



Radiant Temperature of Openings: A Prologue

Faraz Anoushahpour, Parastoo Anoushahpour, Ryan Ferko

Contents

6

Make a word into a building and fill its rooms with silence

Felix Kalmenson

11

Radiant Temperature of Openings: A Prologue

Faraz Anoushahpour, Parastoo Anoushahpour, Ryan Ferko

89

a displacement

Aisha Sasha John

Make a word into a building and fill its rooms with silence

“What is the Imaginary?

In some ways, it is the beginning of a memory.

A place you talk about, but can no longer visit.”

Sitting in sunlight P and R tell me that the negative is incomplete. Only one step away from a direct record of light. With images rendered in silver we must invert ourselves—our hands grasping the medium—to bring history into a likeness of memory. For that moment the markings are unsettled. How, with closure still conjecture, will these dark massings resolve themselves into an articulation of a telling?

“It is an unfinished ruin to memorialize the victims of the flood.”

“The submersion of cities is real.”

The digital records with clarity an experience of light as history.

A shadow breaks and is broken by an earth cut through with lines.

This new line carries a shell which clears the waters.

[Clarity is the imperative of the modern.]

In this moment the visibility uncovers layers of violence on body/earth and the waters testify.

A road has run by and through and now under.

fig. 1 - American Eel, American Eel Sustainability Association



A Curved Line



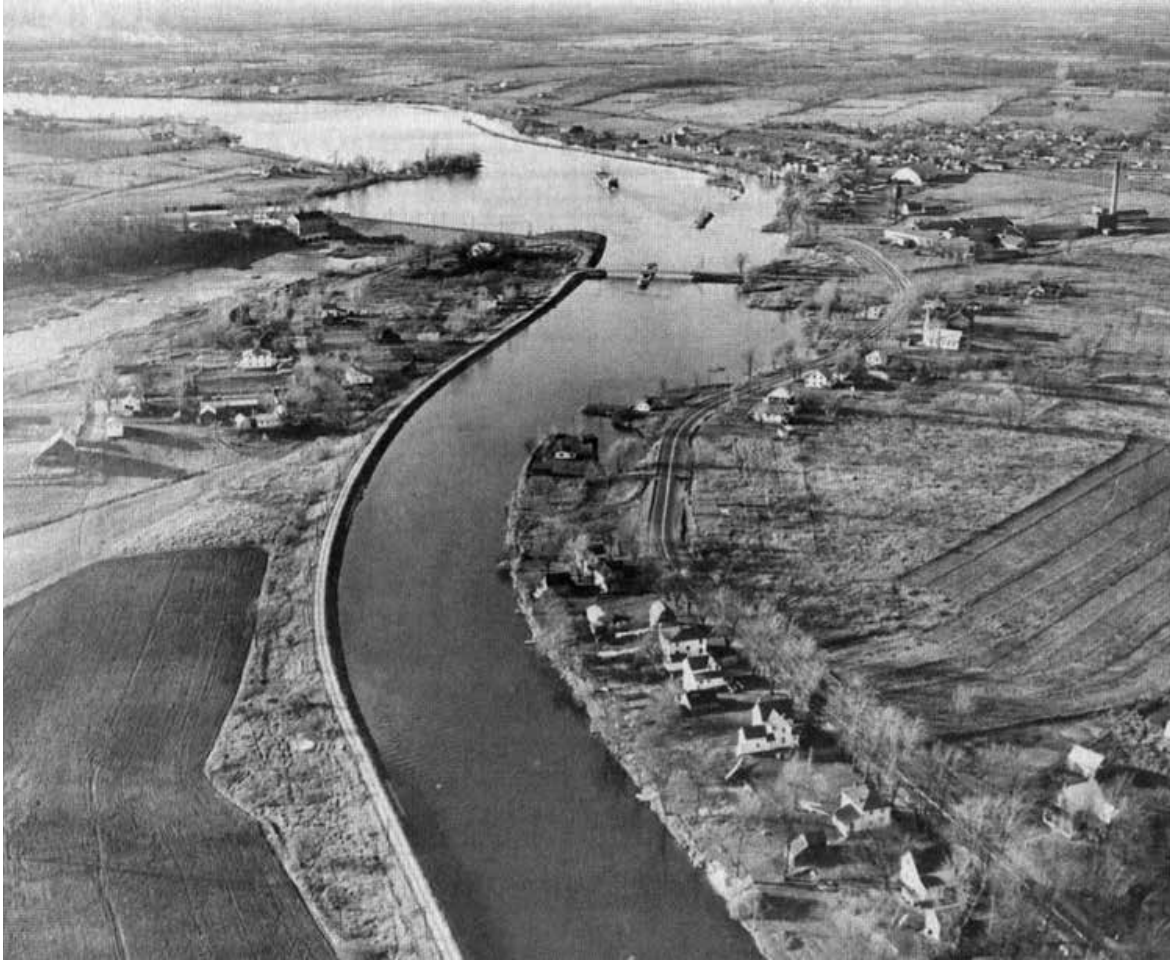


fig. 2 - Aerial View of Mille Roches, Lost Villages Historical Society Archives

A colonial route: The King's Highway No. 2.

