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Résumé de l'article

Les travaux de J.R. Dymond, qui fût professeur de zoologie à l'Université de Toronto, ainsi que directeur du Musée Royal de l'Ontario et qui joua un rôle important dans la conservation en Ontario, soulignent ses contributions à la science d'histoire naturelle et son influence sur la recherche et la protection des parcs provinciaux. Jusqu'à présent, peu d'attention a été portée aux années de sa jeunesse et aux milieux naturels locaux qui ont influencé sa perception de la nature. Dans cet article, nous allons utiliser le concept « d'espace d'appartenance » pour expliquer comment Dymond est devenu conservationniste. Ses expériences dans des endroits spécifiques – un produit des relations sociales et des paysages eux-mêmes – ont donné un sens à ces lieux et ont contribué à définir ses valeurs. Parmi les endroits qui ont influencé sa vie et son travail on peut citer la ferme familiale et la campagne environnante dans le comté de Metcalfe en Ontario, l'Institut Collégial du district de Strathroy, l'Université de Toronto et les zones naturelles avoisinantes, la ville d'Ottawa et plusieurs lacs en Colombie-Britannique et en Ontario.

The Making of a Conservationist

J.R. DYMOND AND HIS ENVIRONMENTS, 1887-1932

by George Warecki

J.R. Dymond, ca. 1930. Courtesy of Margaret Saettler, Kerwood, Ontario

Searching for J.R. Dymond

John Richardson (J.R.) Dymond (1887-1965) was a zoology professor at the University of Toronto (1920-56), director of the Royal Ontario Museum (1934-49) and, as a founder and administrator of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON, 1931), a significant force for conservation. Certain aspects of his life are well-documented. Published accounts of Dymond's work emphasize contributions to the natural history movement, and his influence on both scientific research and the protection of natural areas in provincial parks.[1] However, relatively little attention has been paid to his early life and the local environments that shaped his views of nature. Ongoing research for a biography

[1] Gerald Killan, *Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Provincial Parks System* (Toronto: Dundurn, 1993), 63, 69-70, 77, 93, 123; Gerald Killan and George Warecki, "J.R. Dymond and Frank A. MacDougall: Science and Government Policy in Algonquin Provincial Park, 1931-1954," *Scientia Canadensis* XXII-XXIII (1998-99), 131-56; George Warecki, *Protecting Ontario's Wilderness: A History of Changing Ideas and Preservation Politics, 1927-1973* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), chap. 2. See also obituaries by W. Beverley Scott in *Canadian Field-Naturalist* 79 (Oct.-Dec. 1965), 219-29; by J. Bruce Falls in *Ontario Naturalist* 3 (June 1965), 3-4; *Canadian Audubon* 27 (Jan.-Feb. 1965), 1; and David J. Taylor's history of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON), "Celebrating Nature for Fifty Years," *Seasons* 21 Fiftieth Anniversary Issue (Winter 1981), 17, 19-20, 23-6.

Abstract

Published accounts of the work of J.R. Dymond , a zoology professor at the University of Toronto, director of the Royal Ontario Museum, and a significant force for conservation in Ontario emphasize his contributions to the natural history movement, and his influence on scientific research and the protection of natural areas in provincial parks. Relatively little attention has been paid to his early life and the local environments that shaped his views of nature. This article uses the concept of "place" to explain how Dymond became a conservationist. His experiences in specific locations—a product of social relations and the landscapes themselves—gave those places meaning and shaped his values. Such environments included the family farm and surrounding countryside in southwestern Ontario's Metcalfe Township, Strathroy Collegiate Institute, the University of Toronto and nearby natural areas, places in Ottawa, and various lakes in B.C. and Ontario.

Résumé: *Les travaux de J.R. Dymond, qui fût professeur de zoologie à l'Université de Toronto, ainsi que directeur du Musée Royal de l'Ontario et qui joua un rôle important dans la conservation en Ontario, soulignent ses contributions à la science d'histoire naturelle et son influence sur la recherche et la protection des parcs provinciaux. Jusqu'à présent, peu d'attention a été portée aux années de sa jeunesse et aux milieux naturels locaux qui ont influencé sa perception de la nature. Dans cet article, nous allons utiliser le concept « d'espace d'appartenance » pour expliquer comment Dymond est devenu conservationniste. Ses expériences dans des endroits spécifiques – un produit des relations sociales et des paysages eux-mêmes – ont donné un sens à ces lieux et ont contribué à définir ses valeurs. Parmi les endroits qui ont influencé sa vie et son travail on peut citer la ferme familiale et la campagne environnante dans le comté de Metcalfe en Ontario, l'Institut Collégial du district de Strathroy, l'Université de Toronto et les zones naturelles avoisinantes, la ville d'Ottawa et plusieurs lacs en Colombie-Britannique et en Ontario.*

of Dymond—using archival sources, oral history, family records, and printed literature—reveals the places and people that shaped his ideas of nature and conservation advocacy from 1887 to 1932.[2]

Historiography: Biography and Place

Environmental historians in Canada have long employed biography to illustrate broad themes. We have excellent studies of scientists and naturalists/conservationists, including ornithologists James Baillie and Percy Taverner; field naturalist John Macoun; hunter-naturalist Hamilton Mack Laing; author and angler Roderick Haig-Brown; Aboriginal impersonator and beaver advocate Grey Owl; "Wild Goose Jack" Miner of Kingsville, Ontario; and author Farley

[2] For information on Dymond's family, his life in southwestern Ontario and Toronto, and his personal character, I am indebted to his nieces in Kerwood, Ontario, Margaret Saettler and Ann Dymond, who generously granted interviews and allowed me to use original family papers and photographs. Thanks also to staff at Western Archives, Western University, in London, Ontario (hereafter WA)—especially former director John Lutman, and Theresa Regnier—who helped me find information about the Dymond farms and surrounding communities. A previous version of this paper was presented at the annual conference of the Canadian Historical Association at Brock University in May 2014.

Mowat.[3] Bureaucrats and civil servants have also figured prominently, with federal agents *Working for Wildlife* in Janet Foster's 1978 classic, and appearing less heroic in John Sandlos's *Hunters at the Margin* (2006). Provincial foresters have found the limelight, with John Bacher's fine study of Ontario's Edmund Zavitz, and L. Anders Sandberg's profile of Otto Schierbeck in Nova Scotia. On Canadian National Parks bureaucrats, we have E.J. Hart's tome on director James Bernard Harkin, and Alan MacEachern's works on Harkin, his dedicated publicist, Mabel ("MB") Williams, and a revisionist article about "H.U. Green, a.k.a. Tony Lascelles." The latter's twin careers as a popular nature writer and a "special warden" in Banff National Park, contradict the accepted historiography that conservationists were either private citizens *or* civil servants.[4] While these biographical works vary in scale, each contributes to our understanding of Canadian environmental history.

Historian Jennifer Bonnell has challenged historians to re-think connections between the experience of place, biography, and conservation advocacy.[5] She wrote about Charles Sauriol, a Toronto-based advertising professional whose love for and experience of the Don River Valley evolved from the 1940s to the 1990s. He progressed from weekend recreationist, to summer cottager, working the land; to defender of the Don against destructive recreationists, pollution, and residential, commercial and highway development; to chair of Metropolitan Toronto's Conserva-

[3] Lise Anglin, *Birder Extraordinaire: The Life and Legacy of James L. Baillie (1904-1970)* (Toronto Ornithological Club and Long Point Bird Observatory, 1992); John L. Cranmer-Byng, *A Life With Birds: Percy A. Taverner, Canadian Ornithologist, 1875-1947* Special Issue of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* Vol. 110: No. 1 (January-March 1996); W.A. Waiser, *The Field Naturalist: John Macoun, the Geological Survey, and Natural Science* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989); Richard Mackie, *Hamilton Mack Laing: Hunter-Naturalist* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1985); Anthony Robertson, *Above Tide: Reflections on Roderick Haig-Brown* (Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour, 1984); Arn Keeling and Robert McDonald, "The Profligate Province: Roderick Haig-Brown and the Modernizing of British Columbia," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 36:2 (Fall 2001), 7-23; Donald B. Smith, *From the Land of Shadows: The Making of Grey Owl* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1999); and James King, *Farley: The Life of Farley Mowat* (Hanover, N.H.: Steerforth, 2002). See also Tina Loo's reassessments of Jack Miner, Grey Owl, Farley Mowat, and Andy Russell in *States of Nature: Conserving Canada's Wildlife in the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006).

[4] Janet Foster, *Working For Wildlife: The Beginning of Preservation in Canada* Second Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); John Sandlos, *Hunters at the Margin: Native People and Wildlife Conservation in the Northwest Territories* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006); John Bacher, *Two Billion Trees and Counting: The Legacy of Edmund Zavitz* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2011); L. Anders Sandberg, *Against the Grain: Foresters and Politics in Nova Scotia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), chap. 2; E.J. Hart, *J.B. Harkin: Father of Canada's National Parks* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2009); Alan MacEachern, *Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935-1970* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 25-33; "M.B. Williams and the Early Years of Parks Canada," in *A Century of Parks Canada 1911-2011*, edited by Claire Elizabeth Campbell (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2011), 21-52; and "The Sentimentalist: Science and Nature in the Writing of H.U. Green, a.k.a. Tony Lascelles," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 47:3 (Fall 2013), 16-41. See also *MB: Living and Writing the Early Years of Parks Canada,* <http://mbwilliams.academic-news.org/> (accessed on 30 April 2014).

