

**The Queenston Heights / Village of Queenston /
Landscape of Nations Memorial Landscape
and the
Brock University / Decew House / First Nations Peace
Monument Memorial Landscape
In Collective Memory
And Reconciliation**

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Introduction

“A monument in its oldest and most original sense is a human creation, erected for the specific purpose of keeping single human deeds or events (or a combination thereof) alive in the minds of future generations” (Riegl, 1982). This matters, as

through memory, internal selves have connected with external environments, pasts with presents, random experiences with unconscious routines. Memory has connected us with the larger world on many levels, linking the lived with the folkloric, the children of tomorrow with the ancestors of yesteryear, the personal lives of individuals with the shared experience of the collective

(Zelizer, 1995; p. 214)

Perched high on the brink of the Niagara escarpment, 16 km apart as the crow flies, sit two war memorial landscapes. Each is dominated by a massive structure dedicated to General Sir Isaac Brock. The main thrust of these war memorial landscapes, a monument and a university, built over a century apart, is to honour General Brock and his contribution to the defence of Upper Canada during the War of 1812. In the landscape surrounding each of these are physically less imposing but spiritually, emotionally, and historically significant monuments and commemorative structures as described elsewhere in this paper. The striking thing about these sites to an informed observer is the amount of coupling, or pairing, that is involved. Each of the sites has coupled Isaac Brock and Laura Secord memorials within them; the two memorial landscape sites themselves are coupled together with towering monuments to Brock and less imposing monuments to Laura Secord; the roads leading to each are coupled; each site has a new Native memorial that are coupled together; each of the

sites have coupled primary and secondary sites; each site is coupled again by a structure remaining from the War of 1812.

In this essay I will strive to place the coupled landscapes into a commemorative / memory studies context and show how these traditional war memorial landscapes have been transformed into sites of remembrance, peace, education, reconciliation, and healing.

Commemorative / Memory Studies Literature Review

In addition to providing a general discussion about collective memory, Zelizer (1995) asks a number of questions about individual and collective memories and then offers a series of premises to help understand how collective memory works. By answering some of these questions about the two memorial landscapes in general, and then their individual components in particular, and then applying some of the principles outlined in her premises to both the collective and individual components it is hoped that a greater understanding of these sites in relation to memory and commemorative studies can be achieved. For example, her discussion of memory and time (p. 222), combined with the question “for whom is the remembering being accomplished?” (p. 214) will illustrate very different discourses when applied to the initial Brock’s Monument of 1824 and the latest Landscape of Nation Memorial of 2016. In addition, her discussion of memory and space (p.223-224) will inform the linkage between the use of individual elements within each of the two memorial landscapes and the connections, both temporal and spatial, between the two. Blair, Dickinson, and Ott (2010) believe that “exploring the relations among rhetoric, memory, and place is of crucial importance to

understanding contemporary public culture” and that “memory places are rhetorical” (p. 1). Throughout the paper are concepts and ideas that apply specifically to the memorial landscapes under discussion. Both Zelizer (1995) and Blair and Michel (1999) discuss commemorative monuments, in particular those which “mark death, declare particular relationships between the commemorated and the living, offer a space in which a community may gather to acknowledge its loss and reaffirm its sense of collectivity, and suggest or even advocate a future for the community that is somehow linked to the lives or events commemorated” (p. 33-34). This paper will give a framework for discussion of both the deathscapes that are the *raisons d’être* for these memorial landscapes and of the monuments themselves. Nora (1989) talks about *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory, the tensions between history and memory, and that to create *lieux de mémoire* “there must be a will to remember” (p.19). Nora also talks of the material aspects of the *lieux de mémoire* such as statuary; topographical aspects “which owe everything to the specificity of their location and to being rooted in the ground – so for example, the conjunction of sites of tourism and centers of historical scholarship” (p.22) and “the very possibility of an invisible thread linking apparently unconnected objects” (p.23). This invisible thread will inform the theoretical discussion of my combination of the Brock University / Decew House / First National Peace Monument Memorial Landscape and the Queenston Heights / Village of Queenston / Landscape of Nations Memorial Landscape which are already grounded in common spiritualities, personalities, statuarities, and relics. Johnson (2002) is also concerned with the spatiality of public monuments, where “the spaces themselves constitute the meaning by becoming both a physical location and a sight-line of interpretation” (p.293) and further expands on Nora’s works.