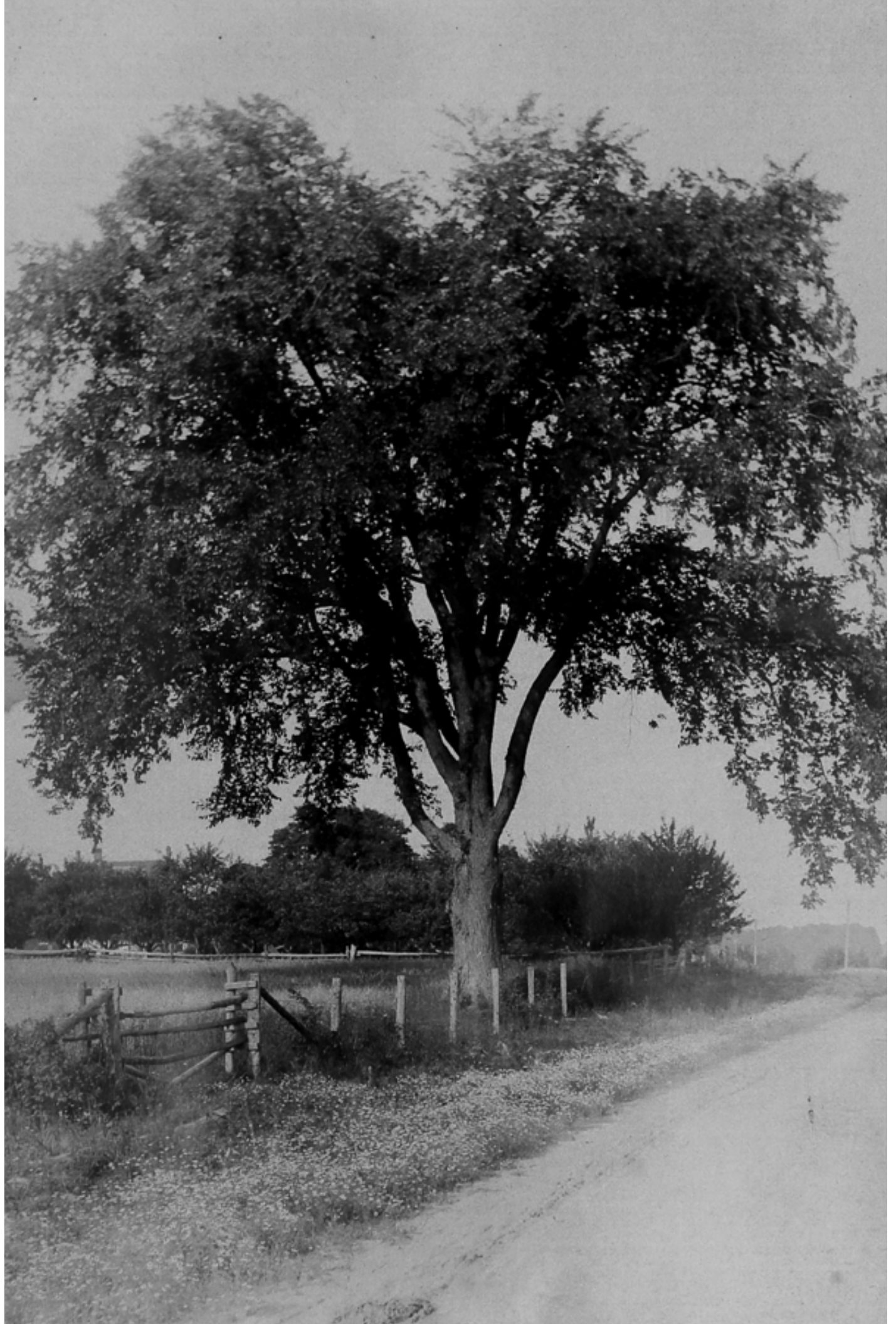
Derived from a series of footpaths linking various British settlements along the north shore of the Saint Lawrence River, initially this route imitates the river valley: a curved line.



fig. 3 - Mildred Evelyn Donnelly, born 1886, east of Aultsville 1 1/4 miles east, donated by Robert G. Hollister's mother to the Lost Villages Historical Society Archives

In 1921 this dirt road is paved.
In 1957 this tree is cut down at 450 years old.
In 1958 this landscape is flooded permanently.

fig. 4 - Elm Tree 1 1/4 miles east of Aultsville, Highway # 2 before being paved, paved in 1921, donated by Robert Hollister to the Lost Villages Historical Society Archives



A Straight Line





fig. 5 - Highway 401 near Kingston, 1960, Ontario Department of Highways, Archives of Ontario

A new highway is planned – one that travels in a straight line.

Highway 401 is carved as an unnatural route through the interior. The landscape becomes a barrier and is removed.





Two Straight Lines





fig. 7 - Highway 401 and Highway 25 Interchange, Nov 4, 1960, Ontario Department of Highways, Archives of Ontario

A problem: how to cross a straight line without stopping.

The solution is to overlap.



fig. 8 - Underpass Construction, Highway 401, Chatham, July 26, Archives of Ontario



fig. 9 - Overpass Construction, Highway 401, Chatham, July 26, 1956, Archives of Ontario

An overpass, under construction.

Isolated as an object, its scaffolding lifts up a space around a flattened landscape.

A void is created when the scaffolding is removed.

A tunnel through a flattened landscape – a hole cut into nowhere.





Straightening a Curved Line



LONG SAULT



RAPIDS





fig. 12 - Longue Sault Rapids, date unknown, Lost Villages Historical Society Archives

The Long Sault Rapids.

Formed by a fifty-foot drop over a relatively short distance.



fig. 13 - Wales - Herbert Markell, Lynn, Stuart, Wendy, and Brian Markell at the site of the Long Sault Rapids, 1957, Lost Villages Historical Society Archives

A cofferdam is built upstream.

The flow of the river is stopped and a hydroelectric dam is built downstream. For a few months the Long Sault Rapids are dried. When the water returns, the rapids will be gone.

