

**Formidable Rivals: Canada, Australia, and the  
Pursuit of British Agricultural Migrants, 1896-1914**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Adelaide.

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## **Abstract**

This thesis examines relations between Canadian and Australian colonial and federal governments between 1896 and 1914 when these governments formally pursued British agricultural migrants to satisfy their respective population and land settlement needs. It asks to what extent their concurrent initiatives to attract and secure this group meant that Canadian and Australian government representatives possessed an informed appreciation of each other's policies and practices. It evaluates the impact of this circulation of idea and charts when and how this information was used by Canadian and Australian officials as they assiduously debated the shape and scope of their own internal operations.

This thesis argues that the timing and scale of Canada and Australia's efforts to secure British agricultural migrants, coupled with their shared position and participation within the British Empire during this period, encouraged interactions and connections between their representatives working in this space. Far from quiet reconnaissance, this highly mobile and connected network of government officials actively and willingly sought and shared information in a spirit of colonial comradery as they attempted to work out the best means for capturing this highly desired group of skilled migrants. Here the bonds of Empire could simultaneously and often paradoxically create moments of cooperation and competition between dominion representatives, reinforcing a relationship based on friendly rivalry.

I demonstrate that Canada's expansive federal campaign to attract British agricultural migrants from the mid-1890s onwards weighed heavily on the minds of Australian state and Commonwealth representatives, and in many ways informed and influenced the shape of their recruitment programmes nearly a decade later. Further to this, I show that Canadian representatives were willing to share their experiences with their Australian contemporaries, in part out of a common sense of Britishness but also because of a perceived lack of threat. It will be contended that by the second decade of the twentieth century when Australian programmes had developed into a highly coordinated and sophisticated campaign, some Canadian officials began to express quiet concern that Australia's 'emulation' of Canadian methods could potentially threaten their own continued success in this space.

This thesis is innovative in showing how ideas and information concerning government-led efforts to attract and secure British agricultural migrants for land settlement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries flowed within this network of dominion personnel and also across the British Empire, and the effect of this exchange of knowledge and experiences at a time when Britain's dominions were beginning to assert greater internal control over this space than previously seen. In doing so, this thesis offers both comparisons and connections between Canada and Australia's government-led activities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and contributes to the understanding of the dominions' official encouragement of immigration and land settlement in this period.

## Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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## Acknowledgements

This is perhaps one of the most difficult sections of my thesis to write because there are so many organisations and individuals that have supported me throughout this journey to which I am eternally grateful.

I would like to thank my supervisors Paul Sendziuk and Robert Foster for their support and encouragement during the research and writing of this thesis. There were many times when I was uncertain of the path forward and Paul's reassurance in particular has been sincerely appreciated. Thank you also to the academic and professional staff in the Department of History at the University of Adelaide, especially Claire Walker who has provided invaluable guidance and support in her previous role as postgraduate coordinator.

Thank you also to the staff of the Canadian and Australian collecting institutions that I visited whilst undertaking the research for this thesis including Libraries and Archives Canada, National Archives of Australia, National Library of Australia, Barr Smith Library, State Library of South Australia, State Library of New South Wales, State Library of Western Australia, State Records Office of Western Australia, State Library of Queensland, Queensland State Archives, State Library of Victoria, Public Records Office of Victoria, and the University of Saskatchewan Library.

Few people are fortunate enough to have the amazing global support network of family, friends, and academic and professional colleagues that I have in my life. There are too many of you to list, but I cannot thank you enough for the countless coffee catch-ups, text messages, phone calls, and emails cheering me on from the sidelines.

The words 'thank you' do not really begin to express the gratitude I have for my amazing partner David who has provided immeasurable support throughout my studies and has always believed in my abilities, especially when I didn't believe in myself. I am so thankful to be journeying through life with my best friend.

Similarly, it is difficult to express just how thankful I am for my parents, Glen and Liz, and for their unwavering love and support. My love of learning and passion for history is because of these two remarkable human beings. Thank you for being my cheer squad, my editors, my counsellors, and my rock.

Thank you also to my siblings, Heather, Neil, and Keith, and their partners and families for the many laughs and encouraging words along the way. Few people are fortunate enough to pursue postgraduate qualifications, and I feel very lucky to have shared this journey with Keith as he completes his own PhD thesis in Microbiology.

One hundred and six years ago, my great-grandparents David and Minnie McKenzie brought their young family to southwestern Saskatchewan, attracted by the Canadian government's promise of free land and new opportunities. David filed for a 160 acre homestead on the southwest quarter of Section 12, Township 08, Range 09, West of the Third Meridian. Five generations and over a century later, my family continues to live on the original homestead farm and even though life has taken me to the other side of the world, the love, pride, and connection I feel for my home remains very deep.

## List of Abbreviations

AB	Alberta
APP	<i>Australian Parliamentary Papers</i>
APD	<i>Australia Parliamentary Debates</i>
BC	British Columbia
CPD	<i>Canadian Parliamentary Debates</i>
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railway Company
CSP	<i>Canadian Sessional Papers</i>
DRC	Dominions Royal Commission
HC	House of Commons
HR	House of Representatives
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
MB	Manitoba
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NLA	National Library of Australia
NSW	New South Wales
ON	Ontario
OYBA	<i>Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia</i>
PROV	Public Records Office of Victoria
QLD	Queensland
QSA	Queensland State Archives
SA	South Australia
SK	Saskatchewan
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales
SLSA	State Library of South Australia
SLV	State Library of Victoria
SLWA	State Library of Western Australia
SROWA	State Records Office of Western Australia
SRWSC	State Rivers and Water Supply Commission
TAS	Tasmania
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
VIC	Victoria
VPD	<i>Victoria Parliamentary Debates</i>
WA	Western Australia
WAPD	<i>Western Australia Parliamentary Debates</i>



## **Dramatis Personae**

**R.V. Billis**, Secretary, Victorian Lands Settlement Delegation, 1910; Acting Victorian Immigration Agent, London, 1910-1912

**William Cattanach**, Commissioner, Victoria's State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, 1906-1915

**W.H. Clarke**, Officer, Commonwealth Department of External Affairs, 1909-1912

**T.A. Coghlan**, New South Wales Government Statistician, 1886-1904; New South Wales Agent-General, 1905-1915

**W.W. Cory**, Canadian Deputy Minister, Department of the Interior, 1905-1913

**Alfred Deakin**, Australian Prime Minister, 1903-1904, 1905-1909, 1909-1910

**George Elmslie**, Secretary, Labor Party of Victoria, 1904-1912; Deputy Leader of the Labor Party of Victoria, 1912-1913; Leader of the Labor Party of Victoria, 1913; Premier of Victoria, 1913-1914

**Major Samuel Harris**, Private agent representing the State of Victoria in Vancouver, British Columbia, 1910-1911

**Littleton Groom**, Minister, Commonwealth Department of External Affairs, 1910-1911

**Atlee Hunt**, Secretary, Commonwealth Department of External Affairs, 1901-1916

**Percy Hunter**, New South Wales Director, Intelligence Department and Bureau of Statistics, 1908-1912; New South Wales and Victoria's Superintendent of Immigration, London, 1913-1914

**J.C. Irons**, Assistant General Agent for Pacific Cost, Canadian-Australian Royal Mail Line (Union Steamship Company of New Zealand), 1906-1936

**Hugh McKenzie**, Victorian Minister, Department of Crown Lands and Survey, 1909-1913

**Elwood Mead**, Chairman, Victoria's State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, 1907-1915

**James Mills**, Chairman, Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, 1875-1936

- F.C.T. O'Hara**, Canadian Deputy Minister, Department of Trade and Commerce, Ottawa, 1908-1931
- William Paterson**, Manager/Managing Trustee, Agricultural Bank of Western Australia, 1895-1920
- Frank Oliver**, Canadian Minister, Department of the Interior, 1905-1911
- Walter Preedy**, New South Wales Agent, London, 1906-1914
- W.T.R. Preston**, Canadian Inspector of Agencies, London, 1899-1906
- George Reid**, Australia's first High Commissioner, London, 1910-1916
- Thomas Bilbe Robinson**, Queensland Agent-General, London, 1910-1919
- D.H. Ross**, Canadian Trade Commissioner, Department of Trade and Commerce, Melbourne, 1903-1934
- W.D. Scott**, Canadian Superintendent of Immigration, Department of the Interior, Ottawa, 1902-1914
- Clifford Sifton**, Canadian Minister, Department of the Interior, 1896-1905
- H.C. Smart**, Officer in Charge, Publicity Branch of the Australian High Commissioner's Office, London, 1910-1944
- J.A. Smart**, Canadian Deputy Minister, Department of the Interior, 1896-1904
- J. Obediah Smith**, Canada's Assistant Superintendent of Emigration, Department of the Interior, London, 1908-1913
- John William Taverner**, Victorian Agent-General, London, 1903-1913
- Horace Tozer**, Queensland Agent-General, London, 1898-1909
- J. Bruce Walker**, Canadian Government Emigration Agent (Glasgow), 1905; Assistant Superintendent of Emigration, London, 1906-1908; Commissioner of Immigration, Winnipeg, 1908-1917
- W.J. White**, Canadian Inspector of United States Agencies, Department of the Interior, Chicago, 1899-c1921

## Introduction

J. Obediah Smith wanted larger displays. Not that there was anything wrong per se with the existing ones being used in 1912. For many years, the Canadian federal government had mounted exhibits of grains, grasses and other natural products at agricultural shows across Britain to showcase the development of Canada's primary industries and the advantages of the dominion as a settlement destination. With several hundred agricultural shows taking place annually, these displays had proven to be a successful method for promoting Canada's immigration and land settlement opportunities to tens of thousands of desirable British agriculturalists. Recently, however, the Australian government had unveiled a new 120-foot display at the Plymouth agricultural show to promote its own immigration and settlement opportunities. The Commonwealth's attractive and expansive stand had been given primacy of place opposite the show's horse ring while Canada's far more diminutive 10-foot tent was positioned at the back of the grounds. Writing from his London office on 18 May 1912 to his superiors in Ottawa, Smith (who was Canada's Assistant Superintendent of Emigration in Britain at the time) gloomily described the effect of the Australian display on the show's attendees:

They had nine employees of the various states of the Commonwealth, and a magnificent exhibit of the products of all the states, completely overshadowing Canada in the eyes of the people who attended the Show. Personally I think it was a mistake not to have cancelled our exhibit altogether, rather than put up such a miserable attempt.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst the extensive stand had quite literally "overshadowed" the Canadian display, in Smith's opinion it had also cast a shadow of doubt in the minds of the show's patrons as to whether Canada's prosperity and advantages for Britons was as promising as that of Australia's. He recommended a complete "re-consideration of the policy laid down in connection with Shows and Exhibits", warning that without it, "we can only fill a very small corner of the space Australia is now occupying in Shows and Exhibits, and we are losing very rapidly our erstwhile supreme position in the eyes of the Public".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 18 May 1912, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 74, File 4971, Part 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

At the time Smith wrote his letter, Empire migration was important business for the governments of Britain's colonies of settlement (which, along with Canada and Australia, included New Zealand and South Africa). Significant improvements in communication and oceanic and rail transportation from the mid-nineteenth century onwards saw the number of Britons choosing to resettle in other parts of the world rise to unprecedented levels. From the 1850s to the end of World War One, 13.4 million people emigrated from the British Isles.<sup>3</sup> Whilst the United States was the preferred destination for most of the period, by the turn of the century Britain's settler colonies had taken over as the favoured destination, with Canada and, to a lesser extent, Australia leading the way.<sup>4</sup> This was an important shift for Canada and Australia as their governments considered British migrants, in particular those from rural areas with agricultural experience, to be a highly desirable and necessary group to attract and secure. By the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a strong public perception within Britain and its Empire that the settler colonies still had many regions that were "land-rich and labour-poor".<sup>5</sup> Whilst settlement and agricultural activities were well established in the older parts of eastern Canada, by the mid-1890s the country's vast prairie interior region known as the North-West Territories possessed a relatively small white population and remained largely unsettled. At the same time in Australia, dispersed pastoralism was the dominant form of land use, particularly in the eastern colonies of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. Despite government efforts to encourage closer settlement and smaller-scale agricultural activities from the 1860s onwards, sheep and cattle rather than farms and people prevailed.<sup>6</sup> In his book, *Finance, Politics and Imperialism: Australia,*

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<sup>3</sup> B.R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp.81, 85.

<sup>4</sup> For more, see Dudley Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy: Emigration and Internal Migration in England and Wales, 1861-1900*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp.62-63; Eric Richards, *Destination Australia: Migration to Australia Since 1901*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2008, p.33; Kent Fedorowich, 'The British Empire on the Move, 1760-1914', in Sarah Stockwell (ed.), *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives*, Melbourne: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, pp.88-93; Gary B. Magee and Andrew S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850-1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.68.

<sup>5</sup> Jeremy Adelman, *Frontier Development: Land, Labour and Capital on the Wheatlands of Argentina and Canada, 1890-1914*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, p.8. Adelman's study compares Canada to Argentina, an area outside of the British Empire which was also actively growing its settler population for agricultural settlement purposes at this time.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Waterhouse, 'Settling the Land', in Deryck M. Shreuder and Stuart Ward (eds), *Australia's Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p.61.

*Canada, and the City of London, c.1896-1914*, historian Andrew Dilley points out that contemporary expectation within the British Empire was that a settler colony's capacity for economic growth was contingent on capital and investment, land occupation and the development of primary produce industries and exports.<sup>7</sup> Increasingly, it was conceded that Canada and Australia's existing inhabitants and natural population growth combined could not satisfy the labour required for this economic growth. As one British government report on natural resources and trade concluded at the time:

Natural resources and their development are a fruitful theme for discussion. It is clear, however, that this development cannot be achieved without adequate man-power. Hence it comes that of all the problems which lie before Imperial statesmanship none is more important and none more fascinating than that of migration. Its successful organisation lies at the root of the problem of Empire development and largely upon it depends the progress of the immense territories of the Dominions and the increase of power of the Empire as a whole.<sup>8</sup>

Consequently, importing a skilled migrant populace for land settlement became a significant focus (or, as some historians have labelled, a 'business' or 'industry'<sup>9</sup>) for Canada and Australia by the beginning of the 1900s. Further to this, Canadian and Australian governments placed considerable emphasis on attracting a British Anglo-Saxon migrant populace in order to reinforce the British political, social, and cultural character of their societies.<sup>10</sup>

Efforts by Canadian and Australian colonial governments to encourage British immigration and land settlement occurred well before this time; however, the mid-1890s through to World War One is regarded as an important transition point when each began to assert greater internal control over this space than previously seen. In

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<sup>7</sup> Andrew Dilley, *Finance, Politics, and Imperialism: Australia, Canada, and the City of London, c.1896-1914*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp.13-14.

<sup>8</sup> Dominions Royal Commission, *Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, March 1917*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.83.

<sup>9</sup> See Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, p.277; Kent Fedorowich and Andrew S. Thompson (eds), *Empire, Migration and Identity in the British World*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013, p.6.

<sup>10</sup> Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, pp.284-285; Stephen Constantine, 'British Emigration to the Empire-Commonwealth Since 1880: From Overseas Settlement to Diaspora?', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.31, no.2, 2003, p.17.

the introduction of their 2005 edited book, *Rediscovering the British World*, historians Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis maintain that Britain's colonies of settlement, known as the "dominions"<sup>11</sup> (a term officially adopted at the 1907 Imperial Conference), desired to be British but "increasingly on their own terms and in their own way".<sup>12</sup> The realisation of self-government and a growing global presence, coupled with the relatively hands-off position of the Imperial government in encouraging colonial settlement, saw Canada and Australia move increasingly towards more centralised, coordinated and professional policies and practices to entice and secure British migrants for themselves.<sup>13</sup> At the same time it was understood that as members of the British Empire, Canada and Australia's paths of economic, political, legal and cultural development were largely a shared one, and their aspirations for future growth provided a sense of commonality and camaraderie. Moreover, the advancements in communication and transportation that made it easier for British migrants to resettle overseas during this period also served to bring these two geographically-distant dominions and their governments into closer contact than ever before.<sup>14</sup> Having an awareness of what the other was doing, particularly in the mutual dash to increase their white settler populations, became both increasingly easier and, as will be shown in this thesis, necessary. Whilst Canada and Australia were carrying out immigration and settlement activities for their own internal purposes, the emigration business, in the context dominion governments formally encouraging and directing British emigration for their settler populations, was a shared experience and global in nature.

This thesis will examine relations between Canadian and Australian colonial and Federal governments between 1896 and 1914 when these governments pursued British agricultural migrants to satisfy their population and settlement aims. It will

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<sup>11</sup> I will adopt Andrew Dille's usage of this term as a loose synonym for the self-governing or settler colonies. See Dille, *Finance, Politics, and Imperialism*, p.2.

<sup>12</sup> Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis, 'Introduction', in Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (eds), *Rediscovering the British World*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005, p.15.

<sup>13</sup> For more about this growing independence of the settler colonies during this period, see Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, 'Mapping the British World', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.31, no.2, 2003, p.4; John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p.51.

<sup>14</sup> Greg Donaghy, 'Parallel Paths: Canadian-Australian Relations Since the 1890s', in Kate Burridge, Lois Foster and Gerry Turcotte (eds), *Canada-Australia: Towards a Second Century of Partnership*, Ottawa: International Council for Canadian Studies, 1997, p.13.

consider how their common position within the British Empire enabled Canadian and Australian government representatives based at home, in London, and across Britain to have an “informed appreciation”<sup>15</sup> of each other’s policies and practices, and evaluate what impact the circulation of these ideas and information had upon their own local programmes during this time. It will seek to show, where possible, when and how Canadian and Australian officials, from High Commissioners through to emigration agents, acquired and used this information as they assiduously debated the scope and shape of their own internal operations. In particular, this thesis will demonstrate the ways in which Canada’s expansive federal immigration operations to secure British agricultural migrants, initiated from the mid-1890s, loomed particularly large in the minds of state and Commonwealth representatives when Australian programmes were reinvigorated nearly a decade later. In doing so, this thesis will offer both comparisons and connections between Canada and Australia’s formal immigration and settlement activities during this period. This thesis will also demonstrate that far from passive observance, Canadian and Australian government representatives working in this space actively, openly, and willingly sought and shared information in a spirit of colonial comradeship and diplomacy as they attempted to work out the best means of capturing this highly desired group of skilled migrants. Within this, the bonds of Empire could simultaneously and often paradoxically create moments of cooperation and competition, reinforcing a relationship based on “friendly rivalry”.<sup>16</sup> Finally, this thesis will reveal that in the final years before World War One when both dominions reached the height of their campaigns and intake of British migrants, some of Canada’s government representatives began to quietly question what Australia’s increased presence and competition in Britain might mean for their own ongoing success.

When Smith wrote his letter recommending a reconsideration of Canada’s approach to agricultural show displays in order to match Australia’s activities, both countries were enjoying some of the highest immigration returns recorded in their respective histories. Between 1903 and 1913, six of the ten largest annual immigration intakes

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<sup>15</sup> Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation*, p.23.

<sup>16</sup> ‘Friendly Rivalry’, *Canada: An Illustrated Weekly Journal for all Interested in the Dominion*, Canada Newspaper Co. Ltd., 8 October 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

in Canada's history were recorded,<sup>17</sup> while immigration to Australia between 1907 and 1912 exceeded all previously documented records.<sup>18</sup> It is necessary to point out, however, that there were a number of important differences in the timing, scale, scope and outcomes of Canada and Australia's government-led programmes to secure British agricultural migrants for most of the period that forms the focus of this study. Canada's immigration and land settlement programmes for the North-West Territories were federally administered under the Immigration Branch of the Department of the Interior, with some minor involvement of the territorial government (later the provincial governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba). By contrast, each of the Australian colonies (later states) managed their own immigration and land settlement schemes through various departments and agencies, with some limited support for immigration and promotional activities from the Commonwealth government following Federation in 1901. As will be seen in Chapter Three, after 1901 the federal government (and Prime Minister Alfred Deakin in particular) attempted to facilitate greater cooperation between states and Commonwealth agencies, but this was never fully resolved during this period. Canada's efforts to attract new migrant settlers for the North-West Territories significantly increased from 1896, while at the same time nearly all government-encouraged immigration activities in the Australian states virtually ceased. This was particularly the case for New South Wales and Victoria, as economic depression and drought plagued the east coast of the country throughout most of the decade and several years into the new century. Western Australia and Queensland sporadically encouraged immigration in the late 1890s; however, their programmes were far more modest in scale and success in comparison to Canada. Further to this, Canada's general popularity as a settlement destination in Britain rose rapidly in the late 1890s and early 1900s, while in this same period Australia faced a negative public perception, particularly in the British press, that the country did not want migrants, even after each state reintroduced efforts to encourage immigration.<sup>19</sup> The countries where Canada and Australia sought agricultural migrants also differed slightly, as did

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<sup>17</sup> Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation*, p.68.

<sup>18</sup> Richards, *Destination Australia*, p.45. Richards notes that there is much discrepancy in the official figures collected during this period by government authorities as often no distinction was made between migrants/permanent settlers and temporary business or tourist passengers.

<sup>19</sup> This was in part because of the situation in New South Wales and Victoria as well as the introduction of the 'White Australia Policy' in 1901. See Dilley, *Finance, Politics, and Imperialism*, pp.84-86.



the timing and scale of their recruitment operations during this period. Whilst the governments of both considered the Anglo-Celtic white male farmer the ideal migrant and focused most of their recruitment activities in Britain, efforts were also made by Canada to attract American farmers and to a lesser extent experienced agriculturalists from some European countries. Australia by contrast was almost exclusively focused on British migrants during the same period, although some of the states did initiate limited promotional campaigns in North America and in parts of Europe, particularly in the final years before World War One. Differences between their programmes were also evident in the immigration returns of the first half of the period in focus. Whilst Canada accepted increasing numbers of migrants from the mid-1890s onwards, Australia faced a greater rate of emigration over immigration throughout the 1890s and several years into the first decade of the 1900s.<sup>20</sup> The reinvigoration of operations beginning with New South Wales in 1905 saw the country quickly regain ground; however, Australia's immigration intake was never able to fully match Canada's by 1914.

The contrasting ways that the two dominions administered their programmes, the timing of their efforts, and to an extent the outcomes of their activities during this period explains, in one sense, why for some time academic assessment of their immigration and settlement in this period has been mainly individualistic or nation-focused, rather than seeking to examine comparisons or connections between the two. A review of the existing literature shows a staggering array of geographically-specific scholarship, addressing the regional, colonial, provincial, state and nation-based settlement histories of Canada and Australia.<sup>21</sup> The rise of these state- or

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<sup>20</sup> Michele Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World": Government Policy and Contemporary Opinion About the Encouragement of Immigration to Australia, 1901-1939', unpublished PhD thesis, Monash University, 1988, p.24.

<sup>21</sup> A very small example of these include F.K. Crowley, *Australia's Western Third: A History of Western Australia from the First Settlements to Modern Times*, London: Macmillan, 1960; K.H. Norrie, 'The Rate of Settlement of the Canadian Prairies, 1870-1911', *The Journal of Economic History*, vol.35, no.2, 1975, pp.410-427; C.T. Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia*, Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1981; Richard Broome, *The Victorians Arriving*, McMahons Point: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1984; Tony Dingle, *The Victorians Settling*, McMahons Point: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1984; Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984; Don Garden, *Victoria: A History*, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson, 1984; Stuart Macintyre, *1901-1942: The Succeeding Age*, *The Oxford History of Australia*, vol.4, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986; Beverley Kingston, *1860-1900: Glad, Confident Morning*, *The Oxford History of Australia*, vol.3, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988; R. Douglas Francis and Howard Palmer (eds), *The Prairie West: Historical Readings*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1992; Bill Waiser, *Saskatchewan: A New History*, Calgary: Fifth House, 2005; Michael Payne, Donald Wetherell

nation-based histories also came as a response to the decline of the British Empire itself from the 1960s onwards and a shift away from the traditional imperial frameworks that accompanied it.<sup>22</sup> By their very nature, state-based or national studies of government-led immigration and settlement of the former British Empire colonies often emphasise uniqueness and independence. As historians Phillip Buckner and Carl Bridge point out, this approach tends to “treat each country in a vacuum”.<sup>23</sup> Historian Ann Curthoys furthered this point in her 2003 analysis of Australia’s national histories, observing that, “In some ways, while Australian history has become more independent, complex, diverse, autonomous, and self-critical, it has also become more insular, isolated, defensive, and inward-looking.”<sup>24</sup>

In the 1990s and 2000s, a number of historians questioned whether this focus on the nation-state limited and distorted our understanding of the past, particularly in the context of Britain and its former Empire members. In his 1999 article, “Back to the Future: From National History to Imperial History”, A.G. Hopkins asserted that especially in case of the settler colonies of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, the nation-based framework disregards the “continuing vitality of the imperial connection long after responsible government and dominion status had been conferred”.<sup>25</sup> Since then, a vast array of studies employing transcolonial, transnational, and global frameworks has sought to redress the narrowing effect of national histories. In their 2005 edited book, *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective*, Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake offered this definition of transnationalism:

It is the study of the ways in which past lives and events have been shaped by processes and relationships that have transcended the borders of

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and Catherine Cavanaugh, *Alberta Formed Alberta Transformed*, vol.1 and vol.2, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2006; Raymond Evans, *A History of Queensland*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2007; Ross Fitzgerald, Lyndon Megarrity and David Symons, *Made in Queensland: A New History*, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2009; Geoffrey Blainey, *A History of Victoria*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

<sup>22</sup> For more on the decline of imperial scholarship, see P.A. Buckner and Carl Bridge, ‘Reinventing the British World’, *The Round Table*, vol.368, 2003, pp.77-88.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p.82.

<sup>24</sup> Ann Curthoys, ‘We’ve Just Started Making National Histories, And You Want Us To Stop Already?’, in Antoinette Burton (ed.), *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2003, p.85.

<sup>25</sup> A.P. Hopkins, ‘Back to the Future: From National History to Imperial History’, *Past and Present*, no.164, 1999, pp.218-219.

nation states. Transnational history seeks to understand ideas, things, people, and practices which have crossed national boundaries. It is generally in a complex relation with national history; it may seek to interrogate, situate, supersede, display, or avoid it altogether.<sup>26</sup>

By adopting a multi-site or even global approach, as historians Karen Dubinsky, Adele Perry and Henry Yu have more recently pointed out, these studies can “reveal highly localized forms of knowledge, potentially capturing the perspectives of people left out of national narratives, and yet they could also reveal important connections at a global scale, registering historical processes both more intimate than and beyond the nation”.<sup>27</sup> This point has also been made by scholars such as C.A. Bayly, who argues that the world, especially in the nineteenth century, was far more connected than is generally acknowledged and that because of this, “all local, national, or regional histories must, in important ways, therefore, be global histories”.<sup>28</sup> In the introduction to *Transnational Ties: Australian Lives in the World*, Australian historians Desley Deacon, Penny Russell and Angela Woollacott argue that applying a transnational approach to Australia’s migration history, for example, would show that “The flow of people helped shape Australia’s distinctive character; the flow of ideas connected Australians to a global community of thought.”<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, British World studies asked for a similar widening of the historical lens in order to more fully understand the former British Empire, the connections between Britain and its colonies (and between the colonies themselves), and what it meant to be a member of “Greater Britain” particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>30</sup> Adele Perry and others have argued that empires, especially

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<sup>26</sup> Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake, ‘Introduction’, in Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake (eds), *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective*, Canberra: Australian National University E Press, 2005, p.5.

<sup>27</sup> Karen Dubinsky, Adele Perry and Henry Yu, ‘Introduction: Canadian History, Transnational History’, in Karen Dubinsky, Adele Perry and Henry Yu (eds), *Within and Without the Nation: Canadian History as Transnational History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015, p.9.

<sup>28</sup> C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons*, Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004, p.19.

<sup>29</sup> Desley Deacon, Penny Russell and Angela Woollacott, ‘Introduction’, in Desley Deacon, Penny Russell and Angela Woollacott (eds), *Transnational Ties: Australian Lives in the World*, Canberra: ANU E Press, 2008, pp.xiv-xv.

<sup>30</sup> A number of British World scholars refer to what Victorian writer Charles Dilke called “Greater Britain” as a means of distinguishing Britain’s white settler colonies from its tropical colonies. See Sir C.W. Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries During 1866 and 1867*, London: Macmillan and Co., 1868.

the British Empire, have too often been narrowly viewed as a “unidirectional arrangement where the ‘centre’ radiated outward to its various ‘peripheries’”.<sup>31</sup> Perry points to studies by historians such as Tony Ballantyne<sup>32</sup> as evidence that relationships within the British Empire more closely resembled that of a web, with “vertical relationships between colony and metropole bisected by horizontal ties binding together different colonial spaces.”<sup>33</sup> Since the late 1990s, a multitude of new imperial studies have sought to critically reevaluate this complex world, the political, economic, and cultural consequences of membership and non-membership within it, and ‘Britishness’ as a transnational or global phenomenon.<sup>34</sup> Within this body of research, a number of scholars such as Stephen Constantine, Eric Richards, James Belich, Marjory Harper, Michael Roe and Angela Woollacott have directed their attention to the implications of British migration and settlement within the British Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>35</sup> These transnational and British World studies are important reference points for this thesis, which addresses how information and ideas relating to the formal or official encouragement of British

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<sup>31</sup> Adele Perry, ‘Whose World Was British? Rethinking the ‘British World’ from an Edge of Empire’, in Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw and Stuart Macintyre (eds), *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2007, p.137.

<sup>32</sup> Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002, pp.14-6. Ballantyne’s study considers the emergence and dissemination of Aryanism within the British Empire in the nineteenth century, particularly in relation to the Maori and Hindu populations of New Zealand and India.

<sup>33</sup> Perry, ‘Whose World was British?’, p.137.

<sup>34</sup> A small sample of these include Simon J. Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of an Imperial Press System, 1876-1920*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003; Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw, Kiera Lindsey and Stuart Macintyre (eds), *Exploring the British World: Identity, Cultural Production, Institutions*, Melbourne: RMIT Publishing, 2004; Buckner and Francis (eds), *Rediscovering the British World*; Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (eds), *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006; Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine and Frank Trentmann (eds), *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire and Transnationalism, c.1880-1950*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007; Darian-Smith, Grimshaw, and Macintyre (eds), *Britishness Abroad*; Shreuder and Ward (eds), *Australia’s Empire*; Magee and Thompson: *Empire and Globalisation*; Dilley, *Finance, Politics, and Imperialism*; Sarah Stockwell (ed.), *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2013; Andrew S. Thompson (ed.), *Writing Imperial Histories*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.

<sup>35</sup> For example, Constantine, ‘British Emigration to the Empire-Commonwealth Since 1880’; Eric Richards, ‘Migrations: The Career of British White Australia’, in Shreuder and Ward (eds), *Australia’s Empire*, pp.163-185; James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009; Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*; Antoinette Burton, *Empire in Question: Reading, Writing and Teaching British Imperialism*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011; Michael Roe, *Australia, Britain, and Migration, 1915-1940: A Study of Desperate Hopes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995; Fedorowich and Thompson (eds), *Empire, Migration, and Identity in the British World*; Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

agricultural migrants flowed between Britain, Canada and Australia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and relations between dominion representatives working within this space.

A number of transnational and British World studies also evaluate the construction of 'whiteness' as a racial category within settler colonies and the implications of racial thinking in the context of dominion government policies are considered for this thesis.<sup>36</sup> These studies are especially pertinent to Chapters One and Two of this thesis, which consider the identification of the white Anglo-Celtic male farmer as the ideal migrant by colonial government officials, and how this was reflected in the immigration and land policies of this period. Other relatively recent innovations in the historiography of migration within the British World are the emphasis placed on the migrant experience as told through the various migrants themselves.<sup>37</sup> As this thesis is focused upon the conceptualisation, administration, and outcomes of government policies relating to agricultural settlement in Canada and Australia, and the officials who were tasked with carry out these policies, the voice of the individual migrant or settler does not feature prominently.

Works examining Australia or Canada's official efforts to encourage British migration during this period inform this thesis. Australian historian Michele Langfield has written extensively on Australian state and federal policies and activities between Federation and World War Two that were designed to encourage British male immigration for land settlement.<sup>38</sup> She notes that the period between 1901 and 1914

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<sup>36</sup> See for example, Laksiri Jayasuriya, David Walker, and Jan Gothard (eds), *Legacies of White Australia*, Crawley: University of Western Australia Press, 2003; Angela Woollacott, 'Whiteness and "the Imperial Turn"', in Leigh Boucher, Jane Carey and Katherine Ellinghaus (eds), *Re-orienting Whiteness: Transnational Perspectives on the History of an Identity*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp.17-30; Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the Question of Racial Equality*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008; Alison Holland and Barbara Brookes (eds), *Rethinking the Racial Moment: Essays on the Colonial Encounter*, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011.

<sup>37</sup> See for example, Maggie Mackellar, 'Love, Loss and 'Going Home': The Intimate Lives of Victorian Settlers', in Desley Deacon, Penny Russell and Angela Woollacott (eds), *Transnational Ties: Australian Lives in the World*, Canberra: ANU E Press, 2008, pp.97-114; Marilyn Barber, 'Nation-Building in Saskatchewan: Teachers from the British Isles in Saskatchewan Rural Schools in the 1920s', in Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis, *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006, pp.215-233.

<sup>38</sup> See for example, Langfield, "'Fit for the Elect of the World'"; Michele Langfield, "'The Ideal Immigrant': Immigration to Victoria Between Federation and the First World War', *Australian Studies*, no.8, 1994, pp.1-14; Michele Langfield, *More People Imperative: Immigration to Australia, 1901-1939*,

has tended to be overlooked by scholars because of the differing positions of each of the states and lack of coordination overall before 1921.<sup>39</sup> Whilst she refers several times in her PhD thesis to Canada's campaign for British male migrants during this same period, stating that competition with their fellow dominion was one of the greatest issues facing Australian recruitment efforts and that "Australia, in a small way, followed Canada's example about ten years later",<sup>40</sup> Langfield's research is focused on Australian policies and she does not offer further elucidation into how or why Canada's programme may have been influential. Two of her more recent studies addressing British juvenile and female migration during this same period do offer important comparisons and connections in the attitudes and approaches of Canadian and Australian officials in working with non-government organisations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, suggesting similar analysis could be undertaken for British agricultural migrants.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, Langfield's 2004 study comparing the migration of Welsh Patagonians to Canada in 1902 and to Australia between 1910 and 1915, also highlights the value of comparative studies even when timing and scale of dominion efforts do not neatly coincide.<sup>42</sup> Another scholar who has written extensively on the administrative or 'business' side of Australian and Canadian government activities in encouraging British male migration and promoting Empire settlement is historian Marjory Harper.<sup>43</sup> Harper's research particularly

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research guide, vol.7, Canberra: National Archives of Australia, 1999; Michele Langfield, 'A Displaced Britishness: Welsh Patagonians in Canada and Australia', in Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw, Kiera Lindsey, and Stuart Macintyre (eds), *Exploring the British World: Identity, Cultural Production, Institutions*, Melbourne: RMIT Publishing, 2004, pp.161-191; Michele Langfield, 'Gender Blind? Australian Immigration Policy and Practice, 1901-1930', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol.27, no.79, 2009, pp.143-152;

<sup>39</sup> Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World", p.3.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p.126.

<sup>41</sup> Michele Langfield, 'A Chance to Bloom': Female Migration and Salvationists in Australia and Canada, 1890s to 1939', *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol.17, no.39, 2002, pp.287-303; Michele Langfield, 'Voluntarism, Salvation, and Rescue: British Juvenile Migration to Australia and Canada, 1890-1939', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.32, no.2, 2004, p.104.

<sup>42</sup> Langfield, 'A Displaced Britishness', pp.161-191.

<sup>43</sup> See for example, Marjory Harper, 'Probing the Pioneer Questionnaires: British Settlement in Saskatchewan, 1887-1914', *Saskatchewan History*, vol.52, 2000, pp.28-46; Marjory Harper, 'Enticing the Emigrant: Canadian Agents in Ireland and Scotland, c.1870-c.1920', *The Scottish Historical Review*, vol.83, no. 215, 2004, pp.41-58; Marjory Harper, 'Pressure and Persuasion: Canadian Agents and Scottish Emigration, c.1870-c.1920', *The Historian*, vol.81, 2004, pp.17-23; Marjory Harper, 'Rhetoric and Reality: British Migration to Canada, 1867-1967' in Phillip Buckner (ed.), *Canada and the British Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp.161-180; Marjory Harper, 'Opportunity and Exile: Snapshots of Scottish Emigration to Australia', *Australian Studies*, vol.2, 2010, pp.1-21; Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*.

considers the activities of the dominion's government emigration agents<sup>44</sup> in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the in-the-field personnel whose role it was to meet directly with Britain's rural populace to "stimulate, steer and sustain emigration".<sup>45</sup> Using correspondence and reports generated by these personnel, Harper highlights instances where Canadian and Australian emigration agents' activities and efforts intersected during this period, including the case of one Canadian sub-agent, Peter Fleming, who was considered a "seasoned professional agent" by the country's officials because he had previously worked for both the Queensland and Western Australian governments.<sup>46</sup> Due to the broadness of her scope, however, Harper does not pursue this argument beyond general observations or consider the interaction or relations between Canadian and Australian officials. For example, in her 2004 article, 'Enticing the Emigrant: Canadian Agents in Ireland and Scotland, c1870-c1920', Harper notes that Canadian agents based in Scotland and Ireland had to contend with "competition from rival destinations"<sup>47</sup> including Queensland and New Zealand, and in their reports back to Ottawa, they urged their superiors to consider introducing state-funded assistance to match Queensland's free passage scheme. Unfortunately, how the Canadian government responded, if at all, to the recommendations put forward to match Queensland's inducements is not explored. In my thesis, I have taken the opportunity to consider how information was acquired, what response it elicited, and the relationship generally among government representatives working in this space which Harper mainly summarises as oppositional or competitive. Chapter Three of this thesis challenges this assumption, providing evidence of where government representatives from Canada and Australia were consultative in a positive manner to assist the other with their pursuit of British migrants. Furthermore, Harper's emphasis on government emigration agents, whom she calls the "linchpins in the system",<sup>48</sup> means that the work of intermediate and more senior level personnel and officials working in Britain and at home in the

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<sup>44</sup> The term *emigration* is used to denote the difference between government personnel responsible for inducing British migrants to leave as opposed to the immigration personnel based in Canada and Australia who assisted with processing and settling new arrivals. This will be outlined in greater detail in Chapter Three.

<sup>45</sup> Harper, 'Enticing the Emigrant', p.41.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p.49.

<sup>48</sup> Harper, 'Rhetoric and Reality', p.166.

emigration administrative arm of the Canadian and Australian governments is largely ignored. This is problematic, particularly if it is considered that the staff of the High Commissioners and Agents-General's offices in London received, interacted and corresponded with arguably as many potential migrants as agents based across Britain's rural regions. Here, H. Gordon Skilling's 1945 analysis of Canadian representation abroad, and Carl Bridge, Frank Bongiorno, and David Lee's more recent edited collection addressing the history of the office of Australia's High Commissioner in Britain are useful background resources.<sup>49</sup>

Lisa Chilton's transnational study, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930*, addresses organised female migration from Britain to Canada and Australia and the work of female-run philanthropic emigration societies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Whilst the encouragement of single female migrants, particularly domestic servants, is outside the scope of this thesis, Chilton's work offers an important example of studies considering formal migration activities (in this case, through philanthropic societies rather than governments) in Britain, Canada and Australia in the same period that this thesis is focused upon. Chilton also considers the aims and methods of particular female emigration officials managing this migration, a group she describes as 'emigrators'. She offers an important observation in her fifth chapter about interactions between these officials, noting that they "had their own agendas, yet they saw the benefit in supporting each other's work. However, an examination of the periodic conflicts that arose between these parties reveals a set of tensions that lay just under the surface of the migration managers' relations most of the time."<sup>50</sup> Through my research, I have found a similar argument can be made for Canadian and Australian government officials in their mutual work in Britain. This will be more fully considered in Chapter Three of this thesis.

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<sup>49</sup> H. Gordon Skilling, *Canadian Representation Abroad: From Agency to Embassy*, Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1945; Carl Bridge and Frank Bongiorno (eds), *The High Commissioners: Australia's Representatives in the United Kingdom, 1910-2010*, Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2010.

<sup>50</sup> Lisa Chilton, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930*, Toronto: University of Toronto, 2007, pp.122-123.



Works about particularly mobile colonial individuals, such as the female emigrators Chilton examines, are also instructive for this thesis in its assessment of the influence and potential impact of Canadian and Australian government representatives and personnel engaged in recruiting the British agricultural migrant. In particular, David Lambert and Alan Lester's 2006 edited collection, *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century*, focuses on individuals who travelled frequently within the British Empire in the nineteenth century, who they define as having imperial careers. Lambert and Lester suggest that these individuals are worthy of study because the connections they made across the British World assisted in facilitating the "continual reformulation of imperial discourses, practice and culture".<sup>51</sup> Zoe Laidlaw also observes that studies of such peripatetic individuals provide scholars with the opportunity to see how "colonial ideas and policies were translated from one location across other colonial (and metropolitan) spheres".<sup>52</sup> Benjamin Rankin's relatively recent article, 'Alfred Deakin and Water Resources Politics in Australia' demonstrates how one such individual, Alfred Deakin, and his overseas study tours of irrigation settlements in countries such as France, Spain and the United States in the 1880s when he was Victoria's Minister of Public Works and Water Supply played a significant role in the formation of subsequent Australian state and federal policies relating to water and irrigation settlement between 1880 and 1910. Rankin maintains that Deakin's writings about irrigation during this period illustrate his extensive knowledge of overseas practices and offers an "example of evidence-based policy making in the colonial period".<sup>53</sup> My thesis also considers how Canadian and Australian government representatives, responsible for immigration and settlement between 1896 and 1914, similarly employed evidenced-based policy making to attract a British migrant populace to their respective lands. Andrew Dilley's article addressing the work of New South Wales' Agent-General T.A. Coghlan between 1905 and 1909 also offers an instructive example of how the work of an individual colonial government representative (in this case Coghlan) can be used to

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<sup>51</sup> David Lambert and Alan Lester, 'Introduction', in David Lambert and Alan Lester (eds), *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p.2. This point about the individual transgressing national borders is also made in the introduction of Deacon, Russell, and Woollacott (eds), *Transnational Ties*, p.xv.

<sup>52</sup> Zoe Laidlaw, 'Breaking Britannia's Bounds? Law, Settlers, and Space in Britain's Imperial Historiography', *The Historical Journal*, vol.55, no.3, 2012, p.808.

<sup>53</sup> Benjamin Rankin, 'Alfred Deakin and Water Resources Politics in Australia', *History Australia*, vol.10, no.2, 2013, p.115.

demonstrate the interactions between colonial government representatives, the prevailing opinion in London in regards to colonial finance, and the politics of debt in New South Wales and Australia in the early twentieth century.<sup>54</sup> The Australian Agents-General, including Coghlan, were important advocates and critics regarding British immigration, and their work and interactions with one another and with other dominion representatives are important considerations for this thesis.

A number of biographical studies highlighting the contributions of individual Canadian and Australian government officials and representatives to immigration and settlement in this period are also useful background information for this thesis. These include D.J. Hall's two-part biography on the career of Clifford Sifton, Canada's Minister of the Interior from 1896 to 1905, who is credited with expanding government operations and stimulating immigration to the interior region after a prolonged period of stagnation.<sup>55</sup> In terms of Australian representatives, a number of scholarly works, namely by Paul K. Conkin, J.M. Powell and J.R. Kluger, address the activities of California irrigation expert Dr Elwood Mead, who is credited with revitalising immigration to Victoria through the promotion of irrigation settlement between 1910 and 1914.<sup>56</sup> Jack Walton's 2007 study of the work of George Randall, Queensland's emigration officer in the 1880s and 1890s, considers his efforts to encourage British agricultural migrants to settle in the colony, notably as the other Australian colonies were terminating their campaigns.<sup>57</sup> Walton also offers some cursory observations about Randall's knowledge of, and interest in, Canada's promotional activities in Britain during the 1890s when the country's programme was significantly expanded under Sifton. He notes that Randall recommended

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<sup>54</sup> Andrew Dilley, 'T.A. Coghlan, London Opinion and the Politics of Anglo-Australian Finance, 1905-09', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.41, no.1, 2013, pp.37-58.

<sup>55</sup> D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900*, vol.1, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981; D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: A Lonely Eminence, 1901-1929*, vol.2, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985.

<sup>56</sup> Paul K. Conkin, 'The Vision of Elwood Mead,' *Agricultural History*, vol.34, no.2, 1960, pp.88-97; J.R. Kluger, 'Elwood Mead: Irrigation Engineer and Social Planner', unpublished PhD thesis, Arizona State University, 1970; J.M. Powell, 'Elwood Mead and California's State Colonies: An Episode in Australian-American Contacts 1915-31,' *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol.67, no.4, 1982, pp.328-353; James R. Kluger, *Turning on Water with a Shovel: The Career of Elwood Mead*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992.

<sup>57</sup> Jack Walton, *George Randall: Emigration Officer Extraordinaire*, Brisbane: CopyRight Publishing, 2007.

Queensland “following Canada’s lead” in its advertising and publicity activities, and that “it did seem that more money became available for advertisement”.<sup>58</sup>

Although Canada and Australia’s campaign to secure migrants outside of Britain between 1896 and 1914 is not considered in any detail in this thesis, it is necessary to mention one study of Canadian promotional and recruitment activities in the United States that has informed my research and approach to this period. In his 1972 work, *Only Farmers Need Apply*, Harold Troper considers the administrative structure of the Department of the Interior and the personnel therein tasked with encouraging American farmers to settle in Canada between 1896 and 1911. Whilst British settlers were considered necessary for maintaining and enhancing the British character of Canada’s populations, federal officials also devoted significant attention and effort to securing experienced American farmers. American settlers brought with them greater existing capital and hands-on experience of farming comparable land south of the border. Moreover, Troper observes that this period also coincided with growing relations between the bordering countries, particularly between Canadian personnel, American immigration officials, the country’s press, and private railway companies. In describing the activities of the Canadian officials tasked with attracting American migrants, Troper effectively argues that, more than just “cogs in a mindless bureaucratic machine”, Canadian emigration and immigration personnel based in the United States and at home wielded significant power over immigration and settlement outcomes during this time.<sup>59</sup> Chapter Three of this thesis addresses the Canadian and Australian government representatives and personnel based in Britain and at home, arguing that this was a highly mobile and connected network of professional men who actively consulted with one another about their policies and practices in an attempt to consolidate their own. In the context of Canada’s campaign, I also address the success of the country’s operations in the United States in the late 1890s, and how this influenced changes to the programme in Britain from 1902 onwards.

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p.104.

<sup>59</sup> Harold Troper, *Only Farmers Need Apply: Official Canadian Government Encouragement of Immigration from the United States, 1896-1911*, Toronto: Griffin Press Limited, 1972, p.15.

Two works considering Canadian and Australian diplomatic relations in the twentieth century, their similar paths of development, and the often-paradoxical nature of their official relationship as a result, are useful to this thesis. Greg Donaghy's published conference paper, 'Parallel Paths: Canadian-Australian Relations since the 1890s',<sup>60</sup> examines the evolution of Canadian-Australian foreign relations from the 1890s through to the 1980s. In the first section of his paper, Donaghy focuses primarily on the Canadian government's attempt to bring the two countries closer through imperial trade prior to World War One. He observes that despite relatively warm relations, Canada's attempts were mainly frustrated by a protectionist response from Australian officials at the time. Donaghy suggests this response is reflective of an overall historical pattern of "bilateral harmony" alternating with "fierce competition and rivalry".<sup>61</sup> Australian historian Penelope Edmonds observes in her book, 'Canada and Australia: On Anglo-Saxon "Oceana," Transcolonial History, and an Interconnected Pacific World', Donaghy's paper emphasises a connection between Canada and Australia based on their mutual growth as independent nations away from the British Empire and much like national histories "the empire in these 'post'-colonial societies is not so much omitted or rejected in service to nationalism as it is rendered benign".<sup>62</sup> And whilst Donaghy provides important insight into trade relations between Canada and Australia before 1914, including the establishment of Canada's first trade commissioner in Melbourne, his analysis of this period is brief and immigration and settlement are not part of the scope of his research. Margaret MacMillan and Francine McKenzie's edited book, *Parties Long Estranged: Canada and Australia in the Twentieth Century*, then considers Canada and Australia's foreign relations from the mid-twentieth century onwards.<sup>63</sup> They acknowledge in the book's introduction that "In the formal organizations of the Empire, statesmen from both countries worked together and against each other in a process that helped define and clarify national interests and goals."<sup>64</sup> This pattern of cooperation and competition,

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<sup>60</sup> Donaghy, 'Parallel Paths', pp.13-37.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>62</sup> Penelope Edmonds, 'Canada and Australia: On Anglo-Saxon "Oceana," Transcolonial History, and an Interconnected Pacific World', in Dubinsky, Perry and Yu (eds), *Within and Without the Nation*, p.118.