[5] Jennifer Bonnell, "An Intimate Understanding of Place: Charles Sauriol and Toronto's Don River Valley, 1927-1989," *Canadian Historical Review* 92:4 (December 2011), 607-636.

tion Areas Advisory Board, and executive director of the Nature Conservancy of Canada. As his experience of the Don Valley changed over time, so did Sauriol's views of nature and the advocacy required to protect it. His "environmental consciousness shifted from a personal appreciation of nature on his private valley holdings to embrace the principles of rational management for the public good." Bonnell's fascinating article is "a selective mapping of key events in his life upon the environmental history of the river—an overlaying of personal biography upon a biography of place." This dual framework was possible because Sauriol wrote extensively about his life in the Don, how he interacted with it, and how these experiences shaped his conservation work.[6] Can a similar approach be used to interpret the conservation career of J.R. Dymond? Unlike Sauriol, Dymond did not leave behind a rich body of reflective writing about specific places and his relationship to them. Historians looking for his personal thoughts about places—especially in his early years—must piece together a picture from scattered and sometimes indirect evidence.[7]

What historical forces "made" J.R. Dymond a conservationist? This essay adapts Bonnell's framework, examining the connections between places and people that shaped Dymond's changing ideas of nature and his conservation advocacy, from 1887 to 1932. What matters here are *people acting in places*. The experiences that Dymond had in specific locations—a product of both social relations and the landscapes themselves—made him a conservationist. He developed a strong attachment to several places, his memories of them ("the imagined landscape"), and the interpersonal relationships that resulted.[8] Psychologists note that an individual's ability to experience the landscape evolves over time as the body and personality de-

[6] Quotes from Bonnell, "An Intimate Understanding of Place," 614, 613. Another Canadian biography that explicitly ties places to an evolving personal appreciation for the natural world is James Raffan's book on artist, film-maker, and canoeist Bill Mason, *Fire in the Bones: Bill Mason and the Canadian Canoeing Tradition* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1996). Michael J. Lanoo examines the role of key places in shaping the conservation outlook of two American biologists in *Leopold's Shack and Ricketts's Lab: The Emergence of Environmentalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

[7] Despite several attempts to locate his personal archive, relatively little has been found. There is some material at the Royal Ontario Museum, the Algonquin Park archives, and in the University of Toronto Archives' Department of Zoology Records and A.F. Coventry papers. Dymond's personal papers may have been destroyed by a fire in 1962 at the FON's headquarters in Toronto's Edwards Gardens.

[8] Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan developed the concept of place. He coined the term "topophilia," meaning "the affective bond between people and place;" quoted in Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA and Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 20. See also Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes and Values* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974), and *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977). Psychologists Setha M. Low and Irwin Altman argued that "[p]laces are... repositories and contexts within which interpersonal, community, and cultural relationships occur, and it is to those social relationships, not just to place qua [*sic*] place, to which people are attached." See "Place Attachment: A Conceptual Inquiry," in *Place Attachment*, edited by Irwin Altman and Setha M. Low (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1992), 7. Another view holds that the "essential attachment is not to the landscape itself, but to its memory and the relived experience. The imagined landscape has more meaning, power, and importance

velop. Young children initially experience nature through their bodily senses. Later, as they grow and mature, they comprehend places on an intellectual level with increasing complexity.[9] Dymond was fascinated by nature, however understood, from an early age. As he matured, he shared his knowledge, first as a naturalist and later as a zoologist. Throughout his life, he experienced nature as a member of various communities. He introduced many people to nature, building support for conservation. The local environments that influenced his early life and work included the family farm and surrounding countryside in southwestern Ontario's Metcalfe Township, Strathroy Collegiate Institute, the University of Toronto and nearby natural areas, places in Ottawa, and various lakes in British Columbia and Ontario. Dymond engaged in a dialectic process with these changing places and the people he encountered. They moulded him—shaping his views about nature, how to study and protect it—and he often shaped them in return. Examining this process can help us to imagine "lost" landscapes,[10] and to understand how Dymond became nature's advocate.

The current paper borrows insights from scholarship on "place." This literature, produced by geographers, psychologists, philosophers, sociologists, historians, and others, "is diverse, extensive, and multidisciplinary." Place is "a human construction of a location created through intersubjective experience of the location itself."[11] Places become significant because of personal, lived experience and the social relations that characterize those locations. Indeed, places can take different forms. One recent review highlighted three key aspects:

> First, *place is relational*, and the relations involve humans and winds and wildlife and culturally emplaced memory.... Second, *places are connected to other places* by flows of capital and ideas, bird migration and human emigration, long-distance transport of pollutants, and flowing rivers and highways. Third, *places act on us*. We are embodied people, and bodies live in places, even in conditions of cosmopolitan modernity.... Nature and culture are held together by place understood broadly, overcoming a portion of the Western epistemological sin that dichotomizes them.[12]

Place is thus a multidimensional concept.

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in the role of the human experience than landscape experience concretely." Robert B. Riley, "Attachment to the Ordinary Landscape," in *ibid*., 20. See also Leila Scannell and Robert Gifford, "Defining Place Attachment: A Tripartite Organizing Framework," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 30 (2010), 1-10; and Maria Lewicka, "Place Attachment: How Far Have We Come in the last 40 Years?" *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 31:3 (September 2011), 207-230.

[9] Riley, "Attachment to the Ordinary Landscape," 18. Some psychologists claimed that "there is a special age in children 'say from about five to nine' in which environmental sensitivity is particularly acute and that preferences for an attachment to landscapes are established during that period."

[10] Bonnell, "An Intimate Understanding of Place," 612.

[11] Randolph Haluza-Delay, Michael J. DeMoor, and Christopher Peet, "That We May Live Well Together in the Land...: Place Pluralism and Just Sustainability in Canadian and Environmental Studies," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 47:3 (Fall 2013), 230. Scholars have developed several related concepts, "including *sense of place*, *place attachment*, and *place identity*."

[12] *Ibid*., 231.

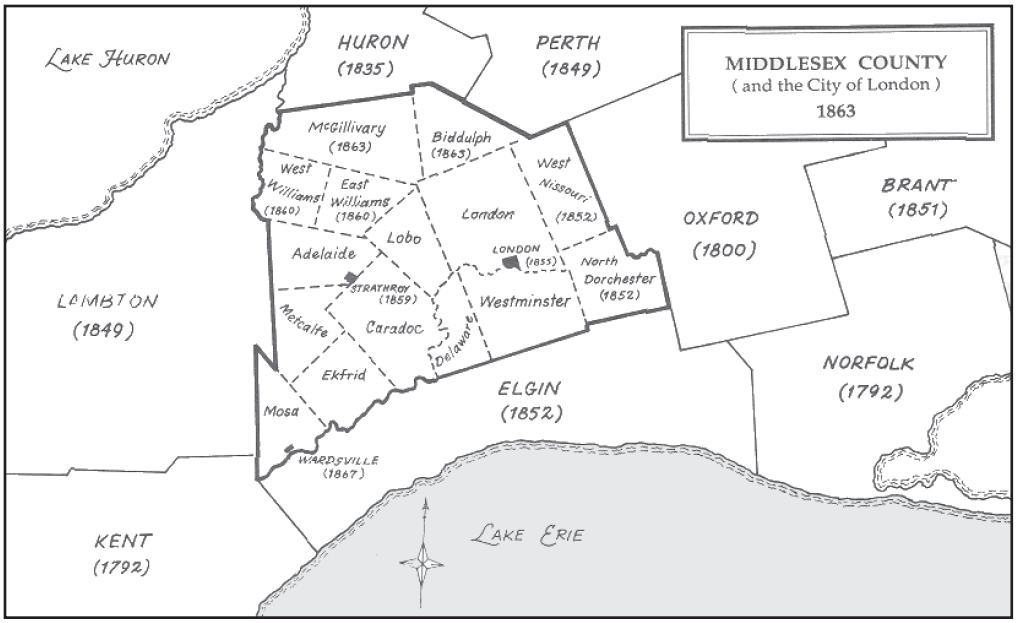

Figure 2: Middlesex County. Daniel J. Brock, "The Shaping of Middlesex County," The London and Middlesex Historian 17 (Autumn, 1990), 24.

Geographer Robert Sack argued that places are constructed through three "realms:" the "*physical world* (including built and natural objects, non-human and human others); the *social world* (including social, economic, political, race, class, gender, and bureaucracy); and the *realm of meaning* (the ideas, values, and beliefs that make up the forces of the mind)."[13] Canadian historians, seeking to analyse past places, have illuminated interactions between these three realms. Joy Parr's *Sensing Changes: Technologies, Environments and the Everyday, 1953-2003* (2010) explored how people in different places understood environmental change partly through their bodily senses.[14] James Opp and John C. Walsh's collection, *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada* (2010), also emphasized local places. Contributors examined how the material and social "conditions of place have shaped accounts of memory."[15] Jessica Dunkin wrote about "community and place," highlighting the "cultural and imagined elements" of community created by "everyday" experiences in a girls' summer camp, and the social relationships shaped by "class, gender, and race."[16] The following

[13] *Ibid*.

[14] Joy Parr, *Sensing Changes: Technologies, Environments, and the Everyday, 1953-2003* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).

[15] James Opp and John C. Walsh, "Introduction: Local Acts of Placing and Remembering," in *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, edited by James Opp and John C. Walsh (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 5-6.

[16] Jessica Dunkin, "Manufacturing Landscapes: Place and Community at Glen Bernard Camp, 1924-

essay contributes to this growing scholarship by interpreting the biography of J.R. Dymond through his experience in several places. This account explores his physical world, the social relationships that characterized those places, and his developing ideas about nature.

