

ST. LAWRENCE PARKS

Although the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Projects are usually thought of in terms of shipping and electric power, their impact on the St. Lawrence Valley will extend far beyond the realm of economics, according to the "Ontario Hydro News".

Along the banks of the St. Lawrence River, paralleling these giant developments, an extensive parks system is being brought into existence.

The St. Lawrence parks serve a two-fold purpose: the preservation of the historical associations of the St. Lawrence Valley and the creation of a recreational area regarded as unsurpassed by any other section of the country.

Even before the engineering developments were begun, it was apparent that the re-location of riverside communities, caused by the raised level of the St. Lawrence, represented an unparalleled opportunity to re-develop the area. To meet this challenge, the Ontario Government established the Ontario-St. Lawrence Development Commission in 1955.

Now, three years after its inception, the Development Commission, under the able chairmanship of Hon. George Challies, former First Vice-Chairman of Ontario Hydro, is engaged in the building of a scenic island parkway and a system of public beaches, playgrounds and picnic and camping areas between Iroquois and Lancaster, a few miles east of Cornwall. The Commission's long-term plans envisage several thousand acres of parks and beaches with a historical centre as the focal point.

Crysler Park, a 2,000-acre combined recreational area and historical memorial, commemorates the victory of British and Canadian troops over American forces in 1813. Situated a few miles east of Morrisburg, the park will contain historical and folk museums, picnic areas, a working model of a lock and canal, a replica of an 18th Century bateau in which visitors may ride, a golf course and a large restaurant.

A war museum is being built at the base of the 55-foot-high earth mound upon which the battle memorial will be placed. From a mound a wide mall leads to a reception centre for visitors.

East of the memorial itself is Upper Canada Village, scheduled to be opened in 1960. An authentic reconstruction of United Empire Loyalist houses, bams, taverns, churches and ships, the village is separated from the Chrysler Memorial by a brick and stone memorial cemetery. It is enclosed by a wall constructed of material salvaged from buildings situated in the area which now forms part of the head-pond for the power project. Set into the wall are tombstones dating back to the early days of settlement in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

The Development Commission has collected some 4,000 objects of historical interest which will be used in furnishing the village. Some of this collection is already on public view in a temporary museum at Morrisburg, near the Commission's Head Office.

Professor Anthony Adamson of the University of Toronto, park architect and planner, says the village will be a "progression of history" with the buildings representing different periods of colonial life in the St. Lawrence Valley.

Nine parks and beaches are now in various stages of construction between Lancaster and Iroquois. Two of them, located at Iroquois and Morrisburg, are being built by Ontario Hydro as part of its programme of rehabilitation in the areas affected by the power project.

Scenic Long Sault Parkway, now being built by the Development Commission, commemorates the historic Long Sault Rapids, which have now disappeared. The new parkway eventually will link nine of the 18 new islands created when the level of the river was raised.

Many St. Lawrence Valley residents believe their area will soon rival the Niagara Parks system as a tourist attraction. Assisted by its advantageous geographical position, the area already is being invaded by thousands of visitors from Canada, the United States and other countries. The north shore of the St. Lawrence River is readily accessible from Montreal, Ottawa and other eastern Ontario communities within a 100-mile radius of the power lake. Major centres of population in other parts of the province and the United States are within a day's drive by automobile.

But despite this influx of visitors, Commission Chairman Challies has emphasized that the new park system will primarily benefit the people of the St. Lawrence Valley Communities. Lauding the preservation of the rich historical heritage of the area, Mr. Challies outlined this aspect of the Commission's responsibility during a speech in the Ontario Legislature before his retirement three years ago.

"Here is our chance," he said, "to bring into focus for this generation, and future generations, the valorous deeds and sacrifices of the heroic men and women who started a remote and savage wilderness on the way to becoming the great and prosperous Province of Ontario".

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TEACHERS IN CANADA

The number of teachers in nine provinces of Canada (Quebec excepted) increased 5.6 per cent during the school year 1954-55 to 75,500, according to a report on salaries and qualifications of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Some 18 per cent were instructing secondary grades only. About 25

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