Davidson (2014) narrows the discussion to focus on war memorial landscapes in particular, the “less recognized memorial types” which consist of “any green space associated with or surrounding a war memorial structure” (Davidson, 2014, p. 58).

Tilden (1977) discusses the interpretation of heritage sites; including the inscriptions on monuments and the use of informational plaques which will tie in with the educational aspects of the sites, in particular the two First Nations memorials that will be discussed.

Background

In order to understand the significance of the two memorial landscapes and the routes connecting them, a basic understanding of the role of General Brock leading up to the War of 1812 is necessary, along with an overview of the Battle of Queenston Heights itself. It is not the intent of this paper to go into great detail about Brock’s background, the war, or the battle but rather to place the memorial landscapes into the literature of commemorative memory.

In addition to being the commander of British forces in Upper Canada (Ontario) Brock was also the President of the Executive Council. As such, he had organized and trained the militias and negotiated alliances with the Natives in the area. In August 1812, Brock with regular troops, militia, and Native allies had captured Fort Detroit, the Territory of Michigan, 2,500 American soldiers, and a large quantity of war material without firing a shot, using psychological warfare, including preying on the common American soldier’s fear of Native warriors (Dale, 2011; Turner, 2015). In the early morning hours of October 13, 1812, American forces invaded at Queenston, scaled the Heights using a small

path, and captured the redan battery located halfway up the hill. The redan battery was a small earthworks emplacement that held cannon that overlooked the villages of Queenston and Lewiston, New York, and the Niagara River that flows between the two. The redan battery's capture was key for the American invaders to successfully cross the river and invade Upper Canada.

Brock, stationed at Fort George, some 10km north of Queenston, rode on his horse, Alfred, to the sound of gunfire with his aides, leaving the rest of the troops to follow behind. Knowing the strategic importance of the redan battery, Brock gathered some of the scattered troops, and led a frontal assault on the battery. The attack was repulsed, and in the melee Brock suffered a fatal wound.

After Brock's death, his aide, Lt.-Col. Macdonell led another frontal attack while riding Alfred. Both were killed. Eventually, the American forces were pushed off Queenston Heights by an attack from the west side by British forces, including many Native warriors, led by Teyoninhokarawen, also known as John Norton, and one of his deputies, Ahyouwa'ehs (John Brant) both of whom would become influential figures later in the War of 1812 and afterward. The war cries of the Native warriors, and the boatloads of wounded soldiers being ferried back to Lewiston were instrumental in the refusal of the main American force to cross the river to reinforce the soldiers in the battle, and resulted in the attack being successfully repulsed 12 hours after it had started (Dale, 2011; Forest, 2012; Malcolmson, 2003; Misiak, 2012).

Collective Memory, Commemoration and Memorial Landscapes

Throughout this study reference will be made to the Queenston Heights / Queenston Village / Landscape of Nations Memorial Landscape and the Brock University / Decew House / Peace Monument Memorial Landscape. For ease of reference I will refer to them as the Queenston Site and the University Site respectively. Each of these memorial landscapes has separate elements coupled and threaded to each other in them, and are linked by roads (18 km) and walking trails (32 km) between the landscapes. Each of these elements will be addressed individually, but a more general discussion is in order to situate these memorial landscapes into a collective memory / memorialization context.

The Queenston Memorial Landscape Site

Queenston Heights is on the edge of the Niagara Escarpment overlooking the Village of Queenston, on the west bank of the Niagara River, where the American invasion force came ashore. At the south end of the village nestled against the base of the Escarpment is the Laura Secord Homestead, now a historic site, where Laura Secord overheard American plans for an attack on Beavertams in June, 1813. Laura's husband James had been wounded in the Battle of Queenston Heights. Close by the homestead at the very base of the Escarpment are three remembrances of the battle: a glass case with a plaque enclosing a statue of Brock's horse Alfred, an obelisk marking the spot where General Brock was killed, although modern scholarship puts the actual death site about 200 metres west of the obelisk (Malcolmson, 2003; p. 236), and just to the west of that a boulder with a plaque attached dedicated to the "Indians at

