> Throughout North America little in the financial history of universities has been more noticeable than the good effect of large grants of wild [Indigenous] land. The original grant to the University of Toronto has borne abundant fruit, has, indeed, made the present state of higher education in Ontario possible.[1]
> – *Report of the Royal Commission on the University of Toronto* (1906)

UNIVERSITY LAND GRABS
Indigenous Dispossession and the Universities of Toronto and Manitoba

In the past ten years, Indigenous land acknowledgements have become a regular feature of webpages, conference proceedings, and discussion at Canadian universities.[2] These acknowledgements connect a university's campus(es) to the traditional Indigenous territories they occupy. The University of Toronto's land acknowledgement, for example, recognizes the institution's ongoing physical presence upon the traditional territories of the "Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit."[3] However, while these statements capture an important aspect of university landholding, insofar as the acknowledgement represents those lands that were (and are) crucial to a university's existence, most of them skirt a deeper and more significant connection between universities and Indigenous dispossession. A more fitting acknowledgement for Toronto's university, which once held lands far beyond its campus, might see the territories of the Attiwonderonk (Neutral), Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Petun, and Omàmìwininìwag (Algonquin) among possibly others, added to its current formulation.[4]

What institutional land acknowledgements seldom reflect is that many universities founded in the nineteenth century began as largescale landowners. By 1828, the University of Toronto's predecessor, King's College, had received more than 200,000 acres of expropriated

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[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on the University of Toronto* (Toronto, 1906), lvii.
[2] See Lynn Gehl, "Land Acknowledgement," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, last modified 6 May 2022, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/land-acknowledgment .
[3] "Land Acknowledgement," *Indigenous U of T*, 2023, https://indigenous.utoronto.ca/about/land-acknowledgement/.
[4] For information on these traditional territories, see: *Native Land Digital* https://native-land.ca .

Indigenous land – an area larger than the present-day city of Toronto.[5] This land, through its lease, mortgage, or sale, then supplied the bulk of the young institution's endowment capital. In Manitoba, a legislative grant of 150,000 acres would securely endow a university in Winnipeg before 1900.[6] Even today, near Vancouver, a provincially-run "unincorporated community of 4,000 people" named the "University Endowment Lands" serves as a reminder of the lands once granted to the University of British Columbia in the early-twentieth century.[7]

Accordingly, this article examines how landholding undergirded Canadian universities' development in the nineteenth century, taking the University of Toronto and the University of Manitoba as its focus. Using Indigenous land to finance higher education was not unique to these institutions nor to Canada, but the relationship between Indigenous dispossession and university-building has not been explored among Canadian institutions – despite its significance to the initial foundations and subsequent wealth of Ontario's and Manitoba's first universities. One reason for this omission is that the land parcels assigned to universities were scattered over great distances and were both larger than, and distinct from, their campuses. A second reason remains that we tend today to think of universities as fixed, place-based communities. Students nostalgically associate their alma mater with a definitive place, usually its host city or campus, while scholars engage with the specific objects and environments that universities create.[8] But the full territorial reach of Victorian universities is less obvious, if no less significant to both institutions and Indigenous communities.

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[5] "Final Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Affairs of King's College University, and Upper Canada College, 1848," box 001, B65-0040, University of Toronto Archives, Toronto (hereafter UTARMS).
[6] Meeting, September 1888, "Land Board-Minutes," book 1, box 6, UA10, A1978-08, University of Manitoba Archives, Winnipeg (hereafter UMBA),.
[7] "University Endowment Lands website," *Government of British Columbia*, 2023 http://www.universityendowmentlands.gov.bc.ca .
[8] William Whyte, *Redbrick: A Social and Architectural History of Britain's Civic Universities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 12; Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3, 7, 16-21.

Considering Canadian universities as settler-colonial landholders has important implications for the study of empire, colonialism, and Indigenous dispossession. University landholding made institutions of higher education the beneficiaries of Indigenous removal and agents of colonization. It also, eventually, made them facilitators of land transfer to settlers and speculators, a role that both depended upon and enhanced maturing systems of settler property rights. As such, this article makes two arguments. First, it contends that land was the essential ingredient in university-building in Ontario and Manitoba, one that linked new universities' establishment to Indigenous dispossession. Without land leases, sales, mortgages, and using land as collateral for loans, it is unlikely that these two institutions would have developed as quickly, or even at all, in this period. Although some of the Indigenous lands granted to these universities had been purchased or ceded before their reassignment, large portions had not, while other lands had been sold under dubious circumstances. Funding universities with Indigenous land, therefore, produced an enormous wealth transfer in land from Indigenous communities to universities.

And secondly, new public universities were not neutral knowledge-producing institutions. Long after the nineteenth century, these organizations would continue to transform their physical environments because they came to control knowledge production about land. Many universities with land endowments, including the universities of Toronto and Manitoba, institutionalized one form of knowledge about land cultivation, based upon the growing field of European agricultural science, while leaving aside Indigenous ways of being and thinking about land. The effect of this knowledge valuation is still felt today. New seed varietals, the introduction of herd animals to non-native environments, the invention of improved fertilizers,

and other university-invented techniques, all altered local ecologies in line with settler knowledge systems and desires.

Recent historical research has traced the landholding practices and colonial legacies of the American land-grant university. Education scholar Margaret Nash and the influential "Land-Grab Universities" project of historian Bobby Lee and journalist Tristan Ahtone focus on the Indigenous lands apportioned to U.S. states to fund higher education under the *Morrill Act* of 1862.[9] Altogether, the *Morrill Act* supplied "land-grant" universities with over 10 million acres – more land than exists in the states of Vermont, Connecticut, and Delaware put together. Yet, despite its size, the *Morrill Act* was just one example of how nineteenth-century legislatures allocated Indigenous land to institution-building. In both the United States and British colonies of settlement, including Canada, the practice of transferring Indigenous lands to young institutions formed a common financing strategy and produced a shared pattern of institutional development.

Invigorated by popular interest in the legacies of empire, university administrators and scholars today have also looked more self-critically at their institutions' histories. Higher education's connections to colonial wealth have been at the heart of this renewed interest. Not only Indigenous land, but projects excavating the ties of slave profits to university building – including those of the historians Craig Steven Wilder and Nicholas Draper – have burgeoned.[10] In the United States, the "Universities Studying Slavery (USS)" consortium emerged in 2014. What began as a research project on the links between slave profits and Brown University is now

[9] Margaret A. Nash, "The Dark History of Land-Grant Universities," *The Washington Post*, 8 November 2019.
[10] Craig Steven Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014); Nicholas Draper, *The Price of Emancipation: Slave-Ownership, Compensation and British Society at the End of Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

an umbrella organization with over one hundred members, situated both in the U.S. and abroad.[11] The University of Glasgow has similarly positioned itself as a center for research on slavery and higher education in the United Kingdom, while universities around the world have developed committees to investigate the links between their institutions and forms of colonial wealth.[12] In this moment of public engagement with institutions' pasts, universities have taken centre stage – not as the detached ivory towers of cliché, but as embedded organizations shaped by their founding, financing, and a shifting array of interests.

Histories of the universities of Toronto and Manitoba, too, have noted their landholding, although not its significance.[13] The genre of the university biography tends to dwell on universities' inner lives, particularly upon the personalities that made each university unique. This focus is important, yet at times it obscures the larger conditions and constraints that enabled those inner lives. In addition, it is difficult to understand the importance of university landholding at Toronto or Winnipeg without looking at this practice in its regional and imperial context. Although landholding at each institution had distinctive features, in neither case was it anomalous. Young settler institutions, connected by imperial networks or academic exchange, often faced similar financial challenges and looked to one another to overcome them. For this reason and others, there is a great deal more to uncover about the practices of Indigenous dispossession that enabled university-building in the nineteenth century, both in Canada and elsewhere.

The following analysis combines archival and digital methods. University documents and accounting records provide one route into institutional land transactions. They allow historians to

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[11] "Slavery and Justice Report," *Brown & Slavery & Justice*, 2021, https://slaveryandjustice.brown.edu/report.
[12] "Historical Slavery Initiative," *University of Glasgow*, https://www.gla.ac.uk/explore/historicalslaveryinitiative/.
[13] Martin L. Friedland, *The University of Toronto: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 8; J.M. Bumsted, *The University of Manitoba: An Illustrated History* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2001), 8-9.

"follow the money" derived from land sales and leases, and to explore how faculty and administrators understood their institutions' relationship to land. Locating the Indigenous lands that formed institutional endowments is a more difficult task however, since maps and surveys of university lands were often poorly made. Georeferencing some of these maps reveals the location of endowment lands, along with their relationship to Indigenous communities.[14] Recreating the location of land parcels also provides new insights into how the process of university landholding operated, showing how Indigenous lands distant from a university could play a pivotal role in its development.

