CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Section - I

West is looked upon as a radiating force in the American context. It has an important and vital role in American history and in the life of American people down the ages. West is in fact a pregnant term; it has been rightly said that the West begets West. In order to understand the West as a complex force, a force that leads to success, that has been chiseled over and over again, in order to attain perfection, it is necessary to understand and the various levels of American's quest for something that is unknown, mysterious.

Naturally America stands before the world as a symbol of prosperity, which has its strong foundations deeply laid down in the heart of this earth. It is also true that one cannot deny, after going through the historical annals, that the entire structure of America stands upon the graveyard of natural resource, native Americans and innocent creature were their inert bodies are lying beneath, where the statue of Liberty at New York is standing inert, helpless, and shocked with its vacant looks as if searching for Twin Towers of World Trade Centre, that has vanished or get buried in confluence with its historical past.

So West has been forcefully subjected to introspection, and retrospection in order to understand the chemistry that operates in the mind and heart of America. In order to locate images of the West,
which appear in different forms, whether it is films, fiction, painting and other media, it is necessary to undertake a through investigation, keeping in view the geographical, and historical aspects, which are evident and important source of information.

The term West deeply sounds of the European sense of direction, of time, of place, of destiny; as a matter of fact, the Native American the West was not West, because it was not primarily a place of direction. It was not a movement moving in a particular direction, perfectly in union with the movement of culture. Levi Strauss wrote:

"That cosmic rhythm which since the beginning of the human race, has imbued mankind with the unconscious belief that to move with sun is positive, and to move against it negative, one direction expressing order, the other disorder."

Most probably Levi-Strauss overstates the pervasive nature of the east-west, both chronologically and culturally in terms of "rhythms." The early white explorers consider the west as a place of destiny, which unfolded from east to west. The image in fact is still the part of United States and especially the West, as a transformed image. In early period it was not treated as a part of status quo of a national consciousness, the image was not fixed, the landscape was a place of interminable chaos in many respects.

The caricatures of West and its natives by the discoveries, by those searching, however unconsciously, to fix an image, seem shockingly native, even barbaric to so called modern sensibilities. The
Spaniards were first to experience and appreciate the West. They came in search for the riches of the European worldview, and the riches that formed the basis of their narratives and descriptions of new Spain, new Spain of course implying an image that could transform an enigma into a cultural probability, since there is no other cultured substitute, the landscape is of course made European.

As a matter of fact on 26th August 1539 Fray Marcos de Niza spoke of what he and his companion viewed as the seven cities of Cibolo he wrote strongly of this land of gold:

"I was told that there is much gold there, and that the natives make it into vessels, and jewels for the ears, and into little blades with which they wipe away their Sweat."

To the early travelers gold was metaphoric for and synonymous with the landscape. Naturally then West was treated as a land of promise in their narration of landscape. It the Motif-Index of Folk-Literature of the world was highly loaded with narrative units extolling the magical properties of gold, to those properties, that involve transformations such as pumpkins, vomit, eggs, the mundane or the profane was transformed to the precious.

These narrative units are enclosed within indexes that lack the clear picture about transforming image of the culture. Since they have become vestments of power, and still are part of pictures, are evident to certain perception and predisposition to transform. Being ordered by outside the culture by researches and collectors, there is reflection or
order, due to the mind set of those who ordered them rather than the transforming unique image of the culture.

The Spaniards, were unable to understand the meaninglessness of the New World Landscape, transformed what they saw, through recourse to their view of the world of folk-belief, into predictable magic of the European landscape and ethos, a way of accounting for the enigma of what was to become the American West was simply to turn it to gold. This of course, does not mean that gold, as a cultural verity had no place in the new world. It did. It is also true that the image of golden landscape was Spanish import, in many respects: was boundless. It is not a motifemic problem; a problem to discover whether or not the native Americans revered, motifemical gold, it is in fact a problem of cultural transformation, urging the landscape not only to speak, of established cultural dialect but also promise an expectation of boundless wealth, which provided the Spaniard to suck further and further into the wastes of the interior. Glimpses of unimaginable productive mines of gold, of the rich and enriched land. And tales later, still persistent, of the Old Spanish mines. Disguised. Lost. Waiting for further transformation, the West, finally, tantalized by its new face, the open desert became hidden secrets of gold.

The enigmatic western landscape were not storage enough in its own accords, other travelers were force a to make it fantastic. The startlingly unfamiliar buffalo was molded by an imagination into a: “shaggy monster of immense proportions.” An image of culture
expectation, not a biological verity. Thus the buffalo also, in its largeness, its transformation seems a wish, a longing, a demand that this landscape remain large. Large, that is, in its promises of wealth, its offer of expedition, not so much as commodity but a vision of wealth.

While touring the prairies Washington Irving recorded in his journals, narrative about animals. He heard that the proportions were altered, in order to match the strangeness of the landscape. He mentioned. "Face of dogs in Rocky Mountains supposed to be cross-breed of the buffalo and the wolf."  

It is true that traditional experience, shared in the West by its earliest "whites" observers is replete with mythological beats, such as minotaur, centaur, Leviathan, Kraken, but the beasts of the American West were, as narrated, akin to the same mind set that saw land exuding gold, in a landscape that never proffered no explanation of itself, nor it portrayed sweet order or so called sensibility of Europe or of the well settled East. A meaning of Folklore was imposed on the landscape and the habitants, the meaning that accounted for the harshness of the environment, the extremes are captured by Irving's dogs, who are bred of the buffalo. The landscape of the American West was made particularly large, boundless by applying cultural transformations. For European folk-mind at least it became absolutely illimitable.

As a matter of fact the West is a complex term of a complex mind. West was an existing force, a geographical space which contains a
quality of metamorphosis. In fact it is a subject of appearance and occurrence. It appeared to European sensibility as a land of promise and to some literary faction it occurred, as Arthur K. Moore writes:

"It gradually occurred to me, that some of the more troublesome, not to say harmful, attitudes of the present were traceable of presumptions about man and society which noisily declared themselves on the frontier." 

These inherited ideas are apparent if we can extract it through frontier experiences by determining certain aspects, the rapidity of its growth, the dynamism of its expansive force, its violence, at its disdain of authority. There are controlling agents of American character based on assumption reinforced by myth and memory.

The westward American movement was gaining momentum; generation after generation by the observers and the participants who were deeply impressed by quick transformation of wilderness into populous urbanized regions. Empty frontiers, were crowded by the cities of Springfield, Independence, Salt Lake City, Spokane, San Francisco. In 1853 feeling tempo a news reported in St. Paul observed: "ten years in a lifetime here, and twenty, time out of memory." 

As far as American West is concern people were prepared to accept the challenges both physical and mental, along with disappointments. After meeting failure, they were always ready for a next change elsewhere, playing the incredible American game that William Appleman William call, "an infinity of second chances."
The American frontier has become a symbol of war. If you go through the historical facts, the pioneers fought battles with native Indians from 1620's to 1890's. Cattlemen fought with sheep men, farmer fought with cattlemen, mine workers fought with mine operates, outlaws fought with railroads, and vigilantes roamed through the story underscorung the barbarities. As a matter of facts, that apart from geographical similarities in Canadian and American frontier there is a contrast, the Canadian frontierman was submissive to judicial authority of Hudson's Bay Company and then was Northwest Mounted Police, Canadian western had a sense of respect for central authority in comparison to their American counterpart, that why, there is a slow movement in the development of Canadian frontier, as far as violence is concern in Canada the minorities, few Indians war and vigilantes the violence was too less, contrast can be traced easily, the influence of people's history on their subsequent acts. American, had fought a revolution against the central authority.

The West in 19th century experienced a settled period of capitalistic Laissez-Faire, let the individual be alone, so that the competitive laws of the market can produce the best forms of society. In the coming period a massive migration from Western Europe, composed of many nationalities-the Germans, Scots, Irish, French, Scandinavians-was contrasted with frontiers like Australia, where settlements was overwhelmed by British.

The American frontier in mind had four distinct characteristics,
rapid growth, dynamic expansion, violence and disdain of authority. The frontier men behaved that the frontier had played a dominant role in American history. Alex de Tocqueville in the early 19th century made a statement: “This gradual and continuous progress of the European race towards the Rocky Mountains had the solemnity of providential event; it is like a deluge of men arising unabatedly, and daily driven onwards by the hands of God.” 11

Turner’s definition about the frontier is rather confusing: he defines the West in various ways such, an area of free, open land; as a line of population density; as a recurrent transition from primitive to complex society; as a spirit of climate of opinion that could be called forth even in the Urban East. Partly because of the ambiguity, his theories fit the mood of romantic nationalism. In later and more sobering times, especially at the time of great depression, scholars began to speculate with a sense of doubt that Turner had not distracted the nation from pressing questions. Instead of drawing attention to international affair, the thesis allowed a sentimental wallowing in nation’s domestic history.

The nation lacked to understand the significance of the West. Daniel Boone had become a symbol of heroic individual, fleeing from corrupt society, or to be treated as Promethean bearer of civilization to the uncouth wilderness. A westerner, if he lived far enough away could be extolled as the true Leather-Stocking nobleman of nature, or if he lived nearby, he could be dismissed as a drifted and a libertine with
dirty fingernails and a wide range of bodily smells.

In search for a representative West or typical westerner has always depended on what the searcher sought, there are in fact and legend many West. As far as history is concerned the historical West is composed of the sweat, tears and ideals of men and women. There is also a West that existed in people’s imagination. These two are different, and yet both are very real. Historians are likely to confine themselves to accurately describing events and institutions, leaving images of Literature and folklore. Frequently, however, the myths and realities are so interwoven that it is hard to distinguished where the motivation come from. To separate facts from fiction is to deny that life often follows art. Buffalo Bills image of the Wild West was as important to the dynamics of expansion as the Homestead Act was.

Both Jesse James and Frank Norris had a common opinion they treated railroad as monster, which was comparatively significant to history. The West in its completeness seems a peculiarly fit subject for observing such inter relations. While analyzing the West, most American’s have focused on prospectors, trappers, and cowboys rather then on the company or Labor union, the circuit rider rather than the co-operative societies, the Pony Express rather than long Santar Fe Caravans. Like Hester Prynne, the westerners: “intellect and heart had their home, as it were, in desert places.” 11

Isolated, lonely settings for the Thoreaus, Boons, Ahab’s and Hawkeys of our dreams. West had a power to grow, Mark Twain’s river
pilot: who “withdraw but lordly and commonding.” 12 In general the westerner symbolized the new Adam, “the authentic American as a figure of heroic innocence and vast potentialities, poised at the start of a new history.” 13 It is widely accepted that individualism is product of frontier experience. It is this assumption that was a governing factor of men’s behavior are that had changed American history.

