried the experiment of renting the hall and providing light
fuel [illegible] at $3, and the following shows the unsatisfactory result:

Receipts:
April 23 -- Presbyterian Church tea meeting $3.00
May 31 -- English Church social $3.00
Aug. 10 -- Informal hop $3.00
Total $9.00

Expenditure:
Caretaker, three meetings $1.50
Coal Oil $2.10
Lamp Chimneys $1.75
One Cord slabs $3.50
Total $8.85

Leaving a balance of 15c for insurance

In view of this statement, I submitted a proposition to a recent meeting of
the council to raise the rental to $5, exclusive of light, fuel, or attendance. The
proposition was approved, and under the new regulations the hall was rented by
Miss Boyce for the occasion referred to in her letter to your last issue.

In this connection it may not be amiss to publish the annexed statement of
receipts and expenditure in connection with the Qu'Appelle Quadrille club, as the
proceeds were used in repairing and furnishing the hall, and its publication may
satisfy the minds of a few who felt somewhat inquisitive as to what was being
done with the money realized:

Receipts
Jan. 12 -- Quadrille club meeting $41.00
Jan. 26 -- $53.00
Feb. 6 -- $59.00
Mar. ___ -- Arabian doctors $10.00
May 24 -- Qu'Appelle Quadrille club $15.00
Total $178.00

Expenditure
Printing $7.00
Music $31.00
Catering and attendance $19.60
Total 57.60

Refreshments--
Ham, flour, coffee, sugar $38.70
Sundries $1.95

Furniture and repairs--
Dishes, cloth for curtains $15.85
Carpet for stage $4.05
Stove and pipes $9.85
Painting, papering, etc. $50.00
Total $120.40
Total... $178.00
Of the above expenditure $4.50 was paid for hams destroyed in the station fire, and $20.85 for music and refreshments for an entertainment provided for Feb. 21, but which did not take place.\textsuperscript{1163}

Anonymous “Criticism of Mr. Raymond’s Reply to Miss Boyce” \textit{Qu’Appelle Progress},

29 November 1894:

It is to be regretted that an explanation of the receipts and expenditure on the hall due to the public, who so well patronized the committee's entertainments on account of their excellent object in using the receipts for putting the hall into a condition fit to be used, was not made before, and that the remark made by Mr. Raymond in his letter that he now gives the information to satisfy "the minds of a few who feel somewhat inquisitive," which is both uncalled for and impertinent. As Miss Boyce and her friends hired the hall on the 14th October last with the understanding that fuel, light and attendance were to be provided by the committee or proper authorities for three dollars, the price fixed by the council, I fail to see that Miss Boyce and her friends are under any obligation to the Quadrille Club or committee, and it comes with very ill grace for Mr. Raymond to make any such statement as he did in his letter. His statement that at a recent meeting of the council he made a proposition to raise the rental to five dollars exclusive of light, fuel and attendance, and that the proposition was approved and that under the new regulation the hall was rented to Miss Boyce for the occasion referred to in her letter is not in accordance with the views held by some of the councillors, as I am told from good authority that the council intended the five dollars rental to include light, fuel, and attendance, and if such is the case Miss Boyce is certainly entitled to a refund of the amount expended by her for fuel, light and cleaning a very dirty room. Besides, if Mr. Raymond thought that his five dollars did not include cleaning the hall, why did he tell a gentleman the reason the hall was not cleaned under his orders on that occasion was that he was too busy to see about it. Mr. Raymond is certainly mistaken when he says that no entertainment took place on the 21st February last; on the contrary, I have been told by those present that it was a most enjoyable affair and the greatest success of any of the entertainments given by the committee, and considering the success and the expenditure of $20.35 incurred, the public might well ask why the entrance money was refunded to those who so enjoyed themselves, and the fund unnecessarily burdened with a loss of $20.35. Mr. Raymond's statement that the committee's entertainments were not patronized is refuted by the figures given by him in his letter--they clearly show that the efforts of the committee were a great

\textsuperscript{1163} Raymond, “In Answer to Miss Boyce,” \textit{Progress}. 
success. In conclusion, is not the action of Mr. Raymond, in refusing the hall to Miss Boyce and her friends on account of his, too often expressed, antagonistic feeling towards the Church of England?\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{164} Outsider, “A Criticism of Mr. Raymond’s Reply to Miss Boyce,” \textit{Progress}. 
APPENDIX B: The Bungalow Affair

An account of an 1883 ball, organized by Major Walsh, where it was reported that men outnumbered women eight to one:

A lady known as Miss Bungalow made a great sensation and attracted to her side many of our guided [sic] youth. One of the most prominent figures from Regina was Mr. Hunter from the Bank of Montreal, who danced once with Miss Bungalow, and that lady declared that she had never danced with a man who went on a lighter step around the room. Captain Steele and Provost of the Mounted Police were the only officers present, but there were any amount of troopers and they danced well and behaved well and their red coats made the room look picturesque.

Mr. Henderson, with his long beard, sitting on the stairs with a girl, looked like Merlin and Vivian, the girl looking like, as Tennyson says, some lovely baleful star near the grey vapour of his beard. Captain Steele piled in like a Trojan and flirted, his eyes gleaming with phosphorescent fire while the handsome Provost looked like some knight of old, so distinguished was his bearing.