How to Build a University: Precarious Institutions and Mid-Victorian University Financing

The turn of the nineteenth century saw a great deal of interest and innovation in university-building across Britain's empire. Especially for clergymen, colleges and universities seemed the ideal institution for training ministers and teachers, and for replanting English social and ecclesiastical hierarchies abroad.[15] What many of these university promoters discovered, though, was that the first stages of institutional development – erecting buildings, paying professors, attracting students – were both incredibly capital-intensive and vulnerable to disruption by the vagaries of colonial life. Dalhousie University, for one, spent its first forty years on shaky terms. While George Ramsay, the ninth earl of Dalhousie, commissioned local freemasons to lay the foundation stone of "Dalhousie College" in 1820, no student would

[14] At its most basic, georeferencing refers to "the process of assigning locations to geographical objects within a geographic frame of reference." In this case, an application for analyzing geospatial information, QGIS, was used to connect land parcels portrayed on historical maps to their current geospatial location. Xiaobai A. Yao, "Georeferencing and Geocoding," in Audrey Kobayashi, ed., *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Elsevier, 2020), 111–117.

[15] John Strachan, *An Appeal to the Friends of Religion and Literature*, 1827, fo. 4, box 001, B1988-0002, UTARMS; Friedland, *The University of Toronto*, 6.

graduate before 1866.[16] In this instance, as in others, the difficulties of building, financing, and operating the institution all emerged after its foundations were laid.[17]

When public universities first opened in the nineteenth century across Britain and its empire, faculty and administrators hoped that student fees would sustain their institutions.[18] Student demand, though, was overestimated by administrators and highly variable. While a few institutions, including University College London (UCL), began as joint-stock companies, most universities relied upon some combination of three forms of revenue. These were: government or ecclesiastical land grants, a government or public cash grant, and benefactions. In some cases, one of these revenue streams dominated, especially during a university's establishment. McGill University, for instance, took its name from its first benefactor, a businessman with ventures in furs but also in enslaved peoples. Convinced of the need for Protestant higher education in the heart of Catholic Lower Canada, James McGill left $50,000 in 1813 for an institution that still bears his name in Montréal.[19] By 1865, the Governors of McGill College had determined that this "endowment, liberal as it was, was yet quite inadequate for the object contemplated…."[20] Fortunately for these Governors, the College continued to receive funds from its provincial Legislative Assembly, as well as major donations from the tobacco magnate Sir William

[16] Jessica Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism, 1717-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 168.
[17] Henry Roper, "Aspects of the History of a Loyalist College: King's College, Windsor and Nova Scotian Higher Education in the Nineteenth Century," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 60, no. 4 (December 1991): 446-7.
[18] Robin S. Harris, *A History of Higher Education in Canada, 1663-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 32. On UCL's early finances, see "University of London, Annual General Meeting of Proprietors," 27 Feb. 1833, UCL0090156 (A3.1), University College London Special Collections, London.
[19] Stanley Brice Frost, *McGill University for the Advancement of Learning, 1801-1895* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980), 5-6.
[20] "Petition to Governor-General Lord Monck Re Permanent University Endowment," 1865, file 10157, container 0455, RG4, McGill University Archives, Montréal (hereafter MGUA).

Macdonald, the businessman Sir Donald A. Smith (Lord Strathcona), the beer-manufacturing Molson family, and eventually, the steel manufacturer Andrew Carnegie.[21]

A little earlier, in the Maritimes, it was government grants that allowed for a wave of sectarian universities to sweep across Canada's east coast. Hoping to transplant a Church of England institution to colonial soil, the British government spent over £37,000 to fund the Anglican King's College Windsor between 1790 and 1834.[22] Nova Scotia's House of Assembly would subsequently outdo this level of support. Until 1881, it supported six universities in Nova Scotia, as well as the Methodists' Mount Allison University despite that "it was located in the neighbouring province of New Brunswick."[23]

While these East Coast institutions all survived their precarious infancy, most nineteenth-century universities spent their first few decades without an endowment or secure funding. University promoters at York (later, Toronto) and Winnipeg both weighed the institutional financing options available to them, latching onto the possibility of a land grant. As in Halifax, the King's College at York experienced a significant lag between its founding and opening, due to both disagreements over its sectarian status and a need to set it on a firm financial footing. Although the College received its charter in 1827, it did not welcome a single undergraduate until the 1840s. During this time, land featured prominently among the financing mechanisms contemplated for ensuring the institution's long-term financial stability. Without a significant initial donor, the Anglican clergyman, John Strachan, wrote in 1827 that revenue for a new university will be found from "the sale of lands appropriated for its endowment, or grants from

[21] McGill College, Endowment Register, file 00998, container 0075, RG0006, MGUA.
[22] Whyte, *Redbrick*, 27.
[23] Roper, "Aspects of the History of a Loyalist College," 445-6.

the Provincial Legislature."[24] Given the subsequent financial crises of the 1830s, Upper Canadian governors and legislatures were more forthcoming with land than coin.

Manitoba's provincial legislature established a university in 1877, exactly fifty years after King's College had gained its charter. Yet the sources of revenue considered for the institution had hardly changed in the intervening years. A summary of the Chancellor's remarks at Manitoba's "Conferring of Degrees" in 1882 attests to the determination of university leaders to support their institution through land, noting that:

> There was another matter… of very great importance to the University; …he meant the obtaining of a special grant of land if possible for University purposes from the Dominion government. …Adequate provision for the future wants of the University must be from this quarter. Private benefactions could not be depended upon…, and it would be some time before the Province would give substantial assistance so far as the university is concerned.[25]

Here, the Chancellor weighs the young institution's financial options. Since benefactions and government grants appeared to be less readily available, the university's provision, he argues, must come from "a special grant of land".

Despite the apparent appeal of land-granting to Victorian educationalists, this financing mechanism was neither particular to universities nor to the nineteenth century. Colonial governments had relied upon grants of Indigenous land to fund railways, turnpikes, canals, and other public projects since the 1600s.[26] The relationship between universities and landholding in Europe, moreover, had an even longer association. In England, the ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge had accrued vast tracts of land, most of which provided rental income to

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[24] John Strachan, *An Appeal to the Friends of Religion and Literature*, 1827, fo. 4, box 001, B1988-0002, UTARMS.
[25] Manitoba University Calendar, 1882, box 2, UPC Gen 184, UMBA.
[26] Eldon J. Johnson, "Misconceptions about the Early Land-Grant Colleges," *The Journal of Higher Education* 52, no. 4 (1981): 333.

individual colleges. As of 2018, according to a report on Oxbridge landholding, these colleges still "collectively own more land than the Church of England and have a portfolio of properties across the UK worth £3.5bn."[27] In pressing their legislatures for land grants, then, university promoters in Canadian provinces worked from European precedents. Like other settlement colonies that invoked these precedents, however, largescale land-granting produced distinct and often devastating effects for Indigenous peoples.

Across Anglo-dominant settler societies, religious difference also drove university expansion. The universities of Toronto and Manitoba emerged out of religious rivalries, as the relationship between colonial churches, settler states, and higher education shifted in the nineteenth century. Out of squabbles between separate denominational colleges for students and funding, both universities paradoxically became nondenominational. They adopted quasi-federative (Toronto) and federative (Manitoba) structures, initially allowing for religious instruction to continue at the collegiate level.[28] Religious boosterism in higher education, as previously described, had already inspired university expansion in the Maritimes. As late as 1922, *Maclean's Magazine* described the Maritime provinces as having "more colleges per head of population there than in almost any other section of the globe."[29] The rate of university-building across Canada, in fact, far exceeded public demand for higher education. It also greatly surpassed the provision of elementary and secondary schooling. Nonetheless, the desire to form faith-based institutions that might train clergymen (including Indigenous clergymen) and

[27] Xavier Greenwood and Richard Adams, "Oxford and Cambridge University Colleges Own Property Worth £3.5bn," *The Guardian*, 29 May 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/may/29/oxford-and-cambridge-university-colleges-own-property-worth-35bn .
[28] Bumsted, *The University of Manitoba*, 3.
[29] Joseph Lister, "Cooperation in Education," 15 July 1922, misc. 1882-1930, folder 8-24, MG 28 I 196 8, Libraries and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

teachers, and act as a bulwark against Americanization, held consistent throughout the Victorian period.

University Land Grabs, Part I: King's College and the University of Toronto

The King's College (York) offered an early and significant example of educational land grants in British North America, carving out a development path for other institutions to follow. The Eton and Oxford-educated lieutenant-governor, John Graves Simcoe, first favoured a college for the Upper Canadian colony in the late-eighteenth century. In 1798, the Upper Canadian Legislature made an initial provision for such an institution.[30] As a later Royal Commission indicates, in that year, "a grant of 549,000 acres was, at the instance of the Provincial Legislature, placed at the disposal of the local authorities, … for the maintenance of various educational establishments, including a University."[31] Between 1798 and 1826, the provincial government then assigned 190,573 acres of this endowment to a public body known as the Board of General Education, which funded grammar and common schools.

At this point, a new lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, appointed in 1818, stepped in. The soldier and colonial administrator, Sir Peregrine Maitland, agreed with elite Anglican educationalists – especially the eventual Bishop of Toronto John Strachan – that a new Anglican university would require more valuable lands to be viable. Maitland thus negotiated a lucrative exchange with the Colonial Secretary, the third Earl Bathurst, in 1825. According to the deed of endowment of King's College, signed on 3 January 1828, this exchange amounted to trading the remainder of the 1798 land grant (358,000 acres) for 225,944 acres of higher-valued Crown

[30] W. Stewart Wallace, *A History of the University of Toronto, 1827-1927* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1927), 2-3.
[31] *Final Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Affairs of King's College University, and Upper Canada College* (Quebec, 1852), 16.