Places, People, and Ideas: Southwestern Ontario

J.R. Dymond learned his first lessons about nature on a family farm near the village of Kerwood in Metcalfe Township, Middlesex County, in southwestern Ontario.[17] (Figure 2). A classic late nineteenth-century history of the region—influenced by local boosters and a materialist definition of progress—claimed that, when European settlement began in 1832, the township was "almost an unbroken forest, and inhabited by wild animals." Gradually the "forest succumbed to the hardy woodsman's axe," giving way to "the large fields of golden grain, as well as the nutritious pastures and meadows so much desired for the support of man and beast." This narrative boasted that "almost every lot in the township" had "a flowing stream," feeding into the "Sydenham River or Bear Creek."[18] Hyperbole aside, the township was a thriving agricultural centre. By 1889 it had 2,192 residents, many of whom proudly displayed their livestock and horses at the West Middlesex Agricultural Society's annual spring show, just east of the township in Strathroy.[19] Among the English emigrants attracted to this flourishing community in Metcalfe were Dymond's ancestors.

J.R. Dymond was the eldest of five sons of William Dymond (1856-1942) and his wife, Margaret A. Richardson (1865-1926). William, the son of James Dymond and Grace Jeffries Dymond, was born in Holsworthy district, Devonshire, England. Although his parents were blessed with seven children, they were financially poor and were employed by local landowners as farm labourers. Young William had little formal education, as he was forced to work in the fields at the age of nine. He drove cattle and sheep for an auctioneer, and eventually ploughed several tracts in the rolling hills surrounding the southern English coastal village of Boscastle. In 1875, at the age of nineteen,

1933," *Histoire sociale/Social History* XIV:89 (May 2012), 84-5. See also John C. Walsh and Steven High, "Rethinking the Concept of Community," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 32:64 (Nov. 1999), 255-73; and Doreen Massey, "Places and Their Pasts," *History Workshop Journal* 39:1 (1995), 183.

[17] Unless otherwise noted, information on Dymond's family background and upbringing in southwestern Ontario is drawn from telephone interview with Margaret Saettler, 7 June 2004; personal interview with Margaret Saettler in Kerwood, Ontario, 15 June 2004; telephone interview with Ann Dymond, 3 June 2004; and the Richardson/Dymond family records, in possession of Margaret Saettler. The latter includes newsclippings, notations in the family Bible, and Fred Dymond's typescript, "Home is Where My Heart Is: The Memoirs of Frederick George Dymond," n.d. (hereafter Fred Dymond, "Memoirs").

[18] *History of the County of Middlesex Canada*. Introduction and Correction to the New Edition by Daniel Brock (Belleville, Ontario: Mika Studio, 1972; orig. pub. in Toronto by W.A. and C.L. Goodspeed, 1889), 528.

[19] *Ibid*., 634, 638, 657-59.

[20] William Dymond's obituary, *London Free Press*, 3 March 1942.

William emigrated to Canada, finding work on the Swift farm on the 8th Line in Metcalfe Township, east of the Kerwood Road.[20] After saving some money, he bought a threshing machine and travelled locally, threshing grain for farmers. William first appeared on the *Voter's List* in 1880 as a tenant on land owned by the Dunlop family. From 1884 to 1886 William farmed fifty acres (lot 9, concession 5) for the Dunlops, who initially worked the adjacent 100-acre tract. In 1885, Dymond took charge of both properties—a mixed farm with fall wheat and livestock. Soon, William would have sufficient capital and experience to set out on his own.[21]

J.R. Dymond's parents met in circumstances common in late nineteenth-century Ontario. In 1881, William, then twenty-five, worked as a labourer for the Richardsons, whose land adjoined the Dunlop farm.[22] This family had deep roots in the region, but a British heritage as well. John Richardson (1822-1886) came from Car Moor, Side Hunslet, near Leeds in Yorkshire, where his parents were prosperous market gardeners, sending produce to Paris and London. Of nine children, the three oldest sons—William, Robert and John—emigrated to Canada. William received a Crown land grant in 1859 for the west half of lot 10, concession 4, Metcalfe Township. Robert and his wife purchased land in the nearby town of Strathroy and became market gardeners. John Richardson (J.R. Dymond's maternal grandfather and namesake) was a potter. In 1845 he married Margaret McDonald (1823-1895) from North Shields, England. They had two sons before coming to Canada in 1856 and purchased ten acres on the southwest corner of William Richardson's property, on the "Butt Line" of Metcalfe Township. There they built a kiln and after 1860, they manufactured pottery, exploiting the rich clay resources of the land. Historian David Newlands has noted that the Richardson Pottery was regionally significant; by 1871 it also produced clay bricks and tile. The business remained in the family after John's death in 1886, until it was finally sold in 1908. John's eldest son, James, started his own tile and brickyard in 1872 near the village of Kerwood.[23] By the early 1880s, then, the Richardsons had established themselves as a substantial, respected family in Metcalfe, making a living from the natural wealth of the land. Into this setting came William Dymond, who proved to be a hard worker and valuable hand. The Richardsons' youngest child and only daughter, Margaret ("Maggie"), was sixteen years old. Romance eventually took its course. Five years later, in

[21] WA, *List of Voters for the Township of Metcalfe* (1880), Roll No. 135, microfiche; *Metcalfe Township Assessment Rolls, 1854-1884,* microfilm M47, 1884, Roll No. 217, and 1885, Manuscript version, Roll No. 215, and 1886, Roll No. 227.

[22] WA, *1881 Census, Middlesex County, West – 1-C-13269, Metcalfe Township*, microfilm, p. 40.

[23] Fred Dymond, "Memoirs," 183-7, and Richardson Family Tree; David Newlands, *Early Ontario Potters: Their Craft and Trade* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, Ryerson, 1979), 183; Paul Patterson, "Richardson Pottery and Tile Yard History," manuscript, 1989, courtesy of Margaret Saettler.

Figure 3: Dymond family home, on the second farm, after addition built in 1911. The family moved to this second farm in 1903, when J.R. he was about 16 years old. He planted maples on the west side of the house, and at the road. Courtesy of Margaret Saettler, Kerwood, Ontario

October 1886, William and Maggie were married. The next year they purchased a 50-acre property (lot 10, concession 2) worth some $1,200. That fall, on 4 October 1887, the couple's first child was born: John Richardson Dymond.[24]

Growing up on the farm gave young "Johnnie," as he was known, a lifelong appreciation for the natural world. In 1887, the property included a five-acre woodlot and five acres of fall wheat. By the time Johnnie was three, there were also fifteen cattle, six sheep, and four horses.[25] But what did he experience? Historian Joy Parr has drawn attention to "the body as a way of knowing." She argued that the act of bodily "sensing nature" enabled people to comprehend "everyday" places and feel secure.[26] As a young child, Johnnie experienced the farm through his senses: learning its sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures. His parents likely taught him what physical dangers to avoid as he visited the animals, the barn and other buildings, and perhaps the edge of the field. The busyness of farm life offered endless opportunities to experience nature. As he gained more independence, Johnnie tended livestock, did some work in the fields, and helped with other chores. Entertainment and healthy, outdoor recreation was readily available—whether exploring the woods, hunting for small mammals, fishing in a nearby creek, or roaming the countryside with friends. Later, the Dymonds kept several breeds of prize-winning chickens, proudly displaying their first-place ribbons in the kitchen. The younger children planted vegetables—encouraged by the Ontario Department of Education—and trapped raccoons and skunks to sell their pelts. Family excursions to seasonal fairs, especially in Strathroy, reinforced this culture of nature in a wider community. Johnnie understood that

[24] WA, *1881 Census, Middlesex County West – 1-C-13269, Metcalfe Township*, p. 40; *List of Voters for the Township of Metcalfe* (1887), p. 2; *Metcalfe Township Assessment Rolls*, manuscript version, 28 April 1887, Roll No. 83.

[25] WA, *Metcalfe Township Assessment Rolls*, manuscript version, 28 April 1887, Roll No. 83; ibid., 28 July 1890, Roll No. 81.

[26] Parr, *Sensing Changes*, 9.

Figure 4: The Dymonds entertain English cousins, ca. 1910. Left to right: Jim (wearing bonnet as joke); Hannah Wheatley (partly obscured), a cousin of Margaret's grandmother; William (J.R.'s father); J.R. (wearing glasses); Maggie (J.R.'s mother; wearing man's tie as joke); Evelyn Wheatley (Maggie's cousin); Alfred; Frank; Fred. Courtesy of Margaret Saettler, Kerwood, Ontario

it was normal for rural people to work the land to survive. Beyond this common view, he became "hooked" on nature; for the rest of his life he was fascinated by its complex diversity. Dymond eventually cultivated this interest into a long and distinguished career as a biologist. The boy was encouraged to appreciate these values by his parents, whose own heritage had taught the importance of caring for the land. In 1900, when J.R. was thirteen, the family purchased additional land to the west (lot 9, concession 1), where they settled for good in 1903. The teenager searched the bush for healthy maples and transplanted a small grove on the west side of the house; he planted another maple at the road to mark the farm and beautify the gate. (Figure 3)

The Dymonds were a warm and supportive family. In this setting, J.R. acquired the social skills and community values that would animate his professional and conservation work. He had one sister, Jessie Grace (1889) and four brothers: W. James "Jim" (1895), Alfred Lewis (1900), Fred G. (1907), and Francis "Frank" Clifford (1903). Fred recalled "a genuine concern for each others' welfare... one would do anything to support the other."[27] The family also had fun, often sharing jokes and staging humorous pranks. The Dymond farm was a magnet for extended family members, friends, and neighbours who paid regular visits. (Figure 4) J.R. thrived in this lively environment, developing his talents as a speaker and storyteller. He learned these skills partly from his father, William, a kind-hearted man, a "mild-mannered, gentle person," and a great conversationalist with a dry sense of humour.[28] J.R. learned the values of respect, self-improvement, and public service from his mother. Margaret was a

[27] Fred Dymond, "Memoirs," 170.