Individualism is closely associated with self-reliance, self-sufficiency, independence, Laissez-Faire, freedom from restrain, loneliness, selfishness, egotism, eccentricity, isolation. And its opposites are community, mutual dependence, tradition, social responsibility, and socialism.

While translating Tocqueville’s Democracy in America the word that dame its first appearance was “individualism” which was first used by Henry Reeves, early in 19th century. B. F. Skinner has identified the individualist as “autonomous man”, a construct of the humanistic and romantic traditions.17 Skinner has an argument that the self-directed, free-willed individual had led us to the brink of destruction, if the society wants to survive it must turn away from the order or the ideas like freedom and human dignity have outlived their purpose.

If you look at the West from Skinner’s point of view, West was a prime determinant in the current of individualism, it would be and act of suicide to glorify legendary frontier value. Whether it was western harshness that forced men and individualistic self-reliance towards group co-operation men thought that the West dictated individualism
and much of American history has been affected by this assumption.

There are two concepts associated with this assumption, Capitalism and Protestantism. Max Weber's classic insights into the growth of these two movements enforcing each other, may provide interesting comparison with congenial relationship between the West and Protestantism. Some of the essential tenets of Protestantism are the direct relation between man and God, the personal interpretation of Bible, the priesthood of all believers were peculiarly relevant to isolated, lonely people embarked on a supposed sea of self-reliance. The Camp meeting with its emphasis on individual conversion, the circuit rider alone battling wind and rain, and the splintering of sects whenever another man had new visions, these were indeed individualistic.

Historians have minimized communal aspects of religion in West. On nationalistic and individual level religious denomination were on frontier. The kingdom of God, had be Americanized. As Jesus Christ had made his first appearance in the frontier of Rome, the messianic age of might begin on the new frontier.

According to Mormons, who were most communal of the religious, believed that Christ had already done so. There was group of consciousness among the traditional denominations as well, especially where the concept of a covenanted community remained firm. Frontier individualism was impregnated with the philosophy of the inner man. Where the frontier became pluralistic the theory led to violent repression of a group by another. In the face of this doctrine, the
covenanted community as an opposing idea broke down into the self-appointed moralism of the small town. In the West, the defense of the higher law was frequently on excuse for violence. Coercive physical force is easy to exert when buttressed by the certainties of self-righteousness, thus vigilantes, in addition to they’re other purpose and methods assumed what is said about the attitude, “Shoot first, ask questions Later.”

Fundamental causes of western violence, were not intimately connected with individualism, they lay nearer to fear of anarchy and to struggle for economic and political power. The state instigated its own violence, Indian wars, the forced removal of Indians to reservations, the vaunted brutality of the groups like Texas, Rangers and the dispatch of federal troops to battle labor unions less individualistic too were mob actions against the Mormons, political vigilantism in San Francisco and Montana, and the kind of social dislocations that lay at the heart of criminal acts. All forms of violence, however, were supported by the myth and opinion the rested on the cult of masculinity and the code of western hero. What persisted were not the fact of the individualist frontier but the myth of its glory, and that became America’s most cherished tradition. Certain assumption about the American West enveloped and reinforced the assumption that nature was an embodiment of morality Wilderness was treated as teacher for man and a source of his most important truths. In Wordsworth word:

“One impulse from vernal wood may teach you more of man of moral evil and of good
than all the sage can.”

On this side of Atlantic Wordsworth was echoed in Literature by Emerson (”In the woods we return to reason and faith”), Thoreau (”We needs the tonic of wilderness..... We can never have enough nature”), Cooper (“This book of nature I can read, and I find it full of wisdom and knowledge”), and in history by Parkman with his haunting passion for the wild. The West was a lost garden for man, and in the words of John G. Neihardth: “groping for the old Adamic dream, he found his pattern in the trees and streams.”

Howard Munford Jones called it second discovery of America, when man saw that:

“the voice of God spoke in the thunder of Niagara, on the height of American mountain ranges, in elemental power of American rivers, the endless sweep of prairie, desert and Great Plains.”

The Pastoral idyll world was like Bierstadt paintings, where isolated figure turned towards the towering truth, the cool springs, or the cloud-filled romanticism of his heartland.

Romantic writers believed in the moral content of nature, but majority of western men placed a higher priority on monetary profit from nature’s resource. One of the earliest Englishmen in America Sir Ferdinando Gorges revealed the motivation: “Let us come a little nearer to what which all harkens unto and that forsooth is profit.” Men believed nature had to serve the will of men instead of man’s blending
into eternal, primal soul. The forest and the prairies and lakes as Horace Greenleys puts it: “must be tamed to hear and heed his voice.” 19

Though there is ambiguity in the two concept of nature, mans submission to nature’s truth and bending nature to his will, there is one point at which the two converge. Whether being bent or doing the bending, man is the recipient and expender of power. The American West had a power to infuse men with a sense of energy and strength to effect great ends. The self-confidence of men who built cities within a lifetime, who conquered arid plains, who sealed impassable mountains, who felled the largest trees, was not easily reined. When men realized what they had grappled with the conquered, the vaulting, spatial immensity of continent, they were filled with a consciousness of power, certainly that may help to explain some of the overconfidence, even arrogance that America continues to exhibits to the world community.

The American frontier was transformed because the East and European invested in it. The competitive spirit, in men like Greenville Dodge building the transcontinental railroad, provided the steam and energy. Education encouraged faith in a driving individualism that would somehow work for the good of society. Economic development of the West was facilitated by a close relationship between government and science, thus the West continued rapidly to transform the wilderness for the uses of man.

At the end the frontier united the nation. The central government had nurtured the West in many ways, by granting it political equality
through statehood, subsidizing its economic development, and showering the abundance of nature into its private hands, it opened the public domain for agriculture and cattle industry. Army engineers surveyed for roads and railroads. Federal policies balanced the export of western gold to help import steel, which ultimately built western railroads. After the Civil War the nation sought in haste a new identity, and it had to be forged in the West because the North and South had drank too much bitterness. The West was an available epic in which both the North and South had participated. As a Missouri newspaper expressed it in 1858:

"The extreme southern, the Virginian the Yankee, recognize each his own image in the many sided man of the West. They feel they have certain affinities for him though they none for each others." 20

Strip the West of its racial ugliness, forget its insistent irresponsibility and drape the whole in self-reliant individualism, moralizing nature, and fervent nationalism, and America had found its image-beautiful as a redwood forest, honest as a cowboy, powerful as Paul Banyan and independent as Davy Crockett at the Alamo.

While dealing with history of American frontier, one confronts with a problem of dualism of romance and reality. Most of the historian had an argument about the great value of the frontier to America is as a myth or a symbol. No one can deny that America had been profited by myths. If the West is considered as a myth, symbol or historical reality,
the facts remains that important areas of American culture including
the Hollywood film industry, television and its multiply channels,
opera, Broadway, Literature, music, art and even sports reflect the
frontier impact. Social scientist had an interpretation about the frontier
impact on the American culture as a desire of the people to escape from
the complexities of 20th century. Few historians had suggested that the
American frontier sets a unique trait, which penetrated into American
society, thereby causing the frontier to be an important stylist feature of
a distinctive American character.

Frontier as a word was used in order to describe a variety of
things, a variety so large that the historians were unable to arrive at
fixed definition of the term. Frontier can mean a place a process, a
direction, a geographic expanse, a cultural region, a stable boundary or
a moving, shifting progressive line. The American frontier, as defined
by America's most famous frontier authority, Frederick Jackson Turner,
says that it is a process, more specifically, a process of Americanization.
It must also be recognized that American frontier is called as a fluid line
moving progressively westward.

The term West and frontier are interchangeable in American
history. One is not any less difficult to define than the other, and
historians continually differs in their interpretation.

A candidate for a degree in biology was asked
to differentiate between a frog and a toad. It
did not ease the student's cerebral
embarrassment when after prolonged silence,
the examiner, a product of western perversity,
told him not to worry because any country boy could describe the difference if someone needed to know. Such is the shortcoming of an academic approach to reality. Scholars quibble over definitions of the West while laymen take the term for granted. The West is the West, as even a fool knows. It is a place where the cowhand puts his foot on a rail instead of his rump on a stool, where the sheriff tacks up a leaflet offering REWARD for the desperado who swaggers up, rip it down laugh scornfully, and rides off into the Scenery. 21

The term West is most frequently used to identify the direction of the frontier movement. Many other countries also have experience a frontier movement, but not all of them moved in a westward direction.

It should not be assumed that the term frontier applies only to America, or that solely the Americans enjoyed the experience of frontier movement. Emerson Hough once wrote that, “The Frontier knows no country; it lies also in other lands, and in other times than our own.” Walter Prescott Webb, a widely known frontier historian, argues that the existence of a world frontier since 1500 and its settlement by European nations is one of the important keys in understanding our modern civilization. Many historians have continually pointed to the significant parallels and contrasts to be drawn from comparative study of frontier experience in the United States with the frontier experience in other historical societies.

There is extensive use of frontier process by the historians, Paul Mac-Kendrick, in his analysis of the expansion of ancient Rome. He
observed a number of parallels to American experience such as the geometry of expansion, the type of settlement and settlers, and the influence, which this experience had upon the central government. Mac-Kendrick even compares the Roman political statesmen Cato and Marius with Lincoln and Jackson are products of a frontier process.

A noted Russian historian, A. Lobano - Rostovrsky, describes Russia's history with the framework of eastward expansion. Lobanov Rostovskv points to a number of parallels with the American frontier experiences. Both the countries were moving towards the Pacific Ocean and both of them contained an important geographic feature, the Volga and Mississippi Rivers, which acted as springboards for the great drive into the frontier regions. The Russian pioneers (Cossacks) were lured to the frontier by furs, silver, and trading opportunities with primitive peoples. They built forts, fought natives, and were followed into frontier by organized emigration, which were in turn followed by the promoters. The parallels to 19th century American are quieting evident.

The American frontier movement provides striking similarities with the frontier movement in Australia, and especially the one in Canada. One historian, A. L. Burt suggests that;

"If Frederick Jackson had looked North when he wrote about the American West, he might have discovered a surprising confirmation of (his) thesis...."22

It is important to recognize that frontier movements are universal and not solely confined to the America's history. Although the westward
movement had neither a precise beginning nor an abrupt ending, it was of paramount importance from the middle of the 18th century to the 1890's. These have been described as the formative years in American history.