His spur was broken but what was that? He broke at least a dozen hearts. Sergeant Bliss and Pringle well supported their officers. What heart could resist the fascinating St — n whose bow was a circumstance of the evening. He danced with everyone and there was a desperate and deadly struggle between this young banker and one of Regina's merchants, the manly Tims. There was a whisper that S. had left a lady behind him who should have graced the scene. It is the old story of men's careless selfishness... Miss Bungalow had, she said, seen at least 40 masculine and ruby lips glued to the nasty necks of those horrid bottles. With a bewitching toss of the head and an angelic smile (251) coupled with a whole battery of irresistible[sic] love missives she turned with sparkling eyes to the now agitated countenance of our handsome young barrister and in her sweetest manner said, "Let us two just for fun play rubies to rubies instead of rubies to crystal." Just then a man of authority appeared and having remarked that such games were not strictly on the Q. T. drew the gloved hand of the lovely Miss B. within his arm and led her away. The dance kept up with great spirit until 4:00 a.m. The strangers put on their buffalo coats and stepped into the chill of the night and so to the train. Our own Mr. Jackson was a host in himself and showed great attention to the visitors.1165

1165 Qu’Appelle Historical Society, 250-251.
APPENDIX C: Angelica and John Francis Guerin

The Guerins appear in the 1881 census of England, living in the District of Truro (Sub-district: Kenwyn). John Francis Guerin (b. “abt 1852” in Aldgate, Middlesex, England) is listed as working as an auctioneer. Angelica M. Guerin, John’s wife, (b. “abt. 1851” in Hythe, Kent, England) was listed as being a “Professor Of Singing (MSCN).” They then had one daughter, Elsie. The only available census information for the Guerins in Whitewood is for the 1906 census: Guerin, J. F, 54; Guerin, A. M. (Wife) 49, both born in England lists emigration year as 1888, which could be a mistake, or a technicality of immigration or tax law. Also Guerin, N. T. Son, 16, Born in SK.

The Guerins raised a family in Whitewood (Elsie, May, Nora and Hubert). Some information about their life there, specifically their interactions with the “French Counts” of St. Hubert is touched on in Kristian Sullivan’s M. A. Thesis, The French Counts of St. Hubert: an archaeological exploration of social identity. Their family life was not without tragedy. The reading room entertainment in 1888 seems to have occurred on the same night that the Guerin’s infant son died. The couple lost another son to a

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1166 1881 England Census. Kenwyn Civil Parish, County Cornwall, England. Registration district: Truro; Sub-registration district: Kenwyn; ED, institution, or vessel: 5; Piece: 2312; Folio: 85; Pg 15.
1167 In Canada, Angelica is listed as being five years younger than her husband; in England she was listed slightly older than him. This could be the result of a bookkeeping error, or her taking the opportunity of immigration to become five years younger.
drowning accident in 1897.\textsuperscript{1170} In addition to directing and performing in shows and concerts, Angelica’s lectures were also eagerly anticipated:

We understand it is the intention Mrs. Guerin, late of the Royal Academy of Music, England, and a pupil of Signor Ferrari and Walter Lacy, who has testimonials from the Lord Bishop of Truro and others, to give a series of six lectures on Elocution and in the course of same to give readings from well known authors.\textsuperscript{1171}

The timing for her identified training is right; Walter Lacy taught Elocution at the Royal Academy of Music in the late 1880s.\textsuperscript{1172} Her experience in England was further documented when “The Guerin Family Comedy and Burlesque” company played Qu’Appelle in 1898 (performing Planche’s \textit{Golden Fleece} and an original farce “arranged by” A. M. Guerin called \textit{Popping the Question}). The preview press coverage assured readers that “we have been shown a number of old country press notices which speak in highest terms of Mr. and Mrs. Guerin’s histrionic ability.”\textsuperscript{1173} Dr. Guerin’s combination of profession and hobby led to some newspaper notices that, at first glance, seem odd, for example:

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Free Concerts in the town hall, Qu’Appelle, Thursday, Friday, Saturday of this week, consisting of Irish and Yankee character sketches, banjo playing and singing, teeth extracted free of charge at each entertainment. Will be at Wolseley next week.\textsuperscript{1174}
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\textsuperscript{1171} “We understand it is the intention of Mrs. Guerin,” \textit{Progress}, 19 April 1888, p1, http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/QPP/1888/04/19/1/Ar00103.
\textsuperscript{1173} “The Guerin Family,” \textit{Progress}, 17 May 1898, P5, peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/QPP/1898/05/17/5/Ar00504.html: Some of these press clippings, and other materials relating to the Guerins’ lives in the Northwest are in a family-held diary, which has proven difficult to access to date, but might prove to be the basis of further, fruitful study.
APPENDIX D: The Croaker


In a letter to the editor from 3 October 1890, “The Croaker,” weighed in on various topics of contention within the community, which included: complaining about the road overseer’s poor job of grading and/or plowing roads near the town sidewalks; commenting on the Legislature being called back on 29th Oct.; and the current good harvest weather after recent poor weather. Croaker’s most THOH-connected observation dealt with the bubbling discussions regarding intra-denominational disagreements concerning apostolic succession as follows:

Say, Boss, and now I’m going to touch on a skeery subject. Don’t you think the Gospellers are going it too strong? You don’t, eh? Well, it seems to me I heard of you argifying as well as the rest. You say that is the way to get at the truth. You say that is the way to get at the truth, providing it ain’t done in a vindictive spirit. Mebbe so; but I read long ago about argifying that ended in persecution. Is man better now than he was then? You say he is; I’m glad to hear it. But ain’t there danger of somebody’s feelings being hurt? You say they ought to be hurt if they are perverting the truth or ain’t doing their duty. Mebbe so. Now just look at those apostolic succession fellows; it seems to me some folks are too hard on them. It don’t hurt them to think as they do. Yes, it hurts the other preachers, but I don’t think they ought to care. I have thought results was the best standard by which to measure any church or sect. Can we not call those the true successors of the apostles who inherit their Pentecostal power? Then we have the plunge and sprinkle notions of baptism. I like the fire, zeal and earnestness of the much water folks, but ain’t there danger of thinking more about the water than the Spirit? I ain’t much of a judge, but as far as my reading of church history goes I find that in all ages, in proportion to the importance made of form and ceremony there is lack of life and power.\footnote{Croaker, “The Croaker Talks.”}
APPENDIX E: Amy Blanche Pott’s Event Reviews

From the Progress, 30 December 1909, Local Items:

Mrs. F. Pott and her able supporters have every reason to be pleased with the reception given them in the town hall Tuesday evening. A Full house, generous applause and receipts amounting to over $200 express the popularity of the entertainment.