<sup>63</sup> Margaret MacMillan and Francine McKenzie (eds), *Parties Long Estranged: Canada and Australia in the Twentieth Century*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

MacMillan and McKenzie assert, continued throughout the twentieth century which allowed Canada and Australia to be simultaneously “allies, rivals, and models”.<sup>65</sup>

It is at this intersection of transnationalism, British World, and Canadian-Australian relations that this thesis sits. It will provide a comparative study of Canadian-Australian relations and seek to highlight the highly connected nature of their policies and practices in pursuing British agricultural migrants. Chapter One begins with an examination of the ideological and pragmatic factors that led to the identification of the British white male agriculturalist as the ideal migrant by Canada and Australia in the late Victorian and early Edwardian period. These included philosophical considerations, such as the importance of the yeoman ideal, utopian ideas of agrarian settlement, as well as the notion that the rural environment imbued positive moral characteristics in a society, especially in contrast to the perceived depravity of the urban lifestyle found in London and other British cities. It will be demonstrated that on a practical level, agricultural migrants were given primacy because of the particular lands and regions identified for settlement and the desire to have strong agricultural production and a primary market economy. Further to this, I explore the language of Canadian and Australian government officials during this period which also emphasised attracting white Anglo-Celtic migrants in order to uphold and strengthen the ‘Britishness’ of their settler societies.

Chapter Two outlines the land and immigration policies and practices that were in operation between 1896 and 1914 that were designed to encourage this particular group of migrants. The year 1896 is taken as the starting point for this thesis because it was from this point that the Canadian government’s efforts to attract new migrant settlers for the North-West Territories began to significantly increase. The new Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, was key to this expansion, and under his leadership significant changes to land and immigration policies and practices were introduced to encourage rapid wide-scale agricultural settlement in the country’s North-West Territories. Chapter Two demonstrates the connected nature of land and immigration legislation during this period, areas that generally fell under the jurisdiction of the same government departments. This chapter also explores the

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

commonalities in Canada and Australia's land and immigration programmes and approaches, but also where they diverged and why. The consequences of these differences in their programmes is further considered in Chapter Three as Canadian and Australian representatives in Britain used the incentives of free farms (in the case of Canada's North-West) and subsidised passage schemes (for the Australian states) as a means of inducing British agricultural migrants and to remain competitive. These incentives were also important tools for encouraging a positive public perception of the dominions in the minds of the British public. I show that access to these incentives allowed government to place conditions on who was eligible to apply.

The third chapter of this thesis primarily addresses Canada and Australia's recruitment campaigns and promotional activities designed to attract and secure British agricultural migrants. It considers the timing of their campaigns, and how Canada's earlier and more expansive operations weighed heavily on the minds of Australian officials as state operations were reinvigorated nearly a decade later. Through correspondence, reports and newspaper articles from the period, it will be shown that Canadian and Australian officials based at home and abroad were intimately aware of each other's activities and efforts to secure British agriculturalists. This level of awareness was made possible chiefly by the personnel themselves, a highly mobile and connected network of professional men who actively and willingly sought and shared information and ideas with one another in order to observe, learn and borrow methods that had proven successful for their sister colony. This chapter will examine how information flowed within this network and across the Empire, and in doing so consider the effect it had on Canada and Australia's recruitment activities in this period.

Chapter Four offers a case study of Victoria's campaign to entice specialist migrants to the state between 1910 and 1914 for the purpose of increasing irrigation settlement on its lands. In particular, it explores the state government's decision to formally pursue Canadian farmers as part of the programme, much to the surprise and annoyance of Canadian immigration officials. Whilst the history of Victoria's closer settlement and irrigation schemes have been documented in a number of scholarly works, surprisingly few have acknowledged the inclusion of Canadian farmers in the state's campaign. As this appears to be one of the first times that one

member of the British Empire officially attempted to induce settlers from another, particularly as both were still actively investing in the growth of their settler populations, this offers an interesting case study into British World relations between 1896 and 1914. This chapter will also demonstrate how Victorian officials drew on their knowledge of the successful promotional methods and activities that Canadian personnel had perfected in the late 1890s and early 1900s. In addition, this chapter offers for the first time insight into the response from Canadian officials to Victoria's programme, which they saw as a "violation of colonial courtesy".<sup>66</sup>

The final chapter of this thesis considers the outcomes of Canada and Australia's campaigns through the immigration figures recorded and the amount of land settled by the beginning of World War One. In particular, it explores how, despite a significant increase in immigration for both dominions, Canada and Australia largely failed to entice their migrant populations onto rural land and instead saw most new arrivals settle in cities and towns. This chapter reports the views of the government officials and personnel, and the reasons they believed that land settlement and development failed to progress to the degree intended during this time. It draws on the statements and evidence given by government representatives during the hearings of the Dominions Royal Commission (DRC) between 1912 and 1916. The DRC canvassed Canadian and Australian government officials in Britain and at home, and their testimonies offer important insight into what they saw as the downfall of their official programmes.

This thesis draws upon a wide range of archival sources produced by Canadian and Australian federal and state government departments and personnel based in Canada, Australia, Britain, and the United States between 1896 and 1914. Archives and collecting institutions visited during the research of this thesis include Libraries and Archives Canada, National Archives of Australia, National Library of Australia, Barr Smith Library, State Library of South Australia, State Library of New South Wales, State Library of Western Australia, State Records Office of Western Australia, State Library of Queensland, Queensland State Archives, State Library of Victoria, Public Records Office of Victoria, and the University of Saskatchewan Library. The archival

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<sup>66</sup> Letter from G.E. Boughton to the Department of the Interior, 7 January 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

sources examined include published materials such as annual and specially commissioned reports, conference proceedings and recommendations, and papers presented to, and printed by, Australian and Canadian federal and state parliaments. As Chilton and Troper have pointed out, it is necessary to consider these sources with a critical eye as such published materials were carefully created with an understanding that they would be widely distributed and read within the British Empire's public sphere.<sup>67</sup> This is particularly apparent when it is considered that many of the Canadian government's published materials used in this thesis were found in libraries and archives across Australia and vice versa for Australian published materials. Further to this, the desire to create a positive public image of their respective dominion to attract and induce potential migrants and overseas investment meant government-published materials such as handbooks, bulletins, pamphlets and broadsheets were often highly selective promotional pieces. This was also a consistent feature of the public statements made by government representatives in interviews with the press at home, in Britain and in other parts of the Empire, which were overwhelmingly positive and promotional in nature. A wide selection of newspaper articles from Canada, Australia and Britain addressing the progress of dominion settlement have also been used throughout this thesis to gauge the ways in which the press shared information and ideas about Canada and Australia's immigration and land settlement policies and programmes during this period.

Government publications such as annual reports naturally summarise the operations and outcomes of government departments and officials over an extended period and consequently are likely to brush over, or miss altogether, the quotidian moments of their work. For this reason, this thesis also makes use of the large body of unpublished materials produced by government departments and personnel during this period, including letters, memorandums and other correspondence. In examining these documents, it is possible to discern the encounters, interactions and the gradual development of relations and relationships between Canadian and Australian personnel, and to consider how and to what extent this sharing of information and ideas over time influenced the formation of their policies and practices. These

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<sup>67</sup> Chilton, *Agents of Empire*, p.14; Troper, *Only Farmers Need Apply*, p.2.



unpublished sources also offer unique insight into the less-guarded thoughts, comments and concerns expressed by government officials as they gathered information and considered one another's operations and what this might mean for their own success. Bringing the published and unpublished archival sources together in this manner offers a unique and innovative comparison between what was said publicly and what was expressed behind-the-scenes.

One of the challenges in writing about this period is that the Federation of Australian colonies occurs in the middle of the time frame. Therefore, where clearly pointing to government activities in the pre-Federation period, I refer to colonial governments and each colony to denote this distinction. 'Australia' is used in a more general way throughout each chapter, but care is taken to draw distinctions between state and federal government policies or practices in the post-Federation period. Similarly, whilst this thesis is focused on the settlement of Canada's North-West Territories between 1896 and 1914, I refer mainly to Canada, in part because of the federal government's retention of responsibility in overseeing immigration and settlement in the region, even after provincial status was attained by Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

In considering the activities of the state and federal governments of Australia during this period to secure British agricultural migrants, this thesis has also been confined to Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Whilst the South Australian and Tasmanian governments did reintroduce immigration and land settlement initiatives in this period, it was not until just before World War One.<sup>68</sup> Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria reinvigorated their operations much earlier and were also arguably more active in their pursuit of British migrants during this time. A review of the available primary sources also indicates that Canadian government officials corresponded most frequently with personnel from the four states that form the focus of this thesis.

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<sup>68</sup> See Elspeth Grant and Paul Sendziuk, "Urban Degeneration and Rural Revitalisation': The South Australian Government's Youth Migration Scheme, 1913-14', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol.41, no.1, 2010, pp.75-89.

The efforts of Canadian and Australian governments to officially encourage British immigration between 1896 and 1914 were supported by a multitude of private enterprises and philanthropic organisations. Whilst they are occasionally referred to in this thesis as part of the government-led activities, their work is beyond the scope of this study. The private steamship companies and their booking agents do feature in the final three chapters as they were engaged by both Canada and Australia to supplement the recruitment work of government representatives and were important contributors to official efforts.

The terms 'British' and 'Britain' are used throughout this thesis to denote the people and places on which Canada and Australia focused their official efforts during this period. Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich point to the increasing popularity of the term 'British' during the eighteenth century in North America as a way for "colonists of mixed English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish origin ... to describe their heritage".<sup>69</sup> What it meant to be British or to have a sense of Britishness has been the source of much debate, particularly for those working within British World scholarship.<sup>70</sup> What is generally conceded is that being British, particularly for those living in the dominions and outside of the British Empire, could include a range of overlapping definitions that strengthened a sense of unity among these individuals whilst simultaneously encouraging a local nationalism associated with their specific place of origin.<sup>71</sup> British World scholars have also pointed out that these multiple definitions could also be used by the dominions' white settler populations to distinguish and assert themselves from Britain whilst at the same time maintain a connection to the centre. For the purpose of this thesis, 'British' is used to describe migrants from England, Wales and Scotland. Whilst Canada and Australia did include Irish agriculturalists in their definition of desirable settlers, the emigration of Irish agricultural migrants, high in the first half of the nineteenth century, was steadily declining by the turn of the

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<sup>69</sup> Bridge and Fedorowich, 'Mapping the British World', pp.2-3.

<sup>70</sup> British World scholars point to Linda Colley's 1992 article about the nature of British identity as sparking much of the debate about whether there was a British identity and if it could sit comfortably with a multitude of other identities, including English, Welsh, etc. See Linda Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument', *Journal of British Studies*, vol.31, no.4, 1992, pp.309-329. See also Constantine, 'British Emigration to the Empire-Commonwealth Since 1880', p.24.

<sup>71</sup> Buckner and Bridge, *Reinventing the British World*, p.79.

century.<sup>72</sup> Reports and correspondence from dominion emigration officials during this period also indicate their focus was primarily on attracting English, Welsh and Scottish agriculturalists, as there was a growing resistance to their efforts within Ireland.<sup>73</sup> Marjory Harper points out that Canadian government emigration agents based in Ireland from the late 1890s through to 1910 regularly reported hostility from Ireland's rural population to their recruitment and promotional activities.<sup>74</sup>

The white Anglo-Celtic male farmer from Britain was the central focus for Canadian and Australian government personnel in their formal immigration and settlement activities between 1896 and 1914, and is thus the main emphasis of this thesis too. The voice of the British agricultural migrant, however, features only briefly as the intention of this thesis is to explore the work of policy makers and those engage in activities in an official capacity on behalf of their dominions to pursue and settle this group of desired migrants. Canada and Australia's acceptance of agricultural migrants from other parts of the world are briefly mentioned, as is rural female and child migration where appropriate. This is by no means to suggest that British male agriculturalists were the only group of skilled or labour-oriented migrants desired by the dominions at this time. Other groups of skilled male migrants including artisans or mechanics were also encouraged, as were single British female migrants for domestic service positions.<sup>75</sup> It is outside of the scope of this thesis to consider the efforts of government and non-government organisations to secure these particular groups. There is considerable existing literature addressing British female domestic servant migration to particular destinations within the British Empire, and an emerging body of literature considering the transnational histories of their

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<sup>72</sup> This point is made by a number of scholars. See for example, Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis, 'Introduction', in Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (eds), *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006, p.7; Richards, *Destination Australia*, p.33; Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.13; D.J. Hall, 'Clifford Sifton: Immigration and Settlement Policy, 1896-1905', in Howard Palmer (ed.), *The Settlement of the West*, Calgary: University of Calgary, 1977, p.71.

<sup>73</sup> See Harper, 'Enticing the Emigrant', pp.48-49.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> James Jupp notes that the terms 'artisan' or 'mechanic' described individuals possessing some kind of professional skills, which generally required the completion of an apprenticeship such as carpenters or stone masons. Whilst artisans were often those working with ancient skills, mechanics were defined by their use of modern mechanisation. See Jupp, *The English in Australia*, pp.79, 80.

migration.<sup>76</sup> Chapters Two and Five will foreshadow the dominions' increasing interest in British child migration on the eve of World War One and the growing popularity of the idea that urban youths could be taught the skills necessary to become successful farmers. Finally, it is unfortunately outside the scope of this thesis to consider how the *industry of white settlement*,<sup>77</sup> as historian Kent Fedorowich and Andrew S. Thompson have termed it, within the British Empire consequently led to the dispossession and delocalisation of Canada's and Australia's Indigenous peoples. I do not address the very complex issue of Indigenous and colonial government relations in the context of land settlement and population aspirations in this period.

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<sup>76</sup> For example see Paula Hamilton, *'No Irish Need Apply': Aspects of the Employer-Employee Relationship in Australian Domestic Service 1860-1900*, London: Australian Studies Centre, 1985; Margrette Kleinig, "'Good Help is Hard to Find": The Emigration of Selected Domestic Servants from the United Kingdom to South Australia, 1911-1914', unpublished B.A. Hons. thesis, Flinders University of South Australia, 1992; Jan Gothard, 'Wives or Workers? Single British Female Migration to Colonial Australia', in Pamela Sharpe (ed.), *Women, Gender and Labour Migration: Historical and Global Perspectives*, New York: Routledge, 2001, pp.145-162; Langfield, "A Chance to Bloom"; B.W. Higman, "Testing the Boundaries of White Australia: Domestic Servants and Immigration Policy, 1901-45', *Immigrants and Minorities: Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora*, vol.22, no.1, 2003, pp.1-21; Lisa Chilton, 'A New Class of Women for the Colonies: The Imperial Colonist and the Construction of Empire', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.31, no.2, 2003, pp.36-56; A. James Hammerton, 'Gender and Migration', in Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp.156-180; Marilyn Barber, 'Hearing Women's Voices: Female Migration to Canada in the Early Twentieth Century', *Oral History*, vol.33, no.1, 2005, pp.68-76; Chilton, *Agents of Empire*.

<sup>77</sup> Fedorowich and Thompson (eds), *Empire, Migration and Identity in the British World*, p.6.

## Chapter 1

### Settlers of the Right Kind

This chapter examines the identification of the British white male agriculturalist by Canadian and Australian governments as the ideal migrant, and what motivated each to focus their formal policies and practices on securing this particular group between 1896 and 1914. As noted in the Introduction of this thesis, settler colonisation in the dominions by the turn of the century was characterised by an increasingly strategic and self-determining approach to securing migrants from Britain. Inherent to this was the growing consensus that dominion settlement was not merely about obtaining a populace; rather emphasis was placed on securing the 'right kind' of migrant who would positively contribute to their new home. This contribution was focused almost exclusively on attracting and securing new settlers that would transform colonial land into small productive homestead farms. As such, the desire to entice this particular group of skilled migrants was manifest in Canada and Australia's land and immigration policies introduced in this period.

This chapter will assess the ideological and pragmatic factors that influenced, to varying degrees, the value placed on the British male agricultural migrant. These included philosophical considerations, such as utopian ideas associated with agrarian settlement and the importance of the yeoman ideal, as well as the notion that the rural environment imbued positive moral characteristics in a colonial society, particularly in contrast to the perceived depravity of Britain's urban centres. It will be demonstrated that on a practical level, agricultural migrants were given priority because of the specific lands and regions identified for settlement, and in the case of Australia, the desire to transition from large pastoral holdings to small-scale farms. This chapter will also consider the significance placed on male migrants, and how the male identity and notions of masculinity were intertwined with the ideal migrant personae. Further to this, it will examine the philosophical and practical considerations that gave primacy of place to British, and more specifically Anglo-Celtic, migrants. Canada and Australia desired to uphold the Britishness of their colonial societies through a transplanted British population, and paramount to this

was securing a migrant populace that would preserve this identity and connection to the Empire. Importantly, this notion was not extended to the entire British populace, only to those of Anglo-Celtic appearance and background. This emphasis on Anglo-Celtics as the ideal migrant was also supported by a strong belief in the benefits of *intelligent emigration*, and the view that the transition from Britain to the dominions could be achieved for British settlers with relative ease as compared to those from other countries. Finally, this chapter will contend that whilst some of these factors were regionally or locally specific in their nature, overwhelmingly the ideas and discourse around the construction of Canada and Australia's settler societies, particularly among dominion government officials, transcended geographic boundaries and flowed across the British Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

This chapter utilises a range of reports, memorandums, speeches, correspondence, and interviews with Canadian and Australian government officials and personnel in order to provide general understanding of how the British male agriculturalist came to be regarded formally as the ideal migrant between 1896 and 1914. It also takes into account a sample of newspaper articles concerning this topic that featured in the Canadian, Australian and British press. The intention of this chapter is to consider generally how Canadian and Australian government officials discussed and articulated their views about who was best for their societies during this period and how this translated into policies and practices in their pursuit of migrants.

The belief that the agriculturalist was the ideal migrant for Canada and Australia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was associated with the prominence of utopian ideals that emphasised the positive and stabilising virtues of agrarian settlement. Popular in the British Empire throughout the Victorian period, these idealised visions of a rural populace again found a place within the new phase of colonial settlement initiatives prior to World War One. Central to this was a belief that humans at their core were connected to the land, and that agricultural settlement was a positive transformative process for nature and for man.<sup>1</sup> Expansionists argued

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Waterhouse, 'The Yeoman Ideal and Australian Experience, 1860-1960', in Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw, Kiera Lindsey and Stuart Macintyre (eds), *Exploring the British World: Identity, Cultural Production, Institutions*, Melbourne: RMIT Publishing, 2004, p.442.

that intensive agricultural activities could transform even the most marginal of lands into a New Arcadia or fertile Gardens of Eden.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the act of domesticating the land was believed to engender rural settlers with an ethos for hard-work and self-sacrifice, the very civic qualities necessary for an emerging society.<sup>3</sup> Canadian and Australian government officials responsible for immigration and land settlement in this period enthusiastically supported these utopian ideals and regularly articulated a belief that a settler population founded upon agricultural pursuits would possess the best characteristics for their young emerging countries. Clifford Sifton, Canada's Minister of the Interior from 1896 to 1905, stated in 1910 that, in his opinion, these rural attributes were what would guarantee Canada's long-term success:

Agriculture is the foundation of all real and enduring progress on the part of Canada ... The possession of a preponderating rural population having the virtues and strength of character bred only among those who follow agricultural life, is the only sure guarantee of our national future.<sup>4</sup>

His sentiment was echoed by Saskatchewan's first Premier, Walter Scott, who declared at the laying of the cornerstone of the province's first university in the same year that "Farming is the foundation of civilization."<sup>5</sup>

In their mutual desire to transform uncultivated land into productive farms, Canadian and Australian government officials placed value on the attributes of the yeoman farmer, who Sifton later famously defined as "a stalwart peasant in a sheep-skin coat, born on the soil, whose forefathers have been farmers for ten generations, with a stout wife and a half-dozen children".<sup>6</sup> Whilst Sifton's description of the yeoman

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<sup>2</sup> For more on how these ideas shaped land use in Australia in this time, see Melissa Bellanta, 'Clearing Ground for the New Arcadia: Utopia, Labour and Environment in 1890s Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol.26, no.72, 2002, pp.13-20; Doug Owsram, 'The Promise of the West as Settlement Frontier', in R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzan (eds), *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007, pp.3-28; James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, p.394.

<sup>3</sup> David Hall, 'Clifford Sifton's Vision of the Prairie West', in R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzan (eds), *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007, p.78.

<sup>4</sup> Quote taken from D.J. Hall, 'Clifford Sifton: Immigration and Settlement Policy, 1896-1905', in Howard Palmer (ed.), *The Settlement of the West*, Calgary: University of Calgary, 1977, p.84.

<sup>5</sup> Quote taken from Gordon Barnhart, *Peace, Progress and Prosperity: A Biography of Saskatchewan's First Premier, T. Walter Scott*, Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2000, p.72.

<sup>6</sup> Sir Clifford Sifton, 'The Immigrants Canada Wants', *MacLean's Magazine*, 1 April 1922, pp.16, 32-4. Reprinted in Howard Palmer (ed.), *Immigration and the Rise of Multiculturalism*, Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1975, p.35.

farmer conjured up images of an antiquated past, he and other Canadian and Australian officials argued that the modern yeomen of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were in fact the most advanced members of society because of their determination to domesticate wild lands into cultivated farms. It was also contended that the modern yeoman promoted the progressive and positive ideas of egalitarianism, emancipation, entrepreneurialism and self-determination.<sup>7</sup> As historian James Belich points out, settler utopian ideas by the turn of the century were not about looking to the distant past; rather they were about looking outward to the “newlands” where progress and development relied on the tenacity of the modern yeoman settler.<sup>8</sup> Such characteristics of the modern yeoman were articulated by Australian government personnel based at home in the dominions and in Britain during this period as well. Western Australia’s premier, John Forrest, observed that what his state most desired was a “bold peasantry”,<sup>9</sup> while South Australia’s Agent-General in London, John Jenkins, described the ideal “yeoman class” as being “thrifty, energetic, [and] full of initiative”.<sup>10</sup>

The belief in the progressive characteristics of agrarian settlement and the modern yeoman farmer were also important political tools for government officials whose enthusiasm for small-scale farms and closer settlement often diverged from the realities of existing land use during this period, particularly in Australia’s eastern states. As noted in the Introduction to this thesis, pastoralism was the dominant form of land use in New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland from the mid-nineteenth century. Closer settlement legislation, introduced from the 1860s onwards, worked to break up large pastoral estates, either voluntarily or compulsory, so that suitable agricultural land could be made available for small-scale farming and closer settlement.<sup>11</sup> With the states reinvigorating immigration activities in the early 1900s,

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<sup>7</sup> B.W. Higman, ‘Sugar Plantations and Yeoman Farming in New South Wales’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, vol.58, no.4, 1968, p.700.

<sup>8</sup> James Belich, ‘The Rise of the Angloworld: Settlement in North America and Australasia, 1784-1918’, in Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (eds), *Rediscovering the British World*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005, pp.51-52.

<sup>9</sup> Matthew Tonts, ‘State Policy and the Yeoman Ideal: Agricultural Development in Western Australia, 1890-1914’, *Landscape Research*, vol.27, no.1, 2002, p.110.

<sup>10</sup> ‘English Families for Australia’, *The W.A. Record*, 17 March 1906, p.17.

<sup>11</sup> Richard Waterhouse, *The Vision Splendid: A Social and Cultural History of Rural Australia*, Fremantle: Curtin University Books, 2005, pp.30-32.



the value of many small yeoman farmer migrants occupying the land as opposed to one large pastoralist was again emphasised. One Brisbane newspaper applauded this position in the case of Queensland:

The policy of the Government in regard to these “small” men is thoroughly sound and sagacious. Better by far is to have a hundred yeomen farmers in comfortable circumstances, than to have one enormously wealthy squatter, whose holding cover vast areas, and keep would-be settlers off the land. And clearly, as the policy of the Government is to settle small men on the land, it should do everything possible to promote the interests of such men.<sup>12</sup>

Similar to the pastoralist, the city dweller was also considered incongruent with the desired settler population for Canada and Australia between 1896 and 1914. In the Australian press it was regularly repeated that urban migrants were not ideal for a developing country:

We do not want more town dwellers—or rather we do not want to encourage to join as colonists people who will not assist in the real work of colonization, but will drift into indoor life to swell the already unpleasant disproportion between town and country dwellers.<sup>13</sup>

Whilst rural life was characterised as challenging but fulfilling work, urban life by contrast was considered one of “idleness”.<sup>14</sup> It was contended that even if urban migrants were willing to take up agricultural activities and rural settlement within the dominions, it would take far too long for them to gain the necessary skills, time which Canada and Australia did not have. Clifford Sifton suggested that, “It takes two generations to convert a town-bred population into an agricultural one, and it is not likely to be done on any considerable scale except under the pressure of starvation ... Canada has no time for that operation. We have not two generations to spare.”<sup>15</sup> Further to this, it was argued that the acceptance of urban migrants would likely mean that primary industries would lag as many of the new settlers would be tempted to reside in dominions’ cities and towns instead of on the land. Whilst growth in Canada and Australia’s urban centres was not necessarily negative, as Australia’s First High Commissioner George Reid pointed out, government officials believed that it was important for rural spaces to increase at a great rate than urban:

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<sup>12</sup> ‘Small Man’s Interest’, *The Telegraph*, 8 August 1912, p.6.

<sup>13</sup> ‘Immigration’, *Northern Argus*, 20 November 1908, p.3.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Town v. Country’, *Queenslander*, 6 May 1905, p.3.

<sup>15</sup> Sifton, ‘The Immigrants Canada Wants’, p.37.

The rise and growth of villages and cities as the result of pastoral and agricultural progress is at once natural and desirable; but a rate of growth in our villages and cities which outstrips that of our primary industries, in the case of a country like Australia—at once so young, so rich, and so vast in its undeveloped wealth of soil and minerals—is a calamity which leaves no excuse for those who do not endeavour to arrest it, by turning on the stream of emigration into the right channels.<sup>16</sup>

Although adult urban settlers were considered undesirable, less clear was how the dominions should approach city youths, particularly within their own population. By the mid-nineteenth century, it was commonly asserted that an agricultural populace in the United States' newly opened West was a necessary societal 'safety valve' to balance the growing urban settlement in the older eastern states.<sup>17</sup> Public figures such as Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune* newspaper, strongly advocated for legislation such as the *Homestead Act* which would encourage small-scale farming and a strong agricultural society in the West to balance America's growing eastern urban populace. Greeley also called on young urban American men residing in the eastern states to take up an agricultural life in the West lest they become too far removed from its positive qualities and virtues. Greeley's mantra was sometimes repeated in the Canadian and Australian press decades later. In 1898 the *Regina Leader* newspaper featured an article from the *Toronto Telegram* entitled, 'The Advice Holds Good' urging young eastern Canadian men to heed Greeley's recommendation:

If Horace Greeley lived in Toronto today, his advice to young men would still be Go West! Go West! There are harvests to be raised, minerals to be quarried, timber to be got out, fisheries to be operated, all kinds of wealth to be produced, and all kinds of commodities to be distributed. Nature has provided the opportunities in abundance, and all that is required is the intelligent application of capital and labour.<sup>18</sup>

The Australian press also capitalised on the directional nature of Greeley's message to emphasise that young men from the more established regions of Australia could benefit from settling on newly opened agricultural lands:

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<sup>16</sup> 'First Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom', *Australian Parliamentary Papers*, no.35, 1911, p.6.

<sup>17</sup> For more on the discourse surrounding land settlement in the United States, see Coy F. Cross, *Go West Young Man! Horace Greeley's Vision for America*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995.

<sup>18</sup> 'The Advice Holds Good', *Regina Leader*, 4 August 1898, page number unknown.

A young fellow named Jack Maloney left Gulgong for West Australia a few years ago with a few pounds but plenty of pluck. He returned to Gulgong last week, a man of independent means. He made £10,000 out of one land speculation and £33,000 out of another ... "Go west, young man" was capital advice in his case.<sup>19</sup>

The emphasis on a strong agricultural population to balance the growing urban environment, and for dominion youth to remain close to the land in Canada and Australia, was also fuelled by a desire to avoid Britain's path of swift industrialisation which many believed had encouraged its cities to become undesirable spaces. Whilst it was conceded that a life on the land promoted a virtuous and noble yeoman society, by contrast the city was criticised for placing these values at risk.<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth Wilson in her study of the growth of major cities in Britain, Europe and the United States, observes that whilst at one time the country and city had mainly complemented each other, the rapid expansion of large industrial cities from the mid-nineteenth century polarised these spaces against the Romantic belief that humans needed to be connected with nature and a rural environment.<sup>21</sup> Where the country promoted peace and a life untainted by immoral behaviour, by contrast the cities were perceived to represent the downfall of society, where "immigrant ghettos, crime, prostitution, alcoholic degradation, undernourished children, and impoverished families" were a common feature.<sup>22</sup> It was argued that able-bodied rural British men were drifting into the cities and becoming unproductive deviants lacking purpose and drive. Amongst the solutions put forward to remedy this loss of the rural society to the urban decay of Britain was to send these men and their families to the colonies where a life on the land would instil the right moral values and work ethic. As Robert H. Macdonald observes, "If civilization was itself to blame, with its materialism, urban problems, and moral temptations, then the country should look to the younger countries, where life was simpler, and where the battle for existence was real."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> 'A Successful Western Australian', *Warwick Examiner and Times*, 31 July 1901, p.3.

<sup>20</sup> Jack Walton, *George Randall: Emigration Officer Extraordinaire*, Brisbane: CopyRight Publishing, p.98.

<sup>21</sup> Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control Disorder, and Women*, London: Virago Press, 1991, pp.26-28.

<sup>22</sup> Anthony W. Rasporich, 'The City Yes, The City No: Perfection by Design in the Western City', in R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzan (eds), *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007, p.179.

<sup>23</sup> Robert H. Macdonald, *Sons of the Empire: The Frontier and the Boy Scout Movement, 1890-1918*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993, p.5.

There were some advocates that argued Canada and Australia should consider assisting British men keen to escape the squalor of the city. It was reasoned that with some basic training on the land, these young urban men would gain the appropriate skills considered worthy of colonial settlement. In September 1910, Britain's *The Daily Mirror* reported on an experiment it had arranged to see if two young unemployed city men, William Munson and Archibald Ivell, could be trained well enough in agriculture to be accepted by one of the colonies as agricultural migrants. The article entitled 'Farmers from the Embankment' described how under normal circumstances, urban men like William and Archibald would not be considered by government officials for colonial settlement:

The emigration officers of the various Colonial Governments are besieged daily with men, young and keen, many with a few pounds of capital, asking to be sent to the Colonies as farm labourers. To the inevitable question, "What experience have you of farm work?" the answer is "None." Naturally enough, these men cannot be assisted as the colonial farm has little use for the man who knows nothing of horses and the land, and the result is that thousands of potentially useful agriculturalists are thrown back upon the stress of the big cities to swell the ranks of the unemployed, and soon by sheer force of circumstances the ranks of the unemployable.<sup>24</sup>

*The Daily Mirror*, keen to prove that with some training these young men could become desirable migrants, arranged for William and Archibald to apprentice on an Essex farm where they would gain relevant skills such as fence-making, spreading manure, and seeding and harvesting crops. The paper pointed out that after only six months, the Queensland and Commonwealth government representatives had accepted William and Archibald as farm labourers, proudly noting that "the two one-time London 'unemployables' are to-day highly desirable immigrants such as the Colony is glad to welcome".<sup>25</sup> Perhaps also keen to demonstrate that the negative impact of city life could be replaced by the virtues of a rural one, the paper noted that the experience on the land had produced positive physical and emotional changes in William and Archibald as well: "the fresh air, the ample food and the hard work of farm life soon had its effect. In a few weeks they were ruddy cheeked, hard and happy."<sup>26</sup> Although there was some belief that Britain's dominions should accept

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<sup>24</sup> 'Farmers from the Embankment', *Daily Mirror*, 10 September, 1910, Available at Libraries and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

inexperienced city men such as William and Archibald, particularly if they could at first gain some of the necessary agricultural skills, overwhelmingly Canadian and Australian government officials considered urban migrants as incredibly risky investments. Labelled as ‘wasters’<sup>27</sup> or ‘wastrels’, immigration personnel argued that these migrants would more likely than not become liabilities, eventually returning to city life and relying on the government for hand-outs. In June 1913, *The West Australian* reported that Perth already had its share of wasters, noting that “One could not mistake him; he was easy to pick.”<sup>28</sup>

In addition to concerns over urban wasters slipping in among suitable agricultural settlers, Canadian and Australian government officials also expressed the belief that the ideal migrant were those prepared to settle on the land without the need of government assistance. It was maintained that suitable migrants would not expect handouts or the easiest path to success, and the best human characteristics were those instilled during the process of colonial settlement which often entailed making do initially with very little. The right sort was considered the self-made man, who would secure his fortune through the investment of his own hard work and sheer determination.<sup>29</sup> In describing a recently arrived settler to Western Australia, *The Daily News* reported:

He has not come to Western Australia to find a fortune; he has come here to make one, and, if we are not sadly mistaken, he is just the sort of man to do it ... And we believe in giving immigrants every encouragement. But, above all, we believe in securing the right kind. One immigrant of the right sort is worth a hundred immigrants of the other variety.<sup>30</sup>

The Australian press regularly expressed the opinion that self-made men were exactly what Australia needed, and that the best kind of settler were those who brought with them existing capital and did not expect or want assistance. The *Camperdown Chronicle* observed that this was an indication of the independent nature of the land settlement process itself:

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<sup>27</sup> Both of these terms regularly appeared in the Australian press in the context of immigration and desirable migrants. See, for example, ‘How the Poor Live’, *The West Australian*, 23 June 1913, p.8.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> D.W. Meinig, *On the Margins of the Good Earth: The South Australian Wheat Frontier, 1969-1884*, Netley: South Australian Government Printer, 1962, p.121.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Immigrants and Immigration’, *Daily News*, 6 December 1907, p.4.

When you get out where a man has a little elbow-room and a chance to develop, he has thoughts of his own. His thinking is not supplied to him every night and every morning, and he is less of a machine and more of a man, so that I do not think that the farmers need to be looked upon, or want to be looked upon, as dependents of the State. They do not come to the State Government asking alms. They are self-reliant, they are intelligent.<sup>31</sup>

On a practical level, there was recognition among Australian officials that the states did need to offer inducements in the form of assistance or subsidised passage in order to encourage British agriculturalists to emigrate and to effectively compete with dominions geographically closer to Britain, such as Canada. It will be shown in Chapter Two that because of Australia's geographic disadvantage, state officials were more willing than their Canadian counterparts to provide assistance to agricultural migrants in the form of subsidised passage and also financial loans granted by state agricultural banks to assist with land settlement.

The Canadian government expressed a similar position that the ideal migrant did not expect government assistance. This position was not simply an attempt by the government to save money, but rather part of a wider philosophical belief among federal immigration and land officials that the best settlers were those who would persevere with settlement on their own.<sup>32</sup> Clifford Sifton's predecessor, Frank Oliver, stated in 1910 that his government was only willing to accept "men who have independence enough to find their own way to this country".<sup>33</sup> Some temporary assistance was provided to individual settlers if it was deemed absolutely necessary and if the circumstances were outside of the settler's control, as was the case of the severe winter in 1906-1907 when a number of settlers in the Prairie Provinces required government assistance; however, it was held that this sort of practice should not be more than temporary less it encourage an expectation of long-term government support among new arrivals.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> 'The Man on the Farm', *Camperdown Chronicle*, 21 March 1908, p.6.

<sup>32</sup> Bill Waiser, "'Land I Can Own": Settling in the Promised Land', in R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzan (eds), *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007, p.158.

<sup>33</sup> 'No Assistance Will Be Given', *The Edmonton Capital*, 23 March 1910, p.1.

<sup>34</sup> For more about government assistance to settlers during the winter of 1906-1907, see Joe Cherwinski, 'The Rise and Incomplete Fall of a Contemporary Legend: Frozen Englishmen in the Canadian Prairies', *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol.31, no.3, 1999, pp.20-43.

Whilst the ideal migrant was considered to be the self-made man, there was also an expectation that his economic success would be shared by the older settlement regions. In Canada, it was assumed that the new western settlers would sell their crops to those in the eastern provinces, and in turn they would purchase the necessary manufactured goods from the East.<sup>35</sup> In an interview with Australian paper, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Canada's emigration agent in London, J. Bruce Walker, stated,

Every emigrant who is put to work on the land makes work for others too. More implements, machinery, tools, furniture, food, clothing, boots and shoes, and the hundred and one necessities of life are required, and so the enterprise of the whole community is quickened.<sup>36</sup>

The belief that the older areas of settlement, and manufacturing industries, would benefit from this new pool of settlers was also shared by Australians: "If they pour in and cultivate the land of the Commonwealth, the home market for city manufacturers will grow, and that home market is the only one which is going to be of any great value to our factories in any future with which we are directly concerned."<sup>37</sup>

A consistent feature of the ideal agricultural migrant identity was its overwhelmingly masculine quality. Women were considered necessary and important members of settler societies as they were deemed an indication of the advancement and sophistication of civilisation in colonial spaces; however, as historians Catherine A. Cavanaugh, Elizabeth Jane Errington and Martin Crotty have pointed out, the prevailing discourse among British and dominion societies was the belief that the physicality of cultivating the land for settlement and domestication could only be managed successfully by men.<sup>38</sup> This is not to suggest that women were not valued as skilled migrants or for their contributions to the labour capacity of settler societies. The encouragement of single women to emigrate for domestic service positions during this same period is a clear example of the value dominion governments placed

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<sup>35</sup> Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987, p.162.

<sup>36</sup> 'British Emigrants: How Canada Works', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 June 1907, p.13.

<sup>37</sup> 'Population: The Desirable Immigrant', *Wodonga and Towong Sentinel*, 24 October 1913, p.5.

<sup>38</sup> Catherine A. Cavanaugh, "'No Place for a Woman': Engendering Western Canadian Settlement', in R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzen (eds), *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007, pp.262, 264; Elizabeth Jane Errington, "'Information Wanted": Women Emigrants in a Transatlantic World', in Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (eds), *Canada and the British World*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006, p.13; Martin Crotty, *Making the Australian Male: Middle-Class Masculinity 1870-1920*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001, pp.20-21.

on skilled female migration.<sup>39</sup> The approach of dominion governments to female migration in the context of agricultural activity and land settlement, however, was markedly different. As Michele Langfield observes, men were considered the head of their households and the primary worker of their family and community, while it contended that a woman's role should be a supportive one for their husband or father.<sup>40</sup> Further to this, policy makers and administrators managing and directing immigration for agricultural purposes and land settlement in this period were almost exclusively men.<sup>41</sup> The dominance of men in this space was evident in the language used about the development of agriculture and in the views expressed about the ideal settlers for the land. For example, when asked why single women were not eligible to apply for land in Canada's North-West in April 1910, Frank Oliver stated: "To secure productiveness of the land is the reason of our homestead laws ... The idea of giving homesteads to single women would tend directionally against that idea. Our experience is entirely against the idea of women homesteading."<sup>42</sup>

The ideal agricultural migrant was also defined by race as there was an expectation that the dominions would be essentially a derivative of Britain in their settler populations. Between 1896 and 1914, white Anglo-Celtic migrants were considered the most desirable settlers by Canadian and Australian government officials. As Howard Palmer observes, "The desirability to Canada of particular immigrant groups varied almost directly with their physical and cultural distance from London, England and the degree to which their skin pigmentation conformed to Anglo-Saxon white."<sup>43</sup> It was argued by federal and state authorities that British migrants more so than other groups would be able to transition to dominion life with relative ease because

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<sup>39</sup> For more on government-encouraged single female emigration during this period, see Lisa Chilton, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2007.

<sup>40</sup> Michele Langfield, 'Gender Blind? Australian Immigration Policy and Practice, 1901-1930', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol.27, no.79, 2009, p.145.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Dominion of Canada Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 30 April 1910, pp.8489-90.

<sup>43</sup> Howard Palmer, 'Strangers and Stereotypes: The Rise of Nativism, 1880-1912', in R. Douglas Francis and Howard Palmer (eds), *The Prairie West: Historical Readings*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1992, p.311.



of the familiar British political, economic and social institutions.<sup>44</sup> In 1912, Alberta newspaper, the *Calgary Herald*, applauded the Australian states' nomination schemes, which offered subsidised passage costs for family and friends of British settlers already residing in the country. The newspaper pointed out that this scheme encouraged the maintenance of the cultural connection between Australia and Britain, and was a form of 'intelligent emigration' because new British arrivals would be surrounded by a society that closely resembled their own:

This privilege has been found to operate as an efficient source of encouragement to land settlement and in the provision of surroundings that recall the home life of the mother country—the real basis of intelligent emigration.<sup>45</sup>

This connection between Anglo-Celtic migrants and 'intelligent emigration' was championed by Canadian and Australian political leaders and also featured prominently in the official promotional materials used to attract this group. It was argued that Anglo-Celtic migrants should not really be considered migrants in the strictest sense of the word because they were merely being redistributed from one part of the British Empire to another.<sup>46</sup> A 1902 handbook produced by the Canadian government for distribution in Britain reinforced this position, noting, "Settling in the Dominion makes no more change in this respect than the removal from the provincial town to London, Dublin, or Edinburgh, and the newly-arrived immigrant has all the privileges of his Canadian-born fellow subject."<sup>47</sup> In a letter to the British press in 1904, Canada's High Commissioner Lord Strathcona also outlined the reasons why it was advantageous for Anglo-Celtic migrants to settle in one of Britain's dominions rather than outside the Empire: "Canada is proud to belong to the great British family, and to be part of the Empire. The system of government is based upon that prevailing in the Mother-Country ... All this tends to create a favourable condition of things not

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<sup>44</sup> Stephen Constantine, 'British Emigration to the Empire-Commonwealth Since 1880: From Overseas Settlement to Diaspora?', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.31, no.2, 2003, pp.16-17.

<sup>45</sup> 'Improved Immigration', *Calgary Herald*, 30 September 1912, page number unknown, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>46</sup> Constantine, 'British Emigration to the Empire-Commonwealth Since 1880', p.23.

<sup>47</sup> Canada, Department of the Interior, *Facts Relating to Western Canada*, handbook, 1902, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 259, File 203543, p.15.

often found outside the limits of Empire.”<sup>48</sup> Similar sentiment was expressed by Australian High Commissioner George Reid, who observed that,

When about to leave for England Australians say, “We are going home”; and when they are leaving England for Australia they still say, “We are going home.” The colonising genius and the loyalty of our race are revealed in that genuine double-barrelled feeling of affection for the land from which their fathers came and the land of their birth. It represents that union of affection which alone makes the British Empire possible and may make it immortal.<sup>49</sup>

The belief that Anglo-Celtics migrants should not be considered migrants featured prominently in the language at the time, with a number of Canadian and Australian representatives pointing out that recently arrived British also preferred to be called settlers rather than migrants. In his annual report for 1911, J. Bruce Walker (now in the position of Canada’s Commissioner of Immigration in Winnipeg) observed that new British arrivals preferred to be identified as settlers: “This new-comer, by the bye, has a pretty general objection to be described as an ‘immigrant,’ attributing in some ways an idea of inferiority to the term. He calls himself a ‘settler.’ The term would appear to be an excellent one, and is becoming much more commonly used in the west than that of immigrant.”<sup>50</sup> Chapter Two will consider in more detail how Canada and Australian immigration and land policies worked to attract and secure Britain’s Anglo-Celtic populace whilst at the same time discouraging those who did not conform to this definition.

Through an evaluation of these ideological and pragmatic factors, it is evident that government officials and colonial societies carefully considered and intensely debated their settler population within the framework of late nineteenth and early twentieth century imperialism. A migrant’s agricultural skills and experience as well as their ethnicity and place of origin were not consistently weighted in equal measure, and tensions could arise when one was given primacy over the other. It is clear from government reports and correspondence, literature and promotional material, as well as the press that a multitude of skills, experiences and capital were

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<sup>48</sup> Letter from Canada’s High Commissioner Lord Strathcona to Representatives of the British Press, March 1904, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 140, File 33793. For more information, see letter from W.T.R. Preston to J.A. Smart, 13 March 1904, in this file.

<sup>49</sup> Sir George Houstoun Reid, *My Reminiscences*, London: Cassell, 1917, p.305.

<sup>50</sup> Report of J. Bruce Walker, ‘Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1911’, *Canadian Sessional Papers*, no.25, 1912, p.92.

deemed desirable. People were needed to settle the land, and as will be seen in the next chapter, much like the definition of the ideal migrant, Canada and Australia's land and immigration policies were carefully considered and crafted to ensure this need would be met.

## Chapter 2

### **'To Sift the Chaff from the Wheat': Canada and Australia's Land and Immigration Policies Compared**

The previous chapter outlined the ideological and pragmatic factors which led to Canada and Australia's mutual identification of the British white male agriculturalist as the ideal migrant. This chapter will consider how the desire for this particular group was manifest in their respective land and immigration policies introduced between 1896 and 1914. Importantly, it will seek to highlight both the commonalities in Canada and Australia's land and immigration programmes and approaches, but also where and why they diverged. A concurrent analysis of the land and immigration policies from this time is necessary because Canadian and Australian government officials expected that the two areas would essentially work in tandem to satisfy economic, population and settlement aims. As Canadian historian Gerald Friesen notes in his study of the Canada's North-West Territories, "Though revised in detail from time to time, these [land and immigration] policies established the basic structure of settlement and remained significant determinants of western history throughout the period 1870-1930."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Australian historian Michele Langfield contends in her study of Australia's immigration policies between 1901 and 1930 that, "Until the mid-1920s, there was an inseparable relation between immigration and land settlement in any overall plan for Australia's development."<sup>2</sup>

This chapter will first outline the land policies established by Canada and the Australian states between 1896 and 1914 that were designed to attract the small-scale agriculturalist, and consequently transition land use away from large pastoral claims to smaller holdings, closer settlement, and homestead farming. The idea of the 'homestead', where land could be both a home and a source of capital was popularised by the successful land settlement programme introduced in the United

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<sup>1</sup> Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987, p.181.

<sup>2</sup> Michele Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World": Government Policy and Contemporary Opinion About the Encouragement of Immigration to Australia, 1901-1939', unpublished PhD thesis, Monash University, 1988, p.5.

States in the 1860s.<sup>3</sup> Under the *Homestead Act of 1862*, an American settler would be granted title over 160 acres or a quarter-section of government land for a nominal cost, provided they met certain conditions within five years. This scheme enabled agriculturalists of modest means to take up land with only a small initial outlay of capital. This chapter will assess how the American homestead programme was replicated to varying degrees on public lands in Canada and in Australia. It will be demonstrated that whilst the promise of essentially free land was wide in its appeal, these policies were also carefully constructed to ensure that only *bona-fide* settlers, specifically British male agriculturalists intending to live on the land long-term, were eligible to take up these schemes.

This chapter will also consider how the emphasis on attracting British male agriculturalists to the land was therefore manifest in the immigration policies introduced at this time. Whilst Canada and Australia desired rapid population growth, as noted in Chapter One, their main objective was to secure the 'right kind' of populace that would go directly onto the land rather than to the city. As such, it will be argued that Canadian and Australian government officials increasingly adopted a more formalised and professional approach to the application and selection process in this period in order to secure these ideal migrants. Criteria based on race and country of origin, mental and physical health, moral character and criminal history, existing capital, age, occupational background, and agricultural experience were all strictly employed to ensure that only those intending to settle on the land and who would reinforce the British composition of the existing populace would be accepted. Key to this approval process for the Australian states was the reintroduction of assisted passage schemes, which enabled government personnel to grant approved migrants a reduced, or even free, passage, provided they met the selection criteria.

### **Canada and Australia's Public Lands Policies, 1896-1914**

The public lands policies in Canada and Australia between 1896 and 1914 were primarily a continuation of legislation introduced from the 1860s to the 1880s that focused on encouraging intensive agricultural activities and wide-scale agricultural settlement. In 1869 the North-West Territories was transferred from the Hudson's

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<sup>3</sup> D.W. Meinig, *On the Margins of the Good Earth: The South Australian Wheat Frontier, 1869-1884*, Adelaide: South Australian Government Printer, 1988, pp.120-121.

