

## Preface and Acknowledgements

*Time and space.* These are the two defining features that give meaning to places such as the City of Greater Sudbury. In this book, *history and geography* provide the context for a journey that began billions of years ago and is still ongoing. It is a fascinating odyssey, encompassing dramatic physical and human events. Among these can be included volcanic eruptions, meteorite impacts, the ebb and flow of continental glaciation, Aboriginal occupancy, exploration by the Europeans, the presence of fur traders, lumbermen, and Americans, the rise of global mining giants such as Inco/Vale Canada Limited and Falconbridge/Xstrata Nickel, unionism, environmental pollution and recovery, and the creation of a constellation city of some 160 000 people. The story includes the history of more than 88 000 departed souls who, at one time or another, chose Sudbury as their home and whose remains now reside in one of its twenty-eight cemeteries.<sup>1</sup>

I have often been asked how long it took to write this book. The simple answer is—a *lifetime*. The book flows from all that I have experienced over a lengthy lifespan that dates back to 1937 when I first saw the light of day at St. Joseph's Hospital in downtown Sudbury. From there, my sense of community belonging and understanding was enhanced by living in several areas of the city, including the West End, Minnow Lake, New Sudbury, Long Lake, and the Lockerby area. More than forty years of tenure as a professor in the Department of Geography at Laurentian University, and ongoing interactions with other faculty and their varying perspectives, provided me with an academic and theoretical vantage point to assess the place where I grew up. My stint at the University of London, and travels throughout Finland and other parts of Europe from the 1960s and beyond were also significant, as they provided me with a comparative stance that honed my appreciation of Sudbury's "sense of place" within a broader geographical context. This perspective is evident in the book's reach, which frequently extends beyond Sudbury to encompass Northeastern Ontario, Canada, North America, and even the entire globe. In short, the book reflects my personalized view of the Sudbury area as I have experienced it over more than seven decades.

The title deserves comment. It sets the framework for the book through its emphasis on two major themes, one physical in nature, the other human. The physical theme involves the great meteorite impact that took place in Sudbury some 1.85 billion years ago. This cataclysmic incident, called the "Sudbury Event" by geologists, transformed the area into a mineral-rich zone that gave rise to two of the world's largest mining companies, and profoundly shaped the regional settlement pattern. Had this impact not occurred, the area would have evolved simply as another lonely wilderness tract in the vast Precambrian Shield. The human theme centres on the creation of the City of Greater Sudbury, a municipal entity that came into being on January 1, 2001, encompassing 3 354 square kilometres of territory, a geographical area more than five times the size of

the City of Toronto (but with only slightly more than 1 per cent of the latter's density) and two-thirds the size of the province of Prince Edward Island.<sup>2</sup> In addition to being the largest municipality in Ontario, and one of the largest in Canada by size, the city has the unique distinction of not developing in a normal metropolitan settlement pattern. In contrast to other large Canadian municipalities that exhibit continuous habitation from their downtown cores to outlying suburbs, Sudbury is made up of a complex of settlements consisting of the former Town/City of Sudbury and a surrounding assemblage of some fifty built-up areas, each with a population of more than two hundred people. Thus, Sudbury can be viewed as a "constellation city" made up of individual, smaller communities, each with its own attributes, forming a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.<sup>3</sup> The importance of this distinctive human setting cannot be over-emphasized; it has shaped much of the history of the area. Unless otherwise noted, the use of the terms "Sudbury," "Greater Sudbury," and "region" in this book will normally refer to the area encompassed by the present-day City of Greater Sudbury.

The book is framed within the context of historical geography, divided into fifteen chapters. While some chapters are chronological in nature, others have been arranged within a thematic context. The material in the book has been largely acquired from existing sources. In the introductory chapters, the historical and geographical perspective has been widened to place Sudbury into broader provincial, national, and global contexts that have been rarely examined elsewhere. Chapter 1 outlines the unfolding of the physical landscape, setting the framework for a better understanding of what transpires in the rest of the book. This is followed, in Chapter 2, by a treatment of the original occupancy of the land by Aboriginals following the retreat of the last glaciers from the area some 10 000 years ago. In Chapter 3 I deal with the manner in which the land was transformed into reference lines known as meridians, base lines, and township grids, a necessary prerequisite for the subsequent settlement of the territory by white people. Chapter 4 explores the discovery of minerals associated with the Sudbury Structure and the formative years of mining exploration and development. Chapter 5 continues with a look at the evolution of Sudbury from a CPR townsite first into a town, and then a city by the Second World War. I examine Copper Cliff's changing setting from that of a mining camp to a corporate town in Chapter 6. The focus of the book returns to mining in Chapter 7, which outlines how two competitive mining giants, The International Nickel Company of Canada and Mond Nickel, found it necessary to merge into a global giant known simply as Inco. Chapter 8 delves into the expansion of the pattern of settlement beyond Copper Cliff and Sudbury, and reviews outlying communities associated with railway stations, mining camps, smelter sites, and other company towns. Chapter 9 begins with a look at other phases of outlying settlement associated with forestry and agriculture. While never located within Sudbury's municipal boundaries, the Whitefish Lake and Wahnapiitae Indian Reserves, as well as the Burwash Industrial Farm are included here because of their effects on the area. The story of the evolution of Falconbridge Nickel and Inco and their later transformations into Xstrata Nickel and Vale Canada is the subject of Chapter 10. Chapter 11 illustrates how

the Sudbury area evolved from a company-town setting into a new constellation entity known as the Regional Municipality of Sudbury that dominates much of Northeastern Ontario. In Chapter 12 I look at Sudbury's transition from a regional constellation into the current City of Greater Sudbury. Chapter 13 examines the history behind the area that served as one of the world's main centres of industrial unionism. Chapter 14 deals with the area's best-known international achievement: recent efforts to heal the landscape after years of resource extraction. Finally, Chapter 15 completes the book with a reflection on Sudbury's past, present, and future. I conclude that the community is poised to move in a new direction, one that lies "beyond a rock and a hard place."

I would like to acknowledge all the people and organizations who have contributed to the voluminous list of historical and geographical publications pertaining to the Sudbury area. I have found it a real pleasure in researching this story to see the spirit of cooperation shown by the people who worked with me throughout this undertaking. Their willingness to share information and constructive criticism proved to be invaluable, and contributed significantly to the completion of the book. To all of them I express my deep and sincere gratitude.

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