The first part of the programme consisted of the presentation of living statuary, twelve scenes in all, interspersed with vocal and instrumental music. The draping and pose of the statuary and the effect in general were extremely artistic and expressive, each scene requiring three or four presentations to satisfy the appreciative assembly. Among the most striking were Compassion and the Divine, War, Peace and Qu’Appelle (who calls). The music, vocal, violin and piano was also heartily encored. The second portion consisted of a dramatic extravaganza entitled “Love’s Stratagem” or “The Prince and the Gypsy.” Carlotta, queen of the gipsies, together with her maiden followers, vows to remain single, but becomes enamoured of the handsome Prince of Belgravia, Alphonso, and her followers likewise accept in secret the attentions of neighbouring brigands. Alphonso joins the brigand band to be near the gypsy queen, is suspected of being a spy, is driven out but Love finally conquers and the maids are absolved from their vow.

The costumes throughout were a marvel of art and pretty fancy, no two alike yet all in accord with gipsy temperament and brigand taste. Each character was well taken and the enunciation, save in one or two of the songs, was better than is usually found in an amateur performance. The herald accepted her part only the day before and therefore had not time to become letter perfect.

To many the play will afford new interest when they learn that it was written by Mrs. Pott, who also acted as stage manager and assisted in planning the costumes. To her and Mrs. Dickson fell the credit of painting the scenery. The music of the songs, “Just wearying for you,” “Making Hay” and “The Eaglet” was composed by Mrs. Pott.

When all the preparations necessary to put on such an excellent dramatic and scenic success are considered it is safe to say that it eclipsed all previous local entertainments and those responsible therefore have every right to feel proud of their efforts.

From the Progress, 15 December 1910, P1:

Unqualified Success—Extravaganza Draws Full House

Those who remember the success attained by Mrs. F. Pott and her company in their previous extravaganza will not be surprised to learn of a greater success achieved in "The Proving of the Princes" on Friday evening last. The play consisted of three sets. The theme is the conquest of good over evil. Mr. A. Rawlinson as Prince Leopold de Montmorence and Mr. Jos. Henley as Prince Hubert de Calavra are contestants for a kingdom, the latter being the rightful heir
but the former by a pact with the Spirit of Evil (Mrs. Frank. Pott) obtains the title, wealth and power. In doing so he sacrifices his memory and his better nature, forgets his engagement to Princess Imogene (Miss Henley) and sues for the hand of Princess Nadine (Miss Sumner), who loves Prince Hubert. Complications follow and a struggle between the good and evil spirits ensues in which the former finally win. Prince Leopold by a good deed escapes the thrall of evil, regains his memory and honor and restores the kingdom he has usurped.

King Unfortunatus (Mr. W. Reeve) and Euphemia, his wife (Mr. L. Stocker) occupy a prominent position throughout, their humorous remarks and antics portraying none of the depression expected of bankrupt rulers.

The scenery and costumes were worthy of unstinted praise, excelling anything ever put on here, professional or otherwise, while the players took their parts with as ease and smoothness seldom obtained on first night by a professional troupe.

The plot, while sufficient to hold the play together, does not prevent the introduction of many lilting songs and choruses, local hits without a sting, and fancy dances.

To Mrs. Pott much credit is due for her painstaking efforts in rehearsal, for her labors in planning and arranging the beautiful costumes and scenery and for her expressive portrayal of her own difficult past as the Spirit of Evil. Those who so ably assisted including Mrs. Henderson, accompanist, and Miss Jelly as the Spirit of Good, all showed ability in interpretation and performance.

The entertainment which was given for the Agricultural Society, was, as it should be, favored with a packed house and the audience have nothing but praise for the performers and performance.

A feature of interest between acts were the humorous and well-rendered songs of D. Graham Stewart and the short addresses of professor Rutherford and F. H. Reed on agricultural matters.

A Palpable and timely hit was made when the King (Mr. Reeve) and Queen arrived in their automobile which broke down and gave the king much trouble. "Finally he remarked, "It won't run for Reeve."
APPENDIX F: Armoury Accounts

In October, payments were made to “J. P. Beauchamp & Co., Armoury Account $11.00; B. Harvey Armoury account $21.70.”\textsuperscript{1176} These costs listed as being in addition to the general hall maintenance costs paid that month, specifically: “Improvement fund, $3.60, Hall $45 = $48.60; W.H. Hunter Hall maintenance $3.90; J. P. Beauchamp & Co., Armoury Account $11.00; B. Harvey Armoury account $21.70; W. Glass, salary $50, hall maintenance $1.00 = $51.00; ... Moore Milling Co., electric light $113.62.”\textsuperscript{1177} In January 1910, further armoury expenses were paid by the town, namely “the account of W. K. Wilson for work at armoury $5.10; B. Harvey, lumber for armoury 1.90 = $7.00.”\textsuperscript{1178}

\textsuperscript{1176} Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 28 October 1908; “Town Council Meet,” Progress, 5 November 1908, P1.
\textsuperscript{1177} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1178} Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 January 1909.
APPENDIX G: Identified Attendees of the South Qu’Appelle R.M. Ratepayers’ Meeting 1911