[28] *Ibid*., 169; telephone interview with Margaret Saettler,7 June 2004 . A fellow conservationist recalled J.R. as "a very gentle man" and a good speaker; private interview with Mr. Gavin Henderson, Toronto, 7 May 1986.

petite, energetic person who enjoyed life and the company of others. She appreciated the arts—she played hymns and popular songs on a mahogany organ in the parlour—and actively encouraged this interest in her five sons. Margaret taught her boys to knit, sew, and help out in the kitchen, as well as perform more traditionally male-oriented tasks. Outside the home, Margaret "was a great church worker," particularly active in a women's quilting group.[29] J.R. absorbed these lessons about learning, community, and public service. He later put them into action by studying diligently, educating people about the natural world, and doing administrative work in conservation.[30]

Figure 5: "Johnnie" (J.R.) Dymond, ca. eight years old. Courtesy of Margaret Saettler, Kerwood, Ontario.

The farm remained a refuge for family and friends who moved to other places. Sons Jim and Frank took over the farm when William suffered a heart attack. After J.R. began university in Toronto (1908), he regularly returned by train to visit the homestead, relishing the company and tramping through the bush "in his rubber boots and funny old hat." Dymond enjoyed these pilgrimages to the second farm because it was a place of memories where he could walk the land and, despite its changes, experience familiar sights, sounds, smells, and tastes. The visits reinforced his sense of identity as a son, a brother, and a naturalist, raised on southwestern Ontario farmland. Dymond visited the farm every Easter and during the summers, until his father died in 1942.[31] Jim also literally fed his brother's hunger for home by sending crates of fresh farm eggs and wheat by train to Toronto, where J.R.'s wife ground the grain to make bread.[32]

Aside from a lively and supportive home, a site for exploring nature, and an anchor for self-identity, the Dymond farm was also a place of emotionally searing experience. When J.R. was eight years old, the family endured trials that demonstrated his mother's extraordinary resolve and fortitude. Johnnie attended the Katesville School, a mile and a half east of the farm. The short, small-boned lad—he had inherited his mother's fea-

[29] Fred Dymond, "Memoirs," 9.

[30] Margaret suffered from severe arthritis. In the 1920s, an overdose of prescribed cortisone treatments relieved her pain but altered her mind. She died in 1926. The family remained closely knit.

[31] Even after William died at the age of 88, his sons carried on the tradition of regular, family reunions.

[32] Interview with Margaret Saettler, 15 June 2004. J.R.'s wife Hilda, a schoolteacher from Carp, near Ottawa, favoured eating healthy food.

tures—was a bright pupil. (Figure 5) His second year of school was punctuated by the death, in February 1895, of his maternal grandmother, Margaret Richardson. She had been afflicted with "dyspepsia" (an intestinal disorder) and deafness for several years, and her passing intensified the family's emotional strain. Some relief came on 6 April when Margaret Dymond gave birth to her third child, W. James. Three weeks later, William left for England to visit relatives. It was the first of May, widely celebrated in Ontario as "Arbor Day" (a time for planting trees),[33] and a day when schoolchildren brought their younger siblings for entertainment. Unfortunately, Johnnie and his young sister, Jessie (aged five and a half) caught scarlet fever at school. Within three weeks, Jessie was dead. Margaret was left to cope with this tragedy while trying to nurse Johnnie back to health and literally nurse James, who was only six weeks old. To make matters worse, the local Methodist minister refused to enter the house for funeral arrangements because he was terrified of contracting the illness. If the loss of his sister was emotionally disturbing, Johnnie at least had some consolation—and new responsibilities—with his infant brother, Jimmy. Johnnie gained a greater appreciation for family from this tragedy. He took time to nurture these bonds throughout his life.

The episode with the Methodist minister leads one to speculate about religion in J.R.'s development. Prior to the tragedy, the Dymonds had been staunch Methodists. Two of William's brothers had been "itinerant Wesleyan preachers in the south of England." However, after Jessie's death, Margaret never went back to the Methodist church. She and William went to the Anglican church in town but, because of service schedules, they continued to send their children to the Methodist Sunday school. This pragmatic mixture continued for some time. Later, in 1926, William insisted that both Anglican and Methodist ministers preside at his wife's funeral.[34] The impact of this religious ambivalence on J.R. is difficult to discern. When he enrolled at the University of Toronto, he attended Victoria College—perhaps in part because of his family's Methodist background. Friends and colleagues noted that Dymond cultivated his own spirituality. He eventually blended an appreciation for the natural world with a strong Christian faith. As historian Carl Berger wrote, "Victorians saw in nature what they were instructed to see—the work of God." The study of nature was promoted as the study of God's handiwork. It was this "identity of science and religion that was challenged and ultimately severed by Charles Darwin."[35] In his university studies and subsequent teaching career, Dymond would accept Darwin's evolu-

[33] Arbor Day began in the United States. See James C. Olson, "Arbor Day: A Pioneer Expression of Concern for the Environment," *Nebraska History* 53:1 (March 1972), 1-13.

[34] Telephone interview with Margaret Saettler, 7 June 2004.

[35] Carl Berger, *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada* The 1982 Joanne Goodman Lectures (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 31, 50.

tionary perspective, but his own personal faith in God remained strong.[36]

The foundation for J.R. Dymond's long career in academia was laid in his high school years, largely experienced off the farm. His parents' resolve to provide a good education led him in 1901 to Strathroy Collegiate Institute (SCI), located several miles east of Kerwood. The town was a very different place from the farm, with its fields, animals, and bush. This change in environments signaled for Dymond a new, more serious phase of his life. By then, Strathroy had long "emerged from its village condition." It boasted "wide business streets, well built up by local enterprise and capital, shaded avenues, with numerous fine dwellings and gardens," and "commodious church and school buildings."[37] Attending SCI was a wise choice. The school was established in 1885 on the recommendation of local resident and Liberal Minister of Education (later Premier), The Honourable George W. Ross. It soon "enjoyed a reputation for scholarships and for producing outstanding graduates," many of whom continued into university and became highly successful lawyers, doctors, and politicians.[38] The school attracted talented people from across Ontario, broadening Dymond's vision of the world beyond Kerwood. He benefitted enormously from popular teacher and principal, James E. Wetherell, a published classicist and linguist, and a gifted public speaker who inspired excellence and enthusiasm among his students. (Figure 6) Four decades later, Dymond regarded "it one of the most fortunate experiences of my life to have been a pupil of his"; he gratefully acknowledged Wetherell's

Figure 6: Principal James E. Wetherell(arrow) and students, Strathroy Collegiate Institute, ca. 1883-1906. James Elgin Wetherell Papers, Western Archives, Western University, RC 100574. Thanks to Barry Arnott for partial restoration of the photograph.

[36] In his later years in Toronto, he was "a devoted member and respected Elder of Timothy Eaton Memorial Church." Obituary by W. Beverley Scott, 222.

[37] *History of the County of Middlesex*, 418. The high school building (it became a collegiate institute in 1885) was constructed in 1880; *ibid*., 424-5.

[38] Quote from "Strathroy District Collegiate Institute – Old School – History," <http://www.tvdsb.on.ca/Strathroy/oldschool/history2.html> (now expired; accessed on 7 July 2004). From 1884-94, SCI graduated 328 of its 1,238 pupils; 50 became undergraduates at the University of Toronto, and over 100 became teachers. WA, James Elgin Wetherell Papers, B4310, newsclipping, "A Retrospective of Ten Years [1894]: Principal Wetherell's Address at the Collegiate Institute Concert."

contribution to his education, both "in a purely academic way" and in "many other aspects" of his life. One characteristic that the principal likely passed on was his passion for identifying birds and rocks, and "his sense of wonder in all Nature."[39] The curriculum at SCI "was strongly academic and intended to refine the students' 'mental culture.'" It featured "English, history, modern languages, science, the classics, and mathematics."[40] Dymond graduated in 1906, at the age of eighteen. Too young for university, he remained at SCI to receive his teacher training—the collegiate was also a Provincial Training Institute or "Model School," affiliated with the School of Pedagogy in Toronto.

The Education curriculum contained the seeds of Dymond's future conservation work. One noteworthy text was written by John Dearness, a former Strathroy teacher, Inspector of Schools for East Middlesex, and then Vice-Principal of the London Normal School. Dearness was an enthusiastic naturalist who had "an incomparable knowledge of the plants of southwestern Ontario."[41] His text, *The Nature Study Course with Suggestions for Teaching It* (1905), offered Dymond a professional and systematic way to indulge and share his passion for the natural world. This book was part of a North American movement to promote nature study among youth. Historian George Altmeyer noted that it was "heavily influenced by the desire to keep rural children on the farms" in an era of rural depopulation.[42] Ironically, for Dymond, nature study would eventually take him to the city. Advocates like Dearness claimed that nature study was a noble pursuit: it involved no less than the "intellectual, physical and moral development" of students. The teacher must "train them to observe, think, investigate and enjoy." In this child-centered approach, success depended upon the teacher's ability to enlist the senses to arouse and sustain the pupil's interest. "The scientific interest and the esthetic [sic] interest are distinctly different," wrote Dearness, "but fortunately they are not incompatible. Nature Study, rightly taught, is as good for the intellect as for the emotions, and it touches the volitional and physical powers at more points than

[39] WA, Wetherell Papers, B4310, handwritten note, J.R. Dymond to Miss [Alice] Wetherell, 20 May 1951; Alice Wetherell, "James Elgin Wetherell, B.A., 1851-1940," *Western Ontario Historical Notes* IX:1 (March 1951), 29-30. See also *History of the County of Middlesex*, 1041-42.