Reserves.[32] Although various College bursars chronically mismanaged these lands, even losing track of them, the Indigenous lands eventually assigned to the University comprised between 223,000 and 226,000 acres.[33] University administrators and professors then selected institutional land parcels over the next decade. Documentation of these selections still exist in Toronto's "Office of the Chief Accountant" records, under the heading "Maps of University Endowment Lands."[34]

There are several ways to assess the use and value of endowment lands to the university, none of which fully capture the significance of their loss to Indigenous communities. Perhaps the most obvious way to study these lands is to examine where they were located and when they were sold. Despite contestation from Methodists and Presbyterians over the lands provided to support an Anglican institution, it was King's College Council who formally managed the land endowment until the College's dissolution in 1850.[35] In practice, however, the task of selecting and selling land was managed by the College Bursar. With little formal training in accounting, this position was held first by an army officer, Colonel Joseph Wells, from 1827 to 1839, followed by the surgeon Henry Boys until 1850.[36] While both men made significant financial gains for King's College from its land endowment, they also provided large, unsecured loans to university administrators from endowment funds (most famously to Bishop Strachan), failed to collect moneys from land rents or sale, and did little to prevent land speculation.[37] As one of the

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[32] Ibid., 17.
[33] Ibid. Range considers the lowest and highest available estimates from these records.
[34] Office of Chief Accountant Records, boxes 602-604, group G, A1968-0010, UTARMS.
[35] In 1850, the new University of Toronto replaced King's College, which ceased to exist, and assumed its landholdings.
[36] Letter to J. Harrison, 10 April 1840, Bursar's Office Records, fo. 8, box 18, A72-0050, UTARMS; D.W. Rudkin, "Boys, Henry," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9 (1976) http://www.biograph.ca/en/bio/boys_henry_9E.html .
[37] *Final Report of the Commissioners* (1852), 21-22.

first professors at Toronto's university, John Langton, remarked in 1856, the endowment was "for twenty-five years and more a perfect mine of wealth for speculators."[38]

Looking at the actions of these Bursars and their fellow administrators reveals that the new institution's land transactions extended across hundreds of Upper Canadian townships. Over 135,000 acres had been sold by 1848, for instance, located across 102 townships (see Figures 1 and 2). At the same time, Bursar Wells had also been tasked with managing the accounts of a new preparatory school named Upper Canada College. Founded by the provincial government in 1829, the Upper Canada College was meant to remedy the province's desperate lack of preparatory schools, colleges, and academies – as well as to serve as a feeder school for King's College.[39] Like other universities in settler societies, Toronto's staff became directly involved in managing secondary schools that might channel students upward and into their institutions. Accordingly, when this new Upper Canada College received its own endowment of Indigenous land – of 66,000 acres spread across twenty townships – it was Wells, the Bursar of King's College, who also managed these lands.[40]

[38] John Langton, *Early Days in Upper Canada: Letters of John Langton from the Backwoods of Upper Canada and the Audit Office of the Province of Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1926), 277.
[39] Harris, *A History of Higher Education in Canada*, 34.
[40] "The University Question Considered: By a Graduate," 1845, fos. 1-4, box 001, B1988-0002, UTARMS.

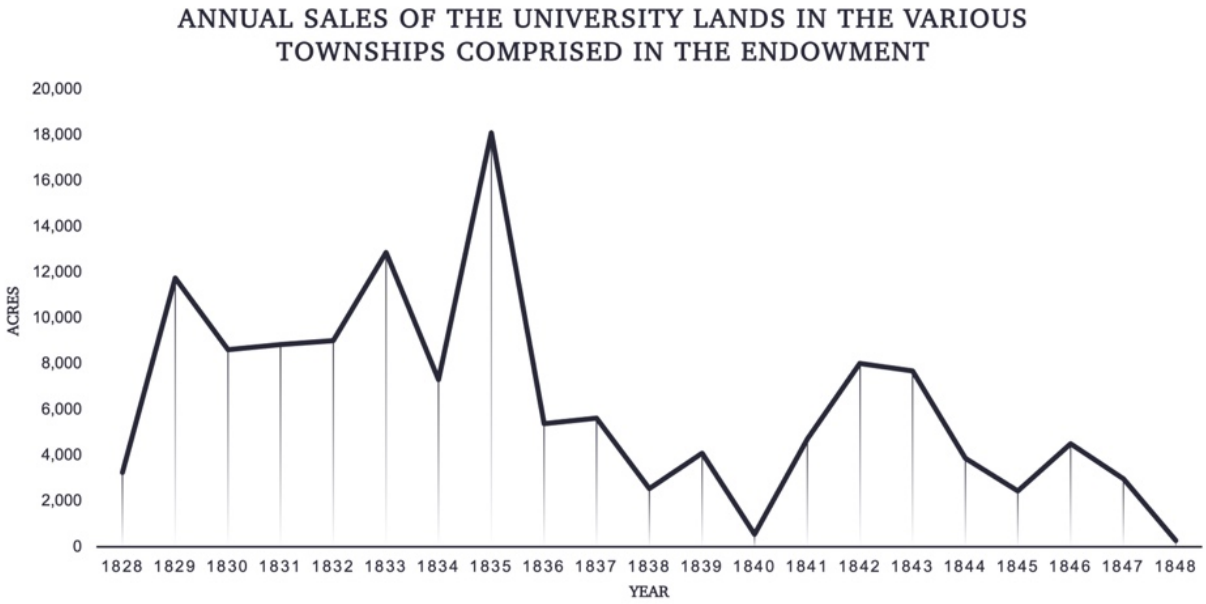

Figure 1: © C. Harvey, compiled from: *Final Report of the Commissioners* (1852), 74-75.

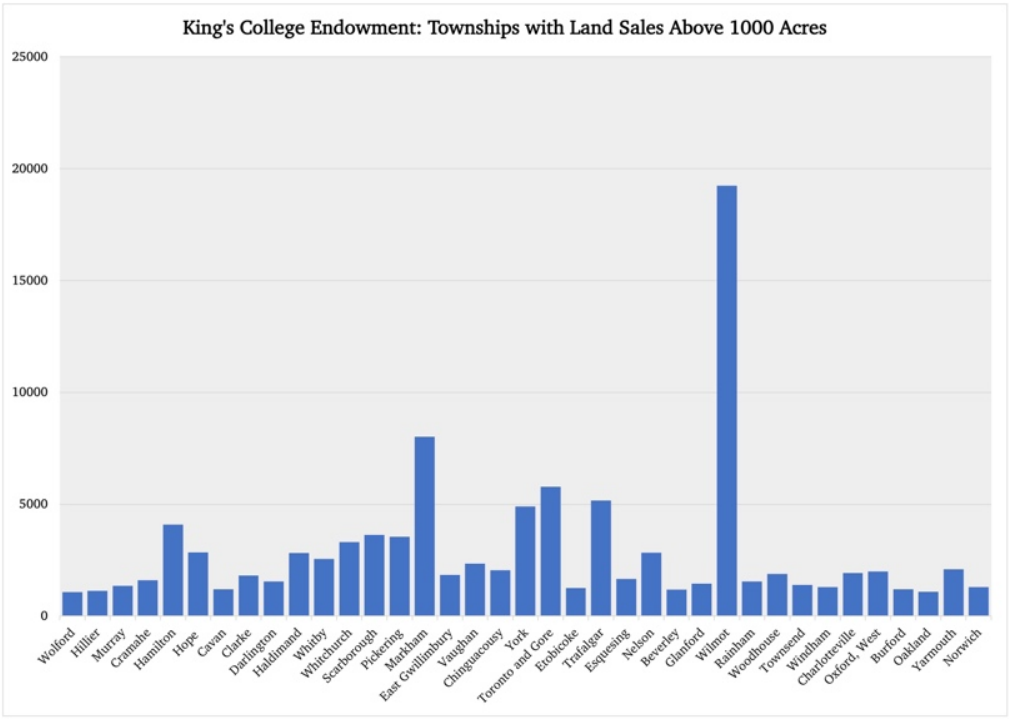

Figure 2: © C. Harvey, compiled from: *Final Report of the Commissioners* (1852), 74-75.

Tracing the land transactions that formed these endowments is challenging, especially because not all college maps and surveys have survived, while others were inexact. Nonetheless, the application of archival and digital methods to these transactions, including basic georeferencing, provides a good indication of where most of the university lands were located. Consider, for example, the region with the largest number of land sales by 1848: Wilmot. Two Bursars of King's College managed lands in Wilmot between 1830 and 1847, making the largest single sale of 12,300 acres in 1835.[41] From the University's endowment maps and the King's College land ledgers, the location of these lands is discernible. The lands selected amounted to 21,300 acres surrounding three roads: "Erbs," "Snider," and "Bleams." Land reserves held by the Canada Company and clergy reserves identified as "Six Nations Lands" enclose the selected parcels, of which 19,425 acres had been sold by 1848.[42] By georeferencing these historical maps using the application QGIS, we can then visualize those nineteenth-century parcels on a contemporary map (see Figures 3, 4).