The identified attendees of the rural ratepayers’ meeting of 13 February 1911 in the Qu’Appelle THOH were mostly residents of the rural municipality. The following attendees were all listed as ratepayers in 1906: B. S. Ross, A. E. Nicholls, W. Henley, F. J. Cates, J. P. Jones, W. G. Vicars, A. Gray, James Smith, T. Bray, F. G. Whitting, L. J. Longpre, W. J. Wyatt, W. L. Rogers, J. Rogers, D. Fraser, R. Skinner, H. Bunn, Jno. Howden, and W. Holliday.\textsuperscript{1179} Three other attendees are listed in 1911 census returns and identified as being long-term residents: J. P. Creamer, G. C. D. Edmunds, and J. Ramsay. Creamer was listed (as he was in the previous censuses of 1901 and 1906) as being a Veterinary Surgeon, living on Walsh Street, and of French Canadian origin.\textsuperscript{1180} Edmunds was a farmer from England (in 1886).\textsuperscript{1181} The likeliest candidate for the attendee, John Ramsay, was a 47 year old farmer from Ireland (in 1883).\textsuperscript{1182}

Anecdotally, a note regarding a pre-meeting incident reveals that at least two town residents were present: “while Jos. Ellis was getting down chairs from the gallery some of the chairs overbalanced and fell throwing Mr. Ellis to the floor with them, seriously injuring his head and body. Dr. Henderson, who was present, attended to his injuries and had him removed to his home.”\textsuperscript{1183} Both Ellis and Henderson lived in the town: Ellis on St. George St. and Dr. Henderson on Qu’Appelle Street.\textsuperscript{1184}

\textsuperscript{1179} R.M. of South Qu’Appelle By-Laws Auditor’s Reports 1884-1893 Assessment Roles 1904-1906, SAB R-2.740, No.3.
\textsuperscript{1183} “Public Protest against Removal of Council to McLean and Purchase of Hall—No Opposition,” Progress 2 March 1911, P1.8.
\textsuperscript{1184} “Previous to the meeting,” Progress, 2 March 1911, P8; Canada, Census 1911, Schedule No. 1, Saskatchewan, Qu’Appelle, 19, Townships 17, p.12, l.32, “Ellis,“
APPENDIX H: Nil Desperandum

Communication – To the Editor of the Progress.

Dear sir,

Some epithets are like roses which waist[sic] their sweetness on the desert air. It is a pity that fragrant things are lost and wasted. Some ratepayers were consigning to oblivion and execration members of a very honorable body, an action very deplorable to relate. Personally, I am fond of flowers and fossils also, honorable gentlemen. Now sir, ratepayers ought to be informed that Reeves and councillors are always gentlemen. A Reeve is like a Caesar’s wife, above suspicion. He frowns down legislation and everything that is small or pettifogging. The motto of a Reeve is, sumnum bonum (the chief good).

Councillors, gentlemen, are brainy men. They live in the sunshine, they shine resplendent, the benign influences of their personalities are refreshing as a summer’s breeze. Officials basking in the sunshine of their patronage bubble over with delight and the typewriter clicks out its joy.

Reeves and Councillors make the world as merry as a cricket. Don’t carry wrong impressions gentlemen, they will prove to be a burden. Even Bill Sykes never breaks his back carrying the safe. He just takes the contents and is satisfied.

*Nil Desperandum*1185

1185 “Communication,” *Progress*, 2 March 1911, P1.
APPENDIX I: Local Option Legal Cases – Petitions and Votes

Leet’s signing the local option by-law petition landed him in police court facing charges as to whether or not he had lived in Qu’Appelle long enough to legally sign the town’s petition. The performance of the court this day was unusual for several reasons. Most accounts of J. P.’s hearings in Qu’Appelle appear to include one or two Justices of the Peace. This day, four J.P.’s sat to hear the cases (J. R. North, F. Amas, D. Browne and W. G. Vicars). Two prosecutors, Messers. Lennox and Reeve, brought cases against the accused and their lawyer, Mr. Bryant. Two prosecutors seems somewhat of a luxury for the J.P.’s court, which implies that these cases were considered important to someone in authority. The cases dealt with local bylaw petitions and the right of two men to sign the town petition.

One of the J.P.’s was Frank Amas, the president of the moral reform society in Qu’Appelle. Amas was sitting as judge on a case regarding a cause dear to the moral reform society (the local option vote) in the same room in which he also presided as president of the moral reform society. It is unclear as to whether Amas, as a leader of the moral reform society was any more or less biased in the case than the other J.P.’s, however the large turnout of justices suggests some attempt at ensuring as wide an opinion as was possible. It seems, however, that no one could escape opinion either for or against; the defence lawyer was Mr. Bryant of the firm Allan, Gordon & Bryant, Regina, whose senior partner, J. A. Allan, was scheduled as one of the featured speakers at a 15 November Local Option rally in the Qu’Appelle THOH. As the Progress explained:

1186 “Remember the monster meeting,” Progress, 10 November 1910, P1.
The case against M. A. Leet turned on the question [of] whether he had been a resident in the province the required time, one year. Messrs. Lennox and Reeve endeavoured to prove that he had been a resident in Revelstoke 9 months and Vancouver 3 months. The case was dismissed [by] the magistrate holding that the prosecution had not made out a prima facie case. A point of interest was the interpretation of the law re residence in the province, Mr. Bryant contending that faulty punctuation of the section left the matter largely in doubt.\textsuperscript{1187}

A record of one of the disputed ballots survived because one rural resident pursued his dispute. On 8 June 1911, almost six months after the local option vote, the case of Luker vs. Starr was brought before Judge Hannon at the sitting of the district court in Qu’Appelle. The Progress reported that it was the sitting’s “most interesting civil case tried... in which the defendant, J. C. Starr, who was returning officer at the local option election here on December 12, 1910, was sued by the plaintiff, W. Luker, for $200 damages for being deprived of the privilege of voting.”\textsuperscript{1188} Starr was the returning officer in the THOH for the night of the vote, in one of his previously-mentioned multiple roles at the THOH so this would imply that Starr would have been very familiar with the ratepayers lists of both the town and R.M.\textsuperscript{1189}

Luker demanded a hearing in court, and claim for damages. Luker was represented by the barristers Gordon and Lennox, as he “was unable to be present, on account of being on a distant homestead.”\textsuperscript{1190} Starr also brought two lawyers to the courtroom, Messrs. Barr and Sampson, although he was able to be present as the courtroom doubled as the council chamber and was across the hall from his office.