[40] Curriculum quotes from Paul Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 61. See also J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp and Louis-Philippe Audet, eds., *Canadian Education: A History* (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall, 1970); and R.D. Gidney, *Inventing Secondary Education: the Rise of the High School in Nineteenth-century Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990).

[41] William W. Judd, *Early Naturalists and Natural History Societies of London, Ontario* (London, Ontario: Phelps Publishing Co., 1979), 32. See also *A History of the County of Middlesex*, 791.

[42] John Dearness, *The Nature Study Course with Suggestions for Teaching It. Based on Notes of Lectures to Teachers-in-Training* (Toronto: Copp, Clark, 1905) ; George Altmeyer, "Three Ideas of Nature in Canada, 1893-1914," *Journal of Canadian Studies* XI:3 (August 1976), 35, footnote 57. See also Kevin C. Armitage, *The Nature Study Movement: The Forgotten Popularizer of America's Conservation Ethic* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2009); and Sally Gregory Kohlstedt, *Teaching Children Science: Hands-on Nature Study in North America, 1890-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

most other school studies do."[43] These values resonated with Dymond, whose subsequent work in education and nature interpretation was fired by a strong mixture of science and aesthetics. As historian Kevin Armitage pointed out, nature study had a distinctively "ecological orientation." Proponents reveled in learning how "various parts of natural world interacted," and eagerly shared this knowledge with fellow enthusiasts. Eventually, "nature study advocates... adopted the science of ecology as the professional extension" of their activity. Dymond's particular professional path would lead to zoology. Like other middle-class professionals in the early twentieth century, he would embrace the conservation of natural resources, a legacy of the nature study movement, with its emphasis on the "interdependence of humans and a sympathetic attitude toward the environment."[44]

During his last few years in southwestern Ontario, Dymond's experience of places further shaped his thinking about nature. After obtaining his teaching certificate, Dymond taught for two years in a public school in Caradoc Township, two and one-half miles east of Mount Brydges (the school was torn down when the province built highway #402). J.R. boarded in town with a Mrs. Trott and walked, morning and evening, along the railway tracks. By now he had developed an enduring reputation as a prodigious, swift walker. This habit, born of necessity (the family didn't own a car until 1916, and J.R. never learned to drive), maintained his robust health and provided opportunities to observe the local flora and fauna along the way. His early teaching career in Caradoc likely put him in touch with a thriving group of naturalists based in London, Ontario. As historian W.W. Judd has documented, the Entomological Society of Ontario had relocated there from Toronto in 1872. During the 1890s, four separate groups studied botany, ornithology, geology and microscopy, providing "a sort of informal Academy of Science" that nurtured the interest of several leading figures, including John Dearness. Thereafter, local biologists and naturalists met on an informal basis until the First World War when the McIlwraith Ornithological Club (established back in 1903) began to revive. It is highly probable that Dymond crossed paths with these outdoor enthusiasts. His subsequent involvement with the broader naturalist community and friendship with William Edwin Saunders (1861-1943)—London druggist and son of William Saunders (1836-1914), director of the Dominion Experimental Farms (1886-1911)—suggests an early connection.[45] If Dymond had not yet resolved to pursue conserva-

[43] Dearness, *The Nature Study Course*, 2, 6, 4.

[44] Armitage, *The Nature Study Movement*, 205-7. Armitage argued that the "ideology of nature study conservation—that people must develop an emotional connection with nonhuman nature so that they will be moved to save it—is a common theme in environmentalist thought," and an important legacy of the Progressive Era.

[45] See Judd, *Early Naturalists and Natural History Societies of London*; quote from p. 14. Not far from Dymond's teaching post was one of the group's favourite field trip sites: "Wonnacott's Farm," near

tion work, his association with Saunders and other urban-based naturalists would soon convince him to act.

Cities

Two cities had an enormous influence on J.R. Dymond: Toronto and Ottawa. In each city, he experienced places and met people who shaped his views of nature and propelled him into a lifetime of zoological studies and conservation work. Dymond's shift from rural southwestern Ontario to Toronto was a natural progression in his personal and professional life. A confident, ambitious young man, he would not be satisfied with teaching in a country school for very long. Moreover, teachers were notoriously poorly paid. Many Strathroy graduates had gone to the University of Toronto during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, finding success. For all these reasons, Dymond set out in the fall of 1908 for the province's largest city.

Dymond's initial experience of Toronto likely caused mixed reactions. On the one hand, his British family heritage, formal education, and cultural background made him comfortable in the Anglo-dominated Toronto and university of the early twentieth century. On the other hand, the physical environment of the city and campus was something of a shock. The lawns, gardens, walkways, and architecture of the university were very impressive. Dymond was also exposed to other sights, sounds, and smells in this growing urban centre. Rattling streetcars, belching automobiles, horse-drawn carriages, and pedestrians jostled in the streets; industrial pollution and chimney smoke darkened the skies and tainted the air. Dymond learned to tolerate this "sensuous barrage," perhaps "by developing sensory calluses."[46] Moreover, there were ways to indulge his passion for nature. As historian Lovat Dickson wrote, "Toronto was a paradise for nature lovers. The small city was situated on rising land between two rivers, with heavily treed ravines, relics of the glacial age, running down to Lake Ontario, and its outskirts provided a perfect haven for wildlife." It was a short walk "to the Don River in the east, or the Humber in the west, where mammals and birds of great variety crossed the paths of the walkers or swooped over their heads."[47] Dymond found relief from

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Komoka, a flood plain of the Thames River surrounded by wooded slopes. Dymond might have joined W.E. Saunders and his naturalist friends on field trips to "the old farm" Saunders owned (1903-09) along the Thames River (lot 28, II concession, London Township—today part of the London Hunt Club). See also J.R. Dymond, "A Crusader for Conservation," in *W.E. Saunders: Naturalist. A Memorial Volume Published By the Federation of Ontario Naturalists*, edited by R.J. Rutter (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1949), 22-7; and David G. Wake, "William Edwin Saunders (1861-1943)," in *Ornithology in Ontario. Special Publication No. 1, Ontario Field Ornithologists – 1994,* edited by Martin K. McNicholl and John L. Cranmer-Byng (Whitby, Ontario: Hawk Owl Publishing, 1994), 189-95.

[46] Parr, *Sensing Changes*, 16.

[47] Lovat Dickson, *The Museum Makers: The Story of the Royal Ontario Museum* (University of Toronto Press, 1986), 42. On Toronto's environmental history, see L. Anders Sandberg, *et.al*., eds., *Urban Explorations: Environmental Histories of the Toronto Region* (Hamilton: Wilson Institute for Canadian History, McMaster University, 2013); Betty I. Roots, Donald A. Chant, and Conrad Heidenreich, eds.,

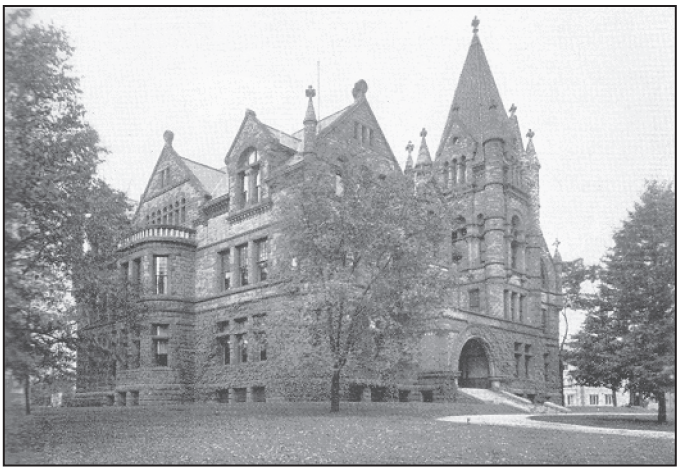

Figure 7: Victoria University, Toronto, Main Building, built 1891-2. Nathanael Burwash, The History of Victoria College *(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1927), between 430-31.*

Figure 8: The Birge-Carnegie Library at Victoria College, completed 1910. C.B. Sissons, A History of Victoria University *(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952).*

the stress of academic work in Toronto's abundant natural areas. He also caught the excitement generated among his professors by the construction of the massive Royal Ontario Museum (completed 1912; co-directed by zoology professor Benjamin Arthur Bensley, until his death in 1934), between "Philosopher's walk" and "tree-lined Queen's Park."[48] In years to come, this place would be a base for Dymond's professional and conservation work. Indeed, the appealing mixture of academic culture and outdoor amenities would convince him to make Toronto his permanent home.

Dymond enrolled in 1908 at Victoria College, where he studied for a bachelor's degree in arts, with a specialty in biology. Two places were especially significant for him: the library at Victoria, and the Biological Building. The library was likely central to his experience because of the shared emotional intensity of studying under pressure with his peers. During his first two years, the library was in "the crowded quarters of the main building." (Figure 7) At the start of Dymond's third year, in September 1910, the College celebrated the opening of the new Birge-Carnegie Library. Its architecture "broke new ground at the University, and set the pattern for several later buildings on the campus," with its "collegiate Gothic" style and "grey Credit Valley stone." Students now had a thoroughly modern and planned facility, featuring "three spacious

Special Places: The Changing Ecosystems of the Toronto Region (Vancouver: UBC Press with the Royal Canadian Institute, 1999); and M. Jane Fairburn, *Along the Shore: Rediscovering Toronto's Waterfront Heritage* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2013).

[48] Dickson, *The Museum Makers*, 38.

