Hugh Guthrie of Guelph (1866-1939)

J.A. MCINTYRE

The biography of Hugh Guthrie provides an opportunity for a brief examination of three events in his political life which were pivotal in the development of Canada.¹ Guthrie's conduct in each of these events reveals crisply the nature of the man; the events equally clearly reveal the nature of the nation.

Hugh Guthrie upon his election to the House of Commons in 1900 was to experience, if not the longest service in that House, certainly a unique political career. Surely most unusual is his political record of never being defeated in thirty-five years in *his* constituency. He turned back all challengers while being elected four times for the Liberal party, once (in 1917) as a Union (coalition) candidate, followed by four elections as a Conservative candidate.

He was the eldest son of Donald Guthrie, K.C. who was born in Edinburgh, Scotland 8th May 1840, the son of Hugh and Margaret Guthrie. Donald Guthrie was educated at the Royal Grammar School, Edinburgh, and came, with his sisters to New York in 1853 where his uncle Patrick McGregor, barrister, Toronto, was then living. Donald's first occupation was as a clerk in a law office in New York. After about a year his uncle was appointed a Professor Queens University, Kingston, at which time Donald and his sisters came to Canada as well.

He first entered the office of John Helliwell, barrister Toronto, later articling to Sir Oliver Mowat, where he continued as a student-at-law until 1861, when he came to Guelph to take up a position as managing clerk in the office of Ferguson and Kingsmill. Admitted as a solicitor in 1863 he continued in a key role with this and other firms as the other principals either died, entered politics or were named to the bench. His eldest son Hugh, the subject of this chapter, entered the firm in 1894.

During a long and active life, Donald Guthrie served as solicitor for the city of Guelph from 1868 and for the county of Wellington for over 50 years. He was elected a member of the House of Commons in 1876 and again in 1878 on which occasion he moved the address in reply to the speech from the Throne. Having retired from public life in 1882 he was persuaded to become a candidate for the Ontario legislature to which he was elected in 1886 and again in 1901.

Born in Guelph, Ontario, 13 August 1866, Hugh Guthrie, Donald's eldest son was to follow closely, and ultimately surpass, the political career of his father.

Being the eldest son in the widely-known Guelph family of some political and social prominence doubtless was no drawback to Hugh Guthrie's success as a politician; this fact was not all important however. Well-educated² even by modern standards, he was an active member of the law firm of which his father was head. By reputation he was a man who in seeking election to the House of Commons would put up a stern fight, respect the views of other men who differ, and would conduct a clear, fair and honourable campaign. The *Guelph Advocate* (an independent newspaper) in editorial comment at the time of his nomination in 1899 noted:

... it is to the realm of political life which the Liberal candidate has been most attached. Always a close student of politics, he has taken part in many campaigns with good success.³

The *Evening Mercury* (a Liberal paper) commented on the same occasion,

... he has grown up among us, and has already earned far more than a local reputation for ability in his profession. As a platform speaker he has few equals, and perhaps no superior among the young men of the Dominion.⁴

The *Globe* (Toronto) said,

In Hugh Guthrie the Liberals of South Wellington have an able and popular candidate. He is known all over the Province as a skillful and effective campaigner, and for a man of his years has done a very large amount of work for the Liberal party. Ontario does not send too many young men to the House of Commons, and we trust that under Mr. Guthrie's aggressive leadership South Wellington may be restored to the Liberal column.⁵

Even the *Guelph Daily Herald* (Conservative) appears to have recognized virtue in Guthrie's nomination, the following observations being recorded in its November 2, 1899 editorial on the nomination meeting of the previous afternoon,

The vote of the convention is at once a tribute to the ability and the popularity of Mr. Guthrie and the earnestness and zeal with which he and his friends laboured to secure the honour. Mr. Guthrie is a young man and a young worker in the party. He is a promising member of the profession to which his father had proved such a distinguished ornament, and he is probably the strongest platform speaker among the local Liberals. We beg to congratulate Mr. Guthrie on the victory that he has achieved and at the same time would intimate to him that we do not think his candidature will seriously interfere with the Conservatives of South Wellington living up to the good old British motto: "What we have, we hold."⁶

Despite the frank, outspoken partisanship characterizing the late 19th century political advocacy, we can see that Guthrie presented a strong case, possessed commanding presence, was widely known and respected both on his own account as well as that of his father, a conscientious "keeper-in-touch" with constituents, events, responsibilities, duties: in short he (in today's vernacular) worked at his job of politician.