\textsuperscript{1187}“Won and Lost.” \textit{Progress}, 17 November, 1910, P1. 
\textsuperscript{1188}“Qu’Appelle Ballot Case,” \textit{Progress}, 16 June 1911, P4. 
\textsuperscript{1189}Starr also served as the secretary for both the South Qu’Appelle Council and the Qu’Appelle Town Council. He also ran his own farm mortgage lending business out of the town hall, which must have regularly put him in curiously-tolerated conflicts of interest. 
\textsuperscript{1190}“Qu’Appelle Ballot Case,” \textit{Progress}, 16 June 1911, P4.
The story of Luker on voting day, as entered into evidence and reprinted in the Progress, “showed that before voting Luker was sworn and served with a summons to appear before a J. P. for illegal voting. He, however, marked the ballot and handed it to the returning officer, who put it in the ballot box. At the end of the day the ballot was not counted either for or against the by law.” The verdict was a total victory for Starr, as “in summing up, his lordship brought out the following points: the plaintiff had not proved that he was a British Subject; and therefore entitled to vote, that he was at no serious loss of time or money on account of his vote not being counted, and that the defendant had not wilfully and maliciously deprived him of his franchise. Luker’s claim was thrown out and he was assessed the costs of the court.”1191 This courtroom exchange was the last reported performative event in the Qu’Appelle THOH regarding the Local Option Fight.

1191 Ibid.
APPENDIX J: Juvenile Bostonians: Then the Cigar Went Out Full Lyrics

*Then the Cigar Went Out* – Adrian Ross (lyrics) and Leslie Stuart (score).

[Jackson:] As I sit in my hammock, smoking and smoking,
And watching the blue rings curl,
They seem as they rise
full of faces and eyes,
And each is a beautiful girl!
One pretty, piquante, provoking,
A model for man to paint,
Who gracefully sat for the face and all that,
As Venus or else as saint!
Ma petite Adèle,
Sweetly your lips could pout,
But you kissed me before
I could say: "Ah, Je t'adore!"
And so that cigar went out!
[Girls:] Ma petite Adèle,
Sweetly your lips could pout,
[Jackson:] You kissed me before
I could say: "Je t'adore!"
And so that cigar went out!

There's a face in the smoke up yonder, up yonder,
A girl that I like a lot,
Her eyes were a hue that was even more blue,
Each one a forget-me-not!
Beside her I used to wander,
And gaze at the flowing Rhine;
My German was weak but I wanted to speak
And say "Liebes Kind, sei mein!" [Dear child, be mine!]
Allerliebste Gretchen, [Charming Gretchen,]
You were a trifle stout,
When I hinted a kiss,
you said "Ja wohl, gewiss!" [Yes, indeed, certainly!]
And so that cigar went out!
[Girls:] Allerliebste Gretchen,
You were a trifle stout,
[Jackson:] I hinted a kiss,
you said "Ja wohl, gewiss!"
And so that cigar went out!

There's a face in the smoke above me, above me,
With wonderful eyes of black;
And passionate mouth, like a fruit of the South,
That carries my memory back!
She met me and came to love me,
In Italy fair and far,
Beside the blue bay where Vesuvius lay
Still smoking his old cigar!
Bella Giovannina,
You I should rave about;
But you clasp'd me, you know,
and said: "Io t'amò!" [I love you!]
And so that cigar went out!
[Girls:] Bella Giovannina,
You I should rave about;
[Jackson:] You clasp'd me, you know,
and said: "Io t'amò!"
And so that cigar went out!¹⁹²

¹⁹² Ross and Stuart, “And then that cigar went out.”
APPENDIX K: Review of McPhee’s Woman Against Woman

From the Progress, 18 November 1909, P1:

A full house greeted the McPhee Company last night when they opened their return engagement in the four act society drama, “Woman Against Woman.” Too much cannot be said in praise of their production or the manner in which it was produced and played. The story of the play shows the struggle between a fond loving wife, and a scheming adventuress who is already married and has had her husband confined in a lunatic asylum; he is discharged as cured, and finds employment at the home where his wife has been received as an honored guest. He threatens to denounce her and she defies him, and with the aid of G. T. Mugs, a broken down museum manager, has him sent back to the asylum from which he is released three years later and returns to confront her; meanwhile she manages to make Florence Grantley jealous, and the Grantleys separate, he is going to Europe and she retires to live with her uncle. Grantley secures a divorce and returns to marry Blanche, but he loses all fortune, and as soon as Blanche learns this fact she refuses to become his wife, and places the cottage, the summer home of the Grantleys on the market to be sold. Florence buys her old home and orders Blanche to leave. A reconciliation is reached between Florence and Harry, and the play ends happily. Florence Grantley was played by Millie la Lena and she was at her best. The audience grieved and rejoiced with her; she possesses the power of moving them to tears or laughter at her own [___?] pleasure. Her costumes were beautiful. Louie Ramsdell, as Harry Grantly played the part in a mannerly way.

Miss Belle Little as the romantic novel reading maid was a scream from start to finish. Mr. Bertrand caused roars of laughter in the part of M. [sic] T. Muggs. Atha Ramsdelll as Blanche Sterling, the scheming adventuress, made the part exceptionally realistic. Mr. Roberts as Uncle Bert was good.

