THE JOURNAL OF CANADIAN ART HISTORY
ANNALES D'HISTOIRE DE L'ART CANADIEN

Draped Head, by Jack Humphrey, Canadian Group Exhibition.

ART

By JOHN LYMAN

Volume XXVII
2006

THE JOURNAL OF CANADIAN ART HISTORY
ANNALES D'HISTOIRE DE L'ART CANADIEN

Études en art, architecture et arts décoratifs canadiens
Studies in Canadian Art, Architecture and the Decorative Arts

Volume XXVII
2006

Adresse / Address:
Université Concordia / Concordia University
1455, boul. de Maisonneuve ouest, EV-3.819
Montréal, Québec, Canada H3G 1M8
(514) 848-2424, ext. 4699
jcah@alcor.concordia.ca
http://art-history.concordia.ca/JCAH/index.html

La revue *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* est membre de la Société de développement des périodiques culturels québécois (SODEP), de l'Association canadienne des revues savantes et de la Conference of Historical Journals. Cette revue est répertoriée dans des index nombreuses.

Tarif d'abonnement / Subscription Rate:
Abonnement pour 1 an / 1 year subscription:
28 $ individus / individuals
35 $ institutions / institutional
L'étranger / Outside Canada
40 $ US individus / individuals
50 $ US institutions / institutional

The Journal of Canadian Art History is a member of the Société de développement des périodiques culturels québécois (SODEP), the Canadian Association of Learned Journals and the Conference of Historical Journals. This publication is listed in numerous indices.

Mise en page / Layout and Design:
Pierre Leduc

Révision des textes / Proofreading:
Élise Bonnette, Mairi Robertson

Traduction / Translation:
Élise Bonnette, Janet Logan

Pelliculage et imprimeur / Film Screens and printer:
Imprimerie Marquis

Couverture / Cover:
John, Lyman, *The Montrealer*, 1 February 1938 with reproduction of Jack Humphrey, **Draped Head** / 1 février 1938 avec reproduction de Jack Humphrey, **Draped Head.**

Les anciens numéros des *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* sont disponibles par l'*Annales* lui même à l'adresse suivante: Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien, Université Concordia, 1455, boul. de Maisonneuve ouest, EV-3.819, Montréal, Québec, H3G 1M8, ou jcah@alcor.concordia.ca ou http://art-history.concordia.ca/JCAH/index.html

Back issues of *The Journal of Canadian Art History* are available by *The Journal* at the following address: The Journal of Canadian Art History, Concordia University, 1455, boul. de Maisonneuve ouest, EV-3.819, Montréal, Québec, H3G 1M8, or jcah@alcor.concordia.ca or http://art-history.concordia.ca/JCAH/index.html

ISSN 0315-4297
Dépôt légal / Deposited with:
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada / National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec

REMERCIEMENTS / ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Les rédacteurs des *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* tiennent à remercier de leur aimable collaboration de l'Université Concordia, Faculté des beaux-arts.

The Editors of *The Journal of Canadian Art History* gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Concordia University, Faculty of Fine Arts.

Les rédacteurs annoncent l'institution des Amis des *Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien.* Un don minimum de 300 $ vaudra un abonnement de trois ans au donateur.

The Editors wish to announce the institution of the category of Patron of *The Journal of Canadian Art History.* A donation of $300 minimum to *The Journal* will entitle the donor to a three-year subscription.

TABLE DES MATIÈRES / CONTENTS XXVII / 2006

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This issue of *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* contains a number of articles that are expanded discussions of papers presented at the conference *Untold Histories* at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in the fall of 2004. The event was sponsored by the Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art, housed within the Art History Department of Concordia University. This colloquium was the first public forum dedicated to research in the history of art of the Maritime provinces. It was intended to shed light on the range of current investigation in the visual culture of eastern Canada. The second intention, and one now fulfilled by *The Journal/Annales*, was to disseminate the ideas presented at the conference. For much too long, the art history of the Maritimes has been best known only "down east" although other aspects of Maritime studies have reached a readership beyond its own borders. We regard our project as essential to the kinds of investigation that bring wider understanding and acknowledgement of the wealth of material that still have to be mined within Canadian art history.

François-Marc Gagnon's discussion of early perceptions of Native Peoples in the region describes how identity is often established by those outside the territory. This theme is further addressed in both Gemey Kelly's article on the critical positioning of Jack Humphrey as a regionalist, and my own piece on the roles of Walter Abell and the Carnegie Corporation of New York in defining a Maritime art community. Virginia Nixon's article, while not part of the *Untold Histories* symposium demonstrates that aesthetic education was a common concern within Canadian culture. Her discussion of Edgar Ryerson's accumulation of copies of paintings for Toronto has links to the ambitions of the Carnegie in eastern Canada.

The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien is committed to continuing its over thirty-year mandate of examining the issues and events that collectively create this country's cultural image. We ask only that you continue to contribute articles that will bring this scholarly knowledge to the national and international community.

Sandra Paikowsky
Publisher and Managing Editor

NOTE DE L'ÉDITRICE

Certains des articles contenus dans ce numéro des *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* sont des discussions développées autour de communications présentées lors de la conférence *Untold Histories* à l'Art Gallery of Nova Scotia à l'automne 2004. L'événement était parrainé par l'Institut de recherche en art canadien Gail et Stephen A. Jarislowsky qui a son siège au département d'histoire de l'art de l'Université Concordia. Ce colloque était le premier forum public consacré à la recherche en histoire de l'art des Provinces maritimes. Il avait pour objectif premier de mettre en lumière l'étendue des recherches actuelles sur la culture visuelle de l'est du Canada. Le second objectif de ce numéro des *The Journal/Annales* était de diffuser les idées présentées lors de la conférence. Pendant trop longtemps l'histoire de l'art des Maritimes n'a été bien connue que dans la région atlantique, bien que d'autres aspects des études maritimes aient rejoint un lectorat bien au-delà de ses frontières. Nous considérons que notre projet est essentiel aux recherches qui contribuent à une plus large compréhension et reconnaissance des richesses qui restent à découvrir dans le champ de l'histoire de l'art canadien.

La discussion de François-Marc Gagnon sur la manière dont, originellement, on percevait les Premières nations dans la région montre comment l'identité est souvent définie de l'extérieur du territoire. Ce thème apparaît également dans l'article de Gemey Kelly sur la perception de Jack Humphrey comme peintre régionaliste ainsi que dans mon propre article sur le rôle de Walter Abell et de la Carnegie Corporation de New York dans la définition d'une communauté artistique dans les Maritimes. L'article de Virginia Nixon, bien que ne faisant pas partie du symposium *Untold Histories*, montre une communauté d'intérêts à l'intérieur de la culture canadienne. Son argumentaire sur l'accumulation de copies de maîtres par Edgar Ryerson pour la ville de Toronto le relie aux ambitions de la Carnegie pour l'est du Canada.

The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien s'engagent à demeurer fidèles au mandat qu'elles se sont donné il y a quelque trente ans d'étudier les questions et les événements qui, collectivement, contribuent à créer l'image culturelle de ce pays. Tout ce que nous vous demandons, c'est de continuer à nous envoyer des articles qui contribueront à diffuser ce savoir au sein de la communauté nationale et internationale.

Sandra Paikowsky
Éditrice et rédactrice en chef

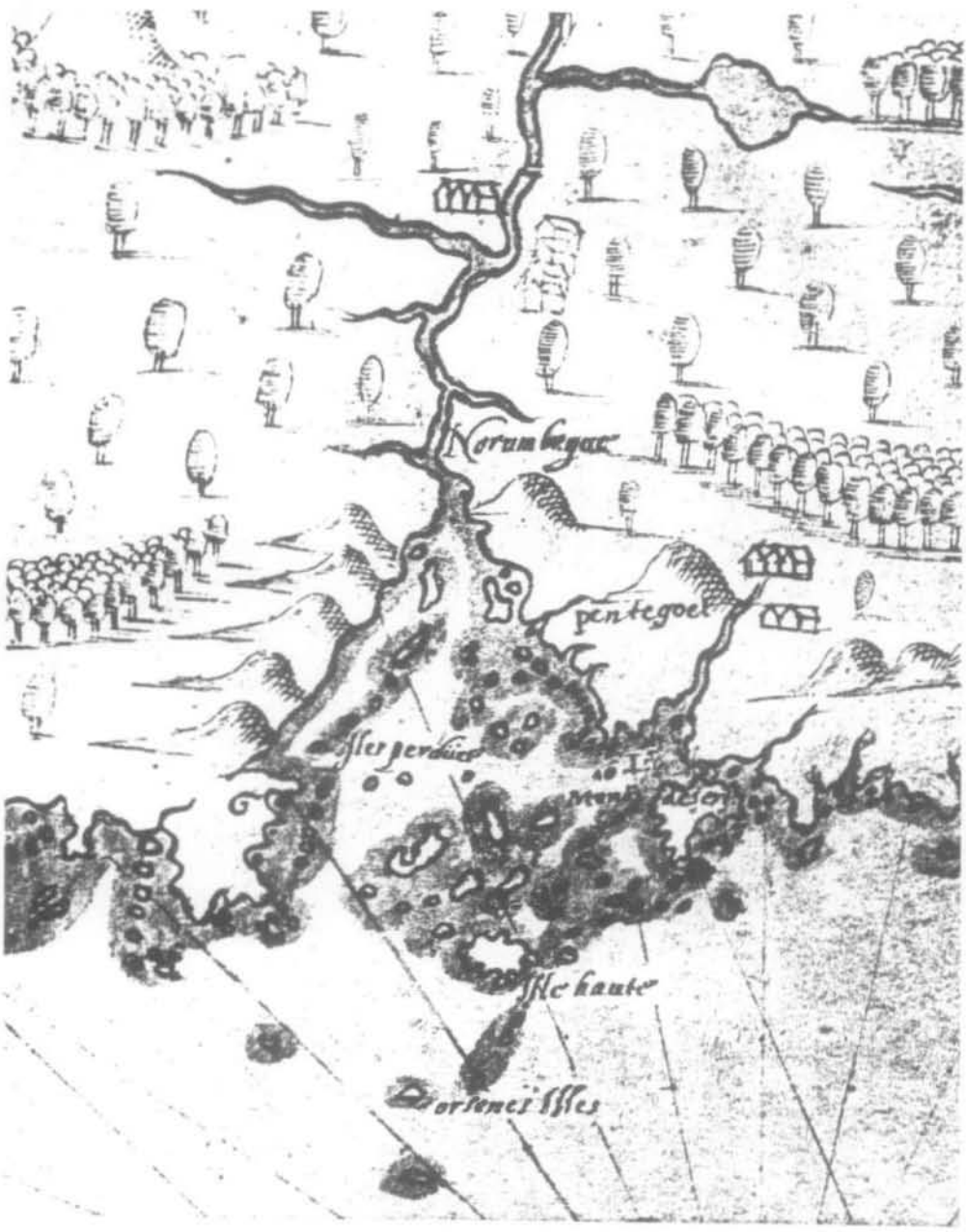


fig.2 Samuel de Champlain, *Descr(i)psion des costes, p(or)ts, rades, Illes de la nouvelle France faict selon son vray meridien Avec la declinaison de le(y)ment de plusieurs endroits selon que le sieur de Castelfranc le demontre en son livre de la mecometrie de le(y)m(a)nt faict et observe par le S(ieu)r de Champlain*, 1607, Congress Library Washington, D.C., détail. (Photo: auteur)

MYTHE OU RÉALITÉ

La côte atlantique vue par Champlain et ses prédécesseurs

On ne peut se faire une idée quelque peu précise des attentes et appréhensions de Champlain quand, en 1604, il entreprit l'exploration de la côte atlantique, sans connaître les représentations de cette région qui circulaient déjà de son temps. On était persuadé que les terres lointaines recelaient dans quelques coins perdus des nations encore civilisées, semblables à des fragments du Vieux Monde, oubliées dans le Nouveau et aspirant à la réunion avec l'Ancien[1]. Une partie de ces spéculations nourrissait l'espoir de retrouver quelque part en Asie-Amérique les dix tribus d'Israël perdues après la séparation des royaumes de Juda et d'Israël. Une même façon de penser fondait la croyance dans l'Atlantide ou dans les Îles Fortunées. On s'attendait à y retrouver des vestiges des temps classiques miraculeusement préservés par l'isolement jusqu'à nos jours. Les légendes médiévales sur l'existence du prêtre Jean en Afrique étaient du même ordre[2].

Le Norembègue avant Champlain

Dans la perspective de Samuel de Champlain, ce type de croyance semble s'être limité au problème du Norembègue, du Saguenay et peut-être de l'Ouest canadien. Nous nous en tiendrons dans le présent contexte au seul problème du Norembègue qui a l'avantage d'intéresser la côte atlantique sinon nos Provinces maritimes.

Henry Harrisse a bien montré que l'origine des fables sur le Norembègue est à chercher dans le milieu dieppois du XVI[e] siècle. Ou ce sont les marins de Verrazano, débarqués à Dieppe qui les ont inventées, ou ce sont quelques pêcheurs de morue qui l'ont fait par la suite. La première mention littéraire s'en trouve dans les *Raccolta* de Giovanni Battista Ramusio citant en 1565 le *Discorso* du capitaine Pierre Crignon, rédigé à Dieppe en 1539.

> De la terre de Norumbega. Au delà de l'île des Bretons, on voit une terre contiguë audit cap et dont la côte gît Ouest un quart Sud-Ouest, jusqu'à la terre de la Floride pendant bien 100 lieues. Cette côte fut découverte il y a 15 ans par messire Giovanni da Verrazano au nom du roi François et de Madame la Régente. Bien des gens, même des Portugais appellent cette terre La Française. Elle s'étend vers la Floride par 78 de longitude Ouest et 37 de latitude Nord. Les habitants de cette terre sont des gens traitables, aimables et pacifiques. Le pays abonde en toutes sortes de fruits; il y croît des oranges, des amandes, des raisins sauvages et beaucoup d'autres espèces d'arbres odoriférants. Les habitants de ce pays l'appellent Nurumbega. Entre cette terre et celle du Brésil, il y a un grand golfe qui s'étend vers l'Ouest[3].

Pour Pierre Crignon, non seulement le Norembègue était un pays au même titre que le Brésil, mais probablement une partie de l'Asie, comme le suggère les plantes qu'il mentionne : les oranges (*arancia*) en particulier. Même si les Grands Herbiers du XVI[e] siècle savent représenter l'oranger de façon assez réaliste, l'orange, aussi désignée *pomo de oro*, ou encore pomme du Paradis, à la fois identifiée au fruit du Jardin des Hespérides et au fruit défendu de la Bible, gardait dans bien des esprits les connotations mythiques qu'elle avait pour Marco Polo. Comme ce dernier en avait vu en Perse[4], à Java[5] et aux Indes, leur apparition à un endroit ou l'autre était un sûr signe de l'Asie. Crignon ne parlait-il pas aussi du fameux isthme que Verrazano situait à la hauteur du Cap Hatteras et qui s'ouvrait vers l'Ouest?

Champlain, qui parle de Norembègue plutôt que de *Nurumbega*, n'avait probablement pas lu les *Raccolta* de Ramusio. Il est beaucoup plus vraisemblable qu'il ait pu lire *Les Voyages aventureux du Capitaine Jan Alfonse*, qui en 1605 en était déjà à sa septième édition. On croit qu'il avait rédigé l'ouvrage quelque part entre 1536 et 1543. Celui-ci était formel sur l'existence d'un peuple civilisé au Norembègue.

> Passé l'isle de sainct Jehan, tourne la coste a l'Oest & Oest-sudoest jusques a la riviere de Norembergue nouvellement descouverte qui est a trente degrez. Aucuns disent qu'il y ha passage, mais lon ne le sçait encor' au vray, car la mer n'ha pas esté toute descouverte. Cette riviere ha a son entree beaucoup d'isle, banchs & roches. Au-dedans bien quinze ou vingt lieues est bastie une grande ville, ou les gens sont petis & noirastres comme ceux des Indes, et sont vestus de peaux, dont ils ont grande habondance, & de toutes sortes. En ceste riviere vient mourir le banch de Terre neufve.
>
> Passé ceste riviere, tourne la coste a l'Oest & Oestnortoest plus de deux cens cinquante lieues, qui ha beaucoup d'isles, & est bien saine, & dit lon qu'il y ha de bon ports, comme ceux de Norembergues. La terre n'est pas fort haute, elle est bien labouree, & garnie de villes & chasteaux, ilz adorent le Soleil & la Lune[6].

À proprement parler, le dernier paragraphe ne s'applique pas au Norembègue comme tel, puisqu'il décrit quelque 250 lieues de côte au sud de la Pennobscot. Si nous avons tenu à le citer tout de même, c'est que la région qu'il décrit nous paraît fonctionner comme un prolongement asiatique du Norembègue, dont celui-ci devient comme la porte, un peu comme le Saguenay l'était aux yeux de Cartier. Jean Alfonse déclare d'ailleurs que les gens y sont «petits et noirastres comme ceux des Indes», suggérant donc que l'on n'en est pas si loin. La mention de «villes & chateaux» va dans le même sens.

> Marc Lescarbot connaissait bien ce texte. Il en parle explicitement et le cite.
>
> ...un Capitaine de marine nommé Jean Alfonse, Xainctongeois, en la relation de ses voyages aventureux, s'est aventuré d'écrire (...)que «passé l'île de Saint-Jean (laquelle je prens pour celle que j'ay appellée ci-dessus l'Ile de Bacaillos),

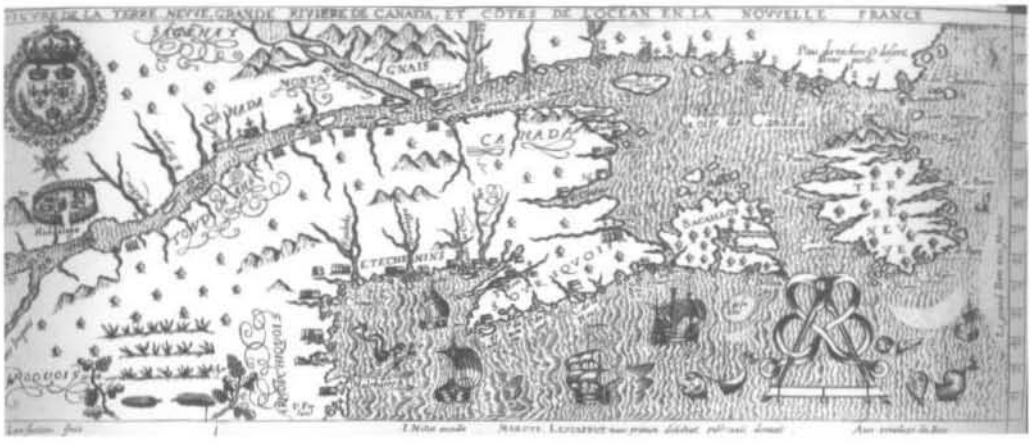


fig.1 Marc Lescarbot del., Ian Swelin fec. et J. Millot exc., *Figure de la Terre Neuve, Grande Riviere de Canada, et Cotes de l'Ocean en La Nouvelle France*, dans Marc Lescarbot, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, 1609. (Photo: auteur)

> la côte tourne à l'Ouest & Oüest Sur Ouest, jusques à la riviere de *Norembergue*, nouvellement découverte(ce dit-il) par les Portugalois & Hespagnols, laquelle est à trente degrez; adjoutant que cette riviere a en son entrée beaucoup d'iles, bancs, & rochers : & que dedans bien quinze ou vingt lieuës est bastie une grande ville, où les gens sont petits & noiratres, comme ceux des Indes, & sont vétus de peaux dont ils ont abondance de toutes sortes. Item que là vient mourir le banc de Terre-neuve : & que passé cette rivière la côte tourne à l'Ouest & Ouest-Norouest plus de deux cens cinquante lieuës vers un païs où y a des villes & chateaux[7].