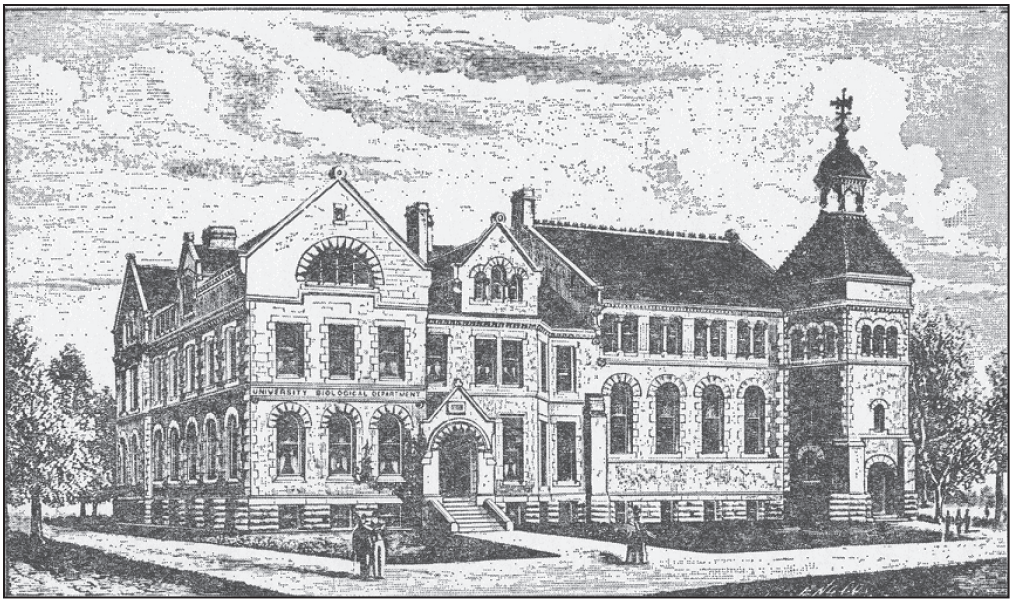

Figure 9: The Biological Building, University of Toronto, 1889. Taken from E. Horne Craigie, A History of the Department of Zoology of the University of Toronto Up to 1962 *(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 19.*

reading rooms," several smaller rooms for research, and a "fire-proof stackroom" for 60,000 volumes—a vastly improved working environment.[49] (Figure 8) Dymond had classes in the Biological Building, an imposing two-storey structure "near Taddle Creek on the west side of what is now Queen's Park." It was built in 1887-88 using stone from the demolished Provincial Lunatic Asylum. (Figure 9) Aside from an extension finished in 1892 to house the Biological Museum and Department of Anatomy, the rooms remained essentially unchanged until the facility was replaced during the early 1960s. The museum, built to assist students in their course work, surely caught Dymond's attention. It covered two floors with four brightly lit rooms, three for Animal Biology and a fourth for Vegetable Biology, connected by a stairway that "demonstrate[d], by means of fossils, the sequence of life from the lowest to the most recent geological strata."[50]

Few records remain of Dymond's undergraduate years. There is no hint that he participated in Victoria's clubs for singing, playing music, debating, or team sports, and there was no student council until 1913. Although women were housed in

[49] C.B. Sissons, *A History of Victoria University* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952), 240; Nathanael Burwash, *The History of Victoria College* (Toronto: Victoria College Press, 1927), 456-7. The college had been established by Methodists in 1841 in Cobourg, Ontario, became federated with the University of Toronto in 1890, and relocated to that city in 1892.

[50] E. Horne Craigie, *A History of the Department of Zoology at the University of Toronto Up to 1962* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 18-27.

an exclusive residence at Annesley Hall (completed in 1903), there was no men's residence at Victoria until after Dymond had graduated.[51] Family sources indicate that he roomed with Harold Sifton, another Kerwood native and former Strathroy pupil of James Wetherell, thus maintaining a close connection with his roots. (Sifton was later head of Botany at the University of Toronto.) In Dymond's final year, there were 850 students in Biology at the University of Toronto. The Honours program had been recently introduced, with its first graduates obtaining Bachelor's degrees in 1907. Students had to complete a number of courses chosen from two dozen offerings; four of these were "collections," requiring students to gather specimens in the field and submit an "accompanying essay" in the following term. This course work may have ignited Dymond's passion for field studies. Two of his professors exerted a strong influence: Benjamin Arthur Bensley (zoology) and Archibald Gowanlock Huntsman (a marine biologist). Both instructors studied aquatic life, became administrators at scientific field stations, and encouraged Dymond to enter the field. A fellow honours biology student, Wilbert Amie Clemens, would also encourage him to study fish. Like his classmate, Clemens recognized the importance of nature education for schoolteachers.[52] Dymond proved, once again, to be a dedicated scholar. He took his BA in 1912, and won the gold medal in Natural Science. (Figure 10)

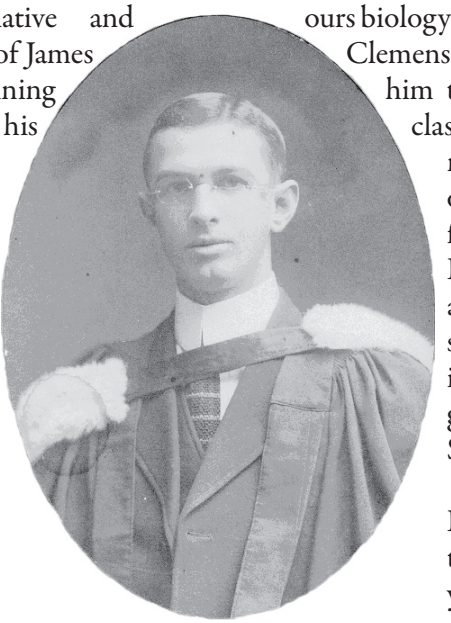

Figure 10: J.R. Dymond, University of Toronto Graduate - BA (Honours Biology) 1912. Courtesy of Margaret Saettler, Kerwood, Ontario.

After graduation, Dymond found a way to earn a living by studying nature—albeit tiny parts thereof. He worked with the federal Department of Agriculture for several years as a seed analyst in Ottawa, Calgary and Winnipeg. Dymond's employment was probably due to his friendship with W.E. Saunders, whose father, William Saunders Sr., had recently retired from the department in 1911. Under the latter's direction, the experimental farms had conducted im-

[51] Sissons, *A History of Victoria University*, 251-59, 225. The men's residence, Burwash Hall, opened in 1913.

[52] Interview with Margaret Saettler, 15 June 2004; information on Biology program, enrollment, and Profs. Bensley and Huntsman from Craigie, *A History of the Department of Zoology*, 64, 60, 29, 32. Clemens spent the following summer at the department's Biological Station at Go Home Bay, on Georgian Bay. He then completed his Master's degree at the University of Toronto, where he was hired in 1916 "as a lecturer in Elementary Biology." "Reminiscences of Dr. W.A. Clemens," in Craigie, *A History of the Department of Zoology*, 90-91.

portant research in cereal culture. Grain production was a booming business in Canada. Farmers on the prairies expanded their wheat production during the Great War because of rising demand.[53] Dymond became an expert on cereal culture during this expansionist phase. (He did not serve in the military, perhaps because of his poor eyesight and valuable work in agriculture.) He wrote a series of articles and some technical pamphlets: *Grain Screenings* (1915), *Cleaning Seed* (1918), and *Red Clover Seed and Its Impurities* (1918)—the latter published by the department in English and French. This expertise soon became the foundation for a Master's thesis.

While Dymond's experience in Ottawa led to an early vocation, it also enriched his avocation. During residency in the nation's capital (1913-1917), Dymond became a stalwart of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club. Comprised mostly of professional men and women from the federal civil service, it was the oldest continuously operating naturalist club in Canada (established 1879). Dymond's experience with this enthusiastic group of biologists would shape his values, and lead to his later professional and volunteer work. Although natural history societies, comprised of amateur and professional scientists, had thrived in Canada during the Victorian era, these clubs declined in number during the early twentieth century, "displaced by universities and government agencies." Many societies shifted their activities, from collecting specimens to "the promotion of popular education, especially nature study in the schools, and conservation."[54] Dymond joined the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club in March 1913. Encouraged by his boss (the club's president), L.H. Newman, and Dominion Cerealist Charles Saunders, Dymond performed valuable administrative work as treasurer and librarian. The group investigated local flora and fauna, produced a respected scientific journal, *Canadian Field-Naturalist* (where Dymond published on seeds in 1918), and promoted public appreciation of natural history. In this cultural *milieu*, Dymond developed an enthusiasm and talent for nature interpretation. He read about "the practical aspects of nature study" and its potential for rural education in articles published by the club's journal.[55] Dymond became an advocate of "junior naturalist" programs—youth education conceived as a less militaristic alternative to the popular Boy Scout movement. Initially, the National Museum took up the program through the efforts of another club member, ethnologist Harlan I. Smith. With the encouragement of Dymond and others, junior naturalist programs mushroomed across southern Ontario in

[53] John Herd Thompson, *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978).

[54] Carl Berger, *Science, God and Nature*, 77.

[55] W.T. Macoun, "The Practical Aspect of Nature Study," *The Ottawa Naturalist* XVII (Jan. 1904), 181-84; and J.W. Hotson, "Nature Study and Rural Education," *The Ottawa Naturalist* XVII (March 1904), 221-24.

Figure 11: Hilda Mary Dymond with son, William Richard Dymond, ca. 1921. Courtesy of Margaret Saettler, Kerwood, Ontario.

the 1940s, providing an introduction to natural history for dozens of future conservationists and biologists.[56]

The years that Dymond spent in the civil service had a significant impact on both his personal and professional life. In 1915 he married Hilda Mary Freeman (1887-1968), a schoolteacher from Carp, near Ottawa. Hilda was very dominating, but devoted to advancing J.R.'s career. She often said that he was "too modest"—and by all accounts, he was, in light of his talents and accomplishments. In 1921, after some six years of marriage, they celebrated the birth of their only son, William Richard.[57] (Figure 11) Dymond now had to think about his family's long-term security. At the end of the First World War, Canadians faced soaring inflation and uncertainty as the economy struggled to adjust. Dymond was not well paid. (Indeed, his father had lent him $500 in 1916.) He and several colleagues resigned from the Seed Branch in Ottawa. Perhaps the most important reason for leaving was that Dymond felt capable of more demanding work—a feeling nurtured by his close association with the intellectual elite in Ottawa. Having decided to further his education, he returned to the University of Toronto where he obtained his Master's degree in Biology in 1920. His thesis—"Elevator Screenings: Their Source and Composition and Certain Problems Connected with their Disposal and Use" (1920)—was a direct result of his work for the federal government. It was published in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, a coup for an aspiring academic.