Queenston Heights.” A flagpole flying the Union Jack stands beside them. Partway up the Heights is the redan battery, with a replica cannon atop a wooden platform and an explanatory plaque. Nearby is a boulder with a commemorative plaque dedicated to Lt.-Col. John Macdonell, Brock’s aide-de-camp. Atop the heights to the main commemorative landscape occupying some forty acres (Malcolmson, 1996, p. 42) one comes across the gargantuan monument to General Brock. The monument, reminiscent of Nelson’s Column in London, is a massive structure with a stone base with a statue of a lion at each corner. A large statue of General Brock, arm outstretched and holding a sword tops a column which rises above the tombs of Brock and Macdonell inside the base. This is the second monument to Brock built on this landscape site. Co-opting the base of the first tower is a much smaller memorial, erected in 1910, to Laura Secord with an inscription describing her exploits and mentioning her husband, James who was wounded here. On the back of the monument some biographical information about James is inscribed, the only ‘common soldier’ mentioned by name at the site. References to James, who had no direct bearing on the story, reminds us of the patriarchal times in which the monument was erected, when a woman was defined in terms of her husband. On the other side, not joined directly by a path, is the new Landscape of Nations Commemorative Memorial dedicated to the Natives who fought in the War of 1812. In contrast to the traditional built monuments of Brock and Secord, the Landscape of Nations incorporates more of the “nature-based symbolism of the native peoples” (Friends, 2017). A path with brickwork reflecting the Two Row Wampum leads past narrative plaques to a floor mosaic representing Turtle Island (North America). From there the path leads past traditional ‘built’ statues of Teyoninhokarawen and

Ahyouwa'ehs, through a representation of a longhouse, past 1812 time markers, into the Memory Circle with its 8 massive stones that “emanate from the circle like a sunburst.” (Landscape, 2016a; 2016b). Six of the slabs are dedicated to each of the Six Nations with a bronze medallion with the name of the War Chief on it, a seventh is dedicated to all of the Nations of the Native Allies who fought in the war, and the eighth is dedicated to the Peace and Reconciliation Ceremony that was held to heal the rifts both between and in the nations in 1815. In the centre of the circle grows healing sweetgrass. The path then continues past 1815 time markers to the Tree of Peace. The Memory Circle is surrounded on three sides by berms, the remains of Fort Riall, which was an outpost of Fort Drummond (now buried underneath a children's splash pool), a few hundred metres away (Landscape, 2016a; 2016b; Seibel, 1985). Scattered around the site are memorial and informational plaques about the Coloured Corps, the Battle of Queenston Heights, and Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe.

The University Memorial Landscape Site

Brock University is situated on 171 hectares of land (Brock, 2016, p.15) at the top of the Niagara Escarpment overlooking the City of St. Catharines, some 16 km from the Queenston Heights Memorial Landscape. Less than 2 km away, on land adjacent to Brock University's land, is Decew House Heritage Park, the final destination for Laura Secord's famous walk, the finishing point of the current Laura Secord Legacy Trail, and the site of the recently constructed First Nations Peace Monument Memorial (Friends, 2017; 2019).

Brock University, as may be expected, has many ties to the memory of General Brock. The naming is rampant: the main road into the campus is Sir Isaac Brock Way, the on-campus pub is called Isaac's, the main food court is the Guernsey Marketplace (Brock was born in Guernsey), the recently closed graduate student and faculty club is named Alfie's Trough (after Brock's horse). At the entrance to the main library is a display case with a replica of Brock's coat and hat, and a replica of the Two Row Wampum that is seen in the walkway of the Landscape of Nations Memorial at Queenston Heights and on a flag flying at the Decew House / First Nations Peace Monument Memorial Site. Dominating the main entrance of the university is a statue of a young General Brock. Tying Brock University to Queenston Heights further, the arm of the statue of General Brock atop the column at Queenston Heights that was damaged during a storm in a 1929 lightning strike is now in storage at Brock University (Hughes, 2011). Maquettes of the statues of Ahyouwa'ehs and Teyoninhokarawen that stand at the entrance to the Landscape of Nations at Queenston Heights are now displayed at Brock University in the Cairns complex looking over the main quadrangle (Dakin, 2018a, 2018b). The Peace Monument at Decew House is a "nature-based memorial," with many of the same plants, the monumental limestone and a white pine as are evident at Queenston Heights (Martin, 2017). The ruins of Decew House has plaques attached describing the nearby Battle of Beaverdams where Native allies defeated the American troops and the role that Laura Secord played in this battle. A small monument about a kilometer away marks the spot where Laura Secord and the Native allies met. They then escorted her to Decew House, headquarters of the British and Native forces in the area.