Lescarbot explicite le texte de Jean Alfonse sur deux points seulement. Il identifie «l'isle de sainct Jehan» à son «Île de Bacaillos», qu'il ne faut pas confondre avec Terre-Neuve chez Lescarbot. Comme on peut le voir sur sa carte (fig.1), Lescarbot réservait ce toponyme à ce que nous appellerions aujourd'hui l'île du Cap Breton. En outre, il précise que les premiers découvreurs de la rivière de Norembègue n'étaient pas les Français mais «les Portugalois & Hespagnols», faisant peut-être allusion à l'exploration de la baie de Fundy par Fagundes et à la découverte de l'embouchure de la Pennobscot par Gomez que les cartographes de son temps avaient l'habitude de confondre en une seule.

Lescarbot ne connaissait probablement pas la *Cosmographie* de Jean Alfonse qui est restée à l'état de manuscrit. Le capitaine y revenait sur le sujet du Norembègue.

Son texte n'est pas sans intérêt. Il corrige sur un point les affirmations des *Voyages aventureux* et ajoute quelques notes nouvelles.

> ...y a une ville qui s'appelle Norombégue et y a en elle de bonnes gens et y a forces pelleteryes de toutes bestes. Les gens de la ville sont vestuz de pelleteryes portans manteaulx de martres. Je me doubte que ladicte rivière va entrer en la rivière de Ochélaga, car elle est sallée plus de quarente lieues au dedans, selon le dict des gens de la ville. Les genz parlent beaucoup de motz qui approuchent du latin et adorent le soleil, et sont belles gens et grandz hommes[8].

On se souvient que Jean Alfonse avait affirmé que les gens de Norembègue étaient «petits». Il se corrige maintenant là-dessus, affirmant qu'ils «sont belles gens et grands hommes». Il avait été question de «peaux». On précise maintenant que les habitants du lieu se vêtaient de peaux de martre. La fourrure de la martre zibeline était spécialement appréciée de la noblesse à l'époque. Si les gens de Norembègue s'en faisaient des manteaux, c'était le signe qu'ils étaient bien nantis. Jean Alfonse répète qu'ils ont une «grande ville» et qu'ils adorent «le Soleil et la Lune», mais il ajoute cette note extraordinaire qu'ils utilisent des mots qui «approuchent du latin», une des langues de l'Antiquité classique et la langue de la Chrétienté. Véhicule de la communication, la parole symbolise l'appétit de réintégration dans le monde civilisé qu'on supposait à ces témoins de l'Ancien Monde.

À l'évidence, Jean Alfonse entendait marquer clairement qu'en ces lieux, on trouvait une nation civilisée. Nous retrouvons donc l'idée d'un fragment du Vieux Monde miraculeusement sauvé dans le Nouveau. Même leur culte solaire – on en niera l'existence, voire de toute forme de religion, chez les Indiens – les qualifierait en ce sens. Il va sans dire que tous ces indices confirmaient aussi la proximité des Indes. Pour Jean Alfonse, le Norembègue est lié à la Tartarie. Il fait partie du continent qui va de la

> terre de Ochélaga au Figuyer[9] et au Pérou, en laquelle abunde or et argent. Veu aussi que ceulx de la terre dient que en la ville nommée Cébola[10], qui est par les trente et cinq degrez de la haulteur du polle artique, les maisons sont toutes couvertes d'or et d'argent, et sont serviz en vaisseaulx d'or et d'argent. Ces terres tiennent à La Tartarie, et pense que ce soit le bout de l'Azie selon la rondeur du monde[11].

On trouve ensuite mention du Norembègue dans un routier rimé dont l'épître dédicatoire à François Ier est signée «Jehan Mallart vostre escripvain». Comme François Ier meurt le 31 mars 1547, Harrisse en avait conclu qu'il ne pouvait dater d'après cette date.

> Comme isle el faict de la terre aux bretons
> Passe cest isle icy que dessus marque
> Tourne la coste au oest et est suest
> Jusques a la riviere Novemberque

Tout de nouveau descouverte et celle est
Assize par trente degrez et disent
Aucuns pillotz qui toutefoys mesdisent
Que icy on trouve ung assez bon passage
Car nul nen a encore trouvé lusaige
A son entree a des isles et bancz
Force rochiers sy trouvent aussy leans[12]
Bien quinze lieux ou vingt lieux a une isle
Tres belle et grande ou la gent est habille
A accoustrer pelleterie exquise
De maint marchant bien cherement requise
Et dont ceulx cy eulx mesmes sont vestus
Tèlz gens sont noirs mais bien plains de vertus
Or est il vray qu'en la riviere ycelle
Viennent mourir ces bancz cy quon appelle
De terre neufve et passe cest eau va
La coste au oest et oest norroest en la
Plus de deux centz cinquante lieux la rotte
Force isles a illecques[13] en la coste
Laquelle est saine et comme on faict rappors
Lon trouve icy de tres excellentz portz
Ils ont chasteaux et villes qu'ils decorent
Et le Soleil et la lune ils adorent
En ce pays leur terre est labourée
Non terroy hault mais assez temperée[14].

Jehan Mallart suit de si près les *Voyages avantureux* de Jehan Alfonse que nous n'aurions aucune peine à dire qu'il n'a fait que les mettre en vers, si son poème ne datait d'au moins deux ans *avant* les *Voyages avantureux*. C'est cette raison qui avait amené Harrisse à proposer que ce serait plutôt dans la *Cosmographie* que Mallart serait allé chercher son bien. Se fiant à sa seule mémoire, il affirmait en effet: «Autant que nous pouvons nous le rappeler, un passage identique se lit dans la *Cosmographie* manuscrite, laquelle, commencée en 1544 et achevée en 1546, se trouvait aussi au temps de François Ier dans la bibliothèque de Fontainebleau[15]». Mais les variantes que nous avons relevées entre les deux textes de Jean Alfonse, en particulier la mention que les Norembèguois parlaient une langue proche du latin, ne se retrouve pas sous la plume de Jehan Mallart. Il faut donc tenir à une dérivation des *Voyages avantureux*. Harrisse ignorait-il que, publié en 1559, cet ouvrage circulait sous forme manuscrite dès 1544[16]? Il aurait pu tomber sous les yeux de Jehan Mallart sous cette forme.

Quoi qu'il en soit de ce problème de source, Jehan Mallart n'en introduit pas moins quelques variantes de son cru. La grande ville qu'on était censé trouver à quinze ou vingt lieues en amont de la Norembègue est devenue «une isle très belle

et grande». Il précise que les peaux dont les gens sont vêtus sont non seulement nombreuses et variées, mais «exquises» et de «maint marchant bien cherement requise»; que si les gens sont «noirs», ils n'en sont pas moins «bien plains de vertus» (pourquoi cette précision, sinon parce que leur couleur faisait attendre le contraire!); et qu'ils «décorent» leurs villes et leurs châteaux. Dans ce dossier sur le Norembègue, la répétition ne va jamais sans amplification.

Quand, plus de vingt cinq ans après, en 1575, André Thevet reprend le fil du discours sur le Norembègue, notamment dans les dernières pages de sa *Cosmographie universelle*, il en change le sens. Avant lui, nous avions affaire à un mythe, en ce sens qu'à partir d'un même thème, chacun des auteurs repérés y allait de ses petites variations et que ces variations obéissaient à un certain déterminisme amplificateur, repérable à l'analyse. Avec Thevet, il n'est plus possible de parler de «mythe», même en un sens étendu. Thevet raconte, en effet, étape par étape, une expédition au Norembègue et décrit des événements dont il affirme avoir été le témoin. On passe donc du mythe au récit de voyage. Cela est d'autant plus remarquable qu'il s'agit en réalité d'un voyage imaginaire, entièrement inventé par Thevet, même quand il proteste de sa qualité de témoin oculaire!

Avec Thevet, l'instantanéité du discours propre au mythe, qui se donne d'emblée comme structure, cède la place à la linéarité du récit. Nous allons de surprise en surprise, sans qu'il soit possible de prévoir la suite. En ce sens, on peut dire que Thevet annonce Champlain, la seule différence étant que, dans un cas, le récit est imaginaire et dans l'autre, vécu. Il commence par une description pour ainsi dire classique des lieux. Le Norembègue se situe au nord de la Floride; comporte une belle rivière «nomée de nous Norombegue, & des Barbares *Aggoncy*[17]». Puis le récit commence.

> Ayans mis pied à terre au pays circonvoisin, aperceumes un grand nombre de peuple qui venoit droit à nous, de toutes parts, & en telle multitude, que vous eussiez dit estre une vollee d'Estourneaux. Ceux qui marchoient les premier estoient les hommes qu'ils nomment *Aquehuns*, apres venoient les femmes qu'ils appellent *Peragruastas*, puis les *Adegestas*, qui sont les enfants : & les derniers estoient les filles, nommees *Ansas-gestas* : & estoit tout ce peuple vestu de peaux (qu'ils appellent *Rabatatz*) de bestes sauvages. Or contemplant leur mine & façon de faire, nous eusmes quelque deffiance d'eux, & pour ceste cause nous nous retirasmes dans nostre vaisseau[18].

Nous sommes donc en plein rapport de voyage ethnographique avec notations de vocabulaire et récit d'une rencontre transculturelle. La suite raconte qu'on finit par se moins méfier les uns les autres et qu'on procède à des échanges de nourriture contre «quelques petits fatras de vil pris, dont ils furent contens au possible[19]». Colomb n'avait pas procédé autrement, distribuant des grelots[20] ou autres colifichets lors de ses premiers contacts avec les Indiens.

Thevet n'est pas en reste pour la suite. Il se met directement en scène et devient la source principale du récit. «Le lendemain matin je fuz commis avec quelques autres, pour aller vers eux, sçavoir s'il nous vouloient ayder de vivres, dont nous avions grande disette : mais estans entrez en la maison (qu'ils nomment *Canoque*) d'un certain Roitelet, qui se nommoit *Peramich*, nous veismes plusieurs bestes mortes pendues aux poteaux de ladite maison, lequelles il avoit fait appareiller (comme il nous fut dit) pour nous envoyer[21]». Les choses se passent donc très bien. L'ambassade des Français auprès de ce Peramich – on a noté que dans ce mot inventé par Thevet il y a le mot «ami» – se déroule fort bien. Puis quelque chose d'inattendu arrive. «Sur ces entrefaictes vindrent quelques belistres[22] d'entre eux apporter à ce Roy les testes de six hommes, qu'ils avoient en guerre prins & massacrez : ce qui nous espouventa, craignant qu'ils ne nous en feissent autant[23]».

Il ne fallait jurer de rien. Le soir venu, on en profite pour partir à l'anglaise – oui, je sais, mes amis anglophones disent *to take a French leave* – sans prendre congé de son hôte. Nouvelle complication. Celui-ci s'en désole y voyant bien sûr un manque de confiance et tente de rétablir les liens par des discours que Thevet nous cite «en sa langue[24]». On se rend à ses arguments, on revient sur la terre ferme, on retourne dans les vaisseaux pour coucher le soir et finalement on le quitte. «...ayant demeuré là cinq jours entiers, levasmes les anchres, partismes d'avec eux avec un merveilleux contentement d'une part & d'autre, & feismes largue[25] en pleine mer a cause des sablons & battures[26]».

On le voit, avec Thevet il ne s'agit plus d'un mythe, mais d'un véritable récit de voyage avec péripéties imprévues, analyses des comportements et rapport au vrai sur ce qui se serait passé. Est-ce à dire que tout discours mythique sur le Norembègue sera remplacé à partir de Thevet par des récits de voyage? Peut-être pas si tôt. Lescarbot parle d'un livre récent, intitulé «*Histoire universele des Indes Occidentales*, imprimé à Doüay l'an dernier mille six cents sept», qui mentionnait encore le Norembègue dans les mêmes termes que ses prédécesseurs d'avant Thevet.

> Plus oultre vers le Septentrion (dit l'Autheur apres avoir parlé de la Virginie) [est] *Norumbega*, laquelle d'une belle ville & d'un grand fleuve est assez connuë, encore que l'on ne trouve point d'où elle tire ce nom : car les Barbares l'appellent *Agguncia*. Sur l'entrée de ce fleuve il y une ile fort propre pour la pecherie. La region qui va le long de la mer est abondante en poisson, & vers la Nouvelle-France a grand nombre de bétes sauvages, & est fort commode pour la chasse, & les habitants vivent de méme façon que ceux de la Nouvelle-France[27].

Lescarbot a beau jeu de réfuter cet explorateur de cabinet. Que dis-je le réfuter? Il le taille en pièces. «Si cete belle ville a oncques esté en nature, je voudrois bien sçavoir qui l'a démolie depuis octante temps: car il n'y que des cabanes par ci par là faites de perches & couvertes d'écorces d'arbres, ou de peaux, & s'appellent

l'habitation & la rivière tout ensemble *Emptegoet*, & non *Agguncia*[28]». Il est facile de savoir où l'auteur de cette *Histoire* avait pris le nom de *Agguncia*. C'est évidemment dans Thevet que nous avons cité plus haut. Lescarbot était plus près de la vérité en parlant de *Emptegoet*, comme nous le verrons dans Champlain.

Champlain au Norembègue

À supposer que Champlain ait partagé quelques-unes de ces idées sur le Norembègue, on imagine sa joie et ses anticipations quand, le 6 septembre 1604, il atteignit l'embouchure de la rivière Pennobscot, la Norembègue des cosmographes. Les premières gens qu'il rencontre à terre, près du site de l'actuelle Castine, étaient des Pentagouets, lesquels constituaient une importante division des Abénaquis orientaux. Ceux-ci lui apprennent que le nom de leur rivière est la «Peimtegouët». Il est persuadé d'avoir atteint la célèbre rivière de la cartographie ancienne : ceste riviere (...) que plusieurs pilotes & Historiens appellent Norembègue», affirme-t-il. Ils l'accompagnèrent ensuite à leur village. De «cités», de gens parlant une langue proche du latin, nulle trace, bien sûr. Champlain prend acte. «...nous ne vismes aucune ville ny village, ny apparence d'y en avoir eu : mais bien une ou deux cabanes de sauvages de mesmes façon que celles des Souriquois[29] couvertes d'écorces d'arbres : Et à ce qu'avons peu juger il y a peu de sauvages en icelle riviere qu'on appelle aussi Etechemins. Ils n'y viennent non plus qu'aux isles, que quelques mois en esté durant la pesche du poisson & chasse du gibier, qui y est en quantité[30]».

Champlain était donc persuadé que les huttes aperçues ici et là n'étaient pas des installations permanentes. Ces indigènes s'apprêtaient à retourner chez eux. C'était bien le comble! On n'avait même pas affaire à des sédentaires. «Ce sont gens qui n'ont point de retraicte arrestee à ce que j'ay recogneu & appris d'eux : car ils yvernent tantost en un lieu & tantost à un autre, où ils voient que la chasse des bestes est meilleure; dont ils vivent quand la necessité les presse, sans mettre rien en reserve pour subvenir aux disettes qui sont grandes quelquesfois[31]».

On ne pouvait imaginer de contraste plus fort. À la place des villes, il n'avait trouvé que des territoires inhabités, tout juste visités durant la saison estivale. Au lieu d'une nation civilisée, une bande de nomades, imprévoyants en plus. Ne rien mettre de côté pour prévenir les disettes, paraissait le comble de l'incurie. Il est vrai que leur misère avait apitoyé Champlain. Il leur déclare par l'intermédiaire d'un «truchement» que non seulement «il vouloit les tenir en amitié», mais aussi qu'«il desiroit habiter leur terre, & leur montrer à la cultiver, afin qu'ils ne trainassent plus une vie si miserable qu'ils faisoient[32]». La même réflexion lui était venue à Tadoussac à la vue de la «misère» des peuples algiques rencontrés à cet endroit. «Tous ces peuples, écrivait-il, patissent tant quelques fois, qu'ils sont presque contraints de se manger les uns les autres pour les grandes froidures & neiges : car les animaux & gibier de quoy ils vivent se retirent aux pays plus chauts. Je tiens que

qui leur monstreroit à vivre & enseigner le labourage des terres, & autres choses, ils l'apprendroient fort bien[33]». Champlain pouvait donc conclure que dans l'un et l'autre cas, il avait affaire aux mêmes Indiens, puisqu'il conclut ainsi son paragraphe sur les Indiens de Norembègue. «Tous ces peuples de Norembegue sont fort basannez, habilles de peaux de cators & autres fourures, comme les sauvages Cannadiens et Souriquois : & ont mesme façon de vivre[34]».

Pour Champlain, plus de doute possible, le Norembègue des cartographes et des cosmographes n'était qu'un mythe. «On descrit aussi qu'il y a une grande ville fort peuplée de sauvages adroits & habilles, ayans du fil de cotton. Je m'asseure que la pluspart de ceux qui en font mention ne l'ont pas veue, & en parlent pour l'avoir ouy dire à gens qui n'en sçavoyent pas plus qu'eux[35]». Il répétera la même chose quand il reviendra sur le sujet en 1632. «Voilà au vray tout ce que j'ay remarqué tant des costes, peuples, que riviere de Norembegue, & ne sont les merveilles qu'aucuns en ont escrites[36]».

On peut suivre sur les cartes de Champlain sa progressive désillusion à propos du Norembègue. Dans la carte manuscrite de 1607 (fig.2), déjà mentionnée, l'embouchure de la Pennobscot est décrite en détail et le nom de «Norumbegue» attribué à toute la région. «Pentegoit» semble tout juste être un endroit sur la rive gauche de la rivière. Enfin, de part et d'autre d'un petit affluent de la Pennobscot, deux groupes de maisonnettes (et non de huttes) semblent indiquer l'emplacement sinon de deux villes du moins de deux agglomérations plus importantes. Sur la carte de 1612 (fig.3), «naranbergue» et «pemetegoit R.» paraissent côte à côte sur la même rive de la Pennobscot, et regroupe cinq maisonnettes sur la rive opposée. Finalement, sur la carte de 1616, conservée à la John Carter Brown Library, le mot «Norembegue» a disparu (fig.4). Si on consulte la légende au numéro 17, il n'y est question que de la «R. de pennetegoit» et du mot «etechemains». La carte de 1632 s'en tient aux mêmes conclusions.

Une nouvelle image de l'Indien

Faudrait-il en conclure que la première exploration de la côte atlantique ne fut que déception pour Champlain? Oui, si l'on ne songe qu'au Norembègue. Mais en réalité, c'est au cours de ces mêmes explorations que Champlain fit une découverte qui allait bouleverser complètement sa perception des premiers habitants des lieux. C'est à l'embouchure de la rivière Saco qu'il vit pour la première fois des indigènes qui «labourent & cultivent la terre, ce que n'avions encores veu[37]». Certes, en parlant de labourage, il exagérait un peu puisque «au lieu de charuës ils ont un instrument de bois fort dur, faict en façon d'une besche[38]». Il n'en restait pas moins que ces gens pratiquaient une forme sinon d'agriculture du moins d'horticulture.