[41] *Final Report of the Commissioners* (1852), 74-75.
[42] Wilmot, "Maps of University Endowment Lands," book B, box 602, group G, A1968-0010, UTARMS.

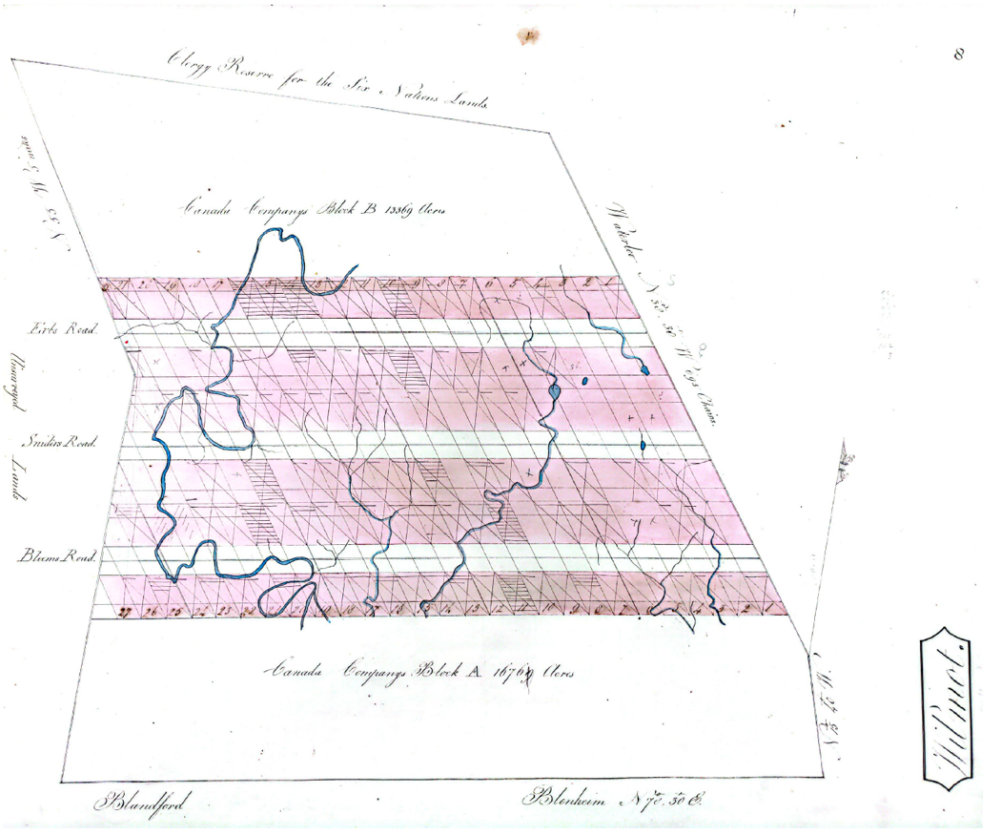

Figure 3: Wilmot, "Maps of University Endowment Lands," book B, box 602, group G, A1968-0010, UTARMS.

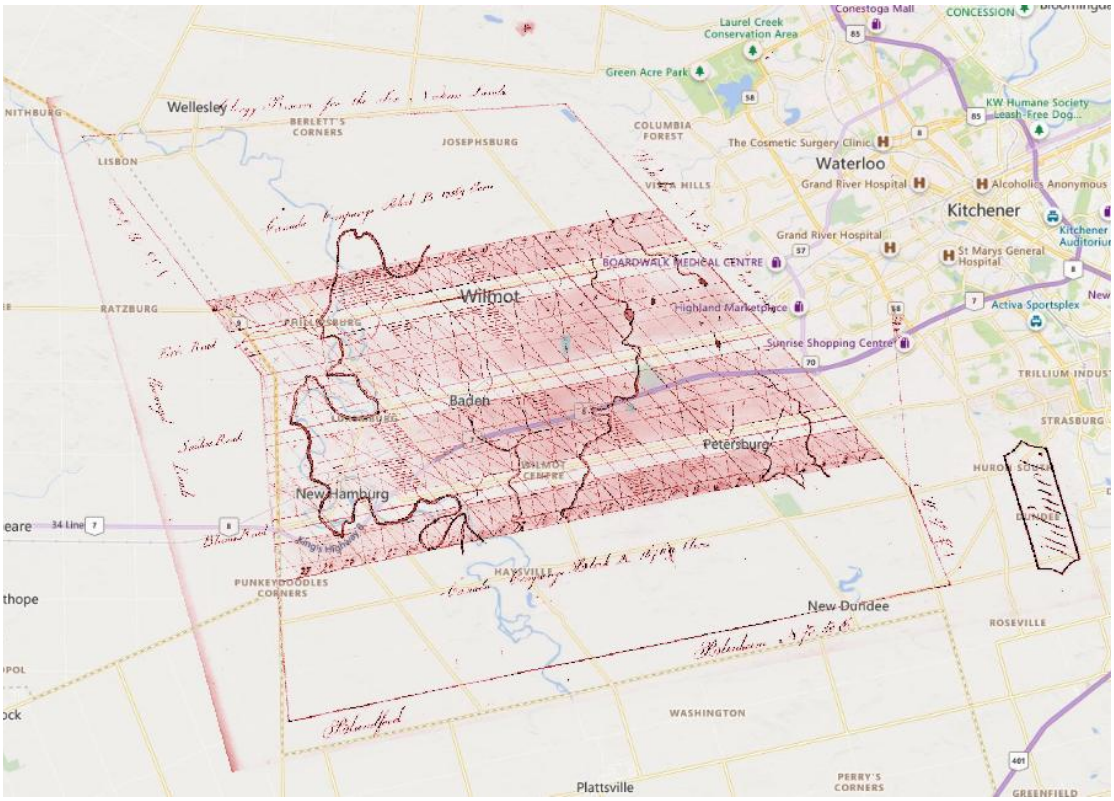

Figure 4: QGIS rendering of Wilmot, "Maps of University Endowment Lands".

As a final step, the georeferenced maps can be used to identify the traditional territories of the Indigenous nations whose dispossession made this university landholding possible. The digital history project, *Native Lands Digital* (*NLD*), provides the approximate locations of Indigenous territories across Canada, along with the treaties that govern them. Using the georeferenced maps and this resource together shows that the Wilmot endowment lands crossed the territories of the Mississauga (Attiwonderonk) and Haudenosaunee. Most of these territories were redistributed under the terms of the Haldimand Treaty, including the Wilmot lands. In 1784, the first iteration of the Haldimand Treaty directed the purchase of approximately 385,000 hectares of Mississauga land in exchange for a little over £1000. Colonial authorities then transferred some of these hectares to the Haudenosaunee, in return for their military service to the British Crown. Subsequent distributions of the land and alterations to this Treaty remain disputed.[43]

Another way of assessing the value of these lands to the growing University is by considering their monetary contributions to its endowment. At mid-century, the average price per acre of lands sold before 1848 was 1 pound, 4 shillings, and 3.5 pence.[44] Based on this average pricing, land sales for the 19,245 acres sold within Wilmot amounted to £23,375, a value greater than the institution's yearly operating expenses. The practice of tracing land sales by region or township, and of georeferencing surveyed land parcels, can be repeated for most of the Indigenous land parcels selected before 1848 (see appendix). Thereafter, with the formation of

[43] Michelle Filice, "Haldimand Proclamation," *The Canadian Encyclopedia,* last modified 10 November 2020, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/haldimand-proclamation .
[44] *Final Report of the Commissioners* (1852), 17.

the non-sectarian University College and the University of Toronto in 1850, a new University Board of Endowment developed its own system for managing the institution's lands.[45]

Much like the machinations of university-building in the Maritimes, a university's development in Toronto grew out of the rubble of a twenty-five-year sectarian clash over the Anglican King's College. This clash continued even after the new, non-sectarian university's establishment and, before it, had stimulated the creation of at least three other bodies of higher learning: the Methodists' Victoria College at Cobourg (1836), the Catholics' Regiopolis College at Kingston (1837), and the Presbyterians' Queen's College (later University) at Kingston (1841) – not to mention the Anglican Trinity College (1853).[46] All of these institutions, including the non-denominational University College, angled for a stake in the land endowments held by Toronto's Board of Endowment. Yet not all of them were successful.

The newly-formed University of Toronto was an examining body, meant to certify degrees while colleges retained the responsibility of teaching undergraduates. Based on this arrangement, affiliated colleges could make claims upon the university's "Surplus Income Fund," even while receiving separate legislative grants, and would be represented on the University Senate. In practice, however, collegiate financing was complex. For an institution that held its meetings in Toronto, University College often found itself with many more representatives present than other Colleges. A financial report on the university completed in 1862 noted, for instance, that "while other Colleges have only one member to represent them, … University College has five members with seats at the board. … The practical effect of this

[45] *Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the expenditure of the funds of the University of Toronto* (Quebec, 1862), 188.
[46] Some of these institutions still exist in different forms. Victoria College merged with Albert University to become the Victoria University in 1884. This institution later became a constituent college of the University of Toronto.

system has been in a measure to give the control to University College."[47] The power of University College members over institutional governance, therefore, also gave this College disproportionate influence over the university's endowment.