Collective memory

“Memory is not simply a recollection of times past, it is also anchored in places past and visualized in masonry and bronze. The ordering of memory around sites of collective remembrance provides a focus for the performance of rituals of communal remembrance and sometimes forgetfulness” (Johnson, 2002, p. 294). Nora (1989) calls these sites *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory. He argues that “[s]tatues or monuments to the dead, owe their meaning to their intrinsic existence; even though their location is far from arbitrary, one could justify relocating them without altering their meaning. Such is not the case with an ensemble constructed over time, which draws their meaning from the complex relations between their elements” (p. 22). Both of these memorial landscapes, ensembles, have been constructed over time – the University site still has the remains of the house that was used as the British headquarters in the War of 1812, with additions of Laura Secord’s monument; Brock University and its commemorative trappings; and the Peace Monument over the ensuing 200 years. Not only does the Queenston site have its Brock’s Monument – first erected in 1824; but also the Laura Secord monument in 1910; and the Landscape of Nations in 2016. In the case of Queenston Heights, “the setting is not only an important feature of the memorial but also positively enhances it and ensures the memorial is part of civic life” (Davidson, 2014, p. 65). The original 12 acre site is now part of a 175 acre recreational site including the children’s splash pad on top of the former Fort Drummond. To get from the Laura Secord monument to Brock’s monument one must pass a restaurant; close by is a bandshell that hosts summer Sunday concerts. Nelson and Olin (2003) sum up the relationship thusly: “[m]onuments enjoy multiple social roles. As things, they share their

status with other objects: the term monumentality suggests qualities of inertness, opacity, permanence, remoteness, distance, preciousity and grandeur. Yet monuments are prized precisely because they are not merely cold, hard, and permanent. They are also living, vital, immediate, and accessible, at least to some parts of society” (p.3).

Johnson’s (2002) idea of ‘forgetfulness’ was borne out by the exclusion of a group vitally important to the success of the Battle of Queenston Heights, the Native warriors. The Native contribution to the War of 1812 had been virtually ignored, but with the addition of the Landscape of Nations Commemorative Memorial to the Queenston site in 2016, it now acknowledges the vital role the Native warriors played, and it became a more “living, vital, immediate, and accessible” (p.3) site; part of collective memory’s “process that is constantly unfolding, changing, and transforming” (Zelizer, 1995; p. 218).

Davidson (2014) says that after the Crimean War “the tone of memorials began to shift from patriotism and pride to commemoration” (p. 59). This is becoming more evident in Canada today, for example, as buildings are renamed to erase and decommemorate the proud, patriotic memory of former nation-builders but who were also responsible for atrocities against Native people (Alderman, 2002). This shift in tone of memorials is evident at both sites, with the addition of the First Nations Peace Monument Memorial at the University site and the Landscape of Nations being added at the Queenston site.

Collective Memory Is...

In an attempt to understand the nature of collective memory Zelizer (1995) highlights six premises of collective remembering that inform contemporary scholarship. Given the scope of this paper, only the four most relevant of these premises will provide

the framework for a discussion of the two memorial landscapes and their place in memory studies.