The specialties introduced between the acts were all first class, and of an entirely different character generally not seem here with travelling companies. At Qu’Appelle opera house. Wednesday night, November 24th. Admission 50 cents, reserved seats 75 cents. Tickets are now on sale at the Central Drug Store.
APPENDIX L: The Coney Island Canoe Club At Home Review

From the Advocate, 2 September 1901, P1:

The Canoe Club “At Home”
The popular members of the Coney Island Canoe club have for weeks past been assiduously practicing for their “At Home” which took place in the town hall last Thursday night. There was a large and enthusiastic audience who seemed to enjoy the bill of fare presented for their delectation.
The first scene, and perhaps the best, was twelve young ladies seated in a large canoe and singing the Canadian Boat song. Miss Kerr sang beautifully the verses and her companions joined in the chorus. Had Thomas Moore, the sweet singer of old Erin, and author of that poetic gem been present, he would have been charmed by the realistic rendition of Canada's Boat song.
The other part of the entertainment represented the Coney Islanders in camp on that sequestered spot on the banks of the Saskatchewan. Admiral Wilson was in charge of the war canoe and all the aquatic braves.
Purser Feoton carried the pay roll.
Scout Ross kept his eyes open that the man of wars didn't collide with a sand bar, an iceberg, or a Saskatchewan crab, so that a second Islander disaster would not have to be recorded.
Commodore Wagner once more imagined himself at home upon the banks of the classic Rhine. His sea costume although not a thing of beauty was truly wonderfully made, and seemed to be a cross between the garb of a newly arrived Doukhobour and a Weary Willie. His singing of the Canoe Club song with canine accompaniment was rich:

    Life on the ocean wave,
    Home on the rolling deep;
    Where the pollywog wiggles his tail,
    Till a tear rolls down his cheek.
    (The above copyrighted and all rights reserved by the Coney Island Canoe Club.)

But space will not permit us giving a full notice of all the performers; of how Norman Russell in a Mother Hubbard gown, of latest Parisian cut, gave a cake walk that touched the audience almost to giving another quarter for the show; of Herb Flanigan's agility in seeing that there was enough grub in the larder for the crew; of the duet of Messrs Valade and Noble and the excellent chorus work of the whole company. Bobby Young's sweet tenor voice being particularly noticeable.
The whole performance was new, novel; and the members have the satisfaction of knowing that about $100 has been added to the Hospital fund.
APPENDIX M: Review of Our Boys at Prince Albert 6 August 1901

From the Advocate, 12 August 1901:

“Our Boys”

The cast included: Judge McGuire; W. J. Symlington; T. S. Jones; THJ Charmbury; FC McGuire; Geo. MacDonald; Miss B. Stewart; Miss L. Kidd; Miss McGuire; Msss [sic] A. Jones

Review:

Highly meritorious... Henry J. Byron’s well known comedy entitled Our Boys. This charming dramatic creation was first produced at the Vaudeville Theatre, London in 1875, and “caught on” in the great Metropolis so thoroughly that it had a continuous run of over 1500 nights. At the local presentation all the town and country around were there. Old gentlemen with silver locks, staid matrons, engaged couples and other couples who would like to be engaged, pretty girls galore—because Prince Albert seems to have a monopoly in female youth and beauty, bashful young men whose hearts went pitter-pat at the sight of the aforesaid feminine loveliness; all were there. The hall was jammed. It is in no sense flattery in saying that the presentation was bright, crisp, indeed a charming one; which showed marked ability, enthusiasm and careful preparation on the part of the performers.

The ladies were particularly good, Mrs. McGuire, as Clarissa Champneys, sister of Sir Geoffry [sic], gave a clever portrayal of the gruff old Knight’s maiden sister. Miss B. Stewart was dignity and grace itself in Violet Melrose, the rich Heiress; whilst Miss L. Kidd, as her poor cousin was so charmingly, sweet, and cute and interpreted her part with such a delicacy and finish that even the most hardened old bachelor sinner—of whom this town has more than enough—gave a sigh for the olden days when he was younger.

The part of Belinda was one of the most difficult to properly interpret, but Miss Jones was quite equal to the task and gave a finished and honest performance.

With the gentlemen it is hard to criticise. The two chief performers, Mr. Justice McGuire and Mr. T. S. Jones reminded one of a couple of trained thoroughbreds, who, getting an even start, kept neck and neck until crossing the tape together, the first prize had to be equally divided. In Sir Geoffrey Champneys, the Country Magnate the judge had a character for which he is admirably adapted. His splendid elocutionary powers, courtly dignity along with a true interpretation made it one of the best in the play.

Mr. T. S. Jones, as Middlewick, the rich retired Butterman, caught the audience immensely. We have often seen a very much less creditable character delimitation in pretentious metropolitan theatres than that of Mr. Jones. His get up was true to life, his accent, that of the genuine successful Devonian butterman whose golden guines [sic?] made him feel that his presence was absolutely essential for the proper revolution of the universe. Mr. Jones made a decided hit.
Mr. Symmington, as Sir Geoffrey’s son; the languid lackadaisical doncher
know sort of chappie who has been reared with the proverbial silver spoon and
who bursts all the old gentleman’s best laid schemes, did remarkably well.
Mr. Charmbury, the butterman’s son, showed that he has excellent
histrionic ability. He has an admirable stage presence and put honest work into
his performance.
Mr. F. C. McGuire, as Sir Geoffrey’s manservant and Mr. Geo.
McDonald, as Poddles the butler had comparatively subordinate parts, but they
gave a faithful reproduction and were much appreciated.
The whole performance was a genuine success and it is to be hoped that
this is not the last the citizens of Prince Albert may see of the local performers
before the footlights.
Between acts Miss Scroggs and Mr. S. Scroggs delighted the audience by
an artistic rendition on the piano and violin, of popular music.
APPENDIX N: Review of the Prince Albert Boer War Send-off Celebrations

From the *Advocate*, 12 February 1900, P1.

