



Beaver Bob

For Shame

There is a place called Amberwood Village near Stittsville, which takes out a large display ad in a local newspaper proudly to proclaim that they have wilfully and wantonly and with malice aforethought destroyed a beaver habitat and replaced it with a golf course.

For shame, Amberwood Village. What kind of a country are we living in where such things can happen?

To compound the fatuity, they have inserted a photo showing three young ladies, two in shorts and one in a skirt, swinging golf clubs over the rolling greens. In the background are various assorted items of male humanity dithering about aimlessly among the trees.

We ask you! Is this what we want our country to become. Is it for this that the pioneers fought and died, suffered and endured?

It is with a profound feeling of melancholy that we quote from the text of the advertisement, as follows:

"We started with a flooded beaver swamp and changed it

into a chain of ponds surrounded by rolling greens and fairways."

The sheer savagery of such a statement, framed as a proud boast, takes one's breath away.

Are there no laws in this country? Is the beaver not protected from the vandalism of promoters with their bulldozers and earth movers, who move in and rip asunder one of nature's most intelligent and harmless creatures.

Are there no environmental protection officials, federally or provincially? Can anyone simply go out for his own purposes and destroy an entire beaver community in a day?

If this is the case, then the beaver, our national symbol (approved by Act of Parliament) has no more protection in this country than the meanest earthworm.

The proud boast of these gentlemen is that they destroyed a "flooded beaver swamp". What is a flooded beaver swamp? Generally, a series of small ponds, three or four, sealed off from one another by beaver dams. Sometimes this

can result in a flooded area of several acres. This means that there is water on the ground.

This water, held back all summer by the beavers is peculiarly useful in that it serves an irrigation function, a habitat for wildlife, ducks, raccoons, muskrats, lynx. It holds back floor waters and releases water when it is most useful in the dry months.

Once the beaver dams are destroyed, the complaints come in about flooding and an uncontrolled spring runoff. Of course, it's uncontrolled, because the beaver, who did it for nothing over the centuries, have been eliminated. The result usually is an expenditure of millions to replace what a little animal accomplished out of his own innate genius.

What purpose does a golf course serve? As far as humanity is concerned, recreation, always useful and commendable. But as far as the environment goes, and the protection of our wildlife heritage, very little.

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The councillors are Leo Marion, Albert Bourdeau, Reeve Gaston Patenaude, Leo Provost, and Baird McNeill. The standing staff members are Armand Brisson, Lucien Millaire, Jean-Guy Bourdeau, and Michel Dignard.



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