> Le lendemain le sieur de Mons fut à terre pour veoir leur labourage sur le bort de la riviere, & moy avec luy, & vismes leur bleds qui sont bleds d'Inde, qu'ils font en jardinages, semant trois ou quatre grains en un lieu, après ils assemblent

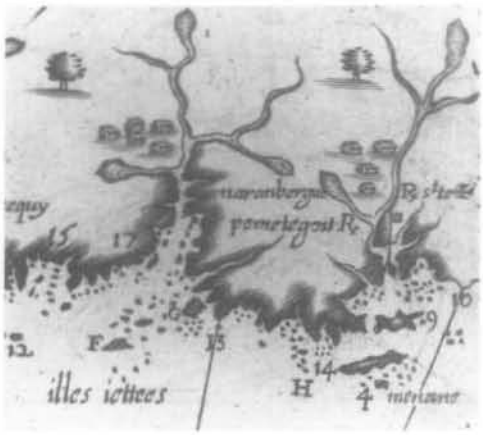


fig.3 *Samuel de Champlain, Carte géographique de la Nouvelle France faictte par le Sieur de Champlain saint Tongois Cappitaine ordinaire pour le Roy en la Marine*, 1612, détail. (Photo: auteur)

fig.4 *[Le Canada] faict par le Sr de Champlain*, 1616, détail, coll. The John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. (Photo: The John Carter Brown Library)

> tout autour avec des écailles du susdit signoc quantité de terre : Puis à trois pieds delà en sement encore autant; & ainsi consecutivement. Parmy ce bled à chasque touffeau ils plantent 3. ou. 4. febves du Bresil, qui viennent de diverses couleurs. Estans grandes elles s'entrelassent autour dud. bled, qui leve de la hauteur de cinq à six pieds: & tiennent le champ fort net de mauvaises herbes. Nous y vismes force citrouilles, courges et petum, qu'ils cultivent aussi[39].

Certes, Champlain parle encore de «labourage», mais il se corrige aussitôt en parlant de «jardinages». Les «écailles du susdit signoc» sont des carapaces de limule, *Limulus polyphemus*, un animal qui avait assez intrigué Champlain pour qu'il le représente sur sa carte de 1612 (fig. 4). Il s'agit en fait dans ce texte d'une excellente description de l'horticulture amérindienne, avec ses trois plantes principales, maïs, fèves et courges, qu'on faisait pousser ensemble.

À partir de ce moment, chaque nouvelle manifestation d'un savoir agricole amérindien est fidèlement rapportée par Champlain. Près de Cap Ann, il apprend «que tous ceux qui habitoient en ce pays cultivoient & ensemensoient la terre, comme les autres qu'avions veu auparavant[40]». Il fait la même observation à Brant Point, un peu au nord de Plymouth : «Nous vismes en ce lieu grande quantité de petites maisonnettes, qui sont parmy les champs où ils sement leur bled d'Inde[41]». Finalement, à Nauset Harbor, Champlain rapporte qu'en plus du maïs, on trouve dans leurs champs une grande quantité de «febves de Bresil, & force citrouilles de plusieurs grosseurs, bonnes à manger, du petun & des racines qu'ils cultivent, lesquelles ont le goust d'artichaut[42]». Cette dernière plante était probablement le topinambour dans la famille de l'*Helianthus*. S'accordant avec Champlain sur son goût, l'anglais la désigne comme le *Jerusalem artichoke*. Même très précises, ces descriptions littéraires ne pouvaient pas ne pas poser plusieurs problèmes aux graveurs qui se seraient mis en tête d'illustrer les textes de Champlain ou autres voyageurs.

S'inspirant de John White[43], de Bry avait, par exemple, représenté les champs près du village de Secoton, un village des Algonkiens des Carolines (fig.5). On a pu situer ce village sur la rive sud de la rivière Pamlico, près de l'actuelle Bonnerton, en Caroline du Nord. Il s'agit d'un village sans palissades, dont les maisons sont faites de branches courbées et de nattes. John White avait probablement fait son aquarelle autour du 15 ou du 16 juillet 1585, si l'on en juge par l'avancement relatif des trois cultures qui y sont représentées : «Their rype corne» en haut, «Their green corne» au milieu et le «Corne newly sprong», en bas. On notera comment les plantes de cette dernière section sont plantées en rangs réguliers. Quand, en 1591, Théodore de Bry se mit en tête de représenter les Timicuas en train de semer leurs champs (fig.6), certes dans une région plus méridionale, puisque les Timicuas habitaient la Floride, il n'a pu s'empêcher de marquer le sol de beaux sillons très réguliers et de mettre dans les mains des semeurs des outils d'origine franchement européenne, comme l'a montré W. Sturtevant[44].

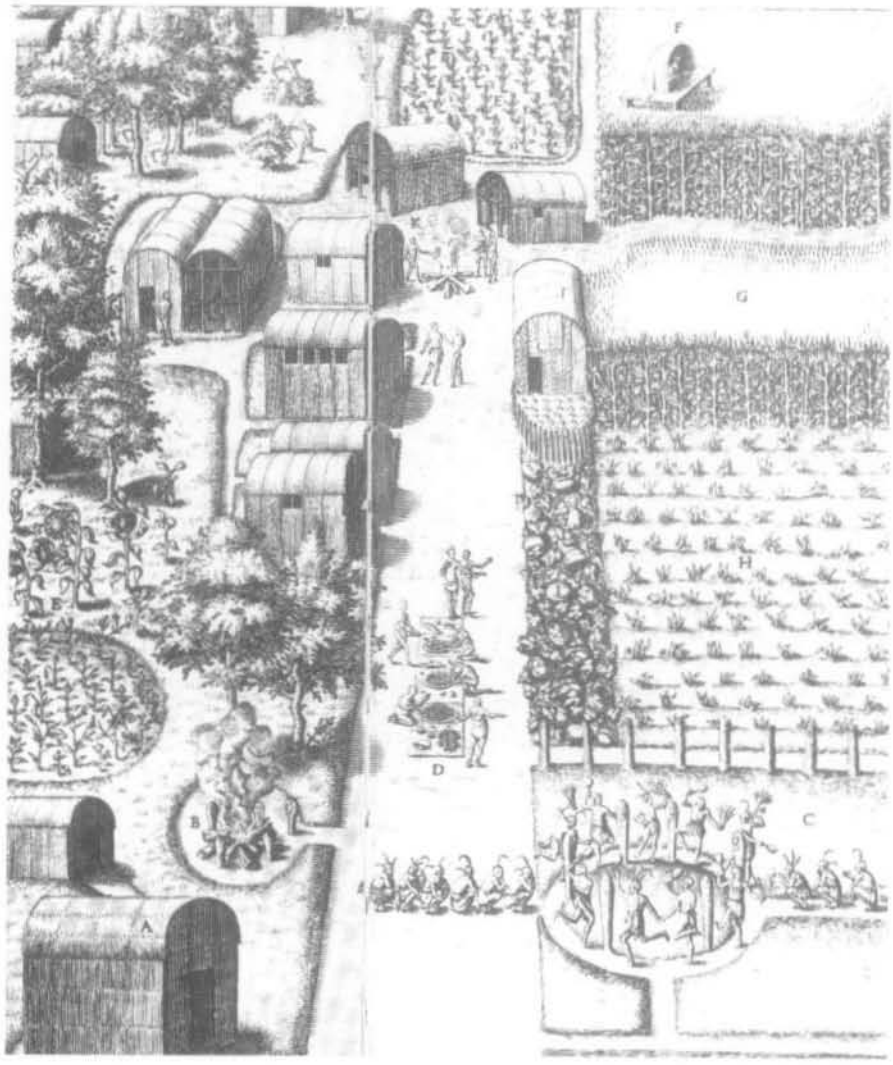


fig. 5 Théodore de Bry, «La ville de Secoton», *America*, part I, 1590, planche XX. (Photo: auteur)

fig.6 Théodore de Bry, «Méthode de labourer la terre et de planter les graines», *America*, part II, 1591, plate 21. (Photo: auteur)

Il faut attendre le graveur de Lafitau, dans les *Mœurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*, 1724, pour avoir une vue plus exacte de l'horticulture amérindienne, cette fois en Huronie (fig.7). Le graveur comprit que les Hurons n'utilisaient pas de charrue et donc ne pouvaient tracer de sillons. C'est la raison pour laquelle il dessina de petits monticules de terre percés de trous pour y mettre les graines. L'utilisation de la bêche fait aussi plus de sens dans ce contexte. Il est vrai cependant que même le graveur de Lafitau ne s'est pas risqué à représenter un jardin amérindien en pleine croissance, avec l'entrelacement de plantes décrit par Champlain. Qu'en est-il de Champlain sous ce rapport? Si l'on s'en remet à ses dessins, tels qu'ils nous sont parvenus dans les interprétations gravées de David Pelletier, on ne peut pas dire qu'ils soient complètement satisfaisants. Il a fait représenter le mieux possible les plantes indigènes qu'il ne connaissait pas pas (fig.8), mais il ne s'est pas mis en frais de nous représenter la manière dont elles poussaient dans les champs.

On peut lire en légende : «la forme des sitroulos», probablement pour citrouilles et courges, «groiselle rouge», «raisins de trois sortes», «chataigne», «les febves du Bresil», «prune» pour les plus facilement identifiables. Sur les «alix», «atemara»,

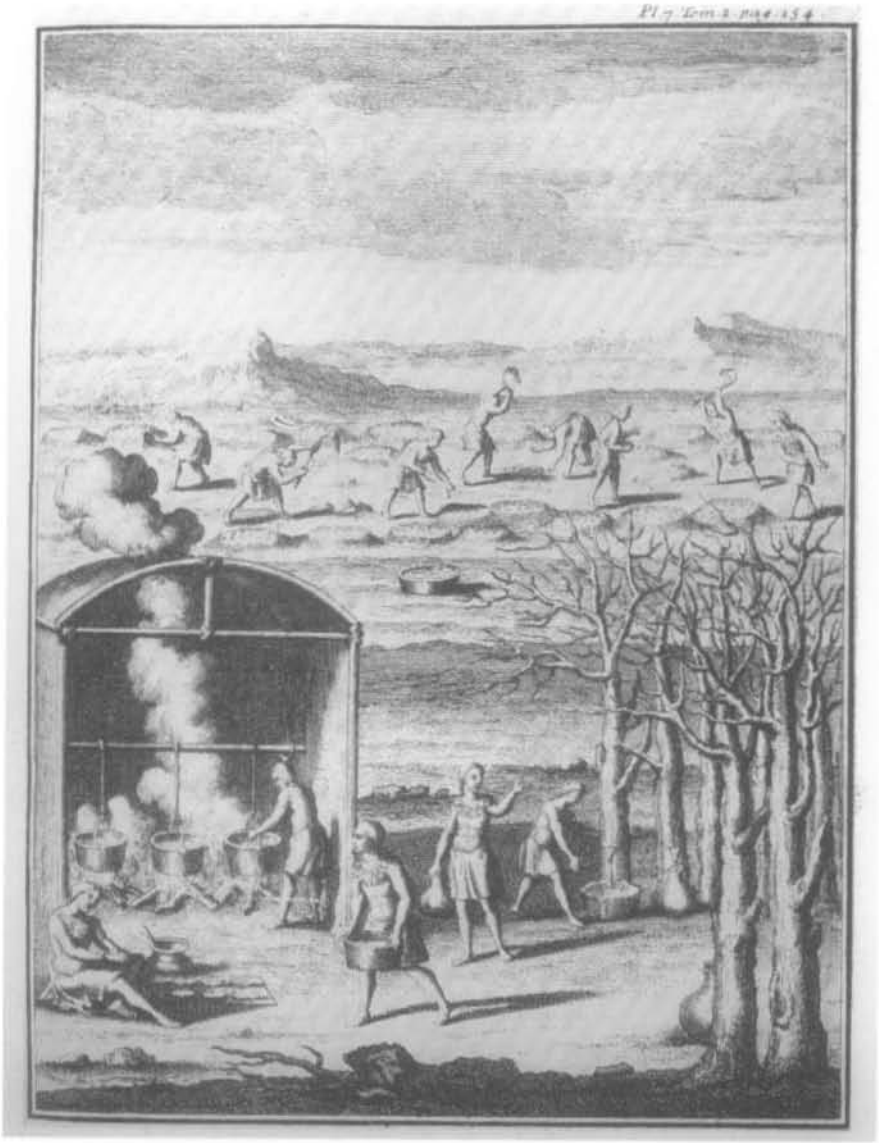


fig.7 En haut : «Méthode de cultiver et de planter»; en bas : «Manière de faire le sucre d'érable» , dans Joseph Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*, 1724, vol. II, planche VII. (Photo: auteur)

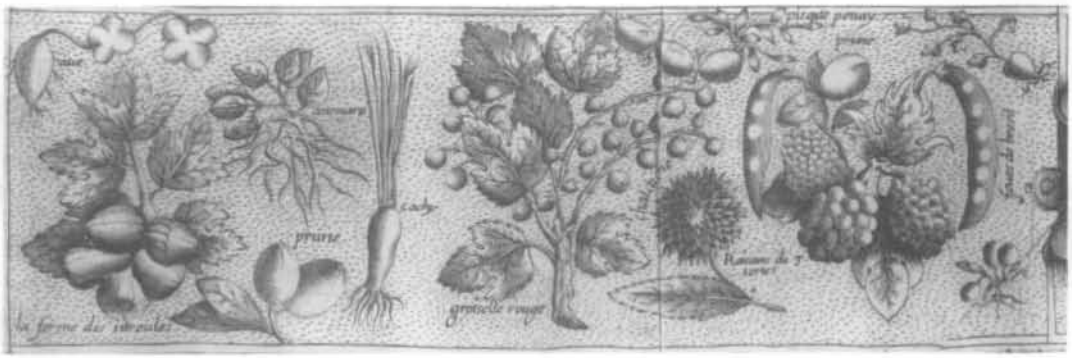


fig.8 Plantes représentées au bas de la carte de 1612 de Champlain. (Photo: auteur)

fig.9 «Maize» dans John Gerarde, *Herball or General Historie of Plants*, John Norton, London, 1597, pl. 75.2. (Photo: auteur)

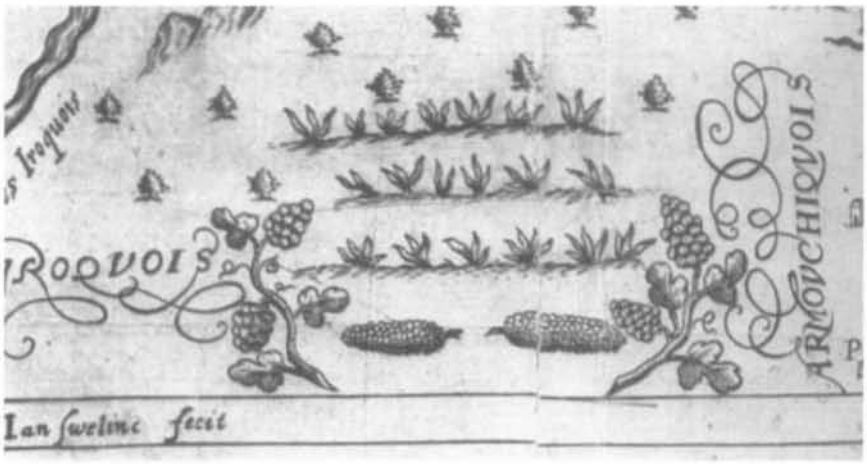


fig.10 Détail de la carte de Lescarbot, 1609. (Photo: auteur)

«cachy» et «pisque penay» nous sommes beaucoup moins fixés. Chose certaine, le maïs brille par son absence dans cette frise décorative. Il faut dire que le maïs n'était pas très connu en Europe à l'époque. Il avait été introduit par l'Espagne et le Portugal et n'avait gagné le nord que lentement. On l'avait d'abord considéré comme une plante purement ornementale[45]. Pourtant on trouvait déjà dans l'*Herball or general historie of Plants* publié à Londres en 1597 par John Gerarde, une belle représentation de la plante en entier (fig.9). Mieux encore et dans un livre accessible à Champlain, Marc Lescarbot avait orné une carte de la Nouvelle-France d'une représentation d'épis de maïs et de grappes de raisins, selon l'opposition classique en iconographie religieuse entre le pain et le vin. (fig.10). Il semble bien que ces représentations aient complètement échappé à David Pelletier.

De plus d'intérêt sont les représentations d'indigènes sur la carte de 1612 (fig.11). Champlain oppose les Montagnais aux Almouchicois, comme les «errants» aux «arrestés», nous dirions les nomades aux sédentaires. Autrement dit, il prenait acte au niveau même de l'illustration, de l'opposition qui l'avait tant frappé sur la côte atlantique, entre ces sauvages qui se construisent des huttes vite abandonnées quand la saison de la pêche est terminée et ceux qui pratiquent

fig.11 «Figures des Montagnais» et «figure des sauvages almouchicois», détail de la carte de 1612 de Champlain. (Photo: auteur)

l'horticulture. Les «figures des montagnais» entendaient nous donner une idée des «errants». C'est la raison pour laquelle la Montagnaise tient un aviron à la main (fig. 12). Elle porte son enfant en bandoulière, dans une position qui peut sembler peu confortable, mais qui signifie aussi la possibilité des déplacements. L'homme montagnais est moins caractérisé comme «errant». Il sert plutôt le stéréotype bien européen du guerrier en opposition à la femme, qui est représentée comme nourricière. C'est aussi ce qui expliquerait la présence d'un petit panier à anse derrière elle.

L'Almouchicoise (fig.13) tient d'une main ce qu'on pourrait prendre pour une poire, ou un coing, mais qui est plutôt un de ces «sitroulos», représentées dans la frise au bas de la carte, donc une courge. On trouve d'ailleurs dans Leonhart Fuschs la représentation assez semblable d'une gourde, *Cucurbita lagenaria* dans son *De Historia Stirpium*, publié à Bâle en 1542 (figs.14 et 16). Sur un dessein de John White représentant une femme de Pomeioc et sa fille, la femme tient la même plante dans sa main gauche. Étant donné que cette représentation est très connue, nous reproduisons une image de Robert Beverley, moins connue mais inspirée de White (fig.15). Dans son autre main, l'Almouchicoise tient probablement

fig.12
La Montagnaise de la carte de 1612 de Champlain. (Photo: auteur)

fig.13
L'Almouchicoise de la carte de 1612 de Champlain. (Photo: auteur)

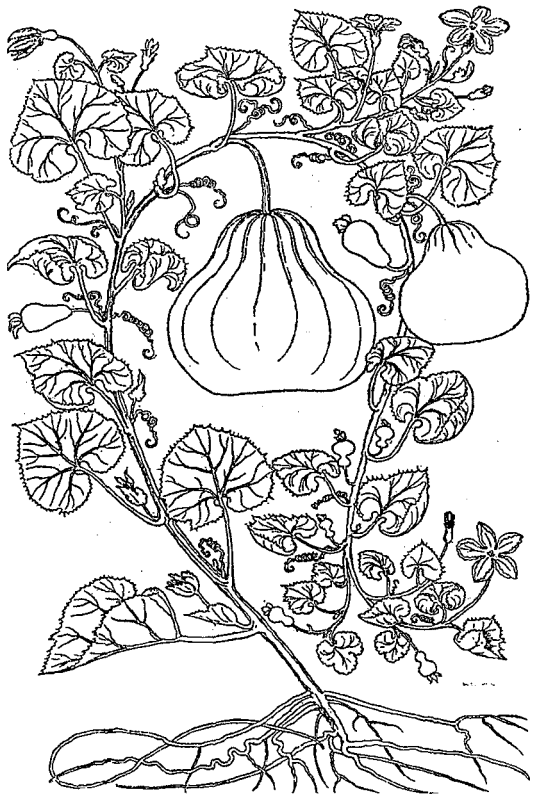


fig.14
Gourde, dans Leonhart Fuchs (ou Fuchsius), *De Historia Stirpium commentarii insignes, maximis impensis & vigillis elaborati adjectis earumdem vivis plusquam quingentis imaginibus, nunquam antea ad naturae imitationem artificiosius effectis et expressis*, in officine Isingriana, Bâles, 1542, p.368. (Photo: auteur)

fig.15 «Femme de Pomeioc et sa fille», dans Robert Beverley, *Histoire de la Virginie*, Amsterdam, 1707, planche VI, face à la page 234. (Photo: auteur)

fig.16 Gourde, dans Leonhart Fuchs, *De Historia Stirpium*..., Bâles, 1542, p.370. (Photo: auteur)

fig.17 Millet indien, dans Leonhart Fuchs, *De Historia Stirpium*..., Bâles, 1542, p.771. (Photo: auteur)

fig.18 L'Almouchicois de la carte de 1612 de Champlain. (Photo: auteur)

un épi de maïs. On me dira qu'il n'est pas très convaincant! J'en conviens. Les feuilles de la plante ressemblent à des feuilles de tulipe. Pierre-Simon Doyon[46] a suggéré que la plante représentée pouvait être une forme ou l'autre de millet, *Holcus sorghum*, qui était mieux connu que le maïs en Europe à l'époque (fig.17)[47]. Une chose est sûre en tout cas: ces Almouchicois sont représentés comme des jardiniers, des horticulteurs, sinon des paysans capables de cultiver leurs plantes.