Theories of past historical development are designed to help understand society today. Therefore, the controversy over the Turner thesis is very important. Frederick Jackson Turner interpreted the Frontier as a process of Americanization in which the force of environment forged variety to character trait in the American personality. Most of his critics interpreted the frontier as geographic area, which slowly became Europeanized as civilization gradually overcame the hostile environment.

Accordingly to Turner the frontier strips the garments of civilization from the frontieman and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the moccasin he wrote:

"... at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions which if it furnishes, or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trail. Little by little he transforms the wilderness." 23

Turner further observed that after reaching the wilderness of the frontier, the white man had adapted the ways of the Indian even to shouting the war cry and taking a scalp in orthodox Indian fashion.

The Indian trade, the fur trapper, or as he preferred to be called in the West, the mountain man was the vanguard at the frontier. He was
pathfinder. Turner grew up in a part of the country first explored by the voyageurs, and he wrote his Master’s thesis on the influence of the Fur Trader in the Development of Wisconsin. “The Indian trade pioneered the way of civilization,” wrote Turner.

The buffalo trail became the Indian trail, and this became the traders “trace”, the trails widened into roads, and the roads into turnpikes, and these in turn were transformed into railroads. 24

In discussing the rancher’s frontier, Frederick Jackson Turner recognized its two most significant aspects, the long drive from Texas to the Kanakas railroad towns or the Northern ranges, and the evolution of large ranches on the Great Plains. He was aware also of the remoteness of these Great Plains.

The ranges of the Great Plains, with ranch and cowboy and nomadic life, are things of yesterday and today. The experience of the Carolina Cowpens guided the ranchers of Texas. One element favoring the rapid extension of the rancher’s frontier is the fact that in a remote country lacking transportation facilities the product must be in small bulk, or must be able to transport itself, and the cattle raiser could easily drive his product market. The effect of these great ranches on the subsequent agrarian history of the localities in which they existed should be studied. 25

But even as he spoke, the range cattle industry was declining and, like the frontier itself, would soon cease to exist. By 1905 the great range herds had disappeared. Owen Wister’s classic, The Virginian, was
published in that year, beginning the process romanticizing the cowboy and the Great Plains, America's last frontier.

A Colorado rancher, who, twenty-five years after reading Wister's book, wrote the author that, best describes romanticizing the cowboy:

"Reading them chapters fetched me West, a heading straight Wyoming which I never reached, although I've been in every other western state in all these years -- No I never saw Wyoming or saw the Wind River Country. I did see the Ranch in Idaho where the hanging took place. Hunted sage chicken there, maybe not the real ranch but it had the cottonwoods and the smell made of it. I've got a feeling low down in my heart that I shouldn't ever go to you Wyoming new. It might not be as perfect as you fixed it in your books. Perhaps I'm illusioned about that country and I wouldn't want it to be different then it is in my mind." 26

The Wyoming of Wister's novel was but a part of the Great Plains, a vast area West of the 98 meridian to the Rocky Mountains are level, treeless, semi-arid, and environment totally different from any previous frontier. The Great Plains were conquered only after the Industrial Revolutions provide the tools in the from of windmills and barbed wire.

Although the cattle Kingdom had is beginning in Texas roughly about 1840, it was not until the Civil Wars that the range cattle industry assumed its distinctive aspects of trails drives and large ranches. The real era of the rancher's frontier begins the first drive of Texas
longhorns across the Red Rivers to the northern market in 1886 and ends with loss of 85 percent of the range cattle in the blizzards of 1885-86.

An understanding of this period of 1855-1885 on the Great Plains and a study of the rancher and cowboy to provide some answers. The term cowboy originated in the Southern Appalachian Mountains of eastern United States about the time of American Revolution, but the influence of the East ends with the contribution of the term cowboy for the Western herdsman. Many authorities on the American West prefer the use of two terms in referring to the cattlemen of the Rocky Mountains and Vaquero for those territories lay West of the Rockies. Americans anglicized this latter term to “buckaroo”. But whether these cowboys, vaqueros, or buckaroos worked in Texas, Montana or California they faced much the same difficulties and dangers. Cowboys were Mexicans, Indians, Anglos and Negroes. Just after the Civil War, over 5000 Negroes were herding cattle in the West.

The cowboy’s occupation was the most natural of the American West. It was natural because it took the Great Plains as they were, grassland, used them in their natural state. This closeness to nature was one of the characteristics of the cowboy.

Perhaps the strength and originality in his speech are due to the solitude, the nearness of the stars, the bigness of the country, and the far horizon — all of which give him a chance to think clearly and go into the depths of his own mind — Unlettered men rely greatly upon comparison to natural objects With
which they are familiar to express their ideas and feelings. 27

Such was the observation of Ramon Adams, himself a cowboy and author of Western Words, perhaps the most complete compilation of terms and words used by the cowboy. Adams describes the cowboy as:

--- a man who followed the cows. A generation ago the East knew him as a bloody demon of disaster, reckless and rowdy, weighted down with weapons, and ever ready to use them. Today he is known as the hero of a wild West story, as the eternally hard-riding movie actor, as the “guitar pick in.” Yodeler, or the gaily bedecked rodeo follower --- The West, who knows him best, knows that he has always been “just a plain, everyday bow-legged human”, carefree and courageous, fun-loving and loyal, uncomplaining and dong his best to live up to tradition of which he is proud. 28

The cowboy was courageous. Isolated from people, removed from law and order, customs and society, he had to be courageous. Courage alone did not guarantee survival, or even success as a cowboy: self-reliance and willingness to drop old methods and adopt new ones better fitted to his Great Plains environment were also characteristic of the cattleman.

The he was fun-loving hardly needs explanation long periods of routine, hard work, isolation and boredom were compensated for by a few nights in town which gave the cowboy a reputation of being rowdy, perhaps lawless, and most certainly a spendthrift with his pay of thirty or sixty dollars a month. But such a reputation was acquired by
generalizing upon these relatively brief instances in which he was observed by many of town's citizens.

The average cowboy was young. Anyone over thirty years of age on a ranch or a trail drive was considered and "old man". He was often an individual looking for excitements or feeling from trouble, and as a result, he was not highly educated. This may account for so few accounts of cowboy's life written by a cowboy during the period of open range and height of the cattleman's frontier. One such account does exist, however, and The Log of a Cowboy by Andy Adams is the most authentic piece of Literature ever written about the cowboy.

The from of humor employed by a cowboy on a ranch or during a trail drive differed greatly that observed by the "paper-collar comanches" of the Cowtowns, as the cowboy refer to the merchants. Adams related one instance in which the foreman on a trail drive appointed one of his cowboy, Joe Stallings, to be Segundo in his absence. Joe good naturally took advantage of the situation by assigning the other men to the cook's duties including standing his night guard, this in return for the cook's promise to provide jam and jelly for the next Sunday. Upon returning from night guard, one of the imposed upon cowboys:

Intentionally walked upon Stallings's bed, and catching his spur in the tarpaulin, fell heavily across our Segundo. "Excuse me", said John (the cowboy returning from night guard), rising, "but I was just nosing around looking for the foreman. Oh, It's you, is it? I just wanted to ask if 4.30 wouldn't be plenty early
to build up the fire. Wood's a little scare, but I'll burn the prairies if you say so. That's all I wanted to know; you may lay down now and go to sleep. 29

The cowboy preferred to be optimistic about any situation no matter how bad it might appear. He seldom complained but chose "Sallow his trouble with his food."

Though his equipment and clothing were often ornate and even exaggerated at times, they were practical. A big, broad-brimmed hat served as an umbrella protecting the wearer from sun and weather. A neckerchief drawn over the face protected him from dust, and chap or chaparejos protected his legs while riding through brush. High-heeled boots made riding easier and protected the ankles from constant chafing. And his spurs were occupational necessity, so too were they a social necessity when on foot, even if he were at a dance.

The first northern ranches were products of the emigrant trade. These roads ranches supplied the Oregon or California bound emigrants with fresh stock. One fat and well-conditioned work steer might be exchanged for two trail-worn ones.

Her owner who despaired of ever ranching Oregon with the cow still alive, but who was in need of flour would trade a milk cow brought from a Midwestern farm for need provision. Thus were begun in the 1840's and 1850's the ranches of the northern Great Plains and valleys of the Rocky Mountains. These ranches were further stocked, in the 1870's and 1880's with longhorns driven from Texas. These early ranchers of
Wyoming, Colorado and Montana were usually old mountain men who, after the decline of the fur trade, were reluctant to leave the country in which they trapped and traded for twenty years.

John Cliff, the first of the cattle kings of the northern ranges, got his start from the stock of gold-seekers heading towards the mines of Colorado beginning in 1858-59. He built his herd from purchases of Longhorns brought up Goodnight-Loving and Western cattle trails from Texas. By 1861, Cliff was supplying the mining towns with beef for the mining towns near Bozeman and Helena. Many Texas cowboys remained in these northern ranching regions, lured by unoccupied rangelands and the demands for experienced cowhands.

The range and ranch cattle industry spread throughout the Great Plains and by the 1880’s occupied nearly entire grassland of that vast area so naturally suited to raising cattle.

A successful Wyoming rancher described the process of establishing a ranch on the northern ranges to the National Stock Growers’ Convention in Chicago in 1886.

Except for the money to purchase the cattle, investment was slight enough. A homestead entry of 160 acres along some stream was selected as the basis for operations. If there was wild hay on the land forage for the riding stick was assured. Ranch houses and corrals might come later, but many an early cattleman spent the first reason or two in a dugout cut in the hillside near the creek with a similar one close by for sheltering his horses in the worst storms. Beef from his herd, bacon, beans and coffee brought by pack horse from the nearest
settlement, constituted the bill of fare. 30

The ranching industry entered its boom period after the Civil War, and from approximately 1870 until 1885, the Great Plains was a region of open range, and empire of grass.

The rancher's range rights had meant his right to a portion of a stream and all the rangeland back from that stream to the divide, which marked the boundary between one stream valley and the next. Claims upon a distance of frontage along a stream therefore entitled a rancher to the rangeland back of the stream, and he had access to the two basic requirements of grass and water. No attempt was made by the ranchers to fence off portions of rangelands Range cattle grazed freely, intermingling with stock of other herds. Cowboy might occasionally, as a neighborly act, throw cattle back across the divide on to their home range, but the calf roundup in the spring would separate the cattle for the purpose of branding and marketing calves. The full roundup would catch any strays missed in the spring.

