

Literacy at the Resource Frontier: A Matter of Life and Death

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ABSTRACT

This article looks at an under-researched aspect of rural education: adult literacy education along Ontario's resource frontier in the early twentieth century. Workers in mining, lumbering and railroads were male; many were immigrants who wanted to earn enough either to establish homes in Ontario or return home with a viable stake. The majority did not read or speak English fluently which, directly and indirectly, led to injuries and accidents. I examine the nascent attempts of educators like Alfred Fitzpatrick to teach elementary reading and writing to these men. Their willingness to participate in the process was, however, limited by factors such as exhaustion at the end of a long shift; gender and cultural prejudices; and competing masculinities. The resource frontier was remote and isolated. The work was hard and dangerous. The inability to read and communicate made it more so. This article sheds light on some of the reasons why illiteracy persisted for so long.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article jette un regard sur un aspect peu connu de l'éducation en milieu rural : l'alphabétisation des adultes aux confins des terres habitées de l'Ontario au début du vingtième siècle. Dans les industries forestière, minière et ferroviaire les ouvriers étaient des hommes; beaucoup d'entre eux étaient des immigrants qui voulaient gagner suffisamment d'argent pour s'établir dans cette province ou retourner dans leurs pays d'origine avec une somme d'argent substantielle. La majorité ne savait ni lire ni parler anglais couramment ce qui, directement ou indirectement, entraînait des accidents et des blessures. Nous traitons des premières tentatives d'éducateurs tels qu'Alfred Fitzpatrick pour enseigner les rudiments de la lecture et de l'écriture à ces hommes. Leur volonté d'apprendre était cependant entravée par des facteurs tels que l'épuisement dû au travail, des préjugés culturels ou de genre et l'influence des modèles de masculinité. Ces régions étaient peu peuplées et isolées. Le travail était difficile et dangereux. L'incapacité de lire et de communiquer empirait la situation. Cet article expose certaines des raisons qui ont favorisé la persistance de l'analphabétisme aussi longtemps.

Education in Canada evolved; it did not emerge spontaneously as a uniform, fully realized institution that could be adopted evenly across the country. It was, under the terms of the *British North America Act*, a provincial responsibility and each province designed and articulated its own curricula. Leaving aside the “educational” work of missionaries like the Jesuits and Recollets, and staying clear of the highly sensitive issues that attended residential schools, I look at education in the post-Confederation era in what can arguably be called education in the modern era. This paper considers the nascent attempts of education pioneers along the resource frontier, most notably the Reverend Alfred Fitzpatrick,¹ to address and overcome issues that attended *in situ* teaching. While there is literature on rural education,² precious little scholarly research has been done on what happened at resource camps beyond Frontier College’s³ self-examinations, which need to be read and considered carefully. This article adds to the existing literature by exposing some of the specific challenges that had to be negotiated by education administrators and teachers.

The education of adults at remote sites—particularly adult, male, immigrant workers—was either non-existent or individual. There is little evidence to indicate any systematized or concerted efforts and literacy training prior to the appearance of the Ontario Reading Camps Association. There were Mechanics Institutes in settled towns with a permanent population base but that was not the case with resource workers. Lumbermen, cannallers, miners and railroad workers were, by the nature of their work, required to labour in distant out-of-the-way places, which were difficult to access, especially for a volunteer teacher. Simply getting to the sites was problematic. Finding a willing group of students was even more troublesome as the men focused more on putting in a full day’s work, than on learning their ABCs.

From the outset, however, the Ontario government supported the idea of education by cooperating with volunteer efforts.

In the new and sparsely settled districts of northern Ontario, the institution of Travelling(sic) Libraries will meet, in a very desirable way, the needs of certain classes of our population. [...] It is exceedingly desirable that those who are engaged in mining and lumbering operations should be furnished with some means of having their spare time occupied with what will be entertaining and elevating.⁴

This comment, made in 1901 by Ontario’s Deputy Minister of Education, John Millar, revealed the province’s interest in delivering literacy skills to the widely scattered workforce along the resource extraction frontier. In 1902 the Ontario Bureau of Mines noted the need to educate the children of miners:

The education of children in our mining camps is a subject requiring serious consideration. In most cases these communities are so different from both the ordinary country school district and the incorporated town or village that regulations under which things work quite smoothly in the latter may be difficult of application in the former.⁵

In the late nineteenth century, elementary reading and writing abilities were largely absent among the men—many of whom were immigrants—who toiled long hours in what were usually remote and isolated labour camps.⁶ Elsewhere, literacy was perceived to be a universal good—governments and social reformers assumed that it was always better to be literate than not—and it was an axiom that appeared to be logical and straightforward. Its essence however escaped many of the men who were the targets of these kinds of “progressive” goals.⁷ The workmen in lumber, mining and railroad work camps actively resisted being educated even though, in some instances, being able to properly read a label on the job meant the difference between life and death. The remoteness of the sites, the adult nature of the students, and the cultural and environmental conditions of learning all contributed to weak classroom attendance, poor participation and disappointing results. This article examines the experiences of teachers, students and the province through the Ontario Reading Camps Association (later Frontier College) between 1899 and 1915.⁸ Notwithstanding the altruism that informed initiatives such as Traveling Libraries and Mechanics’ Institutes,⁹ the earnestness to educate camp men frequently exceeded their willingness to be taught. Using records from the Ontario Bureau of Mines, the Ministry of Education, Frontier College and teachers, I argue that that three factors were responsible for frustrating the early part-time teaching efforts at these sites: conflicting masculinities manifested principally by physical differences between students and teachers; the broad mix of languages and ethnicities; and the density and normative nature of much of the available literature.¹⁰ The confluence of these conditions led to marginal successes, which in turn led to more worker injuries and deaths.

In the early twentieth century, education in the rural areas of Ontario was neither uniform nor consistent. This was especially true in comparison to the situation in large cities like Toronto, Kingston, Hamilton and Ottawa. Yet, even in urban settings, the particularities of classrooms—the ethnicities of students, the varieties of materials, and the gender and diversity of teachers—affected what was taught and how it was presented. Things were even more nuanced in frontier work spaces where there were far greater complexities to negotiate. The types of work being done at the site, the length of the worker-student shifts, the conditions of the job, the part-time nature of the instruction, the availability of teachers, the weather, the pressures of production, and the disparity of languages and cultures meant problems for teachers and students alike.