Between 1854 and 1857, the unevenly-weighted Board of Endowment and new Bursar, David Buchan, approved the sale of "upwards of £140,000 worth of land."[48] Added to previous transactions, this meant that, by 1862, the University of Toronto had contracted sales of Indigenous land worth over $1.3 million Canadian dollars, corresponding to 207,493 acres. About one million dollars of this amount had been collected, with $300,000 outstanding. The significance of these land sales to the size of the endowment is suggested by the Bursar's valuation of the total endowment one year before, in 1861, as just $900,000.[49] In the hands of the University Senate, a substantial proportion of these moneys was then allocated to various building projects, especially to those on its main campus.[50]

Land, not only at Toronto, could be a cumbersome asset to manage. If selected lands were not sold as "scrip," which functioned as a promissory note for the asset itself, then tracts had to be located, sections of land leased or sold, and management costs paid. In some cases, an agricultural board or government legislature managed the lands on behalf of a university. But in other instances, as one professor said of the University of Toronto at mid-century, the "professors who formed the senate found all their time occupied in managing the selling and leasing of the lands and disentangling the immense mass of speculation which had existed."[51]

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[47] *Report of the Commissioners* (1862), 21.
[48] Ibid., 190
[49] Ibid., 204. These sales correspond to thirty to thirty-five million Canadian dollars, as of 2015. Rodney Edvinsson, "Historical Currency Converter," *HistoricalStatistics.org*, last modified 10 January 2016, https://www.historicalstatistics.org/Currencyconverter.html.
[50] University College (UC) had spent over $400,000 on its buildings, museums, and library by 1862. The construction of UC as a 'bricks and mortar' institution thus owes a great deal to moneys arising from Indigenous land. *Report of the Commissioners* (1862), 14.
[51] Langton, *Early Days in Upper Canada*, 278.

Over time, most new institutions of higher education came to favour government cash grants. Yet whether land alone could sustain universities financially did not mitigate the effects of its redistribution for those who gained or lost access to land. And the knock-on effects that often accompanied a land grant, such as private gifts and public money, could be considerable.

University Land Grabs Part II: The University of Manitoba

The appeal of using Indigenous land to fund universities extended beyond Toronto. In fact, whether facilitated by imperial networks or mandated by legislatures, knowledge-sharing and the founding documents of one colonial university often influenced the formation of another. An important reformer in the history of the University of Sydney (Australia), William Charles Wentworth, for one, suggestively noted the "226000 acres" given to the King's College (Toronto) in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1849.[52] In Manitoba, thirty years later, politicians and reformers looked to the constitution of the University of Toronto to understand how their three denominational colleges might become part of a single, non-denominational university.[53]

Established in 1877, the University of Manitoba became the first degree-granting institution of higher education west of Ontario. The province of Manitoba itself had only come into existence a few years earlier, in 1870, following the Riel Resistance.[54] As in Toronto, the University of Manitoba began as a non-sectarian body that federated three existing church colleges: St. Boniface College (Catholic, 1818), St. John's College (Anglican, 1866), and Manitoba College (Presbyterian, 1871). An additional denominational college, Wesley College

[52] William Charles Wentworth, "Foundation of a University," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 September 1849.
[53] For instance, Reverend George Bryce invoked Toronto's example to argue that non-religious subjects might be taught by university faculty, rather than in separate colleges. "President's Inaugural Address," 1890, RBR LE 3 M3832 B79, UMBA.
[54] Bumsted, *The University of Manitoba*, ix-1; 3.

(Wesleyan Methodist, 1873), sprung for university affiliation in 1888.[55] Yet despite this new institutional design, the financial woes of each constituent college remained. As the first principal of Manitoba College, the Reverend George Bryce, recounted in 1900:

> no sooner was the university begun than it was seen that its support would become a serious difficulty.... Thus early in 1878 an application was made to the Dominion government for a grant of wild [Indigenous] lands in the province to become in time a university endowment.[56]

The financial solution presented here, therefore, and the one eventually adopted, was a grant of Indigenous land made by the provincial government.

In its initial years, the University of Manitoba limped along on small provincial cash grants mandated by its founding act, ranging from two hundred and fifty to one thousand dollars. Each constituent college also received a portion of the province's marriage licensing fees, determined by the number among its faith who wed annually.[57] The financial circumstances of the University altered dramatically in 1885 then, when the Canadian government approved the province's request for "150,000 acres" of recently dispossessed Indigenous land.[58] Given that the Indigenous-turned-Crown lands were worth at least $2.50 per acre, this land grant's value was hundreds of times larger than the province's yearly cash grant.[59] Although always subject to the possibility of mismanagement, Manitoba's land endowment held the potential for both immediate financial uplift and long-term stability.

Provincial legislators first offered to select lands on behalf of the university. But faculty and administrators eschewed this proposition, instead forming their own "miniature land

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[55] W.L. Morton, *One University: A History of the University of Manitoba* (London: McClelland and Stewart, 1957), 25-26.
[56] "Manitoba University, Inner History Dealt with by Rev. Dr. Bryce," *Manitoba Morning Free Press*, 17 November 1900.
[57] Bumsted, *The University of Manitoba*, 5.
[58] "A Modern University, being the President's Inaugural Address," 1890, RBR LE 3 M3832 B79, UMBA.
[59] Meeting, September 1888, Land Board, book 1, box 6, A1978-08 (UA10), UMBA.

department," eventually called the "Land Board," to manage the institution's property.[60] Between 1888 and 1891, the university's Land Board undertook the business of surveying, examining, selecting, and rejecting endowment lands. "In the management of this work at Winnipeg," the Board reported, "over 600 letters were written and several hundred post cards were issued, calling meetings and for other purposes."[61] In addition, one subcommittee of the Land Board held over thirty meetings in under three years. Over this period, it surveyed and commissioned reports on more than 400,000 acres of land, even if the university's entitlement was to no more than 150,000 acres. The subcommittee's approach paid off, according to university administrators, because "had the lands been accepted without examination a very large portion would have been made up of sand lots, swamp and muskeg."[62] That certain lands would sell for more money to settlers and speculators was certainly true. But in identifying the choicest lands for its institution, the Land Board also surveyed and made available for sale hundreds of thousands of acres beyond its own endowment.

After completing its land selection in 1891, Manitoba University's Land Board then served as a type of land bank. It offered loans to agriculturalists, secured mortgages, leased its lands through agents, and engaged in land speculation. By 1917, Manitoba university lands were "being sold at an average of $10.47 per acre," a fourfold increase in value since their selection twenty-five years before.[63] The land purchases approved by the Board were often small. Farmers and farmers' wives, such as Sarah Braithwaite of Portage La Prairie, purchased between 100 and 200 acres of wooded or agricultural land.[64] But board members also carried out larger legal

[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Report of Board of Governors of the University of Manitoba, 1917-18, 32.
[64] "Land Sales & Mortgage Investments," July 1899, box 9, UA10, A1978-013, UMBA.

transactions and a considerable loan business, as suggested by "the proposition from Mr. J. S. Haslam [in 1907] for a loan of $25,000 … on lands in the Southern part of Saskatchewan."[65] In addition to its size, what is interesting about Mr. Haslam's loan was that the University Land Board acted to retain power over lands in newly-created adjacent provinces. Shortly after 1907, the Land Board commissioned a solicitor's statement indicating that its claims and loan activity "would be applicable to the territory now included in the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan."[66] Administrators at Manitoba's university thus made concerted efforts to maximize their land revenue.[67] Whereas before its land grant the University of Manitoba had encountered financial difficulty; after it, the institution gained multiple streams of revenue all related to land financing.

So where were the University of Manitoba's lands located? Unlike the University of Toronto, which received Indigenous land parcels of varying shapes and sizes, Manitoba's university selected Indigenous territories from the grid-like Western Canadian land system. Developed in the 1870s and 1880s, this system was (and is) "the world's largest survey grid laid down in a single integrated system."[68] It relies upon a thirty-six square-mile township as its basic unit of survey, creating a checkerboard of townships across 200 million acres of Western Canada.

According to this system's database, the University of Manitoba received land-grants divided into 1,052 distinct parcels.[69] Location data is provided by this database for 545 of these

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[65] Land Board Minutes, 18 April 1907, book 3, box 5, UA10, UMBA.
[66] Ibid., 26 April 1907.
[67] The value of university loans for 1913 "amounted to $128,700." Land Board Minutes, 30 July 1913, book 3, box 5, UA10, UMBA.
[68] "Land Grants of Western Canada, 1870-1930," *Library and Archives Canada* (LAC), last modified August 2021 https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-grants-western-canada-1870-1930/Pages/land-grants-western-canada.aspx#toc2 .
[69] Ibid.