Prince Albert Part of the Empire—Our Northern Metropolis Sends Its Share of the Strathcona Horse—Large and Enthusiastic Gatherings

Local interest in the Transvaal war reached fever heat when it became known that fully twenty of the flower of our young men had volunteered and were accepted for service in the Strathcona Horse. At a meeting of the town council a donation of $10 apiece was unanimously voted the boys, and the free use of the town hall was granted for a farewell demonstration on Thursday night last, for which preparations were hastily made.

On Thursday night the large hall was packed to the doors with all classes of citizens, eager to do honor to those going to the front to assist in upholding the supremacy of the empire. Mr. J. F. Betts, ex-Speaker of the North-West Assembly, occupied the chair. When the curtain rose it disclosed the stage, tastefully decorated with the Union Jack and upon it, just back of the footlights, a large, handsomely framed portrait of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, which was immediately greeted with cheers by the large audience.

The chairman, in a short, happy speech, outlined the nature of the occasion, and then called upon His Lordship the Honorable Mr. Justice McGuire to deliver the oration of the evening. His Lordship proceeded to; show the righteousness of Britain's cause, the necessity for the triumph of the British arms, the gravity of the crisis, the extent to which Canadians would be affected by; the success or failure of Great Britain, and the obligation that rests upon every loyal citizen to rally to the support of the empire. He eulogized in glowing terms the valor which prompts our young men to lay down their lives, if need be, for the honor and glory of their native land; and with touching pathos, which drew tears from an over-full heart, reminded his hearers that occasions of this kind are marked by sadness as well as by pride. He felt sure that the young men going from Prince Albert would do honor to their country and their native town, and that their return, would be hailed with greater enthusiasm than their departure. And if Fate willed that they should not return, then with heartfelt earnestness he commended them to the God of the patriot

“And how can man die better than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers, and the temples of his Gods.”

At the conclusion of his stirring address which was frequently interrupted by applause, His Lordship was warmly cheered. A miscellaneous programme followed, in which Mrs. Wright sang the patriotic song, “Canada,” and Mrs. McGuire favored the audience with the vocal solo ‘Asthore.” Mr. Breckles and Mr. Mitchell rendered two excellent instrumental duetts [sic], and Mr. James McKay gave one of his unique recitations. There was also a hastily organized “Outlander Military Band,” which played “Soldiers of the Queen,” “My Old Kentucky Home,” and other airs to the great delight of the crowd.
After the chairman had announced that if any one required it, or desired it, they could have a little hop, the most successful patriotic demonstration Prince Albert has ever witnessed was concluded, by the hearty singing of “God Save the Queen,” led by the “Outlander Band.”

As the people dispersed a voluntary contribution of some $40 was taken at the door toward defraying the expense of a farewell supper and smoking concert at the barracks on Friday night. This gathering was attended by some three hundred, and was also a brilliant success. His Lordship Mr. Justice McGuire was again the speaker of the evening and roused the enthusiasm of all present by his patriotic remarks, as well as by appropriate recitation. Acting-Mayor Donaldson presented each of the boys with the donation of the council, and each of them made farewell speeches, which were received with rousing cheers. With patriotic song and speech and story, the farewell was prolonged until the hour for the early train, when the entire gathering escorted the departing volunteers to the station, and amidst ringing cheers for, the Queen and the Strathcona Horse Prince Albert’s loyal volunteers began their long journey to the south. The Advocate joins a profoundly stirred and united populace in bidding them God speed.

Those who left here on Saturday morning are as follows:

Sergt. Parker, who takes the rank of captain in the new command.
Willie McLeod, son of Mr. S. H. McLeod, M.L.A.
John McCloy, son of Mr. Thom. McCloy, Ex-President Saskatchewan Liberal Association.
Douglas Maveety, son of Mr. J. D. Maveety of the Saskatchewan Times.
APPENDIX O: Sgt. Hooper’s letter home

Sgt. Hooper of Strathcona’s Horse wrote a letter to the C.P.R. Agent at Duck Lake (a Mr. W S. Urson). Hooper was in Ottawa training and awaiting departure to South Africa. The following excerpt was published on the front page of the Advocate on 12 March 1900 under the headline With “Strathcona's Own”:

We are thoroughly impressed with the fact that we are Tommy Atkins, Soldiers of the Queen, and Absent-minded beggars. I am squadron S. M. of a squadron, and it suits me down to the ground. Soldiering was always my strong point. I never was cut out for a swivel eyed detective. We came here through an array of banquets, and bottles of every brand, through which we have survived gloriously. We have about seven hours drill a day. I am glad to find that I can still shine as an instructor, though my voice has almost completely gone. We are made much of in Ottawa, and are apparently the pets of Canada. We are not even allowed to pay car fare, and refreshments are as grasshoppers in the land. My squadron consists on men from Prince Albert, Battleford, Regina, Moosomin, Virden, Portage la Prairie, Brandon and Winnipeg. 160 rank and file, and they are a fine set of men. We may leave here about the 6th of March, but no sooner. We are quartered in the exhibition grounds, and are living in the cattle stables. My quarters are the Devons, the next room is the Herefords, the next the Holsteins, Durhams, etc. We are now over 400 strong, and have 96 horse already. About 200 more are expected tomorrow. The uniform is dark green with white collar and red piping on the seams, cowboy hats, also kaki suits. My squadron has been fitted out with uniform, and is now complete.
APPENDIX P: Break the News to Mother, Lyrics

Just in case the boy’s dying declaration was not emotionally manipulative enough, the song lyrics later reveal that the dying soldier is the commanding general’s son, who – unbeknownst to his father – ran away from home to fight in his father’s army. C. K. Harris wrote *Break The News To Mother* in 1891. It was originally about a fireman, who dies in his father’s arms after being pulled from a burning building. His last words were, “just break the news to mother/ She knows how much I love her/ Tell her not to wait for me/ For I'm not coming home.” In 1897, during the Spanish-American War, Harris reintroduced the song with new lyrics that made the song’s hero a dying soldier. This soldier-version became a huge hit. In his autobiography, Harris omitted mention of the earlier version of the song.

