

Bancroft, Ontario

You might wonder what Mr. Porter did write about this community. He chose to write about sex crimes, illegitimate children, shanty standards, intermarriage, deformities, Indians, liquor and various other matters on the same high level. Here is one choice extract from the article:

The population grew from 6,000 to 18,000, not always through marriage and very little through immigration.

Here is another choice phrase:

The great-grandchildren of the pioneers scratch for a living.

Another choice extract:

Compelled by the poverty of the earth to live on shanty standards, they have become disillusioned.

Another one:

Intermarriage has sapped their vigour and caused much deformity.

Mr. Porter puts these words into the mouth of the Ontario provincial constable stationed at Bancroft:

When I came here this was the most drunken and immoral area in Ontario.

The constable denies ever making such a statement. The article goes on to refer to criminal offences and Mr. Porter states that many of them were sex offences. These few quotations indicate the nature of the whole article and how little Mr. Porter cared about writing of the true Bancroft. As for sex crimes, I checked with the police authorities and found that it was over three years since there had been a sex crime in the district and then the parties concerned came from the highly virtuous and intellectual city of Toronto.

Apparently Mr. Porter was not interested in writing the truth about this community. He wanted something sensational so he used his limited imagination and vocabulary to use every possible degrading word and phrase simply to make copy. If Mr. Porter had been even a fair reporter he might have told the story of Bancroft's part in the war. He would have pleased everyone in the community if he had mentioned in his article that Bancroft had the fine record of having ten per cent of its entire population in the armed forces, and when I say armed forces I mean the active armed forces. He could have told the story of the Bancroft Red Cross, of the Bancroft bond campaigns. He could have told of the splendid work done by the Bancroft legion.

There was a real story in the history of the Bancroft Lions club, in the large sums of money raised each year. This is a service club that built a covered rink, a service club that made a swimming pool possible, a service club that raised thousands of dollars to assist settlers in a township just south of

Bancroft who lost their buildings and belongings in a tornado, a service club that sponsors a very fine regatta each year, a service club that provides sports equipment for young Canadians.

These fine community activities did not interest Mr. Porter. Apparently he thought such things lacked colour. He was not interested in the activities of the community in providing proper supervised sports activities for the young Canadians of the community, nor was he interested in reporting the success of such activities which is reflected in the complete absence of juvenile delinquency cases in the district. Apparently Mr. Porter and the editor, with the idea of printing an article that might increase circulation, deliberately chose to overlook and ignore the facts and the true history of the community and to produce an article on Indians, sex crimes and intermarriage.

I suggest to Mr. Porter and the editor of the *Standard* that they might well read the daily papers of Toronto and Montreal. There they will find daily reports of acts of violence, often murder, and of rape, robbery, theft of cars, assaults on young women and the doings of vicious young city hoodlums who travel in gangs. Where do these crimes occur? Right in the largest cities of Canada, cities that pride themselves on being educated and the cultural centres of the nation.

If Mr. Porter and the editor of the *Standard* wish to do something for the benefit of the whole country then they should write and publish an article that will tell of the true Bancroft. Let them tell of the great attractions there are there. Let them tell of the few places left in Ontario where the beauty of nature is left unspoiled. Let them tell of the place where you will find people who are loyal, who have genuine friendship for their friends. Let them tell the story of the breed of young men that Bancroft produced during the war. Let both these men forget the degrading matters which were included in this article and produce an article about their fellow Canadians of which they may well be proud.

Surely the editor and Mr. Porter are old enough to know that you should never judge a man by the clothes he wears or by the correctness of his grammar, but rather by the contribution he makes to his community. The record of community contribution and progress in Bancroft speaks for itself. I wanted to protest in the strongest way against this article and the serious breach of the freedom of the press by the Montreal *Standard* in publishing an untrue, an unfair