Collective Memory is Processual

“Remembering is no longer seen as a finite activity, with an identifiable beginning and end. Rather, it is seen as a process that is constantly unfolding, changing, and transforming” (Zelizer, 1995; p. 218). Both the University and the Queenston sites are what Nora (1989) would call *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory. He argues that “[s]tatues or monuments to the dead, owe their meaning to their intrinsic existence; even though their location is far from arbitrary, one could justify relocating them without altering their meaning. Such is not the case with an ensemble constructed over time, which draws their meaning from the complex relations between the elements” (p. 22). Both of these memorial landscapes can be seen as coupled ensembles, each constructed over the course of 200 years. Although the remains of the Decew House and the area north of it remained virtually untouched farmer’s fields until the 1960s (personal recollection), Brock University, the monument to Laura Secord, the Laura Secord Trail, and the First Nations Peace Monument have all been added since then. Brock University could have been established elsewhere, but the selection of a site on property adjacent to an historically significant site (Decew House), and positioned to loom over the south end of St. Catharines was intentional and significant. The central tower of Brock University became, as Brock’s monument had become before it, a massive landmark able to be seen from kilometers around; indeed, Brock’s monument “was created to be seen prominently from the American side of the river” (Forest, 2012,

p. 121). Memory studies trace their origins back to early psychology theories of memory (Zelizer, 2012; p. 215); those early psychologists would have remarked on the phallic nature of these monuments: oozing masculinity, protecting our nation, imbuing future generations with the reminders of past conflict and providing them with the education and the tools needed to survive in the society in which they live.

Native warriors had been largely ignored at both sites, other than a plaque at the base of Queenston Heights near the statue of Alfred and Brock's obelisk, well away from the major memorial landscape. Historians had long called for more suitable recognition of the Native peoples' vital contribution to the war effort. Morden (1929) for example called not only for a memorial to the Native allies, but positioned any such monument firmly into memory studies, saying that "[t]he establishment of monuments, memorial tablets and cairns is most commendable, as, in addition to their educative value....[they] cause us to realize that man's activities soon pass into history" (p. 66). Late additions completely transforming Nora's ensembles are the commemorations of the Native warriors installed in 2016 (Queenston site) and 2018 (University site) respectively.

Calls for a more suitable memorial for the Native warriors had gone unheeded until the temporal convergence in a nine-year period of the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Canada as a nation, and the formation and subsequent report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). The TRC was established in 2008 under "the terms of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement" (Truth, 2015 p. 23), and in 2015 delivered its report and

issued 94 Calls to Action to promote healing and reconciliation. Five of these Calls, numbers 79-83, deal with commemoration of First Nations achievements (p334-335). Although conceived before the report was issued, the Landscape of Nations Commemorative Memorial and the First Nations Peace Monument are commemorative monuments that align with these Calls to Action. In addition, they both “mark death, declare particular relationships between the commemorated and the living, offer a space in which a community may gather to acknowledge its loss and reaffirm its sense of collectivity, and suggest or even advocate a future for the community that is somehow linked to the lives or events commemorated” (Blair and Michel, 1999, p.33-34). Both are sites of acknowledgement of Native contributions, places of healing and education, and, according to Dr. Richard Merritt, one of the key figures in creating the Landscape of Nations, places of “remembrance, recognition, and reconciliation” (personal communication, April 4, 2019).

Collective Memory is Partial

Zelizer (2005) points out that no “single memory contains all that we know, or could know, about any given event, personality, or issue. Rather memories are often pieced together like a mosaic.” This give rise to Dunn’s (2011) assertion that “the past operates not as historical *fact* but as historical *interpretation* for the purposes of making public argument. Through framing the past, we serve a present need” (p.439). In this instance – the last words uttered by Isaac Brock are subject to debate. Major Glegg wrote that Brock said “My fall must not be noticed or impede my brave companions from advancing to victory.” (Cruikshank, 1896, p. 83). A newspaper account attributed to

Lieut. McLean of the York Militia stated that “immediately before he received his death wound, he cried out to some persons near him to “push on the York volunteers” which were the last words he uttered.” (p.114). Another account had Brock saying nothing but just clasping his hands over the wound (Malcolmson, 2003; p. 153). Some 140 years later, the newly founded Brock University indicated their preferred version of Brock’s last words by choosing “Surgite!” (“push on!”) as the school motto, a much better choice than “My fall must not be noticed...” That history is sometimes what is needed at the time is also manifest in the impressive statue of General Brock that dominates the plaza in front of the university’s main entrance. The statue is of a young, slender, handsome, virile man. In fact, the uniform coatee that he died in has a waistline of 47” and indicates that he would have been between 6’2” and 6’4” tall (Kosche, 1979-80; p. 36), “massive and large boned” according to one witness. Another said “he was withal the ugliest officer I ever saw.” (Malcolmson, 2003, p. 35).