A barrier in the landscape, the rapids are removed. The river itself is straightened out, turned into a highway:
The Saint Lawrence Seaway.



fig. 14 - Long Sault Rapids, May 1957, Lost Villages Historical Society Archives

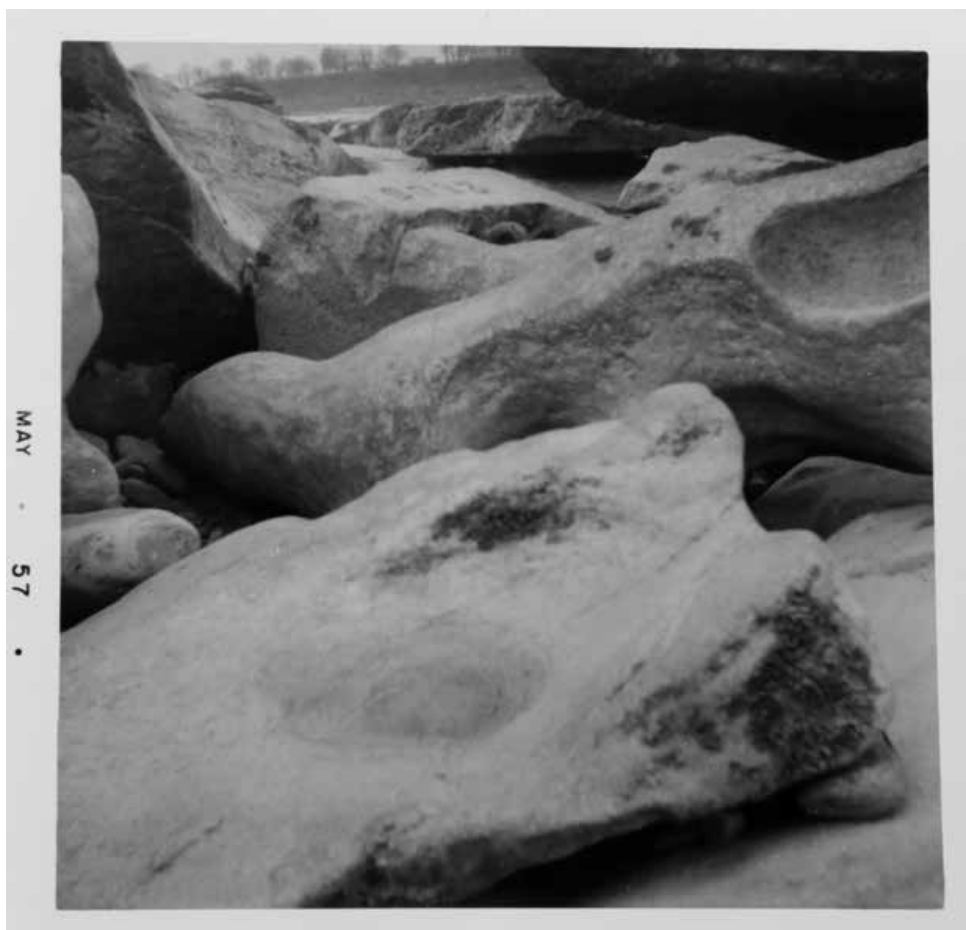


fig. 15 - Long Sault Rapids, May 1957, Lost Villages Historical Society Archives





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An Unnatural Disaster





fig. 17 - Saunders-St. Lawrence Power Project Flooding, Long Sault Rapids Look-Out Point, July 1958, Lost Villages Historical Society Archive

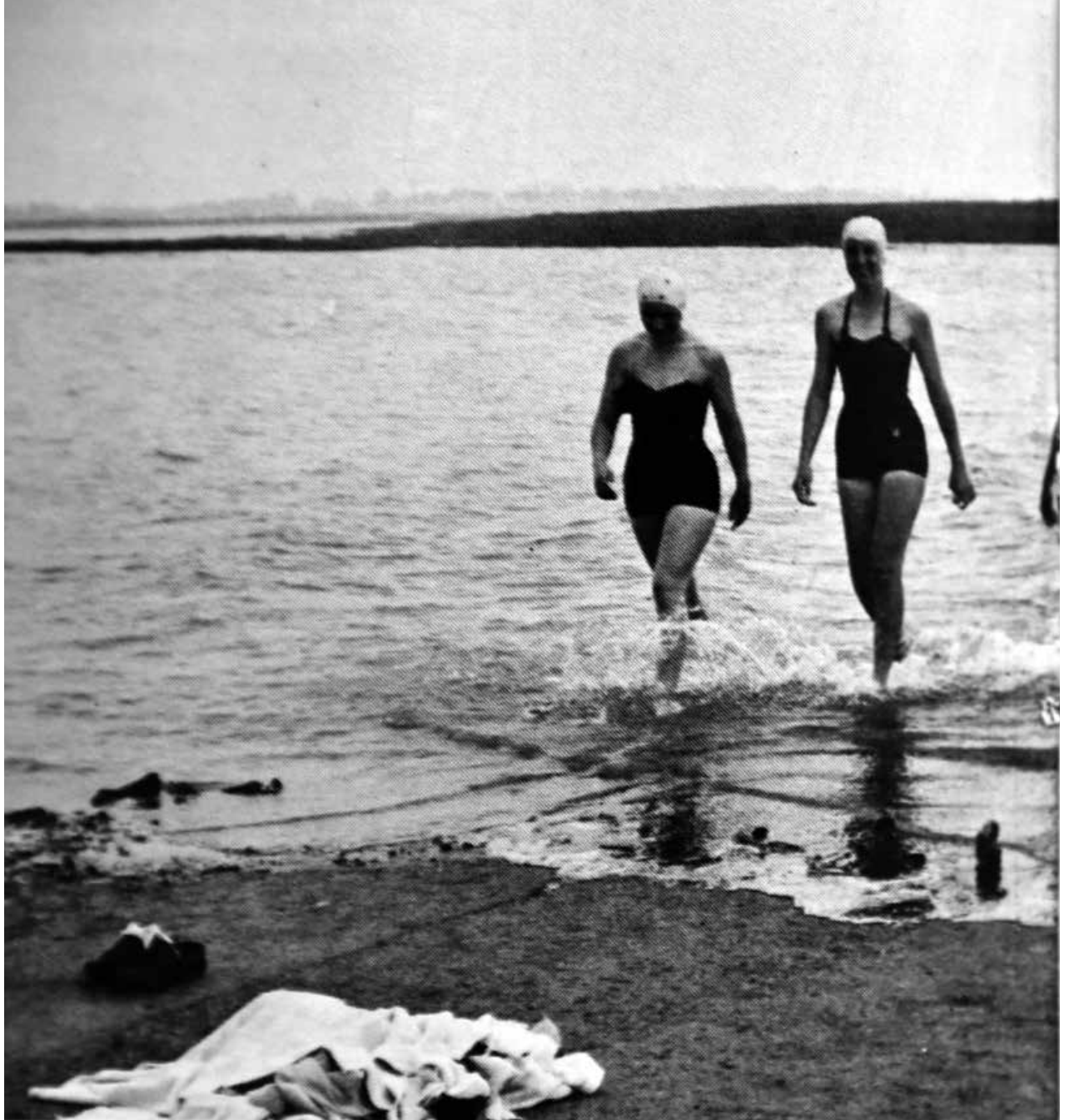
In progress: a flood.