Not everyone perceived his initial nomination at the 1899 South Wellington meeting in a totally positive light. The balance of the editorial is instructive in this connection.

It is not our intention to intrude into the family quarrels of our friends, the enemy. The scheming and wire pulling that preceded the convention and the bitterness that manifested itself throughout the meeting, are probably inseparable from a contest fought under the conditions that surrounded the one out of which Mr. Guthrie has become victorious. If, as charged in some quarters, young men having no claim upon the position were appointed delegates over the heads of tried and faithful workers

in the party, because of their pledge to support one or other of the candidates, Liberal upholders of the sound old principle that the office should seek the man – not the man the office – certainly received a rude shock on Wednesday.

Mr. Guthrie's success is all the more creditable because of the unquestioned claims of his opponents for recognition at the hands of their fellow Liberals. Mr. John Mitchell has borne the heat and burden of many a campaign. True his work has not been as much under the eye of the public as that of a platform speaker, but it counted for more. His genius as an organizer, his great energy, and his popularity with the people, have enabled Mr. Mitchell to do yeoman service for the Liberal party. And what he has been enabled to do he has done carefully and wholeheartedly. Mr. Mitchell's friends have reason, we think, to feel disappointed at the decision of the convention.

The most surprising feature of the result, however, was the small vote polled by Mr. Hugh McMillan. Mr. McMillan has learned the lesson that gratitude is not a prominent virtue in a political convention. How it comes that such an old and trusted worker in the Liberal interests – one who has been fighting the battles of the party and bearing the chief brunt of the struggle for over a quarter of a century, should be almost unnoticed in a convention that had the privilege of conferring a party honour, passes our comprehension. When Mr. Innes quit public life, politicians, both Grit and Tory, pointed to his able and faithful lieutenant, Mr. Hugh McMillan, as his rightful successor. The fickleness of political fortune has in a short time brought to the front a young subaltern and invested him with the command, while the old and tried veteran is left in the rear.⁷

The story is oft repeated: the old give way to the young, rarely with good grace or complete enthusiasm for the disruption implied by the change and reallocation of power to the hands of youth. Hugh Guthrie was just past his thirty-third birthday; a new century was about to commence. The prophetic symbolism of the conjunction of these events would surely not have been lost on Hugh Guthrie or his supporters.

Following his election to the House of Commons in November 1900 he was invited⁸ to move the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. The *Toronto Globe* commented in the following fashion:

"It is officially announced tonight that Mr. Hugh Guthrie member for South Wellington, will move the address in the House of Commons in reply to the speech from the throne at the approaching session of Parliament, and that Mr. Charles Marcil,

member for Bonaventure, will second the motion. The selection of these two gentlemen is in accordance with the time-honoured practice of choosing the youngest of the newly-elected members to make their formal debut in the House. Mr. Guthrie is the young lawyer who defeated Mr. Kloepper in South Wellington, and in so doing scored one of the most notable victories in the general elections. He is looked upon as one of the coming men of Canada, and his friends hope to see him make a good record at the coming session"⁹

Commenting upon Guthrie's parliamentary debate *The Globe* praised the contribution stating, in part, that:

"The debate was also remarkable for the extremely clever speech made by Mr. Hugh Guthrie, member for South Wellington, who moved the resolution for its adoption, and Mr. Charles Marcell, member of Bonaventure, who seconded the motion. As Sir Wilfred Laurier pointed out, Mr. Guthrie is the clever son of the clever sire. Mr. Guthrie's father moved the adoption of the address 24 years ago (on the same day of the same month) and the latter was present in the gallery of the House today to hear his own son discharge the duty which fell to his lot a quarter of a century ago. He must have been extremely gratified with the manner in which his son fulfilled all the expectations entertained of him. Mr. Hugh Guthrie has a decidedly fine Parliamentary style, and is also dignified, logical and convincing. Had he been an experienced Parliamentarian he could not have acquitted himself better, and the House listened with the greatest interest to the masterly address of the young member. Mr. Guthrie displayed no trace of nervousness, but a rare self-possession. This was accompanied with a modesty and diffidence of manner most becoming in so young a figure in the House. Mr. Guthrie's maiden speech can be regarded as a decided success, and his future career in Parliament will henceforward be watched with the greatest interest."¹⁰

His reputation as a barrister was also growing; during 1899 he served as Crown prosecutor at Essex assizes and during his first term in Parliament performed similar duties at the York assizes which included a murder trial of a Fred L. Rice charged with the shooting of a police constable during an attempt to escape custody while being transported to the Don jail. Guthrie was named King's Counsel in 1902.