The Laura Secord Legacy Trail is also a partial collective memory . The actual route that she took is not known for sure, the trail follows an informed “best guess.” What is known absolutely is that no cow was involved in this walk – it was one of a number of dramatic embellishments that have appeared in her story over the years (Bonikowsky, 2015).

The old adage, often wrongfully attributed to Sir Winston Churchill, that ‘the victors write the history’ is not true in published accounts of the War of 1812 (after all, both sides claim victory in this particular conflict (Forest, 2012)), but it is certainly true in the Queenston and University memorial landscapes. The allied British forces were

clearly the victors at The Battle of Queenston Heights (Dale, 2011; Malcolmson, 2003), but their victory would not have happened without their binary, the American allied force. Other than mentions on some of the plaques naming “the opposition forces,” they do not exist in the collective memories of these landscapes, with a notable exception at each site. In late August to early September 1815, a Council of Peace and Reconciliation was held at Queenston Heights for the Native peoples of Western New York and Upper Canada, as “the War of 1812 had become a devastating and deadly civil war between those remaining loyal to the British Crown and those fighting as allies to the United States” (Landscape, 2016a; 2016b). Forty chiefs from Upper Canada and forty from western New York, witnessed by 400 other Natives, gathered and buried a war tomahawk under a white pine tree, restoring peace to their nations. As part of the Landscape of Nations memorial, a stone slab is dedicated to this reconciliation, and as the Two Row Wampum path leaves the memory circle it passes by this slab, past the 1815 marker, to a white pine, the Tree of Peace. Coupled to it with Nora’s thread of memory, at the University Landscape, a path leads through the First Nations Peace Monument to another white pine Tree of Peace (Friends, 2017; Landscape, 2016a; 2016b). Two hundred years after the Council of Peace and Reconciliation took place, the TRC as part of *its* mandate to promote healing and reconciliation released its Calls to Action. Even though these monuments were conceived and well underway before the Calls were issued, they clearly align themselves with the Calls to Action dealing with commemoration (Truth, 2015).

Collective Memory is Usable

“Rather than be taken at face value as a simple act of recall, collective memory is evaluated for the ways it helps us to make connections – to each other over time and space, and to ourselves” (Zelizer, p. 226). In a very tangible way of threading and coupling the two sites together in space, one may choose to physically drive partway on the General Brock Parkway at the Queenston Heights end to Sir Isaac Brock Way leading into Brock University. One may also physically hike from the Laura Secord Homestead in Queenston, past Brock’s obelisk, the plaque to the First Nations people, and Alfred’s statue to Decew House on the 32 km Laura Secord Legacy Trail (Brock, 2006; Forsyth, 2006; Friends, 2019). General Brock Parkway, also known as Highway 405, was renamed on October 13, 2006, the 194th anniversary of Brock’s death. The renaming was spearheaded by Lt.-Col Bernard Nehring, a former commanding officer of the Lincoln & Welland Regiment, based in the Niagara Peninsula. The regiment’s roots go back to the 1790’s and are in part based in the militia that Brock helped to organize in the lead-up to the War of 1812, and that fought at Queenston Heights and other early campaigns (Brock, 2006; Seibel, 1967). The regiment itself can be seen as a site of collective remembrance as today they participate in major events, such as the dedication of the Landscape of Nations and the annual Battle of Queenston Heights commemoration. Their Regimental Flag Battle Honours include Queenston Heights and the Niagara Campaign. As the need to commemorate changed it was only in the leadup to the War of 1812 bicentennial celebrations that the Canadian government decided to award pre-Confederation honours; the L&W Regiment was awarded four Battle Honours related to that war (Battle, 2019).