A single rancher did not conduct his own roundup of an entire distinct would meet to select one of their number as a general superintendent of the roundup, this wan an experienced rancher in whose judgment the other ranchers had confidence. The ranchers and cowboys respected the superintendent's authority and instructions. Every rancher whose was included in the roundup contributed something according to the size of his outfit, chuck, wagons, food, horse remudas, gear and equipment.
The frontier of the open range was gone. Those portions not occupied by farmers with their windmills and barbed wire remained open for another decade or two as remnants of a passing frontier, but cattlemen realized that they could not rely upon the open range, their stock had to be fed through the winter. Herds that have survived the disasters of 1885-86 were drastically reduced. As the ranges recovered, cattlemen fenced them into summer and winter pastures and installed windmills to pump water to those sections on which they grew hay to be cut and stored for winter-feeding. In the decade 1880-1890 the acreage set aside for the cultivation of hay increased more than tenfold marking the decline of the range cattle industry and the passing of the cowboy as a frontier range.

The western hero in legend is a man of excess. He is a creature of the tall tale and fits comfortable in that form of humor. He knows no moderation, in gunplay, drinking, or fighting. A competitive spirit that lures him on to violent aggression motivates him. He is wasteful of game and natural resources. Restless, impatient, he needs no one around him because he is self-sufficient. He is the individualistic personified, standing outside of society of demonstrating that society is irrelevant. His strength and power stem from his continuing bout with the forces of nature. Alone against the wilderness, he is supreme.

Half man, half god, "with a piece of sunrise in his pocket", so Constance Rourke saw the Western hero. He was god because he realized impossible goals, a man because he was entirely earthy and
close to fundamental American experience, his piece of sunrise was moral righteousness. He was at once regional and universal, violent and gentle, boastful and modest, lawless and honorable, competitive compassionate, savage and civilized. Like Proteus, he assumed different forms. For James Fennimore Copper he was Leather stocking. For Own Wister, the Virginian, on the movies screen Gray Cooper or Tom Mix, on television, Wyatt Earp, in the dime novel, Seth Jones or Buffalo Bill, on television, Wyatt Earp, in the dime novel, Seth Jones of Buffalo Bill, under the circus tent, Wild Bill Hickock, as a social rebel, Jesse James, as a women, Annie Oakley or Calamity Jane, in oral tradition, Davy Crockett or Mike Fink, in the North, Paul Bunyan in the southwest, Pecos Bill, on the Great Plains, Febold Feboldson, for the Indian Geromino, for the black, Deadwood Dick, for the Mexican, Joaquin Murrieta. As a hero he revealed what a great many people were or wanted to be.

Paul Bunyan looms over the oral tradition of the once heavily timbered Old Northwest. In the tallest of tall tales, his size was prodigious. His ox, babe, born in the winter of the blue snow, drank dry the Mississippi. The top three stories of his hotel were hinged to allow the moon to pass. His dragging pick gouged the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. His sweat on hot day formed the Great Salt Lake.

Bunyan was only one of a crew of regional whoppers. The Great Plains cradled Febold Feboldson, and unconquerable Swede who overcomes the tribulations of the prairies. He triumphed over razor
sharp blizzard and summer suns so hot they popped the corn still on the cob. One spring, when the fog was so thick it was drinkable and seeds in the earth could not decide whether to grow up or down. Febold cut the fog into great strips and buried them along the roadside, and every spring the ditches are still full of water.

Pecos Bill was a towering counterpart in the Southwest. His rope, which stretched from Pecos to Rio Grande, could lasso the lightning. He fenced Arizona as a calf pasture and raised his horse Widow-maker on nitroglycerin and barbed wire. The only time Pecos Bill was thrown was while riding a cyclone.

Sometimes the hero developed from a historic figure, like Davy Crockett and Mike Fink. Here are some of the basic facts of Crockett’s life. He was born in Tennessee, became a local politician, served in the Congress from 1827 to 1831 and again from 1833 to 1835, changed his political allegiance from the Jacksonian Democrats to the Whig’s, who made him the object of a publicity campaign intended to win backwoods support. Similarly, Mike Fink’s life can be traced, though much less completely. He was raised on the Pennsylvania frontier, where he acquired his skill with the rifle. He drifted to the Ohio and down the Mississippi, working as a river boatman. Later the trapped for The Rocky Mountain Fur Company. Among a collection of scoundrels, Finks might have been the Worst, “a lying sadistic, foul-mouthed braggart, a treacherous and murderous psychopath.”

When Crockett and fink moved into legend, as they did through
oral traditions, almanacs, and newspaper fillers, the exaggerated qualities of Bunyan and his friends quickly crept in Davy Crockett, from the halls of Congress, fell in love with a country girl but wanted relief from the ridiculous feelings because like an illness they constrained his action. He had heard of machines that generated electrically and cured arthritis, but he decided to try something similar but more natural and direct. Standing in the clearing of the woods in the midst of a ferocious storm, he opened his mouth to the heavens and dared the lightning to enter his vitals. When a bolt obliged. Davy was somewhat shaken, and the lightning coming out the other and took his trousers with it. For weeks later he could eat his food raw, for it was cooked on the way down. But he was cured of love and could go his way in freedom.

In legends, Mike Fink drinks a gallon of whisky with no effects. He fought at the drop of a hat, drubbing those who did not laugh at his jokes and fighting just keep his joints from getting “marrow dried.” He could take the Keelboat Lightfoot through the worst rapids of the Ohio, his steady eye and iron arm steering it away from every rock, with Mike standing like Hercules at the helm. In ancient Greece he would have been a Jason. He was river god “one of those minor deities whom men create in their own image and magnify to magnify themselves.”33 Mike Fink often entered stories beside Davy Crockett, the two in monumental competition. Each had his own gun. Davy’s was his Betsy and Mike’s was Bang all identifiable, personalized like Arthur’s sword Excalibur and Siegfried’s nothing.
In formal Literature there is no better model of the Western hero than Owen Wister’s *The Virginian*, published in 1902, it was the product of Wister’s western experiences in the 1880’s and it became one of the most influential and widely read American novels. A socially conscious mother had forced Wister to study music in Europe and at Harvard. In his twenties, his health collapsed and to recuperate he retreated to a Wyoming cattle ranch in 1885, probably the last great year in the heyday of the open range. The West was revelation of Wister, the wilderness fresh like creation:

The ancient earth was indeed my mother and I  
Have found her again after being lost among  
houses, customs, and restraints.  

Wister returned east at the end of the summer, but between 1885 and 1900 he made fifteen trips west. He began writing stories and short novels about cattle country, and the work, like the spring air of Wyoming, seemed to cleanse his spirit. But his writing was done in the East, and after he published *The Virginian* he did not return to the Plains. When later in his life he was invited to visit Wyoming, he refused, fearing to find social and economic changes that would destroy the ghost of the past.

The world of those ghosts, the setting of the western story, was filled with innocence, freshness, and beginnings. The initiative, the energy and the aggressive action were all masculine. Wister called the cattle frontier the great playground of young man. But it was far more than play. It restored health, as it had for Wister himself, and it
recreated men as self-reliant individuals. Underscoring self-reliance is the Virginian’s namelessness. Beyond the reference to Virginia, we do not know his Christian name, his family, or anything else of his background. As with all western heroes, the vagueness of his past requires the reader to judge the man solely in the present.

The individualistic hero stood out starkly against the setting. He was at home in a natural background, lost and uncertain before and unnatural one such as a town. Hell’s Hinges, the dusty settlement in 1916 William S. Hart movie of the name, had to be literally and symbolically burned to the ground before the hero and heroine could walk happily together toward the western mountains. Medicine Bow in The Virginian is insignificant, isolated, perhaps even temporary, a “wretched husk of squalor”. Its buildings stand as weak facades against the strength of the wind. Such towns were “forever the same shapeless pattern, more forlorn they were than stale bones.” But above and beyond was the atmosphere of crystal light, serene, pure, “a space across which Noah and Adam might came straight from Genesis.” 36

The setting thus emphasized the natural as a golden sunset might focus attention to a bird flying across it. The plumage of civilized society is no longer evident. At times the story physically wraps this natural man in nature, as when the Virginian rolls in the dust, insulting himself from the restrained of civilization. At another time the veneer is stripped away by fever. Badly hurt, he is nursed by Molly Wood, his love, in her cabin. In his delirium he raves wildly, all inhabitants gone.
In this state he might be expected to curse and to speak basely of sex. But, with his deepest thoughts and instincts exposed, the natural man is found to be pure.

The purity of his intentions towards woman should not conceal the fact that the western hero placed her on a pedestal, distant and untouchable. The western does not admit women to his world, that is he does not allow them to step down from their elevation, “Never speak ill of any man to any woman. Men’s quarrels were not for women’s ears”. In his scheme, good woman were to know only a fragment of men’s lives. In the story the woman represents the East, culture, schools and religion, all of which are effete, superficial, and unnatural. The good woman never understands the westerner. She is seldom if ever a Scarlet O’Hara or a Becky Sharp, that is, a strong woman who knows for better than men what is really going on and controls events through her own machinations. In the western story the fallen woman, the prostitute, can understand a man, but she does not represent the East. She has forsaken culture, entered the man’s world, and so has found her place, like the hero, in the West.

In the man’s world of fighting, card games, and business transactions bystanders and friends must not interfere. Even the law is suspect, and only mediocre people would restore to legal protection when the issue is man to man. Yet even in this lawless, masculine world, a code governs violence. The hero must not shoot a man in the back, and he must not shoot an unarmed man. More important,
however is the reluctance that precedes the hero’s restoring to violence. *The Virginian,* for examples, knows that he must someday kill the villain in his story, Tramp’s, but the gentle side of the hero controls his action for nearly five years. The reluctance provides time for honorable purpose to be established.

Honor, indeed is the only justification for violence. Robert Warshow calls the Western hero the last gentleman and his story the only form in which the concept of personal honor remains strong. Honor triumphs over friendship as the Virginian allows his best friends Steve to die in a just lynching. The hero may not understand his own motives and certainly he has difficulty verbalizing them, but he nevertheless knows what must be done. His internal gyroscope keeps him on the honorable course without rationalization. Acton takes the place of words. *The Virginian,* for example, has committed himself to his inevitable confrontation with Tramp’s. He struggles to explain his reasons to Molly but cannot do so to the satisfaction of either of them. “Can’t you see how it is about a man? ”He finally asks, “It’s not for their benefit, friends or enemies, that I have got this things to do”. With these confused words the self-reliant individual with his unexpressed certainly walks to his rendezvous with violence.