*Break the News to Mother*

While shot and shell were screaming
Across the battlefield,
The boys in blue were fighting,
Their noble flag to shield.
Then a cry from our brave captain
Said, "Boys, the flag is down.
Who'll volunteer to save it from disgrace?"
"I will," a young boy shouted,
"I'll save the flag or die!"
Then rushed into the thickest of the fray,
Saved the flag, but gave his young life,
All for his country's sake.
We carried him back and heard him softly say,

Cho: "Just break the news to Mother --
She knows how dear I love her --
And tell her not to wait for me,
For I'm not coming home.
Just say there is no other
Can take the place of Mother,

---

Then kiss her dear sweet lips for me,
And break the news to her."

From afar, a noble general
Had witnessed this brave deed.
"Who saved the flag? Speak up, boys.
'Twas a noble and brave deed."
Then a cry from our own captain said,
"Sir, he's sinking fast,"
Then slowly turned away to hide a tear.
The general in a moment
Knelt down beside the boy,
And gave a cry that touched all hearts that day:
"'Tis my son, my brave young hero.
I thought you safe at home."
"Forgive me, father, for I ran away."
APPENDIX Q: Qu’Appelle THOH-related purchases/expenses December 1906-April 1907 (select)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 1906</td>
<td>C. Folster, moving safe</td>
<td>$ 10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall Fund</td>
<td>B. Harvey, Ins. Premium</td>
<td>$ 56.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.P. Beauchamp &amp; Co.</td>
<td>$ 22.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Progress</td>
<td>$ 2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. H. Caswell &amp; Co. Ins. Premium</td>
<td>$ 56.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Milling Co., fuel, etc.</td>
<td>$ 52.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vicars &amp; Morgan, Fuel</td>
<td>$ 48.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Grimstine</td>
<td>$ 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T. Sharpe</td>
<td>$ 10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall Furnishing account</td>
<td>H.F. Harmer &amp; Co., dishes, etc.</td>
<td>$ 30.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.P. Beauchamp &amp; Co., Dishes, etc.</td>
<td>$ 15.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Browne</td>
<td>$ 49.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q. Furniture Co., chairs etc.</td>
<td>$ 193.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1907</td>
<td>Hall Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H. Wilson</td>
<td>$ 2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. P. Beauchamp &amp; Co.</td>
<td>$ 63.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.H. Caswell &amp; Co.</td>
<td>$ 1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Harvey</td>
<td>$ 63.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wm. Dodd, architect, in payment of his account</td>
<td>$ 200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W. K. Wilson</td>
<td>$ 249.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Browne on account of heating contract</td>
<td>$ 300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I.E.A. Haw to date for extras on town hall</td>
<td>$ 245.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. McConkey for plastering</td>
<td>$ 200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vicars &amp; Morgan for coal</td>
<td>$ 192.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Account of D. Browne</td>
<td>$ 29.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morden Co. (&quot;on account and their draft returned to them&quot;)</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1194 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 7 January 1907; “Finance Committee’s Report,” Progress 10 January 1907, P1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 1907</td>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q. Furniture Co. ()</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. F. Cates, wood</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H. F. Harmer &amp; Co.</td>
<td>$13.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W. Glass</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q. Cartage Co.</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bell Telephone Co.</td>
<td>$0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Foster (water)</td>
<td>$8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P. Surgeson – work</td>
<td>$7.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T. Sharpe – wax papers</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morden &amp; Co.</td>
<td>$45.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agent C.P.R. – iron letters</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B Harvey</td>
<td>$8.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W. K. Wilson, contract account</td>
<td>$333.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$58.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall Furnishings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q. Furniture Co. (mattress, etc.)</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hague, Arlington &amp; Co. (mending flag)</td>
<td>$1.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1907</td>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Progress, stationery, access notice, etc.</td>
<td>$17.75</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.C. Starr, disbursements</td>
<td>$3.70</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>London Guarantee Co., premium on bond</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Foster, draying</td>
<td>$8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Henderson, health officer</td>
<td>$4.25</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall Account</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W.K. Wilson &amp; Co., bal. of original contract</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.C. Starr</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Browne, C.J. McConkey</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.J. McConkey, bal. Account plastering</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.C. Starr</td>
<td>$2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Browne</td>
<td>$5.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.H.B. Sperling, cord wood</td>
<td>$64.50</td>
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<tr>
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<td>J.R. North, cord wood</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Folster, water</td>
<td>$10.75</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morden &amp; Co. – Carbide</td>
<td>$45.50</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall Furnishing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Browne</td>
<td>$2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Browne, balance in full on town hall heating plant</td>
<td>$375.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. P. R. Agent, freight on hall gas fixtures</td>
<td>$0.74</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1196 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 February 1907; “Town Council,” Progress, 7 March 1907, P1.
1197 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 27 March 1907; “Town Council,” Progress, 4 April 1907, P4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1907</td>
<td>Hall account</td>
<td>D. Sprague, materials, etc.</td>
<td>$ 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J.C. Starr</td>
<td>$ 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Department</td>
<td>Bole Drug Co., chemicals</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 15.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall</td>
<td>J. A. Laporte, painting office, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 81.05</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Folster – draying, hall acct.</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 9.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Harvey – Hall furnishings</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 16.90</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prairie Lumber Co.</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 14.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall Maintenance</td>
<td>S.H. Caswell &amp; Co., hardware</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W. H. Hunter – floor wax</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F. Amas – caretaking hall, main</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 10.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Harvey – Coal</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 11.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Brown – coal oil, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 50.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hall acct.</td>
<td>$ 2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lee Wing, laundry</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vicars &amp; Morgan, coal</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 11.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Blake, labor</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 18.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1198 Town of Qu’Appelle Council Minutes, 24 April 1907.