Bay Company to the Canadian federal government. The transformation of Canada's vast and sparsely populated interior into a productive wheat-growing region filled with agricultural settlers became an important economic and political objective for the Canadian federal government, particularly with the entry of British Columbia in Confederation in 1872.<sup>4</sup> Establishing the process by which public lands could be acquired by a settler in the region was considered imperative not only to attract a new agricultural population from overseas, but also to retain experienced Canadian settlers from the older eastern provinces looking for fresh opportunities for themselves and their sons.<sup>5</sup> In 1872 the federal government introduced the *Dominion Lands Act*, also known as the *Homestead Act*. Whilst other land initiatives relating to pastoral and irrigation activities were also introduced in this time, this policy, with some amendments, remained the cornerstone of the region's lands programme and agricultural settlement through to World War One. The longevity of the *Homestead Act* was due in part to federal control over the North-West's lands. Whilst other Canadian provinces gained jurisdiction over their public lands as part of entering Confederation, it was not until 1930 that the federal government transferred responsibility for land and natural resources over to the provincial governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.<sup>6</sup>

The desire to secure a rural white populace to develop the land into successful wheat farms was a concurrent objective for Australia; however, unlike the Canada's nearly ubiquitous *Homestead Act*, a multitude of land legislation and subsequent amendments were introduced in Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria from the 1860s onwards in an attempt to encourage wide-scale intensive agricultural settlement. The variation of legislation was due in part to public lands being solely controlled by each individual colony, even after Federation in 1901. F.K. Crowley contends that the difference between the land, natural resources, population and the stage of development of the colonies played a key role in their differing

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<sup>4</sup> Peter Russell, *How Agriculture Made Canada: Farming in the Nineteenth Century*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012, pp.168-169.

<sup>5</sup> Bill Waiser, *Saskatchewan: A New History*, Calgary: Fifth House, 2005, p.63; D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1899*, vol.1, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1981, p.253.

<sup>6</sup> Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies*, p.181.

approaches to land legislation.<sup>7</sup> The description of Australian land tenure in the 1911 *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia* succinctly summarises the state of the legislation by the end of this period:

Though there is a certain similarity between the principal forms of tenure in the States of the Commonwealth, the difficulty of the task of rendering a succinct and coordinated account of the land systems is increased by the variety in detail of the terms and conditions imposed.<sup>8</sup>

The reason for the various forms of land tenure within each of the colonies can also be explained by the status of land occupation and use in Australia by the beginning of the 1890s. The ongoing monopolisation of land by the existing pastoral industry and squatters was a significant constraint for the eastern states of Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria in achieving closer agricultural settlement in the late nineteenth century. Land policies introduced in the three states from the 1860s onwards emphasised selection and later closer settlement in an attempt to “facilitate the establishment of an agrarian population side by side with the pastoral tenants”.<sup>9</sup> The difference of existing settlement and land availability in Canada’s North-West compared to Australia was regularly cited by Australian land authorities as a major constraint in their ability to make the land available for settlement. Queensland’s Assistant Under Secretary for the Lands Department pointed out Canada’s advantage in this regard in 1913:

There is this great difference, that in Canada all of the land is Crown land, and is available for selection immediately on its being surveyed. Here, all our land is held under some sort of tenure—pastoral leasehold, or grazing selection—and before it can be made available for closer settlement it is necessary to get rid of the first tenant.<sup>10</sup>

Pastoralist hold over the land remained a key issue throughout this period, though the economic depression and droughts of the 1890s and early 1900s did noticeably

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<sup>7</sup> F.K. Crowley, ‘The British Contribution to the Australian Population: 1860-1919’, *University Studies in History*, vol.2, no.2, 1954, p.62.

<sup>8</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia* (hereafter OYBA), no.4 (1901-1910), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1911, p.235.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.238.

<sup>10</sup> Dominions Royal Commission, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.97.

alter the situation.<sup>11</sup> During this time, numerous pastoralists were forced to reduce or abandon their holdings and similar to the Canadian government, a key concern particularly for Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria became not only attracting new agricultural migrants but retaining existing settlers, particularly in the case of Victoria.<sup>12</sup> The abandonment of land also provided colonial governments with the opportunity to reacquire previously-held arable land considered suitable for agricultural activities, and introduce closer settlement legislation to encourage small holdings, intensive land cultivation practices, and permanent settlement of agriculturalists. Western Australia's successful eastern goldfields enabled the colony to largely escape the downturn experienced in the eastern colonies. Mindful that the gold mining industry would eventually decline, the Western Australian government introduced new lands legislation from the early 1890s to encourage the development of small farms and the wheat-growing industry in order to maintain the colony's growth and retain the new population that had been attracted there by the gold rush.<sup>13</sup>

### **The American Homestead**

In order to satisfy their respective land settlement objectives, the main questions for Canada and the Australian authorities in formulating their public land policies were: how much land should be offered, under what conditions, and who should be entitled to apply for it.<sup>14</sup> The success of the American homestead programme from the 1860s to the early 1890s in attracting the vast majority of the agricultural migrants from Britain and elsewhere significantly influenced the answer to the first question for Canada and the Australian states. Under the American *Homestead Act* of 1862, settlers could apply for a single block of public land totalling 160 acres, which was known as a

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<sup>11</sup> A number of secondary sources cite the economic depression and environmental droughts as contributing to the downfall of the pastoralist industry in the eastern colonies. See, for example, Don Garden, *Victoria: A History*, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson, 1984; Richard Waterhouse, 'Settling the Land', in Deryck M. Shreuder and Stuart Ward (eds), *Australia's Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp.54-77; Stuart Macintyre, *A Concise History of Australia*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p.130.

<sup>12</sup> See Geoffrey Blainey, *A History of Victoria*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2013, p.150.

<sup>13</sup> R.T. Appleyard, 'Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth, 1850-1914', in C.T. Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia*, Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1981, p.227; Matthew Tonts, 'State Policy and the Yeoman Ideal: Agricultural Development in Western Australia', *Landscape Research*, vol.27, no.1, 2002, p.111.

<sup>14</sup> Russell, *How Agriculture Made Canada*, p.199.



quarter-section or a homestead. Using astronomical observations, government surveying teams parcelled the land into even quarter-sections to create a uniform grid pattern.<sup>15</sup> This efficient system standardised the block size and allowed surveyors to completely disregard natural topographical features and soil variation.<sup>16</sup> Four quarter-sections formed a section equalling 640 acres or one square mile, and 36 sections formed a township.

In Canada's North-West, the American grid system was uniformly implemented across the region, except in places of existing settlement. From 1869 to 1919, Canadian government personnel surveyed nearly 1,110,000 quarter-sections or 178 million acres across the prairies.<sup>17</sup> Importantly, this deviated from the existing 100 acre quarter-section found in Ontario, and the river-lot system used by the Métis along the Red and Assiniboine rivers.<sup>18</sup> Once surveyed, all even-numbered quarter-sections were available for settler selection, except for 8 and 26 which were owned by the Hudson's Bay Company as part of the 1869 agreement. Sections 11 and 29 were set aside for school lands, and the remaining odd-numbered sections were held by the railway companies, the intention being to encourage the construction of further railroad lines in the region and private land sales. Odd-numbered quarter-sections were eventually made available for homesteads in 1908.<sup>19</sup> In 1908, the Alberta newspaper, *Saturday News*, pointed to Canada's replication of the American system across the North-West noting, "In this enterprise the United States was the pioneer, and Canada has been able to profit by her neighbor's experience."<sup>20</sup>

Whilst similar, the uniform adoption of the American quarter-section across the North-West was in many ways unique, even to the United States. The *Homestead Act* was one of a multitude of legislation that covered public lands in the United States,

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<sup>15</sup> This grid survey system of public lands in the United States was originally suggested by Thomas Jefferson and introduced in the *Land Ordinance of 1785*. See Howard W. Ottoson, *Land Use Policy and Problems in the United States*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963.

<sup>16</sup> Waiser, *Saskatchewan*, p.102.

<sup>17</sup> James G. MacGregor, *Vision of an Ordered Land: The Story of the Dominion Land Survey*, Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1981, p.ix.

<sup>18</sup> Waiser, *Saskatchewan*, p.102.

<sup>19</sup> For more on the lands survey system, see Chester Martin, *Dominion Lands Policy*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1973.

<sup>20</sup> 'A Study in Homestead Laws', *Saturday News*, 31 October 1908, p.6.

and a variety of land sizes continued to be available to settlers alongside the quarter-section after 1862.<sup>21</sup> In this regard, the lands legislation and the assorted block sizes available in the Australian states was perhaps more in keeping with the reality of the public lands in the United States. Each of the Australian states offered their own versions of homesteads between 1896 and 1914; however, none ubiquitously adopted the quarter-section like Canada's North-West. Negotiating around a more established and dispersed area of existing white rural settlement made this impractical for many of the Australia states, particularly the older states of New South Wales and Victoria. Furthermore, experience with recent droughts arguably demonstrated to government officials that some of the land should be parcelled into larger blocks in order to ensure a profitable return for the settler, while others were simply not suited to intensive agricultural activities. Whilst the size of pastoral lands in all of the Australian states significantly diminished in this period, there was to a certain degree acknowledgement that pastoralism was still necessary, particularly in semi-arid regions.<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, the significance and impact of the American quarter-section was also acknowledged by the Australian states, with Western Australia and Queensland adopting the 160 acre quarter-section within their lands policies in this period. The Western Australian government passed the *Homestead Act of 1893* following a Royal Commission into the state of agriculture in the colony, which made a number of recommendations including greater government intervention in inducing land settlement rather than relying on private enterprise.<sup>23</sup> Speaking in Parliament, the colony's Premier John Forrest explained the influence of the American and Canadian systems on his own thinking, "In travelling through America and Canada, I found it was almost a religion that every man who wanted to take up his quarter-section should be able to do so; and that was the system of land tenure which has done so much to populate those enormous territories."<sup>24</sup> Unlike their Canadian counterparts, Western Australian authorities soon recognised that in

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<sup>21</sup> Russell, *How Agriculture Made Canada*, p.201.

<sup>22</sup> This does not mean, however, that governments did not attempt to encourage intensive agricultural activities on semi-arid lands in this period. See Monica Keneley, 'Closer Settlement in the Western District of Victoria: A Case Study in Australian Land Use Policy, 1898-1914', *Journal of Historical Geography*, vol.28, no.3, 2002, pp.363-379.

<sup>23</sup> F.K. Crowley, *Australia's Western Third: A History of Western Australia from the First Settlements to Modern Times*, London: Macmillan, 1960, p.104.

<sup>24</sup> *Western Australia Parliamentary Debates* (hereafter *WAPD*), Legislative Assembly (hereafter *LA*), 2 August 1893, p.236.

some regions the 160 acre blocks were not large enough to be economically successful, and consequently adjustments were made in 1898 so that along with the homestead blocks on good quality land, settlers could apply for up to 1,000 acres on surveyed blocks where the land quality varied.<sup>25</sup> Queensland also offered 160 acre quarter-section homestead farms in various land legislation from 1896 to 1914, and like Western Australia, larger block sizes were available depending on the land's proximity to urban centres and the suitability of its soil for agricultural activities.<sup>26</sup> Whilst New South Wales and Victoria offered 'homesteads', neither adopted the 160-acre block size.<sup>27</sup> Instead, the number of acres within a homestead block was subject to the land's location and its quality. For example, the *Crown Lands Act of 1895* allowed for the selection of a homestead in New South Wales of up to 1,280 acres<sup>28</sup>, whilst under the *Murray Settlements Act 1907*, a Victorian settler could apply for a irrigated homestead allotment in the Mallee region provided it was no greater than 50 acres.<sup>29</sup> The Victorian irrigation homestead could also be combined with an adjacent farm allotment of 640 acres of first-class land, 1,000 acres of second class land, 1,280 acres of third-class land, or 1,600 of fourth-class land.<sup>30</sup> Similar to Western Australia and Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria also offered selection on a range of other block sizes across their arable and semi-arable lands.

### **The Promise of Free Land**

Along with the number of acres offered, the terms or conditions that public lands could be acquired was also an important consideration for Canadian and Australian

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<sup>25</sup> B.Y. Main, 'Social History and Impact on Landscape', in R.J. Hobbs and D.A. Saunders (eds), *Reintegrating Fragmented Landscapes: Towards Sustainable Production and Nature Conservation*, New York: Springer-Verlag, 1993, p.39; Tonts, 'State Policy and the Yeoman Ideal', p.111.

<sup>26</sup> For example, the *Land Acts* of 1897 and 1902, and the *Lands Act Amendment Act of 1908* all included the provision of a 160 acre agricultural homestead. Under the *1897 Act*, homesteads could also be 320 acres or 640 acres depending on the quality of the soil.

<sup>27</sup> Under the *Crown Lands Act of 1884* New South Wales was divided into three regions- Eastern Central and Western divisions. Land in the Eastern and Central divisions were considered more arable and suited to intensive agriculture, whereas the semi-arid lands in the Western division was generally set aside for pastoral pursuits. See Janice Cooper 'Land as Property or Natural Resource: The Western Lands Act of 1901-1910', *History Australia*, vol.10, no.3, 2013, pp.193-214.

<sup>28</sup> New South Wales, *Crown Lands Act*, 1895.

<sup>29</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.4 (1901-1910), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1911, p.262. A homestead allotment could, however, be combined with a Mallee farm allotment into one holding. Mallee farm allotments could be 640 acres, 1,000 acres, 1,280 acres, 1,600 acres depending on their classification.

<sup>30</sup> Victoria, *Murray Settlements Act*, 1907.

governments. The American homestead programme was again regarded as an important model because of the process employed for the alienation of public lands. This included the filing of a single claim by a settler, the agreement between the government and settler that they would meet certain conditions in order to improve the land within a specified period, and the granting of ownership or *title* if these conditions were met.<sup>31</sup> Once the terms were satisfied, the settler would be given the land for free, less a small administrative fee of ten American dollars paid at the time of application.<sup>32</sup> For British agriculturalists, predominately tenant farmers of limited capital, the opportunity to own a block of land for practically nothing had served as a powerful inducement for the United States. A letter in *The Queenslander* newspaper noted the connection of the American government's aims for rural population growth and the "free gift" of land: "Here is a direct bid for population, and for the most serviceable population."<sup>33</sup> Canada, Western Australia and Queensland all replicated the American model by offering conditional free homesteads on their public lands. Canada provided settlers with a free quarter-section for an administrative fee of ten Canadian dollars, or two pounds, to match the American scheme.<sup>34</sup> In Western Australia, a free homestead could be obtained for four pounds which covered the survey, administrative costs, and Crown grant costs.<sup>35</sup> Premier Forrest again cited the success of the American and derivative Canadian programmes as motivation for his colony to adopt the free lands system, noting "free grants of land to persons who will occupy and improve them is the great principle which has effected the occupation and improvement of lands of the United States of America, and the great principle upon which settlement has been carried on in the Dominion of Canada".<sup>36</sup> Under the *Lands Act Amendment Act of 1908*, Queensland settlers could apply for a free homestead by paying a one pound administrative fee and one-fifth of the survey fee at the time of

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<sup>31</sup> Under the *Homestead Act of 1862*, settlers were given five years to meet the conditions. Settlers were also only eligible to apply for one homestead.

<sup>32</sup> Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies*, p.184.

<sup>33</sup> 'Free Homesteads', *The Queenslander*, 29 February 1868, p.10.

<sup>34</sup> Canada, Department of the Interior, *The Last Best West is Canada West*, handbook, Issued by Direction of Hon. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, 1911, p.i, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 390, File 541601.

<sup>35</sup> Western Australia, *Western Australia: A Field for Immigration*, handbook, Issued by Authority of Hon. N.J. Moore, Premier of Western Australia, 1908, pp.12-13, State Library of New South Wales (hereafter SLNSW), 325.941/2.

<sup>36</sup> *WAPD*, LA, 2 August 1893, p.237.

application.<sup>37</sup> The state's Agent-General Horace Tozer had petitioned Premier Arthur Morgan only four years earlier to consider introducing free homesteads, stating that in his opinion, "I cannot see how you are to attract the people you want unless you give them land ... Canada finds the system most successful".<sup>38</sup>

New South Wales and Victoria did not adopt a conditional free land system, choosing instead to offer some public land for *conditional purchase*.<sup>39</sup> Similar to a perpetual lease system, under a conditional purchase, land was acquired in low payments over a long-term period; however, unlike a perpetual lease, the title of the land was transferred to the settler provided they met certain conditions (explained below) within a specified period. For example, in New South Wales, a homestead under the *Crown Lands Act of 1895* could be acquired for the cost of the survey fee, and an annual rent equalling 1¼ per cent of the capital value of the land for the first six years. After that time, rent was increased to 2½ per cent of the capital value and was subject to reappraisal every ten years.<sup>40</sup> The *Murray Settlements Act of 1907* allowed Victorian settlers to acquire an irrigated homestead in the Mallee region for an initial application deposit, and then at a cost of the value of the holding plus interest at not less than 4½ per cent per annum, with bi-annual payments to be paid over 31½ years.<sup>41</sup> Along with these homestead blocks, other agricultural and grazing lands were also made available for conditional purchase in Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria. The New South Wales government's decision not to copy the American free homestead like Canada, Western Australia, and Queensland was addressed in its 1908 official handbook, 'Settlers Wanted for New South Wales':

It may be felt that New South Wales should emulate the examples of other Governments and make a free grant of land to emigrants; but it will usually be found that what costs nothing is worth nothing. There is land in New South Wales which could be acquired for the proverbial song, but it is a long way from the railway line, and outside the area where the practical certainty of an average rainfall of 20 inches makes wheat-growing

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<sup>37</sup> Queensland, *Lands Act Amendment Act*, 1908.

<sup>38</sup> Letter from Horace Tozer to Arthur Morgan, 18 November 1904, Queensland State Archives, Item ID 861846, Batch File, Unofficial Letters from the Agent-General, London to the Premier.

<sup>39</sup> Along with free homesteads, Western Australia and Queensland also offered other types of land under the conditional purchase system.

<sup>40</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.4 (1901-1910), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1911, p.259.

<sup>41</sup> Victoria, *Murray Settlements Act*, 1907.

profitable. The owner of a good farm in the New South Wales wheat belt has an asset which in a few years will make him a prosperous land proprietor.<sup>42</sup>

### Conditions

Whilst land was essentially free or available at a low cost for the would-be settler, Canadian and Australian governments also imposed conditions to ensure that only those intending permanent settlement would be eligible to take up the generous concessions offered. The conditions that settlers were obligated to meet in order to gain title over public land generally focused on three areas: residency, land cultivation, and the construction of fences, buildings, or other similar activities that demonstrated an improvement to the overall value of the property. These conditions, along with the rule that an individual could only apply for a homestead once, were designed to prevent the “trafficking in land”<sup>43</sup> or speculation. As with the American homestead programme, settlers in Canada and Australia were required to meet the conditions within a specified time frame in order to secure the land title. Settlers in Canada’s North-West were given three years to satisfy the government’s conditions, notably two years less than the American programme.<sup>44</sup> The time period varied across the Australian states with Western Australia settlers given seven years,<sup>45</sup> Queensland and New South Wales settlers allowed five years,<sup>46</sup> and Victorian settlers required to meet most conditions for a homestead allotment within three years in order to be granted title by six years.<sup>47</sup> Notably, settlers wishing to apply for title earlier than the defined period still needed to meet most of the conditions and pay additional fees, while settlers who purchased the land outright were not subject to meeting the conditions within the specified time period.

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<sup>42</sup> New South Wales, Agent-General, *Settlers Wanted for New South Wales: 12,000 Miles for £6*, handbook, 1908, p.6, SLNSW, 325.241/4.

<sup>43</sup> ‘An Outline of the Main Provisions of the Crown Lands Act in Force in New South Wales’, *Riverina Recorder*, 24 July 1895, p.6.

<sup>44</sup> Canada, Department of the Interior, *The Last Best West is Canada West*, handbook, Issued by Direction of Hon. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, 1911, p.i, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 390, File 541601.

<sup>45</sup> Western Australia, *Western Australia: A Field for Immigration*, handbook, Issued by Authority of Hon. N.J. Moore, Premier of Western Australia, 1908, p.13, SLNSW, 325.941/2.

<sup>46</sup> This period applied for agricultural homesteads, grazing homesteads and free homesteads. New South Wales, *Crown Lands Act*, 1895.

<sup>47</sup> Victoria, *Murray Settlements Act*, 1907.

Whilst initially broad, the conditions on homesteads in Canada and Australia over this period moved from being general in nature to more closely defined. By meeting these conditions within the fixed period, government officials held that an applicant was essentially proving they were a 'bona-fide' settler. The term bona-fide was used within the lands legislation and in Canadian and Australian government literature to emphasise that only genuine agricultural settlers intending to make the land their long-term home would be successful in securing title. A 1908 Western Australia government publication outlining the colony's homestead conditions even suggested that the imposed terms would be advantageous to genuine settlers:

To ensure that bona-fide applicants shall get these farms, certain improvement conditions are enacted, but these are not onerous to the genuine settler, since they are designed with such care and such regard to the settler's needs and requirements, that they are absolutely and entirely to his benefit.<sup>48</sup>

Residency conditions were specifically adopted by Canada and Australia in order to discourage short-term settlement and any opportunities for land 'dummying', where an applicant would select the land on another's behalf and then immediately transfer title. Dummying was a key issue for closer settlement progress especially in the eastern Australian states during the 1880s, where it was found that only a small number of acres were actually placed under cultivation during the decade, and government officials were keen to avoid it hampering selection and settlement efforts in this later period.<sup>49</sup> In Canada's North-West, settlers were required to reside on the land within six months of their application, and for at least six months of each of the first three years. They were also expected to erect a habitable house valued at three hundred Canadian dollars or eighty pounds.<sup>50</sup> In Western Australia, a settler had to live on the land within six months of their application and for at least six months of

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<sup>48</sup> Western Australia, *Western Australia: A Field for Immigration*, handbook, Issued by Authority of Hon. N.J. Moore, Premier of Western Australia, 1908, p.13, SLNSW, 325.941/2.

<sup>49</sup> John McQuilton, *The Kelly Outbreak, 1878-1880: The Geographical Dimensions of Social Banditry*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1979, pp.31-39; J.M. Powell, *Mirrors of the New World: Images and Image-Makers in the Settlement Process*, Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978, pp.78-80.

<sup>50</sup> This was originally stipulated as a "habitable house" but by the end of the period a minimum monetary value was required. Canada, Department of the Interior, *The Last Best West is Canada West*, handbook, Issued by Direction of Hon. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, 1911, p.i, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 390, File 541601.

each year for the first five years.<sup>51</sup> Settlers were also expected to construct a habitable house valued at a minimum of thirty pounds.<sup>52</sup> In Queensland, settlers taking up a free homestead were expected to have immediate and continuous residence for the full term of their application.<sup>53</sup> New South Wales settlers had to assume residency on the land within three months of filing their application and live there for at least seven months of every year, as well as construct a dwelling valued at twenty pounds or more by eighteen months.<sup>54</sup> In Victoria, a settler or a member of his family was required to live on the land for eight months of each year.<sup>55</sup> Canadian, Western Australian and Victorian settlers applying for a homestead also had to cultivate and crop a certain number of acres within a specified time as part of the conditions. For Canadian settlers, the land needed to be cultivated for at least six months of each year to coincide with the warmer months.<sup>56</sup> The required number of cultivated and cropped acres was adjusted throughout the period; however, by 1911 settlers were required to cultivate 30 acres and crop 20 acres by the end of the three years.<sup>57</sup> In 1905, the alternative of raising 20 head of cattle and the construction of a livestock shelter in lieu of cultivation and cropping were added.<sup>58</sup> In Western Australia, one-fourth of the land was expected to be cleared and cropped by the end of the seven years.<sup>59</sup> Whilst the number of acres to be broken and cropped on a homestead allotment in Victoria was not specified, where it exceeded fifty acres or was combined with a Mallee farm allotment into one holding, a settler was given a fixed number of

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<sup>51</sup> Later amendments allowed settlers to live within 20 miles of their homestead and residency by a relative was allowed in some cases. Western Australia, *Western Australia: A Field for Immigration*, handbook, Issued by Authority of Hon. N.J. Moore, Premier of Western Australia, 1908, p.13, SLNSW, 325.941/2.

<sup>52</sup> 'The Homestead Act, 1893', *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 24 November 1893, pp.9-11. In lieu of a house, the equivalent funds could be invested in clearing and/or cropping the land, or planting two acres of orchard or vineyard.

<sup>53</sup> Queensland, *Lands Act Amendment Act*, 1908.

<sup>54</sup> New South Wales, *Crown Lands Act*, 1895.

<sup>55</sup> Victoria, *Murray Settlements Act*, 1907.

<sup>56</sup> Canada, Department of the Interior, *An Official Handbook of Information Relating to the Dominion of Canada*, handbook, 1894, p.90, SLNSW, D15S21.

<sup>57</sup> Canada, Department of the Interior, *The Last Best West is Canada West*, handbook, Issued by Direction of Hon. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, 1911, p.i, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 390, File 541601.

<sup>58</sup> Bill Waiser, "'Land I Can Own": Settling in the Promised Land', in R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzan (eds), *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007, p.158.

<sup>59</sup> 'The Homestead Act, 1893', *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 24 November 1893, p.9.



acres to cultivate and crop by the end of the third year.<sup>60</sup> Canada and the Australian states also expected settlers to undertake other improvement activities during the conditional period to demonstrate they were bona fide settlers and were committed to the land's long-term success. For example, settlers in Canada, Western Australia, and Victoria were obligated to construct a fence around the entire homestead by the end of the defined period.<sup>61</sup> The *1895 Act* in New South Wales allowed for any conditional activities to be enforced at the Minister's discretion, including "drainage, irrigation, the clearing, cutting, preservation or planting of timber" depending on the location of the land.<sup>62</sup> In Queensland, settlers had to undertake permanent improvements valued at a minimum of ten shillings per acre.<sup>63</sup> And Victorian settlers were expected to destroy any "vermin" on the homestead allotment and to make permanent improvements to the land valued at fifty pounds or more in each of the first three years.<sup>64</sup> It is necessary to point out that whilst clearly defined, improvements were subject to the interpretation and discretion of the lands authorities in Canada and Australia and could be (and were) adapted based on an individual's circumstance. Furthermore, although they were designed to discourage any duplicitous activities among the settler population, the conditions were not always followed by settlers themselves.

Western Australia and Queensland also established agricultural banks during this period in part to support settlers in meeting the conditions placed on the land. Western Australia established the first Agricultural Bank in 1894, partially in response to recommendations put forward three years earlier by the *Royal Commission on Agriculture*, which noted the difficulties small-scale settlers faced in borrowing funds at a fair interest rate especially in the first years of settlement. The bank was designed to grant long-term loans to settlers for investment in

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<sup>60</sup> For homestead allotments greater than 50 acres, one-third of the area had to be cultivated by the third year. For combined holdings, an area of one-fifth of the Mallee farm allotment had to be planted with cereal crops. Victoria, *Murray Settlements Act*, 1907.

<sup>61</sup> Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, 'Homesteading', <http://www.saskarchives.com/collections/land-records/history-and-background-administration-land-saskatchewan/homesteading>, accessed 1 August 2014; Victoria, *Murray Settlements Act*, 1907; Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.4 (1901-1910), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1911, p.270.

<sup>62</sup> New South Wales, *Crown Lands Act*, 1895.

<sup>63</sup> Queensland, *Lands Act Amendment Act*, 1908.

<sup>64</sup> Victoria, *Murray Settlements Act*, 1907.

improvements to their property, including clearing, fencing and the construction of buildings.<sup>65</sup> Queensland followed with its own Agricultural Bank in 1902, which was based on the Western Australian model.<sup>66</sup> Although agricultural banks were not established in New South Wales and Victoria, both states made similar loan provisions available through Acts of Parliament.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

The final question of who was entitled to apply for public land in Canada and Australia was also clearly defined in the lands legislation. Unlike residency, land cultivation, and other activities which demonstrated a commitment to making the land productive, these eligibility conditions were based on the personal attributes of the settler themselves and how productive they could be as an individual. As such, eligibility conditions in Canada and Australia's lands policies focused on an applicant's age, gender and citizenship. Men eighteen years or older were allowed to apply for a homestead in Canada and Victoria, while males sixteen years and older were eligible in Western Australia, Queensland, and New South Wales.<sup>67</sup>

Women could also apply for land in some circumstances, though primacy was firmly placed on male selectors over female selectors. Furthermore, married women were generally barred from applying for public land, unless they were legally separated from their husbands or widowed.<sup>68</sup> Amendments to the *Dominion Lands Act* in 1876, for example, allowed a man or woman who was the sole head of a household to apply for a Canadian homestead.<sup>69</sup> However, as historian Catherine A. Cavanaugh points out, despite both sexes having application rights Canadian government officials

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<sup>65</sup> Crowley, *Australia's Western Third*, p.137.

<sup>66</sup> Tasmania was the only other state to establish a separate Agricultural Bank in 1907. See H.S. Roberts, *History of Australian Land Settlement, 1788-1920*, Melbourne: Macmillan of Australia, 1968, p.404.

<sup>67</sup> In Canada, the amendments to the Dominion Land Act in 1874 reduced the age from 21 years to 18 years. Canada, Department of the Interior, *An Official Handbook of Information Relating to the Dominion of Canada*, handbook, 1894, p.90, SLNSW, D15S21; Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.4 (1901-1910), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co. 1911, pp.257-270.

<sup>68</sup> Property ownership and applying for public lands were two separate issues for married women in this period. For more on Australia's married women's property acts in the 1870s and 1880s, see Rita Farrell, 'Women and Citizenship in Colonial Australia', in Patricia Crawford and Philippa Maddern (eds), *Women as Australia Citizens: Underlying Histories*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001, pp.115-140.

<sup>69</sup> Russell, *How Agriculture Made Canada*, p.199.

assumed that “agriculture was an exclusively male enterprise” and that in practice men were to be the primary homesteaders, not women.<sup>70</sup> Western Australia’s *Homestead Act* also allowed for a man or woman who was the sole head of a family to make selection on a quarter-section, and homesteads could only be transferred to a person equally qualified to select it.<sup>71</sup> Whilst a single woman aged 21 years and older were entitled to apply for a homestead area in Queensland, a married woman was considered “not competent” to select a free homestead “unless she had obtained an order for judicial separation, or an order protecting her separate property”.<sup>72</sup> Similar legislation was applied to married women in New South Wales who had to seek the consent of the Minister of the Lands before being able to select a homestead.<sup>73</sup> In 1907, Frances Grace Wilkinson lost an appeal for an additional homestead selection application in New South Wales. As a single woman she had successfully obtained her first homestead, but as a married woman she was deemed ineligible to apply for a second selection under the *1895 Lands Act*.<sup>74</sup> Victoria was the exception in the case of married female selectors, allowing any person over the age of 18 years, including married women, to apply for public lands in the colony from 1896 onwards.<sup>75</sup>

From 1896 to 1914 the question of citizenship of non-British settlers was also included in the eligibility conditions, with Canada, New South Wales and Queensland requiring that settlers become British subjects in order to obtain title over a homestead. Amendments to the *Dominion Lands Act* in 1908 stated that only British subjects, or those who declared their intention to become one, were eligible to apply for a homestead in Canada’s North-West.<sup>76</sup> In New South Wales under the *Crown*

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<sup>70</sup> Catherine A. Cavanaugh, “‘No Place for a Woman’: Engendering Western Canadian Settlement”, in R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzan (eds), *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007, p.272.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Land Settlement in Westralia’, *The Peak Hill Express*, 15 September 1905, p.19.

<sup>72</sup> Queensland, Intelligence and Tourist Bureau, *Terse Information about Queensland: The Queen State of the Australian Commonwealth*, handbook, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1912, p.13, SLNSW, 984/Q.

<sup>73</sup> ‘Married Women and Land. Important Point in Selection’, *Wagga Wagga Express*, 7 January 1904, p.2.

<sup>74</sup> ‘Married Women and Homestead Selections’, *The Farmer and Settler*, 24 May 1907, p.7.

<sup>75</sup> This was introduced under the *Land Act of 1896*. See A.G. Brown, *Victoria: Digest of the Land Acts*, Melbourne: Robert S. Brain, Government Printer, 1901, p.9, National Library of Australia (hereafter NLA), Np336.12BR0; Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.4 (1901-1910), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co. 1911, p.260.

<sup>76</sup> ‘How Homesteads, Pre-Emptions and Purchased Homesteads in West May Be Acquired’, *The Edmonton Bulletin*, 28 August 1908, p.8.

*Lands Act of 1895*, an alien was ineligible to apply for a homestead unless they had resided in the colony for one year and declared their intention to become naturalised within five years, with failure to do so resulting in forfeiture of title.<sup>77</sup> Following the passing of the *Crown Lands Act of 1912*, this period for naturalisation was reduced to three years.<sup>78</sup> The *Land Act of 1910* required non-British applicants in Queensland to obtain a certificate that guaranteed their ability to read and write “from dictation words in such languages as the Minister for Lands may direct”.<sup>79</sup> By this mechanism, non-English speakers or undesirable types could be easily identified and excluded. It was also expected that the applicant would apply for naturalisation and become a British subject within five years of applying for public land.<sup>80</sup> Western Australia and Victoria were the exception, with both continuing to allow non-British subjects to apply for public land under the same conditions as British settlers.

Whilst it is perhaps surprising that age, gender and citizenship restrictions would be included within public lands legislation, these conditions were consistent with the wider population aims of Canada and Australia in this period. An 1896 article published in *The Edmonton Bulletin* summarised the objective of these land conditions in Canada’s North-West:

The question of settling the vacant lands of the Northwest is one of the most important that the new government has to face; second only in importance to the question as to the kind of people who are to settle them. For after all it is the people who make the country. The finest country under the sun is no good unless the people are as good as they should be.<sup>81</sup>

Securing the best kind of people for the land was a concurrent objective of the Australian states, with Australia’s first High Commissioner George Reid declaring, “This question of closer settlement includes a vigorous policy of emigration of the right kind.”<sup>82</sup> Consequently, Canada and the Australian states introduced immigration

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<sup>77</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.7 (1901-1913), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1914, p.223.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Queensland, Intelligence and Tourist Bureau, *The Pocket Queensland*, handbook, 1913, p.135, SLNSW, i20777942.

<sup>81</sup> ‘Land Settlement’, *The Edmonton Bulletin*, 26 October 1896, p.2. Notably, this newspaper was owned by Frank Oliver who held the position of the Minister of the Interior from 1905 to 1911.

<sup>82</sup> ‘Sir George Reid’s Arrival’, *The Standard*, c1909, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

policies which, like their respective lands programmes, were designed to be “aggressive but selective”<sup>83</sup> in order to encourage those considered desirable, chiefly British agriculturalists, whilst equally discouraging those who were not. Michele Langfield has suggested that in the case of the Australian states these could be considered “positive immigration policies” as those desired were given incentives by governments to immigrate, whilst those who were undesirable were “positively discouraged” from immigrating through disincentives, particularly legislative measures.<sup>84</sup> This approach was equally evident in the Canadian operations, as noted by the Superintendent of Immigration, W.D. Scott, to the *Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization* in 1911:

The general work of all these [immigration] offices is twofold in character: first to encourage all desirable persons to emigrate to Canada, and secondly to discourage the emigration of those who for any reason are likely to prove failures.<sup>85</sup>

### **White Canada and White Australia**

In order to achieve these dual objectives, Canadian and Australian government officials clearly articulated through their land and immigration policies the specific types, or classes, of migrant desired and not desired. The term “class” was used to refer to an individual’s physical, mental, or moral attributes as well as their professional expertise. More specifically, Canadian and Australian officials accepted or rejected certain classes of migrants based on their race and country of origin, mental and physical health, moral character and criminal history, existing capital, age, occupational background, and agricultural experience. Race and country of origin were arguably the most controversial and contested conditions of immigration policies and legislation in this period. As noted in Chapter One, the overwhelming consensus among dominion officials was that Anglo-Celtic migrants were the most desirable, whilst conversely non-white migrants were considered not only undesirable, but a possible threat. In a House of Commons speech in 1899, Federal

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<sup>83</sup> ‘Aggressive but Selective Immigration Policy Needed’, *The Edmonton Bulletin*, 30 December 1911, p.8.

<sup>84</sup> Langfield, “Fit for the Elect of the World”, p.35.

<sup>85</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Report of the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization, 1910-11, Testimony of W.D. Scott, 15 February 1911*, Ottawa: Printed by C.H. Parmelee, Printer to the King’s Most Excellent Majesty, 1911, p.115, Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/CCagricult190910rep00uoft>, accessed 25 August 2014.

MP Frank Oliver (later the Minister of the Interior) argued that allowing non-British and non-white migrants to settle in the North-West placed the existing Canadian populace at significant risk:

If you transplant people who are behind in civilization, who have no idea in regard to our system of government or our social life, who have no ambitions such we have, who are aliens in race and in every other respect, can you expect your country to be built up as it would be if you had other and better men in it? I say you cannot reasonably expect it; and you are handicapping the good men you have there by putting such a class of settlers among them.<sup>86</sup>

Whilst non-white migrants from places such as China, India, Japan and the Polynesian Islands had an existing presence in Canada and Australia, their settlement was considered by government officials and the wider public to be mainly temporary in order to satisfy labour needs. Australia's Prime Minister Edmund Barton suggested that this was also the expectation of non-white migrants in a 1902 speech to the House of Representatives:

It will be admitted that the object of many coloured aliens who have entered the Commonwealth in the past has been to go back to the places where they were born, as soon as they had heaped together enough wealth to enable them to live in ease in their own cheap countries.<sup>87</sup>

In reality, earlier immigration legislation introduced by Canada and the Australian states relating to groups such as the Chinese made it difficult for members of these cultural communities or their families to assume any kind of permanent settlement, agricultural or otherwise.<sup>88</sup> Between 1896 and 1914 Canada, the Australian states, and later the Commonwealth of Australia, introduced immigration legislation to increasingly restrict migrants considered undesirable along racial lines.<sup>89</sup> In 1896, the New South Wales Government introduced the *Coloured Races Restriction and Regulation Act* which extended earlier Chinese restriction legislation to all coloured

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<sup>86</sup> 'Immigration', *The Edmonton Bulletin*, 3 August 1899, p.3.

<sup>87</sup> *Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates* (hereafter *APD*), House of Representatives (hereafter *HR*), 15 January 1902, p.8807.

<sup>88</sup> For example, in 1885 a \$50 head tax was imposed on Chinese labourers entering Canada to work on the country's railways, which was raised to \$100 in 1900 and then \$500 in 1903. Such taxes were designed to encourage Chinese men to return to China rather than settling permanently and bringing their families to Canada. Rachel Bright notes that this legislation was a copy of earlier Australian and Californian legislation. See Rachel Bright, 'Asian Migration and the British World, c.1850-c.1914', in Kent Fedorowich and Andrew S. Thompson (eds), *Studies in Imperialism: Empire, Migration and Identity in the British World*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013, p.135.

<sup>89</sup> R.A. Huttenback, 'The British Empire as a "White Man's Country": Racial Attitudes and Immigration Legislation in the Colonies of White Settlement', *Journal of British Studies*, vol.13, no. 1, 1973, p.110.

migrants intending to enter the colony.<sup>90</sup> Western Australia followed with its own *Immigration Restriction Act* in 1897.<sup>91</sup> From Federation in 1901, the new Commonwealth Government assumed some of the responsibility for immigration alongside the now-states, including the ability to enact laws relating to naturalisation and to non-British, or “aliens”.<sup>92</sup> Two key pieces of federal immigration legislation were passed in 1901 relating to race: the *Immigration Restriction Act* and the *Pacific Island Labourers Act*. The latter allowed the government to deport existing Pacific Island labourers from Australia and restrict immigration from this region after 1904.<sup>93</sup> The former authorised government officials to administer to anyone entering the country that may be a “prohibited migrant” a dictation test in a European language of the official’s choosing.<sup>94</sup> In terms of race, the definition of a prohibited migrant was overwhelmingly applied to “coloured people”.<sup>95</sup>

Canada followed in 1906 with *An Act Respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, which allowed the federal government to “prohibit the landing in Canada of any specified class of immigrants”.<sup>96</sup> Racial restrictions were further articulated under the *Immigration Act of 1910* which allowed the government to “prohibit for a stated period, or permanently, the landing in Canada, or the landing at any specified port of entry in Canada, of immigrants belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate

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<sup>90</sup> Jeremy Martens, ‘A Transnational History of Immigration Restriction: Natal and New South Wales, 1896-97’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.34, no.3, 2006, pp.331-332; Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men’s Countries and the Question of Racial Equality*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008, p.144. Along with New South Wales, Victoria had also introduced restrictions on Chinese immigration in the 1850s.

<sup>91</sup> Western Australia, *Immigration Restriction Act*, 1897. See Jeremy C. Martens, ‘Pioneering the Dictation Test? The Creation and Administration of Western Australia’s Immigration Restriction Act, 1897-1901’, *Studies in Western Australian History*, vol.28, 2013, pp.47-67.

<sup>92</sup> The Commonwealth Government and the states could each legislate on matters of immigration after 1901; however, instances where they came into conflict the Commonwealth legislation was given precedence. See David Pope, ‘Assisted Immigration and Federal-State Relations: 1901-30’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol.28, no.1, 1982, pp.21-31.

<sup>93</sup> Australia, *An Act to provide for the Regulation, Restriction, and Prohibition of the Introduction of Labourers from the Pacific Islands and for other purposes*, 1901.

<sup>94</sup> Australia, *Immigration Restriction Act*, 1901. In 1905, the Act was amended so that the test could be conducted in any prescribed language.

<sup>95</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.7 (1901-1913), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1914, p.1031. In 1905 the Act was amended so that contracted alien immigrants could be allowed entry, but only if evidence could be shown that it was difficult for the employers to obtain the same workers in Australia. This was not the case if the contract migrant was British.

<sup>96</sup> Canada, *An Act respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, 1906.

or requirements of Canada, or of immigrants of any specified class, occupation or character".<sup>97</sup> Whilst Canadian and Australian policies to restrict potential migrants along racial lines mainly received a positive response from the wider dominion populations and elsewhere, there were those who were critical of such legislation, particularly the earlier 1890s Australian legislation which strained relations between Britain and its trading partner, Japan.<sup>98</sup>

Whilst the immigration policies of Canada and Australia defined non-white migrants as undesirable and prohibited, less clear was how to categorise European migrants. Between 1896 and 1905 Canada's Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton, who was responsible for regulating immigration, began to focus his department's efforts on attracting experienced agriculturalists not only from Britain, but also from the United States and central and eastern Europe. The acceptance of European migrants was by no means new for Canada; however under Sifton, government operations were significantly expanded to actively encourage a greater proportion of European migrants from a wider range of countries than previously seen.<sup>99</sup> The pre-1905 immigration legislation permitted such an approach as it contained relatively few restrictions and, importantly, none relating to race.<sup>100</sup> In the first years of the 1900s, significant numbers of Italian migrants were attracted to Canada not to take up agricultural settlement, but to serve as temporary seasonal labour on the country's farms and railway and canal projects before returning to Italy.<sup>101</sup> Private agents working on behalf of Canada's railway companies and other private enterprises, rather than government representatives, undertook the recruitment of labourers in Italy. British migrants were considered the primary target of government efforts, and officials were expected to encourage only experienced agriculturalists from European

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<sup>97</sup> Issued by the Superintendent of Immigration, *The Law and Regulations of Canada Respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, Ottawa, 18 April 1911, p.21, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 594, File 850724, Part 1.

<sup>98</sup> Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, pp.143-62.

<sup>99</sup> K. Tony Hollihan, "A Brake Upon the Wheel": Frank Oliver and the Creation of the Immigration Act of 1906', *Past Imperfect*, vol.1, 1992, pp.95-97.

<sup>100</sup> The existing legislation was an amended version of the first federal legislation passed, *An Act Respecting Immigration and Immigrants of 1869*, which placed restrictions against those with physical or mental disabilities or requiring government or charitable assistance. Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Toronto University of Toronto Press, 2010, p.64.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p.142.



countries that were thought to easily assimilate, especially visually, into the existing Canadian society.<sup>102</sup> The Acting Agent-General for New South Wales, T.A. Coghlan, reporting to his government on Canadian immigration operations in 1905, observed that Canada's acceptance of European migrants could be viewed as being mainly economically-driven, as the expected development created by these new migrants, temporary or otherwise, would ultimately benefit the existing Canadian populace:

It hopes by the introduction of immigrants into Canada materially to benefit the people who are already living there; and if what benefits the existing citizens of the Dominion is also a benefit to others, that, of course, is a matter for congratulation, though it forms no part of the policy of the Government which promotes the transference of immigrants from Europe to the New World.<sup>103</sup>

Despite the intended economic benefit, the increase in European agricultural migrants was met with apprehension by some parts of the Canadian populace. Concerns were raised that the government was placing greater emphasis on quantity over quality and groups such as American Mormons, Galicians (Ukrainians), and Doukhobors from Eastern Europe would undermine the British race and cultural character of the country.<sup>104</sup> An 1899 news article in *The Calgary Weekly Herald* entitled 'Galician Invasion' even suggested that the Galicians were "like Chinese" because "they never become citizens, but run back home the minute they have acquired sufficient sum to pull their carts out of the mud".<sup>105</sup> One of the biggest critics was Sifton's successor, Frank Oliver, who upon becoming the Minister of the Interior quickly introduced the new *Immigration Act* in 1906 to enforce cultural criteria over any other consideration including economic benefits.<sup>106</sup> Consequently, government activities in Europe were narrowed to less contentious northern countries, with a 1912 memorandum from the Department of the Interior stating: "No effort is now made to secure immigration from the southern European countries, it being felt that the people from those countries being rather slow to assimilate and having a less

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<sup>102</sup> Waiser, *Saskatchewan*, p.66.

<sup>103</sup> New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Report on Immigration with Special Reference to Canada*, bulletin no.3, 1905, p.21, State Library of South Australia, 325.171.

<sup>104</sup> Kent Fedorowich, 'The British Empire on the Move, 1760-1914', in Sarah Stockwell (ed.), *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives*, Melbourne: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, pp.89-90.

<sup>105</sup> 'A Galician Invasion: Fifty Thousand Preparing to Leave Home', *The Calgary Herald*, 18 May 1899, p.1.

<sup>106</sup> Hollihan, "A Brake Upon the Wheel", p.93.

perfect conception of the ideas of representative Government are in general terms not so desirable settlers."<sup>107</sup>

Australia also accepted white European migrants during this period; however, not to the same extent as Canada and certainly not through similar encouragement as seen during the Sifton years. As efforts to increase immigration to Australia followed the passing of the *Immigration Restriction Act* in 1901, the question of how and whether this new legislation applied to European migrants was intensely debated. On 16 January 1902 Prime Minister Edmund Barton clarified the Commonwealth's position on European migrants noting that undesirable Europeans, regardless of skin colour, could also be subjected to the dictation test:

Where people of European race, whether Italians or of other nationalities, show that they are undesirable, or are discovered to be so, upon grounds independent of colour, there will be no hesitation in applying the education test; but I do not think it was intended by Parliament, or desired by the country, that persons of European race should be subjected to the test, unless there be some specific reason for their exclusion.<sup>108</sup>

Although suitable Europeans were considered exempt from the 1901 Act, primacy remained on securing British migrants first and foremost before turning to European fields. For example, Victorian officials investigated Denmark, Holland, and Italy for potential agricultural migrants to settle on the state's irrigable lands, but in a much reduced manner in comparison to efforts undertaken in Britain and the Western United States.<sup>109</sup> The suggestion of advertising in Italy met significant criticism, with many pointing out that such encouragement could bring less desirable southern Italians rather than those from the north.<sup>110</sup> In 1907, New South Wales sent T.A. Coghlan to visit Europe, two years after his report on Canadian immigration operations there, to determine whether any meaningful emigration from countries such as Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, and Northern Italy was a viable

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<sup>107</sup> Memorandum from the Superintendent of Immigration W.D. Scott to the Honourable John Waterhouse Daniels, 22 November 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>108</sup> *APD*, HR, 16 January 1902, p.8860.

<sup>109</sup> Land Settlement Delegation, *Report of the Victorian Land Settlement Delegation to the Honourable Premier of Victoria*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1911, State Library of Victoria (hereafter SLV), SF 333.33509945 V66RE.

<sup>110</sup> Michele Langfield, "The Ideal Migrant': Immigration to Victoria between Federation and the First World War", *Australian Studies*, no.8, 1994, p.6.

option for the state. He noted that whilst Europe could prove to be a desirable field for experienced agricultural labourers, particularly in the case of Italy, “whether it would be prudent to introduce non-English speaking people into Australia in great numbers is a matter of policy which would need careful thought before being adopted”.<sup>111</sup> The *Contract Immigrants Act* of 1905, which applied to migrants arriving in the country to undertake manual work, was also used to limit the entry of European migrants into the country.<sup>112</sup> The Act stipulated that skilled migrants could only be brought to the country if they did not threaten existing jobs in Australia and were not used by employers as part of industrial disputes. They were also subject to approval by the Minister of External Affairs. Fears of ‘white aliens’ undercutting wages and jobs for existing Australians saw trade unions particularly object to the influx of any overseas labour, and the 1905 legislation worked to curtail their entry.<sup>113</sup>

### **Subsidised Passage Schemes**

Whilst immigration legislation worked to discourage and restrict undesirable migrants based on race and country of origin, other aspects of Canada and the Australia states’ immigration policies were implanted to encourage migrants considered desirable because of their race and country or origin. One such measure to encourage British migrants that the Australian states had utilised before 1896 was to subsidise oceanic travel costs through free, nominated or assisted passage schemes. The distance and cost of passage from Britain to the Australian states was significant, particularly when compared to the much closer proximity of Canada. For example, in 1912 the ordinary steerage rate to Australia for a man, woman and three children cost £42, while the same family could secure passage to Canada for half the cost at £21.<sup>114</sup> Even with comparable land policies to induce potential migrants to settle, Australian government officials based in Britain were acutely aware of their

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<sup>111</sup> New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Report on the Question of European Emigration to Australia*, bulletin no.15, 1907, p.14, SLSA, 325.24.