In her article, “‘I thought the people wanted to get rid of the teacher.’ Educational Authority in Late-Nineteenth Century Ontario,” Jennifer Goldberg notes that the top-down structure of the Ministry of Education did not eliminate resistance at either the board or the school level.¹¹ Each had to negotiate the terms of operation for their school just as teachers had to adapt curricula to the abilities and circumstances of their students. Nonetheless, in cities there was an overarching understanding that children needed to be taught to read and write. And there were rules about truancy that reinforced compliance. These assumptions did not apply to the part-time schooling of adult, male, immigrants who had already put in full, ten to fifteen hour, demanding physical shifts at distant mine stopes or timber limits.¹² There were no

“households” to target or co-opt to encourage education as there were in rural communities and urban settings.¹³ Frontier camps were distinct and unique; they did not conform to either of the other educational paradigms. “The migratory workers of the camps and the frontier, shifting, homeless and womanless, come in contact with the ugliest features of human hire and pay.”¹⁴ In the camps, teaching could only be done by educated men in ways that met the needs of the students. And the teachers quickly learned that they had to imitate their students’ lifestyles, by working alongside them during the day, before instructing them at night, else classes would be empty.¹⁵

Romanticized histories of Northern Ontario fawn and gush over the types of people, usually men, who lived and worked there:

To the Builders of the North

And build ye a race, toil-bred sons of the Northland,
As your stately pines, straight, as your granite hills strong,
Thew-knit, supple-sinewed, soul and body puissant,
Britain’s vanguard in the right, and her bulwark ‘gainst wrong.¹⁶

As the poem indicates, Ontario’s natural resources evolved into work spaces occupied by men who exhibited a normative, muscular masculinity. “Few men physically are so splendidly endowed as the workers in frontier camps. They have not only the masculinity that can endure privation, but the courage to confront physical dangers.”¹⁷ Miners and lumberjacks were perceived to be physically strong and capable because they looked and, equally important, acted the part.¹⁸ Ava Baron describes this as: “A hegemonic masculinity ... that emphasized toughness, physical strength, aggressiveness and risk-taking.”¹⁹ These particular characteristics were made visible: they needed to be seen, to be put on display and demonstrated, because they were part of the worker’s occupational manliness.²⁰ Part-time, non-formal schools were not places of work in the traditional sense yet the presence of a predominant muscular masculinity informed the nascent educational apparatus and produced tensions. In *The Bunkhouse Man*, Edmund Bradwin, a former labourer-instructor with Frontier College, said that workers *qua* students refused to be taught by an instructor who did not present the same kind of masculinity as their own: “[B]ut first and foremost [teachers at the frontier] must measure to full stature as a man; for the sturdy inmate of the bunkhouse will pay obeisance in his soul only to equals.”²¹ Plainly put, Bradwin was saying that pasty-faced, skinny, young men from the city—euphemistically called the “outside”—were the antithesis of what camp labourers knew and trusted. Regardless of the educational qualifications of the teacher, he had to look and behave in ways that conformed to what adult-male students were comfortable with. Alfred Fitzpatrick, the founder of Frontier College, similarly observed that teachers who had “soft hands” were not respected or accepted by camp communities.²² The absence of hand callouses was a key masculine trait and if missing in a teacher, sparked a reticence to be taught by that person. Fitzpatrick added, “there is a certain prejudice against [teachers] who do not engage in the regular routine of the work in hand. There is [a] danger of [our teachers] being classed with the several parasites

who shadow the workmen for the sole purpose of exploiting them.”²³ In other words, most miners, railway men and lumberjacks were only willing to be taught by men who looked and comported themselves in recognizable, if not identical, masculine ways. The educational process in camps was leavened more by masculinity than the three Rs. Pierre Walter examined the literacy programs of Frontier College in “Literacy, Imagined Nations and Imperialism: Frontier College and the Construction of British Canada, 1899–1933” to tease out how students were inculcated into appropriate ways of comporting themselves as British-Canadians rather than as “foreigners” but his work does not address how masculinity competed with nationalism and imperialism in the educational environment.²⁴ In the first fifteen years that literacy programs appeared along the frontier, masculinity trumped nationalism time and time again.

If a teacher was too different in appearance his classes were avoided. If he was not visibly and discernibly one of the men, then he was necessarily the “other” and so his classes were left all but empty. And this happened in spite of the fact that there were ever-increasing numbers of deaths and accidents especially in the mining sector where being able to read the instructions on explosives was essential. Ontario’s Chief Inspector of Mines, Courtney de Kalb, wrote in the introduction to the 1901 *Annual Report* on “Mining Accidents:”

The miner’s calling cannot in the nature of things be dissociated from danger, but experience and care will reduce the risk to a minimum....It seems probable that the considerable proportion of foreigners employed in the mines with their imperfect understanding of the English language and their inability to read, may also have had the effect of increasing the number of [fatalities and] accidents.²⁵

Miners worked with deadly explosives, commonly called “black powder” at the time. The amount of active ingredient and the handling instructions were written on the cartridges in English and preserved under a wax covering. The wooden crates they arrived in featured markings and warning. Any misuse or inadvertent error could—and regularly did—cause deaths and/or serious disfigurements.²⁶ Even though most miners could not read the boxes or the instructions on the cartridges, they were allowed to handle them.²⁷

If the percentage of active ingredient in the charges changed or if the handling instructions were revised or a new supplier was used, there was no way for the workmen to recognize the potential danger unless they could read competently and in 1903 it was estimated that up to 70 percent of all frontier camp labourers were illiterate.²⁸ While not all mining deaths were attributable to illiteracy, the raw numbers of fatalities kept trending upward and pointed to a continuing need for a better qualified workforce, hence the advent of the Travelling Libraries and the Ontario Reading Camps Association. In the eight years between 1892 and 1899 there were 40 deaths in Ontario’s mines. As tools, materials and processes



became more sophisticated, improved literacy skills were needed but not readily taken up. From 1900 to 1907 there were 96 deaths, despite ongoing efforts at teaching elementary reading and writing at a few camps. And in the next 80-year period, up to the beginning of World War One, the total climbed to an astonishing 380 fatalities.²⁹ Notwithstanding these catastrophic numbers, many miners continued to refuse to participate in classes and learn how to read simply because the teachers appeared less manly than themselves.

It soon came to the attention of Alfred Fitzpatrick that teachers would have to conform to the physical expectations of students if the program was going to gain traction. The Reading Camps Associations began recruiting “labourer-instructors.”³⁰ Applicants were required to satisfy dual roles: “To fill such [teaching positions] we must have the best from the schools and universities of the Dominion: men willing to engage in manual work, yet at the same time broadly fitted with the higher principles which give meaning to our institutions.”³¹ It was a big concession and one that reinforced masculinity’s role in the *status quo*. The hegemonic nature of camp masculinity required teachers who complied with extant masculine profiles.