The rapids are erased, and a new lake swallows the land, along with the King's Highway No. 2, and the colonial towns that are settled along it.

In anticipation of this unnatural disaster, houses are lifted and moved away from the waterfront. Houses that are not moved are demolished and burned. Trees are cleared. Graves are either moved, or covered in gravel to prevent floating.

July 1, 1958: thousands of people come to watch the explosion of the cofferdam. Expecting a wall of water to rush down the river valley, the swell turns out to be an anti-climactic crawl.

It takes four days to flood the area.





52 fig. 18 (reverse) - "NEW SWIMMING HOLE - Where highway No. 2, one of Ontario's busiest traffic arteries used to be, water now covers many sections of that road since the flooding of the St. Lawrence Power Project headpond. Here a group of bathing beauties are seen walking on the old highway enjoying the cool water. In the background, the high ground has been created into a new island. This is about a half mile west of where Moulinette was located near the old C.N.R. crossing. ", Cornwall Public Library Archives

Stripes





fig. 19 - Zebra Mussels, Cornwall Standard-Freeholder Image

Nearly 20 years ago, non-native zebra mussels were discovered for the first time in North America. Believed to have been carried in the ballast tanks of ships from Western European ports.

Zebra mussels are efficient at filtering large volumes of water and as an adult may filter more than four quarts a day. This filtration process, although greatly improving water clarity, contributes to the explosive growth of harmful algal blooms.

The mussel is low in fat and its shell has no nutritional value causing fish to expend lots of energy crushing and digesting the mussel. The zebra mussels displace more energy-rich food sources and leave fish and other aquatic species with fewer food options.¹

1. "The Zebra Mussel Invasion" National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States Department of Commerce

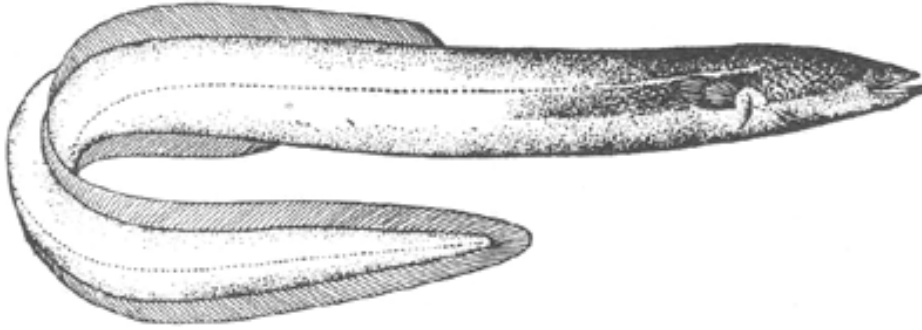


fig. 20 - American Eel, US Dept of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service Image

The American Eel is born in the Sargasso Sea in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

After being hatched, they travel 2000 kilometers to the St. Lawrence River, travelling upstream until eventually returning to the Atlantic to spawn later in life.¹