Despite brilliant promise, and regular commendation from the Prime Minister of the day, Guthrie seemed destined as a Liberal gradually to miss preferment from the ranks of the Cabinet. Front rank¹¹ in the Liberal party as viewed by many, his somewhat

forthright, partisan style may have encouraged hesitation among those with power to dispense.

He had early in his political career displayed his determination to achieve his objectives. For example in 1906 he learned that his friend Mr. McMillan was not to be appointed a judge despite Guthrie's effort in pressing his claim for such a preferment. Even though Liberal newspapers had announced the likely appointment of a Mr. Clement of Berlin (Kitchener), Guthrie, when he learned of this,

"jumped on the train, came down to Ottawa yesterday and protested so vigorously that before he left town Mr. Clement had been sidetracked and Mr. McMillan had got the place."¹²

Protesting vigorously and sidetracking the choice of the Government would hardly have endeared him to those in key positions within the party. A young man of promise certainly but one whose political future was not assured.

The first of the three events we wish to consider occurred in 1908 when he moved a resolution to establish an inquiry into Technical Education. If adopted, the potential effect of passage of his resolution would have been for the Federal government to assume the major share of initiative and control for Technical Education throughout Canada.

Not only the Prime Minister but also the Liberal party as a whole were antagonized by this proposal. Wilfrid Laurier may have perceived this resolution as a poaching manoeuvre if not a potential attack upon Quebec.

Guthrie was, however, well aware that his resolution to appoint a Federal Government Commission to enquire into technical education throughout the Dominion would be confronted by the definite exclusiveness of section 93¹³ of the BNA Act. Not only was he aware of this difficulty, he actually defended his proposal for an enquiry by reference to section 91¹⁴ of the same act.

Guthrie's position was clarity itself, he stated that, he had,

"the honour of bringing it (the resolution) before Parliament at the joint request of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, an association representative of a very large proportion of the skilled labour and mechanics of the country, and of the Canadian Manufacturers Association, an association which embraces in its

membership a large proportion of the industrial employers of this country. Both of these bodies have given a great deal of consideration to the subject and both have endorsed it. It has also been endorsed by some of the leading educationists in Canada, men who are at the head of our Universities, and by over thirty of the leading boards of trade and chambers of commerce, representing the chief industrial centres in Canada. I mention these matters at the outset in order to show the House that the question of technical education is a very live question in Canada today."¹⁵

After establishing to his satisfaction that "technical education" was not, in his view, education as meant within the meaning of Section 93, he continued:

"As a second answer to any objections which might be raised to the constitutional rights of this parliament to deal with this motion I think one can safely argue that the whole question of industrial training is so intimately associated with the general trade and commerce of this country, subjects over which parliament has authority, that it will have such a direct influence upon both the quantity and quality of our manufactured products, that it will bear so directly upon our national resources as regards their development, manufacture and transport, and it is intimately concerned with the general trade and commercial progress of the country that we may fairly say that it comes within the authority and jurisdiction of this parliament."¹⁶

The resolution was regarded by many as his most important up to that point in his parliamentary career. The debate on the resolution lasted five hours and was opposed by the Government of which Guthrie was a member, not because the principle was wrong, but on the ground that such a commission might interfere with the rights of respective provinces. At the time Guthrie was said to have appeared to good advantage in the debate leaving the impression that he was capable of clear, constructive thinking, as well as of convincing address.