In appearance there was nothing of the college man about [our teacher]. At sight no Alma Mater would have claimed him. Without doubt, nobody who had any acquaintance with students would have supposed that two months previous [this teacher] had carried off a scholarship in philosophy. The [teacher] I greeted was a navy³² pure and simple and he certainly looked the part.³³



“A group of workers; Canadian, American, Swedish, Italian and Scots in a C.N.R. construction Camp,” Agabob, BC, 1913.
Source: Frontier College / Library and Archives Canada / C-046150

As revealed in this image, the teacher—the man at the front holding the satchel—is virtually indistinguishable from his students. His build, posture, shirt, overalls, hairstyle and bare forearms all speak to him being one of them rather than an outsider.

Meeting the students’ needs in the ways the students wanted was the only way to build participation levels. There were not, however, a lot of university graduates who were interested in living and working in remote, isolated camps as mine/timber/railroad labourers just to get the chance to teach for an hour or two in a cold, poorly-lit tent to a tired cohort late in the evenings. It was difficult to satisfy Edmund Bradwin’s admonition to “Give the man of books more frequent contact with manual labour other

than by gloved hand.”³⁴ It was also highly likely that the education the teachers had earned was specifically intended to avoid the same “heavy lifting” that resource workers demanded from their instructors.³⁵ Consequently, there were tensions and conflicts between students and teachers that were rooted in masculinity and these compromised the ability of the teachers to attract students and the willingness of the students to be taught. Deaths might well have been avoided with improved literacy in the workforce.

Who were these hardscrabble men who took dangerous jobs in distant lands for little pay and much privation? How did ethnicity play into educational programs? It was almost as problematic as masculinity. While the predominant ethnicity at the frontier was still British—which acted as the model against which alterity (otherness) was measured—there were large numbers of immigrants in Ontario’s mines. Forty percent, or more, of mine workers in the 1891–1904 period were non-English speakers. That percentage increased quickly through to 1925 when immigrants comprised the majority (more than 65 percent) of the workforce, although English continued to be the largest, single ethnic bloc. Although they have not been identified by historians specifically, frontier workmen need to be included in the category “missing Canadians;” those who fell outside of the “Liberal Order Framework,” “in camps and frontier works ... the rights of workers may be frequently infringed.”³⁶ The presence of so many immigrants³⁷ in Ontario’s mines was problematic on several levels, all of which affected the health and safety of workers. Together they comprised one of the groups who fit Ruth Sandwell’s definition of outsiders or the “other.” They were the people who “frustrated the zeal of reformers wanting to make Canadian society a cleaner, safer, more decent, polite, well managed and more ‘civilized’ place.”³⁸ Language was one of the principal characteristics that posed acute dangers for foreigners. Incompatible languages were a recipe for disaster. If one worker could not understand the instructions or signals of another, the consequences could be severe. In 1900 a miner, named John Bishop, suffered a broken leg below the knee. The accident was investigated and reviewed as follows:

The injury was caused while working in the pit of [the Helen Iron Mine]. A lump of ore, which his companions above were dislodging, [rolled] down the side of the pit and [struck Bishop] in the leg.... The men shouted a warning to Bishop, but he ran the wrong way and towards instead of away from the rock. He had full knowledge of what was being done in the pit ... and paid too little heed when the cry came, so that no one was to blame but himself.³⁹

Bishop’s co-workers were of different ethnicities and he did not understand their shouts as warnings but as calls for help so he ran to help them. Frontier workplaces needed a *lingua franca* that permitted clear instructions to be transmitted among the men, but camp teachers were ill-equipped to handle the diversity of the student population.⁴⁰

Ontario’s fledgling Bureau of Mines used language as its chief identifier of ethnicity. Those who spoke English as their first language were deemed to be English. Quebeckers were French. While about 80 to 85 percent of bushworkers were either

English or French-speaking Canadians, the mining industry was far more varied. It included a fluid mix of Germans, Italians, Greeks, Spaniards, Serbians, Hungarians, Russians, Swedes, Finns, Norwegians, Galicians, Poles and more.

The manager of a gold mine west of Lake Superior, who has had his difficulties with mine labour, stated that ... the following nationalities were represented on his pay-roll:—Canadian 8; Americans 5; Finlanders 4; Croatians 2; Indian 1; Irish 1; Scotch 2; Swede 1; German 1; Norwegian 5; Bohemian 1.⁴¹

In this instance there were 31 employees, 13 were traditional English speakers (16 if the three Irish and Scotch are added) or barely half of the total. The Bureau of Mines' reports show that less than half of the total mining population was English and about 60 percent were immigrants. Teaching English to such a mixed group was a challenge. Some ethnicities were thought to be dirty and ineducable. The records of the Health Inspectors who examined the camps testified to an ingrained prejudice, even a xenophobia, about some immigrant groups.

It is hard for those who have not seen them to appreciate the depraved condition of these foreign people with regard to dirty houses and defective personal hygiene. Their bodies are dirty to the point of filthiness; while carious' teeth, nits in hair, body lice, enlarged tonsils, adenoids, and defective vision etc., are other evidences(sic) of their unsanitary life. The floors are black with dirt and in the spring and fall they are covered with mud. The men go into bed with their day-clothes and boots on.⁴²

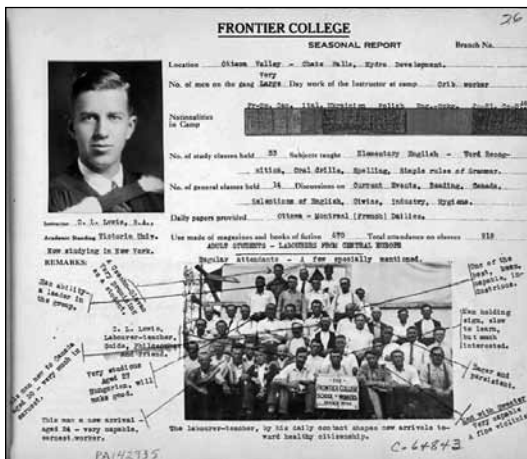
The depth of this rebuke went beyond sanitation; it was an *ad hominent* attack on the character of "foreign people" generally.

