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**Review of *With Scarcely a Ripple: Anglo-Canadian Migration into the United States and Western Canada, 1850-1920* by Randy W. Widdis**

Robert M. Bone  
*University of Saskatchewan*

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**With Scarcely a Ripple: Anglo-Canadian Migration into the United States and Western Canada, 1850-1920.** Randy W. Widdis. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998. xxii+418 pp. Tables, maps, notes, index. C\$65.00 cloth (ISBN 0-7735-1733-2), C\$27.95, US\$22.95 paper (ISBN 0-7735-1845-2).

There is no Little Canada in the United States; yet the relocation of Anglo-Canadians to the United States ranks among the largest group of foreigners settling in America. Why then is their cultural impact on the American landscape virtually invisible? This is the intriguing question Randy W. Widdis addresses in his aptly titled *With Scarcely a Ripple*.

Widdis begins his story with the relocation of some 50,000 Loyalists (Americans who remained loyal to the British crown) north during the late eighteenth century and ends with the settlement of the Canadian Prairies. In between his account of these two historic movements of people into Canada, Widdis provides ample evidence of a strong flow of Canadians to the promised land of the United States. As a geographer, he pays particular attention to the regional origins of this migration. The pull to America took Canadians, motivated primarily by economics, into both agricultural areas and industrial centers. Farmland was in short supply in Ontario by the middle of the nineteenth century and jobs were more readily available in America's cities than in Ontario's.

Information about Canadian immigrants after their relocation in the United States is meager. It seems they "just disappeared." Widdis has tried to compensate by turning to family histories, which often provide some insights into their experiences. In all cases, Canadian migrants quickly melted into American society. Largely difficult to tell apart from Americans in the first place, Canadians, by not attaching themselves to ethnic social groups or particular religious organizations (as did the Franco-Americans), soon became indistinguishable from their American neighbors. The same quick assimilation of Americans took place in the Canadian Prairies, thereby demonstrating the commonality of American and Anglo-Canadian societies and their cultures.

*With Scarcely a Ripple* is divided into four sections: "Contexts"; "Movers and Persisters"; "Destinations"; and "Conclusions." Great Plains readers will be particularly attracted to two chapters in the "Destinations" section. Chapter 6 provides an account of Canadian migration from Ontario to the Red River Valley of North Dakota. While the first settlers arrived in 1812 as part of Lord Selkirk's colonization effort, homesteaders poured into north-

ern tracks of the Dakota Territory during the Great Dakota Boom (1879 to 1886) and into the state of North Dakota during the Second Boom (1898 to 1915). Norwegians composed the largest foreign-born group at 14.1% of the total population, but Canadian-born migrants followed closely behind at 12.6%. Canadians tended to settle along the Red River and near the border with Manitoba. When the arable land was occupied, few ventured further west into the semi-arid lands known as the Great American Desert. Instead, people began to move northward into the parkland belt in the Canadian Prairies and along the route of the Canadian Pacific Railway, completed in 1886. Here, the cost of land was low and many Americans and American-Canadians in North Dakota took advantage of the opportunity.

*With Scarcely a Ripple* demonstrates why Canadian migrants have had so little impact on the American cultural landscape. As North Americans, the cultural differences between Canadians and their southern neighbors were minimal, and Canadians quickly adapted to a world much like the one they left. **Robert M. Bone**, *Department of Geography, University of Saskatchewan*.