<sup>112</sup> Michele Langfield, ‘Attitudes to European Immigration to Australia in the Early Twentieth Century’, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol.12, no.1, 1991, p.2.

<sup>113</sup> Eric Richards, *Destination Australia: Migration to Australia Since 1901*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2008, pp.36-37, 42.

<sup>114</sup> Extract from “The Nation in Arms”, October 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

respective colony's disadvantage in this regard as noted by Western Australia's Emigration Officer, W.H. Dolley:

It is often useless to point out to the proposed emigrant the special opportunities that Western Australia has to offer. The man or woman intends to go to one of the British States, and the merits of the different states appeal to him or her only in relation to the cost of getting there.<sup>115</sup>

As such, between 1896 and 1914 each of the Australian states offered at differing times and to varying degrees assisted and nominated passage schemes. Western Australia<sup>116</sup> and Queensland<sup>117</sup> with a few brief pauses, maintained some form of passage assistance throughout the period, while the impact of the 1890s depression and drought meant that New South Wales<sup>118</sup> and Victoria<sup>119</sup> did not reintroduce government-assisted passage schemes until 1905 and 1907 respectively. Along with assisted and nominated passage, Queensland also offered free passage to British agricultural migrants in this period.<sup>120</sup> Free passage could be granted to farm labourers if the colony's Agent-General was "satisfied with the character and *bona fides* of each applicant"<sup>121</sup> and the only costs incurred for free migrants were transportation to the port and a one pound ship kit. The effects of Australian states' government-assisted passage schemes in drawing British migrants to the southern dominion were significant, with Canada's Inspector of Agencies in London, W.T.R. Preston reporting in May 1899 that Queensland's reinstatement of assisted passage only a few months earlier was already affecting Canada's own British migrant intake:

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<sup>115</sup> W.H. Dolley, Agent-General's Office, 'Report by W.H. Dolley for Year Ending 30 June 1909', 1909, State Records Office of Western Australia (hereafter SROWA), 1816/1043.

<sup>116</sup> Western Australia maintained free, assisted, nominated and full-paying passages for most of the 1890s. See Blainey, *A History of Victoria*, p.149.

<sup>117</sup> Queensland was by far the most active Australian colony in this time, with nominated and assisted passage schemes in Queensland briefly pausing from 1894-1897, and free immigration resuming from 1899. J. O'N. Brenan, *Immigration: Extract from the Year Book*, Brisbane: George Arthur Vaughan, Acting Government Printer, 1901, p.119, SLNSW, 325.94.

<sup>118</sup> State-aided immigration in New South Wales ceased from 1887 and was not reintroduced until 30 November 1905. Some who had arrived under the system before 1887 were still able to bring their families out under special regulations in the 1890s. See New South Wales, Immigration and Tourist Bureau, *Organization of the Immigration Branch in London and its Work During the Year 1908*, bulletin no.34, 1909, SLNSW, SL650.8/C.

<sup>119</sup> Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World", p.60. In 1910, Victoria also offered irrigationists loans of up to 80% to cover passage costs.

<sup>120</sup> Free passage to Queensland paused between 1893 and 1898, resumed in 1899, and paused again briefly in 1900. See Jack Walton, *George Randall: Emigration Officer Extraordinaire*, Brisbane: CopyRight Publishing, 2007, p.95.

<sup>121</sup> J. O'N. Brenan, *Emigration to Queensland*, broadsheet, Issued by the Immigration Office, Brisbane, 6 March 1899, John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, 71051.

The Booking Agents in Manchester, Birmingham, Leamington, Lincoln and one or two other places that I visited, reported a marked falling off in enquiries regarding Canada; and a corresponding increase about Queensland, on account of the assisted passages to that Colony.<sup>122</sup>

Subsidising passage costs not only placed Australia on a more even footing with Canada, but, as historian Eric Richards points out, also provided the opportunity for governments to “determine the selection, composition, scale, timing, and, most important of all in the long run, the source of their foundation peoples”.<sup>123</sup> Those interested in obtaining reduced or assisted passage had to apply to, or were selected by, Australian colonial representatives based in Britain. They were then reviewed by the colony’s representative Agent-General and either approved or rejected. Similarly, under the nomination scheme, migrants were put forward by family and friends already settled in an Australian colony who agreed to pay part of the migrant’s travel costs. If approved, the government would cover the remaining amount, which would be repaid by the migrant at a later date. The nomination system was considered advantageous because it was less expensive for colonial governments to administer, the nominee came recommended by established and presumably successful settlers, and the nominator had to agree to assume responsibility for the migrant’s settlement and well-being. This was highlighted in the annual report of the Western Australian immigration department in 1907: “The increase in the number of Nominated Immigrants is very satisfactory – such persons speedily become useful citizens, as immediately on their arrival they are taken charge of by the friends and relatives who have nominated them and who make it their business to find employment for the new comers.”<sup>124</sup> Australian subsidised passage schemes as an inducement for attracting British migrants will be considered further in Chapter Three.

### **Mental and Physical Health**

Along with race, Canada and Australia immigration programmes also worked to accept or reject migrants based on their mental and physical health. Healthy migrants

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<sup>122</sup> Letter from W.T.R. Preston to Lord Strathcona, 29 May 1899, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 202, File 86087.

<sup>123</sup> Eric Richards, ‘Migrations: The Career of British White Australia’, in Deryck M. Shreuder and Stuart Ward (eds), *Australia’s Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p.166.

<sup>124</sup> Walter James, ‘Agent-General’s Annual Report’, 1907, State Library of Western Australia (hereafter SLWA), 301.328WES.

were considered likely to succeed, while it was anticipated that those afflicted with mental or physical conditions would require assistance and ultimately fail as agricultural settlers. Whilst earlier immigration legislation had allowed the entry of migrants with mental and physical conditions into Canada,<sup>125</sup> from 1896 to 1914 measures were introduced to increasingly prohibit such individuals. In 1902, an amendment was passed to bar the entry of migrants or visitors “afflicted with loathsome, dangerous or infectious diseases”.<sup>126</sup> The *1906 Immigration Act* prohibited the entry of the “feeble-minded, an idiot, or an epileptic, or who is insane, or has had an attack of insanity within five years”, along with individuals who were deaf, dumb, blind or infirm.<sup>127</sup> From 1906 intending migrants were also subject to medical inspections at Canadian ports, and the federal government could legally deport recently arrived or even landed migrants if their mental and physical health proved to be poor either before or, in some cases, after landing.<sup>128</sup> Those fitting in the latter category were often referred to by government officials as “failed” migrants.<sup>129</sup> Stern warnings were also sent to personnel based in Britain when migrants with physical deformities were found to have been encouraged to emigrate. In 1905, Department of the Interior staff were alerted to a recently arrived British migrant who had been given a letter of introduction from the High Commissioner’s office so he could find work upon arrival in the country. Unfortunately, due to a congenital deformity the young man had only the thumb and a single finger on his right hand and it was pointed out that although he had been a farm labourer, “he could not milk, and no farmer who has been here and seen the boy would take him” and that consequently,

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<sup>125</sup> Those identified as a “lunatic, idiot, deaf and dumb, blind or infirm” under the 1869 Immigration Act were required to pay a \$300 bond to cover any potential future public assistance. Canada, *An Act Respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, 1869.

<sup>126</sup> Department of the Interior, *Memorandum*, 29 April 1903, p.6, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 99, File 13098, Part 1.

<sup>127</sup> Canada, *An Act Respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, 1906. The deaf, dumb, blind or infirm could be granted entry if their family could provide evidence that they intended to give permanent support to that individual.

<sup>128</sup> Barbara Roberts, *Whence They Came: Deportation from Canada 1900-1935*, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988, p.53. Roberts notes that although legally not allowed to deport immigrants prior to 1906, the federal government did have a policy in the 1890s of sending back “unwanted migrants” which was more or less deportation.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p.54.

“it was a mistake to send a young man with a deformity of this sort to this country at all”.<sup>130</sup>

Australian state and federal governments also only wanted those who were “physically sound”<sup>131</sup> and introduced measures to restrict the entry of migrants upon the grounds of poor mental or physical health. As one Queensland handbook stated, only “able-bodied men and women to fill [Queensland’s] empty spaces and develop her resources” were wanted.<sup>132</sup> Migrants applying for government-assisted passage schemes were subject to medical and civic examinations before they could be approved. Western Australia required all potential migrants, including children, to obtain a medical certificate endorsing their health. In a 1909 letter to a Manchester doctor, Western Australia’s Agent-General C.H. Rason questioned his decision to certify the health of Clara Beatrice Blakemore, the child of an assisted migrant, given that she “was found to be suffering from Spinal Caries with probably lumbar pr psoas abscess and unfit for any kind of work”, noting that “it was upon the strength of this certificate that the family were given assisted passages”.<sup>133</sup> Even those who passed a doctor’s medical examination could still be rejected if government officials decided that they were not mentally or physically suited for colonial settlement. In an 1890 report, Queensland government official Charles S. Dickson noted that while 28-year-old farm labourer Thomas Adams had passed the doctor’s inspection, Dickson himself had denied Adams the free passage because “he did not seem to me sufficiently robust to stand any knocking about or roughing in the colony”.<sup>134</sup> The Commonwealth’s 1901 *Immigration Act* further prohibited those possessing mental or physical illnesses from entering the country, and any immigrant found to have a prohibited disease within three years of entering Australia could be required to take

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<sup>130</sup> Letter from Director of Colonization Thomas Southworth to W.D. Scott, 25 February 1905, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 101, File 15197, Part 2.

<sup>131</sup> Victoria, Advertising and Intelligence Bureau, Victoria: *The Irrigation State of Australia, Information for Prospective Settlers*, handbook, c1912, p.22, SLNSW, 333.335/2.

<sup>132</sup> Queensland, Intelligence and Tourist Bureau, *Terse Information about Queensland: The Queen State of the Australian Commonwealth*, handbook, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1912, p.6, SLNSW, 984/Q.

<sup>133</sup> Letter from C.H. Rason to Dr A.E. Cotterill, 28 April 1909, SROWA, 1816/1045.

<sup>134</sup> Letter from Charles S. Dickson to the Under Colonial Secretary, 16 May 1890, QSA, Item ID 860840, Despatches.

the dictation test.<sup>135</sup> The *Act* identified migrants considered an “idiot or insane” or suffering from “infectious or contagious disease of a loathsome or dangerous character” as prohibited migrants, and anyone attempting to bring someone who fit in either of these categories was considered liable for any costs incurred for their care in Australia.<sup>136</sup> Subsequent amendments to the *Act* in 1912 saw pulmonary tuberculosis, trachoma or loathsome or dangerous communicable disease added to the prohibited categories.<sup>137</sup> As part of the 1912 amendments, Commonwealth medical bureaux were established in overseas ports so that all intending migrants were required to pass a federal medical examination prior to embarkation. An article in the *British Medical Journal* in 1913 noted that such efforts would avoid deportation from Australia and unnecessary costs for the intending migrant:

It is held that the only humane course in dealing with any prospective emigrant is to afford facilities whereby before any expense is incurred it can be decided whether or not the persons is in such a state of health or physical or mental conditions as might lead to his rejection as an immigrant.<sup>138</sup>

### **Moral Character**

Migrants were also evaluated on their moral character and criminal history, with emphasis placed on rejecting anyone who was likely to become dependent upon public or charitable institutions. Paupers, the destitute, professional beggars, and vagrants were barred entry from Canada, as were those convicted of a crime or prostitution.<sup>139</sup> In 1910, immigrants “to whom money has been given or loaned by any charitable organization for the purpose of enabling them to qualify for landing in Canada”<sup>140</sup> were also added to the list of prohibited classes. Canada’s Superintendent of Immigration, W.D. Scott, testified at the *Dominions Royal Commission on Imperial Trade and Emigration* in 1912 that “failures” were predominately those who had been

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<sup>135</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.6 (1901-1912), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1913, p.1031.

<sup>136</sup> Australia, *Immigration Restriction Act*, 1901.

<sup>137</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.6 (1901-1912), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1913, p.1030.

<sup>138</sup> ‘Prohibited Immigrants to Australia’, *The British Medical Journal*, October 11, 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>139</sup> Canada, *An Act respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, 1906.

<sup>140</sup> *The Law and Regulations of Canada Respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, Issued by the Superintendent of Immigration, Ottawa, 18 April 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 594, File 850724, Part 1.



given assistance by charitable organisations and private enterprises to emigrate to Canada in the first place:

Such organisations confine their efforts almost entirely to assisting those who have failed to “make good” in their native land, and a person who was a failure in the land in which he was born is not so likely to secure success in a new country.<sup>141</sup>

On a number of occasions, the steamship companies were also found to have supported the emigration of British migrants with questionable moral character. In 1898 Winnipeg authorities discovered a young man named Freddie Blunn who had served two prison terms in Britain and was on the verge of destitution. The Commissioner of Immigration W.F. McCreary reported to his superiors in Ottawa that it was his belief that “It is difficult to make a good citizen out of such material” and asked what he should do with the youth.<sup>142</sup> Department officials decided Freddie should be given a chance but “if he does not get on well, or he shows criminal tendencies, the Department will have no hesitation in requiring transportation Companies to take him back to England.”<sup>143</sup>

The Australian states, through the offices of their respective Agents-General in Britain, similarly screened assisted and nominated passenger applicants based on their moral character. Western Australia required assisted passage applicants to be endorsed by both an employer and a “householder” who could vouch that they were “honest, sober, industrious, moral and of a respectable character”.<sup>144</sup> Notably, a publican or a relative were not allowed to provide the endorsement. Additionally, migrants who were “in any habitual receipt of parish relief”<sup>145</sup> were also barred from applying for nominated passage. Likewise, assisted migrants to New South Wales were required to be of a good moral character, and the “respectability” of nominated

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<sup>141</sup> W.D. Scott, *Dominions Royal Commission on Imperial Trade and Emigration, Migration*, response, 1912, p.9, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 594.

<sup>142</sup> Letter from W.F. McCreary to Frank Pedley, 23 December 1898, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 101, File 15197, Part 2.

<sup>143</sup> Letter from Assistant Secretary Lyndwode Pereira to W.F. McCreary, 30 December 1898, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 101, File 15197, Part 2.

<sup>144</sup> Western Australia, Agent-General’s Office, *Nominated and Assisted Emigration to Western Australia*, form, SLWA, PR756.

<sup>145</sup> Western Australia, Immigration and General Information Bureau, *Western Australia 1913*, Issued by Authority of Hon. W.C. Angwin, M.L.A., Hon. Minister in Charge of Immigration, 1913, p.44, SLV, LTP 325.94 W52I.

applicants had to be guaranteed by their nominator and satisfied by the Agent-General before being approved.<sup>146</sup> The Commonwealth Government identified prohibited migrants as anyone who had been convicted of a crime within three years and sentenced to imprisonment, unless one year had lapsed since the end of the time served.<sup>147</sup> This was amended in 1912 to anyone convicted of a crime involving “moral turpitude” and five years since the end of the time served.<sup>148</sup> Non-British subjects convicted of “any crime of violence” once in Australia could also be subjected to the dictation test, with failure resulting in deportation.<sup>149</sup> Individuals engaged in prostitution, as a prostitute or living on the prostitution of others, were also restricted from entering Australia.<sup>150</sup>

### **Existing Capital**

The amount of existing capital held by intending migrants was also considered to ensure that individuals would not require government or charitable assistance once settled. Before 1906, the Canadian federal government did not impose a set amount of capital, instead suggesting to intending migrants that “if a man has about £100 clear on landing he is in a position to make a fair beginning”.<sup>151</sup> The amount of existing capital was more closely defined following the passing of the *Immigration Act of 1906*, which allowed the federal government to stipulate a minimum amount of funds necessary depending on the “class and destination” of the migrant.<sup>152</sup> A 1908 circular from the Department of the Interior to steamship companies and booking agents stated that unless adult migrants were farm labourers, farmers, or female domestic servants, they were required to have at least \$25 CDN in cash and a railway

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<sup>146</sup> Australia, Department of External Affairs, *The Commonwealth of Australia for Farmers*, handbook, 1914, p.93, NLA, N919.4AUS.

<sup>147</sup> The 1912 *Amendment Act* increased the period following the completion of the sentence from one year to five. Langfield, “Fit for the Elect of the World”, p.84.

<sup>148</sup> Australia, *An Act to amend the Immigration Restriction Act 1901-1910*, 1912.

<sup>149</sup> Australia, *Immigration Restriction Act*, 1901.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> Canada, Department of the Interior, *An Official Handbook of Information Relating to the Dominion of Canada*, handbook, 1894, p.25, SLNSW, D15S21.

<sup>152</sup> Canada, *An Act respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, 1906.

ticket to their destination.<sup>153</sup> By 1911, the amount of required funds also depended upon race<sup>154</sup> with British and European migrants expected to have at least \$25 CDN, while Chinese and Japanese migrants were expected to possess \$200 CDN.<sup>155</sup> For a married migrant, his family was also expected to have a prescribed amount of funds, with each member over the age of 18 needing \$25 CDN, and those aged five years and older requiring \$12.50 CDN. If migrants chose to emigrate during the winter months of November to February, this was raised to \$50.00 and \$25.00 Canadian respectively.<sup>156</sup> Importantly, the legislation gave the Assistant Superintendent of Emigration in Britain the discretion to approve migrants who did not meet these minimum requirements, and the authority to reject or deport those who were considered likely to require government support.<sup>157</sup>

Whilst a set amount of existing capital was not stipulated by either the Australian states or by the federal government, government assisted migrants were required to deposit a certain amount of funds in order to be eligible for subsidised passage rates. This deposit would be reimbursed upon arrival in the colony, and would ensure new settlers had some means to establish themselves on the land. The required deposit amount was adjusted throughout the period, so that by 1914 Western Australian assisted migrants were expected to deposit £3 for themselves and each of their family members. Queensland provided a subsidised £5 passage rate for assisted migrants provided they deposited £50 “as a guarantee that they have some means of support”.<sup>158</sup> Agriculturalists were required to deposit between £12-£15 to the New South Wales government, while agricultural labourers were expected to possess an £8 deposit to be eligible for assistance to the colony. The government would also

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<sup>153</sup> W.D. Scott, Superintendent of Immigration, *Circular to Steamship Companies and Booking Agents Carrying and Booking Immigrant Passengers to Canada*, 12 May 1908, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, File 801004, Part 1.

<sup>154</sup> Canada, *An Act to Amend the Act respecting Immigration*, 1911.

<sup>155</sup> Along with this, the head tax on Chinese arriving in Canada by this time had been increased to \$500. W.D. Scott, Superintendent of Immigration, *Circular to Steamship Companies and Booking Agents Carrying and Booking Immigrant Passengers to Canada*, 12 May 1908, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, File 801004, Part 1.

<sup>156</sup> Canada, *An Act to Amend the Act respecting Immigration*, 1911.

<sup>157</sup> The *Immigration Act of 1906* gave officials the right to reject any immigrants who were considered “a pauper, or destitute, a professional beggar, or vagrant, or who is likely to become a public charge”. Canada, *An Act respecting Immigration and Immigrants*, 1906.

<sup>158</sup> Australia, Department of External Affairs, *The Commonwealth of Australia for Farmers*, handbook, 1914, p.94, NLA, N919.4AUS.

retrospectively pay £6 towards the passage of European agriculturalists once they engaged “definitely in agricultural pursuits in New South Wales”.<sup>159</sup> Victorian agriculturalists applying for assisted passage had to declare the amount of existing capital in their possession to the Agent-General’s office, which would determine whether they would be approved or not.<sup>160</sup> This approval was based on whether an applicant possessed “sufficient capital to enable him to start off without uncertainty or undue hardship growing out of lack of money for early expenses”.<sup>161</sup>

### **Age**

The age of a potential migrant was also considered by Canadian and Australian authorities, with primacy placed on attracting men in the prime of their lives. Men aged eighteen and older were particularly encouraged for land settlement in Canada, and although an upper age limit was not imposed, intending migrants were advised that young men should go to the North-West while older men or those with young families should consider the older established parts of Canada.<sup>162</sup> Younger men were most desired by Australian government officials as well with male settlers between the ages of 16 and 24 years identified as most suitable because of their physical fitness and ability to adapt to their new environment.<sup>163</sup> To ensure that young migrants would be encouraged to emigrate, the Australian states also imposed restrictions on the upper age limit of eligible migrants wishing to take up free, assisted or nominated passages. From 1912 the age limit of government-assisted migrants was standardised across all of the Australian states. Men, married women and widows had to be under 45 years of age, while single women were required to be 35 years or younger.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p.93.

<sup>160</sup> Victoria, Agent-General’s Office, *Particulars Required from Agriculturists Wishing to Obtain a Loan of Portion of Passage Money to Victoria, Australia*, form, 1910, Public Records Office of Victoria (hereafter PROV), VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>161</sup> Letter from Elwood Mead to W. Robert Park, 20 December 1910, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>162</sup> Canada, Department of the Interior, *An Official Handbook of Information Relating to the Dominion of Canada*, handbook, 1894, p.25, SLNSW, D15S21.

<sup>163</sup> ‘As Others See Us’, *Sunday Times*, 1 February 1914, p.1.

<sup>164</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.6 (1901-1912), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1913, p.1028.

## **Agricultural Experience**

A consistent feature of Canada and Australia's immigration programmes was to encourage migrants with agricultural experience who intended to take up rural settlement. The definition of agricultural experience was very broad, and could include a multitude of skills and experience that were at the discretion of government personnel to assess. Land-owners, agricultural labourers, irrigationists, orchardists, and dairying farmers were just some of the many sub-groups that were identified by Canadian and Australian officials as the "kind of immigrant we must make every exertion to secure".<sup>165</sup> Concurrent to this was an equal emphasis placed on discouraging urban migrants or "town wastrels" from considering emigration.<sup>166</sup> This latter point was reinforced to government personnel based in Britain in a letter from Canada's Deputy Minister of the Interior, which stated, "Under no circumstances – and this matter has been pressed very strongly upon me by the Minister of the Interior – are our agents in any way to encourage the emigration of skilled mechanics or persons who are simply seeking employment in factories or as ordinary labourers ... I can assure you that the agent will get credit only for those who go to Canada to engage in agriculture."<sup>167</sup> Clerks, draughtsmen, telegraphists, shop assistants, professional men, schoolmasters and teachers, civil servants, architects, and engineers were generally discouraged from applying. The desire for rural migrants and the rejection of urban migrants was also made clear by the Minister of the Interior, Frank Oliver, speaking at the Ontario Club in 1910: "We draw the distinction between the country dweller and the city dweller. We believe we can raise all the city dwellers in Canada."<sup>168</sup> Likewise, the Australian states and the Commonwealth also placed primacy on securing only those with agricultural experience who intended to engage in rural activities. A memorandum prepared for the Australia's Agents-General for Prime Minister Alfred Deakin in 1905 emphasised this point:

In Australia's present condition, therefore, the necessary qualification of an immigrant is the possibility of his becoming a producer directly or indirectly. Once industries for manufacturing, dairying, farming, or mining

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<sup>165</sup> 'The Proper Immigrant', *Brisbane Courier*, 24 August 1896, p.4.

<sup>166</sup> 'Men Wanted on Lands But Not in the Towns', *The Edmonton Bulletin*, 17 March 1908, p.3.

<sup>167</sup> Letter from J.A. Smart to G.H. Mitchell, 5 February 1904, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 5, File 41, Part 1.

<sup>168</sup> 'Wealth and Prosperity Very Good but Good Citizenship is Far Better', *The Edmonton Bulletin*, 23 March 1910, p.2.

take firm root, the country could probably look with equanimity to a large influx of unskilled, or partially skilled, labour, but certainly not before.<sup>169</sup>

Australian assisted passage schemes were also designed for rural migrants with agricultural experience. Western Australia and Queensland offered assistance to farmers, farm labourers, vigneron, dairymen, orchardists, and market gardeners,<sup>170</sup> while New South Wales offered assistance to “*bona-fide* farmers and farm labourers”.<sup>171</sup> Victoria also offered assistance to experienced agriculturalists interested in obtaining one of the state’s irrigated farms provided they could “state fully the nature and extent of your experience of work on the land” before being approved.<sup>172</sup> Equally, the Australian states discouraged the immigration of urban migrants, with Western Australia cautioning prospective migrants that “the State extends no welcome to the man who comes into the community to be a town lounge”.<sup>173</sup> The verification of a potential migrant’s agricultural experience and skills was also taken seriously by Australian officials. In 1907, the Intelligence Department of New South Wales reported that the Agent-General had received application from 1,800 persons who identified as farm hands, but only 20 were granted assisted passage because “most of these ‘farm hands’ were weaklings from the East End of London”.<sup>174</sup>

Western Australia’s Agent-General Walter James remarked in 1906: “In Australia the Immigration question is and practically always has been a land question—that is, with increased facilities for land settlement, there has been an increase of

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<sup>169</sup> ‘Immigration: Memorandum (Dated 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1905) by the Agents-General, Prepared at the Request of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth’, *Australian Parliamentary Papers*, no.80, 1905, p.4.

<sup>170</sup> Western Australia, Immigration and General Information Bureau, *Western Australia 1913*, Issued by Authority of Hon. W.C. Angwin, M.L.A., Hon. Minister in Charge of Immigration, 1913, p.43, State Library of Victoria, LTP 325.94 W521; Queensland, Information Bureau (Greater Britain Exhibition, 1899), *More People Wanted in Queensland (Australia)*, broadsheet, 1899, NLA, PETHpam2067.

<sup>171</sup> New South Wales, Immigration and Tourist Bureau, *Assisted Immigration to New South Wales: How to Nominate a Friend for Assisted Passage*, handbook, 1910, p.4, NLA, PETHpam679.

<sup>172</sup> Victoria, Agent-General’s Office, *Particulars Required from Agriculturists Wishing to Obtain a Loan of Portion of Passage Money to Victoria, Australia*, form, 1910, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>173</sup> N. Keith Bushnell, *Australia for the Emigrant*, London: Cassell, 1913, p.55, SLNSW, 980.1/B.

<sup>174</sup> New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Report on the Formation and Initiatory Work of the Intelligence Department, July 1905-August 1907*, bulletin no.21, 1907, p.11, NLA, N380.95NEW.

immigration. The freer the land, the fuller the flow of immigration.”<sup>175</sup> Indeed, as this chapter has shown, the land and immigration policies of Canada and the Australian states between 1896 and 1914 were designed to work concomitantly to satisfy economic and population aims. The land policies introduced in this period focused primarily on encouraging smaller holdings, closer settlement, and homestead farming. They provided incentives for experienced British agriculturalists to take up land at little cost, whilst at the same time placing conditions on that land to discourage those not intending long-term investment or bona fide settlement. Equally, the immigration policies from this period also worked to positively encourage experienced agriculturalists to immigrate, whilst concurrently discouraging everyone else, particularly those who did not reinforce the British race and cultural character of the existing populace. Potential migrants were also evaluated on their physical, mental and moral attributes and their professional expertise in order to determine whether they were desirable settlers or not. Careful selection was considered paramount if these objectives were to be achieved, and as the next chapter will demonstrate, a central function of government departments and their personnel in administering the lands and immigration policies in this period was to actively pursue British agricultural migrants. As such, it will consider the promotion and recruitment activities of Canada and Australia in Britain at this time.

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<sup>175</sup> ‘Australian Immigration’, Paper by Walter James, Agent General for Western Australia, Read at a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute (London), 10 April 1906, SLWA, PR1-1053.

## Chapter 3

### **In the Field: Recruiting the British Agricultural Migrant**

The previous chapter outlined the land and immigration policies introduced in this period that were specifically aimed at encouraging the emigration and settlement of experienced British male agriculturalists and their families onto dominion land. Whilst it was recognised that positive inducements such as free or low-cost land and subsidised passage rates would appeal to this particular group, it was also conceded that these opportunities, along with the natural resources and general settlement advantages of their representative destinations, had to be actively and widely advertised to the British public in order to attract those most desired. As one Canadian government official observed at the time, “Emigrants are not waiting like a load of coals outside a coal cellar to be let in, but, on the contrary, they have to be diligently sought, individually selected and sent”.<sup>1</sup> This chapter therefore considers the development of Canada and Australia’s government-led recruitment campaigns and promotional activities between 1896 and 1914, which were designed to attract and secure British agricultural migrants.

This chapter is organised in four chronological sections. The first addresses Canada’s promotional and recruitment operations between 1896 and 1905, and the alteration of the federal government’s activities in Britain in 1902 to align with those proven successful in attracting farmers from the United States in the late 1890s. The next section considers the status of Australian state activities during this same period, and in particular the contrasting positions of Canada and Australia by 1905 in their popularity as an overseas destination among the British public. The reinvigoration and expansion of Australian state activities from 1905 to 1910 is then outlined, beginning with New South Wales in 1905. This section in particular considers the influence of Canada’s campaign on the minds of state and federal government officials in Australia as they set about establishing their own methods to entice desirable British agriculturalists. In the final section of this chapter, the campaigns of Canada

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 30 November 1911, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.



and Australia from 1910 to 1914 are compared as their work converged, and each reached the height of their operations and intake of British migrants during this period. In particular, the arrival of George Reid, Australia's first High Commissioner, in London is examined, as is the expansion of federal funding and staff to support state promotional activities and to present Australia as a unified destination for potential agricultural migrants. Furthermore, the way Canadian representatives viewed their colonial counterpart's operations and success, and their own response to the increase in Australian recruitment activities is assessed.

In considering Canada and Australia's formal recruitment campaigns waged during this period to attract and secure British agriculturalists, this chapter will also examine the government departments and officials tasked with creating and administering these activities, the civil service that was ultimately responsible for the formal "mechanics"<sup>2</sup> of directing immigration and settlement in their respective countries. These include the Canadian federal Department of the Interior's Immigration Branch, the Australian federal Department of External Affairs, the Australian state intelligence departments and bureaus, and the staff of the High Commissioner's and Agents-General's offices located in London and across Britain. Whilst the government-led recruitment campaigns employed by Canada and Australia during this period have been considered by a number of scholars, much of the existing literature has focused on the activities of one or the other in isolation.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, few have contemplated the possible interactions, exchanges and connections between Canadian and Australian officials and personnel, other than to suggest that their concurrent

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<sup>2</sup> This term has been adopted from Harold Troper's study of Canadian operations in the United States during this period. See Harold Troper, *Only Farmers Need Apply: Official Canadian Government Encouragement of Immigration from the United States, 1896-1911*, Toronto: Griffin Press Limited, 1972, pp.1-2.

<sup>3</sup> See for example: Marjory Harper, 'Pressure and Persuasion: Canadian Agents and Scottish Emigration, c.1870-c.1930', *The Historian*, vol.81, 2004, pp.17-23; Marjory Harper, 'Enticing the Emigrant: Canadian Agents in Ireland and Scotland, c.1870-c.1920', *The Scottish Historical Review*, vol.83, no.215, 2004, pp.41-58; Marjory Harper, 'Rhetoric and Reality: British Migration to Canada, 1867-1967' in Phillip Buckner (ed.), *Canada and the British World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp.161-180; Jack Walton, *George Randall: Emigration Officer Extraordinaire*, Brisbane: CopyRight Publishing, 2007; Patrick A. Dunae, 'Promoting the Dominion: Records and the Canadian Immigration Campaign, 1872-1915', *Archivaria*, vol.19, 1984, pp.73-93; Michele Langfield, "'Fit for the Elect of the World": Government Policy and Contemporary Opinion About the Encouragement of Immigration to Australia, 1901-1939', unpublished PhD thesis, Monash University, 1988.

activities in the latter half of this period inevitably fostered an “aggressive, highly competitive campaign for British immigrants”.<sup>4</sup>

Recent research by Canadian historian Lisa Chilton has successfully demonstrated that British, Canadian and Australian philanthropic women, working for voluntarily-run emigration societies to assist with the settlement of British female domestic servants in Canada and Australia in the same period frequently met, networked, and supported each other in their common endeavour.<sup>5</sup> Her study reveals that this supportive environment was at the same time also a competitive one, as indicated by the government files that Canada and Australia kept about each other’s immigration activities.<sup>6</sup> Such analysis has yet to be undertaken for Canadian and Australian government representatives working in an official capacity on behalf of their dominions during this same period to encourage British male agriculturalists to settle in Canada and Australia, and whether they too forged similar relationships in their common endeavours. Further to this, as observed in the Introduction of this thesis, a number of historians have hinted at the effect that their concurrent efforts may have had, particularly on Australian operations after 1905, but few have provided further analysis into the linkages between their operations and whether the activities of one can perhaps explain those of the other.

In taking a wider view of the British World and the development of settler colonies between 1896 and 1914, this chapter will argue that Canadian and Australian government officials based at home in the dominions and abroad were intimately aware of each other’s activities and efforts to secure British agricultural migrants. This level of awareness was made possible chiefly by the personnel themselves, a highly mobile and connected network of professional men who actively and willingly sought and shared information and ideas with one another in order to observe, learn and borrow methods that had proven successful for their sister colony and to remain competitive in the business of British male agriculturalist emigration. This chapter will chart just some of the multitude of recorded interactions between these men,

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<sup>4</sup> Dunae, ‘Promoting the Dominion’, p.77.

<sup>5</sup> Lisa Chilton, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.124.

through memorandums, letters, reports, and in the Canadian, Australian and British press. In doing so, the aim of this chapter is to provide an understanding of how Canadian and Australian personnel talked about their own operations and compared them with each other's, and how ideas and information concerning recruitment and promotional work flowed within this network and across the British Empire and what effect it had over this period. Here it will be demonstrated that Canada's earlier start and much larger federal campaign was greatly admired by Australian officials and in a number of ways influenced, and was used as evidence in, the development and expansion of their operations nearly a decade later.

This is not to suggest that Australian activities were an exact replica or derivative of Canada's; as Chapter Two outlined, local and internal considerations such as the cost of passage and distance to Australia from Britain, meant that their activities necessarily diverged at many points. Furthermore, it will be shown several promotional methods introduced by Australia after 1910 were unique to their operations, including a significant series of posters displayed along the Strand in London, advertising exhibits in British railway stations, and large attractive displays at agricultural shows. Here, Canadian authorities greatly admired these innovative approaches and often agitated for the adoption of comparable activities. The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to show how information and ideas about recruiting and securing British agricultural migrants were shared, and the moments when their work connected, diverged, and why this was the case. One example of their connection which will be examined in detail in this chapter is the Scottish Delegation Tour of Australia in 1910, which was intentionally an exact replica (including the delegates themselves) of a similar tour organised by the Canadian government only a few years earlier. It will be contended that by 1912, Australia state's programmes, with the support of the Commonwealth government and Australia's first high commissioner, had developed into a highly coordinated and sophisticated publicity and recruitment campaign, prompting some Canadian officials to express quiet concern that Australia's "emulation"<sup>7</sup> of Canadian methods could potentially threaten their own continued success in this field.

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<sup>7</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 18 September 1908, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

Finally, it will be maintained that while rivalry and competitiveness existed in the pursuit of British agricultural migrants during this period, Canada and Australia's willingness to share information about their respective recruitment campaigns came from a strong sense of connectedness through not only their mutual professional position within the civil service but also from their common position as members of the British Empire. Although their concomitant campaigns to secure British agriculturalists could at times create friction, Canadian and Australian officials by and large considered their concurrent activities to be mainly positive, as their combined presence increased the British public's general awareness of Empire settlement opportunities more so than if they were solely active in this space, and in doing so, strengthened and ensured the longevity of the British Empire overall.

### **Canada's Campaign in Britain, 1896-1905**

By the time Clifford Sifton was appointed the Minister of the Department of the Interior in 1896, the department had held responsibility for immigration and land settlement of Canada's North-West Territories for five years. The department had taken over the management over both areas in 1891 as "it was felt that the work of administering the vacant lands of the country was so closely connected with their settlement that it would be in the public interest that the two duties should be entrusted to the one department."<sup>8</sup> Canada's sluggish economy in the early 1890s and a relatively modest government recruitment programme meant immigration and settlement to the region had been disappointingly low.<sup>9</sup> Sifton also found significant issues with the structure of the Department of the Interior and the existing staff. He later claimed, "the Department of the Interior was a department of delay—of circumlocution—a department which tired men to death who undertook to get any business transacted with it".<sup>10</sup> With a mandate from Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier to quickly and efficiently secure vast numbers of agriculturalists for the North-West, under Sifton's direction the department's structure and personnel were completely overhauled. An Immigration Branch was established within the department to bring

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<sup>8</sup> Report of J.A. Smart, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1903-1904', *Canadian Sessional Papers* (hereafter *CSP*), no.25, 1905, p.ix.

<sup>9</sup> D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900*, vol.1, Vancouver: The University of British Columbia Press, 1981, p.123.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Troper, *Only Farmers Need Apply*, p.13.

together all federal immigration activities to encourage greater coordination, and the number of staff was significantly expanded. Branch personnel were essentially divided in two, with one half tasked with promotion and recruitment in Britain, the United States and Europe, and the other with overseeing settlement in Canada.<sup>11</sup> The Superintendent of Immigration, a position first held by Frank Pedley in 1897 and from 1902 by W.D. Scott, oversaw the coordination of both branch wings.

The number of department staff based in Britain was also significantly increased. Promotional and recruitment activities were shared between personnel based in Ottawa and those located in the London office of Canada's High Commissioner. The first British Empire colony to establish this position in 1879, Canada's High Commissioner was responsible for promoting trade, commerce, and financial ventures for the country, as well as encouraging British emigration.<sup>12</sup> Canada's High Commissioner, Donald Alexander Smith (better known as Lord Strathcona), was an active promoter of Canada as a settlement destination during his time in office. As emigration activities expanded from Strathcona's office in the late 1890s, the first Inspector of Agencies was appointed to oversee the coordination of the British and European recruitment programmes.<sup>13</sup> In 1899, the Deputy Minister of the Interior J.A. Smart wrote to the newly appointed inspector, W.T.R. Preston, stating that his primary objective was "to turn the tide of emigration towards Canada, and to make every effort to induce persons who contemplate moving from their old homes to settle in this country".<sup>14</sup> In 1906 following Preston's departure, the position's title was changed to the Assistant Superintendent of Emigration and was mainly held by J. Obediah Smith for the remainder of the period.<sup>15</sup> Along with the supervision of personnel based in London, Preston and later Smith were also responsible for managing the work of the government emigration agents, the 'front-line' staff based

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>12</sup> Kent Fedorowich, 'When is a Diplomat not a Diplomat? The Office of the High Commissioner', in Carl Bridge, Frank Bongiorno and David Lee (eds), *The High Commissioners: Australia's Representatives in the United Kingdom, 1910-2010*, Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2010, p.12.

<sup>13</sup> A similar role was held by W.J. White from 1899 onwards to oversee Canada's emigration operations in the United States.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from J.A. Smart to W.T.R. Preston, 24 February 1899, p.4, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 194, File 73989, Part 1. From 1902 to 1905, Preston's title was changed to *Canadian Commissioner of Emigration for Great Britain and Europe*.

<sup>15</sup> J. Bruce Walker was the Assistant Superintendent of Emigration from 1906 to 1908, at which time he and Smith traded positions and Walker became the Commissioner of Immigration in Winnipeg.

in cities such as Liverpool, Bristol, Glasgow and Birmingham who were responsible for attracting and inducing those most desired to emigrate. Their work was also supported by a number of short-term contracted staff including farmer delegates, British agriculturalists who had successfully settled in Canada who were engaged to lecture on their experience of farming in Canada to the British agricultural classes. As the country's recruitment efforts increased, so too did the number of permanent and temporary staff in Britain. By 1911, there were nearly 50 Canadian personnel employed in London and across Britain.<sup>16</sup>

Along with the reorganisation of the department and its personnel, the Immigration Branch's promotional and recruitment methods were significantly expanded, beginning in the United States. In addressing the branch's American operations in 1899, Clifford Sifton stated that, "In my judgement, and in the judgement of my officers, the immigration work has to be carried on in the same manner as the sale of any commodity; just as soon as you stop advertising and missionary work the movement is going to stop."<sup>17</sup> Emphasis was placed on adopting an extensive, systematic and business-like publicity campaign to ensure a consistent flow of information advertising Canada's natural resources, economic potential and settlement opportunities reached desirable American farmers. Further to this, Sifton directed emigration personnel to pursue and engage desirable American farmers rather than passively wait for curious individuals to approach their offices.<sup>18</sup>

As historian Harold Troper points out in his study of the federal government's recruitment campaign in the United States during this period, the propaganda and methods employed by Canadian authorities to induce American farmers were by no means innovative or unique. He maintains that Sifton and Immigration Branch staff intentionally adopted and enhanced many of the techniques previously used by American authorities and private land companies to attract prospective farmers from

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<sup>16</sup> Dunaë, 'Promoting the Dominion', p.90.

<sup>17</sup> *Dominion of Canada Parliamentary Debates* (hereafter *CPD*), House of Commons (hereafter *HC*), 27 July 1899, pp.8654-5. Also quoted in Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-1990*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992, p.55.

<sup>18</sup> Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987, p.249.

the mid-1850s onwards, in order to appeal to this same group and their now land-hungry sons.<sup>19</sup>

While government activities to attract American farmers began to garner considerable success by the early 1900s, Canadian officials in Britain were frustrated by the relatively slow growth of British immigration in the same period. The Inspector of Agencies W.T.R. Preston gloomily observed in 1902, "One cannot avoid hearing the constant demand or agitation in Canada for a larger number of British emigrants ... So far it can hardly be said that the desires of the people of Canada have been realized in this respect."<sup>20</sup> In that same year, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, J.A. Smart, and the Inspector of Agencies in the United States, W.J. White, travelled to Britain to evaluate Canada's recruitment operations.<sup>21</sup> White brought with him five years' experience in promotional work, having joined the Immigration Branch in 1897 as a press and advertising agent. From 1899 he had assumed responsibility for all of the country's publicity work in the United States.<sup>22</sup> Upon their arrival, Smart and White observed that the biggest challenge for Canadian personnel in stimulating British emigration was increasing public knowledge of the settlement opportunities in the North-West whilst simultaneously removing, "the deep-rooted prejudice prevalent amongst the rural classes with reference to the climate and other natural conditions of Canada".<sup>23</sup> Smart's frustrations in this latter point were evident in a subsequent report to Ottawa: "I found the same old cry of a cold climate still being raised, and it seems to be the bug bear with a great many people who would otherwise like to move to Canada."<sup>24</sup> The two men recommended several changes to the country's recruitment operations in Britain to ensure activities were more closely aligned to that of the American campaign. This included systematic and coordinated distribution of promotional materials and information to the leading daily and weekly

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<sup>19</sup> Troper, *Only Farmers Need Apply*, p.155.

<sup>20</sup> Report of W.T.R. Preston, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1900-1901', *CSP*, no.25, 1902, p.11.

<sup>21</sup> Memorandum from Clifford Sifton to J.A. Smart, 26 December 1901, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 194, File 73989, Part 1.

<sup>22</sup> Troper, *Only Farmers Need Apply*, p.20.

<sup>23</sup> Report of J.A. Smart, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1901-1902', *CSP*, no.25, 1903, p.xlvii.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.xlvi-xlvii.

British newspapers; forwarding new government publications to important local agriculturalists, religious leaders, school teachers and public libraries; ensuring each government emigration agent had a clear district from which they operated (to avoid overlapping of efforts); formalising relationships and working more closely with appointed local booking agents; and organising parties of British rural community leaders to visit Canada so they could report back on their experience to family, friends and the local press.<sup>25</sup> Personnel were also expected to report regularly on the outcomes of their promotional and recruitment activities and closely monitor local conditions so that methods could be adjusted if it was deemed necessary: "What may be a very good method one year would be utterly useless another so that changes are absolutely necessary not only in the class of publications but in the general methods of advertising."<sup>26</sup> Smart confidently concluded his report to the Minister of the Interior stating that if these methods were adopted, "I do not think that there will be any excuse in future for any person, especially Britons, not understanding conditions as they exist in this country."<sup>27</sup>

Materials and information produced for promotional and recruitment purposes in Britain were also revised along similar lines of those directed to American farmers. Incorporating advertising-like techniques, handbooks, posters, newspaper advertising, displays, and other materials featured colourful illustrations, attractive photographs of Canadian scenes, appealing slogans such as 'Last Best West', and positive written testimonials from real settlers in the North-West. The general volume and distribution of department materials was also significantly expanded. In 1895, the Immigration Branch produced 116,625<sup>28</sup> copies of immigration literature for distribution in Britain, the United States and Europe; by 1904-1905, that figure had risen to well over one million.<sup>29</sup> Several innovative advertising ideas were also

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xlvi-lii.

<sup>26</sup> Memorandum, Department of the Interior, 7 April 1904, p.2, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 125, File 28128, Parts 1-3.

<sup>27</sup> J.A. Smart and W.J. White, *Report of the Deputy Minister of the Interior Upon a Trip of Inspection to Great Britain and the Continent, January and February 1902*, p.35, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 259, File 199038.

<sup>28</sup> Report of L.M. Fortier, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1896', *CSP*, no.13, 1897, p.4.

<sup>29</sup> Report of W.D. Scott, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1904-1905', *CSP*, no.25, 1906, p.3.



established at the recommendation of Smart and White, including the country's first motorised exhibition vehicle to promote immigration and settlement opportunities in Britain's remote towns and regions.<sup>30</sup> The Assistant Superintendent of Emigration in London J. Obediah Smith stated that the objective of such attractive materials and unique advertising tactics in Britain was "to discuss Canada every morning with the Britisher, over his coffee".<sup>31</sup>

The effects of the Canadian government's expanded campaign in Britain were soon evident. Whilst the intake of British migrants from 1898 to 1902 had averaged 11,156 individuals yearly, this figure had steadily increased, with 17,259 in 1902, 41,792 in 1903 and 50,374 in 1905.<sup>32</sup> Overall immigration to Canada in 1905 reportedly reached over 146,000 people, of which 38 per cent were listed as arrivals from Britain and Ireland.<sup>33</sup> The increased interest in Canada was also apparent in the number of written enquiries received at the London office of the High Commissioner. W.T.R. Preston reported that while in 1900 the office had fielded 6,000 letters from potential British migrants, in 1902 the number of written enquiries of the same nature had jumped to 19,000.<sup>34</sup> In his annual report for 1904-1905, J.A. Smart confidently attributed this staggering growth of British emigration to Canada and general popularity of the country in Britain to the alteration of the government's promotional activities:

There would appear to be no doubt to-day that what determined the movement of population from England to Canada was the systematic propaganda that was inaugurated four or five years ago by the department. Before that time Canada was almost unknown to the rural classes in the country. Now it is favourably known, and what did more than anything else to bring about a change in the minds of the agricultural classes in England was the dissemination throughout the entire kingdom

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<sup>30</sup> W.T.R. Preston, *My Generation of Politics and Politicians*, Toronto: D.A. Rose Publishing Company, 1927, p.221.

<sup>31</sup> 'Many Agencies Work to Advertise Dominion', *Vancouver Sun*, 4 June 1914, page number unknown, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 90, File 41, Part 3.

<sup>32</sup> Report of J.A. Smart, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1903-1904', *CSP*, no.25, 1905, p.xxxiii. These figures were recorded in fiscal rather than calendar years.

<sup>33</sup> The actual number of immigrants reported by the department in 1905 was 146,266, of which 65,359 were listed as arriving from Britain and Ireland. Report of W.W. Cory, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1904-1905', *CSP*, no.25, 1906, p.xxx.

<sup>34</sup> Report of W.T.R. Preston, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1901-1902', *CSP*, no.25, 1903, p.11.

... of reliable information with regard to the resources and possibilities of Canada.<sup>35</sup>

The improved position of the country also saw Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier proudly claim that whilst the nineteenth century had been the United States' century, "a new star has now arisen upon the horizon ... and it is towards that star that every immigrant, every traveller, every man who leaves the land of his ancestors to come and seek a home for himself, now turns his gaze".<sup>36</sup>

### **Immigration to Australia, 1896-1905**

Whilst Canada was enjoying rapid population growth in the first years of the new century, by contrast Australia's population had largely stagnated. As noted in Chapter Two, the economic and climate-induced slump of the 1890s saw the suspension of all government-encouraged immigration to New South Wales and Victoria. Western Australia had maintained its nomination programme during the period with some intermittent pauses; however, the colony's presence in Britain and the actual number of British migrants secured was relatively minor.<sup>37</sup> Queensland maintained the most active recruitment efforts of the Australian colonies during the 1890s, sending several special or temporary lecturers on short-term contracts to recruit British agriculturalists during the decade. The colony's long-serving special lecturer, George Randall, travelled throughout Britain on two speaking tours from 1891-1894 and 1897-1902; however, a suspension of activities mid-decade by the colonial government saw overall immigration figures to Queensland in the 1890s remain modest. In his monthly report to the colonial government, Randall made it clear that the suspension of government encouraged emigration in Britain mid-decade, albeit brief, had had a negative effect on his ability to recruit British agricultural migrants afterwards: "To let the field lie practically fallow for three years, and then expect to

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<sup>35</sup> Report of J.A. Smart, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1904-1905', *CSP*, no.25, 1906, p.xxviii.