Un détail reste intrigant. Pourquoi avoir représenté les Almouchicois dans un état presque complet de nudité, en tout cas beaucoup moins habillés que les Montagnais? Certes on pense tout de suite au climat. Les Montagnais habitaient la rive nord du Saint-Laurent à la hauteur de Tadoussac et les Almouchicois habitaient la Caroline du Nord. Mais peut-être était-ce une façon de suggérer que les Almouchicois vivaient dans une sorte d'Arcadie bienheureuse, où leur nudité n'aurait pas été déplacée. Qu'en est-il du compagnon masculin de l'Almouchicoise? Si on isole mentalement sa figure (fig.18), on a la surprise de constater qu'il n'a rien de bien indien. On dirait plutôt une tête d'Européen, une sorte Henri IV ensauvagé. Certes le concept de race n'existe pas à l'époque. Il n'était donc pas question de doter les personnages de traits ethniques caractérisés. La découverte de quelques Indiens pratiquant la culture des plantes démontrait qu'ils n'étaient pas si différents de nous après tout et qu'on pouvait donc espérer les assimiler rapidement.

Il n'y a donc rien d'étonnant à ce que l'homme almouchicois avec sa barbiche nous ressemble autant et semble même s'avancer d'un bon pas vers nous. On notera que le couteau qui lui sert à aiguiser sa flèche était européen (déjà). Le commerce et les échanges seront de puissants facteurs d'assimilation. Les missionnaires feront le reste. Si, pour conclure, on tente de dresser un bilan de l'expérience de la côte atlantique de Champlain, on peut dire qu'elle fut à la fois négative et positive. Il fut en mesure d'envoyer définitivement aux oubliettes le vieux mythe du Norembègue. Mais il se donna une vue plus fine des populations amérindiennes. Il n'était plus possible de parler indistinctement des «sauvages». Certains groupes pratiquaient l'horticulture et cultivaient le maïs. Certes, pour Champlain, il ne s'agissait pas encore de parler de culture, comme nous le faisons aujourd'hui. Clairement, pour lui il n'y a qu'une culture qui vaille, la sienne. Il constatait seulement que certains de ces groupes auraient moins de chemin à faire pour rejoindre sa propre culture, alors que d'autres en étaient beaucoup plus loin et qu'il fallait songer à leur montrer «à vivre & enseigner le labourage des terres, & autres choses».

FRANÇOIS-MARC GAGNON
Institut de recherche en art canadien Gail et Stephen A. Jarislowsky
Université Concordia

Notes

1 Voir Bertrand GERVAIS, «Éléments pour une rhétorique de l'assimilation», *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*, vol.XVII, nº 3, automne 1987, p.41-52.

2 Voir Lee Elridge HUDDLESTON, *Origins of the American Indians. European Concepts, 1492 – 1729*, University of Texas Press, Austin et Londres, 1970.

3 *Discorso d'un gran capitano di mare Francese del luoco di Dieppa sopra la navigationi flotte alla terra bova dell'Indie occidentali, chiamata la nuova Francia, de gradi 40 fino a gradi 47 sotto il porto artico, e sopra la terra del Brasil, Guinea, Loola di san Lorenzo equella di Sumatra, fino alle quali hanno navigato le Caravelle e navi Francese*, dans G. RAMUSIO, *Navigatione et viaggi*, Venise, 1565, vol.III, fol.425v, cité par Henry HARRISSE, *Découverte et évolution cartographique de Terre-Neuve et des pays circonvoisins, 1497-1501-1769. Essai de géographie historique et documentaire*, Londres et Paris, 1900, p.151.

4 «La province de quoi nous commençons à parler est appelée Reobar [peut-être pour *rudbar*, qui en persan indique une région arrosée par un cours d'eau]. Les fruits de celle-ci sont dates, grenades, citrons, pommes de Paradis et pistaches, et bien d'autres fruits qui ne viennent pas en nos pays froids», A.-C. MOULE et P. PELLIOT, *Marco Polo, Le Devisement du Monde. Le Livre des merveilles* (version française de L. Hambis; introduction et notes de S. Yerasimos), Éditions de la Découverte, Paris, 1991, vol.I, p.99. Leonardo OLSCHKI, *Marco Polo's Asia: an introduction to his Description of the world called Il milione*, University of California Press, Berkeley et Cambridge University Press, Londres, 1960, situe sur une carte à la fin de son volume cette région de «Reobarles» et indique, p.374 qu'il s'agit d'une région particulièrement désertique aujourd'hui, mais l'archéologie a révélé l'existence de tout un système d'irrigation qui justifiait sans doute dans le passé l'appellation de *rudbar*.

5 Il est question de *berzi* dans la province de Lochac, à l'extrême sud de la Thaïlande actuelle, dans la région du fleuve Pattani. (Voir A.-C. MOULE et P. PELLIOT, *Marco Polo, Le Devisement du Monde*, vol. II, p.410, n.383). Le mot a intrigué Ramusio qui parle d'un «fruit appelé berci, qui est cultivé et gros comme un citron et très bon à manger». On traduit plutôt *berzi* par bois de Brésil aujourd'hui. Il est clair que Marco Polo n'est jamais allé à Java! Voir Ronald LATHAM, *Marco Polo, The Travels*, Harmondsworth, UK, Penguin Books (1958), 1967, p.251.

6 *Les Voyages avantureux du capitaine Jan Alfonce, Sainctongeois*, par Jan de MARNEF, au Pélican, Poitiers, 1559, f. 28v et 29r. Nous citons l'original à partir de la microfiche nº 29064 de l'Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques ; voir aussi W.F. GANONG, «Crucial Maps in the Early Cartography and Place Nomenclature of the Atlantic Coast of Canada. VI: The Voyages of Jacques Cartier», *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 3e série, vol. 28, Sect. II. 1934, p.274-76.

7 Marc LESCARBOT, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France. Contenant les navigations, découvertes, et habitations faites par les François és Indes Occidentales et Nouvelle-France souz l'avoeu et authorité de nos Rois Tres-Chrestiens, et les diverses fortunes d'iceux en l'exécution de ces choses, depuis cent ans jusques à hui. En quoy est comprise l'Histoire Morale, Naturele et Géographique de ladite province: Avec les Tables et Figures d'icelle*, Paris, chez Jean Millot, 1609, liv. IV, chap. 7; nous citons l'édition W. L. GRANT, *Marc Lescarbot, Histoire de la Nouvelle-France*, The Champlain Society, Toronto, 1907-1914, vol. II, p.524.

8 Georges MUSSET, *Jean Fonteneau dit Alfonce de Saintonge, capitaine pilote de François Ier, La Cosmographie avec espère et régime du soleil et du Nord en nostre langue françoise*, Paris, Ernest Leroux éditeur, 1904, p.504. (BN ms français 676 (1943-4) f. 185).

9 Cap Catoche à l'extrémité nord-est du Yucatán, qui fut ainsi nommé en Allison au Cap du Figuier, qui marquait la frontière de la France et de l'Espagne dans la Baie de Biscaye. Voir H.P. BIGGAR, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, F.A. Acland, Ottawa, 1924, n.4, p.278.

10 Sur Cibola, voir G.P. WINSHIP, «The Coronado Expedition 1540 – 1542» dans *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*, Washington, 1896, p.329-613, où les cartes portant ce toponyme sont aussi reproduites.

11 MUSSET, *Jean Fonteneau dit Alfonce de Saintonge*, p.496; repris dans «An Extract from the *Cosmographie* of Jean Alfonse, completed 24 May, 1544», dans BIGGAR, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, p.298.

12 Adverbe de lieu: en cet endroit-là.

13 Adverbe de lieu: en cet endroit-là.

14 Cité dans H. HARRISSE, *Jean et Sébastien Cabot: leur origine et leurs voyages. Étude d'histoire critique suivie d'une cartographie, d'une bibliographie et d'une chronologie des voyages au nordouest de 1497 à 1550 d'après des documents inédits*, Paris, 1882 (réimpression Chicago: Argonaut, 1968), p.226-27; repris en partie dans HARRISSE, p.219.

15 *Ibid.*, p.229.

16 Voir Ch.-André JULIEN, *Les Voyages de découverte et les premiers établissements (XV^e –XVI^e siècles)*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1948, p.356. Il est venu à la connaissance de Rabelais sous cette forme manuscrite, dès cette date, peut-être par l'intermédiaire de son ami Saint-Gelais, l'auteur du sonnet qui figure en tête des *Voyages aventureux....*

17 André THEVET, *La Cosmographie universelle d'André Thevet cosmographe du Roy*, chez Guillaume Chaudière, rue S. Jacques, à l'enseigne du Temps & de l'Homme sauvage, Paris, 1575, tome II f. 1008v. Nous citons l'original à partir de la microfiche n° 40485 de l'Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques.

18 Op. cit., f. 1008v-1009r.

19 Id., f. 1009r.

20 «From the first, the most popular objects of barter in the West Indies were the small brass bells which falconers in Europe tied to the legs of their hunting birds», Björn LANDSTRÖM, *Columbus*, The MacMillan Company, New York, 1967, p.71.

21 *Ibid.*

22 Le mot est encore au dictionnaire: «Bélître», terme injurieux désignant un homme de rien.

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*

25 Faire largue, prendre un vent oblique par rapport à l'axe longitudinal du navire.

26 *Ibid.*

27 LESCARBOT, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, p.524.

28 *Ibid.*

29 Micmacs.

30 H.P. BIGGAR, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*,The Champlain Society, Toronto, 1922-1936, vol. I, p.292.

31 *Ibid.*, p.292-93.

32 *Ibid.*, p.295.

33 *Ibid.*, p.110.

34 *Ibid.*, p.298.

35 *Ibid.*, p.285.

36 BIGGAR, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*, vol. III, p.368.

37 BIGGAR, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*, vol. I, p.327.

38 *Ibid.*

39 *Ibid.*, p.327-28.

40 *Ibid.*, p.336.

41 *Ibid.*, p.341.

42 *Ibid.*, p.351.

43 Voir John WALKER et Paul HULTON, *The Watercolor Drawings of John White From the British Museum*, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1965, pl. 43, p.35.

44 W.C. STURTEVANT, «Lafitau's Hoe», *American Antiquity*, vol.33, no.1, janvier 1968.

45 «[Corn] was dispayed [by Columbus] as a curiosity to the court at Barcelona». Zvi DOR-NER, *Columbus and the Age of Discovery*, William Morrow and Company Inc., New York, 1993, p.59 et suiv.

46 L'iconographie botanique en Amérique française du XVII^{e} au milieu du XVIII^{e} siècles, Thèse de doctorat, Département d'histoire, Faculté des études supérieures, Université de Montréal, 1993, p.59 et suiv.

47 Voir une représentation à la page 771 du De Historia Stirpium, de Leonhard Fuschs, publié à Bâle en 1542; repr. dans Richard G. HATTON, *Handbook of Plant and Floral Ornament...*, Dover Publications Inc., New York, 1960, p.477.

MYTH OR REALITY

The Atlantic Coast Seen by Champlain and his Predecessors

Myths and legends of the existence of ancient civilized nations abounded in the sixteenth century. It was believed that the discovery of lost kingdoms would link the past and the present, the Ancient and the New World. Such speculation provided the context for Samuel de Champlain's exploration of the Atlantic coast of America beginning in 1604. One of the important fables was that of Norumbega, a myth originating in Dieppe and identifying a place that Pierre Crignon had described in his *Discorso* of 1539 as part of Asia where "the inhabitants are amiable and peaceful" and that "oranges, almonds or wild vines could be found." Champlain may have found a more explicit discussion of Norumbega in *Voyages aventureux* (1536-43) by Jean Alfonse who described "a great city where people are small and swarthy as in the Indies," and its inhabitants spoke a language which reminded him of Latin, symbolizing the conflation of antiquity and the Christian world. Alfonse's description of this mythic place was widely repeated in other texts of the time. Lescarbot added that Norumbega was discovered by the Portuguese and the Spanish, and he "corrected" Alfonse's description of the people by saying they were tall and good looking, and wore fur as proof of their wealth. Jehan Mallart recounted Alfonse's narrative in a lengthy poem dedicated to François I in 1575, and added his own embellishments, so that the ancient city became a large, beautiful island. André Thevet expanded the discourse by publishing the story of his own but imaginary voyage to Norumbega (which he situated north of Florida) and detailed an encounter with the Natives. To authenticate his story, he included Native terms such as the word *Canoque* for their dwellings. He thus placed the myth within the realm of reality and Mallart became the principal witness in contemporary ethnographic cultural travel traditions.

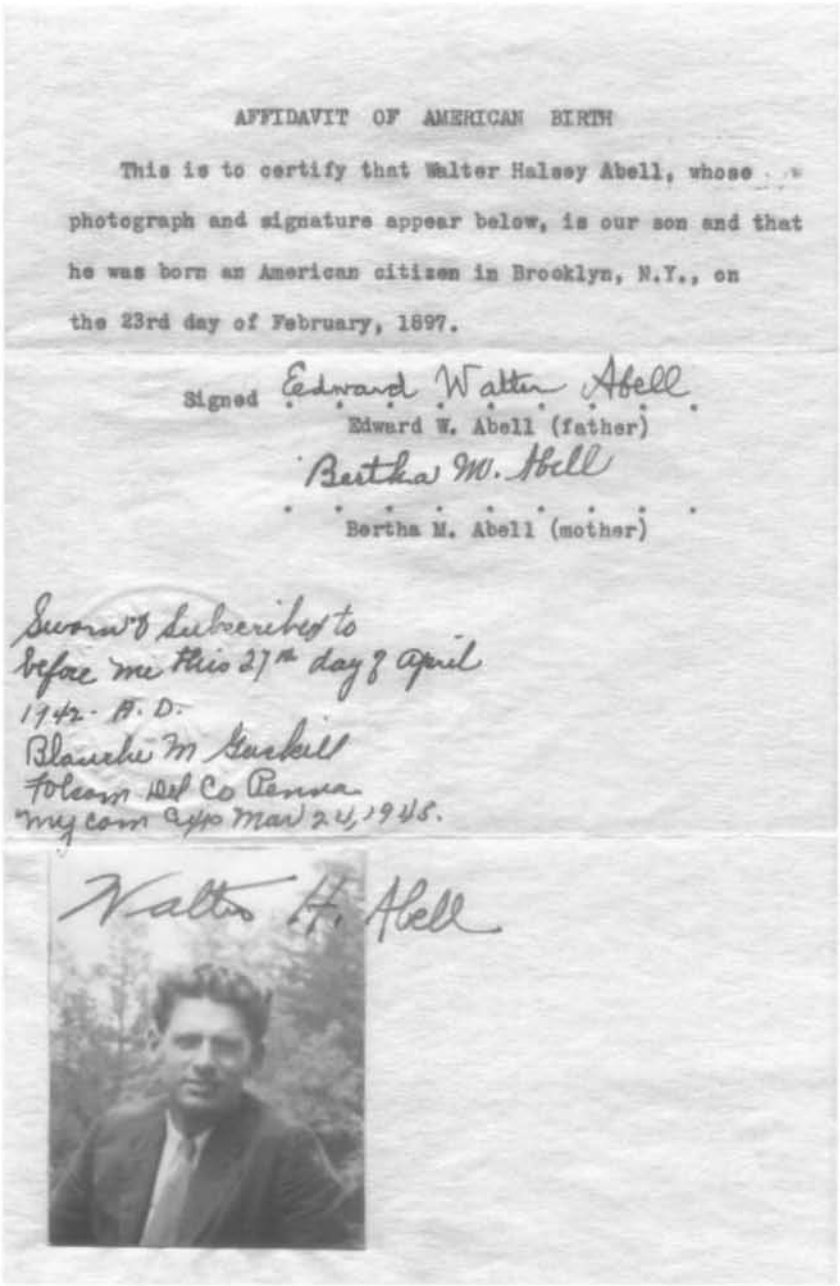
With such provocative texts as his guide, one can fully understand Champlain's disappointment when he landed near the Penobscot River only to discover that it was not Norumbega. He did meet a number of Penatogues of the eastern Abenaki peoples, but soon realized that there was no glorious city, not even a permanent settlement because most of the area was unoccupied. Instead of a "civilized nation," Champlain encountered a band of poor, almost nomadic people who were returning home after the fishing season. Accompanying them to their temporary dwellings, he was disturbed by their improvidence and was stimulated to assist them in more permanent settlements and to teach them to better cultivate the land. Champlain adamantly declared that the Norumbega of the cartographers was indeed a myth, and the name of the imaginary place, "Norembegue," progressively disappeared from his own maps of the early seventeenth century. In his 1632 map only the river is mentioned, along with the word "etechemains."

This does not mean, however, that Champlain's explorations were fruitless as he made major discoveries concerning the life of the Native people. At the mouth of the Saco River, he recorded for the first time a people who "tilled the land, something we have never seen before," an observation he would frequently repeat. It is true that these Natives were accomplished horticulturists, who grew maize, pumpkins, beans, and probably Jerusalem artichokes - not to mention tobacco, which was less familiar to the Europeans at the time. To speak of "labourage" as Champlain did, was indeed a little exaggerated; he rapidly corrected his comment by saying that the Natives used the shell of the horseshoe crab (what he called a *signoc*) to gather the earth around their plants. Indeed Champlain's description of soil cultivation among the Natives is more accurate than that shown in engravings by Theodore de Bry, who had never visited North America. It is not until the eighteenth century that a more realistic depiction of Native agriculture would be presented through the illustrations for *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times* (1720), written by the Jesuit missionary, Joseph Lafitau.

Although the maps of Champlain do not illustrate the vegetable gardens of the area, his 1612 map has representations of cultivated plants that were new to him. Equally important, it includes cartouche portraits of two Native couples: one a Montagnais and the other a Almouchicois. The Montagnais woman holds an oar to show that her people were nomadic while the Almouchicois woman holds what could be a corn husk in one hand and something resembling a pear (probably a squash) in the other. Intriguingly, the men are in contrasting states of undress, perhaps referring to the Montagnais living along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River. The Almouchicois were from North Carolina and the figure's almost total nudity may also be a suggestion that his people inhabited a type of Arcadia. Nevertheless, the images reflect European stereotypes as the men are represented as warriors, and the women shown caring for their families.

