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The Prince of Wales Tour and the Construction of British Sporting Masculinity in Nineteenth -Century Canada

British North America, in the immediate Pre-Confederation period, was both a frontier for touring sportsmen-hunters and a growing colony of diverse rural and urban populations. Sensitive to the geographical, economic, and social interests of the British empire, routinely tested by indigenous peoples, non-English immigrants, and by growing, competitive political powers such as that represented by the United States, the modern loyalist, at home and abroad, actively engaged in sustaining and forging ties between colony and "mother" country. Beyond trade and the military, sport established perhaps the most public and widely advertised cultural connection to Britain through its manifestation of things British to participant and spectator alike. An influence pre-cursive to the pervasive sporting patronage of the governor's general of the Dominion of Canada in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Prince of Wales ardently promoted British sport and the cultural meanings attendant to such gentlemanly gatherings, even the playing field celebrations of the loyal British subject before Confederation. As patron and promoter of sport and pastime, the frequent encouragements of the Prince of Wales went far beyond mere patriotic support of empire and the celebration of British manhood; indeed, such ideological corollaries spoke to deeper veins of political economy, ethnic order, and to the role of the British man in foreign policy.

This study examines the tour of the Prince of Wales to regions of British North America in the early 1860s. In particular we analyze the promotional campaign of the tour, what was being sold to colonists and to the British back home. Methodologically, we are cognizant of identity construction and its role in building support for particular political and economic projects and the place of such "royal" connections to empire building, and the social dynamics of British foreign policy in relation to the building of

new Canadian domestic policies and international relations. We employ a variety of secondary sources, including substantive literature on the tour itself, on policies of British imperialism, on state formation in the Canada, and on the role of forms of culture such as sport in building personal and national identities. Our primary sources include personal accounts and travel narratives of the Prince of Wales tours and the positioning of visits at the local level by small and major Canadian newspapers.