The Western hero has assumed so many shapes that his essence could be conveyed through one novel. James Fennimore Cooper at beginning of the 19th century created one of the greatest western figures, a frontier trapper and scout who moves from youth to death through a
long series of novels and has different names as he goes-Leather stocking, Deerslayer, pathfinder, Natty Bumpo, Hawkeye. But Cooper did not call his scout the hero. That title went to the young dashing man who carried off the girl. Henry Nash Smith has pointed out that Cooper, bound by the social and literary conventions of his day, could not allow the scout to be the hero because he was not of genteel birth. Thus Cooper's plots revolve mechanically around young white officers of good birth and pale young ladies who are likely to swoon when the going gets rough.

Twentieth century readers of *The Last of The Mohicans*, for example, have little interest in Duncan and Alice, technically the heroes. Instead they turn Cora, the mulatto, strong, resourceful, and attracted to an Indian, "the noble Uncas nobly in love with the nobly dark Cora." 39

More fascinating is the hunter-scout, whose name in *The Last of The Mohicans* is Hawkeye and to whom we would gladly assign the title of hero. He is brave and honorable, the natural aristocrat. Like the Virginian; in his heart he knows what is right because he live close to nature. He acts vigorously in the service of a higher purpose. Standing between the Indian and the White man, he represents the best of both. In a later novel, *The Prairie*, he dies seated, facing west in his final confrontation with nature:

"We have never been chiefs; but honest, and useful in our way. I hope it cannot be denied we have always proved ourselves." 40

Cooper's hunter scout, only slightly changed, entered the broader
realms of American popular culture through the dime novel. Eratus Breadle with his brother Irwin and his partner Robert Adams set out to apply the techniques of mass production of publishing. The house of Beadle and Adams was not the first to offer cheap, paperbound novels, but it did initiate issues in series and in large numbers. In 1860 Beadle printed the beginning of the so-called dime novels. *Malaseka: The Indian Life of the White Hunter*. A few stories later, *Seth Jones or the Captives of the Frontier* proved that the publishers was on a successful course; it may have sold as many as four hundred thousand copies. Novel followed novel in series after series, though each story was complete in itself. In 1865 the normal painting for any one-dime novel was about sixty thousand copies. Some authors eventually churned out as many as six hundred novels.

*Seth Jones*, the first great success, was set in the late eighteen century frontier settlement of New York, a local familiar to reader of Cooper. Mohawk Indians had captured a white girl, and the climax of the story was her rescue by the hunter-scout Seth Jones. Seth was a lovable, down east Yankee type who knew the wilderness, including its nature inhabitants, as he knew the back of his hand. Because most dime novelists wrote so fast, they had little for revision, and they had to know in advance what was acceptable both to the publisher and to the reading public. The stories thus reflected what a good number of authors believed to be nation’s taste. The stories gauged what most people felt was true and important about the West, and, in the words of
Henry Nash Smith, the dime novel became "and objectified mass dream." Admittedly there was advertising campaigns. *Seth Jones*, for example was ballyhooed by thousands of placards bearing only the words "who Is Seth Jones?" But advertising was yet too young to be substantial molder of opinion.

Although it was not only setting, the West was by far the most popular. Of the 3158-dime novels published by Beadle and Adams between 1860 and 1898, two thirds took place in the trans-Mississippi West. The trapper or hunter-scout, the lineal descendant of Cooper's *LeatherStocking*, was at first the favorite character. The out law and the soldier eventually joined the roaster, but after the 1880's the cowboy overshadowed them all. Cattle kingdom characters like Big Foot Wallace, Deadwood Dick, Wild Bill Hicok, Calamity Jane and Buffalo Bill Cody increasingly upstaged thus Seth Jones and his counterparts, like Kit Carson, Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone. Unlike *LeatherStocking*, These westerners were clearly heroes; Cooper's worries about gentled upbringing tended to be ignored. The dime novelist seemed intent on giving the impression of historical truth. He loved to use real people as subjects. But he was not overly scrupulous in his attention to truth. Beadle warned his authors, we do not want "repetition of any experience which, though true, is yet better untold." Calamity Jane was one of the real women who became fictionalized in the dime novel. Her full name was either Mary Jane Canary or Martha Jane Canary. Her mother was prostitute, and
Calamity herself was an alcoholic. At seventeen she was wearing pants and consorting with railroad construction crews. A bit later she was banished from General Crook's expedition against Siovx when a colonel found her swimming nude with the men. These are the kinds of true details that Beadle would claim were "yet better untold." The dime novel made Calamity Jane lovable and kindhearted. Like her real self, however, the fictional character could out-ride, outs-swear, and out-shoot the men. She could stand on a running horse bareback and light cigar. She was indeed, a violent woman, unlike any feminine character in Cooper's novels. Nevertheless, the dime novelist who wrote about her had to wrestle with the requirement of gentility in the heroine. Of course, Calamity Jane may not be considered critically a heroine, but she and other violent women in the dime novels are allowed status through devices revealing the lingering influence of Cooper's social conventions. Sometimes the woman's violent role is found to be only a disguise, or, like Calamity Jane, she is in the end shown to be capable of dropping her western lingo for the faultless English of an eastern school.

None topped Buffalo Bill Code, the prince of all dime novel heroes. The first story dealing with him, *Buffalo Bill, King of the Bordermen*, was published by the firm of Street and Smith, but the author, Edward Z. C. Judson (alias Ned Buntline), subsequently wrote nearly two hundred Buffalo Bill novels for Beadle and Adams. Buntline was not alone, Prentiss Ingraham wrote nearly as many. In these stories
Buffalo Bill is skilled in techniques of wilderness survival, "the greatest scout of the West," and he is uncharacteristically temperate in food and drink.

Honor motivated all his actions. Whether rescuing white women from dastardly attacks by Indians or protecting other women's virtue by vows of high purpose. As the number of novels grew, the fictitious details multiplied and Buffalo Bill's exploit in the service of honor became more and more daring, just as his flair for customs burgeoned from embroidered silk shirts and buckskin pants to black velvet and gold braid.

William Frederick Cody was himself such a showman, such a ham actor, that he did his best to live the role in which the dime novel had cast him. His experience had included plenty of raw materials for histrionics. As a boy he had worked on the supply train of the army's expedition against the Mormons. He tramped to the Colorado gold rush and rode for the Pony Express. He scouted for the army in campaigns against Comanches, Sioux, Kiowas, and practically every other plains tribe. His nickname from a job-hunting buffalo to feed railroad construction gangs. In 1872, he hit his stride as actor and producer in a play, *Scout of the Plains*, by his friend Ned Buntline. His Wild West show was organized in 1883, and by then Buffalo Bill was national hero. The Wild West Show was the dime novel western come to life. The characters of one merged into the cast of the other. Illusions of the novels became flesh and blood, and Buffalo Bill was Great White Father
with flowing hair and velvet breeches on the Great White Horse.

By the turn of the century, and certainly after Wister published *The Virginian* in 1902; the basic pattern of the western story was set. But its popularity had only begun. Street and Smith had started their monthly pulp magazines; which simply took the story pattern from the dime novel and broke them into groups of monthly installments. In any listing of the progeny of the dime novel. Zane Grey must certainly be accorded a high rank. Grey, a bored New York dentist, published his first book in 1903 but did not hit his real stride till 1912 with *Riders of the Purple Sage*. Lassiter, the cowboy hero, rescues his love from Mormon perfidy and takes her to a secret canyon where nature enfold them in its embrace. The book has sold at least 1.8 million copies. Grey wrote fifty-four Westerns, including *The Thundering Herd* and *The code of the West*. In one twenty year period his sales topped seventeen million copies.

The motion picture picked up the theme of the Western with as much gusto as had the dime novel. Indeed it is hard to imagine the history of the film without the western. *The Great Train Robbery* of 1903, one of the earliest full-length narratives, coupled forever the motion picture and the western hero. Edward S. Porter, its producer was probably aware that the Union Pacific train crossing Wyoming in 1900 had been held up by a well-known group of bandits, the Wild Bunch. He made his film, though, two thousand miles away, in New Jersey on the tracks of the Delaware and Lackawanna, and it therefore
may be considered, like the lithographs of Currier and Ives, and eastern interpretation of western history. In The Great Train Robbery came the first close-up in film history, and it was, interestingly enough, of a westerner pointing his gun straight at the audience. Porter made other westerns, including Rescue from and Eagle's Nest, in which a baby is stolen by an eagle and taken to its eyrie high a top a peak in the Rockies. The heroic father must scale the mountain and then do battle with the villainous bird to save his child.

The first identifiable film star who assumed the mantle of the western hero was Branco Billy Anderson. During a few years after 1908 Branco Billy started in nearly five hundred short westerns, which drew freely on yellowing dime novels for their plots. In this same period, just before World War I, David W. Griffith directed the first of his western landmarks, The Last Drop of Water and Fighting Blood. In the early 1920's William S. Hart worked with Griffith to bring epic qualities to the western. The best example was Tumbleweeds, in which the Oklahoma land rush became a spectacle in the best tradition of the Wild West show. The genre was ready for the showmanship of Tom Mix, who was as clever as Buffalo Bill at thrilling audiences. Mix, like Cody, held western credential of his own. An Army man, cowboy, marshal, Texas Ranger, and rodeo star, he moved naturally through films such a Chips of the Flying “U” and Sky High.

The 1920's also saw the emergence of Gary Cooper, who in movies like Nevada and Fighting Caravans used the stories of Zane
Grey rather Branco Billy Anderson’s films and capitalized on dime novels. Perhaps Cooper’s most memorable role was as the greatest western hero of them all, *The Virginian*, a film made in 1929, Walter Huston played Trampas, and the classic shoot-out between the two could be heard as well as seen, for the film was one of the first with sound. Off and on for nearly thirty years Cooper continued to play western roles in *The Plainsman* (he played Wild Bill Hickok), 1937; *The Cowboy and the Lady*, 1939, *The Western*, 1940; *The Unconquered*, 1947; *Distant Drums*, 1951; to mention a few. In one of his last great western, *High Noon*, the climax was nearly identical to a corresponding scene in *The Virginian*, which Cooper had immortalized thirty years earlier.

During and after 1940’s John Ford placed his stamp on film westerns. By then the form had grown sophisticated enough to adapt subtly to a director’s changing philosophy. In early films like, *My Darling Clementine*, *Wagon Master*, and the first version of stagecoach could be read Ford’s feeling that the West had worked a good influence on white character and that the Indian was a bloodthirsty Savage. But a far different note emerged after 1950’s in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Violence*, *The Two Rode Together*, and *Cheyenne Autumn*. Ford’s views of Indian culture had softened, and his attitude toward the white frontiersman had soured.