The Laura Secord Legacy Trail, “spanning the full 32 km of her epic journey” was completed as “a permanent monument to Laura’s legacy,” part of the War of 1812 Legacy Commemoration projects. This project was so important to Canada’s War of 1812 commemorations that Laureen Harper, wife of Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, participated in the 200th anniversary commemorative walk (Cheevers, 2013; Friends, 2019). Alderman’s (2002) analysis talks of street (and by extension, trail) naming as an act to bring “the past into the present, helping weave history into the geographic fabric of everyday life” (p. 99). Donna Cansfield, Ontario’s Minister of Transportation, spoke of signs naming the General Brock Parkway as “a teachable moment” about General Brock and a way to “keep Canadian history alive” (Brock, 2006). The Parkway can also be seen as “a thoroughfare of national remembrance” (Johnson, 2002; p. 296). This ties back to Blair, Dickinson and Ott’s (2010) assertion that public memories are shared amongst members of a group, in this case member of the nation-state. This particular highway can also be seen as “partial, partisan, and therefore contested” (p. 4) – for travellers on this highway it is the last road they traverse before entering the United States, or the first road when entering Canada. For those who are already conversant with the War of 1812, or for those who take advantage of Cansfield’s “teachable moment” (Brock, 2006), it, along with Brock’s monument that “was created to be seen prominently from the American side of the river” (Forest, 2012, p. 121) serves as a reminder that Canada’s borders remained intact and that this conflict served as one of Canada’s stepping stones to nationhood.

The TRC Calls to Action numbers 62-65 deal with education for reconciliation (Truth, 2015; p. 331). The Queenston site in particular has many plaques and

inscriptions on monuments; the University site less so, making both sites to a certain extent usable, making connections over time and space, in the context of memory studies. The measure of success for plaques and inscriptions is “making a few words tell a full and moving story” (Tilden, 1977; p. 57). Tilden goes on to say that “some millions of visitors are going to receive their first – and many will unfortunately get their only – impressions from this source (p. 58). With the advent of quick response codes (QR codes) the possibility for more in-depth, curated information for these sites of collective memory exists. QR codes are scanned on a mobile device using an app which then takes the user to a web page with more information on it. The Laura Secord Legacy Trail does make use of some QR codes, and, in addition, both the Queenston and University sites have GPS triggered “points of interest” (POI) on a digital app, *Interpretours*, to inform visitors about various POIs that are related to the trail. A QR code is attached to a tree near the boulder, obelisk, and statue to Alfred at the base of the Queenston Heights site which also takes visitors to the Interpretours site. In addition to narrative information about the POI, there is also value added information such as paintings, contemporary accounts of the conflict, maps and photographs (Friends, 2017).

Brock University has shown a strong commitment to reconciliation and education about Native issues. At the highest levels the recently installed Chancellor is a member of the Cree nation (Cavanagh, 2018) and the university has just hired a member of the Mohawk nation as Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement (Cavanagh, 2019), showing great commitment to building “relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities” (Cote-Meek, 2017). Many other initiatives, such as Indigenous

awareness education, the development of indigenous-themed undergraduate and graduate courses, and higher visibility for indigenous services are ongoing also. With almost 21,000 students, faculty, and staff the university is larger than some of the communities that surround it, educating and reminding them about the Indigenous heritage of the area will have a huge impact on the civic life of the community (Brock, 2017).

In conjunction with the Landscape of Nations Commemorative Memorial and the First Nations Peace Monument, an Ontario curriculum, *Landscape 360°* for kindergarten to grade 12 students is being developed with a team headed by Tim Johnson, co-chair of the Landscape of Nations Committee. The Ignite the Spirit of Education Foundation, the District School Board of Niagara, and the Woodland Cultural Centre are partners in this endeavour (Johnson, 2018; Landscape, 2018). As Foster (2019) points out, “activities such as these lesson plans integrate information...into school curricula and often end up decorating walls in schools and being used in school assemblies, and that create a commemorative habit starting at an early age.” (p.13).