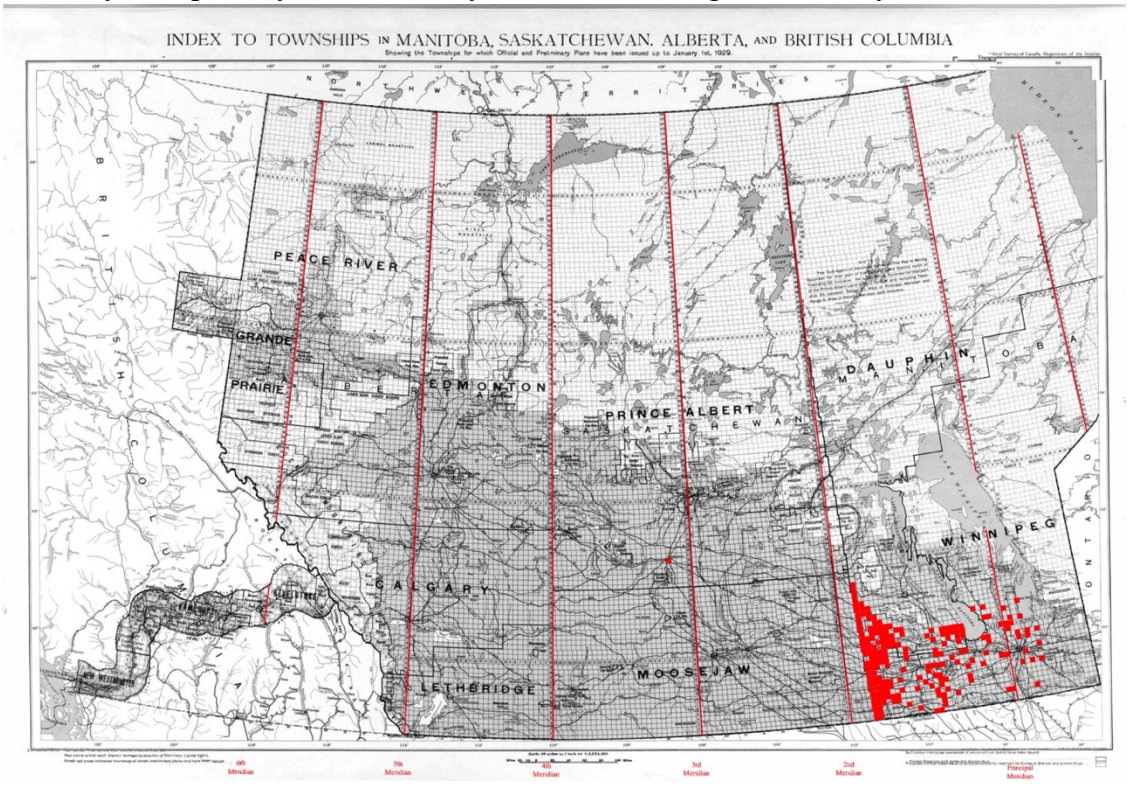
parcels. By applying this data to a Western Canadian land-grant system map then, we can identify the townships that contained university land parcels and reconstruct a significant portion of the institution's footprint (see Figure 5). This footprint fell considerably south of Winnipeg, so that its spread reached the province's southern border. Again, the *Native Lands Digital* database reveals the traditional Indigenous territories associated with these land parcels. Lands with available geographic data fell within the territories of the Métis, Cree, Anishinabewaki, Ochéthi Sakowin (Sioux), among other Indigenous groups.[70]

As in Toronto, the monetary value of these Indigenous lands was significant to establishing the young University of Manitoba. Manitoba's Land Board, in fact, carried out its work with greater effectiveness, although in a later period, than Toronto's bursars had. In 1900, Principal Bryce noted that "some 6,000 or 7,000 acres [of land] have been sold, realizing $45,000 so that the present value of the grant may be considered to be between half a million and a million dollars."[71] Bryce's estimate of the land endowment's total value was not far off. The university's Annual Report for the year 1919–20 indicates that total land sales amounted to $1,063,971.97, with the Land Board accounts showing "interest-bearing capital now $938,473.60."[72] In today's currency, these land sales would be worth approximately thirty million Canadian dollars.[73] As of 1920, moreover, Land Board records showed 41,000 unsold acres, with the average price per acre at more than thirteen dollars.[74] Land transactions altogether encompassed more than half of the university's assets in 1920, providing a stable source of

[70] *Native Land Digital*, 2023 https://native-land.ca . For the university's land acknowledgement, see "Territory Acknowledgement," *University of Manitoba*, 2023 https://umanitoba.ca/current-students/first-year/um-commons/territory-acknowledgement .
[71] ""Manitoba University, Inner History Dealt with by Rev. Dr. Bryce," 17 November 1900, box 1, UA17, UMBA.
[72] Annual Report 1919-20, p.29-35, UPC PRE 1 1918-30, UMBA.
[73] Edvinsson, "Historical Currency Converter," https://www.historicalstatistics.org/Currencyconverter.html .
[74] Annual Report 1919-20, p.29; 38-39, UPC PRE 1 1918-30, UMBA.

income and a large pool of investable capital. Notably, the other major sum held in trust by the University was the bequest of the Métis lawyer and fur trader, Alexander Isbister.[75]

The size of its institutional land endowment, finally, positioned the university as a dispenser and purveyor of lands to other new institutions. New elementary and secondary school boards looked to the university to purchase lands for school buildings. In 1899, for example, the university agreed "to sell to the Ellice Union School District two acres of land in a square block" within township seventeen at only four dollars per acre.[76] Similar agreements would be made with Teulon School Board, and other schools within one hundred kilometres of Winnipeg. The effects of Indigenous dispossession upon Manitoba's education system were, therefore, numerous and wide-ranging. Not only did Indigenous lands firmly entrench Manitoba's university both physically and financially, but they also came to be seen as property that might be conveyed to primary and secondary schools according to university administrators' designs.



[75] "Isbister Deed of Trust and Will," 31 March 1884, box 579-007, UA29, UMBA.
[76] Land Board Minutes, March 1899, book 1, box 6, A1978-08, UMBA.

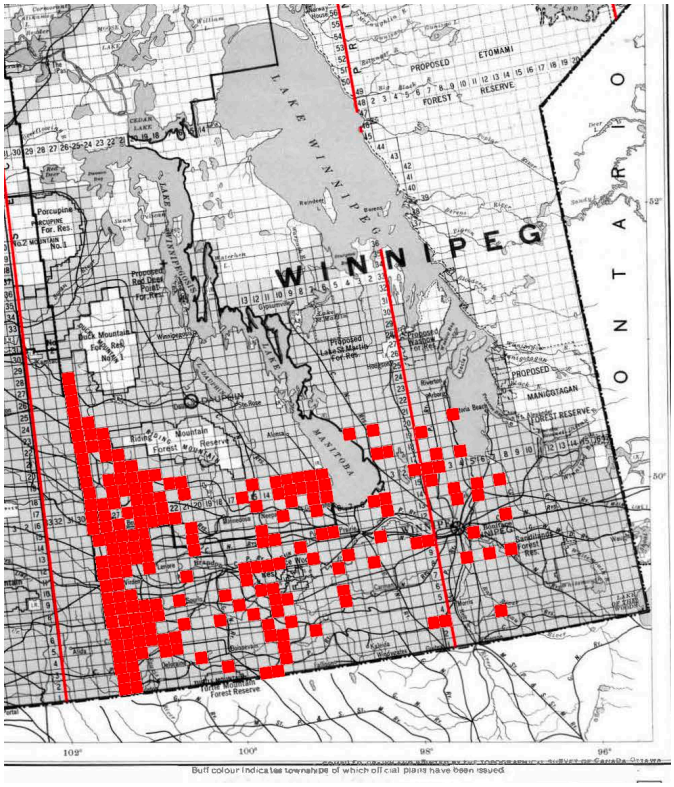


Figure 5: Townships Containing Manitoba University Endowment Lands, created using: Topographical Survey of Canada, Department of the Interior, 1929, LAC.[77]

University Land Grabs Part III: Toronto and Manitoba's Universities in Context

Not all Canadian universities began as Indigenous landowners; yet institutions that relied on Indigenous dispossession, like the universities of Manitoba and Toronto, were common in the nineteenth century. Principally in Canada, Aotearoa New Zealand, and the United States, but also in other colonies of settlement under British rule, public universities developed along similar lines and adopted similar strategies when faced with financial precarity. Among the most prevalent of these strategies was land financing. A brief examination of the imperial and transnational context of university land endowment accordingly explains why development among distant institutions often came to look so similar.

[77] "Land Grants of Western Canada, 1870-1930," Library and Archives Canada (LAC), https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-grants-western-canada-1870-1930/Pages/land-grants-western-canada.aspx#toc2.

Within Canada, Toronto's and Manitoba's universities set important precedents for higher education, even as their administrators referenced developments elsewhere. The Reverend Bryce, for instance, complimented the forms of land administration adopted at American "state universities" and their emphasis on the agricultural and natural sciences. "It was lately my privilege," Bryce told his audience, "to visit the great western universities in the states of Minnesota, Nebraska and Kansas and the same features were to be seen in them all."[78] In another instance, ten years later, Manitoba's faculty sent an educational commission to those institutions considered to be the most like their own. Representatives of the university would "visit the agricultural colleges in North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, and the Ontario college at Guelph" in 1900.[79] Although both the universities of Toronto and Manitoba became distinctive institutions, the process of expansion among "western" universities occurred in tandem for much of the United States and Canada.