A less romantic approach to American pat may explain the rise in the 1960’s of tongue-in-cheek westerns like *Cat Ballon*, *Butch Cassidy and The Sun Dance Kid*, and *Little Big Man*. Even though tarnished, the
basic themes of the western, self-reliant individualism and personal honor, nevertheless remained in destructible in these films.

The Western became America’s national epic and the westerner the national hero. The modern nation-sate requires that its people be aware of some uniqueness in their past, something that sets them apart from other nationalities and unifies discordant group within the population. The western story dealt with an experience to which all regions of the country could relate. The Civil War was also a shared event, but the western avoided the divisiveness of that conflict. Neither North nor South could embrace a symbol springing from the history of other, but both could cherish an embodiment of the frontier like the cowboy. For a variety of sound historical reasons the western theme was right for a national epic. The Federal government, like a mother had created the West – first by fighting wars of expansion and then by nourished and protected the area through army exploration, subsidies for transportation, encouragement of the settlement, and the general promotion of economic development. Eventually the nation turned to its matured offspring for the symbol that would hold its other parts together.

Part of the explanation for the appeal of westerns may well lie in the psychological realm. The strongman character carrying a gun could have role of women broadened in the twentieth century, both men and women looked with nostalgia to an unquestionably male-dominated society. The masculine world of the cowboy has attracted adolescents
rebelling against the authoritarian controls of their childhood. The western cult of masculinity thus in several ways might be explained in terms of the modern psyche.

New themes have crept into the stories, the hardship and monotony of western life as in Tom Lea’s *Wonderful Country* the irresponsibly shiftlessness of frontiersmen as in H. L. D. Davis *Honey in the Horn*, the psychological of violence as in Walter Van Tilburg Clark’s *The Ox-Bow Incident*. But these are only sophisticated glosses on the basic code of the West. In the final scene of the movie *Shane*, little Joey cries out to his departing hero, growing small against the magnificent Teton speaks, “come back, Shane; Shane come back”. William S. Hart watching his friends a cattle herd running off at the approach of Oklahoma settlers, in tones solemnly “Boys, it’s the last of the West”. And the Gary Cooper closed his Television memorial “The Real West” with a soft nostalgic thought. How wonderful to start the whole westward movement over again. Through each character a majority of the American people called symbolically for a return to the sense of boundless natural power with which the legendary western heroes were so well endowed, for a rebirth trust in the individual’s inner truth and certitude, which the Virginian so confidently held, and for a recurrence of the western’s predictable situations in which violent action would Usher in the triumph of personal honor.

The West, of course, from the point of view of the transforming image has not become, it is hot one thing or image. As always, it is
continually becoming. Transformations of sense are never static; they both produce and accompany the major cultural shifts. Transformation of power, on the other hand, are pride of stasis the image of an arrested and frozen status quo, sold and consumed not for power, in a quest to establish of conscious manipulators. No doubt, the West is disputed ground in a struggle for power, in a quest to establish it is a permanent refuge for, say, political conservation and economic entrenchment, but it also much more as it continues in the endless process of cultural becoming.

In many important ways, the entire west in these times reflects a posture of status quo, of the west as last refuge of freedom and right living. Proposals associated with industry and national defense have united westerners across a broad socioeconomic-religious spectrum against the federal government. Old forms of folklore used for millennia to deal with and thus transform the landscape are now being used in different. For instance, a traditional phenomenon many would associate with the West and westerners is the hanging of slain predatory wild life such as, predatory wild life such as, Coyotes, hawks, bobcats on barbed wore fence. However, such practice is archaic. Ancient people hung the skins of certain animals on trees that marked the boundaries of their sacred groves, place of worship. One trespassing on ground made sacred by these markers committed a sacrilege “analogues to profane person’s entrance into a sacred forest or template.”46
Greek of the classical period were deeply concerned with means of protection for garden, mainly herb garden, and this concern moved actually to medieval England where elaborate preoccupations against the elements and their dangers were taken by the English. Very often, these protective measures involved hanging predatory wildlife, in part or whole, from fences surroundings the garden. 48

This practice in form at least, probably moved from England to America and thence to the West. While there is latent belief that dead Coyotes on western fences, usually hung head-down and sometime badly mutilated, will protect what the fence encloses, sheep perhaps, by warning other Coyotes away, the import of this act I believe, has accrued meanings other than it had archaically. In the past the act was pre establishment, highly spiritual protective of the norms of culture. While a different community is being protected today, the predators are hung in open defiance of the establishment against laws that limit or forbid the killing of such animals. And one level, at least the cat is devoid of spiritual significance. That is, the purpose of such display assumes another focus. Archaically, it affirmed the culture verities for the sake of the culture itself; the validation was internalized and consumed by the culture exclusively for its own sake. This exclusive sense of community was visible within the circle of cultural validation, evidently, it did not move outward to either engulf or negate transforming images of other peoples. Today, however, the cat is a portrayed of violent defiance, a defiance that certainly affirms the group
and keep it encircled by an aura of its own belief. The variant here has as all “variants” experience, been transformed into an image of the culture. But the home-place is the place of vengeance, and as the vengeance is directed towards alien and therefore threatening institutions, it both affirms the culture and destroys the chaos of alien institutions. This is not a problem of paradox, of affirming and denying simultaneously, but a problem of posture, through which a tenet of folk belief, an image of transformation, through its portrayed of violence, affirms the community in its own sense, in its own ardor.

Nonetheless, the practice is a persistent form of folklore and does embody assumptions about the landscape, much of its owned by federal government, that the land belongs to those who live by and use it and that the federal government had better not tamper with private affairs. The god of the Western landscape today, on the mainstream cultural, level, is one of political conservatism and blacklash against the federal government, this however, is also a mystique, a way of perceiving the landscape through folk belief.

Westerners assume the land a possession because that is the meaning the chaos of wilderness must now assume in order to be comprehended. The West remains enigmatic. Its spaces can never be taken for granted. Desert, mountain, the lack or abundance of rainfall, all continue to demand a transformation by culture. The terror of these enigmatic spaces is alleviated only as the spaces are converted to a culture, to a transformation of sense, and the essence of folk belief is the
Vehicle cultures use to remake a landscape into a pleasant image of themselves. We have been slow to understand transformations, slow to move away from the ordered illusion of index and archive to the vibrant belief in living contest. Slow to substitute "collection" and "field trip" with a careful scrutiny, a felt scrutiny, of why cultures do what they do, assume what they seem to assume.

Speaking of the cultural transformation, Cavetti affirms that what we learn from considering the essence of transformations is what it means fro the Bushman "to think of a creature other than himself."49 As this study shown, what he thinks of, culturally, is the image of his own people, their institutions of becoming. What he feels is a sensation in his head when he is going to cut off the springbok's horns. What he seems to feel is a cultural image, in all of its uses and movements, speaks a cultural dialect. What the Bushman thinks of when we thinks of a creature other than himself it himself, is the image his culture has provided of the meaning and place of natural things. Such natural things assume a culturally dictated meaning reflecting the hierarchical values of the system. What the Bushman as individual, as existential essence, feels and knows we may scarcely discover. But we know what his culture feels to knows by experiencing the images of transformation, chaos becomes an ordered image of the culture that transforms it.

In the language of folklore, from earliest times until now, the landscape had been endowed with a human, a cultural, meaning, has been personified in myriad ways, simply because the land itself has no
human meaning. Cultures can deal with the west only when it assumes a meaning the culture dictates. That is how life is lived and made meaningful, through and within a cultural transformation. Edward Abbey’s thoughtful, probing, “undressing”, the West of its cultural mores and attitudes, if that ever possible has led to the realization that the desert says nothing, that it is completely passive is acted upon but never acts, invites not love but contemplation, and finally, therefore, has no hear, presents a riddle with no answer, the riddle being merely and illusion. This tough stance seems remarkably sound and existentially honest, yet it eludes, and perhaps ignores the stolid, pervasive practices of belief, the dusty philosophy of Western Cultures that says the landscape has meaning only when it looks like, the precious image of my face reflected in every crevice and rise of a landscape called western.
THE CANADIAN FRONTIER
Section - II

Canada under the French regime was a small colony, seemingly of little importance in the greater world of European civilization in an age of imperial expansion. Its population at its conquest by Great Britain in 1760 was only some seventy thousand, yet the French in North America for over half a century dominated the larger part of the continent, from the sub-Arctic wastes to the Gulf of Mexico.

The frontier of this colony, for a variety of reasons, bore little resemblance to that of the English colonies. To a considerable extent the geography of the continent, the physical environment, accounted for this difference, but marked disparity in social values and institutions was also an important factor. The Canadian frontier is deserves study because it had many interesting aspects peculiar to it. It also serves, by way of contrast, to throw light in an oblique way on the frontier experience of the English colonies. These tow European peoples, occupying adjacent areas, sharing much in common, in some respects reacted in the same way to their environment, but in others they reacted in markedly different ways.

In fact it not an attempt to confirm or refute the Turner's thesis. It seeks to define the term frontier in Canadian context, to discover the motives of those who peopled it, to define what they brought to the frontier and what effects the frontier experience had on them.
collectively. It has been quite impossible, given the imposed limitations on length, to provide a general history of New France as background, many important aspects had to be ignored or dealt with summarily, but an attempt was made to include enough to keep the events on, and the influence of, the frontier in a meaningful context.

Before undertaking any frontier study, it is essential to know; frontier of what? In Canada under the French regime, as in other European colonies in the Americas, the frontier can be defined as the outer limits if European civilization. Its was a manifestation of the so called expansion of Europe that begun in the fifteen century and continued for over four hundred years, until European civilization to do so. Only in the past half century has the tide of this advance been turned. How far the retreat will go remains to be seen.

This great wave of European expansion is frequently attributed to the new spirit of individualism released by the forces that accompanied the epoch known as the Renaissance. It may well be that the movement was an outgrowth of this spirit, but to be more specific one has to examine the motives of the Europeans who were willing to venture across uncharted oceans to conquer unknown lands against in calculable odds. Their motives were fourfold. The European had, first, an avid desire for recognition and fame, to distinguish himself among his fellows and achieve a higher social status, to acquire those intangible qualities that the French refer to as a Lag Lorie, seconds, an insatiable curiosity, a thirst for knowledge, to know what is on the other
side of a mountain, around the next bend in a river, on the other planets, third, highly developed acquisitive and competitive instincts, a desire to acquire more of the world’s goods than his neighbor, an inability to accept what he had, no matter how much, as enough; fourth a marked intolerance in religious beliefs, the conviction that his particular branch of Christian Church possessed the only true faith and that all peoples everywhere should be converted to it, that those who resisted thereby merited extermination, or, at best, a lifetime of servitude to further the aims of Christians.