From a teaching perspective, it was clear that the kind of non-formal, occasional study found in frontier settings was far from ideal. In 1902 Fitzpatrick found a dozen experienced and qualified professional instructors for frontier camps but they did not last long as they were unwilling to endure the impenetrable isolation, hard lifestyle and coarse accommodations. The following year he tried to turn workers already at the camps into teachers, but that was also unsuccessful, "evidence indicates that [these teachers] rarely held classes and could only be depended upon, at best, to distribute magazines."⁴³ Finding a suitable and willing group of teachers proved daunting. Eventually, Fitzpatrick focused on university students who were willing to work in the camps during the summer months, but this strategy immediately limited the number of lumber camps served because they were usually operated only in winter.⁴⁴ Because labourer-instructors earned wages for their mine or lumber work, the costs associated with their teaching were minimized which appealed to the much underfunded Reading Camps. The new appellation "labourer-teacher" however privileged the "labour" aspect of the position for financial reasons. But Fitzpatrick persevered and found some university students who,

donned the rough dress of the frontiersman and engaged in every kind of labour known to the frontier. They may be seen shooting the rapids of a mountain river with supplies for building a transcontinental railway, wheeling sand for cement pillars, ... building dumps, or at lumber camps “bucking” timber (sawing), “chickadeeing” (picking obstructions off the main trail), “falling”, acting as “beavers” (cutting trails) and engaging in a score of other occupations.⁴⁵

Labourer-instructors shifts lasted from ten to twelve or more hours per day after which tools were looked after, meals were eaten and then classes held. Only after work was finished did the “labourer” become the teacher. The assumption was that the other workers’ observations of the teacher during the day would generate a sense of equality, reciprocity, or trust, and encourage participation in the evenings. Yet here another problem arose: because the college graduates were unused to the conditions and work, they often failed to win camp men to their classes because new recruits were often given the toughest jobs in order to prove themselves. Many failed the test. Nonetheless, Fitzpatrick continued to press his corps of resilient teachers to conduct two hours of classes each day and more on rainy days and holidays. It was a rigorous schedule for both teachers and students, especially because the labour exceeded their daily obligations.

Because most frontier workers were immigrants—up to 90 percent of railway crews—teaching rudimentary English skills became the norm by default. Highfalutin ambitions to develop high school curricula fell by the wayside as lessons concentrated on rote pronunciation and copying the alphabet. Lesson plans included the following: elementary English, word recognition, oral drills, spelling, and the simple rules of grammar. These were used in “discussions” on topics like Canada, hygiene, civics and current events.



Page from “General Report, Frontier College Activities among foreign-born labourers, Dominion of Canada.”

Unless the lessons were adapted to the needs and interests of the students they were not valued. As it was, estimated participation levels were low. According to Erica Martin's work on Alfred Fitzpatrick, there were more than 300,000 camp labourers employed across the country⁴⁶ but even by Frontier College's generous measurements of their accomplishments, only about 20,000 of these men ever attended a class.⁴⁷ This was just six percent of the total. Therefore, even though the predominant ethnic bloc was English speaking, the majority were an admixture. For teachers from an exclusively English background it was hard to communicate even at the most elementary level and it frustrated both parties. Classes, according to some teacher records, became little more than letter-writing exercises for the teachers, who wrote down the thoughts of their pupils which could then be mailed home.

Labourer-teachers also brought their own likes and dislikes to their classes. Some saw their efforts as heroic: "The instructor's work cannot be reported. It is limitless. He lives not for himself but for others."⁴⁸ Others thought some ethnicities were of lower stations and therefore "inferior," a word which appeared with some regularity during the course of this research. For the sojourners—those who were only working for a season or two to save money and return home—there was little or no interest in taking classes. Their plans were to be in Canada for a limited term so learning a new language must have been considered either a luxury or an irrelevance. For immigrants intending to stay and become Canadians, there was more enthusiasm about learning the country's language but that was often tempered by the homogeneity of the particular camp. If, for example, the population of a site was eighty or ninety percent Spanish-speaking, the workers saw little benefit in classes. Furthermore, Frontier College did not attempt to organize and instruct in those kinds of camps. Its absence from densely represented ethnic sites—other than English—was noteworthy in the early years.⁴⁹

Ethnicity and language diversity were problematic. While it is possible to draw only general conclusions, it is apparent that coordinating a teaching plan that met the needs of as many as six or seven different cultures and languages simultaneously was daunting. Because the province had limited, if any, supplies of books written in the native languages of the students, most of the educational efforts concentrated on teaching conversational English as a second language rather than broader understandings associated with the word "education." There was little indication that critical thinking or higher learning skills were ever being taught. Perhaps, many of the "classes" could also be fairly characterized as social respites where English was spoken. This leads to an examination of the kinds of books and literature that were made available to the labourer-students.

The third axis of this analysis looks at the type and style of literature present in the camps. They derived from the Ontario Ministry of Education's newly introduced "traveling libraries." Each camp had to submit a formal application for review; see the next page.

While each of these controls articulated a concern for the physical welfare and prompt return of materials, item number seven was problematic. There was no mutually agreed to definition of a "standard author" nor was there any discussion about the

APPLICATION

..... Ont. 190

To the Minister of Education, Toronto.

The undersigned citizens of, Ont, hereby petition the Minister of Education for books for a Travelling Library, to be loaned tosubject to the rules governing such loans.

It is hereby expressly agreed by and between the parties hereto and each of them severally that the books and cases loaned by the Minister of Education in response to this application shall be carefully handled, shall be loaned without cost to borrowers or without other cost than a nominal fee to defray expenses, and that the same shall be returned to the Education Department within a period of six months, unless permission for a longer retention of the same shall be asked and given, and that the books and cases shall be returned in as good condition as when borrowed, ordinary wear excepted and the said citizens also agree to pay transportation charges both ways, and to pay promptly to the Education Department for all damages to books or cases not occasioned by ordinary wear and use.

..... is hereby designated as Librarian, and is authorized and directed to represent us in all correspondence and dealings with the Minister of Education, until we give notice of a change in local librarian.