The appeal of funding universities with Indigenous land had reached British Columbia by the turn of the twentieth century. Government officials and university promoters from Toronto and Montréal made early attempts to establish a degree-granting institution in the province, even forming a private McGill University College of British Columbia (McGill BC).[80] But the secure establishment of a public university awaited stable financing. In 1907, the University Endowment Act accordingly reserved "up to two million acres," meant for a public University of British Columbia (UBC), "the proceeds from which would be used for the betterment of higher education."[81] Yet this enormous grant, seventy-times the size of Vancouver, did not supply the

[78] "A Modern University," RBR LE 3 M3832 B79, UMBA.
[79] "The Agricultural Commission to Make a Trip to Ontario and the U.S," *Winnipeg Tribune*, November 1900.
[80] N.A.M. MacKenzie, "The History of the University," *University of British Columbia Archives*, 2018, https://archives.library.ubc.ca/general-history/the-history-of-the-university/ .
[81] Christopher Hives and Erwin Wodarczak, "Historical Sketch," in University Endowment Lands Collection / various collectors (1907-1989), University of British Columbia Archives, Vancouver.

ready capital desired. Located in the north of the province, these lands were hopelessly underpopulated, while the institution's immediate financing needs made engaging in land speculation risky. Instead, UBC exchanged its unprofitable acres in 1920 for three thousand more valuable ones located near Point Grey. These new endowment lands fell (and remain) within unceded Musqueam territory and, although now separate from the university, they still support a community named the "University Endowment Lands" today.[82]

As in Canada, educationalists in the United States turned Indigenous spaces into seed funding for universities. This practice achieved its most complete expression in the *Morrill Act* of 1862. Passed by the Lincoln administration as the U.S. Civil War ground on, the *Morrill Act* supplied each state not "in a condition of rebellion or insurrection" with 30,000 acres of land per senator and Congressional representative. The Act mandated that these lands be used to finance at least one institution of higher learning dedicated to "agriculture and the mechanic arts."[83] Consequently, since populous Eastern states had more representatives and less densely populated land, they received far greater grants of land scrip than the sparsely populated Western states. In addition, that land scrip could be selected from within one state for the monetary benefit of another. Universities in states outside of California, for example, bought and issued scrip for 1.5 million acres of California's lucrative, post-gold rush land. About twenty percent of all *Morrill* college lands, Robert Sauder has shown, lay in this state alone.[84]

Depending on the state's population, lands provided from the *Morrill Act* to an individual university ranged from 90,000 to 990,000 acres. In 1905, the U.S. Department of Agriculture

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[82] "University Endowment Lands website," http://www.universityendowmentlands.gov.bc.ca .
[83] Act of July 2, 1862 (Morrill Act), Public Law 37-108: United States National Archives, Washington DC, Enrolled Acts and Resolutions of Congress, 1789-1996; Record Group 11.
[84] Robert Sauder, "The Impact of the Agricultural College Act on Land Alienation in California," *The Professional Geographer* 36, no. 1 (1984): 30.

(USDA) estimated the value of all the various land-grant funds at US$72,540,588.[85] Both before and after the *Morrill Act*, however, legislative grants of Indigenous land had propped up public universities in the United States. After an initial, ill-fated attempt by the British government to fund a college in Virginia in 1619, other American educational land endowments emerged out of the federal Northwest Ordinance of 1787, the many Swamp Land Acts of various states, and other state-level appropriations.[86] For instance, between 1839 and 1883, Texan legislators furnished their university system with 2.1 million acres of land. The University of Texas System and Texas A&M University System still control nearly all of that land, along with the gas and oil found underneath it.[87]

In a similar vein, educationalists in the southern hemisphere found that universities might benefit not simply from Indigenous land, but also, from what was below its surface. The second half of the nineteenth century was a significant period of university-building and expansion across South Africa and Australasia. While the University of Adelaide in South Australia received an institutional land grant of 50,000 acres in 1874, most South African and Australian universities reaped the benefits of nearby mineral rushes before their supporters looked to Indigenous land.[88] Nearly all nineteenth-century universities established in Aotearoa New Zealand, however, received grants of Māori land. One of the most significant periods of growth in higher education in Aotearoa occurred, not coincidentally, during the height of Māori land

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[85] A.C. True and M.T. Spethmann, *USDA: Office of Experiment Stations – Circular No. 61* (Washington DC, 1905), 1.

[86] Harold Melvin Hyman, *American Singularity: The 1787 Northwest Ordinance, the 1862 Homestead and Morrill Acts, and the 1944 G.I. Bill* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), 24-25. In 1619, the British government assigned 10,000 acres to endow a "Henrico College" in Virginia.

[87] "History of University Lands & The PUF Lands," *University Lands*, accessed 26 June 2020, http://www.utlands.utsystem.edu/Home/PUF .

[88] Caitlin Harvey, "The Wealth of Knowledge: Land-Grab Universities in a British Imperial and Global Context," *Native American and Indigenous Studies Journal* 8, no. 1 (2021): 100; "University Lands Rent Book," 1876-1888, volume 1, series 5, University of Adelaide Archives, Adelaide.

seizure and transfer to Pakeha occupiers. Founded in 1869, the University of Otago acquired at least 200,000 acres of Māori land before 1900, while the University of Canterbury gained 305,000 acres from its provincial government in 1871, becoming the largest landowner in its province.[89] Other grants of land in Auckland and the province of Taranaki would be set out for new universities by colonial officials in Melbourne, despite that Māori communities had not ceded them. Particularly during the final years of the New Zealand Wars, officials allocated this "confiscated land" – which had been seized from Māori tribes in the North Island – to universities that were yet to exist.[90]

In all of these examples, universities emerge as beneficiaries of Indigenous dispossession and facilitators of a major wealth transfer in land, from Indigenous communities to settlers and speculators. Warfare with Indigenous peoples and land clearances, sometimes in earlier decades and sometimes ongoing, made this wealth transfer possible. Indigenous land endowment in Toronto and Winnipeg, therefore, was not a purely Canadian (or American) phenomenon. It was a financing mechanism that held broad appeal across colonies of settlement in the nineteenth century, and one that requires further scrutiny – both to trace its full contours and to clarify its impacts beyond the Victorian period.

Landscape Transformation and University Knowledge Production

A crucial dimension of universities' relationship to Indigenous land lies in investigating what forms of knowledge these new higher education institutions ultimately produced. Up to the mid-nineteenth century, universities had traditionally taught theology, along with some

[89] W.J. Gardner, E.T. Beardsley, and T.E. Carter, *A History of the University of Canterbury* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury, 1973), 42; UNZ Senate Minutes, volume 1 (1871-1880), container C 392 109, box 457, AAMJ W3119, Archives New Zealand Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga (hereafter ANZ), Wellington.
[90] "Note of Mr. Richmond" 1868, container C 500 063, LE1 59, ANZ.

combination of mathematics and the classical and liberal arts.[91] Although it occurred gradually, land-grant universities helped to loosen the grip of the classical subjects over higher education. Especially within the United States, these institutions slowly introduced agricultural degrees and research, as they were legislated to do, producing knowledge that transformed the American countryside just as much as it changed the shape of higher education. The universities of Toronto and Manitoba took up this task too. Inspired by the growing field of European agricultural science and the agricultural background of many of their students, they professionalized the study of branches of knowledge like agriculture and engineering. It was not by chance, as this article argues, that Canada's earliest agricultural colleges, experimental farms, and extension programs emerged at universities that were major landholders.[92]

Universities with land endowments furthered particular forms of agricultural production and expertise because they were born with a vested interest in these activities. One of Toronto's founding professors, Henry Croft, largely opened the field of agricultural chemistry in Canada. As one assessment of Toronto's early professors, completed in 1914, described: "Agricultural chemistry in Canada owes much to Professor Croft; he, more than any other man of eminence in the Province, impressed its great practical utility upon our people. He was not less forward in his advocacy of a Provincial School of Agriculture … for the training of farmers and farmers' sons."[93] The "Provincial School of Agriculture" referred to here was the "Ontario School of Agriculture and Experimental Farm," situated in Guelph, but founded as part of the University of

[91] Harris, *A History of Higher Education in Canada,* 27.
[92] The only other contemporary of Toronto and Manitoba's agricultural schools was the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (1905), preceded by a smaller School of Agriculture.
[93] John King, *McCaul, Croft, Forneri: Personalities of Early University Days* (Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1914), 134.