These attitudes were clearly defined by Samuel de Champlain, one of the more intrepid agents of European expansion, when he wrote in the preface to his journal, published in 1613.

Among all the most useful and admirable arts, that of navigation has always seemed to me to hold the first place; for more hazardous it is and the more attended by innumerable dangers and shipwrecks, so much the more is it esteemed and exalted above all others, being in no way suited to those who lack courage and resolution. Through this art we gain knowledge of different countries, regions and kingdom; through it we attract and bring into our countries all kinds of riches; through it the idolatry of paganism is overthrown and Christianity proclaimed in all parts of the earth. 51

Such then, were the dominant motives that brought the French to North America to establish, first commercial bases, then missionary outposts, and eventually permanent settlements.
In early Canada it is possible to distinguish four types of frontier: commercial, religious, settlement, and military. Yet they were all part of one frontier, and this one frontier embraced the entire area, not merely the outer fringes of the territory in North America controlled by France. Thus the Canadian frontier was markedly different, in nature and historical development, from that of the English colonies to the south. The frontier of these latter colonies and of the republic that eventually developed out of them, was basically a settlement frontier that advanced steadily westward in a roughly distinguishable, if very irregular, line marked by cleared land, a frontier constantly in contact and usually in conflict with the original inhabitants, the Indians. The Canadian frontier, on other hand, consists of a main base on a river that gave easy access to the heart of the continent, and several smaller bases, or outposts, far in the interior but dependent on the main base, which in turn was dependent on the mother country, France. The settlements of the main base, along a stretch of the St. Lawrence River between Quebec and Montreal, were a relatively narrow ribbon backing on to inhabited virgin wilderness. Unlike the situation in English colonies, the back areas of these settlements could be regarded as a frontier in only a very limited sense, but they were part of the much larger Canadian frontier.

If the Anglo American frontier is accepted as the norm, then Canada can hardly be said to have had a frontier at all. Rather, it can be said to have been a metropolises beginning to develop in the West at
such points as Detroit and Michilimackinac, and in the Illinois country. When Louisiana was established at the beginning of the eighteenth century, it quickly became a metropolis in its own right, competing with Canada for control of the entire hinterland south of the Great Lakes. To the east, Acadia developed along somewhat different lines. It served, at one and the same time, as a border march in the defensive system of Canada, as a base for the French and Anglo-American fishing industries as a French agricultural settlement, as a base for missionary and fur trade activities, and as a hinterland of the rival metropolises, Canada and New England. It was, in fact, an area of overlapping imperial systems. In 1813 the main settled region was ceded to England, and from then on the areas remaining to France served as little more than a buffer zone protecting the approaches to Canada.

Geography dictated the pace and nature of European expansion in the frontier of the colonizing powers. When the continent is approached from Europe, there are only four main entryways into the interior: Hudson Bay and St. Lawrence, Hudson and Mississippi rivers. France gained control of the St. Lawrence and Mississippi, England of Hudson Bay and the Hudson River. At Hudson Bay the English made no attempt to establish settlements or to move inland; they maintained only a few commercial posts, supplied from England, where they waited for the Indians to come to them to trade. Farther South, close behind the area settled by the English along the Atlantic seaboard, the
rugged mass of the Appalachian mountain chain blocked river communications and easy access to the western interior. The only major gap in this barrier is the valley of the Hudson and Mohawk River leading to Lake Ontario, and by way of the Great Lakes to the western plains. This route was, however, effectively barred to the English by the confederacy of the five Iroquois nations, who formed the most powerful military force in the region until the eighteenth century. By the time the English were ready to expand to the southwest, the French had established themselves in their new colony of Louisiana, properly to block them.

In the English colonies the frontier was perforce the line of settlement created by axe and plow as settlers move steadily westward away from the seaboard. In their wake the forest was cut down, the animal and human life it sustained killed or driven further west. In some areas Anglo American fur traders served as an advance guard of this destructive movement, but their numbers were relatively few. In short, the Anglo American frontierman was potential settle, the enemy and destroyer of the frontier forestland and its denizens.

The development of the Canadian frontier and the relations of the Canadians to it were in marked contrast to this situation. The St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers and the Great Lakes gave the Canadians easy and direct access to the interior of the continent. The Canadians could travel with relative ease from their base in the St. Lawrence valley all the way to the Gulf of Mexico, north to Hudson Bay, or due west to
the Rocky Mountains. Throughout the lands along these water routes, supplies of food were easily obtained. Game and fish abounded, corn-raising Indian tribes were eager to exchange food and furs for European goods in the southern half of the continent, and on the northern plains the great buffalo herd provided adequate food. Along these waterways, there was no barrier to westward progress of the Canadians until the Rocky Mountains were reached. They reached the shadow, at least, of the cordillera before the Anglo Americans had managed to struggle across the Alleghenies.

Rivers by themselves however are not enough. A means to transportation is required, and here again the Canadians had a marked advantage over their Anglo American and English rivals. The Indian’s birch bark canoe was capable of carrying heavy loads, was light enough to be carried around river obstructions such as rapids by one or two men, and was manufactured entirely from material readily available in the Canadian forest. The larger white birch trees that provided the essential sheets of bark for the outer shell of the canoe grew abundantly in the St. Lawrence valley and thee lands along the north shore of the Great Lakes, but to the south and north of this white region the white birch of adequate size was scarce. The Iroquois and Anglo-Americans, when they could not obtain Canadian canoe, had to make do with canoes made of elm bark, or with dugouts, which were not nearly as serviceable. Similarly, the men at the Hudson’s Bay Company posts were gravely handicapped by both the lack of canoes and skilled canoe
men until well into the nineteenth century, when they devised a practical alternative, the York boat. 53

Although the French had the physical means to penetrate into the interior, they could do so only with the agreement of the Indian nations. As long as the Indians received benefits and saw no threat to their own interests, they allowed the French to establish trading posts, and even a few settlements, on their lands. But to the end of the French regime, these posts and settlements were tiny islands, with a handful of men, amid a much larger population of Indians, who regarded the land as theirs. In some areas the French had better relations with the Indians, than did the Anglo-Americans, but this was by no means universal. For the French, good relation with the Indians were absolutely essential for commercial, religious and political reasons; for the Anglo-Americans, however these motives were not so dominant. Frequently the interests of the English settlers and the Indians were in direct conflict. This was particularly true on the eastern frontier, as the population of New England expanded and encroached upon the Indian’s hunting grounds. In the West, the greed of Anglo-Americans for land did not constitute a serious threat to the move powerful Indian nations until near the end of French regime.

Ironically, French relations with the Indians were initially the same as were later to be those of the English. When, in the first half of the sixteenth century, the French attempted to establish settlements in St. Lawrence Valley, the attitude of the resident Indian tribes changed
rapidly from friendliness, to suspicion, to open hostility. This in no smaller measure contributed to the abandonment of the attempts by Jacques Cartier and Jean-Francois de la Rocque, Sieur de Roberval, to found colonies in St. Lawrence Valley in 1541. By the beginning of the next century this relationship had changed radically for the better. In the intervening years Iroquois tribes that had occupied the area between present day Quebec and Montreal had departed, and no other sedentary tribes had settled in the vacant territory. It was, in fact, an unoccupied buffer zone between the Iroquois and Montagnais nations. Thus, when the French finally established their settlements in the St. Lawrence Valley, they did not have to dispossess the Indians. Moreover, the northern Algonkin nations welcomed the French, who were able to supply them with European weapons for use against their Iroquois foes of the south and the Sioux in the West. In exchange they gave furs, which had not been highly valued in Cartier’s day, but which now enabled the French to realize substantial profits on the European market.

By the early seventeenth century the French had established a close commercial alliance with the Algonkin nations and their allies, the Huron. This led, inevitably, to a military alliance, and the French were obliged to commit themselves to active military support of their commercial partners against the Iroquois. These in turn obtained European weapons from first the Dutch then English, who by this time were established along the Hudson River. What had begun in the
distant past as intermittent war between Indian nations armed with weapons of wood, bone, and stone, waged in a fashion more akin to blood sport than to war as European knew it, rapidly developed into a struggle between the rival imperial system of the European powers. In the beginning the French had been drawn into the struggle between Alognkin and Iroquois as auxiliary troops, but the roles were soon reversed and the Indians nations became mere pawns in the larger European power struggle. Yet always they sought to play the French and English off against each other, supporting the side that seemed best serve their interests and only for as long as this condition obtained.

Commerce was not the only motive the French had for maintaining good relations the northern Indians. Religion was also an important factor. Within a few years of the establishment of a small commercial base at Quebec in 1608, French missionaries had began their work far in the interior, among the Huron at Georgian Bay. These men, Recollets and Jesuits alike, had only one aim, to save the souls of the Indians by converting them to Christianity. To this end they lived among them, learned their languages, devoted themselves completely, and on occasion sacrificed their lives. Hero was a unique type of frontier, a religious frontier of the mind these intellectuals, products of the highly civilized Baroque Age, heirs of Greece and Rome, medieval Christianity, the Renaissance, and the Catholic Reformation, struggle in a savage wilderness environment to impose their very sophisticated concepts and values on the North Americans of the Stone Age, who
already had religious beliefs that sufficed very well for their needs. At first the missionaries sought to assimilate the Indians into French civilization, but failed. Too many of the Indian seemed to acquire only the worst traits of the French layman they encountered; and conversely, too many of French showed a marked aptitude for adapting Indian mores that were quite contrary to Christian teaching. The missionaries therefore strove to keep the Indians and French laymen apart in order to protect their charges from the debasing effects of too close contact with Europeans.\textsuperscript{55}

Yet missionary activity, commerce and imperialism inevitably became closely intertwined, as all three depended upon the Indians to achieve their aims. Among the western tribes, wherever the missionaries established their Chapels, French fur traders also had their trading posts. So that control might be exercised over both Indian allies and the French traders, military commanders with garrison troops were appointed to the main posts in the 1680's.\textsuperscript{56} In this fashion French authority was extended over the interior of the continent. Policies were enunciated and orders issued by the king and the minister of marine at Versailles, sent to the governor general and the intendant at Quebec, and passed on by them to the officers commanding the western posts. The missionaries, too, were pressed into the service of the French crown, serving as liaison officers and intelligence agents, passing information back to Quebec and relaying orders to the post commanders.\textsuperscript{57} By these means the write of the king of France ran for
Thousands of miles into the far reaches of the North American Wilderness.