In the light of debate of recent years on the Constitution, particularly the difficulty surrounding the issues of the division of power between the Federal and Provincial levels of Government, Guthrie would appear as a centralist, or, if you will, when major issues were at stake he took the broadest view of the nation's good. The logic of his position, in particular the desirability of a properly prepared work-force of technically-trained persons supporting the rapidly developing economic expansion of Canada, must surely have appealed to those perceiving this issue as a central concern of the

times. The narrower, more partisan viewpoint would prevail, however, due largely to the inability of the legislators to conceive of a means of ensuring the desirable results of such a policy while avoiding offence against the perceived jurisdictional rights of the Provincial authority. Today, in the final quarter of the Century, our Parliamentarians appear no nearer the creation of a means of cracking this rights-obligations blockage which concentrates the attention of the respective legislators on partisan positions to the exclusion of the national good.

When in August 1911, Sir Alan Aylesworth, then Minister of Justice resolved to retire from the Government, speculation that Guthrie would be the government's choice as successor was widespread. In fact, a newspaper story for August 8, 1911, virtually announced the appointment under a large picture of Guthrie, all of which hovered under this large-type head:

Mr. Hugh Guthrie, M.P. to be Minister of Justice. A dispatch from Ottawa says that Mr. Hugh Guthrie, K.C., the member of South Wellington since 1900 will probably succeed Sir Alan Aylesworth as Minister of Justice. Mr. Guthrie is a native of Guelph, and has had substantial majorities in all his contests for the riding he represents, that of 1908 totalling 701. He was elected Chairman of the Commons Railway Commission in 1907. A keen debater and a Parliamentarian whose work is distinguished by ability and thoroughness he has come rapidly to the front during the past few years. In religion, Mr. Guthrie is Presbyterian. He was born in 1866.¹⁷

The year was 1911 and an election was in the offing. The second event we wish to note – the reciprocity debate – would be central to this election, as well as a definite influence upon his career.

Laurier made no decision about replacing Aylesworth, leaving the question up in the air throughout the campaign. While speculation continued to circulate, and other considerations such as a possible judgeship were mooted for Guthrie should he lose the election, no evidence exists that he did other than deny such speculation when questions about such possibilities were directed to him.

Guthrie's position on the reciprocity issue was straightforward and clear. He argued forcefully in favour of it approaching the subject from all points of view, while emphasizing the distinct advantage which would accrue to the farmer if reciprocity was instituted.

The relative merit of the ultimately defeated proposal of reciprocity is not the central issue of this study; nonetheless, the pivotal

importance of the issue in the development of the Canadian economy and society can hardly be over-emphasized. The decision to hide behind tariff regulations or to compete in a broader market-place clearly was a water-shed. The effect upon the economy was no less important than the issue of the provision of technical education for a somewhat educationally-impooverished work-force earlier unsuccessfully proposed by Guthrie.

While in the latter concern Guthrie had been the lone proponent arguing against the collective determination of his party, in the reciprocity issue he found himself roundly attacked by the opposition as well as selected members of his own party once the initial euphoria of the proposal was dissipated.

The determined opposition of the Conservative members of the House of Commons prevented any business proceeding in the House, claimed Guthrie:

"The reciprocity proposal had precedence and they blocked it, and they were prepared to block every other measure. Mr. Blair of Peel, and Mr. Lancaster of Lincoln going so far as to state that they wouldn't vote one dollar of supplies to carry on the government of the country unless the government absolutely dropped this measure, and there was nothing else to do but to go direct to the people and ask them to decide upon the question. . . . It is the first duty of the members of parliament to vote money to carry on the government of the country, and then to look after the trade of the country. That is our duty. And it is not necessary that on these questions we should have to dissolve the House and take a referendum."18

Later in that same address he added, while emphasizing the virtue of the proposal for the interest of the farmer:

"I realize that if the farmers of Canada at the present time don't look after their own interests, I believe the chance they have will not recur to them again perhaps in 25 or 50 years. We have waited a long, long time for this chance. It is needless to tell you how hard Sir John MacDonald tried to get it, Sir George Brown, the Hon. George Foster tried to get it, and all the other leading Conservatives have tried to get it. For 45 years we have been trying to get this agreement with the United States and the tariff wall went up, up, up. The Liberal party cannot say that created the present situation with the United States, but we are willing to take advantage of it. Their own domestic condition has led them to offer this trade agreement to Canada. . . . At the outset all Canada said 'Yes.' Now the Conservative Party say 'No.' It is a solemn moment almost for the agricultural portions in Canada.