Field Laboratories

As we have seen, places are connected by flows of people, ideas, and money. When Dymond was studying at the University of Toronto, he developed relationships

[56] My thanks to Dan Brunton for information on Dymond's experience with the Ottawa club; personal communication, 10 September 1992. Did Dymond embrace nature study partly as a reaction against the popular "muscular Christianity" movement? See Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[57] "Billy" (later Bill) would be raised in Toronto, where he attended Upper Canada College. He eventually earned a Ph.D. in Labour Relations from Cornell University and, in the late 1950s, became Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour to the Hon. Michael Starr, in John Diefenbaker's federal government.

with his peers and professors that led to scientific work beyond the city. These personal connections guided him to ichthyology, the branch of zoology that examines fish. In 1920, Dymond was hired by the zoology department at the university to teach systematics—"the classification and study of organisms with regard to their natural relationships."[58] He had already shifted his attention from agriculture to aquatic life by the spring of 1921. On 27 May he observed "that large numbers of land-locked sea lampreys were in the Humber river, just west of the city." Hundreds were stymied from moving upstream by the three-foot Lambton weir. Dymond reported his findings to a departmental colleague, who visited the site and studied the lampreys' breeding habits.[59] This brief experience led to more extensive outings. During the summer months, when he wasn't teaching classes, Dymond joined communities of scholars engaged in systematic field studies. A common characteristic of these seasonal experiences was the strong sense of community, goodwill, and *camaraderie* among the participants. Although the social relations were sometimes hierarchical, in keeping with social attitudes of the day, Dymond enjoyed the informality, a product of the rough conditions of the facilities and the willingness of field scientists to share biological questions, insights, jokes, and hospitality. He often brought his family along, teaching them about his work and cementing lifelong friendships with colleagues. Dymond revelled in this culture because it valued and celebrated the pursuit of knowledge about nature outdoors, in community with others. He developed a strong attachment to the field laboratories, to the relationships formed in those settings, and to the idea of protecting "natural" areas for scientific study.

Figure 12: "Seining in a shallow bay" – Lake Nipigon, 1926. John Richardson Dymond, The Fishes of Lake Nipigon. *University of Toronto Studies. Publications of the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory No. 27 (Toronto: The University Library, 1926), Plate XI.*

[58] Merriam-Webster Dictionary, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/systematics > (accessed on 11 July 2014).

[59] A.F. Coventry, *Breeding Habits of the Land-Locked Sea Lamprey* (*PETROMYZON MARINUS VAR. DORSATUS WILDER*) University of Toronto Studies. Publications of the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory No. 9 (Toronto: The University Library, 1922), 130.

As Dymond later wrote, scientists during the 1920s were engaged in basic "stock-taking"—gathering information about "the taxonomy and distribution of fishes in Canada."[60] The work of taxonomists began "in the field, with exacting and systematic collecting." Ichthyologists collected fishes "as whole (and smelly) specimens in jars of alcohol or formalin;" they were "expensive to house and unpleasant to work with."[61] Dymond would have disagreed with the latter point. He eagerly waded into aquatic fieldwork during the 1920s, accompanied by his wife and young son. Dymond conducted numerous studies at lakes across Ontario. In 1926 and 1928 he studied trout at some interior lakes in British Columbia, and at the Pacific station of the Biological Board of Canada (it became the Fisheries Research Board of Canada in 1957) in Nanaimo, then directed by his former classmate W.A. Clemens.[62] This burst of activity launched a productive period of scholarly publication. Many of his articles were works in systematics, in which he described a number of new species and new forms, and classification. He worked with nets of various types and sizes, captured specimens, and carefully recorded details of the catch. (Figure 12) Often, he engaged in dialogue with commercial fishermen and anglers who offered useful information and, sometimes, shared their own catch. To verify his findings, Dymond consulted data collected in previous field studies and wrote to experts across Canada and the United States, widening his contact base, influence, and sense of scientific community.[63]

Dymond was part of an important community of university scientists, undergraduate and graduate students known as the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory (OFRL, established 1920). It was supported by funds from the Department of Zoology at the University of Toronto. A vehicle for co-ordinating research and sharing findings through informal discussion and publications, the OFRL aimed to contribute to a "better understanding of lakes as 'complete physi-

[60] J.R. Dymond, "A History of Ichthyology in Canada," *Copeia* 1 (1964), 14.

[61] Robert E. Kohler, *All Creatures: Naturalists, Collectors, and Biodiversity, 1850-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 242, 244.

[62] Kenneth Johnstone, *The Aquatic Explorers: A History of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 109-110, 184. See also Jennifer Hubbard, *A Science on the Scales: The Rise of Canadian Atlantic Fisheries Biology, 1898-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

[63] Dymond's publications include *A Provisional List of the Fishes of Lake Erie* University of Toronto Studies. Publications of the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory No. 4 (Toronto: the University Library 1922); *A Provisional List of the Fishes of Lake Nipigon* University of Toronto Studies. Publications of the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory No. 12 (Toronto: The University Library 1923); *The Fishes of Lake Nipigon* University of Toronto Studies. Publications of the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory No. 27 (Toronto: The University Library, 1926); with J.L. Pritchard, *The Fishes of the Canadian Waters of Lake Ontario* University of Toronto Studies. Publications of the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory No. 37 (Toronto: The University Library, 1929); and *The Trout and Other Game Fishes of British Columbia* The Biological Board of Canada *Bulletin* No. XXXII (Ottawa: F.A. Acland and the Department of Fisheries, 1932).

cal-biological complexes,'" and to provide the scientific foundation for managing fisheries to maximize their productivity.[64] The group conducted summer field work at Lake Nipigon (1921-26), Lake Abitibi (1927), Lake Ontario and its tributaries, including sites at Port Credit and the Bay of Quinte (1927-28), and Frank's Bay on Lake Nipissing (1929-35). W.A. Clemens directed operations from 1920 to 1924, succeeded by a former student, Prof. William J.K. ("Bill") Harkness (B.A. 1922), who served as director until 1946. In the mid-1930s, Dymond and Harkness would put their considerable experience and values to work, establishing a permanent site for fisheries research in Algonquin Park.[65]

The station at Frank's Bay provides a window on the setting, activities, and social relations typical of the OFRL "field labs." J.G. (Jack) Oughton, a biology undergraduate in 1929, later wrote a colourful account of his experience.[66] "The field station was housed in a dilapidated frame structure that had been part of a lumbering operation" at the French River. "This gaping, weathered house set in burnt land on smoothly rounded, bare granite" had to be repaired by the fisheries students, who learned "carpentry, simple cookery, camping, boat maintenance, and canoe handling, as well as the more strictly limnological work." The rebuilt front of the house had an upstairs office for Harkness, a "general fish lab" below, a back room for storage "and water analysis" and, on the other side, a few bedrooms above with "a kitchen and a dining room below." Porcupines, bats, birds, and skunks ignored the human invasion, and continued to explore and modify the structure. Research work was often tedious: taking water samples to test chemical composition and record temperatures; collecting "plankton and bottom fauna;" constructing gill-nets and identifying, measuring and examining the stomach contents of the catch; and conducting "special studies of ciscoes, back bass, and plankton." The "fish lab" became "an educational adjunct of the university." At day's end, undergraduates joined graduate students and professors to exchange observations and anecdotes, pick blueberries across the bay, explore the local bog, swim, fish, or photograph.

Because of its rustic environment and rich sensory experiences, the station created vivid memories. "Always in the fish

[64] Stephen Bocking, "Fishing the Inland Seas: Great Lakes Research, Fisheries Management, and Environmental Policy in Ontario," *Environmental History* 2:1 (January 1997), 53. See also Dymond, "A History of Ichthyology," 4, 10.

[65] "Reminiscences of Dr. W.A. Clemens," 90-92. Like Dymond, Harkness had a passion for field research. Neither were "ivory tower academics." Both actively encouraged public awareness of conservation. In 1925, for example, Harkness and Dymond helped to found the Toronto Anglers' Association—forerunner of today's Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. Harkness later served as secretary of the Special Committee on the Game Fish Situation in Ontario, which heard representations from sportsmen and other concerned citizens across the province during 1929 and 1930.

[66] The quotes in this paragraph and the next are from J.G. Oughton, "Dr. Harkness as a Teacher," in *Fish and Wildlife: A Memorial to W.J.K. Harkness*, edited by J.R. Dymond (Toronto: Longmans, 1964), 11-16.