In short the results of Champlain's expeditions to the New World were both negative and positive. The myth of Norumbega was finally put to rest and replaced by a more nuanced representation of the Natives. After Champlain's voyages along the Atlantic coast, it was no longer possible to regard the Indians simply as "errants" or nomads. Some of them were "arrestés" or settlers because they cultivated corn and other crops. Champlain's discoveries brought the Natives closer to the traditional European image and perhaps as a result, made them more ready for assimilation.

Translation: author



AFFIDAVIT OF AMERICAN BIRTH

This is to certify that Walter Halsey Abell, whose photograph and signature appear below, is our son and that he was born an American citizen in Brooklyn, N.Y., on the 23rd day of February, 1897.

Signed Edward Walter Abell
Edward W. Abell (father)
Bertha W. Abell
Bertha M. Abell (mother)

Sworn & Subscribed to
before me this 27th day of April
1942. A. D.
Blanche M Gerkell
Folcroft Del Co Penna
My Comm Exps Mar 24, 1945.

Walter H. Abell

fig.1 Affidavit of American birth for Walter Halsey Abell, 1942. (Photo: the author)

"FROM AWAY"
THE CARNEGIE CORPORATION, WALTER ABELL AND AMERICAN STRATEGIES FOR ART IN THE MARITIMES FROM THE 1920s TO THE 1940s

The history of the art community in the Maritime Provinces is written through a series of episodes. At various points, this narrative describes the influence of individuals and interests from outside the region or, to use the more redolent Maritime phrase, "come from away." This is particularly true of the period from the late 1920s to the mid 1940s, when the identity of the region's art milieu was strongly marked by American attitudes and strategies. The two most influential forces on the Maritime art community were the President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Frederick P. Keppel (1875-1943), and the Pennsylvanian art writer and educator Walter Halsey Abell (1897-1956) at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia (fig.1). Their story is the subject of this article, but it is only one part of a larger story.[1]

The Carnegie Corporation had been interested in Canada since the founding of their Commonwealth Program in 1911; and the relationship was facilitated by easy access, a shared language and a legacy of historical interaction between the two countries.[2] The Carnegie became actively involved in Maritime education in the early 1920s when it funded a government project to establish an inter-provincial federation of universities.[3] Its reasoning was quite straightforward: "the Corporation extended its main effort in the Maritime Provinces which were effectively isolated from the rest of Canada and had particular educational problems."[4] A similar motive would underpin Carnegie support for art in the region.

Under Frederick Keppel's presidency from 1923 to 1941, the Carnegie grant programs were driven by an agenda of cultural philanthropy.[5] The former Dean of Columbia College (now University) and the son of a famous New York art dealer, Keppel (fig.2) was the first Carnegie administrator to fully ensure that the visual arts were the main priority of its grant-giving. As Walter Abell would write at the time of Keppel's retirement, "there are few institutions in the field of art on the North American continent which have not received encouragement at their growing edge from the Carnegie Corporation.... That program was, in not small measure, Dr. Keppel's vision and achievement."[6] Keppel's definition of cultural advancement derived from his belief that Americans were merely "unaesthetic," rather than anti-aesthetic. His writings[7] emphasize a desire to

fig.2 Frederick P. Keppel, 1941.
(Photo: www.carnegie.org/sub/philanthropy)

educate public taste by promoting "the best" in culture, which he defined as the most beautiful and the most edifying, as opposed to the most popular and the most entertaining.

Keppel believed that aesthetic education could be achieved by developing the expertise necessary to promote and disseminate wider access to culture; this goal would be accomplished by training future cultural authorities who would function as interpreters to the general public. He also envisioned these "aesthetic" experts as the next generation of art patrons or "philanthropoids" (as he called them). Preparation of such diffusers of cultural knowledge would be achieved by the upper level of educators. Here the very American Keppel may have followed a contemporary British model that relied on university-based intellectuals to perform the task. Keppel also ensured that colleges and universities received the infrastructure support necessary to make it happen. He regarded such institutions as the most appropriate training ground as they had the scholarly resources for developing elevated taste, for maintaining and diffusing models of excellence, and for encouraging the teaching of art history and aesthetics as part of a liberal education. As Ellen Lagemann points out, Keppel's preoccupation with this professionalization of culture clearly relates to the Carnegie's involvement in the "politics of knowledge."

Keppel's cultural philanthropy was not intended to educate the artist or similar cultural producers as the Carnegie had little interest in supporting vocational education. This explains, for example, why the Nova Scotia College of Art in Halifax did not received Carnegie funding despite the requests of its principal, the formidable Elizabeth Nutt. Nevertheless, in the late 1920s, Keppel demonstrated his belief that Carnegie programs for the advancement of art could be as efficacious in the Maritimes as anywhere else in North America. That such financial assistance was welcomed by the region's institutions seems undeniable; that it was of dire necessity was forcefully (over) stated by Dr. J. Clarence Webster, the Maritime physician and historian who had his own ties to the Carnegie Corporation:

> In the Maritimes...cultural development is almost entirely wanting. Art is practically non-existent. There is little appreciation for it in any form. There is no market for paintings, etchings, engravings or sculpture; not a single public collection of any importance, and very few private houses in which good works of art are to be found. Loan exhibitions, even, are so very infrequent as to be almost unknown.[8]

Webster placed the blame squarely on the region's universities for failing "to develop a widespread love of culture" and for not having "furnished the intellectual leadership so greatly needed in public life."[9] But with the arrival of Carnegie art support at Acadia University in 1927, some of Webster's criticisms would be addressed and several of Keppel's ambitions fulfilled.

Walter Abell in the United States

The second protagonist in this narrative of the Maritime art community is the aesthetician, educator and writer Walter Abell, whose work in the region defines Carnegie cultural patronage. After negotiations between Frederick Keppel and the university's president, Dr. Francis Patterson, Abell arrived at Acadia University in the fall of 1928 to establish a Department of Art and Aesthetics.[10] He would stay in Wolfville for the next fifteen years and successfully place the Maritimes on the map of Canadian art. Abell was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. although his family was resident near Philadelphia when he was a young child.[11] At the end of World War I while completing a B.A. in literature at the Quaker school, Swarthmore College, he became a convert to the Society of Friends.[12] His decision to become a liberal Hicksite rather than an Orthodox Quaker was undoubtedly influenced by the modern views espoused by the Friends' communities at Swarthmore and its sister college Haverford. Abell would remain a member of the Swarthmore Monthly Meeting throughout his lifetime.

From October 1918 to September of the following year, Abell volunteered with the American Friends Overseas Service as a member of a reconstruction

unit in France.[13] There he was posted to Ornans and then to the Meuse to help replace housing that was destroyed during the war.[14] Before returning to the United States, he was offered a scholarship by the Quaker Studies Centre at Woodbrooke in Birmingham, England.[15] Although he refused the grant, he spent some time there in late summer 1919 prior to returning to Swarthmore to complete his undergraduate studies the following spring. In October 1920 Abell took up the managing editorship of the Philadelphia Quaker bi-weekly newspaper the *Friends' Intelligencer* where he would publish over sixty signed articles and several poems over the next two years.[16] He was introduced to its readership with the comment: "He has been interested for several years in the problem of squaring the modern concept of religion with the highest modern thought and modern social needs." Authoring a range of editorial topics, especially on the role of young Friends and their place in post-war society, Abell also wrote a number of pieces that referenced the fine arts, particularly architecture. He resigned as Editor of the *Intelligencer* in June 1922, although he would contribute twenty-five more articles until the early 1930s. He also served as the Publicity Secretary for the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia from 1922 to 1923. As I shall explain later in this text, Abell's Quakerism deserves closer consideration than it has previously received because it is most relevant to his activities in eastern Canada.

Abell then returned to Swarthmore and completed his Master's degree in 1924 with a thesis entitled "Fine Art as an Element in Liberal Education." Because art history *per se* was a fledgling academic pursuit at Swarthmore, part of his research work was carried out in France, England and Italy. He also did independent study at home at the Barnes Foundation in nearby Merion, Pennsylvania.[17] Although Albert Barnes famously barred art historians and critics from the Foundation, it is possible that Abell's past work with the Society of Friends made him acceptable to Barnes. More to the point, the Foundation particularly welcomed students and professors from the nearby Quaker colleges. The Barnes' educational programs and publications such as its *Journal*, were a major influence on Abell and his interest in John Dewey's theories on the educational and societal value of art were also a result of his time at the Foundation.[18]

After spending more time abroad, Abell accepted a position at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio where he would teach art and aesthetics from 1925 to 1927. During his tenure he also published a book of poetry, *Eternal Springtime*.[19] His arrival at Antioch to develop a program in Applied Aesthetics may indicate Abell's initiation into the circle of Frederick Keppel and the Carnegie Corporation. In a 4 February 1925 letter, Arthur Morgan, the President of Antioch College informed Keppel that:

> I wanted some one with whom the appreciation of art was an emotional experience even more than an intellectual discipline, and I finally found Mr. Abell. I discovered that for some years past he has been looking for a place

> to work in the field of art teaching, but that he had found almost every course in art appreciation to consist of the history of art. He visited colleges over the country and visited faculties in this general field, and came to the conclusion that he wanted to make a radical departure from nearly all of them. He believed that they were teaching the history of art rather than the emotional appreciation of art. When he and I became acquainted with each other each of us felt that the meeting was a fortunate one.[20]

Another, but less significant factor in Abell's appointment may have been his Quaker connection as the Society of Friends was beginning to establish a presence at Antioch at this time.

Morgan also furnished Keppel with Abell's five-page syllabus, "Aim and Outline of Antioch College Course in Applied Aesthetics."[21] This course plan would also serve as the template for Abell's art offerings at Acadia University a few years later. As Abell explains in the syllabus, the course would "cultivate the student's power of perceiving and enjoying beauty in all its phases, in order that his experience may be enriched by this source of pleasure, and in order that he may recognize and develop the aesthetic possibilities of his own daily life and environment." At Antioch he introduced such topics as "The Nature of Beauty," "Beauty in Personal Life," "Beauty in Social Life," and "The Fine Arts." In his second year Abell added the course "Art Through the Ages" where: "These achievements are studied, not as models to be copied, nor as sources of historical data to be memorized, but as treasuries of beauty to be enjoyed and as examples of the successful application of universal aesthetic principles."

While at Antioch, Abell also delivered papers at the annual meetings of the College Art Association and the American Federation of the Arts, as well as attending a summer course at the Art Institute of Chicago,[22] thereby extending the network of contacts that would serve him well in the Maritimes. However, his tenure at Antioch was not of long duration because of reductions in the university's budget and, as he wrote to Albert Barnes in January 1926, there were some questions about his "aesthetic judgments."[23] However, in a 10 March 1927 letter to the Foundation, he states that Antioch asked him to come back for the academic year 1927-28, but he had refused their offer.[24] This decision was to be of great benefit to the Maritimes.

It was at this point that Keppel informed Abell that he had recommended him for a position as Professor of Fine Arts at Acadia University in Wolfville.[25] He accepted the offer although, with President Francis Patterson's agreement, he postponed the appointment for one year until the fall of 1928 so that he could "complete my first-hand observation of the important phases of European art."[26] Before leaving for the continent, Abell attended what was known as the Carnegie Corporation summer course in museum studies at Harvard and offered by Paul J. Sachs.[27] The best information available on Abell's time in Cambridge comes from his letter to Sachs in 1931: "At the close

of the course, as my special paper, I drew up a tentative outline for a study of the esthetic aspects of museum work. At that time I was just beginning a study of the esthetic values of architecture, sculpture and painting, upon which I have since engaged."[28] Abell's interest in museology would continue to be a strong preoccupation when he moved to Nova Scotia, and he would end his Canadian career as an educator at the National Gallery in Ottawa. More importantly, Abell honed his definition of aesthetics in the United States and he was equipped with the ideological tools to challenge the condition of the Maritime art community. This would symbolize a Carnegie approach to cultural education that most decidedly came "from away."

Carnegie Art Teaching Equipment

The narrative that follows Walter Abell's arrival in Wolfville, Nova Scotia in the fall of 1928 had begun a year earlier when he was first offered his professorship and when Acadia University obtained a Carnegie Teaching Equipment Set. The Corporation's project of providing visual arts materials to colleges and universities had been initiated in 1925, and each set was valued at $5,000 or at least $50,000 in current dollars.[29] The "arts teaching equipment" or "art study material," as it was also known, consisted of almost two hundred books, eighteen hundred black and white photographic reproductions of art works in storage cases, and a small group of original prints and textiles, all with annotated labels. Intended to accompanying the visual materials were lengthy explanatory texts and catalogues but the latter were never fully completed.[30] In the late 1930s, two hundred colour illustrations were also distributed, but by then the boxed set of textiles had been eliminated.[31] The content of the sets were determined by a Carnegie committee of Frederick Keppel, Paul J. Sachs of Harvard, Frank Jewett Mather Jr. from Princeton, John Shapley, president of the College Art Association, and other art historians, museologists, librarians and related experts. Most impressively, the Carnegie materials were remarkably inclusive at the time in their attempt to span the history of art in terms of both historical periods and international geography.

The allocation of art teaching materials began in 1926, with the Carnegie drawing up its own list of potential recipients as well as agreeing to requests from numerous institutions. Although there were some exceptions, equipment sets were not generally available to universities with a solid program in art history or visual arts. One hundred and fifteen sets were distributed to universities and a few art museums in North America; of the twelve sent to Canada, the University of Toronto, Queen's and Dalhousie were the first recipients in 1926.[32] That same year, Antioch College had also received its arts equipment, so Walter Abell was fully familiar with its contents and had presumably used the set in his classes.[33] Acadia University received theirs in 1927, the only one distributed

in Canada that year; and it would receive the set of colour illustrations in 1937. Elsewhere in the Atlantic region, Mount Allison at Sackville, N.B. obtained its Carnegie materials in 1933 but only after several requests and a year after Memorial University in Newfoundland.[34]

Frederick Keppel believed that making the teaching materials available to universities was the most expedient method to prepare the next generation of cultural leaders. The Carnegie stated that the equipment sets "should serve in the teaching of art as the laboratory serves in the teaching of science."[35] This gifting of art materials was also seen by the Corporation as a "start-up" strategy that would help to introduce academic art courses at the post-secondary level, or in some cases, to expand the few art offerings already in place. The Carnegie also believed that the sets would encourage the introduction of departments of fine arts and most importantly, they would help make the study of art history the scholarly equivalent of other academic disciplines.[36] At the very least, the sets would make students more aware of "the significance of art in daily life, in clothes, furniture and belongings" – an oft-repeated phrase and a sentiment that was also integral to Walter Abell's definition of aesthetic education.

The Carnegie made no distinction between the sets for Canada and the United States. Such thinking reflects the continentalist attitudes and benevolent cultural imperialism that pervaded all of Carnegie philanthropy. Through visits to those universities and colleges that received or asked for Carnegie support, Corporation representatives determined first whether the institution would put the sets to good use, and later returned to learn how the art materials were actually being used. According to an 18 March 1927 letter from Keppel, it appears that Professor Clarence Kennedy of Smith College, Northampton, Mass. visited Wolfville in early 1927 to ascertain "any impressions as to the vitality of the art interests at Acadia University. President Patterson has asked for one of our Fine Art sets."[37] There were obviously no difficulties.

The Carnegie and its advisory committees did not mandate the ways in which the arts equipment sets were to be used inside or outside the classroom. However, Keppel had originally hoped that the books and images would be kept together in a special area so that the students (and faculty) could consult them in tandem. The Carnegie also wanted this dedicated space to function as a type of art center for exhibitions of the illustrations. Although this request was abandoned in 1928-29, it seems that Abell did present displays of the visual materials at Acadia. (A number of the prints are now in the Acadia University Art Gallery collection.)

The Carnegie considered the illustrations of architecture, painting and sculpture to be "the major unit" of the set. The reproductions were "virtually identical for each college" and "represented all the major currents in the stream of art - individuals, periods, schools." Annotated labels were provided, "giving

the artists, the setting of the work as to school and technique, something of the life and personality of the artist and that for which the work is distinguished. Some analysis also is given." Grouped with the reproductions, were "50 original prints, showing different processes of print-making and the work of periods and notable men." The emphasis on images of artwork in the sets can be related to Keppel's concern that aesthetic awareness should be drawn directly from the object, "rather than in the abstract." That his father was a famed New York print dealer undoubtedly influenced his belief in the importance of the visual.

Throughout the years of the project, the availability of titles would determine the selection of books in each set. Nevertheless, the Carnegie believed that: "The books constitute a good working library in the history of art and the analysis of all the arts, including decoration and the décor of the theater. They are in English, French and German, some of them equally valuable in text and reproduction; some on the arts in general, some on definite arts, some on special periods, others on individuals." Because Acadia University has preserved its original library accession books, the contents of their set of books can be largely reassembled.[38] Their holdings correspond almost exactly to the titles listed on the mimeographed "List of Art Books Distributed by Carnegie Corporation, 1927. 9 Sets" that is preserved in the Carnegie archives.[39] The same degree of inclusion seen in the Carnegie's choice of reproductions can also be found in the range of subjects within the equipment set's collection of books, reflecting Keppel's belief that art "may be a universal language but it has many different dialects in different times and places."[40] This promotion of the universalism of aesthetics would also underscore Abell's work in the Maritimes.

Abell at Acadia

Walter Abell's appointment at the Baptist-run university quickly put into play Carnegie's ambitions for the development of cultural expertise in the region.[41] Since 1920, the Corporation had been contributing to Acadia's endowment fund and would continue to aid its arts and science programs into the 1940s.[42] For many years the university's Ladies' Seminary and then the School of Household Science and Fine Arts, had offered studio courses; but given the low priority of art history, Acadia met the Carnegie criteria for receiving an arts equipment set in 1927. President Patterson had obviously made it clear that Acadia was ready to develop an academic program more in line with the Corporation's aims. Abell's new Department of Art and Aesthetics came under the Arts and Science faculty; and more importantly, it was the first of its kind in Canada.

Although Annie Richter from Household Science would continue to teach the new department's studio courses for several years, Abell would be its only academic as he had been at Antioch's art department. His American definition

of aesthetic education is strongly echoed in his description of the department in the 1928 Acadia calendar: "to develop the aesthetic faculties of the student in order that he may increasingly enjoy the beauties about him in nature and in art. To acquaint him with the great creative achievements of the past and the present; and to promote refined taste in personal life, and the competence to meet the aesthetic opportunities of public life." The text not surprisingly also reads like a mission statement of Carnegie cultural philanthropy, and it also easily incorporates Keppel's ambitions for the arts equipment sets. Abell's courses such as "Elements of Beauty," "Beauty in Daily Life," and "The Enjoyment of Art," in addition to traditional art history study, certainly replicates the topics that Abell had taught at Antioch, but now he could expand his ideas within a Canadian context.[43]

Writing to Albert Barnes on 11 April 1929 after his first full term at Wolfville, Abell agrees with Barnes' earlier comment that he and his wife Marcelle were "exiles," but replies that "to find out how much in the way of esthetic development can be undertaken in a place like this, to adapt the tradition to local possibilities and needs is proving quite an interesting task. I think I'll get more out of such work, with freer possibilities for experiment, than I would in an academic art department at most of the universities."[44] By the time he wrote this letter, Abell was starting to look beyond the classroom; he had already published "Three Essentials to the Enjoyment of Art" in the June 1928 issue of the *Bulletin of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union* and he would soon assert his presence in the wider community by developing the Maritime Art Association. His activities in the regional milieu will be treated separately from his academic life, although the two are often intertwined.