Put the Liberal Party out of power and lose the chance of this agreement. Let those special interest down in Toronto prevail, those who occupy the seats of the mighty, let them become dominant in Canada, and it will be 25, or 50 years perhaps, before the market in the United States will be open."19

To gain perspective we should recall that at the time of these debates almost 70% of the work force in Canada was engaged in agriculture. Guthrie correctly identified the "tail wagging the dog" aspect of the banks and industrial interests' negative intervention in the critical decision.

Nevertheless when all the dust had settled the Liberal government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been defeated, but, Hugh Guthrie, once again for the fourth time, had been re-elected.

With the outbreak of what came to be called World War I the nature of Hugh Guthrie's "Notion of a Nation" became crystal clear. The lead editorial of *The Free Press* of London, Ontario, December 23, 1916, proclaims the sharp differences rending the Liberal party while, at the same time eulogizing the stand taken by Hugh Guthrie on National Service.

"Mr. Hugh Guthrie, M.P. the Liberal representative for Wellington County in the House of Commons, and one of the foremost members of the opposition, has written to the Mayor of Guelph asking that a public meeting be called in that city to give support and co-operation 'with the great work of the National Service of Canada.' The action of Mr. Guthrie is such as to earn for him the sincere regard of every Canadian whose loyalty transcends party.

When it is reflected that it was upon this National Service Board that Sir Wilfrid Laurier refused his services, though the subject of a special invitation from the Prime Minister of Canada, the action of the stalwart Wellington Liberal becomes by contrast all the more prominent. Mr. Guthrie represents the will and heart of Liberalism in this province. In the minds of the people party politics are placed to one side. With Asquith, of England, they say: There is no opposition.

How might it well be otherwise when Liberals are fighting side by side with Conservatives for the great cause? What insanity could possess us to interpose partizan and petty issues in the face of the struggle of life and death that is being waged in France and on all the war fronts? What patience can there be with Canadians who fail to rise above the mean and little things when national existence itself hangs in the balance? As one critic has said, Sir

Wilfrid Laurier went to Toronto to discuss woman suffrage and to tell reminiscences of his life, while men were dying for freedom's sake. Liberalism is not represented in such a leader. It is represented in men of the broad Canadianism of its Hugh Guthries."²⁰

Parochially disruptive in content while attempting to illustrate national cohesiveness though the editorial may be, the referred-to action of Guthrie foretold decisions he would take within the following year.

The war progressed unevenly, with recruiting of adequate manpower a continuing concern. Meighan,²¹ Solicitor-General in Borden's cabinet, with wise foresight proposed during the first year of the war formation of a non-party union government as the necessary means of curbing party politics so that the war could more readily be won. At that stage, the proposal was rejected. When the winning of the war finally came to the point of requiring a Military Service Act, the necessity of a coalition between the Conservatives and Liberals exacerbated the trauma, shattering any real hope that a reconciliation of an English-speaking and French-speaking view of what constituted an adequate effort in the war might be achieved.²²

The first break in the Liberal ranks on the question of conscription came on 19 June 1917 when Hugh Guthrie,

"... for seventeen years a staunch supporter of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the House of Commons, refused to accept his amendment calling for a referendum on compulsory service and declared his 'whole-hearted support' of the bill brought forward by the Prime Minister. His speech was delivered with intense earnestness, and with evident sincerity. Parliament is seldom moved so deeply as it was by the member for South Wellington. It was fair, closely reasoned, judicial, and at times he rose to heights of great eloquence."²³

Complimented by Borden for:

"... your great speech. It was one of the finest I ever heard in the House of Commons in twenty-one years,"²⁴

his action opened the way for the eventual formation of a coalition government, possibly wrecked the Liberal party's position respecting conscription and threw a sharp, clear light upon the residual dilemma inherent in Canada's internal as well as international posture - the English-speaking-French-speaking dichotomy.

On the 19th June Guthrie was the star performer. With only a note or two:

"For eloquence and logic he matched Foster, and in the scope of his argument, which was not the regular kind of political speech, he travelled on lofty ground, making a convincing appeal for Parliamentary unity in prosecuting the war, the enactment of conscription without a referendum, the formation of a coalition government, extension of Parliament and no election. It was a wrench for him to break with Sir Wilfrid but patriotic duty demanded it."²⁵

The Toronto *Daily News* had this to say:

"His speech which may be historic as marking a realignment of the parties was followed with the closest attention by a tense expectant House and crowded gallery. Time and again he was applauded thunderously by the Government benches and English-speaking Liberals who sympathized with his views.