1. "American Eel" Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

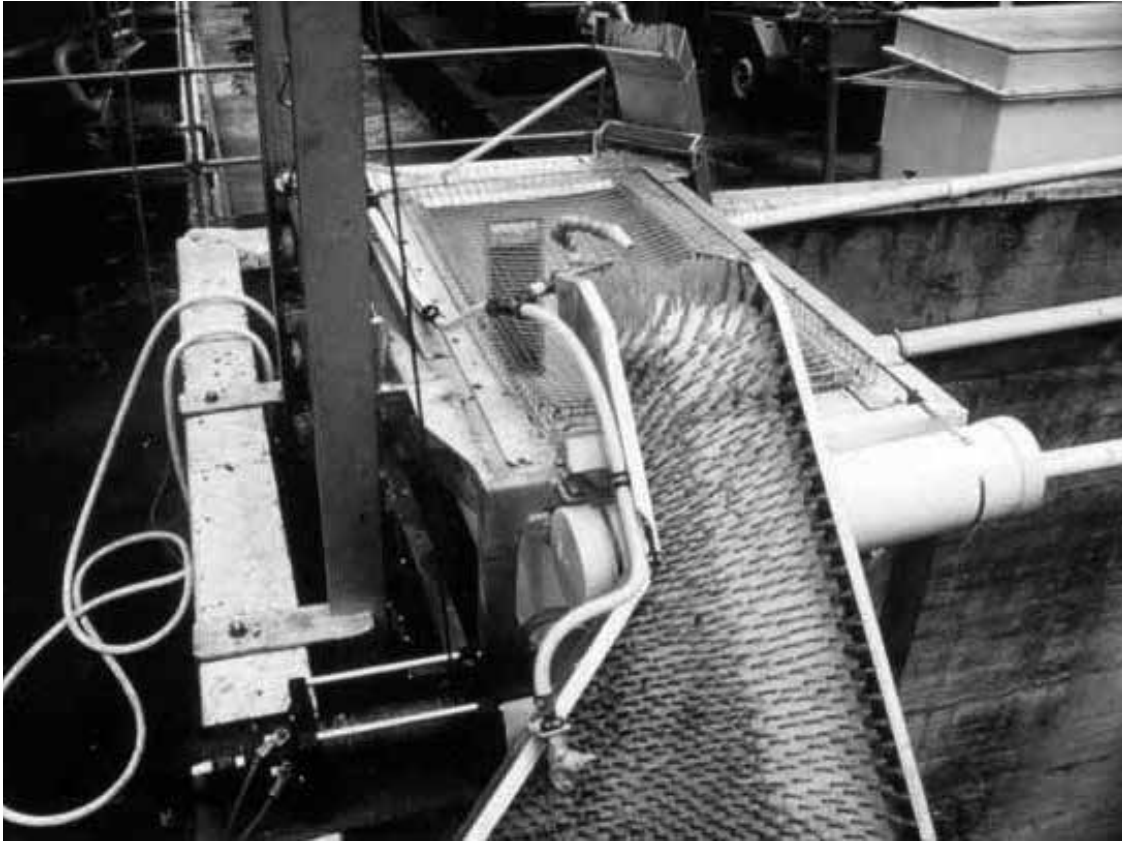
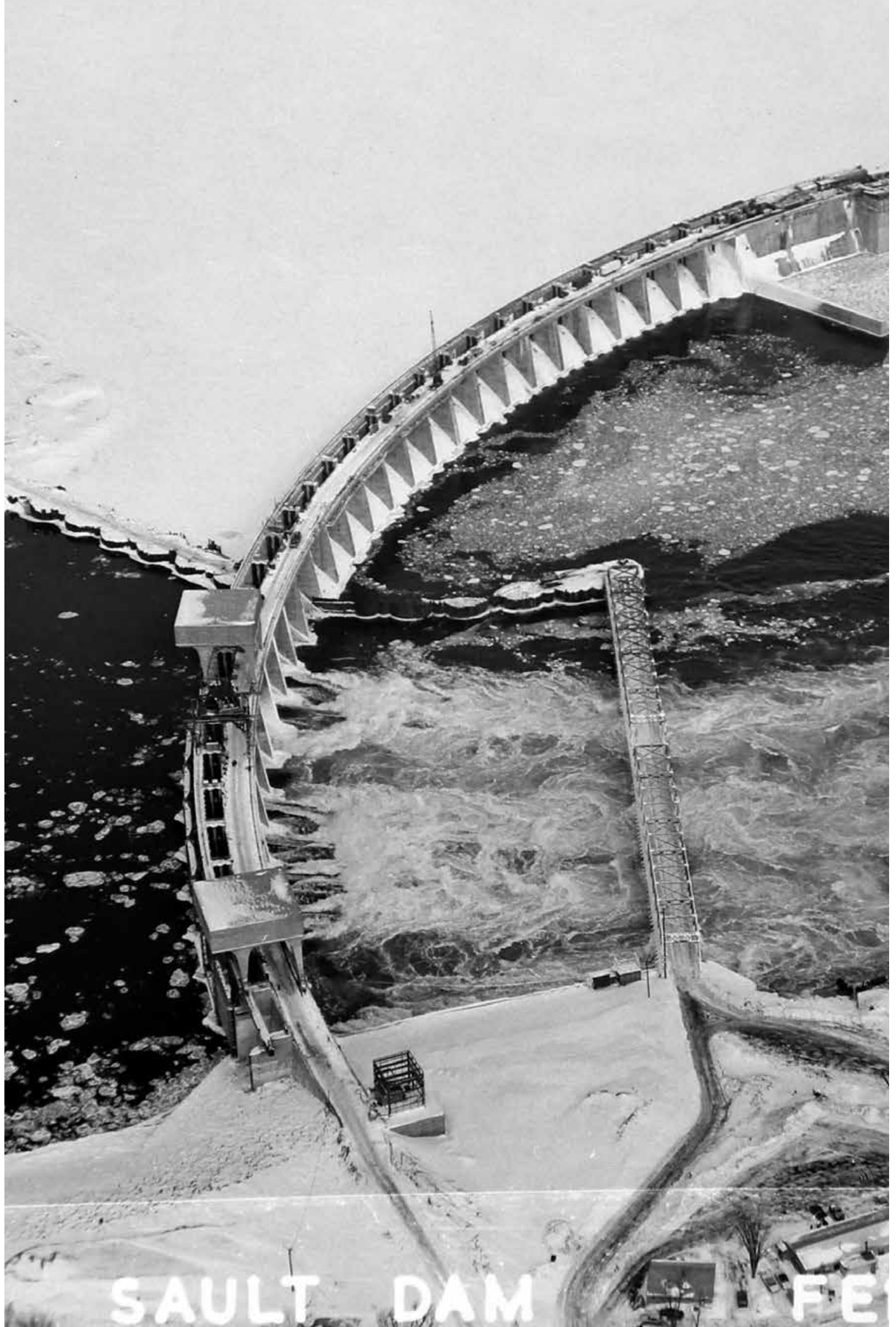


fig. 21 - Eel ladder, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations Image

With the landscape straightened to turn the river into a highway, new artificial barriers block the transit of the eels. Atlantic shipping traffic, in its place, imitates this migration as the eel population slowly declines.