Collective Memory is Material

“One of the most marked characteristics of collective memory is that it has texture. Memory exists in the world rather than in a person’s head,” in “the artifacts that mark its creation” (Zelizer, 1995, p. 232). Tilden (1977) asks “What is the keynote of this place? What is the over-all reason why it should have been preserved? It is for this reason that I have in time past suggested what I call the “master-marker” which would be, as one might say, the title of the book, and the rest of the markers would be chapter

heads” (p.60). The keynote for both sites is the Battle of Queenston Heights, the “master-marker” the memorial at each site to General Brock, the monument in Queenston and the University itself at the University site. Brock did not win the Battle of Queenston Heights, nor, as Stan Rogers (1984) would have us believe, did Macdonell.¹ The attacks they led were both repulsed by the Americans holding the redan battery. The commander who orchestrated the defeat of the Americans was General Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe and his Native allies. Unfortunately for Sheaffe’s fame and lasting legacy, he had the misfortune to live through the war, and didn’t attract the cult-like following that Brock did. He does, however, rate a memorial plaque at the base of Brock’s monument and a small statue inside the Queenston Heights Restaurant, two of Tilden’s “chapter heads.”

The materiality in collective memory at the Queenston site is shown not only in the monuments, plaques, markers, and statues that dot the site. The selection of the materials making up these “chapter heads” is infused with memory. Both Brock’s monument and the huge stone slabs in the Landscape of Nations are composed of Queenston Limestone. This stone is composed of decayed organisms and corals left at the bottom of a huge inland sea that once covered the area. The structure of the stone can clearly be seen when it is polished (Tiplin, 1988, p. 192). According to Richard Merritt (personal communication, April 4, 2019) the First Nations representatives on the Landscape of Nations planning committee felt that the connection not only with Brock’s monument, but to the living creatures of past eras made these stone slabs particularly meaningful to them, as they also link back to the Haudenosaunee creation story

(Landscape, 2016a; 2016b). As the slabs are local, and many buildings in the area are also made of Queenston limestone, the use of the Queenston limestone also “reinforces the link with the local community” (Davidson, 2014, p. 62).

Each of the sites also contain living memorials; indeed the very name “Landscape of Nations” implies a living memorial. In addition to the ‘living stone’ mentioned above, the Landscape of Nations prominently includes healing sweetgrass in the middle of the Memory Circle; and flora that were native to the area at the time of the War of 1812. Similarly, the Peace Monument at Decew House is also a living memorial, with much of the same flora, and the monumental limestone structure. The Tree of Peace, a white pine, is a crucial components at each of the sites, symbolizing the end of the internecine civil war amongst the Natives during the war and the reconciliation, the burying of the tomahawk, between the Nations at the end of the conflict. Sather-Wagstaff (2015) points out that trees “have through a (re)appropriation of nature for memory, become a landscape requirement in contemporary popular cultures of commemoration.” She goes on to say that “trees are the focal green landscape features, chosen for their old and/or new symbolism, indigenous status in the area, and/or aesthetic reasons” (p. 236). Davidson (2014) explains that “setting is an important influence on the user’s experience and in this particular location allows for a path directly to [*and through*] the memorial and there is also space for benches for contemplation and a calming backdrop of trees and planting (p. 65; bracketed words mine).

Conclusion

In this essay I have placed the Queenston and University Commemorative sites into the context of memory studies, primarily through the lens of Zelizer's (1995) premises of collective remembering and secondarily through Nora's (1989) *lieux de mémoire* and his "invisible thread linking apparently unconnected objects" (p. 23), which also ties into the coupled sites and monuments within those sites. The changing role of commemorative and memorial landscapes has been highlighted, showing how two traditional, exclusionary, commemorative sites have been transformed and are continuing to be transformed into sites of education, peace, reconciliation, inclusion, civic responsibility, and remembrance. Although outside the scope of this paper, it would be interesting to delve into the two remaining aspects of Zelizer's premises of remembrance – that collective memory is a) unpredictable and b) particular and universal. This paper has focussed on the physical sites themselves. The War of 1812, the Battle of Queenston Heights, and the players involved also have, for example, many depictions in art, history, literature, the performing arts and digital media. Exploring these depictions in the context of collective memory is worthy of further study.

Notes

1. Even though Rogers was trying to memorialize Macdonell, ironically enough his spelling of Macdonell's last name was errant. Rogers' spelling was MacDonnell; the actual spelling had only one "n" and the "d" was not capitalized.

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