In the late 1930s, Abell introduced a groundbreaking course on the art history of Canada. "Canadian Culture in the Visual Arts" was conceived "to develop a sense of the artists' accomplishment in their own land," which Abell believed was a necessity "if a genuine natural culture is to develop." In his 1938-39 departmental report to the University, Abell described the project:

> So far as is known to the writer the course is the first university course ever offered anywhere which gives a comprehensive introduction to the study of Canadian art and its relationship to Canadian life. It will be seen that the course is in line with the current trends towards regionalism, toward connecting art studies with one's own time and place and – in its modern section – toward encouraging an appreciation of the creative efforts being made by contemporary artists of Canada.

More details on the course content can be surmised from Abell's 4 June 1938 letter to Frederick Keppel where he lists the topics: "Primitive cultures: Indian cultures," "Settlement by white races," "Folk Arts: farms and their

architecture" (including crafts and painting) and "Towns: their architecture and layout" that covered the fine and industrial arts, art museums, private collections and dealers.[45] He further described the project as one "devoted to the study and promotion of cultural values in Canadian life, and more especially in the life of the Maritime Provinces."

The course was evidently well into the planning stage before Abell left for a sabbatical year in New York. In early September 1937, a Canadian Press wire service article quotes Abell's exuberant proposal for an offering in Canadian culture that "would make [Acadia] a research centre for the study of folk arts in Canada and introduce extension work in the...Maritimes to make textiles, rugs, pottery, furniture and even paintings." But just as unusual for the time was Abell's inclusion of Inuit and Native art as part of his course on Canadian art history. While the Carnegie arts equipment set was of obvious use in his other courses, its books and reproductions were lacking in any "Canadian" visual material and he sought the help of Alice Webster, the doyenne of the New Brunswick Museum in Saint John who had amassed her own collection of historical illustrations and objects.[46] Abell continued to develop other courses such as "Art in Contemporary Living" and "Creative Art for Children," although "Canadian Culture in the Visual Arts" would eventually become the more prosaic "History of Canadian Art."[47]

At Acadia, Abell also broadened his contacts with the wider Canadian art community and the most important of these was H.O. McCurry, then the Assistant Director of the National Gallery of Canada, whose support would be essential to the founding of the Maritime Art Association. In the 1930s Abell had begun taking frequent trips to central Canada, meeting museum directors, collectors and artists, including Arthur Lismer.[48] These visits were also the occasion for public talks on aesthetics in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal, sponsored by the National Gallery. He had commented on the importance of the trips to McCurry:

> As an American, whose training had been received in the United States and in Europe, I had for several years felt the desirability of being in closer touch with Canadian art centers. Yet I had had no opportunity either to meet the leaders in this field of Canadian life or to study the material contained in any of the more important art collections.[49]

At the same time, Abell kept up his professional academic ties to the United States. Working on a manuscript entitled "The Elements of Art Criticism" in the early 1930s, he unsuccessfully applied for publication aid from the American Institute of Architects and the Carnegie.[50] Unfortunately he faced the same rejection when he twice applied for a Guggenheim Fellowship to investigate the history of art criticism.[51] However, in his career as an art theorist, his most significant achievement to date was the 1936 publication of his well-received

book, *Representation and Form*. Advantageously, the Harvard scholar Arthur Pope wrote the introduction and the book had sideways funding from the Carnegie Corporation.[52] During the 1930s Abell also contributed articles to *The American Magazine* and during the rest of his stay in Canada, he would publish regularly in the *Magazine of Art* and *Parnassus* (in addition to Canadian periodicals). He also maintained his ties with American art associations by attending conferences, and met with Frederick Keppel and other Carnegie officers on his regular summer trips to the eastern United States.

Meanwhile Abell was becoming aware of Acadia's limitations: "The position has its desirable aspects, but it is limited in the resources which it offers for research and for contact with important museum collections, current exhibitions, and people who are active in the field."[53] It seems that he always intended to return to the United States as evidenced by both Walter and Marcelle Abell's letters to Albert Barnes, who believed the best place for him was Philadelphia. Nevertheless Acadia itself was obviously supportive of his efforts: "The Acadia Fine Arts Course is now recognized as outstanding among similar courses offered by either Canadian or American universities."[54] Letters from Acadia's President Patterson to Keppel in the mid-1930s also record his great satisfaction with Abell, but they also lament that the university's financial difficulties during the Depression were making it difficult to retain his professorship. The Carnegie solved the problem in the short-term by granting Acadia funds specifically for Abell's salary because "the art program at Acadia is among the most interesting that has been developed in Canada."[55]

In the mid 1930s, Abell also received a Carnegie grant to study at Columbia University in New York with the intention of introducing art education training courses at Acadia (which he would offer the following year along with Saturday morning art classes.) But instead of going to Columbia or even Harvard as he had suggested to Paul Sachs, Abell spent his 1937-38 sabbatical year as the Supervisor of Education at the Brooklyn Museum (then the Museums of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.) There he organized activities for children and series of lectures for its adult education program as well as other projects including an exhibition on games and toys.[56] As he wrote to the painter Jack Humphrey, he had come to the Brooklyn not only for the new experience but also to help decide whether or not to return to Acadia.[57] The decision was easily made as the museum intended to eliminate the position for financial reasons; but by then Abell had already decided he preferred university teaching even if he had told Humphrey that Brooklyn was more conducive to him and his family than Wolfville.[58]

Unfortunately for Abell, there was a major change in the Corporation's financial policies as grants to universities were being curtailed and the Carnegie was moving towards a new policy of favouring the sciences over the humanities.

At the end of 1940, Acadia's Board of Governors told Abell that it could not "continue his services" unless funding arrived from the Corporation.[59] While New York again came to the rescue, it is not surprising that when Abell was attending the Carnegie's Conference of the Arts in New York in December,[60] he informed Keppel that he was thinking of leaving Acadia and was interested in applying for a position at Swarthmore. In 1941, he also gave a course on modern art at McMaster University's summer school, perhaps because of the city's proximity to Toronto and his friendship with Stanley Hart, the only art professor at Hamilton. Even though Keppel "had started to taper off the arts and adult education programs, on the grounds of leaving a clean slate for his successor,"[61] the Carnegie provided funds to Abell to present a talk on art education programs in Canada at a conference in Philadelphia in 1942.[62]

During Abell's last years at Acadia he presented more courses on aspects of the history of art and was less obviously privileging studies in aesthetics. With severe financial shortfalls in the early 1940s, added to declining enrollments as more and more students became soldiers, President Patterson could find little justification for continuing the Art Department, which had certainly never been the favourite of his Board of Trustees. The University effectively ended Abell's tenure at Acadia in 1943.[63] Abell's departure to Ottawa in late summer obviously left a void in the Maritime art community, and it was also a difficult move for him. He had earlier expressed his regret at possibly leaving Wolfville in a letter to Robert Stackpole at the Carnegie Corporation: "I love this country around here and in many respects should hate to leave it if I were ever called upon to do so."

He then spent a trying year at the National Gallery of Canada, during which he replaced Arthur Lismer as Education Supervisor and he also worked as the editor of the newly-founded *Canadian Art Magazine*.[64] Believing, however, that there was little to keep him in Canada, Abell returned permanently to the United States and to the Art Department at Michigan State College [now University].[65] He would continue to preserve some ties to Canada by occasionally writing on Canadian art and maintaining friendships. Certainly, the importance of Abell's time at Acadia went well beyond the classroom as evidenced by his work with the Maritime Art Association. But his academic life is testament to his determination to provide an Americanized aesthetic education that was steeped in Keppel's definition of cultural advancement. While Abell showed a great empathy with the Maritime's cultural difference, he also followed the Carnegie Corporation's view of the region as part of a North American mainstream; and in this way he was not so different from many Canadian academics and administrators.

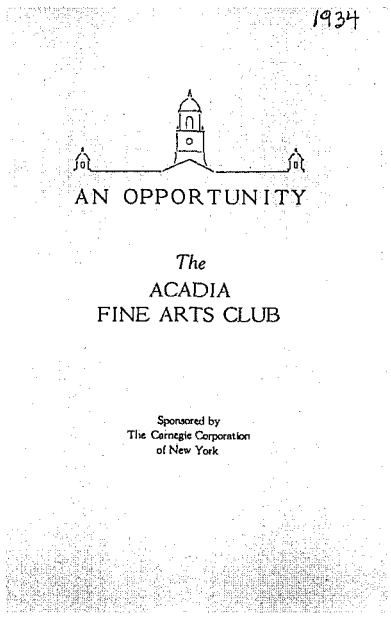


fig.3 *The Acadia Fine Arts Club* report, 1934. (Photo: the author)

The Maritime Art Association

Abell's second arena for aesthetic advancement and cultural awareness was the Maritime Art Association formed in 1935; and in many ways it parallels his experiments in the classroom. The year before, with Carnegie financial and ideological backing, he had organized the Acadia Fine Arts Club with its membership of town and gown (fig.3). The art club grew out of Abell's desire: "to bring the various art activities of Acadia as fully as possible into the life of the university and the surrounding community, and, by enlisting the cooperation of the community, to increase the resources available for the study and enjoyment of art in Wolfville."[66] With an initial membership of seventy, he also set up a picture-loan collection and held regular talks and workshops. More importantly, he joined with Elizabeth MacLeod, the director of Mount Allison University's Art School in Sackville, to obtain circulating exhibitions from the Carnegie-supported College Art Association and the American Federation of Artists. Abell's own earlier ties to these groups undoubtedly played a role in their willingness to send artwork to such remote Canadian centres, and several of the shows traveled to other Maritime venues. The six exhibitions from the United States shown at

Acadia in 1934-35 included "Self Portraits in Prints" by sixty contemporary European and American artists and "Oil Painting by Contemporary Artists." This program clearly demonstrates that the region was not quite so isolated from viewing international art as it might proclaim.

More important for the future Maritime Art Association, in 1934 Abell also obtained another small Carnegie grant to investigate "the development of art interest in the Maritimes."[67] It is not surprising that the Corporation would support Abell's study as it had been funding American community-based art groups since the early 1920s.[68] Abell and MacLeod first envisaged the association as an interprovincial exhibition circuit.[69] As they wrote to fourteen potential organizations and institutions in eight centres across the region, "we feel that the benefits [of] cooperation could be strengthened and extended if all Maritimes centers interested in art joined with us to establish a Maritime Art Association."[70] They stressed that an association would not only increase the number of traveling exhibitions, but would reduce the costs of presentation and circulation. As well, such "joint action" would give more muscle to regional requests to the National Gallery of Canada "for loan exhibitions of Canadian art to be shown in the Maritimes;" and would also "enable us to organize significant exhibitions of our own."[71] The Gallery's Assistant Director, H.O. McCurry assured them that he would support the project although his assent is somewhat archly stated in a 2 November 1934 letter to Abell: "I need hardly tell you that this is a scheme which the National Gallery has been anxious to foster for a number of years. Our loan exhibitions have been extensively distributed throughout Eastern Canada with marked effect, but the response...has been spasmodic and unsatisfactory." Abell got his own back by informing him that some groups in the Maritimes were not enchanted with "the idea of National Gallery exhibitions" as they were "quite expensive, and...it was somewhat difficult to conclude definite arrangements as to dates of showing." Although Abell knew that McCurry was a formidable ally, currents of tension between the Maritimes and Ottawa would mark the Association's first decade.

Within a few months Abell and McLeod announced the official formation of the Maritime Art Association – the first Canadian regional alliance of art clubs and societies, public schools, universities, social organizations, service and civic groups, artists, art students and anyone else interested in art. The MAA's constitution was ratified at the Association's first annual meeting held in Saint John, N.B. at the end of March 1935, and Abell was easily elected its President.[72] The MAA's constitution was quite straightforward: "to promote a knowledge and appreciation of art; to foster art activities in the Maritime Provinces by uniting for cooperative effort, all interested groups and individuals, by securing and offering for circulation, exhibitions of fine and applied art," as well as "arranging for lectures and for engaging in such other activities to promote

these aims." Despite the constitution's lack of lyricism, the MAA attracted an impressive membership of seventeen groups in fourteen centres within two years, and would continue to maintain these numbers for the coming decade. The creation of many local art societies, such as the Fredericton Art Club and another at Charlottetown, were the immediate result of the formation of the MAA. In a letter to Jack Humphrey (who seemed to look at all of Abell's initiatives in terms of his own potential rewards), Abell insisted that the Association would be "a constructive force by working in the right direction of promoting increased interest in art and educating public opinion to an understanding of the aims of the modern painter."[73]

Abell's ambitions for the MAA were pure Carnegie: to ensure a wider access to culture, to advocate the development of taste through aesthetic experience, and to constitute a form of public patronage or even philanthropy through art sales. But rather than depending on a narrow elite in colleges and universities as happened with the Carnegie arts equipment set, Abell took a grass-roots approach to constructing a regional art community. He cast the net wide and obtained memberships from such disparate groups as the Art Society of Prince Edward Island to the Amherst, N.S. chapter of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. As the first organization of its type in Canada, the MAA offered Maritimers a more democratic and populist arena than art associations in the rest of the country, which tended to be city-based and only a few were province-wide.[74]

Abell's desire for cultural advancement was first and foremost tested and proven through the MAA's network of circulating exhibitions. The National Gallery of Canada, in view of its superior resources and experience as well as its ability to subsidize costs, loaned the majority of the exhibitions. However, there were no more shows borrowed directly from the United States as McCurry made it known that his support of the MAA exhibition circuit was not open to competition from other agencies.[75] While it goes without saying that the exhibitions provided by the Gallery allowed for efficient and regular regional art programming, it is also obvious that the National Gallery saw the MAA as a further site for determining its own hegemony as *the* art institution in Canada. Abell himself was fully aware of the advantages offered by Ottawa for the fortunes of the MAA as well as for his own career.

McCurry's power over the activities of the MAA was further enhanced by changes in the Carnegie Corporation's support of community (rather than university) art activities. In 1933, Carnegie arts funding within Canada was channeled through the advisory board of the newly-formed Canadian Museums Committee; it was centered in Ottawa with McCurry as its Secretary and its primary administrator.[76] The Canadian Committee would provide a small annual grant to the MAA for almost a decade, although on occasion additional

funding came directly from New York. However, in the early years of the MAA, McCurry would make demands and attach strings to his purse that went beyond those ever exerted by the Carnegie.[77] Knowing that he was working for two masters, Abell regularly sent lengthy reports to New York, as well as visiting the Corporation in the summer so that Keppel was informed of the MAA's activities from his perspective, rather than only through McCurry.

The MAA's exhibition program of about eight shows per year was its most effective instrument for aesthetic development. In the early materials publicizing its formation as well as the numerous newspaper and magazine articles heralding the organization, exhibitions are certainly given pride of place. Its lecture circuit of speakers from both within and outside the Maritimes was also highly promoted by the MAA, and radio talks and later a slide collection would be part of its cultural mandate. The Carnegie Corporation also supported traveling exhibitions as a means of public art education. Keppel had stated in a 1932 American Federation of Art booklet that: "exhibitions, in their travels, and wherever they might be shown, prove that art has no boundaries or limitations." Abell shared the Carnegie belief that the exhibition was also a venue for patronage by the public, as the artist had the right to make a living through exhibition sales. In the Dirty Thirties, any purchase of work from MAA shows or shows sponsored by member groups would be a validation of modern Canadian art and a basic source of income for the artist. Spreading the word beyond the Maritime Provinces, Abell lectured at the Art Association of Montreal in 1939 where he urged that: "A fine school of Canadian painting must depend in part, upon adequate Canadian patronage" to "assist artists who cannot live and work if they cannot sell their pictures."[78]

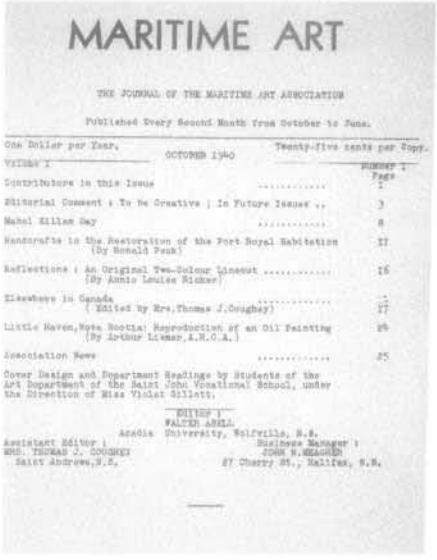
The MAA annual exhibition, with its wide variety of regional artists and enthusiastic newspaper coverage, was perhaps the most successful strategy for constructing the identity of the regional art community. From the beginning, the annuals were accompanied by mimeographed information sheets that included an essay on the exhibition, as well as a list of participants. Several were written by Abell; and the first of these, his 1935 text "Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces," serves as an important indicator of his aesthetic approach and its application to Maritime art. Here, Abell is strident in his emphasis of borderless aesthetics as exemplified by Maritime efforts. He makes no reference to Canadian painters outside the region; he makes no attempt to link trends in Maritime painting to those in the rest of the country. Nor does he make reference to the nationalist implications of any type of subject matter. More importantly, he does not position Maritime art within the usual self-deprecating narrative of regional isolation, although both he and the Carnegie Corporation were mindful of this position. Instead he discusses the work only within the context of international art history. His text also stresses that art is a metaphor for the

ideals of contemporary social democracy: "The ultimate aim is to help awaken the eye and the sense of beauty and to bring them together in relation to both the pictures and with life" – ideas that he expressed throughout his American and Canadian teaching career and in his texts for other annuals.

The reports of the Association's annual meetings (sometimes running over twenty pages in length) suggest that despite the difficulties related to organizing and representing such a disparate community, the MAA's diffusion of art knowledge was working successfully in the Maritimes. The membership remained steady and continued to include diverse types of organizations. The annual exhibitions, usually held in makeshift venues, certainly provided an opportunity for both professional and amateur Maritime artists to display their work in a regional forum that could only have been provided by the invention of the MAA. Oddly enough, one bone of contention was H.O. McCurry's attitude to the Association. Despite constant invitations, McCurry never attended any of the Maritime Art Association meetings during its first decade, although he always led the executive to believe that his arrival was imminent. He also demonstrated little understanding of the problems and complexities encountered when organizing an exhibition circuit in a region with only one art museum and two permanent multidisciplinary museums.[79] For example, at the end of its first season Abell had to remind McCurry that unlike institutions in Montreal or Toronto, most centres did not have the resources – physical or human – to maintain a summer exhibition schedule, and that whatever the MAA did accomplish, it was done entirely by volunteers and not by paid professionals. McCurry's criticisms were based on obtaining greater exposure for Ottawa shows during the tourist season but only served to reinforce the Maritime's own perception of its position on the periphery. Nevertheless, the National Gallery provided exhibitions that otherwise would not have been seen in the region, even if they were often displayed in halls, schools, libraries, gymnasia, department stores and hotels.[80]

The successes and failures of the MAA during its first decade are too lengthy to be discussed here and are part of my ongoing study. As would be expected in any communal project, local squabbles and regional jealousies abounded. For example, the tensions between Abell and his long-serving successor as president, John Meagher of Halifax (who resigned angrily in 1942) reflect Abell's larger ambitions for the organization as much as they describe Meagher's attempts to maintain the status quo. These differences came to the forefront over the Association's performance during World War II.[81] As is obvious in Abell's writings and lectures, he saw the period as an opportunity for increased commitment to art activity, and a reason to plan for the future. His evidence was the WPA in the United States and nearer to home, the formation of the Contemporary Arts Society of Montreal in 1939 and the Federation of Canadian Artists in 1941.[82] Meagher on the other hand, saw the period as one

fig.4 *Maritime Art*, vol.1, no.1, 1940. (Photo: the author)



MARITIME ART

THE JOURNAL OF THE MARITIME ART ASSOCIATION

Published Every Second Month from October to June.