Eel ladders are installed at the various locks and dams in an attempt to overcome the blocking of the artificial barriers.



SAULT DAM FE

An overpass for nature to cross the barrier of the dam ultimately proves less effective than the crossing of the two straight lines of the highway.



fig. 23 - American Eels, Robert-Moses Power Dam, film still, "St. Lawrence: Stairway to the Sea" 1982, National Film Board of Canada

High in fat, the American Eel was previously a main food source for the Mohawk and other Indigenous populations of the area.¹

The eels that do manage to pass over the barrier of the dam, however, are no longer caught for food. The same fat that previously made them nutritious, now stores the poisons from the factories occupying Akwesasne.

1. "American Eel" Department of Fisheries and Oceans of Canada

An Invisible Line



fig. 24 - Mohawk blockade of Cornwall Island Border Crossing, film still, "You Are on Indian Land" 1969, National Film Board of Canada

Roughly the middle of the river forms the border line between Canada and the United States. At some point the eels become known as American.

The territory of the Mohawks of Akwesasne is divided in half by the invisible line of the border between these two nations.



fig. 25 - Cornwall Island Customs Building, before demolition, image from Public Works and Government Services of Canada Project Report: "Demolition of former Customs Buildings, Cornwall Island, Ontario", May 2015

The Ontario Court of Justice, representing *Her Majesty the Queen* uses a specific narration of the history of the river in order to maintain control over the invisible line.

From a river, to a highway, to a border, the curved line is straightened further.

3.2: *Is mobility for family or community purposes a practice, custom or tradition that existed prior to contact?*

[26] At the time of contact, there is no evidence of regular crossing of the St. Lawrence River in the vicinity of Akwesasne by Mohawk. In R. v. Adams, the Supreme Court of Canada found that there was sufficient use of Lake St. Francis by the Mohawk to warrant a finding of a modern day aboriginal right held by the Mohawk of Akwesasne to fish there. That finding was based on evidence that Mohawks at around the time of contact regularly visited the St. Lawrence River to pursue acts of war with other competing tribes.

The fish would be taken to sustain warriors while waging that war. There was no finding in Adams that the Mohawks of the day were regularly engaged in north-south travel across the St. Lawrence River. Professor Parmenter testified at length about the importance of mobility to the Mohawk way of life, but conceded that there would only have been occasional border crossings. In my view, the occasional nature of such crossings would not raise them to the level of a practice, custom, or tradition at the time of contact.

[27] Further, while much of the evidence at trial addressed whether there was a Mohawk aboriginal right to mobility per se, as indicated above, the Applicants ultimately particularized their claim as an aboriginal right to travel freely for family or community purposes within the territory of Akwesasne without reporting in person at the border. There is no evidence of any women accompanying Mohawk warriors to the area of Akwesasne around the time of contact for the purposes of supporting the warriors as they waged war.

There is no evidence of any Mohawk travel across the St. Lawrence River at the time of contact for family purposes. There is no evidence that travel for family purposes across the St. Lawrence River was a custom, practice or tradition by Mohawks pre-contact. In the absence of any such evidence, that disposes of the Application with respect to an aboriginal right to travel freely within the Akwesasne territory for family purposes without reporting for examination at the Cornwall Port of Entry.¹

*Signed: Justice P. Griffiths
Ontario Court of Justice*

¹ R. v. Shenandoah, 2015 ONCJ 541, October 2 2015

The straightened line of history charges the *Applicants* with aiding and abetting a person to enter Canada without appearing for examination by a border officer.

The illegal person who entered Canada in this case was a six-year-old girl, dropped off by her mother at a lacrosse match on Cornwall Island.