Signatures

Addresses

.....
.....
.....⁵⁰

The application was subject to these additional regulations:

REGULATIONS

1. On satisfactory guarantee that all regulations will be complied with, Travelling Libraries may be lent to Associations or Reading Clubs in the new and sparsely settled portions of the Province [of Ontario].
2. One or more citizens acting as Trustee or Trustees must be personally responsible for the loss or injury beyond reasonable wear; and the Trustee or Association shall appoint a suitable person to be Librarian.
3. Books (only one case at a time) will be loaned without charge to the Association, excepting the express charges to and from the Department [of Education] and the payment of damages for loss or injury to books beyond reasonable wear.
4. The Travelling Library shall not be kept longer than six months after its reception, except by special permission from the Minister of Education.
5. The Librarian shall care for the books while under his control, circulate them in accordance with the Regulations of the Department and the Rules of the Association, and make required reports respecting their use.
6. The books will be carefully selected for each Travelling Library, but the Department will not undertake to furnish other books than those forming each library collection.
7. So far as possible the works of standard authors will be selected, including books of natural and social science, biography, history and travel, in addition to a moderation proportion of works of fiction.
8. The Library shall be kept at a convenient place, and be open for obtaining and returning books at such time as the Association of Trustee in charge shall direct.
9. The Association may require each borrower to pay promptly any fines due for over-detention of books or for injuries of any kind beyond reasonable wear to any book charged to him.
10. All corrections of the text, or marks of any kind on books belonging to the Travelling Library are unconditionally forbidden, and all losses or injuries beyond reasonable wear must be promptly adjusted to the satisfaction of the Trustee by the person to whom the book is charged.

presumed importance of “natural and social science, biography, history and travel.” These decisions and the attitudes that informed them were made unilaterally by the Ministry. The 50 titles that comprised each “library” further reflected the normative nature of the government’s intentions.⁵¹ It must first be remembered how the men were described by their teachers: “The labour of the campman is very real. He does not write epics on sheets of paper, nor are his personal achievements recorded in the archives, but he makes of the winds and the snows a playfellow.”⁵² The sophistication of the worker was not in question; most of them were seen to be beasts of burden. Therefore, with most of the workforce made up of immigrants it is hard, even at a remove of one hundred years, to understand why scarcely literate, immigrant men were sent the following to “entertain and elevate” their spare time: four volumes of Green’s *History of the English People*; Drummond’s *The Natural Law in the Spiritual World*; and Eby’s *Monopolies and Trusts*.⁵³ These were extremely sophisticated tomes especially for those scarcely able to read at an elementary level. The bulk of ministry-approved materials were also heavily Anglo-centric. They valorized white, male, English, heroes like: Sir John Franklin, Sir Richard Whittington, Dundonald, Sir Charles Napier, Shakespeare, The Earl of Aberdeen and the Earl of Beaconsfield, to name only a few.⁵⁴ These historical figures were representative of heroes in the British canon but there was nothing of ethnic heroes or champions. The archetypal nature of the literature met resistance in the camps. The language and story lines of Anna Sewell’s *Black Beauty* or Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* might have been appropriate for those recently acquainted with reading, but many of the other works were far too dense to be helpful. Certainly, none of them related to safety or mining procedures or to understanding the newly evolving technologies being introduced underground. The distribution of that kind of information fell to the Bureau of Mines.

The steps they took were also ineffective, notwithstanding their altruism. Inspector Courtney de Kalb wrote a 126 page booklet called the *Manual of Explosives: A Brief Guide for the Use of Miners and Quarrymen*. It was widely and freely distributed around the province in an attempt to reduce the numbers of accidents and fatalities relating the proper handling and use of explosives.

In order that [the *Manual of Explosives*] might have the widest circulation among those for whose benefit it was prepared, all the mining companies actually at work in the Province were asked to furnish a list of the captains, foremen or employes(sic) handling explosives and a [free] copy was mailed to each man whose name was given, as well as to every known mine manager. Persons operating quarries, contractors and foremen engaged in railway construction and others whose occupations involved the handling of explosive substances have also been made welcome to a copy.⁵⁵

The booklet did a brisk business in the camps, yet the vast majority of miners remained illiterate. They could not grasp the complexities and sensitivities of intricate combinations of chemical nitrates; to wit the *Manual of Explosives* reads:

The characteristics of the ordinary dynamites which are those having doses of the nitrate and chlorate mixture class, may be considered before giving an account of the more peculiar combinations of nitroglycerine with nitro-substitution and nitric derivative compounds.⁵⁶

Clearly, de Kalb, was well educated. But he wrote at a level far beyond the comprehension of those who most needed to benefit from his knowledge. The effects of the manual were therefore insignificant as proven by the ever-increasing number of mining deaths from explosion-related accidents. The Bureau of Mines records show that over the 13-year period from 1891 to 1904 there were a cumulative total of ninety-four mining deaths. In the next 11 years, there were 422.⁵⁷

Cumulative Mining Deaths

Year	Mining Deaths	Cumulative Totals
1892	5	5
1893	3	8
1894	7	15
1895	2	17
1896	3	20
1897	1	21
1898	5	26
1899	14	40
1900	17	57
1901	13	70
1902	10	80
1903	7	87
1904	7	94

Year	Mining Deaths	Cumulative Totals
1905	9	9
1906	11	20
1907	22	42
1908	47	89
1909	49	138
1910	48	186
1911	49	235
1912	43	278
1913	64	342
1914	58	400
1915	22	422

While not all of these deaths were directly related to literacy or education, the numbers indicate the ongoing dangers occasioned by the workforce which education could only have ameliorated. The more sophisticated the technologies became, the greater were the perils faced by an illiterate workforce. The types and styles of reading materials being offered in most camps were impenetrable; therefore, little improvement was realized among the workmen and the death tolls reflect this.

Conclusion

The initial efforts—individually and collectively—of Frontier College, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Bureau of Mines to bring education and literacy to resource labour camps were largely unsuccessful in the pre-World War One era. There were too few teachers. The conditions they had to endure in order to teach for one or two hours a day were largely unappealing. The part-time students who made up the classes resisted being taught by those whom they could not relate to in either appearance or through workplace experience. If the teachers did not look and act in ways that were compatible with those of the local labour cohort, then classes were poorly attended. Only after much experimentation did the teaching format recognize the need for “labourer-teachers:” men who worked at the lowest jobs in the camps in order to win the confidence and respect of their co-workers sufficiently to have them attend an hour or two of classes in the evenings. Only if the instructor’s masculinity mirrored that of his camp-mates did he build a following. But that was not the only obstacle.

The diverse ethnicities in the camps also frustrated teaching attempts. The records of the Ontario Bureau of Mines and those of Frontier College reflect such a breadth of languages that most of the early classes were devoted to rote learning or the copying of alphabetic symbols. The classroom mix was unlike that found in urban and rural schools where there was a predominant English presence—usually white English speakers whom teachers could address in reasonable comfort. Frontier languages were vastly different and demanded much greater patience from instructors and more polished teaching skills. This accounts for the small number of classes held relative to the number of operating camps and the total numbers of workmen taught. It also explains why there were few classes held in places dominated by a specific ethnic group that did not speak English as their first language. Camps consisted principally of Italians, Poles, Finns or Slavs (among others) were not targeted as preferred locations for classes and they do not appear in the records of the Reading Camps Associations or Frontier College’s.