One Dollar per Year. OCTOBER 1940 Twenty-five cents per Copy.

Volume I NUMBER 1

EDITOR : WALTER ABELL Acadia University, Wolfville, N.S.

Assistant Editor : MRS. THOMAS J. COUGHEY Saint Andrews,N.B.

Business Manager : JOHN W.MEAGHER 27 Cherry St., Halifax, N.S.

fig.5 *Martime Art*, Table of Contents, vol.1, no.1, 1940. (Photo: the author)

filled with imposed limitations and did little to sustain the circulating exhibition program. He even went so far as to refuse funding from the Carnegie Canadian Committee although they sent the money anyway.

Other internal problems arose from the diverse resources of the member organizations; others were the result of ineptitude. Still others came from Martimers' long suspicion of people "come from away" who, like Abell, would never gain real acceptance. While the Maritimes had obvious social, economic and cultural ties to the United States, it also continued to privilege inherited British traditions and a reticence to step outside self-imposed boundaries. This situation was exemplified by Abell's most vocal early critic of the MAA, Elizabeth Nutt, the British painter and Principal of NSCA. She repeatedly insisted with great exaggeration that "the College was the pioneer of all such efforts," citing among other endeavors, her own "Citizen's Society for Fostering an Appreciation for Fine Arts," which was really a local public lecture series. Although their relationship could be seen as a clash of egos, it is perhaps more appropriate to view it in terms of the tensions between Nutt's Canadian neocolonialism and Abell's pragmatic American continentalism with its inherent threat to her Old World governance. Nevertheless the MAA created an infrastructure for the promotion and dissemination of art in the Maritimes – despite or perhaps in recognition of the difficulties imposed first by the Depression and then by the Second World War.

Maritime Art Magazine

Another principal instrument for cultural advancement by the MAA was *Maritime Art* magazine, founded in 1940 by Abell (figs.4 and 5). It was the first periodical in Canada entirely dedicated to the visual arts and would prove to be his most successful and lasting contribution to Maritime and Canadian visual culture. The magazine was ostensibly intended to disclose art activity in the region but from the start Abell had national ambitions for the periodical. Aware of the influence of large themes and a wide readership, Abell drew upon his American experience as editor of the *Friends' Intelligencer* in Philadelphia, and a contributor to the *Magazine of Art* and *Parnassus*.[83] His previous work provided the models for Abell's Maritime publishing project and the Carnegie provided the money.[84]

The most important aspect of *Maritime Art* was its inclusivity as defined in Abell's oft-quoted first editorial of October 1940:

> We are interested in the painting of the Maritime Provinces, but we are also interested in their architecture, their creative photography, their pottery and weaving, their work with children; in their efforts at town planning, in the art departments of their schools and colleges, in the collections being formed by their museums and private collectors. All of these things are art. All of them have a contribution to make to culture.

Certainly these words evoke the language of Frederick Keppel in his publication, *The Arts in American Life* as well as the ideology of Abell's Antioch and Acadia course descriptions, his radio talks and his lectures in central and eastern Canada. Abell invited articles from artists and art writers from the Maritimes and outside the region, allowing for a democratization of the magazine that paralleled his own American-honed populist attitudes. Like the American art periodicals to which he contributed, Abell wanted the publication to have a national audience; and in 1942 it added the subtitle, *A Canadian Art Magazine*. The following year he wrote to the New Brunswick potter, Erica Deichmann about the future of the periodical:

> It seems evident that a national magazine when, and if, started had better have an independent foundation rather than attempt to take over Maritime Art, for it will have to be started without any regional strings on it. On the other hand it seems unlikely that such a national magazine can be put in operation before the autumn of 1943. The best course therefore seems to carry on with Maritime Art, giving continuity to the work already accomplished and filling to the best of our ability the gap now existing in the national field. This means another year of hard work for all associated with the magazine, but it has its rewards in the feeling that we are doing a pioneer job and contributing something to art both in the Maritimes and other parts of Canada.[85]

The Maritime Art Association, however, would take a contradictory position on the magazine's national ambitions. Certainly the MAA was fiercely proud of the reputation that the magazine had instantly garnered outside the region; but it was equally resentful of its growing national content. Ironically, the detractors had little concern about Abell's articles on pan-Canadian topics and had no difficulty with his regular reviews of American and British art books, perhaps because they believed that they reflected a Maritime perspective. In a 16 June 1942 letter to André Bieler at Queen's University, he reiterated the situation of the magazine, but the tone was more irritated than in his later comments to Erica Deichmann:

> Certain elements in the Maritime Art Association oppose the manner in which I have developed the magazine toward a national policy, and feel that it should be kept for regional purposes. In some ways they are no doubt right, and I am now inclined to feel that the best course may be to leave Maritime Art for them as a regional magazine and make a clean start with a new national set-up.... Basically I and the staff have made the magazine what it is and the Maritime Art Association has done almost nothing in the matter.[86]

The role of *Maritime Art* came to a head with John Meagher's resignation from the MAA presidency and his covert slandering of Abell in letters to the membership. In reply, Abell's four-page legal-sized letter to the entire MAA

membership in early January 1943 insisted that the publication was separately funded by the Carnegie and took nothing from the monies for the Association. He also addressed the criticisms over the amount of Maritime content in the periodical and accepted them as a difference of opinion, but adds that he never failed to publish any article on the region. He admonishes the membership by stating that if they want more, they should write more and not just submit local news. He summarized his argument for a greater national perspective by saying:

> There is no less talent in the Maritimes than elsewhere, but it is exposed to less constant stimulus due to its relative isolation from large centers, and is thus in danger of failing to develop its full capacities.... We must know what is being done elsewhere in Canada and must measure our own work by the highest standards obtainable. Only so will our artists keep pace with the times and our public grown in its understanding.

Abell's rebuttal was obvious: the magazine informed Maritimers of the art world beyond its borders; and just as importantly it brought their own art community to national attention. Such estrangement between the MAA and its periodical was not unexpected in a context that exemplifies the tensions between regionalist and nationalist perspectives. In fact, Laurence Coleman, a Carnegie Corporation advisor had already predicted both the difficulties of such an association-based project and the eventual solution:

> From what I have seen elsewhere, I think that art magazines are sometimes hampered by the organizations running them, and that an independent magazine with plain cold-blooded subscriptions is likely to be better off than a magazine sharing dues and also problems with some membership group. If the 'Canadian Art Magazine' had a management of its own and the subsidy that would be needed under any control, Ottawa might be the best place to publish it.[87]

Needless to say, Abell's federalist position won out with the creation of *Canadian Art*. But whatever the internal difficulties *Maritime Art* was a major cultural accomplishment in a regional community with a weak base, a flimsy superstructure and an ad-hoc infrastructure. To its credit, the Maritime Art Association had achieved a certain stability despite the fracas surrounding the magazine and the decline of its exhibition program. The organization had become financially self-sufficient or at least it was solvent enough to maintain its basic activities; and it would continue as force in the Maritimes until the mid-1960s. Certainly Abell had greater hopes for the MAA's accomplishments, including its potential as the stimulus for a similar national art association.

The MAA's replacement for *Maritime Art* was the new *Bulletin*, a publication for regional news. It certainly paled in comparison to Abell's production of the first issue of the new national publication, *Canadian Art Magazine* from Ottawa. While his editorial work was part of his shared National Gallery and

Carnegie salary as the gallery's education supervisor, the Carnegie would not separately finance the magazine because by now it had withdrawn its support for American art periodicals. Concomitantly, the unofficial management of *Canadian Art* by H.O. McCurry, who was now the National Gallery's director, was becoming increasingly bureaucratized. Although he was also teaching an art history course for Carleton University, Abell's own education activities at the museum gave him limited satisfaction; and so with nothing to keep him in Canada, Abell accepted a professorship in art history at Michigan State College.[88] He remained in East Lansing until his early death in 1956, having written his posthumously published, *The Collective Dream in Art*.[89]

To Conclude

With all of Walter Abell's activities for defining, activating and educating an art community in the Maritimes, comes the question of "why"? At the most basic level, the Carnegie Corporation encouraged Abell's work because it fulfilled the Corporation's mandate to promote "the diffusion knowledge" and Frederick Keppel's particular policy of cultural advancement through the visual arts. Carnegie's interest in the Maritimes was one aspect of its North American continentalism, even if its Canadian Committee was overlaid with centralist ambitions. Perhaps more complex are Abell's own motivations for becoming a "missionary for culture" as Helen Beals, his friend and associate at Acadia so aptly described him in her writings and interviews.

His first five years of teaching at Acadia University had provided Abell with a ready audience to advance his belief that art played an important role in the betterment of society. He had created a template for aesthetic education at Antioch and expanded its parameters at Acadia, especially in terms of a Canadian context. Acadia also provided him with the financial security to continue his own research and writing on international art, and to maintain his ties with North American art organizations. By the time Abell began constructing the Maritime Art Association, his first book was completed, he had administrative experience at Acadia, and he had made connections with artists in the region. Energetic and ambitious, he seems to have been frustrated by the limitations of Wolfville and its isolation from more intellectually stimulating art centres. Faced with this situation, it could be said that he simply took matters into his own hands, and with unbridled entrepreneurial spirit he attempted to turn the Maritimes into a vibrant audience for art – as much for himself as for the regional community. Being an American, he was unburdened by the Maritimes' long-standing and somewhat deserved resentment towards the rest of Canada. Instead Abell saw the region as the land of opportunity with the potential to emulate democratic cultural action as it was being framed in the United States.

Abell's motivations for establishing the Maritime Art Association can be further positioned within American parameters. His participation at meetings of the College Art Association and similar educational societies acquainted him with the power of communal organizations and their potential to foster art knowledge, in its broadest definition. Creating an exhibition circuit that would bring national and international art to the region was of prime importance and this went to the heart of his empathy with John Dewey who had said, "what an artist produces is an art product, but it becomes a work of art through the active engagement of the audience." His belief in the cultural value of exhibitions and the important interchange between objects and viewers also allies Abell with Holger Cahill, the National Director of the Federal Art Project, Works Projects Administration (WPA), who Abell lauded in his presentation at the 1941 Kingston Conference. In Cahill's writings of the 1930s, he stressed the need for the democratic dissemination of visual culture to the people and that the exhibition was intrinsic to its success. Other American precedents for both the MAA and its exhibition program could be cited; but Abell's work towards the construction of an art community in the Maritimes was unique in this country, and is rooted in the instruments of cultural democracy from the United States.

At the same time, it is also tempting to link Abell's vision of the educational potential of the MAA to two other significant cooperative movements closer to home. The first, the Maritime Rights Movement of the 1920s had been a regional alliance formed in protest against the economic decline of the region, and it was supported by trade unions, civic organizations and local clubs.[90] While its efforts were wiped out with the coming of the Depression, it had given a collective voice to Maritime frustrations and it long remained a symbol of regional determinism. Because of its role in defining the political identity of the Maritimes and Abell's own concerns for social justice, he would undoubtedly have been aware of Maritime Rights' importance to the region. A second possible influence was the Antigonish Movement that had just begun at St. Francis Xavier University when Abell came to the Maritimes. Its primary mandate was the fostering of adult education programs through study clubs and cooperatives as well as publications, all of which would ideally lead to widespread social reform. The structure and educational spirit of the Antigonish Movement have obvious similarities to the MAA. In terms of the more elusive potential of art for the good of humanity, Abell's interest in the Movement is documented by two letters he wrote to its leader Reverend Moses Michael Coady.[91] On 6 June 1940 he tells Coady that the Movement's objective to develop the "foundation essential to a good life" was a reflection of his own belief in the "spiritual, aestheticism and cultural values through which the good life must ultimately find expression." In an 8 September 1940 letter to Jack Humphrey, Abell

mentions spending two months with fishermen in eastern Nova Scotia working on a novel based on their lives. Evocative of his empathy with the situation of Maritime artists, Abell hoped:

> to study the cooperative movement among the fishermen about which I have heard so much..., plenty of opportunity to see the cooperative movement at work.... It has only made a fair start and cannot be said to have radically changed the economic status of the people. But it has given them a new hold on their economic destinies, and in time if pursued far enough, and if not crushed by resistance from groups in power, could transform the economic order. It is the only thing I know about which seems to have some real hope of economic democracy in it, for by a perfectly orderly process, it is capable of placing economic power in the hands of those who should hold it – namely those who produce it in one way or another by their labour.

It is also revealing that in the August 1940 issue of *The Canadian Forum*, Marcelle Abell published an enthusiastic review of Rev. Coady's *Masters of their Destiny. The Story of the Antigonish Movement of Adult Education Through Economic Development* (1939), and she comments on the Movement's "tremendous faith in man and his power of bettering himself and his environment."[92] This statement also parallels the attitudes inherent in both the writings of her husband and the cultural philanthropy of the Carnegie Corporation.

However, I would like to suggest that there is another important factor in Abell's concept of a cooperative and democratic Maritime art community; and it derives from the fact that he was a Quaker. As mentioned earlier, he was a convert to the Society of Friends and always maintained his membership. He rarely cited his religious affiliation in the entries that he contributed to Canadian biographical dictionaries while he lived in the Maritimes, although it does appear after he returns to the United States. Abell did, however, serve on the *Friends' Intelligencer*'s Advisory Board in the early 1930s after arriving in Nova Scotia. But nothing (so far) suggests he openly mentioned his Quaker affiliations to his Maritime associates and there were no Friends' meetings in either Wolfville or Halifax at the time.[93] Perhaps he felt that there were enough negative undercurrents in his dealings with the Maritime Art Association simply because he was "from away." To further identify himself with someone more familiar to the majority of "downhomers" as that man on a box of breakfast cereal might have caused even more unneeded tension. Nevertheless, his work in the Maritimes frequently echoed the ideas of his writings in the *Friends' Intelligencer* in which he had often used references to art and aesthetics to express the development of spiritual strength and accomplishment. He had often implored his readers "to cultivate this spirit in ourselves and in those

about us, and to apply it to the miracle of transforming drab existence into abundant lives." This was a constant thread in his Quaker editorials; he believed that fulfilling spiritual life was the means "for solving the problems of personal and social life, and for promoting human growth and happiness."[94] It is not difficult to see that Abell applies the same turn of thought to the enrichment of life in the Maritimes through the agency of the visual arts. Similarly, his perspective as a Friend is underscored in one of his early Nova Scotia radio talks, where he stressed that "art is an international language by which the best of each race speaks to the best in all the others. It helps us to understand the good things in other nations and so helps us to love them." He continued by saying that although too few people encourage international understanding, their numbers "will grow as the love of art grows and the whole world will gain as a result."[95]

Furthermore in his *Friends'* editorials he had consistently emphasized the power of collective action, using architecture as a metaphor for past cooperative effort. His Quaker writings regularly refer to the Society of Friends' obligation to service in the wider community through the instrument of "democratic cooperation," a term that he later applied to efforts by the Maritime Art Association. Similarly his use of the phrase "comradeship in terms of ideas" in his *Intelligencer* editorials and later contributions such as its lead article "Social Vision Through the Meeting for Worship" of 13 Sept. 1924 reflects the same idealistic social views that he would hold for the MAA and its community. His editorial comment on the potential of Quaker "active cooperation" to "awaken in all a sense of responsibility to self-development" is easily applicable to his ambitions for the region through the workings of the MAA. In the same vein, in July 1930, he wrote a three-part article entitled "Technique for Friends Meeting" in which he calls for a merger of substance and technique for developing comradeship, and this may have served as guide when he ran the large and sometimes heated MAA annual meetings.

Certainly Abell's desire for an inclusive content and readership for *Maritime Art* can be linked to his earlier Quaker newspaper editorials. While the primary models for the magazine were first and foremost American art journals, it is worthwhile considering a comment Abell wrote on 28 January 1922 in the *Friends' Intelligencer* explaining that for the newspaper to reflect its community it:

> must give expression to all the degrees of conviction..., and that within the limits of proper balance and available space, every Friend should feel free to use it as a medium for the expression of beliefs which he considers of possible interest or value.... To have a periodical which can [have a rounded corporate opinion] and a constituency which in open-minded tolerance, can read and profit by all sides of any question, is to demonstrate the real working power of that spirit of considerate brotherhood.

Ironically, his future disappointment with the conflicts over *Maritime Art* could have been foretold by his 12 May 1928 *Intelligencer* article "The Modern Natural Man," where he wrote that: "the group can grow only as various of its members explore new possibilities and gradually add new elements to the group tradition. Often the group punishes with its disapproval, not only those who are behind its standards, but also those who are moving ahead of them, who are confronting it with something new and difficult to assimilate."

Other comments from his Friends editorials would provide further links between Abell's Quaker thinking and the cultural concerns of his teaching, his work with the MAA, and his articles in *Maritime Art*. His writings in the *Intelligencer* on the need for progress, for betterment, and "a more perfect humanity," clearly exemplify the attitudes that informed his art activities in Nova Scotia. The universalist spirit of a liberal Quaker is clearly reflected in his ambition to be a "missionary for culture," and in his belief that through collective effort and mutual understanding, the Maritime art community would assume a meaningful place in the hearts and minds of its constituency - both regionally and nationally.

At their very best, the Carnegie Corporation and Walter Abell had cultural ambitions for the Maritimes that were perhaps more idealistic than realistic. Their continentalist aspirations were contested by a conservative and circumscribed mindset, and by a population too small to provide the necessary support for a more fully developed regional art community at that time.[96] As well, Ottawa's determined centralization of Canadian art created a form of national cultural imperialism that could be seen as more directly imposing than the ideas of the Carnegie's North American continentalism.[97] Nevertheless, without Frederick Keppel, the Carnegie and most importantly the determination of Walter Abell, the Maritime art community from the late 1920s to the early 1940s would have been of little consequence to the region, or even to Canada. Coming "from away" had its benefits.

SANDRA PAIKOWSKY
Art History Department
Concordia University

Notes

This article is based on my research on the Maritime art community from the 1920s to the 1950s that was aided by recent funding from SSHRC and earlier grants from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Concordia University. Their generous support allowed for a squadron of research assistants to whom I am eternally grateful. I also wish to thank the numerous Canadian and American archivists and librarians whose unfailing assistance was essential to this project.

1 The documents cited in this article relating to Abell's dealings with Frederick Keppel, the Carnegie Corporation and Carnegie administrators can be principally found in the Carnegie Corporation of New York Records (CCNY Records), Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries (CU RBML), Series III, Grants, Series III.A. Grant Files, Box 1, Walter Abell. The Carnegie Corporation Archives has been most supportive and I am extremely indebted to Brenda Heering, William Stingone, and Jane Gorjevsky of the Carnegie Corporation.

2 See Jeffrey D. BRISON, *Rockefeller, Carnegie and Canada. American Philanthropy and the Arts and Letters in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005). I wish to thank Dr. Brison for allowing me to read his doctoral dissertation, "Cultural Interventions: American Corporate Philanthropy and the Construction of the Arts and Letters in Canada 1900-1957," Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., 1998.

3 See William S. LEARNED and Kenneth C.M. SILLS, *Education in the Maritime Provinces of Canada* (New York: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1922).

4 Stephen STACKPOLE, *Carnegie Corporation Commonwealth Program 1911-1961* (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1963), 7. See also Robert LESTER, *Review of Grants in The Maritime Provinces of Canada and in Newfoundland 1911-1913* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, Office of the President, 15 March 1934).