<sup>36</sup> New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Preliminary Notes on Canadian Immigration Policy and its Results*, bulletin no.1, 1905, p.10, State Library of New South Wales (hereafter SLNSW), 325.71/P.

<sup>37</sup> F.K. Crowley states that Western Australia only offered 1,000 British migrants financial assistance as part of the colony's land settlement policy during the decade as many of the colony's incoming 'migrants' were former settlers from New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. See F.K. Crowley, *Australia's Western Third: A History of Western Australia from the First Settlements to Modern Times*, London: Macmillan, 1960, p.118.

gather a human harvest of the most conservative people in the world with a rush, is to indulge in a most unreasonable and unbusiness-like expectation.”<sup>38</sup>

By the beginning of the 1900s, there was growing concern that the newly federated country was facing not only a lack of population growth, but also an alarming decline in its existing population. Fears over the declining natural population growth rate in New South Wales prompted the *Royal Commission on the Decline in Birth Rate and on the Mortality of Infants* in 1903.<sup>39</sup> Victoria, too, was confronted with a receding population. The state had been particularly devastated by the conditions of the 1890s, with emigration exceeding immigration for several consecutive years.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, most of those leaving Victoria were rural men, prompting one of Member of Parliament to warn in 1895 that the colony was “losing her place of pride and prestige in the Australian colonies”, and that, “In a very short time Victoria would be absolutely compelled to have woman suffrage, because there would be no men left here to vote.”<sup>41</sup> Reports of the devastating conditions in the eastern colonies during the 1890s, coupled with low immigration figures and negative press coverage of the Commonwealth’s new restrictive immigration legislation, meant that even with an improved economic climate by the early 1900s, Australia’s public image in Britain suffered considerably.<sup>42</sup> In 1904, Western Australia’s Agent-General H.B. Lefroy observed that the state’s greatest challenges was convincing the British public that the economic and environmental conditions there differed markedly to those that had been reported in eastern Australia in the 1890s:

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<sup>38</sup> George Randall, ‘Report to the Queensland Acting Agent-General Charles Dicken for the Month of July 1897’, 1897, p.7, Queensland State Archives (hereafter QSA), Item ID 860868, Despatches.

<sup>39</sup> For more on the population debates during this period, see Neville Hicks, *This Sin and Scandal: Australia’s Population Debate, 1891-1911*, Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978; Langfield, “Fit for the Elect of the World”; Michele Langfield, “The Ideal Immigrant’: Immigration to Victoria Between Federation and the First World War’, *Australian Studies*, no.8, 1994, pp.1-14; Michele Langfield, *More People Imperative: Immigration to Australia, 1901-1939*, research guide, vol.7, Canberra: National Archives of Australia, 1999, State Library of Queensland, G 304.89401999.

<sup>40</sup> Geoffrey Blainey, *A History of Victoria*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2013, p.150.

<sup>41</sup> *Victoria Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 18 December 1895, p.4353. An extract of J.W. Foster Roger’s parliamentary speech featured in a subsequent publication titled, *The Victorian Exodus, and How to Stop It: Want of Confidence Motion in Parliament, Victoria Being Drained of Her Life Blood and the Government Merry*, Prahan and South Yara: Drakard and Frasier, 1895, National Library of Australia (hereafter NLA), ID No. 598647.

<sup>42</sup> Dilley, *Finance, Politics, and Imperialism*, p.85; Simon J. Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of an Imperial Press System, 1876-1922*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003, p.81.

One of the greatest difficulties which Western Australia has to overcome is the gloomy news brought to England by persons who returned during the depression in Eastern Australia from 1894 to last year. It is almost inconceivable the difficulty experienced in dissuading the Public, either collectively or individually ... that because depression exists in one Australia State, the whole continent is not equally involved in it.<sup>43</sup>

This was particularly exasperating for Queensland representatives in Britain as well, who were still attempting to promote and encourage settlement in the state. Queensland's Agent-General in London, Horace Tozer, expressed his frustration in a confidential letter to the state's Premier, Arthur Morgan, in the same year Lefroy made his remarks: "It was simply painful to me to see 10,000 landing every week in the U.S.A. and about 120,000 a year in Canada, and a host in South Africa, and hardly any going to Australia."<sup>44</sup> The Agents-General also agreed that the language test and other provisions of the Immigration Restriction Act had garnered considerable negative press in Britain and conjured a negative public opinion of Australia as a settlement destination in the minds of the British populace as a result.<sup>45</sup>

### **Reinvigoration of Australian Campaigns, 1905-1910**

With improved conditions and a renewed sense of urgency to secure British agricultural migrants, each of the Australian states reinvigorated their government operations from 1905 onwards. Similar to Canada, this involved restructuring existing government departments, establishing new departments, and increasing the number of personnel dedicated to emigration and immigration work. One significant addition to the states' civil service was the creation of intelligence departments or bureaux, which were responsible for gathering, producing, and disseminating information and materials to assist both the recruitment of migrants overseas and their settlement once in the state. New South Wales was the first to establish its Intelligence Department and Bureau of Statistics in 1905, which was led by H.C.L.

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<sup>43</sup> Walter James, 'Agent-General's Annual Report', 1904, pp.3-4, State Records Office of Western Australia (hereafter SROWA), 0969.04.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Horace Tozer to Arthur Morgan, 1 January 1904, QSA, Item ID 861846, Batch File, Unofficial Letters from the Agent-General, London to the Premier.

<sup>45</sup> 'Immigration: Memorandum (Dated 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1905) by the Agents-General, Prepared at the Request of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth', *Australian Parliamentary Papers* (hereafter APP), no.80, 1905, p.4.

Anderson and later Percy Hunter.<sup>46</sup> Western Australia followed shortly after with the creation of the Immigration Office and General Information Bureau in 1906; Queensland's Intelligence and Tourist Bureau in 1907; and finally Victoria's Advertising and Intelligence Bureau in 1910. Most of the state intelligence bureaus were also responsible for tourism as the notion "the settler follows the tourist" grew in popularity from the middle of the first decade of the 1900s.<sup>47</sup>

From 1905 onwards, the state intelligence departments also worked closely with the personnel based in the emigration branches of the offices of the Agents-General in London. Similar to Canada's High Commissioner, the Agents-General were responsible for pursuing trade and commercial interests, liaising with the British government, and promoting British emigration to their respective state.<sup>48</sup> The structure of the emigration branches and the number of staff dedicated to recruitment work, particularly government emigration agents and special lecturers, varied depending on the state. Some Agents-General were also more active in their individual promotional efforts than others, such as Queensland's Horace Tozer, Western Australia's Walter James, and New South Wales' T.A. Coghlan. Each of these men worked closely with the British press to promote the resources and land opportunities of their respective states and also to refute any negative claims made against their state or Australia generally. Coghlan also organised several collaborative events among the states between 1905 and 1910, including lecture series where emigration personnel from the other Australian states were invited to speak.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Tasmania's tourism ministry, established in 1893, inspired New South Wales Premier J.H. Carruthers to set up a similar department in 1905 that also encompassed immigration in his state. See Jim Davidson and Peter Spearritt, *Holiday Business: Tourism in Australia Since 1870*, Melbourne: University of Melbourne Press, 2000, pp.67-68.

<sup>47</sup> 'Immigration and Tourist Department', *Western Mail*, 12 March 1910, p.45. For more about the development of immigration and tourism departments in Australia, see Davidson and Spearritt, *Holiday Business*; Justine Greenwood, 'The Migrant Follows the Tourist: Australian Immigration Publicity after the Second World War', *History Australia*, vol.11, no.3, 2014, pp.74-96.

<sup>48</sup> For more about the position of Agent-General, see Olwen Pryke, 'Foundations: Australia's Early Representation in Great Britain', in Carl Bridge, Frank Bongiorno and David Lee (eds), *The High Commissioners: Australia's Representatives in the United Kingdom, 1910-2010*, Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs, 2010, pp.24-35.

<sup>49</sup> Coghlan's collaborative events were reported by several of the state's emigration representatives in reports back to their superiors. See for example, E.T. Scammel, Agent-General's Office, 'Report by E.T. Scammel for Year 1906-1907', 1907, p.13, SROWA, 0969.05.

Although not until 1910, it is necessary to briefly mention that Victoria's recruitment efforts in Britain were also supported by another state government branch, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (SRWSC). Under the direction of its American-born chairman, Elwood Mead, the SRWSC undertook a special campaign to recruit experienced agriculturalists for irrigation settlement. In late 1910, R.V. Billis, an employee of the SRWSC, was sent to the Victorian Agent-General's office to recruit and approve migrants for settlement on the state's irrigable lands. This campaign and the promotional work of the SRWSC representatives will be examined in greater detail in Chapter Four.

One of the key issues facing Australian state officials by 1905 was how their activities should be coordinated, particularly with the possible involvement of the new federal government. As noted in Chapter Two, following Federation in 1901 the Commonwealth assumed responsibility for laws relating to naturalisation and restricted immigrants. David Pope and Michele Langfield contend that although each of the states continued to hold responsibility for the recruitment, selection, and settlement of British migrants, from 1905 there was increasing pressure for them to work more closely with the federal government and with each other.<sup>50</sup> Prime Minister Alfred Deakin was particularly keen to foster greater coordination and reduce replication and associated costs of promotional work in Britain; however, cooperation among the states with the federal government was slow to progress. The New South Wales government was especially resistant to involve the federal government in the recruitment and selection of British migrants for the state.<sup>51</sup> In a letter to Deakin in 1905, Premier J.H. Carruthers responded to his suggestion for direct communication between the federal government and Agents-General relating to immigration by stating, "it is by no means clear what would be gained by correspondence between your Government and the Agents-General ... any action by your Government in the direction of encouraging immigration which ignored the State concerned is liable to cause serious trouble, as the States have to provide land

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<sup>50</sup> David Pope, 'Assisted Immigration and Federal-State Relations: 1901-30', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol.28, no.1, 1982, p.22; Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World", pp.57-58.

<sup>51</sup> This point has been made by a number of historians. See, for example, Geoffrey Sherrington, 'Settlement 1881-1914', in James Jupp (ed.), *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origin*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p.86; Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World", p.58.

and employment for persons arriving therein”.<sup>52</sup> Among the Australian Agents-General, however, there was awareness that Australia’s greatest disadvantage in Britain was the country’s lack of an overall unified presence in promoting itself as a settlement destination, particularly in comparison to Canada. In a memorandum to Deakin in 1905, the Agents-General observed: “It has been made clear to us that we must deal with and talk of Australia, and not of each state ... To the Englishman, the connexion between the various States of the Commonwealth is so close that reports from any one State are treated as referable to all.”<sup>53</sup> At the Conference of Commonwealth and State Premiers and Ministers the following year, Deakin warned state representatives that without greater coordination in the area of immigration, the states would also essentially continue to compete with one another as they did with Canada: “If we do nothing in this regard as a body, the advocates or agents of each State will take their place beside the agents of Canada, and each in a measure will be a rival of all the others.”<sup>54</sup> Whilst there was some movement towards greater coordination, particularly among the Agents-General who began meeting monthly in London to discuss how to improve the country’s public perception in Britain, the Commonwealth’s role remained primarily confined to the production of advertising and other promotional materials about Australia as a whole, while each of the states also continued to advertise separately.<sup>55</sup>

### **Observing Canada, 1905-1910**

Australian state and federal government officials were keenly aware that they were re-entering a space that Canada had dominated for the better part of a decade. Western Australia’s Premier Newton Moore pointed out that the scale of Canada’s operations and the amount that the federal government invested in their promotional work stood in stark contrast to Australian state operations:

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<sup>52</sup> ‘Immigration: Correspondence in Regard to Communications Between the Commonwealth and the Agents-General for the States on the Subject of Immigration; and Letter from Prime Minister to the Chairman of the Agents-General’, *APP*, no.34, 1905, p.2.

<sup>53</sup> ‘Agents-General, Memorandum by, on the Question of Publishing Information and Removing Misconceptions as to the Commonwealth; and Advertising Its Resources and Developments, etc.’ *APP*, no.62, 1905, p.2.

<sup>54</sup> ‘Conference of Commonwealth and State Premiers and Ministers: Report of Debates Together with Agenda Papers, Minutes of Proceedings and Appendices’, *APP*, no.34, 1906, p.48.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Immigration: Correspondence in Regard to Communications Between the Commonwealth and the Agents-General for the States on the Subject of Immigration; and Letter from Prime Minister to the Chairman of the Agents-General’, *APP*, no.34, 1905, pp.1-5.

Canada is, of course, our chief rival ... Canada spends more in this way in a single year than all Australia has spent during the last quarter of a century. You cannot go and find a town of importance on the European continent without a Canadian Emigration Agency, and you cannot find a town in England or Ireland or Scotland, nor even a small town, without a Canadian agency of some kind.<sup>56</sup>

State officials also recognised that Canada's earlier start and successful promotional methods, particularly in moulding a positive public opinion of the country in Britain, provided a practical example for their own operations. As such, each state sent government representatives on research trips to Canada "for the purposes of studying other methods".<sup>57</sup> The main objective of these study trips was to consider Canada's immigration and settlement programmes in their entirety, from recruitment through to reception and settlement of new arrivals. In 1908 alone, Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales each sent government representatives to Canada to study the federal government's immigration and settlement operations.<sup>58</sup>

Far from quiet reconnaissance, these research trips were mainly undertaken with the knowledge and full cooperation of the Canadian federal government and the Department of the Interior, which enabled Australian representatives to meet with immigration officials directly to discuss their operations first-hand. In 1905 following the reintroduction of the state's nominated and assisted passage schemes, New South Wales sent Walter Preedy to take up a position in the Immigration Branch of the Agent-General's office "to utilise his services towards securing a fuller and more accurate representation of this State in the United Kingdom and abroad".<sup>59</sup> En route to England, Preedy was instructed to stop in Canada to investigate the country's progress of agricultural settlement and assess the promotional methods employed by

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<sup>56</sup> 'The Premier Interviewed', *The West Australian*, 20 July 1910, p.8.

<sup>57</sup> New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Preliminary Notes on Canadian Immigration Policy and its Results*, bulletin no.1, 1905, p.4, SLNSW, 325.71/P.

<sup>58</sup> Western Australia's Premier John Scaddan and the state's Agricultural Bank Manager William Paterson each visited Canada in 1908, as did Queensland's Franco-British Exhibition representative, William Gordon Graham (later the Assistant Under Secretary of the Lands Department). New South Wales sent Percy Hunter, the Acting Director of the Intelligence Department, to tour Canada in 1908.

<sup>59</sup> New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Preliminary Notes on Canadian Immigration Policy and its Results*, bulletin no.1, 1905, p.4, SLNSW, 325.71/P.



government officials in attracting migrants.<sup>60</sup> In his subsequent correspondence to Premier Carruthers, Preedy reported that his trip had been authorised by Canada's Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier, and that the Canadian leader's consent made it possible for him to "come into close touch with the whole working of the system ... which would otherwise have taken many months to become acquainted with—if, indeed, it could be done at all".<sup>61</sup> Preedy's detailed observations of Canada's policies and practices were published by the state's Intelligence Department and cited in a subsequent report on encouraging immigration to the state prepared by New South Wales' Agent-General T.A. Coghlan, which was tabled in federal parliament later in the year. From Preedy's findings and his own investigations into Canada's activities in Britain, Coghlan concluded that the only significant advantage Canada possessed over Australia in his opinion was its closer proximity to Britain. The country's popularity among British agricultural migrants, in Coghlan's mind, had therefore come as a result of the Canadian government's approach to promotional activities: "the difference in results is, to my mind, chiefly a difference of method".<sup>62</sup> As such, Coghlan recommended, "the example of Canada in carrying on a systematic immigration propaganda must be followed by Australia".<sup>63</sup> Coghlan's report and recommendations were subsequently tabled by New South Wales' Premier J.W. Evans at a conference between the Commonwealth and State leaders in April 1906. Evans agreed with Coghlan's assessment of the Canadian programme, and recommended that the other states also consider Coghlan's recommendations:

It is thought that efforts should be made to reduce, as far as possible, the existing comparative disabilities referred to by Mr. Coghlan, and the suggestions should receive careful consideration of those assembled. This being done, I believe we can establish the basis of a vigorous and effective policy of immigration.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Preedy also visited the United States where he also met with and interviewed Canadian government emigration agents based in the country. See New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Report on Immigration with Special Reference to Canada*, bulletin no.3, 1905, p.22, State Library of South Australia (hereafter SLSA), 325.171.

<sup>61</sup> New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Preliminary Notes on Canadian Immigration Policy and its Results*, bulletin no.1, 1905, p.5, SLNSW, 325.71/P.

<sup>62</sup> New South Wales, Intelligence Department, *Report on Immigration with Special Reference to Canada*, bulletin no.3, 1905, p.11, SLSA, 325.171.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

<sup>64</sup> 'Conference of Commonwealth and State Premiers and Ministers: Report of Debates Together with Agenda Papers, Minutes of Proceedings and Appendices', *APP*, no.34, 1906, p.144.

Whilst it does not appear that the Canadian government sent immigration personnel to Australia for comparable research trips between 1896 and 1914, D.H. Ross, Canada's official trade commissioner based in Melbourne, did serve as an in-country point of contact for department officials during this period. Whilst Ross's work mainly focused on pursuing trade and commerce between the two dominions, in his quasi-diplomatic role Ross also provided a link between Canadian and Australian government immigration personnel. In 1910, Canada's Superintendent of Immigration W.D. Scott received a letter from W. Birch, the Records Clerk for the Closer Settlement Office in Melbourne, stating he had been given Scott's details through Ross who was a close personal contact. Birch asked if Scott would send him official Canadian immigration and settlement materials that he thought would assist Birch with his similar work in Victoria.<sup>65</sup> Unofficially, Ross also ensured that Scott was kept well informed on the development of state and federal operations to induce British immigration and settlement. As state and federal operations began to increase, Ross frequently wrote to Scott and sent examples of Australian reports, promotional pamphlets, and handbooks, as well local newspaper clippings and other information outlining the country's immigration and settlement programmes. It will be shown in Chapter Four that Ross was a particularly important source of information for Scott and other Ottawa officials when Victoria initiated its campaign to recruit irrigation migrants in 1910.

In the reinvigoration of their efforts to induce British agricultural migrants to the country, Australian officials also sought information independent from Ross through direct letter writing and correspondence with their Canadian contemporaries. Letters requesting statistical data, annual reports, handbooks, and information that "might deal with the technical side of the handling of immigrants"<sup>66</sup> were regularly sent between government immigration officials based in Ottawa and Australia's major cities between 1896 and 1914. In introducing themselves, personnel would often refer to their mutual professional task of securing migrants and suggest establishing an ongoing reciprocal arrangement so that each would continue to receive the most

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<sup>65</sup> Letter from W. Birch to W.D. Scott, 17 October 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from Percy Hunter to W.D. Scott, 28 September 1908, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

up to date information on one another's methods. Following a series of correspondence between the Director of the New South Wales Intelligence Department, Percy Hunter, and W.D. Scott, Hunter wrote, "I should be very glad if you could see your way to forward me regularly copies of any similar reports or publications you may issue, and in return the publications of this Bureau will be sent you as issued."<sup>67</sup> From their letters of reply, it is clear Canadian officials, particularly Superintendent of Immigration W.D. Scott, were also happy to provide examples of their publications to demonstrate their methods. In a letter to a Victorian official in July 1910, Scott stated that he was sending a sample of the current pamphlets produced by the department but that they "will give you a good idea of the style of our advertising".<sup>68</sup> Such correspondence and exchange of information and ideas about immigration and settlement was not confined to the public service. Higher-level officials and politicians also corresponded about promotional work for recruiting migrants, frequently referring to Canada and Australia's mutual position and common identity within the British Empire as settler countries as the motivation for sharing this information. In his letter to the Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton, requesting examples of Canadian promotional illustrations, Western Australia's Acting Premier W.H. Montague wrote, "Your acquiescence in this will place me under an obligation to you, and at the same time do a kindness to a fellow Briton on this side of the world."<sup>69</sup>

As Canada's success in securing British agricultural migrants grew in the first years of the 1900s, Canadian representatives, including D.H. Ross, were frequently interviewed and quoted by the Australian press to see if 'lessons' could be gleaned from their experience in recruiting British agricultural migrants. Canadian personnel were happy to comply with such requests, seeing it as an opportunity to further promote their dominion's success within the wider British Empire. The point was also made that sharing information of this nature was, in their opinion, important for the longevity and success of the British Empire as a whole. In a practical sense, it is also evident that the perceived lack of threat of Australia's smaller programmes in the

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<sup>67</sup> Letter from Percy Hunter to W.D. Scott, 29 January 1909, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>68</sup> Letter from W.D. Scott to A.T. Sharp, 7 July 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>69</sup> Letter from W.H. Montague to Clifford Sifton, 5 December 1901, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

early 1900s encouraged this congenial spirit and colonial comradeship. In one interview conducted in London, an Australian journalist asked if Canada's Assistant Superintendent of Emigration, J. Bruce Walker, would outline how the country's promotional activities were organised to attract British migrants. Walker responded enthusiastically: "Certainly. We are good enough Imperialists in Canada to wish Australia well in this enterprise."<sup>70</sup> Canada's methods were regularly pointed to in Australian newspapers as examples of what Australia could be doing to attract British agricultural migrants, particularly among commentators keen to see the merger of state and federal activities. *The Evening Telegraph* newspaper stated in 1908, "Great as appear the strides made by Australia in general, and Queensland in particular in this direction in recent years, they are but as the tottering steps of childhood, compared with Canada in the same connection, and it is worth while considering Canada's methods if only to see if we cannot gather hints for improvement."<sup>71</sup> One Sydney newspaper, the *Evening News*, even featured a Canadian recruitment advertisement highlighting the country's free homesteads, which had been published in several British newspapers, to demonstrate to its Australian readers the ways Canadian officials promoted the country to the British public. The clipping was sent to W.T.R. Preston in London, who then forwarded it on to officials in Ottawa. From Preston's letter, it is clear he was surprised by the level of detail of Canada's methods outlined by the Sydney newspaper, and he happily reported that the newspaper's feature had unintentionally served to stimulate enquiries from a number of Australians as to the possibility of emigrating to Canada: "A remarkable outcome of this effort to show the Australian public how enterprising Canada is ... that [m]any number of letters have come from Australians whose only acquaintance with Canada has come from the gratuitous insertion of the advertisement in question."<sup>72</sup>

Australian representatives in the City of London also took advantage of their physical position in Britain to observe and report on Canada's promotional activities first-hand. London was a particularly important location for the dominion's government

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<sup>70</sup> 'British Emigrants. How Canada Works. Lessons for Australia', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 June 1907, p.13.

<sup>71</sup> 'How Canada Encourages Immigration', *The Evening Telegraph*, 29 December 1908, p.2.

<sup>72</sup> Letter from W.T.R. Preston to J.A. Smart, 17 August 1903, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 125, File 28128, Part 1-3. For the original advertisement, see *Evening News*, 25 April 1903, p.4.

representatives based in Britain to meet, share information and interact with one another in a professional capacity.<sup>73</sup> Described by one Western Canadian newspaper as the “nerve centre” of dominion emigration business in Britain, Canada’s High Commissioner’s office and staff therein managed and directed a multitude of administrative processes associated with emigration work across the country.<sup>74</sup> The advantage of the Agents-General’s position in London to examine Canada’s recruitment methods and outcomes up close was noted by Prime Minister Deakin. In a letter to T.A. Coghlan in August 1905, Deakin pointed out that the evidence gathered by the Agent-General would be valuable in assisting in the formulation of Australia’s own approach to promotional work:

Your residence in the metropolis of the Empire will have enabled you to observe the different methods by which desirable emigrants are being encouraged to make new homes for themselves beyond the sea ... It is known that the attractions of certain countries are liberally and widely advertised throughout Great Britain ... The expenditure upon these advertising agencies must be large, and, with a view to economy as well as effectiveness, it is desirable that we should know which of them are most successful, in what forms, and at what approximate cost they should be used with corresponding advantage in our instance.<sup>75</sup>

Horace Tozer also took the opportunity to visit the Canadian office and speak directly with personnel about their promotional work in Britain. One such visit was documented in a letter to W.D. Scott in 1904:

Sir Horace Tozer, the Agent-General for Queensland, called in to-day to get from us some illustrations of what we are doing to advertise Canada in this country ... The Australian Agent-Generals on this side are evidently trying to urge the Federal Government to take steps to follow Canada’s example in advertising their country, and they want to send out practical illustrations of what we are doing in this respect.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Although her study primarily considers Australian colonial women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Woollacott points out that London was an integral physical space for colonial men in this period to build relationships so they could “enhance their individual connectedness, the metropolitan visibility of their colonies or dominions, and, at times, recognition of their profession or industry”. See Angela Woollacott, *To Try Her Fortune in London: Australian Women, Colonialism and Modernity*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p.108.

<sup>74</sup> ‘Canada’s Shop Window’, *Manitoba Free Press*, 17 May 1913, page number unknown, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 90, File 41, Part 3.

<sup>75</sup> ‘Immigration: Correspondence in Regard to Communications Between the Commonwealth and the Agents-General for the States on the Subject of Immigration; and Letter from Prime Minister to the Chairman of the Agents-General’, *APP*, no.34, 1905, p.3.

<sup>76</sup> Letter from Acting Commissioner of Emigration C.F. Just to W.D. Scott, 12 November 1904, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

The increased interest shown by Australian representatives in London did not go unnoticed by Canadian emigration authorities. In his annual report for 1905, Inspector of Agencies W.T.R. Preston warned that the interest of the Agents-General in Canada's promotional methods indicated to him that his country should be prepared for increased competition from Australia:

It is quite evident, as I have said, that from this time Canada is not going to be allowed sole possession in the emigrating field ... It will, therefore, be necessary in considering the character of the propaganda in the future, to see that nothing is left undone so that the Dominion shall continue to maintain the premier position it now occupies among the inquiring or prospective emigrants.<sup>77</sup>

### **Australian Operations, 1905-1910**

From 1905, Australian emigration officials began to expand their promotional activities in Britain to "make known as widely as possible the advantages our State offers to settlers, and the steps to be taken by persons wishful to emigrate".<sup>78</sup> T.A. Coghlan argued that critical to achieving these dual objectives was cultivating better relationships with the British press, which had been mainly unkind towards the Australian states in the 1890s and early 1900s. In his 1908 report on the work of his office for that year, Coghlan claimed that even with improved relationships with the British papers, Canada's efforts showed that reaching the country's agriculturalists through the press would take time: "It took Canada nearly ten years to make any impression on the agricultural population of this country, even with the offer of free land and the yearly expenditure of many thousands of pounds in advertising."<sup>79</sup> The other Agents-General agreed with Coghlan's assessment, advocating for the adoption of judicious and wide-scale advertising to both reverse the negative public perception of Australia and simultaneously stimulate British emigration to the states. Western Australia's Agent-General, Walter James, pointed to the strong relationship between positive advertising and inducing British emigration:

Advertising is to a very large extent so closely mixed up with our emigration work that it is not easy to separate it ... I have found very little hostility towards Australia but an amount of misconception that is readily

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<sup>77</sup> Report of W.T.R. Preston, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1904-1905', *CSP*, no.25, 1906, p.52.

<sup>78</sup> New South Wales, Immigration and Tourist Bureau, *Organization of the Immigration Branch in London and its Work During the Year 1908*, bulletin no.34, 1909, p.6, SLNSW, SL650.8/C.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21.

understood when one reads the journalistic references to the Commonwealth; then one appreciates how difficult it must be to avoid erroneous views when fed on such one-sided and unfair matter.<sup>80</sup>

The Agents-General were also critical of the limited capacity of state budgets to invest in wide-scale advertising they saw as necessary, particularly when comparisons were made to the Canadian government's expenditure. In 1903, James's predecessor Henry Lefroy had strongly argued that his state would always be at a disadvantage to Canada because of their contrasting levels of expenditure:

When Canada ... is expending £100,000 a year in making its resources known ... it cannot be expected that Western Australia can attract anything like similar attention, nor is it surprising that the stream of Emigration from the Mother Country flows west-ward. We live in an age of advertising and people seek for information mainly through the Press.<sup>81</sup>

Nonetheless, each state began sending promotional materials to the British press and advertising in the daily and weekly papers the availability of land and the opportunities for approved migrants to apply for subsidised passage schemes. In an effort to efficiently promote the state within the confines of his limited budget, Western Australia's newly-appointed Emigration Commissioner in London, E.T. Scammel, took advantage of the knowledge of his Canadian colleagues to determine which British newspapers would elicit the greatest response from British agriculturalists. He reported in 1904 that before deciding in which newspapers and journals to advertise the state's opportunities, he had "conferred very frequently with Mr Preston, the Canadian Immigration Commissioner"<sup>82</sup> about the publications he felt were most effective in reaching Britain's rural populace. Furthermore, following their conversation, Scammel had decided to enter an agreement with the same advertising agents used by Canada to promote Western Australia in the British press. Along with overseeing the advertising and promotional work in the British press, the Agents-General also kept a watchful eye on the local press so they could be quick to refute any negative publicity about their state or Australia generally. Coghlan was particularly active in this regard, writing extensively to editors of the British papers

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<sup>80</sup> Walter James, 'Agent-General's Annual Report', 1904, p.27, SROWA, 0969.04.

<sup>81</sup> Henry Lefroy, 'Agent-General's Annual Report', 1903, p.2, SROWA, 0969.03.

<sup>82</sup> E.T. Scammel, Agent-General's Office, 'Report by E.T. Scammel for Year 1904', 1904, pp.3-4, State Records Office of Western Australia, 0969.04. Scammel also noted that New Zealand and Queensland also engaged the same advertising company for their emigration work.

to counter criticisms that were, ironically, often made by parts of the Australian press back home.<sup>83</sup>

From their offices in Australia, the state intelligence departments also revamped and increased the production of promotional materials for encouraging British agricultural migrants, including handbooks, pamphlets and other literature for distribution across Britain. Similar to Canada, these materials incorporated more advertising-like techniques than the emigration literature produced in the previous century, and featured colourful illustrations, attractive photographs of Australian landscapes and cities, settler testimonies, and catchy slogans. Titles of handbooks issued by the states included *Glimpses of Sunny Queensland*,<sup>84</sup> *Victoria, The Garden State of Australia*,<sup>85</sup> *The Best of the New Countries: New South Wales*,<sup>86</sup> and *Souvenir of the Land of the Golden West*.<sup>87</sup> Many of these publications were sent to Ottawa by J. Obediah Smith, who regularly posted examples of Australian materials to W.D. Scott to show how the states were promoting themselves in Britain to potential agricultural migrants. Newspaper clippings and advertisements were also sent on for reference, with Smith often pointing to instances of where he believed Australian activities were a replica of Canadian methods. Attached to one New South Wales' publication sent in 1910 was a hand-written note from Smith not so subtly suggesting, "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery".<sup>88</sup>

### **George Reid and the Expansion of the Australian Campaign, 1910-1914**

At the end 1909, George Reid was appointed Australia's first High Commissioner to Britain. Prime Minister Deakin established a publicity branch in Reid's London office

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<sup>83</sup> For more on Coghlan's campaign in this period to reverse the negative public image of Australia in the British press, see Andrew Dilley, 'T.A. Coghlan, London Opinion and the Politics of Anglo-Australian Finance, 1905-09', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.41, no.1, 2013, pp.44-47.

<sup>84</sup> Queensland, Intelligence and Tourist Bureau, *Glimpses of Sunny Queensland*, handbook, 1910, SLNSW, M984/G.

<sup>85</sup> Victoria, Department of Agriculture, *Victoria, The Garden State of Australia: A Handbook for Rural Home Seekers*, handbook, 1909, SLNSW, 982/V.

<sup>86</sup> New South Wales, Immigration and Tourist Bureau, *The Best of the New Countries: New South Wales*, handbook, 1909, SLNSW, 919.440441/1.

<sup>87</sup> Western Australia, Agent-General, *Souvenir of the Land of the Golden West: Fairest of England's Daughters Fair*, handbook, 1906, State Library of Western Australia, 338.109941 SOU.

<sup>88</sup> Memorandum from J. Obediah Smith to the Department of the Interior, received 17 May 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, File 306064, Part 1.



shortly thereafter to oversee all federal promotional activities in the country.<sup>89</sup> H.C. Smart was employed as the Officer in Charge of the branch and Henry S. Gullett was engaged to liaise with the British press to advertise Australia as a whole. Referred to by Reid as “experts” in the field of promotional work, Smart had previously worked in the office of the Agent-General for New South Wales, while Gullett had had a successful journalism career for a number of years in Australia and Britain.<sup>90</sup> From their London office, Smart and Gullett were expected to work closely with federal staff based at home in the Department of External Affairs, including the department’s secretary Atlee Hunt and W.H. Clarke, who had been appointed an officer in the advertising branch only a few months earlier.<sup>91</sup> Similar to Smart, Clarke brought with him significant experience in emigration promotion, having previously worked for the New South Wales government as a special lecturer in the Agent-General’s office.

Shortly after Reid’s appointment, the *Advertising Australia Abroad* conference was convened in Melbourne bringing together federal and state personnel for the first time to discuss how to promote Australia as a settlement destination to potential British agricultural migrants. Conference attendees included Percy Hunter (New South Wales), J.E. Jenkins (Victoria), R.L. Gilbert (Western Australia), and Atlee Hunt and W.H. Clarke (from the Commonwealth Department of External Affairs). Among the recommendations put forward at the conference was the adoption of a more systematic approach for sharing information between state and federal departments. It was pointed out that regularly scheduled correspondence between the two levels of government would ensure the High Commissioner’s office was kept up to date with the latest information about employment opportunities for rural workers, the availability of land, and the general conditions of the labour market in each state, which the office could then in turn use for promotional purposes.<sup>92</sup> By mid-1910, the

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<sup>89</sup> ‘Second Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom’, *APP*, no.39, 1912, p.7.

<sup>90</sup> Letter from George Reid to Littleton Groom, 13 May 1910, p.4., National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA), A2911, 8/911. Reid also reiterated this statement in his first annual report as High Commissioner in 1911. See ‘First Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom’, *APP*, no.35, 1911.

<sup>91</sup> For more about Clarke’s appointment, see ‘Advertising Australia’, *The Register*, 23 November 1909, p.6.

<sup>92</sup> Advertising Australia Abroad Conference, *Suggestions and Recommendations of the Conference*, Melbourne, 16-18 February 1910, p.1, NAA, A63, A1910/2923.

federal publicity office in London was supplying a weekly summary of news and information about Australia to nearly 800 British newspapers, bringing the country's press coverage in line with that of Canada's at the time.<sup>93</sup> In early 1910 the High Commissioner's office also engaged *Street & Company* of London to undertake fortnightly advertising in British newspaper, the same advertising firm the Canadian government contracted for similar advertising.<sup>94</sup>

It was also agreed at the conference that the federal government's publicity activities and expenditure should be significantly expanded to showcase the natural advantages of the country and attract potential British agricultural migrants.<sup>95</sup> As George Reid stated, "Publicity – publicity – publicity – is the beginning and the end of Australia's needs in every part of the world".<sup>96</sup> Upon his arrival in London, it became clear to the High Commissioner that Canada's promotional work offered an important example of how Australia could advance its own position in the country and attract British migrants:

For a good many years past, the Government of the Dominion of Canada has expended large sums of money in making known its resources and attractions to the British people. The effect has been very great. Without one moment suggesting that the wonderful progress of Canada ... is entirely owing to the publicity it has secured, the facts of immigration, even if we leave other great increases out of account, from the United Kingdom are very striking.<sup>97</sup>

Reid himself had visited Canada in the late 1890s (and would tour the country again in 1912 in his role as High Commissioner). He later wrote of the immense growth of the country through the government-led initiatives to stimulate immigration and land settlement, observing that "I left Canada full of admiration for her immense resources ... There seems no limit to her possibilities."<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Potter, *News and the British World*, p.85.

<sup>94</sup> Letter from George Reid to Littleton Groom, 24 March 1910, p.2, NAA, A2911, 8/911.

<sup>95</sup> Advertising Australia Abroad Conference, *Suggestions and Recommendations of the Conference*, Melbourne, 16-18 February 1910, pp.1-2, NAA, A63, A1910/2923.

<sup>96</sup> Letter from George Reid to Littleton Groom, 13 May 1910, p.4, NAA, A2911, 8/911.

<sup>97</sup> 'First Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom', *APP*, no.35, 1911, p.3.

<sup>98</sup> Sir George Houstoun Reid, *My Reminiscences*, Melbourne: Cassell, 1917, p.306.

One of the Canadian government's promotional methods that Reid and other Australian officials strongly supported was the practice of organising British farmer delegation tours of the country. A highly successful promotional method used by Canadian officials in the late 1890s to attract American farmers and promote land settlement opportunities in the American press, by the early 1900s experienced British agriculturalists and the country's press were also being sent on guided tours to view Canada's lands, natural resources and progress of settlement first-hand. The tours were organised and paid for by the federal government, with the only requirement of delegates being to relay their impressions of the country to the British public upon their return through published letters and reports, public lectures, or in interviews with the press. Though not explicitly stated, it was hoped that the views expressed would be mainly positive, and locations were judiciously selected to give the delegates a favourable impression of the country.<sup>99</sup> Delegates themselves were also carefully chosen by government officials, with preference for experienced agriculturalists, prominent public figures and professionals who were associated with, or had an interest in, agriculture. When Victoria initiated its campaign to induce irrigation settlers from 1910 onwards, it was pointed out "Canada enlists every year the assistance of successful farmers who go Home and tell the story of their rise. The co-operation of visiting Victorians should be made a continuous feature of the effort to secure settlers in [G]reat Britain."<sup>100</sup>

One of the most widely known and successful delegation tour hosted by the Canadian government before 1910 was the Scottish Agricultural Commission. In 1908 the federal government invited the commission to tour Canada for two months and to publish a report on their findings. Most members of the commission had taken part in two similar agricultural excursions to Denmark in 1904 and Ireland in 1906, and the benefit of utilising the same delegates from these earlier tours was noted by the Alberta newspaper, *The Edmonton Bulletin*:

It can hardly be doubted that the opinion formed by these men will have weight and influence in their home land. The deputation has already had the advantage of seeing what is being done in the way of agriculture in

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<sup>99</sup> Harper, 'Rhetoric and Reality', p.167.

<sup>100</sup> Land Settlement Delegation, *Report of the Victorian Land Settlement Delegation to the Honourable Premier of Victoria*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1911, p.2, State Library of Victoria, SF 333.3509945 V66RE.

both Denmark and Ireland ... Its powers of comparison will therefore be considerable.<sup>101</sup>

In August and September of 1908, the 22 delegates undertook a whirlwind guided tour across Canada, stopping in the older established eastern provinces before visiting the new western provinces. During the tour, members of the commission met with settlers in the prairie region to discuss their experience and inspect homesteads. The commission's final 63-page report, which was published by the Department of the Interior in 1909, applauded the progress of settlement in the region and also provided plenty of advice and warnings for intending migrants about the opportunities and challenges of settlement Canada's West:

But if a man has ambition and ability, if he is determined, having as a ploughman placed his foot on the lowest rung of the ladder to reach the top as an occupying owner, Canada is emphatically the place for him. It offers the opportunities to succeed to all those who can, and it welcomes with outstretched arms the man, who, having counted the cost, has decided to avail himself of the opportunity.<sup>102</sup>

Though perhaps not overflowing with praise, there is little doubt that Canadian government officials considered the report a valuable promotional tool for inducing British agriculturalists to the country. In 1909, 211,000 copies were printed and distributed by the Department of the Interior, the second highest printed booklet amongst its immigration literature for the year.<sup>103</sup> Members of the Commission also gave lectures upon their return to Britain at no cost to the federal government and summaries of their report featured in numerous British newspapers. Further evidence of the tour's success came with reports in the Canadian press that one of the delegates, J.M. Hodge, had returned in 1909 to purchase \$70,000 worth of farmland in Alberta for himself and a syndicate of Scottish agriculturalists.<sup>104</sup> As the Assistant

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<sup>101</sup> 'Scottish Farmers Coming', *The Edmonton Bulletin*, 16 September 1908, p.8.

<sup>102</sup> Scottish Agricultural Commission, *Canada As Seen Through Scottish Eyes: Being an Account of a Trip Taken Across the Dominion by the Scottish Agricultural Commission in the Autumn of 1908*, Ottawa: Published by the Authority of the Minister of the Interior, 1909, p.36, SLSA, 630.994.

<sup>103</sup> Report of W.D. Scott, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1910', *CSP*, no.25, 1911, p.60. By 1912 over 1,200,000 pamphlets containing testimonies from the delegates had also been printed and distributed. See Memorandum from J. Obediah Smith to W.W. Cory, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>104</sup> Hodge's land purchase featured in a number of Western Canadian newspapers. See for example 'Have Faith in Alberta: Scotch Commission Members Are Now Buying Land', *Crossfield Chronicle*, 6 May 1909, p.5; 'With the Investor', *Saturday News*, 22 May 1909, p.2; 'Buys Alberta Land', *Western Globe*, 18 May 1909, p.2.

Superintendent of Emigration J. Obediah Smith later stated, “The Commission to Canada ... was one of the best advertisements the Dominion ever had”.<sup>105</sup>

News of the commission’s Canadian tour and the influence of the report for attracting agriculturalists reached Australia as well. Returning from London with a copy of the report he had obtained from Canadian emigration personnel,<sup>106</sup> New South Wales politician and Immigration League of Australasia president, Richard Arthur suggested that the state and federal governments should consider inviting the same commission to Australia: “As this report comes from impartial sources, it is of infinitely greater value than anything issued by the Government itself and carries correspondingly greater weight among the farming community.”<sup>107</sup> George Reid also emphasised the value of the inviting the same delegation, recommending “this sort of expedition cannot be too strongly supported by the Federal Government”.<sup>108</sup> In September 1910, twelve delegates from the Scottish Agricultural Commission, eleven of whom had toured Canada, were greeted by W.H. Clarke in Fremantle.<sup>109</sup> The tour was organised so that the Commission would visit the rural regions of each of the six states to ensure that “the recent settler was put to the question as well as the long established cultivator”.<sup>110</sup> The delegates were also treated to a luncheon with Prime Minister Andrew Fisher at Parliament House in Melbourne.<sup>111</sup> The final 300-page report, published in 1911, was distributed to over 1,000 British newspapers<sup>112</sup> and applauded by Reid as “studiously impartial and free from exaggeration, and will, I am

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<sup>105</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.W. Cory, 12 September 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>106</sup> Richard Arthur reportedly obtained the copy from J. Obediah Smith. See ‘Scottish Agricultural Commission’, *Evening News*, 30 September 1910, p.3. A copy of the report was also sent to W. Birch from Victoria’s Closer Settlement Office in November 1910 by W.D. Scott. See Memorandum from W.D. Scott to Miss Rose, 24 November 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>107</sup> ‘Immigrants for Australia’, *Morning Bulletin*, 30 August 1909, p.8.

<sup>108</sup> Letter from George Reid to Littleton Groom, 13 May 1910, pp.15-16, NAA, A2911, 8/1911.

<sup>109</sup> ‘Scottish Commission’, *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 27 August 1910, p.8.

<sup>110</sup> Scottish Agricultural Commission, *Australia, Its Land, Conditions and Prospects: The Observations and Experiences of the Scottish Agricultural Commission of 1910-1911*, Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1911, p.9, SLSA, 630.994.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>112</sup> ‘Scottish Agricultural Commission: The Report Published’, *The West Australian*, 13 May 1911, p.12.

convinced, produced invaluable impressions in the right quarters.”<sup>113</sup> The tour was also praised by the Australian press, with *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser* newspaper noting that, “The report on Canada made by practically the same body of men in 1908 has been freely circulated throughout the old land, and this fact will give more interest to the one that is to come on Australia.”<sup>114</sup> From his vantage point in Melbourne, D.H. Ross expressed concern that Australia’s engagement of the same delegation would potentially draw unfavourable comparisons between the countries. In early 1911 he asked W.D. Scott to send copies of the delegation’s Canadian report and other relevant materials “in case that controversies may arise later on”.<sup>115</sup> For its part, the Scottish Agricultural Commission was careful to praise both countries in equal measure, with one member declaring that Canada and Australia were “the best places on God’s earth for young men and women of British stock to settle in if they are obliged to leave homes”.<sup>116</sup>

Whilst the Scottish Agricultural Commission’s tour of Australia was intentionally a replica of the earlier successful Canadian tour, federal personnel also introduced several innovative and previously unseen advertising tactics to promote Australia and draw the attention of the British public. This included the installation of large advertising posters along the Strand in London. W.H. Clarke pointed out that whilst Australia did not want to attract British urban migrants, such eye-catching and positive imagery positioned in the heart of London would assist in regaining the confidence of the city and potential investors therein: “The position of Australia would be strengthened in the minds of investors if occasionally city men were made to realise that Australia is strenuously in earnest in the desire to attract population.”<sup>117</sup> This point was also made by Reid himself, who observed that, “No one can be long in London without perceiving its enormous power as a centre of public

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<sup>113</sup> ‘Second Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom’, *APP*, no.39, 1912, p.5.

<sup>114</sup> ‘Scotsmen Spying Out Land in Australia’, *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 9 November 1910, p.25.

<sup>115</sup> Letter from D.H. Ross to W.D. Scott, 6 April 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>116</sup> ‘Scotch in Australia: Twelve Commissioners from the Old Country Visit the Commonwealth’, *The Daily*, c1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>117</sup> Department of External Affairs, *Report by Mr W.H. Clarke on the General Question of Advertising*, 10 January 1910, p.5. NAA, A63, A1910/2923.

opinion, backed up by vast wealth of a kind which is never locked up, when an attractive opening in any part of the world is presented.”<sup>118</sup> In 1912, 22 framed photographs on calico material measuring five feet by ten feet were erected on the Strand at the future site of the Commonwealth’s office building. Each featured a different image of Australian cities and country scenes along with a billboard displaying “Australia’s Daily Messages”.<sup>119</sup> One message, quoting the country’s Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, promised would-be migrants that Australia offered “an honest day’s wages for a fair day’s work”.<sup>120</sup> Tasmanian newspaper *The North West Post* reported the effect of the display: “Big crowds assembling day and night at the Commonwealth site on the Strand ... the scheme is easily the best advertising dem[o]nstration yet made by the Dominions in London.”<sup>121</sup> One British newspaper also applauded the display, noting “They are attracting much attention and should answer their purpose of encouraging emigration to Australia ...This al fresco picture gallery in the Strand points the way to happiness and prosperity over-seas.”<sup>122</sup> This newspaper article and details of the poster display were sent to Canada’s Immigration Branch in Ottawa.

Along with the large display in London, the High Commissioner’s office also arranged for the erection exhibits of Australian produce and natural products at the North Eastern Railway Company’s stations in centres such as York, Newcastle, and Darlington.<sup>123</sup> The company agreed to display the government’s exhibits in 12 of its major railway stations for a one month period before moving them to another station.<sup>124</sup> Canada’s Assistant Superintendent of Emigration, J. Obediah Smith, wrote to the Superintendent of Immigration W.D. Scott in 1913 to alert him to the agreement between Australia and the company, noting that the Commonwealth had

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<sup>118</sup> Letter from George Reid to Littleton Groom, 13 May 1910, p.3, NAA, A2911, 8/911.

<sup>119</sup> ‘Third Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom’, *APP*, no.38, 1913, p.41.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> ‘Advertising Australia’, *The North West Post*, 18 October 1912, p.3.

<sup>122</sup> Article title and newspaper unknown, 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 594, File 850724, Part 1.

<sup>123</sup> ‘Second Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom’, *APP*, no.39, 1912, p.9.

<sup>124</sup> News of this agreement was reported in numerous Australian newspapers in December 1911. See, for example, ‘Advertising Australia’, *The West Australian*, 30 December 1911, p.11.

agreed to pay the railway company £120 per exhibit per year.<sup>125</sup> Whilst Smith did not suggest that Canada should contemplate arranging a similar agreement with the company, the level of detail he provided and the inclusion of a photograph of the display at the Newcastle station suggest Smith believed the Canadian government should consider pursuing a similar arrangement.