Finally, the kinds of literature supplied by government agencies did not fairly meet either the reading levels or interests of the students they were sent to. For men of elementary abilities, the opacity of the books sent to “elevate and entertain” them was well beyond their grasp. Even the literature the Bureau of Mines distributed freely to workers proved too dense to effectively limit the numbers of annual fatalities. The camps needed materials geared to the abilities of the workers, rather than the ideas of learned urban bureaucrats.

The consequence of these three influences led to only marginal successes in the camps until after World War One. Only then did the workforce gain the respect of the general public enough to be taught in ways that reflected their needs and their abilities.

Appendix A. Case "C" 1901.

Across the Sub-Arctics of Canada, (Tyrell); *Agriculture* (James); *Among the Celestials* (Younghusband); *Appreciations and Addresses*, (Rosebery); *Bird Life*, (Chapman); *A Book for all Readers*, (Stofford); *Canadian Essays*, (O'Hagan); *Oliver Cromwell*, (Frith); *David Copperfield*, (Dickens); *Domestic Science* (Hoodless); *Early Trading Companies of New France*, (Biggar); *Elizabeth and Her German Garden*, [no author named]; *English Traits* (Emerson); *Farthest North*, 2 volumes, (Nansen); *Fights for the Flag*, (Fitchett); *Flame, Electricity and the Camera*, (Iles); *Forty-one Years in India*, (Lord Roberts); *The French Revolution*, 2 volumes, (Carlyle); *The Great Boer War*, (Doyle); *A Guide to Wild Flowers*, (Lounsberry); *Heart of Midlothian*, (Scott); *Highways and Byways in Donegal and Antrim*, (Gwynn); *History of Canada*, (Roberts); *History of the Hudson Bay Co.*, (Bryce); *Historical Tales from Shakespeare*, (Quiller-Couch); *Household Economics*, (Campbell); *In India*, (Steevens); *Last Days of Pompei*, (Lytton); *The Life of William Shakespeare*, (Lee); *The Life and Character of Robert Shields*, (Grote); *The Life and Works of Sir John Thompson*, (Hopkins); *The Long White Cloud*, (Reeves); *Modern France*, (Lebon); *Old Red Sandstone*, (Miller); *The Progress of the Century*, (Wallace); *Queen Victoria 1819–1901* (Holmes); *Religious Progress(sic) in the 19th Century*, (Withrow); *Revolutionary and Napoleonic Era*, (Rose); *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, 2 volumes, (Motley); *Short History of the English People*, (Green); *Silas Marner*, (Eliot); *Soldering(sic) in Canada*, (Denison); *A Story of the Cowboy*, (Hough); *A Treasury of Canadian Verse*, (Rand); *The United States of America*, (Channing); *West African Studies*, (Kingsley); *Wild Animals I Have Known* (Seton Thompson).⁵⁸

Notes

- 1 *Frontier College Letters: One Hundred Years of Teaching, Learning and Nation Building*. Frontier College. 1999. There is also biographical material on Fitzpatrick on the website of Frontier College. http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/learn/alfred_fitzpatrick.html. See also Alfred Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls; A Plea for Part-Time Study* (Toronto: The Hunter-Rose Company, 1920). This "plea" reveals much about the conditions faced by educators in remote areas.
- 2 There is a growing body of work on rural history and how education played a role in that. See Ruth Sandwell's article in this issue: "'Read, Listen, Act' Adult Education, Rural Citizenship and the Canadian National Farm Radio Forum, 1941–1965." For more on education in rural Canada, see Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972). Ian Radforth, *Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario 1900–1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987). See chapter five: "In the Camps," Rex Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown, Life in Canadian Communities of Single Industry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971). See also Gordon Selman, *Citizenship and the Adult Education Movement in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Centre for Continuing Education, 1991). There are some passing references to education in the annual reports of the Ontario Bureau of Mines from 1892 but they are general and narrative like: "The older mines, like Deloro and Copper Cliff, have provided means of education and recreation, and such comforts of civilized life as are attainable." Ontario Bureau of Mines, *Annual Report 1902* (Toronto: Queen's Park. L.K. Cameron, 1902), 68.

- 3 Frontier College grew out of the Ontario Reading Camps Association which was stewarded by Fitzpatrick. It was the earliest attempt to organize education at the frontier and included the support of business magnates like M.J. O'Brien and J.R. Booth. Fitzpatrick was the impetus behind sending teachers to the worksites of illiterate labourers at the end of the nineteenth century and he initiated contact with the Ontario Ministry of Education to get its support.
- 4 *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1901*, Education Department (Toronto: Queen's Park Printer, 1901), xvii.
- 5 Ontario Bureau of Mines. *Annual Report 1902* (Toronto: Queen's Park. L.K. Cameron, 1902).
- 6 The Ontario *Mining Regulations Act (1890)* legislated that all underground mine work had to be done by men only. See Section 158. "Except as stenographer, book-keeper (sic) or in some similar capacity, no girl [under the age of 14] or woman shall be employed at mining work or allowed to be for the purpose of employment at mining work, in or about any mine." The lumber industry was seasonal and not covered by legislation like that used in mining but the effect was the same nonetheless. There were no women employed in lumbering or residing at camps other than as cooks, "cook-ees" and an occasional nurse.
- 7 Although "progressivism" has often been considered an American movement, Canadian workplaces were also subject to the scrutiny and attention of activists. See Judy Fudge and Eric Tucker, *Labour Before the Law: The Regulation of Workers' Collective Action in Canada, 1900–1948* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2001). Eric Tucker. *Administering Danger in the Workplace: The Law and Politics of Occupational Health and Safety Regulation in Ontario, 1850–1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990). Progressivism was not so much an organized movement as it was a general spirit of reform embraced by [North] Americans with diverse goals and backgrounds during the early twentieth century (1900–20). Progressives sought advancement through the liberation of human energies and potential from both the fading restraints of past ages and the new restraints imposed by modern industrialism. <http://spider.georgetowncollege.edu/htallant/courses/his225/progmovt.htm>
- 8 The Reading Camps Associations began in the late 1890s by Presbyterian minister, Rev. Alfred Fitzpatrick. The name was changed to Frontier College in 1913 and incorporated under that name in 1919.
- 9 Mechanics' Institutes began [in 1820] as voluntary associations of working men seeking self-improvement through education. These community-based institutes offered evening lectures, lending libraries and periodical reading rooms. <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0005192>. I am unfamiliar with the literature on Mechanics Institutes and do not have the sources available at this time.
- 10 The part-time nature of camp teaching and the fact that the students were working adults rather than children, stand in sharp contrast to urban and rural attempts to educate children in full-time classes. For more on this see Michael Corbett, M., "A Protracted Struggle: Rural Resistance and Normalization in Canadian Educational History" (*Historical Studies in Education* 13, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 19-48). While I agree with Corbett's analysis and the doctrinal aspects that informed rural and urban education systems, it is apparent that frontier literacy classes were entirely outside of the mainstream teaching models. The environment, hours, curricula, teachers, ethnicities, and goals did fit the examples he used apart from general comments such as: "In rural circumstances, the teacher as instrument of state leverage and purveyor of "civilisation" and "improvement" often failed and teachers were forced to adapt to community realities or perish" (24). In Corbett's examples, resistance to education did not reside with the students but with their parents and the exigencies of competing family