Mr. Guthrie's speech was one such as is rarely heard in Parliament - fair, judicial, closely reasoned, and at times rose to great heights of eloquence. Parliament is seldom moved as it was last night when Mr. Guthrie, amid intense silence, wound up a plea to back up the men at the front by quoting a poem of John McRae, a McGill University student, entitled 'ON FLANDERS FIELD' which concludes as follows:

'If ye break faith with those who die,
We shall not sleep though poppies blow,
On Flanders Field.' "²⁶

Not everyone perceived Guthrie's action to be virtuous; The Montreal newspaper *LE CANADA* observed, in part:

"Two traitors have gone over to the enemy - with an éclat which betrays the Conservatives' joy at such a desertion. ... Thank God the Liberal Party is not comprised by these desertions."²⁷

However when Hugh Guthrie was charged with being a "turn-coat" he had this to say:

"They accuse me of turning my coat, which has always been a Liberal one. I have taken off my coat and I will keep it off until this war is over."²⁸

His formal statement given to a meeting of electors of both parties held in Guelph in October 3, 1917 is instructive:

"And now a word with reference to the position which I intend to take if I am again returned to Parliament in respect of measures pertaining to the present war. I intend to give wholehearted and unqualified support to any Government which may be formed and which will undertake to prosecute the war to the full extent of Canada's power in men, money and resources. It matters not to me whether such a Government is called Coalition, Union or National. I believe in a union at the present time of all political forces for the prosecution of the war irrespective of all political parties. It is a united action which is needed at the present time and matters of mere party politics should be buried until victory is won. In the past I have been looked upon as a strong party man, but since May I have publicly and privately advocated a cessation of party strife and I intend to continue in this course until the end of the war. I do not know whether a Union Government will be formed by Sir Robert Borden at the present time or after the general election, if he be returned to power. I am certain from the public statement which the Prime Minister has made that it is his intention to form a Union Government of the best men available either now or later on, and if a Union Government is formed and I am returned to Parliament for this riding I shall give it my utmost support. It must not, however, be supposed that by pursuing this course that I have changed my Liberal principles. I have not done so. Liberal principles which I have advocated for many years past I still adhere to, but in my judgement all political questions which are now before the public must take a secondary place to the one supreme question of Canada's participation in the war to the fullest extent. I place this first and foremost in the political situation in Canada today and I believe that whatever shall be required of Canada in connection with the war and which is within Canada's power to do so, should be done, even if other matters of great importance under normal conditions, must wait until some future time for adjustment. Win the war first and fight our own political battles afterwards is the basic principle upon which my political action shall be framed until the war is over, and the most desirable thing at the present moment, in my judgement, in the political affairs of this country is a Union Government and if such a Government is formed I shall certainly support it to the utmost of my ability."²⁹

After several months of tortuous negotiation Borden finally succeeded in forming a Union Government in which nine Liberals took ministerial office including the appointment of Hugh Guthrie as Solicitor-General, although not appointed to the cabinet. The privy-councillor rank would come in 1919.

Hugh Guthrie was to serve the nation in political office until 1935 - another eighteen years - but never again as a Liberal. He won the next four elections as a Conservative candidate in South Wellington.

These three major political events and Guthrie's part in them bring his essential political style and viewpoint into sharp focus. His part in these "great events" reveal a man, who, as he could claim, was a strong party man. Demonstrated, above all else, is his vision and desire for the successful achievement of National objectives. When partisan politics intervened to obstruct the potential achievement of the National "good," Guthrie saw clearly the necessity for setting aside the pettiness of partisanship in favour of the success for Canada as a whole.

Each of these events, the debate over Technical education, the Reciprocity controversy and election and the conscription issue of 1917 while different in form, content and perhaps importance, embrace the three central Canadian issues; the provincial-federal relationship, the Canada-United States relationship and the English-speaking-French-speaking relationship, the continued irresolution of which account in large part for the frustration of Laurier's boast that the XXth Century would be Canada's century.

Guthrie saw clearly what must be done, what must prevail and the probable consequence for failure to act in the "national good."