Australian displays at agricultural shows in Britain were also completely overhauled under the direction of the High Commissioner's office. Canadian and Australian emigration personnel considered attendance at Britain's agricultural shows to be one of the most important and effective promotional and recruitment methods undertaken by their governments. Since the 1880s, each had organised displays of natural resources, agricultural products and other attractive materials to showcase their respective destinations to potential agricultural migrants. Although many of these fairs averaged a few hundred visitors, larger shows such as the annual *Highland and Agricultural Show* could attract nearly 100,000 people from across Britain and elsewhere.<sup>126</sup> Thanks to George Randall, Queensland had received significant attention and praise at Britain's rural shows in the late 1890s, even accepting an award at the Warwickshire Agricultural Show in 1897 "in recognition of the merits of the stand".<sup>127</sup> Whilst the states had continued the practice of mounting displays at agricultural shows through the early 1900s, the federal publicity branch's Officer in Charge H.C. Smart observed that by 1910, state personnel were only attending roughly 15 per cent of all shows across Britain and Ireland and were also mounting separate displays for each of their respective states.<sup>128</sup> Reid recommended that the Commonwealth invest in two agricultural displays promoting the whole of the country in order to give Australia a greater presence at Britain's agricultural shows. A 120-foot display would be used at the larger agricultural shows, while a smaller one would be designated for local fairs. Further to this, the publicity branch would

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<sup>125</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 10 October 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>126</sup> Letter from Canadian Government Agent H.M. Murray (Glasgow), 21 December 1897, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 74, File 4971, Part 1.

<sup>127</sup> Horace Tozer, 'Report of the Agent-General of Queensland for the Year 1897', 1897, p.8, QSA, Item ID 860871, Despatches.

<sup>128</sup> 'First Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom', *APP*, no.35, 1911, p.18.



arrange the materials for the displays, and both federal and state representatives would staff the stands.<sup>129</sup> The increase of Australian representation at the agricultural shows and the new displays were reported almost immediately by Canadian personnel based in Britain, with many requesting Ottawa invest more in their exhibits in order to effectively compete. A number of Canada's emigration agents based outside of London, including James Millar in Birmingham, reported extensively on the effect that the Commonwealth's new exhibits, which included a wide variety of materials including grains, fruits, and taxidermy animals. Millar noted that the array of materials in the Australian displays when compared to the Canadian exhibits, which mainly featured grains and grasses, elicited a negative perception of Canada's fertility and growing capacity among show patrons: "Many of my visitors asked if Canada only grew grain, and mentioned that Australia must be a better country to go to as from the display at their stand they grew almost everything."<sup>130</sup> Canada's emigration agent in Liverpool A.F. Jury further noted that Canada's simple displays of grains and grasses when compared to the variety offered in the Australian exhibits seemed to reinforce the view that Canada was "icebound nine months of the year".<sup>131</sup> As noted in the Introduction of this thesis, Canada's Assistant Superintendent of Emigration, J. Obediah Smith, was particularly concerned about the effect that the large, attractive Commonwealth displays had on the minds of the British public in contrast to Canada's more diminutive stalls. In 1912, Smith provided W.D. Scott with a list of agricultural shows that Australian officials intended to attend with their new stands, advising, "if we are to take space, we should be placed in a position to also make a display creditable to Canada".<sup>132</sup>

To further promote Australia in Britain's rural districts, Reid's office organised a motorised vehicle to tour through the country. New South Wales Agent General T.A. Coghlan and the federal government's Advertising Officer W.H. Clarke strongly

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<sup>129</sup> 'Second Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom', *APP*, no.39, 1912, p.8.

<sup>130</sup> Report of J.K. Millar, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1912', *CSP*, no.25, 1913, p.86.

<sup>131</sup> Report of A.F. Jury, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1914', *CSP*, no.25, 1915, p.98.

<sup>132</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 5 March 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 74, File 4971, Part 1.

advocated for the investment in a promotional vehicle, pointing to Canada's success in attracting attention with its exhibition car only a few years earlier. Clarke maintained that from a practical point of view, the Canadian vehicle had proven advantageous for promoting the country as a settlement destination outside of show season and in more rural and remote regions. Clarke noted that "while the farmer or farmhand is not likely to be seriously moved by any theatrical display, it is certainly an immense advantage to be able to get right into his village".<sup>133</sup> Clarke also recommended adapting the Canadian model by equipping the Commonwealth car with a bioscope, so that the lectures given by government representatives could also include the projection of images on a screen attached to the vehicle.<sup>134</sup> The Commonwealth Cinema Car began touring the southern and western counties of Britain in 1912, advertising "open-air shows ... in the villages, admission free".<sup>135</sup>

One of the greatest challenges for Australian emigration personnel in advertising their respective destination was overcoming the British public's perception that Australia was too far away and too costly to travel to, particularly in comparison to Canada. As noted in Chapter Two, subsidised passage schemes in the 1880s had allowed the Australian colonies to level out transportation costs to effectively compete with dominions that were geographically closer to Britain. In the 1890s, the schemes had proven effective for Western Australia and Queensland in competing with Canada's growing operations. In his annual report for 1899, the Deputy Minister of the Interior James A. Smart reported that Queensland's offer of free passage had resulted in a noticeable number of desirable British agricultural labourers choosing the Australian colony over the dominion during the year. Smart recommended that the federal government consider offering some form of subsidised passage to agricultural labourers, observing, "it has even been hinted that some of those who were thus induced to move to Queensland would have preferred Canada, but the necessity of having assistance at the outset compelled them to choose the Australian

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<sup>133</sup> Department of External Affairs, *Report by Mr W.H. Clarke on the General Question of Advertising, 10 January 1910*, pp.31-32, NAA, A63, A1910/2923.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> 'Second Annual Report of the High Commissioner of the Commonwealth in the United Kingdom', *APP*, no.39, 1912, p.9.

colony".<sup>136</sup> Whilst Smart was convinced of the need for Canada to offer similar inducements, the scale of Queensland's individual programme in the 1890s posed little concern for other Canadian officials. The country's High Commissioner Lord Strathcona reasoned: "While this does interfere with our work to a certain extent, it does not make any considerable impression on the bulk of the emigration to Canada. It is generally admitted in steamship circles, that Canada gets the larger proportion and the cream of the emigration which leaves the United Kingdom."<sup>137</sup>

With the reinvigoration of Australian efforts in the early 1900s, the question of passage schemes was again raised. At the conference of federal and state leaders in 1906, Prime Minister Deakin acknowledged the country's ongoing disadvantage to Canada:

The greatest deterrent, or one of the greatest deterrents, to would-be emigrants to Australia, is the fact that they can get to Canada very cheaply; it is much more expensive to come to Australia. The other advantage in favour of Canada is that it is so near to the mother country that people feel that, if they have made a mistake, or if they desire to visit relatives, they can go back readily and cheaply to England.<sup>138</sup>

This disadvantage was also pointed to in the Australian and Canadian newspapers at the time. Western Australia's *The Evening Star* observed in 1907, "it is possible for the immigrant to reach Canada and be settled in work there at a cost of about £5, and the loss of only two or three weeks' work. To reach Australia he must spend quite £15, and will lose six weeks' work, at a low estimate."<sup>139</sup> Similarly, one Vancouver newspaper pointed out in 1909 that while Canada "is 'just over the way,' and a five-pound note would take the disillusioned traveller back whence he came ... to come to Australia means that men and women must make the best of their bargain".<sup>140</sup> The lack of uniform rates across the country and the pricing wars between the states

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<sup>136</sup> Report of J.A. Smart, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1899', *CSP*, no.13, 1900, p.xiv.

<sup>137</sup> Report of Lord Strathcona, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1897', *CSP*, no.13, 1898, p.115.

<sup>138</sup> 'Conference of Commonwealth and State Premiers and Ministers: Report of Debates Together with Agenda Papers, Minutes of Proceedings and Appendices', *APP*, no.34, 1906, p.50.

<sup>139</sup> 'Australia's Needs: Commonwealth and Canada Contrasted', *The Evening Star*, 21 February 1907, p.2.

<sup>140</sup> 'Canada Given a Bad Name', newspaper title unknown (Vancouver), 15 February 1909, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, File 306064, Part 1.

made the work of personnel in Britain particularly challenging.<sup>141</sup> Deakin had strongly advocated for standardising the transportation rates across the country in 1906, and at the Premiers' conference in 1912, state leaders finally agreed to fix the minimum passage rate offered in an attempt to eliminate the remaining internal competition relating to transportation costs.<sup>142</sup> The change in the Australian scheme in 1912 was felt by Canadian emigration agents almost immediately. Canada's Liverpool agent, John McLennan, reported, "The strenuous efforts of the various states of the Australian Commonwealth are beginning to bear fruit ... the free and assisted passages offered by some of the States, are of such a character that it is impossible for us to compete with them."<sup>143</sup> A similar report was made by the agent based in Exeter who stated that the subsidised passages offered by New South Wales had been particularly popular among the rural populace in the region.<sup>144</sup> The agent reports were also supported by the Assistant Superintendent of Emigration J. Obediah Smith who observed that what he considered to be the remaining desirable rural population in Britain consisted primarily of farm labourers of small means rather than the agriculturist with capital. Smith argued that even with competitive rates, the present wages for labourers in Britain meant many of these desirable men would be unable to pay for the associated transportation costs to Canada, and would instead be attracted to Australia's passage concessions:

In view of assisted passages given by other parts of the Empire, it is quite clear that, without something similar on the part of Canada, we must always be placed at a disadvantage regarding a desirable class who have not the same means to move.<sup>145</sup>

Whilst personnel in Britain recommended Canada consider offering reduced passage costs to match Australian efforts, authorities in Ottawa continued to reject the idea, believing that such assistance would encourage the unemployed 'wasters' of Britain's

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<sup>141</sup> F.K. Crowley, "The British Contribution to the Australian Population: 1860-1919", *University Studies of History and Economics*, vol.2, no.2, 1954, p.72.

<sup>142</sup> Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World", p.85.

<sup>143</sup> Report of John McLennan, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1912', *CSP*, no.25, 1913, p.87.

<sup>144</sup> Report of A.F. Jury, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1912', *CSP*, no.25, 1913, p.77.

<sup>145</sup> Report of J. Obediah Smith, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1914', *CSP*, no.25, 1915, p.91.

population rather than desirable agricultural labourers.<sup>146</sup> Despite fierce debate in Canadian parliament, the Minister of the Interior Frank Oliver remained firm on the position that Canada would not provide passage assistance to migrants:

It is absolutely contrary to the policy of the Immigration Department of the Dominion government at the present time to give assistance to immigrants—to pay anything to induce an immigrant to come to Canada ... In our present attitude we are pursuing an entirely different policy from that adopted by the States which comprise the Australian Commonwealth.<sup>147</sup>

### **Increased Competition, 1910-1914**

By 1910s, the increase of state promotional activities, along with the injection of Commonwealth's support through George Reid and the publicity branch, saw both Australia's public image and intake of British migrants improve dramatically. One British newspaper, the *Aberdeen Weekly Journal*, observed in August 1912, "it appears as if the stream which has hitherto flown steadily and strongly toward the Dominion were at last to be at least partly diverted in the direction of the Commonwealth ... The marvellous progress made by the Dominion of Canada imparted a lesson that was greatly needed in Australia".<sup>148</sup> In the same month, *The Daily Telegraph*, reporting on 700 British emigrants that had recently left for the Commonwealth, also pointed out that the improved position of Australia naturally meant the country "is becoming a serious rival to Canada as a field for British emigrants".<sup>149</sup>

Canadian officials were also aware of Australia's much improved position, particularly by 1912. The country's Assistant Superintendent of Immigration, E.B. Blake Robertson prepared a detailed memorandum for the Deputy Minister of the Interior outlining the development of the Australian campaign and citing what he saw as an increasing imitation of Canadian methods:

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<sup>146</sup> This argument continued after 1912 and was integral to the debates of the 1920s associated with the *Empire Settlement Act*. See Janice Cavell, 'The Imperial Race and the Immigration Sieve: The Canadian Debate on Assisted British Migration and Empire Settlement, 1900-30', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.34, no.3, 2006, pp.345-367.

<sup>147</sup> CPD, HC, 13 March 1911, pp.5167-5168.

<sup>148</sup> 'The Stream of Emigration', *Aberdeen Weekly Journal*, 30 August 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>149</sup> 'Emigrants for Australia', *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 August 1912, page number unknown, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

I may mention a sample of that country's imitation of Canada's propaganda that the Commonwealth, seeing the desirable advertising which the Dominion secured through lectures delivered and letters written to the press by members of the "Scottish Agricultural Commission to Canada in 1908" induced the same body, or rather a portion of it, to visit Australia in 1910.<sup>150</sup>

From his office in London, Canada's Assistant Superintendent of Emigration, J. Obediah Smith, kept a particularly watchful eye over Australian recruitment activities and reported in detail on the country's operations and their results to Ottawa. Smith's correspondence from 1911 onwards indicated the marked change in the Australian programmes with the arrival of the High Commissioner George Reid, whom he noted was "a natural born advertiser he has lost no opportunity during his residency in London of keeping Australia constantly before the public eye".<sup>151</sup> He pointed to the increase of British emigration to Australia as a worrying shift in popularity towards the country and away from Canada: "Whereas Canada is likely to get a good number of people during the coming season, Australia is likely to get more than ever, and a competitor which formerly was of small consequence, has now become a serious feature in the same field in which we have to work."<sup>152</sup> Smith also referenced newspaper reports indicating when large groups of British emigrants were leaving for Australia. In 1911 he reported that 1,500 first-class emigrants were leaving for Victoria, stating:

I send this with the object of fortifying my requests for an opportunity to make a more extensive and intensive emigration propaganda in favour of Canada. There was a time not so very long ago when the possibility of sending such a large number of desirable people to Victoria, or any part of Australia, would have been considered highly problematical, now it seems quite necessary that the Canadian emigration propaganda should be extended.<sup>153</sup>

Whilst the number of British emigrants choosing to go to Australia still remained well below that of Canada's, the increase of Australia's intake alarmed Smith and some

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<sup>150</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.W. Cory, 12 September 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>151</sup> Memorandum from J. Obediah Smith to W.W. Cory, 12 September 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>152</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 22 February 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>153</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 24 October 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

other Canadian emigration personnel. One report sent to W.D. Scott indicated that although Canada's intake was significantly greater than that of Australia's between 1911 and 1912, the increase in the number of British emigrants choosing Australia had jumped by 23 per cent between the two years, while Canada's had only increased by 3 per cent.<sup>154</sup>

Part of the concern for J. Obediah Smith stemmed from the increasing attention Australia was receiving from the steamship companies' booking agents. Along with government personnel, both Canada and Australia relied on the support of private booking agents employed by steamship companies to promote emigration opportunities and recruit British agricultural migrants on their behalf. Booking agents were considered advantageous because they enabled the dominions to significantly expand their promotional activities and overall presence in Britain than otherwise would have been possible. This was particularly the case for the Australian states, which employed noticeably fewer government personnel than Canada, although the Canadian government saw equal value in engaging significant numbers of booking agents.<sup>155</sup> Along with speaking directly to potential migrants, booking agents organised a multitude of promotional activities along the same lines as government-employed personnel, including hosting public lectures, mounting displays in their office windows, taking out advertisements in local newspapers, and distributing dominion literature.<sup>156</sup> For every suitable British agricultural migrant and family member secured for a particular dominion, the agent would receive a commission or bonus from that dominion's government.<sup>157</sup> Many of British-based booking agents were engaged to work concurrently for multiple dominions and even for destinations outside of the British Empire including Argentina. As such, agents

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<sup>154</sup> Letter from CPR Passenger Traffic Manager C.E.E. Ussher to W.D. Scott, 11 January 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>155</sup> For a case study of Canada's engagement of shipping agents, Donald F. Harris, 'The Promotion in Shropshire of Emigration to Canada to 1914, with Particular Reference to the Period from 1890', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 1998, pp.299-355.

<sup>156</sup> In a letter to the Victorian government in 1913, booking agent Angus MacDonald outlined these activities as work he could undertake on the state's behalf to promote irrigation settlement opportunities. See letter from Angus MacDonald to William Cattanach, 2 May 1913, Public Records Office of Victoria, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>157</sup> Bonuses were also paid for other desired groups, including domestic servants and, in the case of Canada in 1913, railway construction workers and miners. See Memorandum from W.D. Scott to H.S. Clements, 30 January 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 99, File 13098, Part 2.

frequently held competing loyalties.<sup>158</sup> Canada's government emigration agent in the north of England had pointed out in 1901 that because booking agents approached their recruiting work as purely a business transaction, they would naturally be inclined to "helping the place that pays them best".<sup>159</sup>

As Australian efforts increased, so too did the bonuses paid by both the Australian states and by Canada. By 1911, Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and Canada were each paying booking agents one pound for every suitable adult male agricultural migrant, one pound for his wife, and ten shillings for each of their children.<sup>160</sup> Bonuses became an increasingly contentious issue as Australia paid agents immediately upon booking a migrant for passage, whilst Canada would only pay once it was proven that the migrant had actually landed in the country. Although by the 1910s Canada and each of the Australian states were paying exactly the same bonus amounts for suitable migrants secured by booking agents, Canada's delayed bonus payment system annoyed many of the agents. Writing to Canadian authorities, one aggrieved booking agent stated that, in his opinion, "I must say the Canadian Government Officials who have the bonuses to deal with are about the meanest paymasters I have the misfortune to work for", while another warned: "There is no doubt, if a satisfactory arrangement is not forthcoming immediately, agents will influence their bookings in other directions as in many cases they are easily able to do."<sup>161</sup> In 1912, Smith reported to W.D. Scott that this arrangement was resulting in booking agents to preference Australia ahead of Canada. He suggested Ottawa consider removing the condition and increase the bonus amount, stating "this

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<sup>158</sup> Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, p.298; Donald F. Harris, 'The Role of Shropshire Local Shipping Agents in Encouraging Emigration to Canada, c.1890-1914', *The Local Historian: Journal of the British Association for Local History*, vol.30, no.4, 2000, p.241.

<sup>159</sup> Report of A.F. Jury, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1900-1901', *CSP*, no.25, 1902, p.19.

<sup>160</sup> The Australian states defined 'child' as under the age of twelve, while Canada offered this bonus amount on individuals under the age of 18. Memorandum, *Rates of Emigrant Passage to Australia and New Zealand with Bonus and Commission Paid to Booking Agents Thereon*, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>161</sup> Both quotes are taken from *Extracts from Booking Agents' Letters Regarding the Present Bonus System*, date unknown, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 194, File 73989, Part 2.



opportune moment should be taken for re-establishing ourselves in the confidence and goodwill of the booking agents".<sup>162</sup>

Whilst J. Obediah Smith and other Canadian personnel in Britain expressed concern about the increased activity and popularity of Australia by 1912, immigrant personnel in Ottawa appeared to consider their concurrent efforts as little more than a minor irritant. No doubt this position was fuelled in part by the increasing influx of British migrants to Canada, with 1912 resulting in the highest intake on record for the country. In reply to Smith's request for changes to the bonus system, W.D. Scott pointed out that Canada was continuing to enjoy a steady increase of British migrants and, in his opinion, changes to the bonus were unnecessary: "I do not feel that this Department has any just grounds for fearing any decline in the immigration from that source".<sup>163</sup> Others including E.B. Blake expressed the belief that Australia's increased promotional activities and improved position had in fact benefitted Canada, as the dominions' combined efforts had alerted the British public to settlement advantages of the Empire:

The competition of Australia and Canada to my mind is like the competition of two life insurance agents representing rival companies canvassing the same town – each gets more business than he would were the other not there. If Canadian and Australian agents succeed in awakening the industrious desirable workers living hand to mouth existences in the United Kingdom to the advantages offered by emigration to the colonies, each country will get more settlers than would be obtained were the other not in the field.<sup>164</sup>

Blake's sentiment was also echoed by George Reid in an interview with a British newspaper, the *Chronicle*. Reid pointed out that competition between the two dominions should not be considered negative, maintaining, "It is not a question of invidious comparison between one part of the Empire and another, but of friendly rivalry in the race for overseas development under the same Crown, under the same

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<sup>162</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 9 January 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>163</sup> Letter from W.D. Scott to J. Obediah Smith, 27 January 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>164</sup> Memorandum from E.B. Blake to W.W. Cory, 12 September 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

flag, and in the cause of the same Empire.”<sup>165</sup> Further to this, while the increased competition for British agricultural migrants had undoubtedly made the work of Canadian authorities more challenging, it was agreed that Britain was a shared field and it was fair for each Empire member to want to induce their respective settler populations from that field. Despite his private concerns, publicly J. Obediah Smith pointed out that as good imperialists, Canada and Australia also preferred the “British people to remain in some part of the Overseas Dominions rather than be lost to the empire”.<sup>166</sup> And because of these imperial ties, Smith and his colleagues were “willing to accord the various States in the Australian Commonwealth all information regarding our methods of business, on the understanding that their propaganda would be carried on with the spirit of emulation” in Britain.<sup>167</sup>

By the final years before World War One, it appeared there was little stopping Canada and Australia from continuing to receive increasing numbers of British agricultural migrants. Whilst a sense of competitiveness had certainly grown between the two dominions over this period as Australia adopted and perfected similar promotional methods to that of Canada, it was mainly conceded by Canadian government personnel that as good imperialists, it was necessary to support each other in their mutual endeavour. After all, Britain was an accepted field from which its dominions each desired to source their settler populations and Canada’s migrant population was continuing to grow at a steady pace despite increased popularity of Australia among the British populace. As the next chapter will demonstrate, however, Australia’s growing operations and confidence in this period would test the limits of what was considered acceptable colonial practice, with one Australian state turning its attention for the first time to a new field from which to source its agricultural migrants – Canada.

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<sup>165</sup> ‘Sir G. Reid’, *Daily Chronicle*, 1 March 1910, p.1, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>166</sup> ‘Canada’s Shop Window’, *Manitoba Free Press*, 17 May 1913, page number unknown, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 90, File 41, Part 3.

<sup>167</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 18 September 1908, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

## Chapter 4

### **A Violation of Colonial Courtesy? Victoria's Pursuit of Canadian Farmers, 1910-1914**

By the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, the negative perception of Australia as an Empire settlement destination was being rapidly overturned. With the country's newly appointed High Commissioner, George Reid, widely promoting settlement opportunities in the Commonwealth and each of the states increasing their immigration operations through staffing and promotional activities, the message that Australia needed and wanted migrants was being strongly impressed upon the minds of the British public. As noted in the previous chapter, in 1907 the Victorian government renewed its efforts to attract new settlers onto the land through immigration. That same year, the state government invited American irrigation expert Elwood Mead to take up the position of Chairman of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (SRWSC), the body responsible for administering Victoria's irrigation works.<sup>1</sup> Whilst state officials wanted agriculturalists generally, the government was also keen to attract settlers with specialist knowledge for the state's irrigable areas. Irrigation farming would encourage the development of marginal waste lands and support the government's closer settlement objectives, as smaller irrigation blocks could accommodate a far greater populace than was possible on larger wheat farms.<sup>2</sup> Mead believed that in order for irrigation settlement in the state to succeed, a government-led recruitment campaign was needed to entice migrants experienced in this form of agricultural practice. Whilst the well-known fields of Britain would be canvassed, Mead also recommended that state-appointed emigration agents attempt to induce irrigators and farmers from Europe, the western United States, and, for the first time, Canada. The inclusion of Victoria's colonial sister as a source of migrants was observed by Canada's Trades Commissioner in Australia,

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<sup>1</sup> For more on Mead's life and his career in Victoria and California, see Paul K. Conkin, 'The Vision of Elwood Mead,' *Agricultural History*, vol.34, no.2, 1960, pp.88-97; J.M. Powell, 'Elwood Mead and California's State Colonies: An Episode in Australian-American Contacts 1915-31,' *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol.67, no.4, 1982, pp.328-353; James R. Kluger, *Turning on Water with a Shovel: The Career of Elwood Mead*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992.

<sup>2</sup> Tony Dingle, *The Victorians: Settling*, Melbourne: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, Melbourne, 1984, p.126.

D.H. Ross. From his office in Melbourne, Ross wrote to Ottawa on 9 December 1910, noting: “This is the first time that any Australian State has endeavoured to secure emigrants from Canada ... and the experiment may be worth watching.”<sup>3</sup>

The history of Victoria’s government-led closer settlement initiatives and the development of the state’s irrigation areas during this period have been documented in a number of scholarly works.<sup>4</sup> So too has the influence of Elwood Mead, who as Chairman of the SRWSC from 1907 to 1915 transformed Victoria’s marginal land settlement through government irrigation projects.<sup>5</sup> Mead’s extensive experience in his native California’s irrigation areas and his application of similar practices in Victoria has been cited by several scholars. The significance of Victoria’s attempt to induce Canadian farmers as part of the scheme, however, is an issue that has received surprisingly little attention from historians. Many scholars examining the state’s immigration and irrigation settlement initiatives during this time have overlooked Canada in the list of destinations targeted by government officials. Tony Dingle, for example, states that Victoria sought experienced agriculturalists from “Europe, the United States and Britain”<sup>6</sup>, while Gerard Blackburn refers generally to North America and then more specifically to the United States in his analysis of the scheme.<sup>7</sup> Historians James R. Kluger and Michele Langfield include Canada in the list of destinations targeted by the state; however, neither offer insight into whether Victoria was successful in enticing Canadian farmers and importantly, what these

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<sup>3</sup> Letter from D.H. Ross to F.C.T O’Hara, 9 December 1910, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>4</sup> For example, see Dingle, *The Victorians*; Richard Broome, *The Victorians: Arriving*, McMahons Point: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1984; Michele Langfield, “Fit for the Elect of the World”: Government Policy and Contemporary Opinion About the Encouragement of Immigration to Australia, 1901-1939’, unpublished PhD thesis, Monash University, 1988; Michele Langfield, “The Ideal Immigrant’: Immigration to Victoria Between Federation and the First World War’, *Australian Studies*, no.8, 1994, pp.1-14; Gerard Blackburn, *Pioneering Irrigation in Australia to 1920*, Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> For example, see Conkin, ‘The Vision of Elwood Mead’; J.R. Kluger, ‘Elwood Mead: Irrigation Engineer and Social Planner’, unpublished PhD thesis, Arizona State University, 1970; J. Rutherford, ‘Interplay of American and Australian Ideas for Development of Water Projects in Northern Victoria’, in J.M. Powell (ed.), *The Making of Rural Australia. Environment, Society and Economy: Geographical Readings*, Melbourne: Sorrett Publishing, 1974, pp.116-134; Powell, ‘Elwood Mead and California’s State Colonies’.

<sup>6</sup> Dingle, *The Victorians: Settling*, p.127.

<sup>7</sup> Blackburn, *Pioneering Irrigation in Australia to 1920*, p.153.

activities meant for British World relations at the time.<sup>8</sup> Whilst the focus of this thesis is primarily on Canada and Australia's pursuit of British agricultural migrants between 1890 and 1914, the Victorian government's interest in and targeting of Canada's settler population, at a time when the Dominion was still actively investing in the growth of this population, presents as an interesting case study in British World relations in this period.

This chapter therefore considers how Victoria's 'experiment' to recruit Canadian farmers for its irrigable lands was carried out, and the policies and methods adopted by the state's representatives to induce this particular group. These included the widely publicised and heavily promoted Land Settlement Delegation tour in 1910; the employment of private and contracted emigration agents to recruit specialist irrigators and general agriculturalists; the production and distribution of literature and promotional materials specifically for a North American audience; and the introduction of land-seeker excursions to enable potential migrants, at no personal cost, to inspect Victoria's irrigable lands before deciding whether to emigrate. It will be shown that Elwood Mead's extensive knowledge of the Department of the Interior's successful recruitment operations meant that many of the methods Victoria adopted for attracting irrigation migrants during this period were not only inspired by, but were a direct copy of those perfected by Canadian immigration officials. It will be contended that Victoria's imitation of Canadian practices was, in part, a strategic attempt to appeal to Canadian farmers who were familiar with, and had been successfully attracted by this type of promotional work to Canada by Department of the Interior personnel. Further to this, it will be shown that the adoption of Canadian promotional practices was also to attempt to divert the flow of American farmers from Canada, a populace that Victoria's sister colony had enjoyed almost exclusively for well over a decade. In his work, 'Interplay of American and Australian Ideas for Development of Water Projects in Northern Victoria', geographer J. Rutherford observed, "Progress in water resources law, and its implementation for enabling works and land settlement schemes throughout northern Victoria, owe much to American ideas."<sup>9</sup> This chapter will further Rutherford's argument, by demonstrating

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<sup>8</sup> Kluger, *Turning on Water with a Shovel*, p.66; Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World", pp.89-90.

<sup>9</sup> Rutherford, 'Interplay of American and Australian Ideas for Development of Water Projects in Northern Victoria', p.116.

that the introduction of Victoria's highly strategic and carefully crafted recruitment programme to secure American and Canadian irrigation settlers between 1910 and 1914 pays equal homage to the ideas and practices perfected by Canada during this period.

Finally, through a review of the Department of the Interior's records, this chapter also reveals for the first time how Canadian immigration authorities discussed and responded to Victoria's scheme both publicly and privately, and considers the effect that the state's programme had on relations with its colonial counterpart. Although the official government response was to remain unvexed, quietly behind-the-scenes Canadian personnel intensely debated how best to respond to what was considered a "violation of colonial courtesy".<sup>10</sup> Whilst Britain was an accepted and expected field from which Empire members sourced their migrant populace, this chapter will demonstrate how Victoria's decision to pursue agricultural settlers from its sister colony challenged the accepted boundaries of late nineteenth and early twentieth century imperial migration.

### **The Arrival of Dr Mead**

The use of irrigation works to encourage the development of marginal lands was by no means a new idea in Victoria by the beginning of the twentieth century; however, this period is acknowledged as the beginning of greater government control over its development and implementation. As historian Gerard Blackburn observes, whereas independent irrigation activities by private individuals and trusts had enjoyed some success in Victoria prior to the 1900s, it was the introduction of more centralised and regulated government control following widespread drought in 1902 that set off the greatest development of irrigation works in the state.<sup>11</sup> The *Water Act* of 1905 saw the dissolution of private irrigation trusts and the establishment of the SRWSC, a new centralised authority responsible for all irrigation activity.<sup>12</sup> The 1905 Act also gave the state government authority over all streams, ending any remaining riparian rights

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<sup>10</sup> Letter from G.E. Boughton to the Department of the Interior, 7 January 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>11</sup> Blackburn, *Pioneering Irrigation in Australia to 1920*, p.149.

<sup>12</sup> Tony Dingle notes that all private trusts except the first Mildura Irrigation Trust were dissolved with the 1905 Act. Dingle, *The Victorians: Settling*, p.125.

from previous legislation. In 1907, Victoria successfully enticed Californian irrigation expert Dr Elwood Mead to take over the chairman position of the SRWSC. Mead possessed extensive experience in the development of irrigation projects in the United States, and from 1897 to 1907 he had held the positions of Professor of Rural Institutions and the Practice of Irrigation at the University of California, and Chief of Irrigation and Drainage Investigation of the federal Department of Agriculture.<sup>13</sup> Mead's knowledge and experience in California's comparable climate and irrigation fields was ideally suited for Victoria's waste lands, and he shared the state government's vision for utilising irrigation works to attract settlers and promote economic growth.<sup>14</sup> Under Mead's guidance, further amendments were made to the 1905 legislation, and the new *Water Act* of 1909 saw the merger of the Department of Water Supply into the SRWSC so that one authority controlled the state's entire water supply and works. The 1909 Act also introduced compulsory charges for irrigation water, based on the supply cost rather than on the valuation of the land.<sup>15</sup>

Despite these legislative and administrative changes, by 1909 only a limited number of acres had been taken up by settlers in the irrigation districts. In a report to the Minister of Water Supply, the SRWSC pointed out that although the irrigation works were capable of supporting 350,000 acres of land, the absence of settlers meant the areas were not reaching their full agricultural potential and were not generating the necessary revenue from the compulsory water charges.<sup>16</sup> It was suggested that between 5,000 and 6,000 more irrigators along with families of 30,000 or more people were required to make use of the existing water supply alone, and such numbers could not be sourced from within Australia's existing population. The SRWSC concluded that, "These great possibilities can only be realized by a complete change in existing conditions".<sup>17</sup> Among a list of recommended changes to the programme was the suggestion that, along with sourcing a settler population from

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<sup>13</sup> Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of Manufactures, *Daily Consular and Trade Report*, Washington, 12 July 1910, p.1, Public Record Office of Victoria (hereafter PROV), VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>14</sup> Kluger, *Turning on Water with a Shovel*, p.xii.

<sup>15</sup> Rutherford, 'Interplay of American and Australian Ideas for Development of Water Projects in Northern Victoria', p.126.

<sup>16</sup> State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (hereafter SRWSC), *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, p.1, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

the familiar British fields, the state government consider expanding into Europe and the United States where “small holdings and intensive cultivation are the rule”.<sup>18</sup> Armed with his prior experience in California’s irrigation areas, Mead was particularly enthusiastic about recruiting experienced irrigators from the United States as, “Such settlers would have less to learn than those from other countries because of the similarity of Australian and American conditions. The knowledge they have would be of the utmost value.”<sup>19</sup> He recommended the introduction of a strategic and comprehensive government-led campaign to entice experienced irrigation migrants to the state, maintaining that, “Every developing country has to seek settlers just as it has later on to seek markets, and nothing better repays careful persistent effort.”<sup>20</sup>

It is clear that Mead’s own awareness of, and admiration for, Canada’s highly coordinated and successful immigration and settlement programme influenced his proposal to the Victorian government in early 1910. Shortly before his arrival in Australia, Mead had served as a consulting irrigation engineer to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company’s (CPR) irrigation scheme in southern Alberta, and he was particularly impressed with what he saw as the cooperation between the private railway companies and the federal government in promoting irrigation settlement on the country’s marginal prairie lands.<sup>21</sup> As a leading expert in the field, Mead was also highly regarded within Canada, and he was cited in a number of promotional handbooks and other materials produced by the CPR for its irrigation settlement scheme in the early 1900s. In the railway company’s 1906 handbook, Mead was quoted as saying of the company’s irrigation settlement, “It is impossible to state adequately the amount of traffic which such agricultural settlement will create without seeming to exaggerate.”<sup>22</sup> In outlining his recommendations to the Victorian government only a few short years later, Mead referred to the Canadian federal

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>21</sup> ‘More People’, *The Argus*, 17 January 1910, p.6.

<sup>22</sup> Canadian Pacific Railway Company, *The Canadian Pacific Railway Company’s Irrigation Project, Alberta, Canada: A Handbook of Information Regarding This Undertaking*, handbook, 1906, Peel’s Prairie Provinces, University of Alberta, <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/bibliography/2931.html>, accessed 3 March 2016.



government's immigration programme for its success in attracting settlers to the prairie region, noting his admiration for the country's methods, and stating that he found their operations to be "most instructive" for attracting a desirable agricultural populace.<sup>23</sup> In an interview with Melbourne newspaper *The Argus* in 1910, Mead offered the following observation about the Canadian programme:

Now, how shall we obtain these settlers? There is only one way. We must adopt the methods which the United States and Canada have found so successful. We must go out and look for them; enter on an organised crusade ... Canada made no progress while she relied on the normal progress of the country to attract immigrants. In the face of such competition as now exists amongst new countries to attract settlers from the old countries, it will be 50 years before the irrigation districts of Northern Victoria are filled up, if we rely on natural development only to provide increased population.<sup>24</sup>

Mead was particularly impressed with what he saw as the Department of the Interior's "judicious and continued advertising" of Alberta's irrigated lands, and he recommended that Victoria adopt smaller but comparable practices, arguing that, "The world must be made acquainted with the Goulburn Weir and Waranga Basin just as it now talks about the Canadian Pacific irrigation Scheme at Calgary."<sup>25</sup> Mead's admiration for the Dominion's operations was equally shared by Hugh McKenzie, Victoria's Minister for Lands. McKenzie argued that with the rich resources of the state and the adoption of a comparable promotional campaign, Victoria would not only be able to guarantee similar immigration levels as Canada, it could even challenge its sister colony's success: "With inducements which could be placed before the people, the same great stream of genuine settlement which was going to Canada could be turned to Victoria. The climate was better, the conditions of life better, and the soil equally fertile."<sup>26</sup>

### **Land Settlement Delegation Tour**

Mead's recommendations for an organised campaign to attract settlers from abroad was endorsed by the state government, and in 1910 a delegation was established to identify the best localities to source irrigation migrants. A tour would then be

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<sup>23</sup> SRWSC, *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, p.22, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>24</sup> 'More People: How to Get Them', *The Argus*, 17 January 1910, p.6.

<sup>25</sup> SRWSC, *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, pp.13-14, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>26</sup> 'The Quest for People', *The Argus*, 14 May 1910, p.16.

undertaken by the delegation to visit these regions to promote the state's irrigation and settlement opportunities whilst at the same time studying the "methods employed by other countries in obtaining and settling immigrants".<sup>27</sup> On 18 May 1910, the Land Settlement Delegation comprising of Mead, McKenzie, the delegation's secretary R.V. Billis, and a handful of representatives from the Australian press set off for a six-month tour through Europe, Britain, the United States and western Canada.<sup>28</sup> Within Europe, the delegation identified Northern Italy, Southern France and Spain as desirable locations to source experienced irrigators; however it was noted that settlers from these regions were generally "home-keeping people and there is small hope of securing many such recruits".<sup>29</sup> Anticipating difficulties in inducing specialist irrigators from these regions, Mead suggested that Victoria should also be open to accepting experienced agriculturalists and general agricultural labourers for the programme, and he suggested farmers from Denmark, Holland, Germany and Scandinavia were still desirable as they would possess the necessary skills to quickly adapt to irrigation farming. It was also pointed out that, "Canada and the United States obtain a large percentage of their farming immigrants from other countries in Northern Europe, and it is likely that farmers from these countries being good cultivators would soon become skilful irrigators."<sup>30</sup> Whilst quick to reassure that British migrants would receive preference over those from European countries, Mead advised that widening the state's field of recruitment into Europe was necessary in part because of increasing difficulty in securing suitable British migrants, particularly as other Empire destinations and elsewhere were also vying for this limited pool of potential settlers: "In Great Britain the State must compete with the highly organized and effectively administered immigration agencies of Canada, the United States and Argentina, and with the cheaper land of Africa and the other Australian States."<sup>31</sup> In keeping with the state's overall immigration programme, the delegation also made it clear that only those experienced in agriculture would be selected and approved by government officials.

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<sup>27</sup> SRWSC, *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, p.21, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>28</sup> Billis travelled with the delegation until they reached London, where it was decided he would work in the Agent-General's office to assist in securing British agricultural migrants for the irrigation areas.

<sup>29</sup> SRWSC, *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, p.4, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

<sup>31</sup> Letter from Elwood Mead to George Elmslie, 4 May 1910, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

Whilst the majority of migrants for Victoria were to be sourced from Britain and to a lesser extent Europe, Mead and the SRWSC believed that a considerable number of skilled American irrigators could be induced to emigrate. Mead suggested that although the challenge of convincing established irrigation farmers to start over on the other side of the world was a significant one, Canada's persistent promotional campaign from the late 1890s to secure experienced American farmers for the country's prairie region proved that it was possible. It was observed that, "whilst it might be somewhat difficult to start this stream of immigrants in this direction the experience of Canada has been that the character of the American immigrant makes him worthy of an additional effort".<sup>32</sup> Canada's experience in this endeavour and the country's ongoing campaign to secure American farmers for its prairie region was also raised by Mead as a potential issue for relations between the two Empire members. In a report to Victoria's Premier, John Murray, Mead and McKenzie identified what they saw as a clear distinction between the first and second half of their tour in how their efforts could be received, particularly by local government authorities:

The task in the United Kingdom had been definite and comparatively simple. The situation in America was different. Both the United States and Canada have large areas of unsettled land, much of which is irrigable. Both countries are expending large sums of money in endeavours to secure settlement. Because of this, it was feared the Delegation might meet with a lukewarm, if not critical, reception. It was regarded as wise, therefore, to emphasize at the onset that the Victorian irrigation areas could only provide for a small number of farmers, as compared with the much larger areas awaiting settlement in America or Canada.<sup>33</sup>

Accordingly, Mead and McKenzie went to great lengths during the delegation's tour to state that their main objective was to study agricultural conditions in North America. Fortunately for the delegation, American newspapers took up their educative message and covered the tour widely. Headlines such as 'Distinguished Australians on Trip of Investigation', 'Australians Investigating' and 'Australians Are Sight-Seers'

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<sup>32</sup> SRWSC, *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, p.5, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>33</sup> Land Settlement Delegation, *Report of the Victorian Land Settlement Delegation to the Honourable Premier of Victoria*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1911, p.3, State Library of Victoria (hereafter SLV), SF 333.33509945 V66RE.

appeared in newspapers across the country.<sup>34</sup> And even without overtly declaring their intentions to attract potential migrants whilst in North America, the delegation received over 200 letters from interested American farmers during one week in Denver alone.<sup>35</sup> The positive response to Mead and McKenzie's presence in the United States was described by the delegation in 1911: "The President of the United States, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the owners and managers of irrigation projects in every State visited, expressed the greatest interest in our work, and their willingness to do everything possible to promote its success."<sup>36</sup> By contrast, surprisingly little can be found in a review of the Canadian and Australian press from the time about the delegation's visit to Canada. One British Columbian newspaper, *The Nicola Valley News*, reported Mead and McKenzie's stop in Vancouver and their interest in recruiting settlers from abroad; however, it was stated that the Victorians were seeking irrigation farmers from Britain, Europe and the United States, and not from Canada.<sup>37</sup> Several other Canadian newspapers also mentioned Mead and McKenzie's visit to the country, but did not note their recruitment objectives. Instead, emphasis was placed on the delegation's discussions with representatives from British Columbia's business sector to strengthen the emerging trade between the two countries, as well as their attendance at the inaugural international apple show in Vancouver, which included a small exhibit of Australian apples.<sup>38</sup> The reason that the delegation's tour may have received so little attention, particularly in the Canadian press as compared to the United States, could be in part because Mead and McKenzie decided that "no effort was made to induce [Canadian] immigrants to leave" whilst they were in the country.<sup>39</sup> One Melbourne newspaper, *The Herald*, did print a lengthy article about the delegation's visit to Canada and their intention of attracting the country's farmers to the state's irrigable lands. The article stated that the delegation's time in Vancouver "is likely to rank with the most important of the tour" and that,

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<sup>34</sup> 'Press is Compared', *Oregonian*, Oregon, 28 October 1910; 'Australians Investigating', *Deseret Evening News*, Salt Lake City, 13 October 1910; "Australians are Sight-Seers", *Western British American*, Chicago, 1 October 1910, PROV, VPRS 11186/P/0001, Unit 11.

<sup>35</sup> 'Mr Mead's Impressions', *The Age*, 1 December 1910, p.6.

<sup>36</sup> Land Settlement Delegation, *Report of the Victorian Land Settlement Delegation to the Honourable Premier of Victoria*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1911, p.3, SLV, SF 333.33509945 V66RE.

<sup>37</sup> 'Irrigated Lands for Settlers', *The Nicola News*, 4 November 1910, p.6.

<sup>38</sup> 'Australian Produce', *Northern Times*, 5 November 1910, p.5.

<sup>39</sup> 'Irrigation and Immigration', *The Advertiser*, 28 Nov 1910, p.10.

“Victoria’s invitation is now in the hands of these Canadian farmers, and it is certain that there will soon be a good many candidates for berths on the Vancouver boats bound for Australia.”<sup>40</sup> This article found its way into the hands of Canada’s Superintendent of Immigration, W.D. Scott.

### **Adopting Canadian Methods**

Whilst Mead and McKenzie made no outward effort to recruit Canadian farmers during their tour of the country, before departing the delegation quietly engaged a private company to begin recruiting Canadian settlers on the state’s behalf. In early 1910, Mead had successfully argued for a consistent representation of the state in the countries from which Victoria hoped to attract irrigation migrants. Prior to Mead’s employment with the state government, the number of personnel dedicated to encouraging immigration from Britain and elsewhere had been relatively small and piecemeal.<sup>41</sup> Mead emphasised that in order for the scheme to succeed, knowledgeable and proficient emigration agents were needed, especially if they wanted to convince experienced irrigators to emigrate:

Each intending settler has questions and problems of his own which differ in some degree from every other settler’s and these can only be dealt with to his satisfaction by a personal interview with some one [*sic*] acquainted with the conditions of the State to which he is going.<sup>42</sup>

Mead pointed to the success that Canada had found by maintaining a highly organised and consistent government emigration agent presence in key locations throughout Britain, Europe and the United States:

Canada ... has splendid organisation in her immigration enterprise. There are twelve men on permanent immigration staff in Europe. In 1908 she sent over thirty delegates to the United States to give special assistance in the work of obtaining immigrants. She has 10 permanent immigration officers in the United States and, in addition, pays commission to immigration agencies for all settlers obtained through them ... Canada finds it pays to adopt organised methods of obtaining settlers.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> ‘Canada’s Western Gateway’, *The Herald*, 8 December 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>41</sup> Langfield, “The Ideal Immigrant”, p.4.

<sup>42</sup> SRWSC, *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, p.14, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>43</sup> ‘More People’, *The Argus*, 17 January 1910, p.6.

Whilst he did not believe that Victoria required as many representatives as Canada, Mead suggested that a modest number of emigration agents should be engaged to “reach all the irrigated areas”.<sup>44</sup> It was also decided that rather than employing government representatives, Victoria would contract private companies established in the United States and Canada that were already active in the tourism, information or immigration industry. In the United States, the delegation engaged the Miller and Williams Company in Denver and the Peck-Judah Company, which had offices in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle. In Canada, Major Samuel Harris (and later B.J. Hansen and J.W.A. Kelly) was hired to represent the state in Vancouver. As a resident of Western Canada for over a decade, Harris was particularly familiar with the country’s prairie provinces.<sup>45</sup> Harris, Hansen and Kelly were also Australian by birth. Similar to the arrangements made between the Victorian government and British booking agents, contracts with private emigration agents in the United States and Canada were contingent on the number of settlers actually secured.<sup>46</sup> These emigration agents were expected to obtain American and Canadian migrants who were “of good reputation as to honesty, sobriety and industry”, who were experienced in irrigation farming, and in possession of at least \$1,500.<sup>47</sup> A potential migrant’s irrigation experience would also need to be verified by signed written statements from two reputable residents from the settler’s region of origin.<sup>48</sup> In return for securing a suitable settler, agents would be paid £2 for every male and family member over 18 years of age. It was noted in SRWSC report by the end of 1910 that, “The State’s representative in Canada believes 1,000 will come from that country in the next twelve months ... They will help to transform our irrigation areas from being unprofitable and unproductive to ones in keeping with their natural advantages.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> SRWSC, *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, p.13, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>45</sup> ‘Canada’s Western Gateway’, *The Herald*, 8 December 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306 0641, Part 1.

<sup>46</sup> Agreement between Major Samuel Harris and the Land Settlement Delegation of the State of Victoria, 4 November 1910, p.1, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Letter from SRWSC to the Hon. George Graham M.P., 9 December 1910, p.2, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000031, File 493.

In a letter to Major Harris on 13 January 1911, Mead outlined his expectations about where the newly appointed agent should source suitable emigrants: "I hope that you can secure us a good number of people from British Columbia and the State of Washington in America who have a little irrigation experience."<sup>50</sup> Along with British Columbia, Major Harris would also venture into the prairies to promote Victoria's irrigation areas and recruit settlers with either irrigation or general agricultural experience. He made at least two trips through the region in 1911, stopping at several major centres including Calgary, Edmonton and Medicine Hat in Alberta, Regina in Saskatchewan, and Winnipeg in Manitoba. Harris wrote to Mead stating his confidence in being able to entice a number of Canadian farmers from the region to emigrate, noting one interaction with a Scottish settler looking for land for his son. After meeting with Harris and discussing the opportunities in Victoria, the Scottish father had evidently "decided his son was better off in Victoria. He will be writing to you or Mr. McKenzie to make a selection for him."<sup>51</sup> In a subsequent letter, Harris reported that whilst travelling through the West, he had interviewed a large number of Canadian farmers and felt particularly confident that experienced irrigators could be secured Cardston in southern Alberta.<sup>52</sup> Whilst Cardston was a thriving and successful irrigation settlement in Western Canada by 1911, its establishment three decades earlier was mired in controversy because of the settler population it attracted. Many American Mormons had come to the region to settle on the irrigable lands during the 1880s, and although considered desirable because of their extensive irrigation experience, the new settlers were rumoured to be active polygamists despite Canadian federal legislation prohibiting it.<sup>53</sup>

Along with establishing a consistent state presence through private agencies and agents, Mead also insisted on the production of colourful and attractive printed

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<sup>50</sup> Letter from Elwood Mead to Sam Harris, 13 January 1911, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>51</sup> Letter from Samuel Harris to Elwood Mead, 12 February 1911, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>52</sup> Letter from Samuel Harris to Elwood Mead, 20 February 1911, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>53</sup> For more about the Cardston settlement, see work such as Lawrence B. Lee, 'The Canadian-American Irrigation Frontier 1884-1914', *Agricultural History*, vol.40, no.4, 1966, pp.271-284; Lawrence B. Lee, 'The Mormons Come to Canada 1887-1902', *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, vol.59, no.1, 1968, pp.11-22; Jessie L. Embry, 'The Mormon Experience in Alberta: Oral History of the Polygamy Question', *Oral History Forum*, vol.9, 1989, pp.17-20.

materials specifically for promoting Victoria's irrigation scheme and settlement opportunities. He cited the immense volume of immigration literature produced by the Department of the Interior as evidence that his Canadian counterparts valued this method of promotional work and found it to be effective for making the country's land and settlement opportunities more widely known:

In 1908 the Canadian Government distributed 2,327,747 different pamphlets, 31,000 maps and over 200,000 newspapers, and this was supplemented by the advertising of literature of the Canadian Pacific railway and numerous land companies.<sup>54</sup>

Printed materials produced by Victoria's Advertising and Intelligence Bureau were to be specifically tailored to a North American audience. Information was carefully expressed to suggest to American and Canadian settlers that emigrating to Victoria could be done with relative ease, and living in the Australian state would feel just like "being at home".<sup>55</sup> Some of the materials cheekily suggested that Victoria would not only be a familiar home, but an improved one. Whilst pointing out that "the climate and products of Victoria resemble those of California," the government's third bulletin booklet, *Victoria: The Irrigation State of Australia*, not so subtly indicated the positive climatic advantages of the Australian state over North America: "Indeed, scores of thousands of Victorian people residing in town and country have never seen snow."<sup>56</sup> *The Mildura Cultivator* observed that the Advertising and Intelligence Bureau's bulletin series were unlike anything previously produced and distributed by the state: "A publication of this kind marks a new departure in Victorian land settlement policy and it will be a good thing for the State if it succeeds."<sup>57</sup>

The bulletin series also carefully outlined what the Victorian government was prepared to offer to prospective settlers. A key objective of the irrigation scheme was to place new arrivals on the land immediately; however, as noted in the second bulletin, the state government recognised that, "One of the most difficult problems in land settlement is the time and the outlay required for the erection of the necessary

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<sup>54</sup> SRWSC, *Immigration Report*, 18 January 1910, p.19, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000081, File 1074.