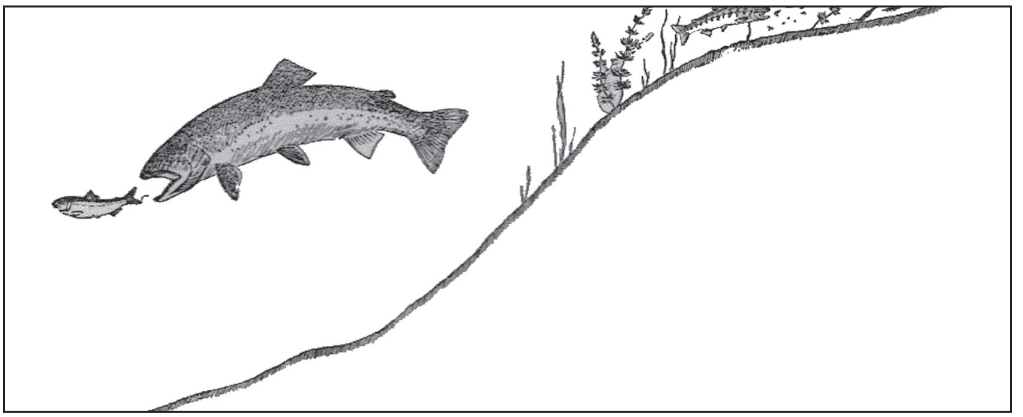

Figure 13: "A diagramatic representation of a young trout feeding in the shallow water of a lake where numerous organisms of a size suitable for small trout occur and a large trout feeding in the open, over deep water." Illustration by E.B.S. (Shelley) Logier, Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology. J.R. Dymond, The Trout and Other Game Fishes of British Columbia, *The Biological Board of Canada Bulletin No. XXXII (Ottawa: F.A. Acland and the Department of Fisheries, 1932), 47.*

lab one was aware of the natural settings:" the "fragrant" smell of distant bush fires, "the changing moods of the lake," the "rocky shores," the "sad, straggly trees of the burnt-over areas," the "rhythmic plop-plop of the boat," the sight of "deer drinking at the water's edge," the "unearthly" call of the loon, and "the sad, hopeful cry of the whippoorwill." Dymond was there in 1929. Although we cannot be certain that his memories were identical, he enjoyed the experience and remembered it fondly thirty years later. Human relations at the station were friendly, cooperative, and sometime hilarious. In addition to sharing scientific discussions, station members posted witty compositions on the dining room wall, engaged in elaborate pranks—Mrs. Dymond was an accidental victim, soaked by a bucket of dirty water—and performed a lighthearted ritual with clever puns to divide leftovers at mealtime. The latter contributed to group morale but also reminded everyone of the staff hierarchy.[67]

By the mid-1930s, Dymond's forays into the field lessened in frequency as he increasingly turned his attention to administrative work. His experience in outdoor laboratories taught him a great deal, including lessons about conservation. Evidence of his developing ideas can be found in a short essay he published in 1932 on trout conservation, appended to his study on the game fishes of British Columbia. He abandoned the technical language and form of the preceding pages to argue that scientific research was essential for the "conservation of any form of wild life." He used an ecological framework to explain

[67] "The halving system first developed with surplus blueberry pie that remained at the end of the meal. The ceremony ran as follows: Bill Harkness would turn to the senior visitor, J.R. Dymond, and say solemnly, 'J.R., would you like to halve this pie?' J.R. would cut the piece in half, eat his share, and pass the remainder to his neighbour. The blueberry pie circulated around the table, decreasing inversely as π^2." *Ibid*., 14.

that several related factors affected trout populations, including the food supply, a function of lake habitat. The ideal lake had "a considerable area of water under thirty feet in depth, together with some deeper water," as depicted in an illustration by E.B.S. (Shelley) Logier of the ROM. (Figure 13) Other crucial factors for trout were pollution-free shallows and adequate plant life, which "in turn depends on inorganic constituents... leeched out of the soil and carried in solution by the waters of rivers and lakes." Trout also thrived in streams where water levels and flow were "fairly uniform," supporting "the little animals on which trout feed." Dymond revealed that the traditional managerial approach of planting hatchery-raised fish "fry and fingerlings" was sometimes ineffectual because it overlooked other production factors. He invoked the concept of a balance in nature, another popular construct among some scientists in the 1930s. "Under natural conditions," he wrote, "there is more or less of a balance maintained between the various species of fish, and other organisms occupying a body of water. If this balance is seriously upset, so that the enemies and competitors of trout become very numerous, it becomes increasingly difficult for trout, especially young trout, to survive. Depletion is a far more serious matter than we have thought...." Dymond had become an advocate for nature. He admonished anglers to "learn to be satisfied to take only their share of fish." If every angler was a "true sportsman," he chided, the "problem of the conservation of our game fish [would] not be so pressing as it is to-day."[68] This short essay revealed Dymond's emerging ecological perspective, his basic assumptions about conservation—including acceptance of human intervention—and exhibited his strategic approach, to build support by appealing to different "users" of nature (conservationists, fisheries managers, and anglers).[69]

Like many scientists of his day, Dymond was convinced that careful, systematic research was essential to advance knowledge of the natural world. He recognized that scientific research had to be communicated to a wider public—informally, and in publications—to increase support for conservation. Dymond accepted the scholarly obligation to write and disseminate his work, not simply to "publish or perish" academically, but also for the thrill of sharing his knowledge.

[68] J.R. Dymond, "The Conservation of British Columbia Trout," in *The Trout and Other Game Fishes of British Columbia*, 46-49.

[69] Dymond's embrace of an ecological framework was partly due to his experience in the "fish labs" but was also the product of reading Charles Elton's *Animal Ecology* (1927). Elton had proposed basic concepts that were widely adapted in ecological research. J.R.D[ymond], "Scientific Natural History," *Canadian Field-Naturalist* 43 (January 1929), 22; Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 294-99. Dymond visited Elton at Oxford in 1929, and arranged a reciprocal visit to Toronto in 1938. University of Toronto Archives (hereafter UTA), Department of Zoology Records, A74-0022, box 2, file D2, General Correspondence, Dymond to W.J.K. Harkness, 7 Aug. 1929; and W.J.K. Harkness, "Report of the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory, 1938," in *Algonquin Park News Letter* 7 (1938). See also Peter Crowcroft, *Elton's Ecologists: A History of the Bureau of Animal Population* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

Field laboratories gave him a practical model for generating valuable research. He now understood that scientists required special *places* to study, relatively free of other kinds of human use. In this regard, he was part of a growing international movement to protect so-called "natural areas". Dymond, like ecologists Charles Elton in Britain and Victor Shelford in the United States, became an advocate for publicly-owned nature reserves for ecological research. His support for such reserves was partly self-serving, but he also insisted that reserves should be established to protect nature "*for its own sake*." The twin impulses of science and aesthetics propelled him into a conservation crusade beginning in the early 1930s.[70] By then, his experiences in Toronto had sharpened his thinking about nature, and produced bodies to protect it.[71]

Conclusion

Dymond's experiences of specific locations made him a conservationist. He developed a strong attachment to several places, his memories of them, and the interpersonal relationships that resulted. These experiences were shaped by the physical landscapes and the social relations that governed them. The combination of people and places in his early life encouraged a love for nature and a desire to study its complexity. Dymond fulfilled this ambition first as an amateur naturalist, then as a professional zoologist studying fish and, by the early 1930s, as a conservationist. For the rest of his life, he promoted scientific research as a prerequisite for conservation—which he understood as the wise management of natural resources. Although Dymond experienced nature in many different settings, he enjoyed it most when part of a community. By bringing other people to nature, he built public support for conservation.

The flow of people, ideas, and activities between places was significant to Dymond's personal development. But the flows were not always one-way. Sometimes, as in the case of his repeated return visits to the family farm, the flows went backward in response to ideas of family heritage. When Jim Dymond sent food from the farm by train to his brother in Toronto, it repeated the direction of J.R.'s earlier migration for education and employment. Yet this act encouraged Dymond's thoughts to travel back to his roots, and cultivated the memories he had planted on the farm. Historians can learn much by paying attention to such movements between places across time.

Was Dymond an anti-modern figure? In the sense advanced by historians T. Jackson Lears or Chris Dummitt, Dymond fits the mold. He was progressive in his own time by seeking to educate peo-

[70] Warecki, *Protecting Ontario's Wilderness*, chap. 2. Elton claimed it was imperative to "manage" such reserves because of their many "dynamic processes." Daniel Simberloff, "Charles Elton: Pioneer Conservation Biologist," *Environment and History* 18 (2012), 183-202.

[71] Previous works have discussed Dymond's conservation thinking and advocacy from the early 1930s onward. His later years in Toronto and Algonquin Park enriched his experience of places and refined his thoughts about nature. These themes will be developed in a forthcoming biography.

ple about nature. In his view, people's lives would be improved if they knew more about the natural world and acted to conserve its wealth. This impulse was only partly a reaction to modernity—the characteristics of urban and industrial life that he witnessed in cities. Indeed, Dymond learned to value nature in his early years on the farm and in rural schools. He later refined his views about the natural world through formal education and the many contacts he made in Toronto and Ottawa. He studied nature both in the city and beyond, in natural areas on the urban fringe and at lakes in B.C. and near-northern Ontario. His love of nature was not simply bourgeois dissatisfaction with urban life—a rejection of the city. Dymond's apparently anti-modern rejection of the automobile is noteworthy. He never learned to drive nor did he ever purchase a car. He felt they were too expensive and unnecessary, a position more easily taken where one could walk or take public transit to key places. Dymond simply walked—unless he needed a ride somewhere. On the other hand, he fully embraced much of what defined modern city life. By the mid-1930s, as a good administrator, an effective lobbyist and organizer, he relied on technology like telephones, typewriters, bureaucratic structures, and rational planning to achieve his social and political goals. Moreover, his advocacy of scientific management of fisheries also smacked of modernity. In his values and activities, Dymond projected a mixture of modern and anti-modern impulses, somewhat typical of twentieth century environmentalism.[72]

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[72] T. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Christopher Dummitt, *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007); Tina Loo, "Making a Modern Wilderness: Conserving Wildlife in Twentieth-Century Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 82:1 (March 2001), 93-94. For other Canadian reactions to modernity, see Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); and Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994).