But it could hardly be said that the French occupied the West of the junction of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence rivers were trading and missionary posts, the closest being hundreds of miles away from the central colony. In between was virgin wilderness. By the eighteenth century a few of the posts, at Detroit and in the Illinois's country, had developed to the point where some of the land was being settled to provide food for the men at the posts and the traders who traveled along trade empire. For the most part, however, the trading posts were a few long huts, perhaps surrounded by a stockade, with a small garden for growing vegetables, on a riverbank near an Indian village.

Although the men who traveled to these western posts and beyond, referred to as Coureurs de bois in the seventeenth century and as voyageurs in the eighteenth, are legendary figures in Canadian history, we do not much about them. A great deal of research needs to be done to discover who they were, the true role they played in the history of the period, the changes wrought to them by their way of life, and the changes they wrought to Canadian society. Many of them. Perhaps most, were illiterate, and only a very few committed anything to paper that has survived. We know them mainly from the comments of their contemporaries, for the most part in the reports of royal officials and missionaries, who deplored their way of life, yet found them indispensable at times. We know that in 1714 there were reputed to be
at least two hundred of them who did nothing else during their entire active lives, made them all too prone, rendered them incapable of paddling from sunrise to sunset and carrying backbreaking loads over an infinity of portages. How many others in the colony made the occasional trip to west for adventure, to a mass of a few hundred livers, or just to get away from their wives for a while, we do not know.

From the comments of contemporary observers, these men appear to have a unique blend of French and Indian, wearing Indian dress, traveling like Indians, eating the same sort of food, speaking their languages, making war in the Indian manner, living off the land and enduring privation with the fortitude of the Indian. Many of them took Indian girls for wives, and in the Indian fashioned, changed them as fancy dictated, the gambled away their hand–earned profits as did the Indians, and gloried in their physical prowess. In short, they embodied the antithesis of middleclass virtues. What the Indians thought of them, we can only guess from negative evidence, most likely the accepted them as equals, for that they were. The missionaries, however, were aghast at their adoption alike of Indian virtues and vices, and some of the royal officials expressed alarm at the effect they had on colonial society.

In the late seventeenth century as French officer in the Troupes de la Marine described them in these terms:

"The Peddlers call’d Coureurs de Bios, export from hence every year several canows full of Merchandise, which they dispose of among all the Savage Nations of the continent,
by way of exchange for Beavers-skis seven or eight days ago. I saw twenty-five or thirty of these canows return with heavy Cargoes; each canows was manag'd by two or three Men, and carry's twenty hundred weight, i.e. forty packs of Beaver Skins, which are worth as hundred Crowns a piece. These canows had been a year and eighteen months out. You would be amaz'd if you saw how lewd these Peddlers are when return; how they Feast and Game, and how prodigal they are, not only in their cloths but upon women. Such of 'em as are married, have the wisdom to retire to our East-Indian-Men, and Pirates are wont to do; for they Lavish, Eat, Drink, and Play all way as long as the Goods hold out; and when these are gone, they e'en sell their Embroidery, their Lace, and their cloths. This done, they are forc'd to go upon a New voyage for Subsistence. 59

The Canadian frontiernmen were an entirely different breed from the frontiernmen of the English colonies. They made no attempt to destroy the wilderness, because their way of life required its preservation. They were much more akin to the seamen of New England than to the Anglo-American carrying their goods to distant posts to exchange them for return cargoes of furs, just as New England seamen sailed to ports in Europe, Africa, and the West Indies, to exchange fish, rum, and timber for sugar, slaves, or manufactured goods. The New England men did not occupy the Atlantic, nor did the Canadians occupy the western wilderness; they merely established factories at remoter points to collect the local produce and make it ready for the return journey to Montreal.
In contrast to the English colonies where the frontier became ever more remote from the settled areas along the seaboard, Canada was part and parcel of an all-pervasive frontier, for all the houses in the colony had the river at their doorstep and along it came the men of the wilderness, French and Indian alike, bringing the values and customs of the wilderness into the homes.

In the English colonies, as the frontier of settlement moved farther West, the restraints of civilized society weakened and the authority of the colonial governments became more difficult to maintain until it was almost nonexistent. Similarly, the absence of an educated clergy on this a frontier did much to weaken the bonds of civilized behaviour. The frontier settlers, if they paid any heed to religion at all, depended on individual interpretation of the Bible, which in itself amounted to a rejection of authority. As long as they were able to control events, they needed to obey only the dictates of self-interest; but when they encountered hostile forces that they could not master, they immediately appealed for help to the colonial authorities. These authorities remote from the dangers and problems of the frontier, frequently failed to respond, thereby creating hostility between the two sections.

Again the Canadian experience was different. The Canadian frontiermen, although frequently out of the colony, many of them for years at a time, did make trips back to the central colony. The always retained some ties with civilization, and while they were in the West,
the officers at the main posts and the missionaries exercised some
degree of restraining influence over them. Although many of the
Coureurs de Bios paid little heed to authority most of the time, all were
aware to how they were expected to conduct themselves. They might
honor the King's edicts and the canons of the Church in the breach
rather than in the observance, but if their conduct became to notorious
they had to reckon on the possibility of one day being brought to
account.61 Moreover, they were always a minority among the Indian
nations and dependent on them to a large degree. In their own self-
interest, they dared not behave in too offensive a manner. Any who did
endangered not only themselves but also other Canadian, perhaps the
entire French position in a vast area.

The Anglo-American frontier settler, by comparison, felt no such
restraint in his relation with the Indians. To him, they were merely
savages whom he despised feared, and wished removed from the lands
he coveted.62 The Canadian needed the Indians to provide goods and
services, they were commercial partners; but the Anglo-American saw
the Indians merely as an obstacle to progress to be exterminated as
quickly as possible. On this point then nineteenth century American
historian Francis Parkman commented:

The English borderers regarded the Indians
less as men than as vicious and dangerous
wild animals. In fact, the benevolent and
philanthropic view of the American savage is
for those who are beyond his reach: it has
never yet been held by any whose wives and
children have lived in danger of his scapling-
knife. 63

As with so much in Parkman's histories of New France, this was a half-truth "benevolent and philanthropic," but the Canadian had suffered heavily in their wars with the Iroquois, and they did manifest, in variety of ways, considerable respect for these particular nations. The eighteenth century Jesuit historian Father Charlevoix was closer to the truth when he wrote:

The British Americans..............do not humor the savages, because they see no need to do so. The French youth, on the contrary...get along well with the natives, whose esteem they easily win in war and whose friendship they always earn. 64

Given this marked difference in frontier experience, what effect did the peculiarly Canadian conditions have on the central colony? In what ways did the Canadian frontier affect French culture and institutions in the settled communities? In studying this question one might begin with what French brought with them from France, then note any departure from the culture and institutional practice of France. And here great care has to be exercised, for some quite radical changes were made by the French government in the institutions brought to Canada. This was particularly true in the administrative machinery and in the administration of justice. Reforms that the government could not make in France owing to the resistance of powerful vested interest were made
in Canada. It would therefore be wrong to attribute these particular changes to Canadian conditions, that is, to the frontier environment. Little significant changed occurred in the structure and working of the Church, only minor variations in methods to suit local conditions. In secular society, however, some, market changes occurred, setting in Canadian people apart as quite distinct from people of the same social class in France as in the English colonies. By the end of the seventeenth century a unique Canadian individual and a unique form of the society had developed. To a large degree it was environment, the frontier experience that brought this about.

One aspect of two developments was made very plain in the military field. When the long-drawn-out struggle between England and France for imperial supremacy began in 1689, the Canadians were more than able to hold their own against the English colonies. They proved to be vastly superior to the Anglo-Americans in forest warfare, and the Indian nations for the most part favored the French. The devastating raids on the English border settlements bear witness to this. The attempts of the English colonies to conquer Canada all ended in failure, several large-scale expeditions had to be abandoned before they made contract with the foe owing to poor organization and general ineptitude. The French lost only part of Acadia, very weakly defended, in all this time. In the mid-eighteenth century, the rapid growth of population in the English colonies, doubling every generation, caused the pressure of their westward movement to increase immeasurably. As
long as French had to contend only with Anglo-American fur traders they could more than hold their own, but in the 1750’s a new element was introduced into the struggle, that of Anglo-American land speculators covetous of the Indians lands in Ohio Valley. Moreover, this time they could count on the full support of British military might. Thus began the final conflict between the two types of frontier, the fur trade and military frontier of the French, and the advancing land settlement frontier of the Anglo-Americans.

During the first three years after hostilities began in 1754, the French almost brought certain of the northern and central colonies to their knees, their governors were reduced to pleading with the imperial government to make a peace.65 It was not the Anglo-American frontiersmen or the provincial troops that ultimately conquered, after six long years of hostilities, by the Royal Navy and British regular soldiers. Although these troops initially suffered disastrous defeats, they eventually mastered the art of forest warfare. When the Indian allies of the French defected, the British were able to gain the upper hand in the West, and the tactical blunders of the French command enabled them to take Quebec. Once the French forts in the West and colony’s seaport were captured, the Canadian military commercial empire collapsed. This made abundantly plain tenacious French control of the interior had been.

After the conquest, the British found themselves obliged to adapt the old western policy on the French. They now sought to bar the area
West of the Alleghenies to settlements by the Anglo-American frontiersmen and to preserve the Indians fur trade frontier. But eventually the British were swept aside by the Americans and their new - found allies, the French. The Frontier of settlement then surged forward and the old Canadian frontier was finally submerged.
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52. On the concept of the metropolis in Canadian history, the article by J. M. S. Careless, *Frontierism, Metropolitanism and

53. R. Glover, The Difficulties of the Hudson's Bay Company's Penetration of the West, The Canadian Historical Review, vol. XXIX (September, 1948), pp. 240-254; Adolph B. Benson (ed.) Peter Kalm's, Travels in North America 2 vols. (New York, 1966), vol. I, pp. 362-365, 373. Kalm discusses the relative merits of the Canadian canoes and those used by the New York settlers. The York boats, built of pine with a 28 foot keel, was flat bottomed, sharp propped, side bow and stern sharply angled, propelled by oars and sail, such a boat cost L 20 to L 25, was manned by from eight to twelve voyageurs, carried a cargo of 3 tons, was easily carried or dragged over a portage, and would last two seasons.


56. The first such appointments were made by Governor General Le Febvre de la Barre in 1684, Morel de la Durantaye being appointed to command at Michilimackinac and the Chevalier de Baugy at St. Louis des Illinois.


61. For example of Coureurs de bois being brought to book for misbehavior, see Le Gardeur de St. Pierre a Beauharnois, Fort