A Circle

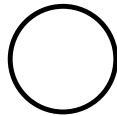
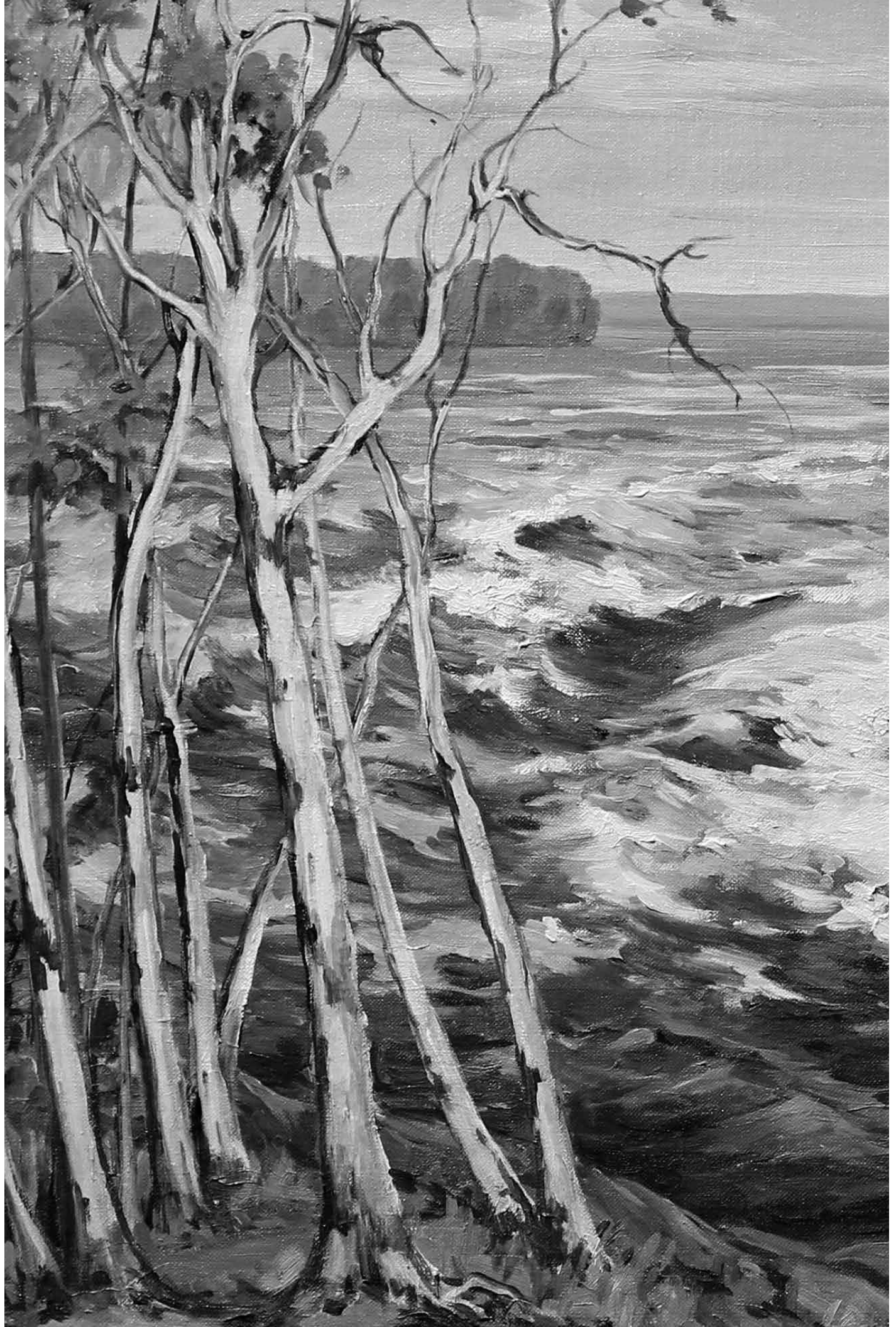


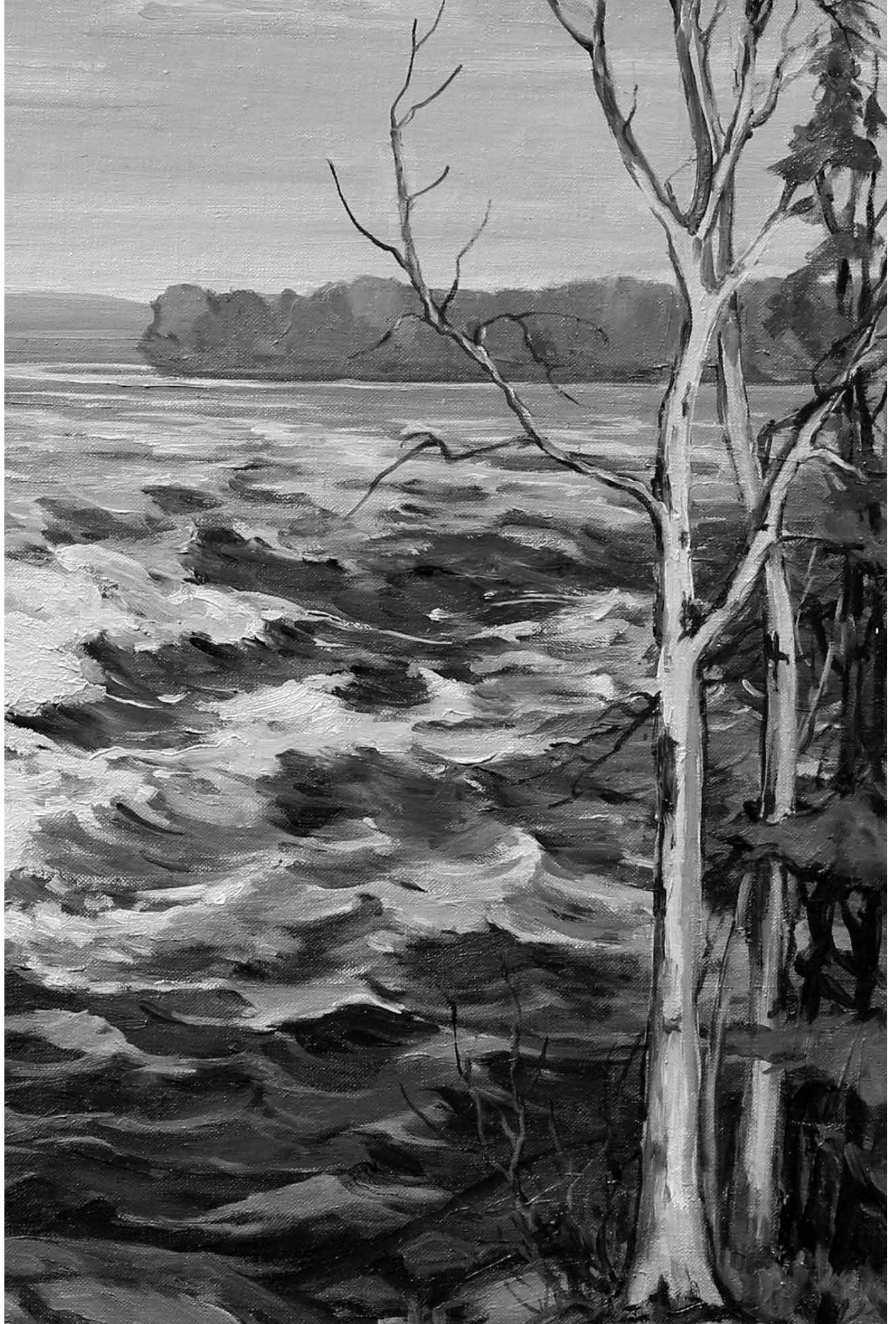


fig. 26 - Broder Island, with view of submerged King's Highway No. 2, South Dundas, Ontario, Google Earth View, 2015

With the water calmed by the dam, and cleared by the invasive zebra mussels, the location of the Lost Villages and King's Highway becomes a popular recreational diving spot in an artificial lake.