- interests, usually agricultural demands. In the camps, resistance was the choice of the students exclusively and did not depend on other work or family pressures.
- 11 The term “school” reflects places of learning be they tents, outside gatherings or buildings designated for literacy and general education according to provincial requirements of the time. Jennifer Goldberg, ‘I thought the people wanted to get rid of the teacher:’ Educational Authority in Late-Nineteenth Century Ontario,” *Historical Studies in Education*, 23, 1 (Spring 2011): 41-60.
 - 12 The camps examined in this article were ostensibly all male. The presence of women—even as cooks or cookees—was negligible. There were few if any traditional households in the sense of having a husband, wife and children residing *in situ* or nearby. The transience of the work did not lend itself to family life. Adele Perry’s work on the backwoods of British Columbia, which antedates the timeframe for this article, considers communities of camp men in terms of family—they looked after one another medically and adopted traditionally female roles in the absence of women, cooking, washing, cleaning—but these were temporary arrangements born of necessity rather than socially structured choices. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race and the Making of British Columbia, 1849–1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001). See chapter three: “Bringing Order to the Backwoods: Regulating British Columbia’s Homosocial Culture,” 79-96.
 - 13 See Ruth Sandwell’s article: “Rural Reconstruction: Towards a New Synthesis in Canadian History,” *Histoire Sociale/ Social History*, vol. 27, no. 53 (May, 1994), 1-32. Her exhortations for historians to focus their attention on “...the most important institution of rural society: the household” is, in the instance of the frontier, belied by the absence or paucity of households. Sandwell’s argument works well in a predominantly agricultural setting—where occupational plurality was a fact of family life—but does not fit Ontario’s homosocial mining camps in ways that help explain the workplace and its attitudes toward education.
 - 14 Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 225.
 - 15 In lumber and rail camps rainy days were also teaching opportunities as the men did not go out to work.
 - 16 John Macdougall, *Two Thousand Miles of Gold from Val d’Or to Yellowknife* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1946). Macdougall, an educator working for the Ontario government, glowingly describes the typical man as having a “sinewy chest, brawny arm, firm-set face.” These physical manifestations are the focus of his attention. There is no mention of their intelligence or need for education. Remoteness however is dealt with at length in Macdougall’s descriptions. It sometimes took a day or two to reach a destination like Rib Lake or Elk Lake. To get there he travelled by train, steamboat, canoe, horseback, snowshoe, dog-team and footpath guided by numbered telegraph poles and ridge pines. See chapter five “Gowganda or Bust.”
 - 17 Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 220.
 - 18 John Harvey Kellogg also contributed greatly to imagined nineteenth century American masculinity. He idealized the male body. ... and defined it in terms of health and moral purity rather than only aesthetics and physical appearance. Kellogg ... associated manliness with healthful eating and moral and sexual purity as well. http://books.google.ca/books?id=E0R9ILtv8i8C&pg=PA56&lpg=PA56&dq=kellogg+and+masculinity&source=bl&ots=Nwd8A6iRHq&sig=Q8Yom4qYra7WRUY1SYbLw2sJGIM&hl=en&ei=WA0bTpe2NOT30gHoytGXBQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=2&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=kellogg%20and%20masculinity&f=false
 - 19 Ava Baron, “Masculinity, the Embodied Male Worker, and the Historians’ Gaze,” *International Labour and Working Class History* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 69: 143-160.

- 20 Craig Heron's examination of workplace masculinity is helpful in understanding how the male body had to adapt to the demands put on it at work and in public. See, "Boys Will Be Boys: Working-Class Masculinities in the Age of Mass Production," *International Labor and Working-Class History* (2006), 69: 6-34. Published online: 30 August 2006. Heron also notes the fluidity of masculinity and he comments: "... masculinities were not fixed, static, or universal, but shaped in specific ways in different contexts and subject to challenges and re-negotiation over time." While Heron applied this to class structures it nonetheless applies to the frontier work camps of the early twentieth century as well.
- 21 Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 241.
- 22 Alfred Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls; A Plea for Part-Time Study* (Toronto: The Hunter-Rose Company, 1920). Chapters one and two background bringing literacy to lumber, railroad and mine workers.
- 23 Alfred Fitzpatrick, *The University in Overalls; A Plea for Part-Time Study* (Toronto: The Hunter-Rose Company, 1920) 120-121. The parasites referred to by Fitzpatrick were prostitutes (boxcar Annies) and transient sales people.
- 24 Pierre Walter, "Literacy, Imagined Nations and Imperialism: Frontier College and the Construction of British Canada, 1899-1933," *Adult Education Quarterly*, 54, 1 (November 2003): 42-58. Because Walter's work extends twenty years beyond the time period considered here, he is able to draw different conclusions. This is due in part to nationalism and imperialism being incorporated into ideas about masculinity during the Great War. That accounts from some, if not most, of the changes he notes following the Armistice of 1918. For more on this see also, Terry Wilde. T, *Medicine, Masculinity and Mechanization; the Construction of Occupational Health in Northern Ontario 1890-1925* (York University: Doctoral dissertation, 2012). Chapter three deals with how miners and other resources workers were valorized for their work and for volunteering so robustly to fight in Europe. For more on the Canadian-ness and how it was informed by imperialism, see Carl Berger's *The Sense of Power, Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970). Chapter 10 "Militarism" deals with this element.
- 25 *Ontario Bureau of Mines Report for 1901*, prepared by Inspector DeKalb (Archives of Ontario: Government Doc's M. Microfiche, 1901) 48. More than 60 percent of miners were "foreigners" and of that proportion more than seventy percent were unable to read well enough to write a letter or confirm that their pay cheques were accurate.
- 26 See the *Annual Reports of the Ontario Bureau of Mines 1891-1915*. Each report contains a section on "Mining Accidents" which includes the details of every fatality from the preceding year. The reasons for the accident, the ethnicity of the miner, and the findings of the mine inspector and the coroners' juries all confirm the dangers and the fault behind the death tolls, many of which were related to a lack of literacy skills.
- 27 In the late nineteenth century civil law precedent in labour matters held to the doctrine of "assumed risk." This meant that the courts used the benchmark of each worker assuming all the risks that attended his job regardless of who or how they were caused. This British model of jurisprudence was imported with workers and recruited into Ontario's legislation. See, Eric Tucker, *Administering Danger in the Workplace. The Law and Politics of Occupational Health and Safety Regulations in Ontario 1850-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 9. There is still more about this in Judy Fudge and Eric Tucker, *Labour Before the Law, the Regulation of Worker's Collective Action in Canada, 1900-1948* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2001).
- 28 "Camp Schools," In "Proceedings of the Forty-Second Annual Convention of the Ontario Educational Association," held in Toronto 14-16 April, 1903. Alpha-Omega Patterson.