Toronto in 1874. It became a founding college of the University of Guelph, under the name "Ontario Agricultural College" (OAC), ninety years later.[94]

Agricultural colleges like the OAC developed extension programs, experimental farms, demonstration trains and, by 1900, international reputations that cemented settlers' relationship to Indigenous land.[95] McGill University and the University of Manitoba replicated these programs through their own agricultural colleges, respectively named the Macdonald Institute (1907) and the Manitoba Agricultural College (1906). Faculty within these institutions designed their extension programs to make the knowledge they offered available to as wide an audience as possible. A report on the "University Extension Popular Lectures" made by Manitoba College's faculty in 1914 noted that:

> In order to extend the influence of the University as widely and effectively as possible, three circuits of five towns each were arranged. At each of these places a series of four lectures were delivered. … The places visited this year included Portage La Prairie, Gladstone, Dauphin, Neepawa, Minnedosa, Brandon, Oak Lake, Virden, Elkhorn, Souris, Hartney, Deloraine, Boissevain, Killarney, Crystal City, Pilot Mound, Warrenton and Holland.[96]

The account concludes by calculating the number of attendees as 9875 people, spread across seventy lectures. The content of these extension lectures, among others, introduced farmers to university-derived farming techniques, from preventing soil depletion to showcasing hybridized corn. University agricultural research also presented farmers with transformative technologies and products. Novel seed varietals, selective animal breeds, mechanized farm equipment, and agricultural courses "designed especially to meet the needs of western agriculture," emerged from land-rich institutions that sought to prove their utility to settler agricultural communities.[97]

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[94] Wallace, *A History of the University of Toronto*, 248.
[95] Alan I. Marcus, *Agricultural Science and the Quest for Legitimacy: Farmers, Agricultural Colleges, and Experiment Stations, 1870-1890* (Ames: Iowa State University, 1985), ix.
[96] Annual Report of the University Faculty, 1913-1914, P378.7127 C 1904-17 c. 1, UMBA.
[97] Manitoba Agricultural College Calendar, 1906-7, box 1, UPC Gen 184.23, UMBA.

At the same time, faculty attempted to universalize the farming knowledge that universities produced. The agricultural reformer and politician, Sir George Fowlds, for instance, supplied all universities in New Zealand (Aotearoa) in 1924 with "an account of some investigations I made regarding Agricultural Education in Canada and America during the past six months."[98] Having visited universities across Canada and the United States, he recommended permanent contact be maintained especially with the Canadian and Californian institutions. An increasingly international philosophy of agriculture could thus be shared, urging settlers to see farming not as a fundamentally local enterprise – but as a domain reducible to universal laws that could be tweaked to fit local conditions. Lands once tended by Indigenous groups and imagined differently by them, therefore, not only became a financing tool for settler institutions but were, in turn, transformed by these bodies of higher learning.

By contrast, according to scholars of Indigenous history, there was not a unified Indigenous philosophy of land that held stable across local tribes, let alone across continents.[99] At odds with the multiplicity of Indigenous knowledge systems, then, were the notions of individualized land tenure and private property that remained remarkably consistent across Euro-American settler societies. This was unsurprising for settlers that shared a common law heritage. Young American lawyers often carried with them pocket editions of William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* in the early nineteenth century.[100] A shared cultural norm of "improvement," moreover, which relied upon Enlightened ideals of progress and the betterment of land as a justification for settler landholding, had a "British lineage" and

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[98] "Fowlds, G. Report to Auckland University Council," 1924, ID 47917, MS 61, MacMillan Brown Library, Christchurch.
[99] Matthew Palmer, *The Treaty of Waitangi: In New Zealand's Law and Constitution* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2008), 33.
[100] Lawrence Friedman, *The History of American Law* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973), 69.

influenced the drafting of settler property laws.[101] Yet as the scholar Susan Hill claims of the Haudenosaunee context, these settler norms and the European notion of private property were almost an inversion of certain Haudenosaunee beliefs about land. "Many Indigenous knowledge holders," she maintains, "talk about the idea that the land does not belong to Native people, but rather Native people belong to the land."[102]

Understanding land-grant universities' role as knowledge holders and producers of specific forms of knowledge sheds light on their political and ecological legacies, which extended beyond their campuses. In Ontario as in Manitoba, largescale institutional landholding stimulated the formation of university-run experimental farms and agricultural education programs. And, although university buildings were geographically-fixed, the knowledge that emerged from these edifices was not. University faculty, meanwhile, took active steps to market their institutions and innovations. By 1918, Manitoba College's "extension lectures" reached an aggregate audience of 15,000 people.[103] The incredible amount of Indigenous land that underlay the growth of public higher education in Ontario and Manitoba, therefore, is not the only dimension of universities' relationship to land. Perhaps the more far-reaching contribution of Toronto's and Manitoba's universities was their production of knowledge and technologies that literally reconstituted landscapes and linked settler agriculture globally.

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[101] From this perspective, new universities as knowledge producers might seem to have been the ultimate land "improvers." Yet, outside of experimental farms, universities left the execution of "improvements" to agriculturalists, placing more emphasis upon selecting profitable lands for ready sale than upon bettering them. John C. Weaver, *The Great Land Rush and the Making of the Modern World, 1650-1900* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 12. See also: Daniel Samson, *The Spirit of Industry and Improvement: Liberal Government and Rural-Industrial Society, Nova Scotia, 1790-1862* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 59.
[102] Susan M. Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2017), 5.
[103] Board of Governors Report, 1917-18, UPC PRE 1 1918-30, UMBA.

Conclusion: University Land Grabs Past and Present

The past landholding practices of the universities of Toronto and Manitoba urge scholars to look beyond these institutions' land acknowledgements when thinking about the role of landholding in these universities' histories. Whether leased or sold, Indigenous land provided the endowment capital for new Canadian universities in the nineteenth century. This link between universities and land investment, moreover, remains intact today. While faculty and administrators in Toronto and Winnipeg disbursed most of their initial land grant by the early twentieth century, other nineteenth-century institutions retained their lands. The most notable example might be the University of Texas, which has accumulated billions of dollars from its oil and gas operations on acquired lands.[104] But in other cases, including that of the University of Toronto, higher education institutions in the twentieth century undertook new land transactions, such as forming satellite campuses, creating land trusts, and investing in farmland.[105] Many of these transactions evoke an institutional development strategy honed a century before.

This article reveals the significance of Indigenous dispossession to the formation of the University of Toronto and the University of Manitoba, arguing that their territorial reach was much larger than has been realized. It also uses these two institutions, which were prime movers in Canadian higher education, to open debates about the landholding practices adopted by other Canadian institutions and the wider imperial and transnational contexts relevant to the development of universities in Canada. Taken together, nineteenth-century university land endowments in Canada encompass at least 445,000 to 450,000 acres – not including the millions of acres surveyed or held temporarily by these institutions (see Table 1). This amount of land is

[104] "History of University Lands & The PUF Lands," http://www.utlands.utsystem.edu/Home/PUF .
[105] Friedland, *The University of Toronto*, 449-456.

larger than the contemporary cities of Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver combined.[106] While both the universities of Toronto and Manitoba eventually received income from multiple sources, in their initial years, land financing was their most substantial revenue stream.

Table 1: University Endowment Lands in Canada

Grant	Location	Year	Acreage
University of Toronto Endowment	**Toronto, Upper Canada (Ontario)**	**1828-9**	**225,944 (223,000 – 226,000)**
Upper Canada College Endowment (related to University of Toronto)	**Toronto, Upper Canada (Ontario)**	**1828-9**	**64,000 - 66,0000**
Ontario Agricultural College (now University of Guelph)	**Guelph, Upper Canada (Ontario)**	**1874**	**1,455 – 1,500**
University of Manitoba	**Winnipeg, Manitoba**	**1877-1900**	**150,000**
University of British Columbia	**Vancouver, British Columbia**	**1907**	**3,000 (original grant: 2,000,000)**
TOTAL			**445,000 – 450,000**

Examining Ontario and Manitoba's land-rich universities, furthermore, supplies important insights into the operation of colonialism, Indigenous dispossession, and knowledge production. How institutions collect, organize, produce, and esteem particular types of knowledge has significant ramifications for the creation of social and scientific categories outside of them.[107] Like universities in other settler societies, the universities of Toronto and Manitoba privileged the findings of European agriculture and academe, and developed technologies that lived lives far beyond the ivory tower. Many of these findings and technologies took the place of Indigenous epistemologies of land caretaking. And relatedly, by training those who would govern, by applying social and scientific research to Indigenous peoples and colonial

[106] Comparison does not include greater metropolitan areas.
[107] William Beinart, Karen Brown, and Daniel Gilfoyle, "Experts and Expertise in Colonial Africa Reconsidered: Science and the Interpenetration of Knowledge," *African Affairs* 108, no. 432 (2009): 413-414.

landscapes, and by aiding settler self-understanding and the formation of a civil society, these institutions supplied the intellectual infrastructure of empire and, later, of the nation-state.

In nineteenth-century Toronto (York) and Winnipeg, where early benefactors and government grants were lacking, Indigenous land proved essential to university development. It rooted some of Canada's earliest universities in the process of Indigenous dispossession, while connecting them, often consciously, to universities in the United States and the British Empire that adopted a similar approach to institutional financing. As the historian Craig Steven Wilder has suggested of the American Ivy League universities, these bodies "were imperial instruments akin to armories and forts, a part of the colonial garrison."[108] Examining how these "instruments" functioned then, reveals a significant dimension of university history in Canada, one with ramifications beyond both university campuses and the nineteenth century.

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[108] Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy*, 33.