<sup>55</sup> 'Bulletins for Settlers', *The Mildura Cultivator*, 4 February 1911, p.5; 'Peopling the Land', *The Argus*, 14 September 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>56</sup> Victoria, Advertising and Intelligence Bureau, *Victoria: The Irrigation State of Australia*, bulletin no.3, 1911, p.1, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>57</sup> 'Bulletins for Settlers', *The Mildura Cultivator*, 4 February 1911, p.5.



farm buildings and fences.”<sup>58</sup> In early 1910, Mead had pointed out that part of the success of the CPR’s private irrigation scheme in southern Alberta was due to the company’s provision of ‘ready-made’ farms to new settlers upon their arrival.<sup>59</sup> Whilst ready-made farms were by no means unique to Canada, with a number of private enterprises having constructed similar farms across the United States, Mead knew that the offer of a cleared block with a new fence and home had been particularly effective in attracting American settlers to the railway company’s irrigable lands only a few years earlier. Mead advised the Victorian government that providing this type of infrastructure to new settlers at low repayments over an extended period of time would ultimately encourage long-term settlement and investment in the region: “Such an arrangement will not only contribute to the material comfort of the labourer and his family, but it gives him an interest in the prosperity of the district, and his little home becomes the training school in agriculture and horticulture of his children.”<sup>60</sup> Mead’s suggestion to incorporate ready-made farms into the irrigation scheme was approved by the state government, and plans were drawn up to provide new settlers with a small selection of housing options that they could choose from for their new home. The size and cost of the government-built dwellings ranged from a one-room house for £34-£40, to a three-bedroom house with separate kitchen and living room for £265.<sup>61</sup> Interestingly, ready-made farms were also introduced in Western Australia in 1910; however, similar to Canada and the United States, they were the initiative of the privately-owned Midland Railway Company, rather than the state government.<sup>62</sup>

Another practice of the Canadian federal government that Mead put forward for the Victorian scheme was the use of government-organised tours to invite distinguished foreign guests, desirable agriculturalists and journalists to inspect the country and relay their findings back home. As noted in Chapter Three, in early 1910 the

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<sup>58</sup> Victoria, Advertising and Intelligence Bureau, *Victoria: The Irrigation State of Australia*, bulletin no.3, 1911, p.3, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>59</sup> ‘More People’, *The Argus*, 17 January 1910, p.6.

<sup>60</sup> Letter from the SRWSC to the Hon. George Graham, M.P., 24 January 1910, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>61</sup> Advertising and Intelligence Bureau, *Types of Houses for Settlers Erected by the Government of Victoria*, handbook, 1912, pp.3, 12, SLV, P690.837 R98L.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Midland Railway Company’, *Geraldton Guardian*, 13 January 1912, p.3.

Commonwealth and state governments were in discussion to replicate the Scottish Agricultural Commission's tour of Canada which had garnered considerable positive publicity for the country as a settlement destination. Whilst positive testimonials from community leaders such as the Scottish Agricultural Commission were considered beneficial in enticing prospective migrants, Mead was also aware that the land-seeker excursions, organised by Canada's Department of the Interior to bring out American and British farmers to inspect the land for themselves before deciding on whether to emigrate, produced equally positive results. At the *Advertising Australia Conference* in Melbourne in February 1910, he suggested that the Commonwealth and state governments should arrange this type of tour for American and Canadian settlers to inspect Australian lands.<sup>63</sup> Mead's recommendation was strongly supported by Australia's Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, who saw the tours as an excellent opportunity for collaboration between the state and federal governments.<sup>64</sup> As Victoria's Minister of Public Works and Water Supply in the 1880s, Deakin had advocated for the expansion of irrigation farming, viewing it as an advantageous method for rapidly growing the state's rural population and economy. He had taken part in several overseas study tours during this period to survey irrigation settlement in other countries and witnessed first-hand the immense success of American irrigation farms in California and Colorado.<sup>65</sup> As Prime Minister in 1906, he had told state premiers and ministers that in his view, "I do not abandon the idea that we shall gain suitable settles from both the United States and Canada, and in a very few years".<sup>66</sup> W.H. Clarke from the Advertising Branch of the Commonwealth Department of External Affairs also supported for Mead's idea, pointing to the significant capital American farmers reportedly brought with them to Canada, which in 1909 the Department of the Interior had valued at approximately

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<sup>63</sup> Michele Langfield points out that despite support from the Commonwealth government, the other states did not take part in the land-seeker excursions from America. Langfield, "Fit for the Elect of the World", p.88.

<sup>64</sup> 'The Immigration Mission', *Leader*, 12 March 1910, p.35.

<sup>65</sup> J.M. Powell, *An Historical Geography of Modern Australia: The Restive Fringe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p.49; Benjamin Rankin, 'Alfred Deakin and Water Resources Politics in Australia', *History Australia*, vol.10, no.2, 2013, pp.114-135.

<sup>66</sup> 'Conference of Commonwealth and State Premiers and Ministers: Report of Debates Together with Agenda Papers, Minutes of Proceedings and Appendices', *Australian Parliamentary Papers*, no.34, 1906, p.49.

\$60 million dollars.<sup>67</sup> He suggested that, “It may be deemed desirable in the near future to follow the example of Canada in respect of this form of incidental advertising.”<sup>68</sup>

During their tour of North America a few months later, Mead and McKenzie witnessed first-hand the success of Canadian land-seeker excursions particularly in convincing seasoned American farmers with moderate capital to emigrate:

It is very rare that the American farmer moves his family and capital to a new country until he has seen, approved, and selected the land for his new home. Much of Canada’s success in attracting farmers and capital from the United States has been due to its effective system of land seekers’ excursions, and to the attention given to the comfort of those who join them.<sup>69</sup>

Shortly after the *Advertising Australia Conference*, the Victorian government began organising its first land-seeker excursion to bring potential Canadian and American settlers to the state’s irrigation areas. In early 1912, the SRWSC Commissioner William Cattanach travelled to Canada and the United States to promote the tour. Whilst in Canada, Cattanach visited Winnipeg, Moose Jaw, Calgary, and Vancouver to advertise both the land-seeker excursion and the general advantages of irrigation settlement in Victoria to prairie farmers. He also took the opportunity to visit the CPR’s irrigation settlements outside of Calgary.<sup>70</sup> Cattanach then made his way to Chicago, where he stopped by the office of Canada’s Inspector for the United States Agencies, W.J. White. As noted in Chapter Three, White had led Canada’s successful promotional campaign in the United States in the 1890s, and along with the former Deputy Minister of the Department of the Interior, J.A. Smart, he had made several important recommendations that led to similar results in Britain in the early 1900s. It was noted that Cattanach “questioned him closely on his methods in securing American settlers by thousands for Canada”.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> W.H. Clarke, *Memorandum*, Department of External Affairs, 22 July 1910, National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA), A63, A1910/2923.

<sup>68</sup> Department of External Affairs, *Report by Mr W.H. Clarke on the General Question of Advertising*, 10 January 1910, pp.14-15, NAA, A63, A1910/2923.

<sup>69</sup> SRWSC, *Sixth Annual Report 1910-1911*, p.22, PROV, VPRS 9477/P0001/1.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Interested in Irrigation’, *The Strathmore Standard*, 9 March 1912, p.3.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Interested in Irrigation’, *Bassano News*, 7 March 1912, p.7; ‘Interested in Irrigation’, *Claresholm Review*, 7 March 1912, p.7.

By April 1912, the SRWSC Commissioner had attracted 46 American land-seekers to undertake the voyage to Australia. Hailed in the Australian press as “pioneer emigrants”,<sup>72</sup> the inaugural group included general agriculturalists, irrigation experts, two journalists from the American press, and even a former governor of the State of Wyoming. Whilst the state’s maiden land-seeker excursion was deemed an overwhelming success, it was not without controversy. During the course of the tour, it was found that several government agents from New South Wales had distributed their state’s immigration literature to the American visitors upon their disembarkation in Sydney, and had subsequently travelled to Victoria to attempt to entice the group to also visit their agricultural lands. Although the land-seekers declined, Victoria’s premier labelled these activities by the neighbouring state as “unfair and unfriendly”.<sup>73</sup> New South Wales’ attempt to divert the American land-seekers group also appeared to confirm Mead and McKenzie’s concerns about the existing transportation arrangements for both the land-seeker tours and the general movement of incoming American migrants to Victoria. In their report to the premier in early 1911, the two men had flagged that the steamship services from the United States was, in their opinion, the weakest aspect to the programme:

There is no direct passenger service between America and Melbourne. Everyone who comes must change his ship once or twice, and this causes uncertainty and delay which is most discouraging ... [The] opinion was freely expressed by those having considerable experience in settlement matters that unless we secure steamers coming directly from America to Melbourne, we must count on losing a considerable number of our settlers at these different ports of call.<sup>74</sup>

Although no Canadian farmers took up the opportunity to be part of the first excursion, subsequent land-seeker tours did attract a small number of the country’s settlers. A. Wilson, a Canadian farmer from Saskatchewan, decided he would take up land in the Bamawm District north of Melbourne following a personal inspection of the region. He told Melbourne’s *Leader* newspaper “It is his opinion that a great many farmers from the prairies of Canada would only be too glad to make their home in this

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<sup>72</sup> ‘Pioneer Emigrants’, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 May 1912, p.8.

<sup>73</sup> ‘Snatching our Landseekers’, *Geelong Advertiser*, 22 May 1912, p.4.

<sup>74</sup> Land Settlement Delegation, *Report of the Victorian Land Settlement Delegation to the Honourable Premier of Victoria*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1911, p. 4, SLV, SF 333.33509945 V66RE.

State, provided they were aware of the advantages which it offers.”<sup>75</sup> Glowing testimonials from the Canadian and American land-seekers like Wilson soon appeared in the Australian press and in immigration literature produced by the Victorian Government. One statement from W.J. Stover indicated the effectiveness of the land-seeker excursions in convincing otherwise-reluctant Canadian and American settlers to emigrate. Stover, an irrigationist from Rialto, California, had written to Mead in 1911 expressing an interest in Victoria’s scheme. With over ten years’ experience in the United States and Canada, Stover conveyed his hesitancy to emigrate without first asking a series of questions about the land and its farming prospects. In a letter to Mead, Stover justified his detailed questions by remarking that, “I presume to think that in event of going so far to undertake a home settlement on this land, that your department will appreciate that I may feel entitled to all opportunities necessary to make a careful selection”.<sup>76</sup> After accepting an invitation to tour the state’s irrigated areas during a land-seeker excursion, it is clear that the first-hand view of the region had successfully allayed the irrigator’s initial concerns:

The very efficiently organised system by which the Victorian Government receives visitors and prospective settlers seems to have won the admiration of us all ... I have found every promise of the agents and literature fulfilled.<sup>77</sup>

Stover was not alone in expressing concerns over the distance to Victoria and the perceived associated risks with emigrating so far from his original home. The Victorian Government observed that for the vast majority of would-be settlers, the decision to leave the United States and Canada was often hindered by the perception that the state was too distant, too costly, and therefore too great a risk. For American farmers contemplating taking up land in Canada, the geographic closeness of the two countries made their neighbour a far safer, and thus more appealing, destination. During the tour of the United States and Canada, it became evident to Mead and McKenzie that critical to the success of the Victorian scheme was securing reduced passenger rates similar to those negotiated for British migrants travelling to the state. Furthermore, the scheme would not only require reduced passages for confirmed

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<sup>75</sup> ‘Rich Irrigable Areas’, *Leader*, 13 January 1912, p.31.

<sup>76</sup> Letter from W.J. Stover to Elwood Mead, 12 July 1911, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>77</sup> W.J. Stover, *The Impressions of a Farmer from the Imperial Valley, California, U.S.A.*, pamphlet, 1912, p.3, LAC, Immigration Branch RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

settlers and their families approved by government agents, but also potential land-seekers wanting to inspect the lands first. Whilst securing a direct route to Melbourne would take time, negotiating reduced passenger rates with the steamship companies could be achieved relatively quickly. In late 1910 Mead contacted the New Zealand-owned Union Steamship Company to discuss the possibility of offering reduced passenger rates for approved settlers leaving from Vancouver and San Francisco for Melbourne.<sup>78</sup> As the contracted company for the Canadian-Australian Royal Mail Line, the Union Steamship Company received subsidies from the governments of Canada, Australia and Fiji for general mail and trade purposes.<sup>79</sup> By early 1911, Mead and the steamship company had reached an agreement for special rates to be introduced in March and April of that year for “a number of American farmers”<sup>80</sup> leaving from Vancouver and San Francisco. It is not clear whether this initial agreement also included reduced fares for approved Canadian settlers. The new reduced passenger rates were widely promoted in the third bulletin published by the state government entitled, *Victoria: The Irrigation State of Australia*. The publication stated that special prices had been introduced for first and third class single fares from Vancouver to Melbourne, which provided a savings of \$49.40 to first class passengers and \$15.85 for third class passengers bound for Australia, whilst those travelling in the opposite direction would continue to pay the regular fare.<sup>81</sup> Along with the reduced rate, approved applicants would also be eligible for assisted passage from the state government that was equal up to eighty per cent of the cost of an adult third-class ticket, provided they promised to settle on irrigated lands upon arrival in Victoria.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> The initial conversation between Mead and The Union Steam Ship Company chairman, James Mills, is referred to in a subsequent letter between the two men. See letter from James Mills to Elwood Mead, 31 December 1910, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>79</sup> Letter from F.C.T. O’Hara to W.W. Cory, 21 January 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1. For more on this, see Greg Donaghy’s chapter, ‘Parallel Paths: Canadian-Australian Relations Since the 1890s’, in Kate Burridge, Lois Foster and Gerry Turcotte (eds), *Canada-Australia: Towards a Second Century of Partnership*, Ottawa: International Council for Canadian Studies, 1997, pp.13-37.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from James Mills to Elwood Mead, 31 December 1910, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>81</sup> Victoria, Advertising and Intelligence Bureau, *Victoria: The Irrigation State of Australia*, bulletin no.3, 1911, p.17, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>82</sup> Victoria, Advertising and Intelligence Bureau, *Victoria for the Settler*, handbook, 1912, p.54, SLV, S631.587 V66A.

## Canadian Awareness

Although government immigration officials in Ottawa were aware relatively early on of Victoria's campaign to induce Canadian settlers to the state, from surviving correspondence between officials in the Department of the Interior during this period, it appears they were not initially concerned with the state's activities. Part of this was likely attributed to the status of Victoria's immigration programme by the early 1910s, which, while clearly growing, had been previously dormant for the better part of three decades. Furthermore, the introduction of such activities by a single Australian state would not have been considered overly threatening to the much larger dominion, particularly as Canada's own immigration intake showed little signs of slowing at the time. As discussed in Chapter Three, among Canadian and Australian immigration personnel there was also a willingness to share information about their methods and operations for recruiting and settling migrants because of a sense of professional comradery and a belief that what was good for one part of the Empire was ultimately good for the rest. Even regular newspaper reports published throughout 1910 of a rumoured mass exodus of Canadian farmers to Victoria did not initially worry Canadian authorities. Some of these articles even preceded the Land Settlement Delegation's tour. For example, on 14 April 1910 *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported that a number of settlers from British Columbia had been in contact with the Victorian Agent-General in London expressing their desire to leave Canada. It was stated that as many as 1,000 Canadian families intended to emigrate due to the "rigorously cold winter weather".<sup>83</sup> On 8 June 1910, the Canadian Assistant Superintendent of Emigration in London, J. Obediah Smith, wrote to the Superintendent of Immigration in Ottawa, W.D. Scott, alerting him to this statement which he had read in the *Melbourne Weekly Times*.<sup>84</sup> Smith advised that he had been in communication with British Columbia's Agent-General and he was assured that there was no truth behind the story.<sup>85</sup> However, the figure of 1,000 British Columbian migrants persisted in the Australian press, and by December 1910 the Canadian Trade Commissioner in Melbourne, D.H. Ross, wrote to inform Ottawa of yet another Australian newspaper article reporting the exodus of 1,000 Canadian farmers. As

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<sup>83</sup> 'Immigration: British Columbia Settlers', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 April 1910, p.8.

<sup>84</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 8 June 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

outlined in the previous chapter, as a representative of Canada's federal Department of Trade and Commerce, Ross was responsible for promoting trade and economic opportunities between the two countries. He had also served for a number of years as a point of connection between Canadian and Australian government immigration personnel, and from his office in Victoria's capital he had witnessed first-hand the rejuvenation of state operations to recruit settlers from abroad. Ross recommended that, at the very least, the Canadian government should keep an eye on the Victorian immigration programme as it appeared to be encouraging these reports of a Canadian exodus to the state: "While the proposals of the Victorian Government may not be sufficiently attractive to induce emigrants to leave Canada, yet it may be advisable for the Department to take some cognizance of what is being done."<sup>86</sup>

In his letter, Ross also enclosed a copy of *The Herald* newspaper article from 8 December 1910 that had outlined the delegation's tour of Canada and Victoria's intention of recruiting Canadian farmers. Ross pointed out that the article mentioned Major Harris's employment as Victoria's representative in Vancouver and that he was "to conduct an advertising campaign and [he] is offered a bonus of £2. a head for approved adults who leave Canada to settle in Victoria under his auspices".<sup>87</sup> The article also indicated Victoria had successfully negotiated a substantial discount off the regular passenger rates with the Union Steamship Company for land-seekers interested in touring the irrigated lands first.<sup>88</sup> The Trade Commissioner concluded his letter by stating that whilst he understood it was not the policy of Canada to attract emigrants from another British colony, "it would be a suicidal policy for the Canadian Government to subsidise a line of steamers taking passengers away from the Dominion at considerably less rates than passengers are brought to the Dominion over the same existing route".<sup>89</sup> Whilst friendly competition on an even playing field for migrants was acceptable, in Ross's opinion substantially lower passage costs away from Canada placed the country at a serious disadvantage to its colonial counterpart. Ross's report of the subsidised passage rates from Canada to Australia was worrying

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<sup>86</sup> Letter from D.H. Ross to F.C.T. O'Hara, 9 December 1910, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> Letter from D.H. Ross to James Mills, 18 January 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.



news for government officials within the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Department of the Interior, whom the matter was referred onto. In January 1911 the Superintendent of Immigration W.D. Scott sent a memorandum to the Deputy Minister of the Department of the Interior W.W. Cory expressing his concern:

It would appear to be a most incongruous thing that the Government of Canada should subsidise a line (I presume it is subsidised) and it be enabled to offer special inducements to our population to leave our shores for another British colony, while we are at the same time spending money to induce immigrants to come to Canada.<sup>90</sup>

The Canadian federal government promptly wrote to the Union Steamship Company to confront them about the lower passage rates and Victoria's advantage over the Dominion. On 18 January D.H. Ross sent a letter to the company's chairman James Mills in Dunedin, New Zealand, pointing to the negotiated Australian rates, stating, "You can readily recognise that the Canadian Government is not likely to view concessions in passage rates "one way" – and that to the disadvantage of the Dominion – with equanimity."<sup>91</sup> Whilst Ross placed pressure on Mills from Melbourne, in Ottawa W.W. Cory questioned the company's resident agent in Vancouver, J.C. Irons, requesting that he confirm the exact rates being offered to Canadian emigrants for travel to Australia and conversely to Australian migrants travelling to Canada.<sup>92</sup> Notably, there was some discrepancy between Mills and Iron's responses regarding the agreed price of the special passenger rate arrangement. Despite both men reassuring their respective Canadian officials that the third bulletin had incorrectly advertised the special first class fares, they offered different figures as to what had actually been negotiated with the Victorian Government. Writing to D.H. Ross on the 1 February 1911, Mills stated that the first class rate listed in the publication should have been \$175.20 rather than the \$158.40 quoted.<sup>93</sup> Mills claimed that this rate was only agreed to by his company on the condition that it was for a limited number of American farmers to travel during what were considered the "slack

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<sup>90</sup> Letter from W.D. Scott to W.W. Cory, 18 January 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>91</sup> Letter from D.H. Ross to James Mills, 18 January 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>92</sup> Letter from W.W. Cory to J.C. Irons, 2 February 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>93</sup> Letter from James Mills to D.H. Ross, 1 February 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

months” of March and April in the northern hemisphere. He noted that “In the pamphlet the quotation is made to apply to a longer period of the year, but this was done without our authority.”<sup>94</sup> Similarly, in response to W.W. Cory, J.C. Irons confirmed that the rate listed in the third bulletin was incorrect and only applied to those passengers travelling in March and April; however he reported to Cory that the agreed rate had been set at \$172.80, not the \$158.40 published in the bulletin nor the \$175.20 suggested by Mills.<sup>95</sup> Regardless of the discrepancy in the fares, the letters from Mills and Irons confirmed for Canadian officials that the rates offered by the Union Steamship Company benefitted only those passengers travelling to Victoria and not to Canada. Canadian personnel were perplexed about what the appropriate response should be, and as F.C.T. O’Hara, Deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce, pointed out, “We have no precedent for a case of this kind; in other words, complaining of the lower rate from Canada than is given to Canada.”<sup>96</sup> In March 1911, O’Hara met with J.C. Irons in Vancouver to discuss the company’s agreement with the Victorian Government. Whilst Irons initially assured O’Hara that the rates only applied to American farmers departing from Vancouver, he subsequently clarified that the reduced prices could in theory be granted to either American or Canadian settlers provided they were approved by one of Victoria’s representatives.<sup>97</sup> W.W. Cory responded to O’Hara’s report stating that “In view of the heavy expenditure we are incurring each year in the cause of immigration to this country it does seem a most remarkable thing that the Government of Canada should subsidise a line that is endeavouring to nullify our efforts in the way of encouraging the movement of a population towards Canada.”<sup>98</sup> Whilst the Minister of the Interior Frank Oliver suggested that O’Hara propose to Irons a matching of fares in both directions<sup>99</sup>, no evidence has been found to suggest that rates from Sydney to Vancouver were altered

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> Letter from J.C. Irons to W.W. Cory, 22 February 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>96</sup> Letter from F.C.T. O’Hara to W.D. Scott, 27 February 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>97</sup> Letter from F.C.T. O’Hara to W.W. Cory, 23 March 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>98</sup> Letter from W.W. Cory to F.C.T. O’Hara, 29 March 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>99</sup> Letter from W.W. Cory to Frank Oliver, 10 March 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

in the subsequent months of 1911. It is possible that the timing of the Canadian federal election, held in September of that year, may have played a part. Wilfred Laurier's Liberal government lost to Conservative Robert Borden after nearly 15 years in power. Whilst there was little change among the personnel of the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Department of the Interior following the election, it appears that the issue of passage fares from Australia to Canada was not pursued.

Perhaps adding further insult to injury, the Department of the Interior also had to grapple with an influx of letters from curious Canadian and American settlers wanting to know more about the Victorian irrigation scheme. Charles Besson of Montmartre, Saskatchewan, wrote to the federal government in 1912 asking for the price of "immigration tickets" from Regina to Melbourne.<sup>100</sup> In his reply, W.D. Scott, stated that he was unable to quote the necessary rates and suggested Besson instead contact the General Passenger Agent for the CPR or his nearest railway ticket agent for the desired information.<sup>101</sup> Thomas Parkes of Ottawa, Ontario, also wrote to the Canadian government in 1912 explaining:

I wish to proceed to Australia as early as possible as the warmer climate agrees with me better than Canada and work either on a farm or other outdoor work. I should feel extremely obliged if you would enlighten me on various matters as to the best place to go to for work, etc. I have no friends there and whatever information I could get would be very valuable to me.<sup>102</sup>

Scott responded to his letter as well, suggesting Parkes contact either the Peck-Judah Company in San Francisco or the Agent-General for Australia in London to obtain the necessary information.<sup>103</sup> It is evident in some of the letters that it was not entirely clear to the interested settlers which country was offering the inducements to

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<sup>100</sup> Letter from Charles Besson to the Department of the Interior, date unknown [received 2 November 1912], LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>101</sup> Letter from W.D. Scott to Charles Besson, 6 November 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>102</sup> Letter from Thomas Parkes to the Department of the Interior, 29 April 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>103</sup> Letter from W.D. Scott to Thomas Parkes, 7 May 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

migrate to Victoria. In May 1911 the Department of the Interior received a letter from William Ferguson of Lakeview, Washington:

I have been told that the Canadian government is sending people to Australia and that the government pays the fare for those who have little money but not enough to be able to pay th[ere] own way and have money [illegible] to start life with. The government afterwards col[lecting] fare from the wages of the people after they are located there please let me know if this is so and send me whatever information you can on the subject.<sup>104</sup>

Concerned by Ferguson's belief that the Canadian government was somehow involved in the Victorian scheme, the Secretary in Charge of Immigration L.M. Fortier asked if he could indicate where he had heard acquired this information:

I should be greatly obliged if you would inform me as to the source from which you obtained the information that the Government of Canada paid the fare of persons who desire to go from this Dominion to Australia. While we are using every endeavour to induce new settlers to come to this country from all parts of the world it must occur to you that the report you have heard is most unlikely to have any foundation in fact. If any assistance at all were given it would most likely come from the Australian Government.<sup>105</sup>

Presumably, with the intent to divert Ferguson's interest from Australia and potentially attract the American settler north, Fortier concluded his letter with information about Canada's own inducements and promised to send a pamphlet which would provide further details about settlement in Canada under a separate cover.<sup>106</sup>

### **Staying Neutral**

Despite expressing private concern over the increased attention of Victoria as a desirable settlement destination, officials from the Department of the Interior publicly maintained the position that they were not worried about the state's attempts to induce Canadian settlers. Personnel repeatedly stated in the press that it was the federal government's belief that good Canadian settlers would find Victoria's

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<sup>104</sup> Letter from William Ferguson to Department of the Interior, date unknown [received 15 May 1911], LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>105</sup> Letter from L.M. Fortier to William Fergus, 17 May 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 1.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

offer no more attractive than their current situation. W.D. Scott was quoted in one British Columbian newspaper that in his opinion, "Australia will have about as much chance to get immigrants from Canada as Canada has to get immigrants from Australia ... I do not think that the effort will meet with much success. As far as I am concerned I have no objection to offer."<sup>107</sup> Despite this assertion, any reports that appeared in the newspapers of sizeable numbers of Canadians being induced to Victoria were thoroughly assessed by Canadian personnel and quickly refuted when found to be inaccurate or exaggerated in order to avoid any damaging press. For example, in August 1912 Canada's government emigration agent in Wales, W.L. Griffith, cabled Scott to alert him to press reports in Britain that over 80 Canadian farmers and their families had been secured by Victoria and that "arrangements were now being made to take out some hundreds more".<sup>108</sup> Ottawa personnel checked this claim with J. Bruce Walker, the Commissioner of Immigration in Winnipeg, who confirmed that the number was "untrue and without the slightest foundation of fact. You may safely cable a sweeping denial of this rumour".<sup>109</sup>

While Canadian representatives in Britain monitored the country's papers, from his Melbourne office D.H. Ross also carefully watched the local Australian press and responded to any negative claims made about settlement conditions in the Dominion, especially by Victorian officials. On several occasions, Ross refuted negative reports about the supposed dissatisfaction of settlers in Canada due to the country's climate, including one made by the Minister for Lands, Hugh McKenzie. Shortly after returning from the delegation tour, McKenzie was quoted saying that new Canadian settlers were advising their family and friends back home not to join them in Canada because of the severity of the country's winter climate. In *The Argus* newspaper a few days later, Ross retorted:

In advancing his cause surely there was no necessity for Mr McKenzie to quote Canada or its climate. From an Imperial point of view, the advancement of one portion of the Empire should be a matter of pleasure to the rest. Would it not serve a better purpose to refer to the many

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<sup>107</sup> 'Doesn't Fear Australia', *Bassano News*, 22 June 1911, p.7.

<sup>108</sup> Telegram from W.L. Griffith to W.D. Scott, 29 August, 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>109</sup> Letter from J. Bruce Walker to W.D. Scott, 3 September 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

thousands of Britishers lost to the Empire every year by settlement in foreign countries?<sup>110</sup>

Ross also responded to similar remarks made by D. Dowrick, a public servant from the SRWSC. Dowrick, who had assisted William Cattnach in inducing the first group of American land-seekers in January in 1912, told *The Age* newspaper that from his experience in the country, Canada was “simply reeking with discontent, and he expects a steady stream of emigrants from that quarter”.<sup>111</sup> Ross wrote to the editor of the newspaper to voice his annoyance at the statement, suggesting that it was unfair of one member of the Empire to comment on the other after only being in the country for a short time: “imagine if a man from South Africa landing at Fremantle and, after three days there, writing to Capetown newspapers that Australia was seething with discontent and unrest, because there was a tram strike at Perth”.<sup>112</sup>

From Melbourne, Ross continued to provide regular updates to Ottawa so that officials at home could monitor the progress of the Victorian scheme. He reported in a letter to F.C.T. O’Hara in June 1912 that in ten days he had met with five separate Canadians in Melbourne who had all been induced to come to the state because of the literature they had been given by Victorian representatives.<sup>113</sup> Similarly, other Canadian government representatives based abroad also shared information with Ottawa about Victoria’s operations and its results. In January 1912, the Inspector for the United States Agencies, W.J. White, wrote to W.W. Cory to inform him of the first land-seeker excursion departing from the country: “During the past winter Australian interests have been active in the United States and I believe have succeeded in securing a large or fair portion of a shipload to leave one of the coast points, I think San Francisco, about the 1<sup>st</sup> April.”<sup>114</sup> White sent a subsequent letter confirming the steamer’s departure on 3 April from San Francisco, and noting that it was anticipated that two or three hundred passengers would participate in the round trip to inspect

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<sup>110</sup> ‘Mr McKenzie and Canadian Immigration’, *The Argus*, 27 December 1910, p.10.

<sup>111</sup> ‘Immigration Policy’, *The Age*, 11 April 1912, p.13.

<sup>112</sup> ‘Canadian Immigrants’, *The Age*, 12 April 1912, p.10.

<sup>113</sup> Letter from D.H. Ross to F.C.T. O’Hara, 29 June 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>114</sup> Letter from W.J. White to W.W. Cory, 22 January 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

the irrigable lands offered in Victoria.<sup>115</sup> In early 1912, J.H. MacGill, the Dominion Immigration Agent based in Vancouver, wrote to W.D. Scott advising him that he too had received numerous inquiries from settlers in British Columbia and Alberta requesting particulars about the passenger rates and the land offers in Victoria.<sup>116</sup>

There were also Canadian citizens who felt compelled to write the Dominion officials to alert them to Victoria's recruitment activities in the country. G.E. Boughton of Vancouver wrote to the Department of the Interior in early 1913 reporting of advertisements in the British Columbian newspapers promoting the Victorian scheme:

Gentlemen! Perhaps the enclosed clipping showing the Victorian Government advertising for Canadian immigrants may be of interest to you. The writer is of the impression that this is a violation of colonial courtesy and if this true all good Canadians will appreciate the attention of the Australian Government called to the matter.<sup>117</sup>

W.D. Scott responded to Boughton's letter, thanking him for his concern and stating:

Australia has for some time advertised for settlers in Canada, and while we have been cognisant of this, it has been thought advisable to take no special steps to prevent its being done ... Canada does not advertise in Australia, or in any British Colony which is desirous of increasing its population by immigration. While Canada takes this attitude, other parts of the Empire may not feel obliged to do so.<sup>118</sup>

Further to this, Scott reassured Boughton that although the Australian state was offering appealing inducements, "We believe Canada offers better advantages than does Australia and I do not think they are likely to take from us any number of really good settlers."<sup>119</sup>

Despite Scott's assertion that the best approach was to remain neutral, others suggested that the Canadian government should consider responding to Victoria's

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<sup>115</sup> Letter from W.J. White to W.W. Cory, date unknown [1912], LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>116</sup> Letter from J.H. MacGill to W.D. Scott, 16 January 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>117</sup> Letter from G.E. Boughton to the Department of the Interior, 7 January 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>118</sup> Letter from W.D. Scott to G.E. Boughton, 16 January 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

scheme by introducing their own advertising campaign in the state. In June 1913, G.T. Bell of the Canadian Grand Truck Railway reported to Scott that some of the American states and the country's private enterprises had adopted this approach, and were now advertising in Victoria to recruit agricultural settlers. The Oceanic Steamship Company was distributing the booklet *California for the Settler* on behalf of the American state to Victorian settlers, whilst Santa Fe Railways was handing out its own publication *Kansas - A Small Story of a Great State*.<sup>120</sup> In his reply, Scott again reaffirmed the position of his government was to "not advertise in sister colonies which are themselves desirous of increasing their population by immigration".<sup>121</sup> Whilst the Canadian federal government remained firm on its position, it appears that Canadian immigration literature produced by private enterprise found its way to Victoria by 1914. In a slightly ironic twist, the CPR began quietly sending its own irrigation literature to be circulated in Victoria with the hope of enticing Australian irrigators to Alberta's irrigable lands. Ross reported this development to Scott, observing that whilst he had resisted any urge to officially promote the Dominion on the grounds that for the government "it is better to let sleeping dogs lie", he had discovered that the railway company had decided to respond with their own recruitment campaign: "I found that a recent arrival from Calgary had brought forward a considerable quantity of irrigation literature and a little of it was circulated in this city."<sup>122</sup>

### **The Outcome**

The initiation of advertising by the Canadian railway company in Victoria may have also been, in part, a response to the dramatic increase in the state's migrant population by 1914. In 1910, the number of migrants arriving to Victoria during the year was recorded as 14,942; two years later, the annual figure had more than doubled to 34,568.<sup>123</sup> How many of these new arrivals were Canadians? It is difficult

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<sup>120</sup> Letter from G.T. Bell to W.D. Scott, 14 June 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 3.

<sup>121</sup> Letter from W.D. Scott to G.T. Bell, 16 June 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 3.

<sup>122</sup> Note from D.H. Ross to W.D. Scott, 2 May 1914, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 3.

<sup>123</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia*, no.7 (1901-1913), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1914, p.1038.



to say definitely, in part because it is unclear whether American farmers who were living in Canada or just using the port of Vancouver to emigrate were documented as American or Canadian. Furthermore, many settlers did not necessarily identify with one country or the other, some having crossed the border several times. From the SRWSC reports, it appears that the number of American and Canadian migrants to the state between 1910 and 1914 reached only a few hundred each year, with some years the total number being considerably less. Historian Richard Broome states that by December 1914 only 52 American farmers had settled on the land, while a further 200 had come to the state to work as agricultural labourers.<sup>124</sup> Certainly, the number of Canadians actually secured by Victorian officials was significantly fewer than the thousands once predicted by the state government and parts of the Australian press. It was suggested by a number of government officials that the state should consider terminating recruitment activities in the two countries due to the disappointingly low returns, particularly as the campaign had cost Victoria £10,000 or five times the amount it would have cost to assist the same number of migrants from Britain.<sup>125</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, British migrants constituted the vast majority of new arrivals recruited by state representatives during this period. And although perhaps not the intended target, the government's promotional activities also served to stimulate Victorians already resident in the state to take up irrigation farms for themselves.<sup>126</sup>

Along with failing to attract significant numbers of Canadian and American migrants, the Victorian government also faced a number of challenges in settling those that were enticed to the state. A key component of Elwood Mead's vision for the scheme had been the introduction of 'ready-made farms' and the provision of government-led infrastructure so that new arrivals could settle with few delays onto the land. This infrastructure included the erection of houses, buildings and fences, the construction of ditches, and planting of trees. Whilst in theory the standardisation of government-built dwellings meant homes could be constructed quickly, in practice building works in the irrigation districts often lagged well behind the arrival of settlers. In some

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<sup>124</sup> Broome, *The Victorians: Arriving*, p.133.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> A.M. Laughton, *Victorian Year-Book, 1914-1915*, Issue 35, Melbourne: Albert J. Mullett, Government Printer, 1915, p.194.

instances, government houses were built first on unoccupied blocks before those that had been taken up by settlers, causing further delays. State government personnel based in the irrigation districts regularly cited housing and accommodation among the chief grievances for new settlers. In his 1912 report on the status of Cohuna district settlers, F. Bassett reported to Mead that three settlers, who had arrived two months earlier and taken up irrigation blocks, were still waiting on construction of their respective houses. One man, Betts, had begun preparing his block for lucerne and barley growing and had already acquired eleven cows, but the other two men, Stone and Whipp, had decided to leave their blocks undeveloped and seek local employment until they had a permanent dwelling on their land.<sup>127</sup> Bassett warned Mead that it was unwise to leave these men waiting for their homes for long, particularly as “on other unoccupied blocks in the District[,] houses have been and are in the course of erection”.<sup>128</sup> Limited railway infrastructure also hampered housing construction and general settlement in the irrigation areas. In 1911, D.H. Ross sent W.D. Scott an article clipping from Melbourne newspaper *The Australasian* on the progress of settlement in the irrigation districts. The paper reported that the lack of railway facilities to the region was causing building delays as materials for Cohuna’s new homes were being transported overland from Melbourne. Further to this, it was noted that while Mead and other state government officials were generally pleased with the progress of settlement, it was found that only an estimated 50 per cent of the new arrivals had taken up land straight away, with the other half opting to work for other settlers first in order to gain experience before acquiring their own land. With perhaps a hint of Schadenfreude, Ross had underlined this statistic in the article, adding, “My dear W.D.S. How is this for your Australasian friends!”<sup>129</sup> Although housing construction delays and limited transportation were short-term issues for the scheme, longer term much of the land chosen for the scheme also came under scrutiny for being ill-suited to irrigation farming.<sup>130</sup> In 1916, a Royal Commission on Closer Settlement in the state found that the Closer Settlement Board

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<sup>127</sup> Letter from F. Bassett to Elwood Mead, date unknown [1912], PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000031, File 493.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> Letter from D.H. Ross to W.D. Scott, 8 May 1911, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2; ‘Peopling the Land’, *The Australasian*, 18 March 1911, p.28, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 2.

<sup>130</sup> Dingle, *The Victorians: Settling*, p.127.

and the SRWSC had purchased a significant proportion of land without properly inspecting it as to its suitability for irrigation farming and intense cultivation. The Royal Commission found, "To put the matter plainly, unsuitable land actually means failure from the outset in respect to intense culture. Evidence and observation have shown conclusively that a serious percentage of failures have occurred from this cause."<sup>131</sup>

For his part, Elwood Mead continued working for the Victorian government until the beginning of World War One when immigration began to decline. In 1915, he returned to the United States to take up a professorial role at the University of California. For many, the Victorian government's recruitment campaign under Mead's leadership to secure settlers between 1910 and 1914 was considered a great success, evidenced by the dramatic growth in the state's population in only a few short years. Others were more critical of Mead and the SRWSC's programme, particularly when it was found that a significant proportion of the state's new arrivals were choosing to settle in the city rather than take up land, irrigable or otherwise. As Michele Langfield points out in her study of Victoria's immigration during this period, of the 20,000 migrants that the state government assisted during this time, only 325 actually pursued immediate agricultural settlement.<sup>132</sup> This lack of land settlement was by no means unique to Victoria, however, and the failure of Australia and Canada generally to secure a populace that intended to take up land during this period will be considered in the following chapter.

The significance of Victoria's campaign for irrigation settlers during this period is not so much in the number of actual settlers secured, but in the operations introduced by the state government to induce and secure potential migrants. The state's adoption of a promotional campaign based on the methods used and perfected by Canada to secure its settler population highlights the closeness of the two Empire members during this period. It also indicates the extent to which they paid attention to each other's activities in this regard, and where, when it was considered advantageous,

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<sup>131</sup> Victoria, Royal Commission, *Final Report from the Royal Commission on Closer Settlement as to the Working of the Closer Settlement Acts in the Irrigable Areas and a General Review of the Finances of Closer Settlement; Together with Appendices*, Melbourne: Albert J. Mullett, Government Printer, 1916, pp.22-23.

<sup>132</sup> Langfield, "The Ideal Immigrant", p.9.

they chose to adopt or imitate the activities of the other in order to achieve similar outcomes. Victoria's imitation of Canada's immigration programme, coupled with the inclusion of Canadian settlers as targeted migrants for its irrigable lands, presented a significant shift in the accepted boundaries of the business of Empire migration in this period. As one newspaper opined in late 1913, the introduction of the state's experiment to advertise and recruit in Canada presented a new "interesting phase in the Imperial migration problem".<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Article title and newspaper unknown, 22 December 1913, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 3.

## Chapter 5

### Immigration, Settlement and the Dominions Royal Commission

In the final years before World War One, it appeared that the dominions' recruitment campaigns were producing the desired results in Canada and Australia's immigration returns. In 1913, a record 78 per cent of all British migrants were choosing to settle in Britain's dominions, a stark contrast to the 28 per cent recorded between 1891 and 1900.<sup>1</sup> Concurrent to this, Canada and Australia each recorded their highest immigration intake on record in the 1910s. Although Australia's immigration figures never reached the levels of Canada, the promotional efforts of state and federal government personnel dramatically altered the country's public image in Britain and by the 1910s had enabled the country to be a serious contender in the recruitment field. Whilst government policies and programs during this period were premised on satisfying both population and land settlement aims, the latter of the two objectives was noticeably less successful. Historians such as Keith Williams and Eric Richards have shown that while Canada and Australia's populations increased dramatically through immigration, the progress of colonial land settlement remained disappointingly slow as the majority of new arrivals chose to live in towns and cities rather than take up farming.<sup>2</sup> This trend towards urban settlement amongst Canada and Australia's new population was also well known by government officials and the wider public by the end of this period. In 1913, the former Canadian Minister of the Interior Frank Oliver pointed to government statistics showing that while immigration was continuing to rise, the country was actually experiencing a considerable annual decline in homestead entries. His conclusion that Canada was "not getting the people who are going on the land" inspired the paradoxical

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<sup>1</sup> Dominions Royal Commission (hereafter DRC), *Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, March 1917* (hereafter *Final Report*), London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> Keith Williams, "A Way Out of Our Troubles": The Politics of Empire Settlement, 1900-1922', in Stephen Constantine (ed.), *Emigrants and Empire: British Settlement in the Dominions Between the Wars*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990, p.27; Eric Richards, *Destination Australia: Migration to Australia Since 1901*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2008, pp.45-48.

newspaper sub-headline, 'More Immigrants – Less Homesteads'.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, census data released in 1910 indicated that although New South Wales was enjoying a significant growth in its population, the state's urban populace was outpacing its rural sector by a ratio of three to one, prompting Sydney newspaper the *Evening News* to ask why "are Australians town lovers?".<sup>4</sup>

This chapter will consider the reasons why Canada and Australia largely failed to secure a British populace that was prepared to take up colonial land settlement between 1890 and 1914. The outcomes of government-encouraged immigration and land settlement during this period have been considered in a number of scholarly works.<sup>5</sup> This chapter will contribute to the existing research through an examination of how Canadian and Australian government officials and personnel themselves viewed this failure by the World War One, and the reasons they provided at the time for the lack of land development among a population they overwhelmingly recruited and selected. In particular, this chapter will draw on the statements and evidence provided by government representatives during the hearings of the Dominions Royal Commission (DRC), a relatively neglected source of information about the period of settlement. At the 1911 Imperial Conference in London, Canadian Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier called for the appointment of a DRC to investigate the natural resources and production, manufacturing, and distribution facilities of the Empire colonies, as well as potential trade between them and with Britain. In the course of the investigation, the DRC would also examine migration and settlement as "the increase of population in those Dominions by means of migration from the United Kingdom appears to have an essential relation to the development of their natural resources".<sup>6</sup> The investigation into migration and settlement in the Dominions was in

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<sup>3</sup> 'Speech by Hon. Frank Oliver', *Edmonton Daily Bulletin*, 7 June 1913, p.6.

<sup>4</sup> 'Peopling the State', *Evening News*, 8 December 1910, p.9.

<sup>5</sup> For example, see Richards, *Destination Australia*, pp.45-48; Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010; Michele Langfield "'Fit for the Elect of the World": Government Policy and Contemporary Opinion About the Encouragement of Immigration to Australia, 1901-1939', unpublished PhD thesis, Monash University, 1988; Michele Langfield, "'The Ideal Immigrant': Immigration to Victoria Between Federation and the First World War", *Australian Studies*, no.8, 1994, pp.1-14; Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2010; Lucy H. Campey, *Ignored but Not Forgotten: Canada's English Immigrants*, Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2014; Williams, "'A Way Out of Our Troubles'".

<sup>6</sup> DRC, *First Interim Report of the Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His*

part a response to philanthropic organisations, imperialists, and Australia's Prime Minister Andrew Fisher in particular, who had been petitioning the British government to adopt a more formal approach to encouraging and directing its mobile population to settle within the Empire. The DRC's investigation into British migration and Empire settlement was considered vital to this debate.

By April 1912, the Commission was established with representatives from Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Newfoundland. Over the next four years the members of the DRC, heralded as a "new experiment in Imperial co-operation"<sup>7</sup>, travelled across Britain and the Empire interviewing government officials, representatives from private enterprises and charitable organisations, as well as individual settlers to evaluate existing immigration and settlement operations and to make recommendations for future policy and work. A number of scholarly studies have cited the DRC's final report, released in 1917, and recommendations made therein as an important catalyst for Empire settlement schemes introduced in the post-war period, particularly for British ex-servicemen and sponsored juvenile migration.<sup>8</sup> Few, however, have closely examined the testimonies documented during the hearings held in London in 1912, Australia in 1913, and Canada in 1916, and what this information reveals about Canada and Australia's official immigration and settlement programmes and those who administered them before World War One. Through an examination of this evidence, this chapter will show that immigration and lands personnel based at home were particularly vocal in suggesting that those most desired and pursued, namely adult British agricultural migrants, were generally ill-equipped to meet the demands of immediate settlement on Canada and Australia's colonial lands.

One of the central questions of the DRC investigation into Empire migration was to evaluate the number of British settlers that the dominions had recently secured and

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*Majesty, December 1912* (hereafter *First Interim Report*), London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912, p.3.

<sup>7</sup> 'Dominions Royal Commission', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 February 1913, p.12.

<sup>8</sup> For example see Michele Langfield, 'Voluntarism, Salvation, and Rescue: British Juvenile Migration to Australia and Canada 1890-1939', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.32, no.2, 2004, pp.86-114; Kent Fedorowich, 'The Assisted Emigration of British Service-men to the Dominions, 1914-1922', in Stephen Constantine (ed.), *Emigrants and Empire: British Settlement in the Dominions Between the Wars*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990, pp.45-71.

the settlement patterns of British settlers once in their new homes. Despite dwarfing all other dominions in its immigration intake between 1890 and 1914, a review of Canada's immigration returns indicated that British migrants constituted roughly one third of the country's incoming populace. Between 1897 and 1913, a little over 38 per cent of migrants in Canada were identified as British and Irish, whilst 35 per cent were arrivals from the United States, and the remaining 27 per cent were categorised as from "other countries except United States" or mainly from Europe.<sup>9</sup> From 1903 there was a marked increase in British immigration to Canada, which coincided with the adjustment of the country's recruitment operations in London as noted in Chapter Three. From 1903, British migrants mainly constituted the largest migrant group arriving annually in Canada until World War One, just slightly ahead of arrivals from the United States and Europe.<sup>10</sup> However, the DRC also observed that Canada's British population was overwhelmingly in favour of urban settlement over rural. In its *Fifth Interim Report*, the DRC stated that while 37 per cent of Canada's migrant population between 1907 and 1915 had come from Britain, British migrants only contributed to 27 per cent of the total homestead entries made during the same period. American settlers, by comparison, constituted 36 per cent of total arrivals and made up more than 39 per cent of the homestead entries in Western Canada.<sup>11</sup> The country's Assistant Superintendent of Emigration in London, J. Obediah Smith, told the DRC in 1912 that the British movement to Canadian urban centres mirrored a similar trend found in Britain: "The difficulty in Canada is that the towns in Canada are growing, like they are here, at a greater ratio than the population of the country. We do not wish that to continue; in fact we want to stop it, and we want to keep the people on the land because that is the policy."<sup>12</sup> This trend for British migrants, and especially English migrants, to settle in Canada's urban areas was particularly evident in the

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<sup>9</sup> Report of W.W. Cory, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1913', *Canadian Sessional Papers* (hereafter *CSP*), no.25, 1914, p.xxxiv.