- 29 These figures have been compiled from the *Annual Reports* of the Ontario Bureau of Mines "Accident Reports."
- 30 Frontier College continues to use the 'labourer-instructor' appellation in all its recruiting literature.
- 31 Alfred Fitzpatrick, *The University in Overalls; A Plea for Part-Time Study* (Toronto: The Hunter-Rose Company, 1920) 122.
- 32 "Navy" was a popular British term in the nineteenth century. It referred to an unskilled labourer, most often a canal digger or a railroad construction worker. In Canada it usually designated a white railroad construction worker. Chinese navvies were called "coolies."
- 33 Alfred Fitzpatrick, *The University in Overalls; A Plea for Part-Time Study* (Toronto: The Hunter-Rose Company, 1920) 122-123.
- 34 Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 230.
- 35 Even when new university graduates were recruited to camps, they were usually given the worst or toughest assignments to see how well they handled themselves. Many failed right away and abandoned the effort.
- 36 Ruth Sandwell, "Missing Canadians: Reclaiming the A-Liberal Past" in Jean-François Constant and Michel Ducharme, eds. *Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 246-273. The quote is taken from Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 224.
- 37 It is impossible to determine from the sources how many of the immigrant miners before 1904 were sojourners but it is reasonable to assume that 20%–25% planned to save some money and return home with it to buy land and establish themselves.
- 38 Ruth Sandwell, "Missing Canadians: Reclaiming the A-Liberal Past" in Jean-François Constant and Michel Ducharme, eds. *Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 247.
- 39 *Report of the Bureau of Mines 1901* (Toronto: L.K. Cameron, 1901) 47.
- 40 It was not until 1907–1908, when a coroner's jury recommended that all signs at mine sites be posted in the languages of the workmen, that this step was finally taken. (See special *Accident Report of 1908*, Ontario Bureau of Mines). See also the *Ontario Bureau of Mines Report for 1909* (p.62) where the coroner's verdict on two deaths at the La Rose Mine included the recommendation that "all mining companies avoid having two men working together who do not understand the same language." At the Kendall mine later the same year a different coroner's jury looking into the death of another miner came to a similar conclusion: "We would also recommend that immediate action be taken to prevent men of different nationalities working together who do not understand each other."
- 41 Ontario Bureau of Mines. *Annual Report 1912*, 14.
- 42 John S. McCullough, Chief Officer, Ontario Board of Health. *Special Report on the Work of the District Officers of Health for the Year 1912–1913* (Ontario Government Archives, Government Doc. HE, Misc. Box 1, No. 16). Toronto: Printed and published by L.K. Cameron 1914 and printed by William Briggs.
- 43 James H. Morrison, "Black Flies, Hard Work. Low Pay." A Century of Frontier College. *The Beaver*. (Oct/Nov. 33-8.)
- 44 By 1902 -1903 there were 24 active "reading rooms" along the resource frontier. (Erica Martin, *Action and Advocacy; Alfred Fitzpatrick and the Early History of Frontier College*. (Master's Thesis, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education: University of Toronto. 2000) 67. Generously assuming there were 60–70 men per camp that would total about 1680 men who had access to reading material, though not all of them would have been literate. That same year, Ontario's Bureau of Mines recorded 10,658 employees in

- mining alone. Ontario Bureau of Mines, *Annual Report* (Toronto: Queen's Park, 1904)
3. Comparable figures for lumber and railway camps are not available but would—at a minimum—have added another 50,000 to the total. Therefore the success of the Reading Rooms was limited considering the death of camps and men who had access to educational materials.
- 45 Alfred Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls; A Plea for Part-Time Study* (Toronto: The Hunter-Rose Company, 1920). James Morrison, *Camps and Classrooms, a pictorial history of Frontier College* (Toronto: Frontier College Press, 1989).
- 46 Erica Martin, *Action and Advocacy; Alfred Fitzpatrick and the Early History of Frontier College*. (Master's Thesis: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. University of Toronto, 2000) 83. Martin notes that Fitzpatrick compiled the figures himself which he used to win interest and solicit financial support, so there is lively speculation that the numbers may have been inflated or generously rounded up.
- 47 By 1904 there were 42 active teaching sites along the Ontario frontier which was less than five percent of the total.
- 48 *Annual Report of Frontier College*. Frontier College, 1909.
- 49 This conclusion is drawn from a cursory examination of the records of Frontier College and those of the Ontario Bureau of Mines. While it is not meant to be definitive, because of the small number of camps with teachers, there were few examples of classes held at places (like Espanola) known to be favoured by men from Spain or Finlanders in the mines at Michipicoten.
- 50 *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1901* (Part I. Queen's Park, 1901) xvii-xviii.
- 51 Alfred Fitzpatrick also contributed to the "Canadianizing" of the frontier worker with his "The Handbook for New Canadians: to help new immigrants understand the culture and traditions of Canada." (undated).
- 52 Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 241.
- 53 In the interest of space I have only included a few representative titles. The full lists of books included in the trunks of the traveling libraries can be found in the Ministry's Records.
- 54 For a complete list of titles included in one Travelling Library case see Appendix A.
- 55 *Ontario Bureau of Mines Report for 1900*. Prepared by Inspector De Kalb. (Archives of Ontario: Government Doc's M. Microfiche, 1900) 49.
- 56 Courtney De Kalb, *Manual of Explosives, A Brief Guide for the Use of Miners and Quarrymen* (Toronto: Ontario Bureau of Mines, 1900) 34.
- 57 The lumber industry was not required to submit the same data to the Ministry of Natural Resources so there is no comparable data from that sector to make a similar comparison.
- 58 *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1901*. Part I. With the statistics of 1900.