NOTES

¹The definitive biography of Hugh Guthrie is now being written by the author. Central facts in his life include the following:

Hugh Guthrie (1866-1939)

Born in Guelph, August 13, 1866

Education: Osgoode Hall, 1888 (K.C. 1902)

Rep. South Wellington Can., H/C 1900-1935

Solicitor-General Union Government, 1917, Privy Council, 1919 and *into cabinet remaining Act./Sol. Gen. until Sept. 1921 and retaining portfolio until fall of Government, December 1921.*

1920-21 Minister of Militia and Defense

1926-Minister of National Defence (Meighan administration)

1930-35 Minister of Justice (Bennett administration)

1935-Retired and appointed Chief Commissioner Bd. of Railway Commissioners for Canada

Died Ottawa, November 3, 1939

Biog. source: Wallace & McKay, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, IVth edition, *Encyclopedia Canadiana*.

²Guthrie was educated through public school and the Collegiate Institute in Guelph, matriculated from the University of Toronto, and then on to Osgoode Hall graduating in Law in 1888.

³The Guelph *Herald* editorial comment, 2 November 1899. Book 1, Guthrie papers.

⁴The *Evening Mercury*, November 2, 1899, editorial comment. Book 1, Guthrie papers.

⁵The *Globe*, Toronto, editorial comment, 3 November 1899. Book 1, Guthrie papers.

⁶The *Guelph Daily Herald*, editorial comment, 2 November 1899. Book 1, Guthrie papers.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸Laurier to Guthrie, Ottawa, June 7, 1901. Book 1, Guthrie papers.

⁹*Toronto Globe*, January 11, 1901. Book 1, Guthrie papers.

¹⁰*Toronto Globe*, February 12, 1901. Book 1, Guthrie papers.

¹¹Although he was referred to as of the secondary rank from Ontario in connection with the political crisis of 1917; see Hutchinson, Bruce, *Mr. Prime Minister 1868-1964*, Longmans, Toronto, 1964, p. 180.

¹²The *Mail and Empire*, Toronto, January 31, 1906. Book 3, Guthrie papers.

¹³Which establishes that in and for each province the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education.

¹⁴Which provides that in matters of trade and commerce the Federal parliament will have jurisdiction.

¹⁵Hansard as reported February 15, 1908, page 100, Book 4, Guthrie papers.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷*Guelph Mercury*, August 8, 1911. Book 3, Guthrie papers.

¹⁸Speech at Guelph, August 17, 1911; on the occasion of his unanimous choice as Liberal candidate. Book 4, page 4, Guthrie papers.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰The *Free Press*, London, Ontario, December 23, 1916. Book 5, Guthrie papers.

²¹Hutchinson, Bruce, *Mr. Prime Minister 1868-1964*, Longmans, Toronto, 1964, p. 159.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 172.

²³*Ottawa Evening Journal*, June 29, 1917. Book 5, Guthrie papers.

²⁴Borden to Guthrie, 19 June 1917. Book 5, Guthrie papers.

²⁵*Evening Record*, Windsor, 19 June 1917. Book 5, Guthrie papers.

²⁶*Toronto Daily News*, June 23, 1917. Book 5, Guthrie papers.

²⁷*Le Canada*, Montreal, 5 October 1917. Book 5, Guthrie papers.

²⁸*Guelph Mercury*, October 3, 1917. Book 5, Guthrie papers.

²⁹*Ibid.*

Walter Murray of Saskatchewan (1866-1945) Prairie Pioneer

D.R. MURRAY

Not all prairie pioneers journeyed west in Red River carts, nor were all pioneers prospective farmers. The construction of Canada's transcontinental railways unleashed an immigrant boom which transformed the Canadian West. Immigrants in their thousands poured into the prairie communities, especially in the first decade of the twentieth century, stimulating a sudden demand for education. Higher education in the form of universities had been thought of in the West before 1900. In 1889 the Legislature of the North West territories asked the Dominion Government for a university land grant, but it was not until after the creation of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905 that the actual establishment of state universities occurred in each province. The formation in 1907 of a state university in Saskatchewan brought Walter Murray to the province the following year as the first President of the fledgling institution. He regarded himself as a pioneer and he was — an intellectual pioneer who was the leader in moulding higher education in Saskatchewan.

Murray remained in Saskatchewan for the rest of his life serving the university as President during a tenure of nearly thirty years spanning World War I and the Great Depression. He was pre-eminent