<sup>10</sup> For immigration statistics and country of origin, see the Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior.

<sup>11</sup> The Commission also found that migrants from "other countries" accounted for 27 per cent of new arrivals and formed 33 per cent of homestead entries. See DRC, *Fifth Interim Report of the Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, February 1917* (hereafter *Fifth Interim Report*), London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.13.

<sup>12</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912, p.93.



country's eastern cities, such as Toronto. In her 2012 study, Amy J. Lloyd points to the growth of the city's English-born population, which rose from twelve per cent to nineteen per cent between 1901 and 1911 alone.<sup>13</sup> Lloyd suggests the English preference for urban settlement explains, in part, why a desire to attract British migrants could exist alongside a growing anti-English sentiment in the country. Along with the need for new farms to be established in the young western provinces, the older and more established farms in eastern provinces such as Ontario still required a migrant populace to work as agricultural labourers. The high numbers of English migrants choosing the city over the farm seemed to suggest to the existing Canadian population "too many English immigrants were from cities, were unskilled and were unable or unwilling to undertake agricultural work".<sup>14</sup> Some, including the former Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton, felt that it was due to the changes Frank Oliver had made to the immigration policy in 1906, which had placed emphasis on a potential migrant's cultural origin as opposed to their agricultural skills or experience. This, it was argued, had encouraged many British urban migrants to enter the country to look for work in cities and towns.<sup>15</sup>

The composition of Australia's migrant populace noticeably contrasted with Canada's. Immigration policies and government assisted passage schemes in operation during this period ensured that the country's migrant populace was almost exclusively British. For example, of the 163,990 immigrants admitted into the country in 1912, over 146,000 or roughly 89 per cent were identified as British.<sup>16</sup> The second largest group was German migrants, who constituted 3,501 or just over 2 per cent of the immigration figures.<sup>17</sup> The propensity of Australia's British populace to prefer town and city life to rural, however, mirrored that of Canada's. Statistical data taken in ten-

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<sup>13</sup> Amy J. Lloyd, "The Englishmen here are much disliked': Hostility towards English Immigrants in Early Twentieth-Century Toronto', in Tanja Bueltmann, David T. Gleeson and Donald M. MacRaild (eds), *Locating the English Diaspora, 1500-2010*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012, pp.138-139. Lloyd notes that the English constituted 80 per cent of the British migrant population entering the country in this period.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p.142.

<sup>15</sup> For more on this see D.J. Hall, 'Clifford Sifton: Immigration and Settlement Policy, 1896-1905', in Howard Palmer (ed.), *The Settlement of the West*, Calgary: University of Calgary, 1977, p.75.

<sup>16</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia* (hereafter OYBA), no.7 (1901-1913), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1914, p.1032.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

year intervals from 1891, 1901 and 1911 showed that across the country the proportion of men who identified as primary producers in Australia tended to remain constant and even to slightly decrease. This was particularly the case between 1901 and 1911, which showed that the number of primary producers had decreased from 27.2 per cent to 26.8 per cent.<sup>18</sup> The DRC even stated in its Second Interim Report that the urban population of Australia could be defined as “excessive”.<sup>19</sup> Some state government officials contended that the growth in urban populations was not the result of government-assisted immigration, but rather due to full-paying migrants and those supported by private enterprises and charity organisations. F.C. Govers from the New South Wales Immigration and Tourist Bureau stated that his government intentionally discouraged charitable migrants as it was believed that they were most likely to end up in the state’s urban centres: “Many of them are quite unsuited to farm life, and would have little chance of success if they did proceed to the country. It is feared a considerable proportion of such immigrants remain in the cities, and are the first to feel the effects of unemployment.”<sup>20</sup>

One reason for the slow progress of land settlement identified by the DRC was the lack of sufficient existing capital amongst Canada and Australia’s migrant populace. A consistent feature of both countries’ immigration policies was the expectation that migrants should possess a minimum amount of capital prior to arrival. As noted in Chapter Two, along with safeguarding against the possibility of new settlers requiring government or charitable aid, these conditions were aimed at attracting agriculturalists and landowners who would bring with them a larger proportion of existing capital to invest in their new home. Canada’s Assistant Superintendent of Emigration J. Obediah Smith told the DRC that whilst emigration personnel and booking agents were expected to observe the \$25 CDN minimum in required capital

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<sup>18</sup> DRC, *Second Interim Report of the Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, January 1914* (hereafter *Second Interim Report*), London: Published by His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1914, p.8.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>20</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.81.

after 1906, he admitted that this rule was not strictly imposed and officials were able to make exceptions on individual cases where it was considered appropriate:

These regulations are never intended to prevent any desirable person going out to Canada, and we do not lay down the law that a man who has only a little money or no money at all is, therefore, no good; on the contrary, he is offered the best lands if he has a little money and can work.<sup>21</sup>

Further to this, despite the required capital outlined by federal authorities, promotional literature produced by the Canadian government for recruitment purposes also encouraged the idea that those with less than the required \$25 CDN should still consider emigrating to Canada and could expect to do very well in their new homes if they had a strong work ethic. In the section titled 'Speaking from Experience' in the 1911 British edition of the popular handbook *The Last Best West*, was the story of British settler John Davies. Originally from Whixall, Shropshire, John had arrived in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1902 with only a small amount of existing capital but a willingness to work hard. He quickly secured short-term employment under a Canadian farmer and within the year John was able to take out his own homestead claim. John wrote that "all the money I had when I arrived here was £14, less than \$70, and to-day I have about £1,000".<sup>22</sup> Whilst John had done very well in a relatively short period of time, during the DRC's hearings in Canada, evidence was given showing that his story was not common for most British settlers in the country. It was found that those with minimal existing capital were generally unable to take up land, even the free quarter-sections offered by the government:

We found it agreed on all sides that it was inadvisable that anyone should take up land on his account without the possession of sufficient capital or previously acquired knowledge of Canadian farming conditions.

Comparatively few immigrants on arrival, certainly few of those from the United Kingdom, possess either of these qualifications, and hitherto no facilities have been available, except through private help and enterprise, for their acquisition.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912, p.85.

<sup>22</sup> Canada, Department of the Interior, *The Last Best West is Canada West*, handbook, Issued by Direction of Hon. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, 1911, p.33, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 390, File 541601.

<sup>23</sup> DRC, *Fifth Interim Report*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.12.

By contrast, it was observed by the DRC that American migrants arriving in Canada possessed greater existing capital than their British contemporaries and as such were able to establish themselves more rapidly on the land and with a higher degree of success. American farmers also possessed knowledge and experience of similar land conditions, and overland migration made it possible for many to transport existing farming implements, animals and household items.<sup>24</sup> With greater existing capital, American settlers were more readily able to purchase railway and private lands with established buildings, fences and other improvements rather than take up an unbroken government quarter-section that required three years of hard work before the title could be secured. Charles S. Hotchkiss, the Chief Publicity Commissioner for Alberta's Department of Agriculture, told the DRC at a hearing in Edmonton in 1916 that because of their ability to settle quickly and with a higher degree of success, American farmers were from a practical viewpoint preferable to British settlers: "There are a good many things to learn before the man from overseas can make his efforts tell like the man living adjacent to us and who has lived similar to us."<sup>25</sup> Along with this, though not classified as 'migrants' in the traditional sense, eastern Canadians from the provinces of Ontario and Quebec were among some of the highest number of homestead entries during this period, arguably because of the similar position they held to American farmers in bringing to the North-West existing capital and knowledge of Canadian land conditions.<sup>26</sup>

Part of the relaxing of capital requirements for accepted migrants also came in response to the increasing difficulties articulated by Canadian and Australian emigration personnel in sourcing British agriculturalists with sufficient existing capital. Victorian representatives observed that it was significantly easier to induce British agricultural labourers with smaller means as their ability to leave was far

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<sup>24</sup> Bill Waiser, *Saskatchewan: A New History*, Calgary: Fifth House, 2005, p.110.

<sup>25</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in the Central and Western Provinces of Canada in 1916, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, February 1917*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.19.

<sup>26</sup> For example, in 1904 Canadians from Ontario were reported as the second highest 'migrant' group to submit homestead entries in the North-West. Report of J.A. Smart, 'Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1903-1904', *CSP*, no.25, 1905, p.xxv.

greater and the perceived risks associated with liquidating their assets was considerably less as compared to the more affluent agriculturists:

The percentage of farmers to farm labourers among the immigrants is, however, decreasing. The reason for this is not obscure. Farmers with capital and established homes are harder to move than labourers with little or no capital, because there is much more to be done before they leave home, and much more to lose if conditions are not as represented.<sup>27</sup>

As such, personnel from the Agent-General's office were more willing to accept those with less capital, provided that they had some agricultural experience and were prepared to take up much smaller irrigation blocks in the state.<sup>28</sup> In some instances, an applicant's existing capital was markedly less than the state's recommended £300 minimum. In 1910, David Downie from Dunfermline, Scotland, applied to Victorian officials for assisted passage, noting that while he only possessed £17 and was in his opinion "not an experienced farmer", he had worked on a small croft farm in Scotland and a wheat farm in Manitoba.<sup>29</sup> Despite his small savings and perhaps questionable agricultural experience, Downie's application for himself, his wife and two children was accepted by the Agent-General's office.<sup>30</sup> When questioned by the DRC in 1913, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (SRWSC) chairman Elwood Mead conceded that similar to Canada each application was at the discretion of the state's London personnel, and exceptions to capital requirements such as Downie's were by no means unique: "Whilst we say abroad that a man must have at least 300£ capital, we break that rule whenever we think that its enforcement would deny a suitable settler an opportunity to succeed."<sup>31</sup>

Whilst it was easier for Canadian and Australian officials in Britain to secure agricultural labourers, immigration and lands personnel at home found that this

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<sup>27</sup> State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, *Sixth Annual Report 1910-1911*, p.22, Public Record Office Victoria (hereafter PROV), VPRS 9477/P0001/1.

<sup>28</sup> Victoria, Advertising and Intelligence Bureau, Victoria: *The Irrigation State of Australia, Information for Prospective Settlers*, handbook, c1912, p.22, State Library of New South Wales, 333.335/2.

<sup>29</sup> Letter from David Downie to the Agent-General for Victoria, John William Taverner, 17 August 1910, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Appendix: Land Settlement and Irrigation, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1913, p.120.

group overwhelmingly experienced greater difficulties in acquiring and settling on the land, even when the land was provided at a nominal cost. As noted in Chapter Two, a quarter-section in Canada's North-West was free (less an administrative fee) if a homesteader could fulfil the requirements of residency, land cultivation and the erection of permanent structures such as a fence and house within three years. Whilst these conditions were designed to discourage speculation and short-term settlement, it was found that until sufficient crops could be harvested, new settlers would have little income during the years they were required to stay on the land. One Canadian witness told the DRC that because of this "the first three years of a homesteader's life are largely fruitless to himself, and economically lost to the country. Frequently the sordid discouragement of these three years not merely deteriorates the settler, but turns him from an agricultural life."<sup>32</sup> Similar conclusions were found for Victorian irrigation settlers in a separate Royal Commission investigating Closer Settlement in the state. In the final 1916 report, the Victorian Royal Commission observed: "The first three years is the biggest struggling period which a settler has to encounter. He has to clear his land, fence it, grade and sow it, and at the same time erect his home and the outbuildings and pay his land instalments and water rates, and earn a living. As a rule, for the first eighteen months he receives no return."<sup>33</sup> The financial challenge of the first three years, coupled with the seasonal nature of agricultural work particularly for Canadian settlers, also compelled many new settlers to take up off-farm work. The Commissioner of the Saskatchewan Board of Trade, F. MacLure Sclanders, told the DRC in 1916 that "the homesteader who is struggling along to get his homestead and start his life on the plains, if he can come into the town and make a little money in the winter time, tries to do so".<sup>34</sup> Steady employment and the predominantly higher wages experienced in the city was often more appealing than returning to the homestead in the spring.<sup>35</sup> The challenge of meeting the conditions

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<sup>32</sup> DRC, *Fifth Interim Report*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.17.

<sup>33</sup> Victoria, Royal Commission, *Final Report from the Royal Commission on Closer Settlement as to the Working of the Closer Settlement Acts in the Irrigable Areas and a General Review of the Finances of Closer Settlement; Together with Appendices*, Melbourne: Albert J. Mullett, Government Printer, 1916, p.13.

<sup>34</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in the Central and Western Provinces of Canada in 1916, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, February 1917*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.29.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p.183.

was also compounded by the fact that as the government retained ownership of the land until they were satisfied that the settler had met all requirements, new settlers were unable to take out loans against the land in order to meet the conditions:

Our present methods of handling the homesteads unquestionably tie up the productive efforts of a man for the first three years of his life in this country.

***Can he borrow?*** Not unless he has his patent (or title), and then he can only borrow 40 per cent. of the conservatively assessed value of his land. The first three years of his life he has a hard struggle.<sup>36</sup>

F. MacLure Sclanders told the DRC that he believed the Australian system of loans against the mortgage of the land through the state agricultural banks was one that Canada should seriously consider as it gave settlers “enough – not money but *improvements* – to enable him to earn a livelihood almost from the beginning”.<sup>37</sup> H.M.E. Evans from the Edmonton Board of Trade agreed that any consideration of government financial assistance should go towards improvements, but was opposed to any other monetary assistance for new settlers otherwise. He stated that, “the failure of loans to raw men on raw lands will so far outweigh the success that it will not be a good scheme”.<sup>38</sup> Instead, Evans suggested government financial assistance should be directed to the “established farmer to enable him to hire the other man as his labourer”.<sup>39</sup>

The DRC found that part of the rationale for providing minimal assistance came from the pervasive belief among government officials that an individual’s agricultural experience outweighed their need for financial support. New South Wales politician John Treflé told the DRC in 1913, “I have heard a great many men dogmatise on that, and most of the information given is misleading. One man may go on a block with 300£, or 400£, capital and yet fail. Success largely depends on the energy, experience, and capacity of the settler.”<sup>40</sup> It is clear, however, that the amount and type of

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.31-32.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.32.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.25.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Appendix: Land Settlement*

experience that a potential migrant required could, like their existing capital, be widely interpreted by the London staff. Western Australia and Queensland officials, for example, provided government-assisted passages to those that fell under the category of “country workers” including axemen, fishermen, gardeners, and horse drivers.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, even British settlers with extensive and practical farming experience could be challenged by colonial farming conditions, particularly in Australia. One British settler told the DRC that despite his significant British farming knowledge and experience, he was delayed in establishing himself on the land in New South Wales because the conditions were so foreign:

I was trained in English farming in Hampshire, Surrey, and Kent. I came out here, and I found that I was all at sea. The conditions were so utterly different that it took me two or three years to get anything like a good knowledge of the way in which farming should be carried on here.<sup>42</sup>

Queensland’s Under Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, Ernest Scriven, also conceded to the DRC that even the most seasoned British agriculturalists struggled to settle straight away in his state: “Here we grow different crops, we have different seasons, and a good deal of our agriculture is of a different form from that in England ... no man, whatever his training might be in Europe, can come here and start farming straight away if he wants to save his money.”<sup>43</sup> Canada and Australia did offer limited formal training facilities in the way of government agricultural farms for new settlers as well as instructional pamphlets and lectures.<sup>44</sup>

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*and Irrigation, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.14.*

<sup>41</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1912, p.104*; DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.4.*

<sup>42</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Appendix: Land Settlement and Irrigation, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.105.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>44</sup> It was pointed out by several witnesses that government advice and the production and distribution of official information dominion farming techniques to settlers were increasing at that time. See for example, G.H. Knibbs, *Replies to Memorandum of Questions Submitted by the Dominions Royal Commission*, Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1913, p.50, 54.



In order to mitigate the challenges of dominion farming, new arrivals were encouraged by immigration and lands officials to seek short-term employment on established farms before venturing out on their own, so that they could acquire the necessary knowledge and experience of local conditions. This was especially emphasised amongst those with limited agricultural experience and existing capital, as short-term employment would enable them to obtain further savings before attempting landownership themselves.<sup>45</sup> J. Obediah Smith stated to the DRC in London in 1912 that for recently arrived migrants, “the best and quickest way to learn to farm in Canada is to live with a farmer out there, under the advice of one of the many Government agents, and do the best he can from the first day”.<sup>46</sup> Government and private labour bureaus across Canada and Australia arranged for new migrants to be placed with existing farmers looking for labourers. In 1908 the Department of the Interior wrote to a number of Canadian farmers employing recently-arrived British agricultural labourers requesting information on the “kind of satisfaction he is giving and what wages he is receiving”.<sup>47</sup> Ontario farmer John Ploughman replied that he was greatly satisfied with his British labourer Henry Clark, “considering of course he knows nothing about farm work only as he learns, but he seems willing to learn”.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, Quebec farmer E.B. Pope responded that his British labourer H.G. Chandler was “steady and doing well ... seems to like and take to the work quite handy. I think the only trouble with him is, he is very small, and farm work is heavy”.<sup>49</sup> Similar reports were sent to Victoria’s SRWSC, with some noting the reluctance of new arrivals to take on certain types of agricultural work. In 1910, SRWSC employee J.M. Skene wrote to Commissioner William Cattanach about a migrant named Barnder who had arrived in the Swan Hill region to take up work as an agricultural labourer. Skene reported that Barnder was offered a job straight away

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1912, p.92.

<sup>47</sup> Letter from the Immigration Branch, Department of the Interior, 1908, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 99, File 13098, Part 2.

<sup>48</sup> Letter from John Ploughman to W.D. Scott, 15 May 1908 LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 99, File 13098, Part 2.

<sup>49</sup> Letter E.B. Pope to W.D. Scott, 11 August 1908, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 99, File 13098, Part 2.

by two farmers to sink post holes for new fences, but refused the work suggesting he would gain little knowledge from it and “What he wanted was a job at good wages and to be instructed in planting, milking, etc.”<sup>50</sup> Skene stated that, “That class of man would be very little good on a farm for some time, he knows absolutely nothing about the work and therefore cannot expect to get at ruling wages right away.”<sup>51</sup>

The encouragement of British migrants to acquire experience on established farms before becoming landowners themselves inevitably meant that land occupation progressed significantly slower during this period than Canadian and Australian officials had anticipated, or perhaps hoped. Western Australia’s Immigration Officer A.O. Neville told the DRC in 1913 that only approximately ten percent of immigrants took up land in the state within a year of their arrival.<sup>52</sup> In Australia, the total area annually devoted to crops was estimated at over 13 million acres by 1913, which, while considerable, “viewed in relation to the total area of the Commonwealth, it is relatively small, and represents considerably less than 1 per cent. of the total area”.<sup>53</sup> Queensland’s Immigration Agent, John O’Neill Brenan gloomily predicted that, “The vast area of land will be crying out for the next hundred years at the rate we are going to-day.”<sup>54</sup>

The location and quality of available public lands further hampered the progress of settlement in Canada and Australia. In Canada’s North-West, the government’s decision to divide the land into uniform quarter-sections completely disregarded variation in soil quality and farming suitability, which consequently led to many new settlers abandoning their homestead before they had secured title or patent. Whilst

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<sup>50</sup> Letter from J.M. Skene to William Cattanach, 27 October 1910, PROV, VPRS 3844/P/000082, File 1075.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.71.

<sup>53</sup> Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, OYBA, no.7 (1901-1913), Melbourne: McCarron, Bird & Co., 1914, p.90.

<sup>54</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.2.

the federal government had made several amendments under the direction of Clifford Sifton to the *Homestead Act* in the late 1890s to encourage greater flexibility of land use and settlement in the North-West, including irrigation settlements in Alberta, no changes were made to enable settlers to apply for a second free homestead after patent. The federal government maintained the position that any subsequent land acquisition had to be paid and allowing settlers to leave their initial quarter-section, regardless of the reasons for doing so, would only encourage short-term settlement and land speculation.<sup>55</sup> Further to this, by the 1910s, when immigration and interest in the region had reached its peak, the majority of the remaining available homesteads were located in the drier and more remote southern regions of Saskatchewan and Alberta.<sup>56</sup> Whilst Australian lands policies gave greater recognition to soil variation, new settlers largely lacked the necessary capital to purchase higher quality land found in more advantageous locations near rail lines and other infrastructure. This was the case in places such as the Darling Downs in Queensland which was primarily held in private hands and as such sold at a much higher price.<sup>57</sup> Drought in the final years before World War One also exacerbated issues around the realities of land suitability for farming and settlement. Two short but significant droughts in 1911 and 1914 saw the Western Australian government adjust the availability and selection of land in regions where rain fall was considered insufficient.<sup>58</sup>

In New South Wales and Victoria, slow progress of small-scale farming settlement was also attributed to government's land resumption program. When questioned why he believed almost half of the New South Wales' population lived in urban centres, Percy Hunter explained to the DRC that the slow progress of breaking up existing pastoral holdings meant the land had not been readily available for recently arrived

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<sup>55</sup> Hall, 'Clifford Sifton', p.63.

<sup>56</sup> Jeremy Adelman, *Frontier Development: Land, Labour and Capital on the Wheatlands of Argentina and Canada, 1890-1914*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, p.28-29.

<sup>57</sup> For more on this, see J.C.R. Camm, 'Commercial Wheat Growing in Queensland 1870-1915', *Australian Geographer*, vol.13, no.3, 1976, pp.173-181.

<sup>58</sup> Sean Glynn, *Government Policy and Agricultural Development: A Study in the Role of Government in the Development of the Western Australian Wheat Belt, 1900-1930*, Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1975, p.92.

migrants.<sup>59</sup> In Hunter's view, "Our demand for rural labour will grow, but there is certainly a limit to the number of people we can absorb at any one time. The fact that we are undeveloped makes that so."<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Victoria's SRWSC claimed one of the greatest challenges in increasing the state's irrigation settlement was the acquisition of land at a fast enough pace to meet the demands of new settlers. In his testimony to the DRC in 1913, the SRWSC Chairman Elwood Mead stated that this meant that Victoria had to proceed at a much slower pace, particularly in comparison to Canada:

You must understand our conditions. When we took up this work we could only care for settlers as fast as we acquired the land, put the channels on it, and made it ready for them ... If we had entered on a campaign like Canada, or, indeed, had done very much more than we did, we should have had more settlers than we could care for, and the whole movement would have been hopelessly discredited.<sup>61</sup>

The general consensus by World War One was most new settlers required some degree of training on established farms before taking up their own land seemed to suggest to the members of the DRC that the dominions' official position and insistence of securing experienced British agriculturalists was largely irrelevant. In their second interim report released in 1914, the DRC stated that: "We have not found in the evidence which we have taken either in the United Kingdom or in Australasia confirmation of the current opinion that only those who have followed agriculture in the Old Country can be expected to become successful agriculturists in the new."<sup>62</sup> Despite this, Canadian and Australian authorities were mainly reluctant to consider sourcing their settler populations from the British urban centres. When it was suggested that some of these men would have likely moved from the country to the city, Victoria's Honorary Minister of Immigration Frederick Hagelthorn told the DRC

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<sup>59</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912, p.19.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Appendix: Land Settlement and Irrigation, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1913, p.124.

<sup>62</sup> DRC, *Second Interim Report*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1914, p.10.

that personnel from his state had experimented in this area and the results had not been very positive, particularly in recruiting older migrants.<sup>63</sup>

Whilst it was conceded that older migrants generally struggled to adapt to the farming conditions in Canada and Australia, there were growing calls for the dominions to consider accepting British urban youths who could receive the necessary training for agricultural settlement. Victoria's Agent-General John William Taverner stated to the DRC that while the state did not accept "town-bred British men as farm labourers" he was a strong supporter of schemes to send out British urban youths: "Put these lads in an agricultural atmosphere, feed them on farm produce, and a strong and healthy addition to the Empire's manhood will be the result."<sup>64</sup> Through the course of their investigation, the DRC found that "the town-bred youth often finds his feet more quickly in his new social conditions and environment than does the rustic".<sup>65</sup> In Australia and New Zealand, the DRC concluded that the best age for emigrants was those between the ages of 16 and 24 years.<sup>66</sup> Certainly small experiments conducted by governments, charitable organisations and individuals in training British youths for agricultural settlement in Canada and Australia had already shown promising results. H.M.E. Evans from the Edmonton Board of Trade stated that his own personal experience in training a British youth on his ranch had been highly successful:

This boy was a smart boy, and he was only getting \$4 a week, and I sent him out to the ranch, and that boy worked for me out at the ranch for several years, and he gained good experience, he got a homestead, and today he has got four and one-quarter sections of land, that is 640 acres in each section, and he owns it all ... I do not think he owes anything to anybody, and it is not more than about dozen years he has been at the business himself, and he started with nothing.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1913, p.59.

<sup>64</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912, p.22.

<sup>65</sup> DRC, *Second Interim Report*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1914, p.10.

<sup>66</sup> 'As Others See Us', *Sunday Times*, 1 February 1914, p.16.

<sup>67</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in the Central and Western Provinces of Canada in 1916*,

In New South Wales, a scheme to train British city youths on the state's agricultural farm at Scheyville near Pitt Town had been established in 1910, and the state's Immigration Officer Percy Hunter told the DRC that although only a few hundred youths had thus far been brought out, if it was possible he would "not have the slightest hesitation in taking 1,000 boys a year in that way".<sup>68</sup> Although the Queensland government had not yet considered recruiting British urban youths, the state had accepted a small number of individuals through charitable organisations including the Church Army. During the DRC's hearings in London, the state's Agent-General T.B. Robinson also mentioned the results of *The Daily Mirror's* experiment in 1910 to train two London men in agricultural practices so that they could be eligible for settlement in Queensland. As noted in Chapter One, the newspaper had selected William Munson and Archibald Ivell from the Embankment area to see if they could be trained in agricultural practices well enough to be accepted as agricultural migrants by one of the dominions. The Agent-General noted that whilst there had actually been a third young man who "did not prove amenable to the course of training on Mr. Falconbridge's farm, and disappeared" (a detail which *The Daily Mirror* failed to mention its coverage of the experiment!), the two remaining men "had turned out exceedingly well. It was a surprise to a great many of us."<sup>69</sup> Both William and Archibald had gone on to secure agricultural employment in Queensland. When questioned by the DRC whether he felt that this experiment indicated that this form of training would be a good scheme in the future, Robinson stated, "if they had preliminary training which would enable a man on his arrival there to go into some self-respecting employment, it is astonishing the effect it has".<sup>70</sup>

Government officials also pointed out that in many cases adult male settlers with families faced greater difficulties in securing the necessary training on existing farms

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*Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, February 1917, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.25.*

<sup>68</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912, London: Printed Under Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912, p.21.*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p.119.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

than single men and youths. Queensland Immigration Officer John O'Neill Brennan pointed out that in a practical sense this was because, "No employer would feed a whole family simply to get the work of the man himself."<sup>71</sup> The DRC observed that this disadvantage often forced male settlers to leave their families in towns and cities whilst they sought work in the rural areas – an arrangement that often further delayed the settler acquiring his own land because of the challenge of supporting two separate residences.<sup>72</sup> It was also suggested by the DRC that because of the lack of infrastructure to support families in rural areas, including schools and access to medical professionals, family migration should not be encouraged as "on a large scale (it) is likely rather to swell the town population than to people the country-side".<sup>73</sup> One Canadian official also believed that this lack of infrastructure was one of the main reasons that wives of settlers were likely to persuade their partners to settle in urban centres rather than stay on the land:

The wife very often is the trouble; she cannot stand the loneliness of the plains, she misses the shops and the stores, and the general bustle of city life, and I have known in my nine years' experience quite a number of instances where a man would have like to have stayed, but his wife insisted on coming back into the town.<sup>74</sup>

Others argued, however, that women ensured married male settlers saw their land as a "home" and were more likely to settle longer-term, whereas bachelors were inclined to drift to towns and cities without the support of a partner.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, concern that there were not enough women in Canada and Australia was highlighted by a number of government personnel during the DRC hearings. The DRC found that the ratio was only slightly skewed, with 926 females in Australia and 886 females in Canada for every 1,000 males.<sup>76</sup> Whilst this contrasted with Britain, where the female

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<sup>71</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1913, p.4.

<sup>72</sup> DRC, *Fifth Interim Report*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.12.

<sup>73</sup> DRC, *Second Interim Report*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1914, p.14.

<sup>74</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in the Central and Western Provinces of Canada in 1916, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, February 1917*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.29.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p.34.

<sup>76</sup> DRC, *Second Interim Report*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1914, p.11.

population outnumbered male, the DRC pointed out that in Britain the excess of female population was predominately over the age of 40, and was not suited for countries seeking a younger population for marriage and settlement.<sup>77</sup> The DRC concluded that it wasn't necessarily eligible women for marriage that Canada and Australia needed, but rather domestic servants to mitigate labour shortages.

The state passage schemes were proven to be powerful inducements for potential migrants in choosing Australia over other destinations, and they also enabled government officials a vehicle for carefully screening their incoming populace. By the years immediately before World War One, however, it was clear to Australian personnel that those taking up subsidised passage through the nomination system overwhelmingly chose the city over the country. Historian Eric Richards contends that the lack of growth in Australia's rural population during this period was in large part due to nominated migrants, as they constituted a significant proportion of government-assisted passages during this period.<sup>78</sup> For example, of the 10,278 migrants brought to New South Wales in 1911, 6,956 of those were under the nomination system.<sup>79</sup> The state immigration officer, Percy Hunter, told the DRC that from his experience approximately 50 per cent of nominated passengers coming into the state were town workers, skilled artisans, or manual labourers, while most of the remaining 50 per cent were likely the wives and children of settlers that had migrated earlier.<sup>80</sup> Whilst government officials were careful to scrutinise those seeking assisted passages, nominated migrants were subject to far less evaluation, in part because it was assumed that "People who have prospered here can well be trusted in encouraging their friends at home to come out."<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, whilst assisted passage migrants were provided with immediate support by immigration officials to find employment or acquire land, relatives were expected to assume responsibility for nominated migrants upon their arrival. This familial and community support did

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p.12.

<sup>78</sup> Richards, *Destination Australia*, p.45.

<sup>79</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912, p.18.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>81</sup> 'The Immigration Agent's Report for the Year 1903', 23 August 1904, *Queensland Parliamentary Papers*, vol.2, 1904-1905, p.1.



mitigate the risk of nominated migrants requiring government or charitable aid; however, it did not necessarily encourage them to seek agricultural work or land settlement. Along with nominated migrants, those with enough capital to support their own passage without assistance from state governments also tended to be urban migrants. New South Wales Acting Director of the Immigration and Tourist Bureau F.C. Govers noted that full-paying or unassisted migrants predominantly tried to remain in Sydney or other major urban centres to secure work, and that, “they try every possible avenue for obtaining city employment before coming to us. Our aim is to send all new comers into the countryside.”<sup>82</sup>

The process of recruiting through the engagement of booking agents in Britain also proved to be a divisive issue concerning land settlement. As noted in Chapter Three, Canada and the Australian states worked closely with booking agents employed by the shipping companies to encourage and recruit agriculturalists on their behalf. Booking agents received a bonus payment from a government for every suitable male migrant (and to a lesser degree their wives and children) secured on their behalf. One Canadian official suggested that in the case of settlement in Saskatchewan, approximately 50 per cent of the new settlers in the provinces could be attributed to the work of government agents or those employed by steamship and railway companies or private enterprises.<sup>83</sup> Canada’s Superintendent of Emigration J. Obediah Smith calculated that 63 per cent of migrants arriving in Canada as a whole could be attributed to the work of government efforts, including that of the booking agents.<sup>84</sup> The Australian states relied even more heavily on booking agents than Canada, and found that the lack of uniformity in the state passage schemes often led to confusion and even complaints amongst migrants. New South Wales Acting Director of the Immigration and Tourist Bureau F.C. Govers noted this in his statement to the DRC:

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<sup>82</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.41.

<sup>83</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in the Central and Western Provinces of Canada in 1916, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, February 1917*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1917, p.32.

<sup>84</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in London during October and November, 1912, Part I. Migration, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1912*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1912, p.90.

The crux of the whole question of complaints appears to be when the same (booking) agent is the representative of several States, as frequently happens, whose conditions and concessions are not uniform ... hence, on arrival in Australia, he finds the concessions which obtain in, say, Queensland, do not prevail in New South Wales, and is consequently under the impression he has been misinformed.<sup>85</sup>

In order to remain competitive, Canada and the Australian states regularly increased their bonus amounts, with the expectation that a higher payment would induce agents to preference their destination over others. Bonus payments were also contingent on migrants meeting the selection criteria set out by each government. It is clear however, that in the race to secure migrants, there were many instances where booking agents attempted to pass off unsuitable migrants as suitable. Thomas M. Molloy, an official from the Department of Agriculture in Saskatchewan, told the DRC that between 1911 and 1912 a number of British mechanics had been sent to the province by booking agents even though the province did not want this particular group. Without the necessary demand for their labour, Molloy noted that the mechanics were living in the capital city of Regina and were at the present time part of the “army of unemployed”.<sup>86</sup>

One of the most widely reported cases of booking agent misconduct in Britain during this period was that of G.H. Brown. Brown, a local shipping agent and preacher from East Lancashire, had been engaged by a number of the Australian states to promote their settlement opportunities to the local rural population. In 1912, Brown was found guilty of seven counts of “having obtained, and attempted to obtain, money by false pretences from the Agent General for Western Australia”.<sup>87</sup> It was discovered that on several occasions Brown had sent individuals to the state pretending to be the applicants approved by the Agent-General’s office, but who were someone else entirely. One such applicant was farm labourer James Alfred Taylor. Taylor had

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<sup>85</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in Australia in 1913, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, December 1913*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1913, p.32.

<sup>86</sup> DRC, *Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty’s Dominions, Minutes of Evidence Taken in the Central and Western Provinces of Canada in 1916, Part I, Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, February 1917*, London: Printed Under the Authority of His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1917, p.35.

<sup>87</sup> Newton Moore, ‘Agent-General’s Annual Report’, 1911-1912, State Records Office of Western Australia (hereafter SROWA), 0969.08.

applied in September 1910 for assisted passage to Western Australia, paid his portion of the passage costs, but then decided not to go. Rather than alerting the Agent-General's office to Taylor's changed circumstances, Brown instead organised for another man to go out under Taylor's name. It was also found that Brown had encouraged applicants to lie about their occupations and agricultural experience in order to secure assisted passage from the state. A weaver and his wife were advised by Brown to pretend to be farm labourers and have a farmer sign a declaration validating their fabricated agricultural experience.<sup>88</sup> Western Australia's Agent-General Newton Moore contended that the activities of Brown were incongruent with the work of most booking agents who were mainly "reputable and business-like men".<sup>89</sup> Historians Stephen Constantine and Marjory Harper observe in their book *Migration and Empire* that Moore was not alone in his belief concerning the booking agents, and some of the other Dominion officials including Canada's J. Obediah Smith also defended their work, suggesting that overall booking agents had a "very high business reputation".<sup>90</sup> Other personnel including W.D. Scott were less convinced, however, that Brown's actions were unique. Only a few years earlier, Scott had reported that a number of booking agents had come into conflict with the Department of the Interior or had lost their license from the steamship companies due to similar dubious practices.<sup>91</sup> The DRC concluded that for booking agents working within the largely unregulated system "an unsuitable migrant is as profitable as, or perhaps more profitable than, a suitable migrant".<sup>92</sup> It strongly recommended the introduction of measures to more closely monitor booking agent work, including a new system of licensing.<sup>93</sup>

As this chapter has outlined, by World War One Canadian and Australian officials were grappling with a new populace that overwhelmingly preferred town and city life

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<sup>88</sup> 'Alleged Emigration Frauds', *Shipping News*, 17 February 1912, SROWA, Emigration. G.H. Brown. Agent, 1253.

<sup>89</sup> 'Dominions Royal Commission', *The West Australian*, 16 November 1912, p.8.

<sup>90</sup> Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, p.297.

<sup>91</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Report of the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization*, 1910-11, Ottawa: Printed by C.H. Parmelee, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1911, Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/CCagriculture190910rep00uoft>, accessed 25 August 2014, pp.115-116.

<sup>92</sup> DRC, *Final Report*, London: Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1917, p.88.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.89-90.

to the homestead. The reasons for the slow development of land settlement provided to the DRC between 1912 and 1916 by Canadian and Australian government personnel included the over-recruitment and selection of British agricultural labourers over agriculturalists; their lack of sufficient existing capital and the conditions imposed on the first years of land settlement; and a general need for all new settlers, regardless of their existing agricultural experience, to be provided with some level of training before taking up their own land. There was also an acknowledgement that a lack of infrastructure in rural regions, particularly for families, made land settlement a difficult process in Canada and Australia and encouraged many to drift into the towns and cities. The nomination system in Australia and the use of booking agents by both Canada and Australia were also attributed to the rise in their urban populations, as both systems were not subject to rigorous scrutiny by government officials. In its final report released in 1917, the DRC advised that Empire migration and settlement “is a problem which requires, in our judgment, far more sustained attention than it has hitherto received”.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> DRC, *Final Report*, London: Published by His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1917, p.83.

## Conclusion

By the end of 1912, Canada and Australia were each facing a declining interest and even growing opposition towards their campaigns to attract and induce Britain's rural populace to emigrate. Although both dominions enjoyed a record high level of British immigration during the year, government personnel reported increasing difficulties in securing British agricultural migrants. By the 1910s, British authorities and the press noted that emigration and the attractions offered by urban employment in Britain's cities and towns had resulted in the local agricultural sector experiencing its own difficulties in retaining a rural work force.<sup>1</sup> Canada and Australia's common predicament was observed by Victoria's Honorary Minister in Charge of Immigration Frederick Hagelthorn in an interview with *The West Australian* newspaper: "The difficulty of obtaining a suitable class of farm worker would now seem to be facing Canada equally with Australia ... it is hard to induce these men to leave Great Britain."<sup>2</sup> With the outbreak of war in 1914, Canada and Australia's promotional and recruitment efforts were sharply curtailed as it was conceded that activities to entice British men away from the country during wartime would not be looked upon favourably. Writing to the Superintendent of Immigration W.D. Scott in August 1914, Canada's Assistant Superintendent of Emigration J. Obediah Smith noted the change in pace from his London office: "Of course everything here is all war and excitement, and consequently the matter of emigration has fallen very far into the background, in fact one might truthfully say there is practically nothing being done in the way of emigration at the present time."<sup>3</sup> This did not mean, however, that the discourse surrounding British migration to the dominions ceased along with Canada and Australia's recruiting efforts. Throughout World War One, the Dominions Royal Commission (DRC) continued to gather evidence across the British Empire and publish interim reports on its findings regarding the state of immigration and settlement in each of the dominions. The DRC's final report, published in 1917, served to fuel the ongoing debate about the extent to which the Imperial government should

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Richards, *Destination Australia: Migration to Australia Since 1901*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2008, p.42.

<sup>2</sup> 'Are Our Immigrants Unsuitable?', *The West Australian*, 9 November 1912, p.7.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 19 August 1914, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 90, File 41, Part 3.

be involved in promoting and encouraging Empire migration among its mobile populace.<sup>4</sup> The report also encouraged the growing interest in British juvenile migration and the argument that British youths could be more readily trained on colonial lands compared to British adults.<sup>5</sup>

This thesis has focused on the development of Canada and Australia's policies and practices between 1896 and 1914 that were designed to attract, recruit, and secure British agricultural migrants for dominion land settlement. It has specifically considered the activities and actions of Canadian and Australian federal and state officials based at home in the dominions and in Britain who were tasked with turning the policies set out by their governments into reality, by widely and aggressively promoting their respective destinations to attract those most desired. This study has taken as its starting point observations of scholars examining this period, such as Michele Langfield, who suggested that, "Australia, in a small way, followed Canada's example about ten years later"<sup>6</sup> and asked, can the activities and actions of one, in fact, explain those of the other?

Between 1896 and 1914, government-led management of immigration within the British dominions was in many ways an emerging field of professional work. By the turn of the century, the realisation of self-government and a growing public confidence on the global stage saw Canadian and Australian government departments and their personnel move increasingly towards more centralised, coordinated, and professional practices to entice and secure those most desired. As was shown in Chapters One and Two, Canada and Australia each considered experienced British agriculturalists to be the ideal migrant during this period and consequently this particular group became the focus of many of the Dominions' land settlement and immigration policies. Whilst there was an expectation that dominion government

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<sup>4</sup> Keith Williams, "'A Way Out of Our Troubles': The Politics of Empire Settlement, 1900-1922", in Stephen Constantine (ed.), *Emigrants and Empire: British Settlement in the Dominions Between the Wars*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990, p.27; Richards, *Destination Australia*, p.28.

<sup>5</sup> For more on juvenile migration in the post-World War One period, see Geoffrey Sherrington, 'Contrasting Narratives in the History of Twentieth-Century British Child Migration to Australia: An Interpretive Essay', *History Australia*, vol.9, no.2, 2012, pp.27-47.

<sup>6</sup> Michele Langfield, "'Fit for the Elect of the World": Government Policy and Contemporary Opinion About the Encouragement of Immigration to Australia, 1901-1939', unpublished PhD thesis, Monash University, 1988, p.126.

representatives would adhere to the objectives and aims set out by these policies, personnel were given relative freedom to decide the mechanics of their work to induce British agricultural migrants to emigrate. As noted by J. Obediah Smith in 1914: "While Ottawa controls the policy, the details, including expenditures, are worked out in London."<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, Canada and Australia's common objective to entice this particular group of skilled migrants, coupled with the advancements in communication and transportation during this period, encouraged dominion government representatives working within this space to come into closer proximity than ever before to observe and respond to information and ideas about their emerging professional fields. As this thesis has demonstrated, far from passive observation, Canadian and Australian personnel actively sought and shared information about their respective programmes in order to learn what inducements and methods had proven to be successful for their colonial colleagues, and to consider whether to adopt similar practices for their own operations in Britain. The peripatetic nature of their work, along with relatively high levels of mobility as government leaders and public servants, enabled Canadian and Australian officials to acquire this information not only in London and across Britain, but also by undertaking research trips to each other's dominion with the expressed intention of seeing first-hand the outcomes of their formal immigration and settlement programmes. For less mobile personnel based at home, letter writing and correspondence requesting an exchange of promotional publications and statistical information ensured they were kept up-to-date on with the latest developments in their mutual work. Importantly, an environment of sharing and supporting one another within this co-fraternity of dominion men was encouraged not only out of a sense of professional camaraderie, but also in recognition of their common Britishness and place within the British World. In acknowledging that their dominions were on a shared path of development and that they held mutual aspirations for future growth, which was considered important to the British Empire as a whole, such exchange of information and ideas for evidence-based policy making was regarded as what good Imperialists should do and good Imperial practice overall. As one Canadian journal stated in 1914: "After all,

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<sup>7</sup> 'Many Agencies Work to Advertise Dominion', *Vancouver Sun*, 4 June 1914, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 90, File 41, Part 3.

if the British Empire is to persist and prosper, it must be by having regard to the interests of the whole as well as of each part.”<sup>8</sup>

This thesis has shown that the timing, scale, and outcomes of their government-led programmes were critical to the development of relations between Canada and Australia between 1896 and 1914. As was demonstrated in Chapter Three, from the mid-1890s the Canadian federal government embarked on an ambitious and systematic programme to attract and induce agricultural migrants to the North-West Territories. Early success in the United States saw the introduction of a similar campaign in Britain from 1902 onwards. By 1905 when the Australian states were contemplating the reinvigoration of their own government-led immigration programmes, Canada’s efforts to attract British agricultural migrants had garnered considerable success. The positive public perception and opinion of Canada among the British public and the success of the country’s programme in inducing British migrants to its shores played a crucial role in the development of Australian state and federal activities from 1905 onwards. Whilst local considerations and conditions meant there were points where their policies and programmes diverged, there were a number of instances in this period when Australian authorities adopted Canadian methods and activities with the intended aim of drawing similar results and positive comparisons between the two dominions. The Scottish Agricultural Commission’s tours of Canada in 1908 and Australia in 1910 was just one such example.

This thesis has demonstrated that this environment of Imperial cooperation could, at the same time, exist comfortably alongside a sense of colonial competition. Whilst Australian operations and the country’s resulting immigration intake never reached the same levels as Canada’s during this period, through an examination of letters, memorandums, and other unpublished correspondence, it is clear that behind-the-scenes Canadian authorities paid very close attention to the development of their dominion sister’s policies and programmes, and took a keen interest in their outcomes. The rapidity by which Australian state and federal operations developed from 1905, the successful reversal of the previously held negative perception in Britain of their dominion as a settlement destination, and the increasing numbers of

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<sup>8</sup> ‘British Emigration and Canada’, *St Thomas Journal*, 8 April 1914, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 3.



British agricultural migrants choosing to emigrate to Australia particularly after 1910, seemed to indicate to Canadian authorities that their sister dominion could pose a serious challenge to their own continued success in the future. The Canadian government's concern over the growth of Australia's operations and migrant intake in this period came from the recognition that it had occurred, in part, through the adoption and utilisation of Canadian methods. In a memorandum prepared for the federal senate in November 1912, W.D. Scott made this point in summarising the status of Australia's emigration operations in Britain by this time:

To revert again to the propaganda carried on in the United Kingdom it may be stated that we have there now a rather formidable rival in Australia which country is spending immense amounts of money to endeavour to divert the flow of British emigration there. Until recent years Australia's propaganda met with very little success and it is only within the last five or six years when they commenced imitating Canadian methods that the flow of immigration to Australia assumed any proportion."<sup>9</sup>

This colonial competition, however, was not necessarily considered negative. As was revealed in Chapter Three, some Canadian and Australian authorities suggested that their mutual promotional efforts within Britain would be beneficial in increasing the British public's awareness of Empire settlement opportunities more so than would have been possible if they were working alone in this space. Their concurrent activities also ensured that desirable British settlers would be more likely to choose to migrate to a dominion destination rather than settle outside of the British Empire in places such as the United States or Brazil, thus maintaining and strengthening the British composition and identity of the Empire as a whole.

Despite a mainly positive approach to their concurrent efforts, Chapter Four illuminated the moments of tension within the business of Empire migration as the boundaries of what constituted colonial courtesy and acceptable imperial practice were tested and retested by Canadian and Australian officials during this time. This was perhaps most evident in the case study of Victoria's pursuit of Canadian farmers for its irrigable lands between 1910 and 1914, when Canada was still actively attempting to grow this population itself. More subtle moments of internal tension

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<sup>9</sup> Memorandum Prepared by W.D. Scott for the Honourable Mr. Daniels, M.P., 22 November 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 90, File 41, Part 3.

were highlighted as well, particularly around the issue of settler poaching between New South Wales and Victoria.

As far back as 1972, Harold Troper argued that Canadian immigration personnel “did not work in a vacuum”<sup>10</sup> in their pursuit of agricultural migrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; however, historians since that time have mainly chosen to study the immigration and land settlement history of Canada and Australia through the national lens, and to largely emphasise the internal factors that motivated their respective governments to pursue agricultural migrants during this period. By employing a transnational and British World framework, this thesis has illuminated the highly connected nature of Canada and Australia’s formal policies and programmes relating to British agricultural migrants which hitherto have been largely overlooked or under-appreciated. It has demonstrated that the importance of the British Empire to the dominions and their mutual membership therein encouraged the flow of information and ideas between Canadian and Australian governments that ultimately contributed to the framing of an imperial discourse surrounding British Empire migration and settlement at this time.

In reflecting on the progress of Australia’s campaign in Britain by 1912, J. Obediah Smith warned Ottawa that the Canadian government should see their sister dominion’s progress as a clear indication of their future efforts for pursuing British agricultural migrants: “Canada must continue to consider Australia as not only a strenuous and important competitor, but one whose needs will require them to be more aggressive and enterprising in emigration matters in future.”<sup>11</sup> Whilst war would temporarily halt the business of British migration, it is clear that by 1914 Canada and Australia were still far from satisfying their population and settlement needs, and their pursuit of British agricultural migrants would continue for many years to come.

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<sup>10</sup> Harold Troper, *Only Farmers Need Apply: Official Canadian Government Encouragement of Immigration from the United States, 1896-1911*, Toronto: Griffin Press Limited, 1972, p.155.

<sup>11</sup> Letter from J. Obediah Smith to W.D. Scott, 17 January 1912, LAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, Volume 317, File 306064, Part 3.

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