With the rapids smoothed, members of the community begin reproducing images of them in paintings based on photographs.





50 years after the cofferdam explodes and sets off the unnatural disaster flooding the river permanently, Akwesasne receives an acknowledgement too late.

The turbines of the power dam continue to rotate.

Apology to the Mohawks of Akwesasne

Over 50 years ago, Ontario Hydro came to build hydro electric facilities on the St. Lawrence River and consequently your land was flooded by construction of the RH Saunders Generating Station. During the time of planning and construction your community was disturbed and, in the years following, our people did not appreciate or respect the importance of your cultural and social practices. Procedures were followed that neither properly informed you nor allowed your direct participation. Consideration was not given to how greatly the building, operation and maintenance of the generating station would affect your way of life. These actions negatively impacted the resources and traditions of the Mohawks of Akwesasne. Since then, unresolved historical grievances have remained an obstacle in our relationship. We have listened to those grievances and hereby acknowledge them.¹

1. "Apology to the Mohawks of Akwesasne" Jake Epp, Chairman, Ontario Power Generation, October 2, 2008



A displacement.

A ghost-thing.

A separate introductory section of a major literary work.

All my life I've had to sympathize with white people.

Also it throws this spotlight around.

And after awhile it was like oh.

And husband George who planted his peas by the phases of the moon.

Anything else that wasn't moved was burned.

At first I'm into the nostalgia.

But it's silent.

But that's my response.

Can I have some water, Faraz?

Daughter, Joan.

Ding ding ding ding.

Do you know what I mean?

Even as the oldest colonial settlements they're only like 4 generations or something.

Event or action that leads to another event or situation.

Everyone who lived in this town that's now underwater.

Everything sort of starts with the river.

Exactly.

First of all you just get numb.

For me, I'm just tired.

Fuck that's so intense.

Fuck they know everybody.

Happening on a land that was more violently displaced.

Her brother, Oscar Cook.

I actually don't even know how I'm deciding what its speed is.

I am not experiencing this great longing.

I can't commit to the sadness.

I can't commit to understanding it only as violent.

I could also walk to it like this.

I don't even know who my ancestors are.

I don't know why I also find it fast.

I exist; I lived here.

I feel like you have a lot of thoughts in your head right now.

I felt self-conscious about having that response.

I start to think about who they are in relation to me.

I thought it was slow.

I was thinking about rhythm.
I'm important; I exist; look at me.
I'm important; I matter.
I'm just thinking about what you mean.
In the same way that a family album exists for the family to know itself.
Inasmuch as displacement goes and memory this is like you know.
Is Wales Cornwall?
It enacts the loss.
It has more than one speed.
It seemed like such a complete thing.
It still has rhythm.
It's a luxury.
It's actually kind of a fast walk.
It's also the way that um uh.
It's an eye going around too.
It's even and it's slow.
It's frustrating our pleasure.
It's like a planet.
It's like an organizing principle that's also metaphoric.
It's like is that expected of me?
It's more like fatigue it's like oh yeah.
It's not nothing.
It's not slow when you walk it.
It's oh you like that?
It's orbiting.
It's really regular.
It's slow and fast.
It's slow and it's fast.
It's the speed of something.
Like, it's slow.
Me?
Melancholic.
Mmhhm.
Mmhhm.
Mrs. Harry Johnson.
Mrs. Williams.
My whole history is completely erased.
Neil Whittaker, age 14.
Next door are the Moths at 74.

Next door was Nancy Fox.
Nuh uh.
Oh look at George.
Oh.
On Sunday people come and they go through lists.
One house east lived the Williams'.
Remember the genealogy workshops in the Cornwall library?
So that also mitigates longing.
So you felt melancholic or you felt sad?
Sorry I'm cooking back here.
South of Wales live the Johnsons.
Techno, progress, uuuurrrrh.
That to me is maybe the loudest thing.
That's now underwater.
That's the instinct of narration.
That's the thing about these historical narratives.
The beauty of each individual face baselines.
The first one is very insular.
The idea of straightening a curved line.
The idea of the river as the point of origin.
The idea of you and Parastoo being there interviewing these people.
The more time I spend with it.
The reason soldiers carry photos of their sweethearts.
The whiteness of them is more like fatigue.
There's a Mohawk territory that's has been hemmed in by two borders.
There's all of these different official narratives.
There's something else elsewhere and here's where our home is.
These are the colonial loyalist towns.
These people are obviously dead.
They all have the same function.
This colonial narrative back to the homeland.
This history that isn't chronological.
This is all under water?
This is us; look at us.
This sort of proto-suburban nuclear family.
This town's small enough to even have that illusion.
What do you mean removed?
What is this beat that the thing is rotating on?
What response?

What was the word you just said?

Woah.

Ya.

Ya.

Ya.

Ya.

Yeah exactly.

Yes, totally.

Yes.

Yes.

Yes.

Yes.

Yes.

Yet they did a full scale erasure of someone else's.

You can't have an us without a them.

You prevent me from getting seduced.

You said that you find it complete and I said that I find it lacking.

You start to understand the pattern.

You were talking about lines.

Young Robert.

You've seen it already.

-Aisha Sasha John

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Ryan Ferko
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a displacement
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