5 For discussion of Keppel and the Carnegie, see Ellen Condliffe LAGEMANN, *The Politics of Knowledge. The Carnegie Corporation, Philanthropy, and Public Policy* (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 1992 ed.). Her classic study, as well as the Corporation's own publications including Robert LESTER, *Review of Grants to Colleges and Universities in the United States 1911-1932* (N.Y.: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1933), and Brenda JUBIN, *Carnegie Corporation Program in the Arts 1911-1967* (NY: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1968), are the primary texts for my discussion of Carnegie policy and funding.

6 Walter ABELL, "Patron Incorporated. Dr. Keppel and the Carnegie Corporation's Art Program," *The Magazine of Art*, vol. 34 (November 1941): 472-75, 491. Abell does not discuss Canadian activities, but does include an illustration captioned: "A Saturday morning art class at Art Gallery of Toronto. One of several Canadian educational projects directed by Arthur Lismer. Supported by Funds from Carnegie Corporation."

7 Keppel's numerous publications include *Education for Adults and Other Essays* (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1926), *The Foundation. Its Place in American Life* (N.Y.: Macmillan Co., 1930), *Philanthropy and Learning* (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1936), and especially, KEPPEL and R. L. DUFFUS, *The Arts in American Life* (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933).

8 John Clarence WEBSTER, *The Distressed Maritimes* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1926), 12. He adds that the "appreciation of the fine arts in the rest of Canada, for the greater part is scarcely in a more advanced condition, and cannot boast of any such activity as is exhibited in the United States."

9 Ibid., 45. Webster specifically admonished the Maritimes for ignoring Carnegie recommendations for higher education.

10 It has yet to be determined when and where Keppel and Abell first made contact. Both attended the 1926 meeting of the American Federation of Arts, as noted in a letter from Keppel to Arthur Morgan, President, Antioch College, 17 May 1926 where Abell was teaching. Morgan and Keppel discussed Abell in letters from 1924. I wish to thank Scott Sanders, archivist at Antiochana, Antioch University, for his enormous help in supplying documentation on Abell's time in Ohio and for information from the Arthur Morgan Papers that is cited in this article. Correspondence between Morgan and Keppel as well as other Antioch administrators, is also found in the CCNY Records, CU RBML, Series III, Grants, Series III.A. Grant Files, Box 42, Antioch College. Abell accompanied his poem published in the 10 April 1926 *Friends' Intelligencer* with a quote by Keppel on education.

11 His father, the Yale-educated Edward Walter Abell (1864-1957) worked for the General Electric Company and was also a violin historian and contributor to *The Violinist* periodical, and his mother, Bertha Halsey, was a Wellesley College graduate of old New England stock. Family biographical information provided by Edward Abell can be found in the Herbert K. Goodkind Papers, Series II, Special Collections, Library, Oberlin College, Ohio. Walter's younger brother Richard was a psychoanalyst in New York but my meeting with him prior to his death in 1998 yielded little information, and I know almost nothing of their sister, Frances Abell Booth.

12 The Abell family was Presbyterian and his mother, sister and brother would also become Quakers after World War I, although his father, who was most sympathetic to the Friends, did not convert. Abell's wife, Marcelle Marie Achard (1898-1990), from Grand-Serre (Drôme), France was a student at Swarthmore and become a Friend at the time of their marriage in September 1921. She and their two children gave up their Quaker membership after Abell's death. I wish to thank Susanna Morikawa, Archival Specialist, Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore, for her great assistance. For pertinent discussion on the Society of Friends in Philadelphia, see Philip BENJAMIN, *Philadelphia Quakers in the Industrial Age, 1865-1920* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1976).

13 There is little personnel correspondence by Abell at this time but a letter to one of his professors was published in the 4 Oct. 1919 *Friends' Intelligencer*, as "A Swarthmore C. [Conscientious] O. [Objector] in France." Abell also writes of the experience in his "The Mission Vs. French Materialism" in the November 1919 *American Friend*, and in *Friends' Intelligencer* editorials.

14 His unit is cited in Ormerod GREENWOOD, *Friends and Relief* (York, England: William Sessions Ltd., 1975), 203-07. I wish to thank Jack Sutters, Director of the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia for his help. Abell would also do liaison work for the American Friends while in Europe in the early 1920s.

15 Woodbrooke was founded in 1903, using a house donated by George and Elizabeth Cadbury, who were one of the British Quaker "chocolate" families that included the Rowntrees and the Frys of which the art critic Roger Fry was a member.

16 The *Friends' Intelligencer* was begun in 1844 as a continuation of the *Friends' Journal of Religious, Literary and Scientific Culture*, and continued to publish until 1955. It was supported by the Hicksite Friends, who had separated from the Orthodox Quakers in 1827. I wish to warmly thank Emma Lapsansky-Werner, Curator of the Quaker Collection, Haverford College for facilitating my access to the *Friends' Intelligencer*. While in Canada, it

appears that Abell did not contribute to its counterpart publication, *The Canadian Friend.* I am grateful to Jane Zavitz-Bond of the Canadian Quaker Archives and the Arthur G. Dorland Friends Historical Collection, Pickering College, Newmarket, Ont. for this information.

17 I wish to thank Katy Rawdon-Faucett, Archivist, The Barnes Foundation for making letters between Abell and Barnes up to 1934 available to me. More correspondence may come to light as the archive continues its important cataloguing work. Letters between Barnes and Marcelle, and her 1974 conversation with Charles Hill at the National Gallery of Canada (who kindly provided me with a resumé of their meeting), suggest that she may have taught French to Barnes, that they may have seen each other in France and that Barnes much preferred her to her husband. One of the Foundation's first publications, *An Approach to Art* (1925) by Mary Mullen, prompted Abell to send Barnes a thirteen-page "critique;" Barnes found it youthful but valuable as a reflection of the views of its intended readership.

18 Barnes' admiration of George Santayana would also be important to Abell. Barnes' emphasis on first-hand study of art in Europe was an essential factor in Abell's own research, and he often mentioned on his curriculum vitae that he had followed "a program in line with the Foundation activities." The numerous publications on Albert Barnes and the Foundation provide a context for Abell's time in Merton. An evaluation of Foundation thinking on Abell's art writings has yet to be done.

19 In a letter from Barnes to Abell of 22 May 1924 he advises Abell not to accept a position at Antioch, but to spend more time in Europe. Other letters to Barnes and Morgan's to Keppel, 24 Nov. 1924 show he was already preparing his lectures for Antioch.

20 Morgan's earlier letter to Abell in Paris on 25 Dec. 1924 assures him that he has sent the syllabus to Keppel "without changing a word of it." Copies of the syllabus are found at both the Antioch and Carnegie Corporation archives.

21 The course covered architecture, sculpture, painting, music, house design and interior decoration. The department expanded its name to include the title "art," and two courses in drawing and painting were offered by a Mr. Whitmore.

22 Abell's time in Chicago is mentioned in a letter from Philip C. Nash, Dean, Antioch College, to Frederick Keppel, 25 June 1926: "He is enjoying it greatly, and I think may have something to contribute to the course as well as receiving a great deal from it. His main contribution perhaps would be the spreading of an interest in Aesthetics, not only to painting and sculpture but also to architecture, house furnishing, even offices and factory buildings, etc."

23 Letter, Walter Abell to Albert C. Barnes, 18 Jan. 1926. The Barnes Foundation Archives, Merion, PA. Reprinted with permission.

24 While at Antioch, Abell applied for a position at Lehigh University, where his father had also studied. A letter from Barnes to John Dewey (Special Collections, Morris Library, The Dewey Centre, Southern Illinois University) concerns a request from P.W. Palmer at Lehigh's College of Arts and Science for Barnes' opinion of Abell. Barnes withheld his opinion but recommended the art writer and educator Thomas Munro. Barnes fired Munro from the Foundation in 1927 for being too "old-fashioned," and thus presumably better suited for an academic position.

25 On 24 March 1927, Keppel wrote to Patterson: "This is a letter from my friend Abell, which I think, shows the kind of man he is. Will you write him directly if you want any further details." There is no copy of Abell's letter in the Carnegie Corporation Archives,

nor at the Acadia University Archives. Correspondence between Francis Patterson and Frederick Keppel as well as documents relating to Acadia University at this period are found in CCNY Records, CU RBML, Series III, Grants, Series III.A. Grant Files, Box 1, Acadia University.

26 Abell to Keppel, 21 April 1927.

27 Topics included the philosophy, history, organization, buildings, administration and collections of museums. I wish to thank Abigail G. Smith, Archivist, Harvard University Art Museums for her help.

28 Abell to Sachs, 2 Sept. 1931, Harvard University Art Museums Archives, Paul J. Sachs files. I am most obliged to Steven McNeil, National Gallery of Canada, for transcribing their correspondence in February 2006. Abell is possibly referring to research that appears in his 1936 book, *Representation and Form.*

29 The $100,00 for the costs of material and labour for the sets was allocated by the Carnegie on April 6, 1925 and the project was officially announced the following October. It was discontinued in 1940, but by then sets had also been distributed to secondary schools. Detailed information on the sets is found in the CCNY Records, CU RBML, Series III, Grants, Series III.A. Grant Files, Box 44 and 45, Arts Teaching Equipment. See also Robert LESTER, *Arts Teaching Equipment for Colleges and Secondary Schools* (N.Y.: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1937) and Florence ANDERSON, *Memorandum on the Use of Art and Music Study Material* (N.Y.: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1941). Music study sets first came to Canada in 1933.

30 The sets were to have also included ceramics and casts but these were eliminated by late 1925 because they were difficult to ship and to store.

31 The textile collection producer, Eliza Niblack was killed in an automobile accident in 1930 and her sister Sara took over the work along with Frances Morris of the Metropolitan Museum's Decorative Arts Department. Unfortunately Sara had little talent and also seems to have abused her workman, but more importantly she was in constant conflict with Morris. In 1932, the Carnegie decided that the situation was no longer worth the time and trouble, and the textiles were discontinued.

32 Queen's early receipt of a set seemed to have made little impact as they requested one a few years later, oblivious to the fact that they already owned it. The Carnegie bemusedly agreed. For a brief discussion of the Dalhousie materials, which has an intact set of textiles, see Sandra PAIKOWSKY, "The Carnegie Collection," *Dalhousie Art Gallery. The Collection* (Halifax: Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2003), 64-68. At the time, the University offered one course in art appreciation given by Prof. James W. Falconer.

33 Prior to the set's arrival at Acadia and with Keppel's agreement, Abell had taken some of the books to Europe with him before he began teaching in Wolfville. According to Carnegie records, the list of books that he obtained has been destroyed.

34 The Carnegie hesitated to support Mount Allison because it had a fully functioning studio art department. From 1930 to 1932, the allocation of the sets was done through the College Art Association. Previously known as Newfoundland College, Memorial's establishment in 1925 was strongly aided by the Carnegie Corporation.

35 All comments here concerning the set are from a six-page detailed statement on the purpose of its contents in the CCNY Records, CU RBML, Grant Files, Box 44, Arts Teaching Equipment. It is unsigned and undated, but probably written in 1926 for distribution and promotional purposes.

36 For a view of the sets' contribution to the advancement of fine arts education, see Priscilla HISS and Roberta FANSLER, *Research in Fine Arts in the Colleges and Universities of the United States* (N.Y.: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1934). Their findings are based on a questionnaire that the Carnegie had sent to the recipients of the sets. One unnamed respondent commented on the lack of Canadian materials. See also Robert LESTER, *Arts Teaching Equipment.*

37 For information on Kennedy see, CCNY Records, CU RBML, Grant Files, Box 195, Clarence Kennedy.

38 I wish to profusely thank Pat Townsend, University Archivist, Acadia University for providing me with the library records and for her generous help in many other aspects of my research over the years.

39 Another, but slightly different, list of the books included in the 1926-1928 sets is dated 1 March 1928 and can also be found in the CCNY Records, CU RBML, Grant File, Box 45, Arts Teaching Equipment. Undoubtedly other early sets would also replicate the titles cited in "Books for the College Art Library" published in the September 1929 issue of the Carnegie-supported *The Art Bulletin.*

40 KEPPEL, "The American Approach to the Arts," *The Arts in American Life*, 26.

41 Abell, his wife Marcelle and their children Alfreda (1926-76) and Marc (1927-93) arrived by ship in Halifax from France on 25 September 1928; National Archives of Canada, RG76, Immigration Series C-1-b 1928, vol. 13, 58.

42 Information concerning Carnegie funding of Acadia can be found in the CCNY Records, CU RBML, Series III.A. Grant Files, Box 1, Acadia University, and the annual reports of both the Corporation and the University. The majority of the comments in this text derive from these sources.

43 In his first year at Acadia, he also gave a five-week lecture course in Windsor as part of the university's Carnegie-sponsored extension program. He would continue these lectures to the wider community, in addition to participating in Acadia's series of radio talks. In 1928-29, Stewart Dick of the National Gallery of Art in London, England gave a series of lectures entitled "Art in Daily Life," in various centres in the Maritimes as part of the same extension activities. See "Report of the Board of Governors of Acadia University," in *The United Baptist Yearbook of the Maritime Provinces of Canada* (Truro, N.S.: News Publishing Co. Ltd., 1929), 72-73.

44 Letter, Walter Abell to Albert C. Barnes, 11 April 1929. The Barnes Foundation Archives, Merion, PA. Reprinted with permission.

45 At this time, Abell was on sabbatical leave in Brooklyn, N.Y. An enthusiastic photographer himself, Abell initiated a student project at Acadia to create a (now lost) photographic archive of Maritime architecture.

46 Abell to Webster, 11 Oct. 1938, New Brunswick Museum Archives, Art Department F3-1. I wish to thank Peter Larocque, Curator of New Brunswick Cultural History and Art for his assistance. Alice Webster, a mainstay of the NBM was also a supporter of early education and as a friend of Keppel, had asked him for Carnegie art teaching materials and books for New Brunswick school children. She was also the wife of the afore-mentioned Dr. J. Clarence Webster.

47 Abell's lengthy reports from 1938 to 1943 on the activities of the Art Department also include information on his publications, lectures, and exhibitions organized for Acadia, the Maritime Art Association and *Maritime Art* magazine; see the various annual "Report of

the President to the Senate of Acadia University," Acadia University Archives. Unfortunately, Abell's reports prior to 1938 have not been found. Brief descriptions of Abell's courses are also found in the University's annual calendars. In 1934 Marguerite Porter (later Zwicker) began teaching studio courses in the department, along with Annie Ricker.

48 The Art Gallery of Acadia University holds an undated manuscript by Abell entitled "Badger and the Star Wars. A Story based on the Legends of the Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia," with eight drawings by Arthur Lismer.

49 "Report of a Trip to Ottawa and Toronto Jan. 22 - Feb. 2, 1935," Archives, National Gallery of Canada, 7.4.c, Carnegie Corporation – Individuals (Outside Activities/Organizations) Abell, Walter. I wish to sincerely thank Cyndie Campbell at the National Gallery for her dedicated assistance. Copies of documents that address Abell's activities were also regularly sent to the Carnegie Corporation.

50 Paul J. Sachs and H.O. McCurry wrote weak letters of support; Lionello Venturi in Paris, Philip McMahon at NYU and Arthur Pope at Harvard were most enthusiastic.

51 In his application, he describes his research plan as "The preparation of a book on French art criticism: its history and essential findings, together with selections from its masterpieces of critical writing." Archives, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, New York, Walter Abell File. I wish to thank Thomas Tanselle of the Guggenheim Foundation for his help.

52 The Carnegie Corporation gave Harvard University $1000 to subsidize publication costs as part of its grant for art publications and research. It is worth mentioning that following the Carnegie "money trail" is not always easy as funds rarely went to an individual but were channeled through diverse institutional grants to facilitate the Corporation's administrative operations.

53 Abell to Sachs, 12 March 1937, Harvard University Art Museums Archives.

54 "Report of the Board of Governors of Acadia University," *The United Baptist Yearbook of the Maritime Provinces of Canada*, 1933, 72.

55 The Carnegie Corporation internal memorandum of early March 1934 continues: "The President believes it would be unfortunate for this work to lapse now due to a temporary shortage of funds." Prior to this Abell was paid with endowment funds including monies from the Estate of C.E. Reid that had been allocated to the Art Department. Funding for Abell came under the Carnegie category of "Fine Arts Work." Payment of "6,000 payable $2000 annually for 3 years" began in March 1934 and other financial assistance continued until 1940. Patterson's Board of Trustees was not particularly progressive, and Keppel's assistant Robert Lester commented in a Carnegie internal memorandum that "the Baptists should give him a rest."

56 His activities at the Brooklyn Museum are outlined in two internal reports; I wish to thank Deborah Whyte, Archivist and Manager of Special Library Collections for her help. Abell also gave a talk in January on "Recent Painting in Canada" for the Canadian Women's Club in New York, according to the *Acadia Bulletin* (April 1938): 22.

57 Abell to Humphrey, 6 April 1938, Jack Humphrey Papers, NGC Archives.

58 Ibid., 7 March 1938.

59 Minute Book, Board of Governors, 12 Dec. 1940, Acadia University Archives.

60 Abell and John Alford of the University of Toronto, who had strong ties to the Carnegie including his eventual marriage to its art adviser, Roberta Fansler, were the only Canadians invited to the December 16-17, 1940 conference and listed under the category of "Art Education."

61 "History of the Carnegie Corporation Art Program, Report of Interview, 7/3/56," CCNY Records, CU RBML, Series III.A. Grant Files, Box 72, Carnegie Corporation Arts Program.

62 In a 26 Jan. 1942 letter from Bartlett Hayes, Director of the Addison Gallery in Andover, MA to Florence Anderson at the Carnegie requesting funds for the conference, he wrote: "we are anxious to have Walter Abell...to tell something of the art program in Canadian schools, particularly what has happened during the two years that Canada has been at war. The added reason for asking Mr. Abell to speak is what seems to be a desirable contact between those teaching secondary art in the United States and in our northern neighbour."

63 According to the Acadia University, Board of Governors Executive Committee Minutes, 10 March 1943. "The President reported that he had informed Professor Abell that due to the decrease in the registration in Arts it would be impossible to carry on the work next year." With Abell's departure, the department as he envisioned it, effectively closed. Helen Beals, a librarian, painter and his assistant at *Maritime Art* magazine was appointed Instructor in Art, but did not take over until 1945 when she completed art history courses at the University of Toronto.

64 Half of Abell's salary was paid by the Carnegie Corporation. Lismer had come to the National Gallery as Educational Supervisor in September 1939. Because of his difficulties with McCurry (and vice-versa), he was parachuted into a similar post at the Art Association of Montreal that was also funded by New York. Lismer's letters to Keppel deploring the National Gallery are at the Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives. For a discussion on Abell's activities, see "The National Gallery of Canada. Progress Report on Educational Activities Supported by the Carnegie Corporation, 1944-45." National Gallery of Canada, 7.4.c, Carnegie Corporation – General-File 5 (Outside Activities/Organizations).

65 Abell had applied for a position at East Lansing in 1942 but at the time, the school preferred a practicing artist.

66 "Acadia Art Department Active," *Acadia Bulletin* (May 1935). Abell received $200 from the Carnegie for the Art Club; and his eleven-page report of the Club's activities for 1934-35 for the Carnegie Corporation notes that one of the aims of the club was "to make increased use of the Carnegie art and music set." Other university art activities organized by Abell are cited in the *Acadia Athenaeum* and the *Acadia Bulletin*.

67 He received $100 in April 1934 (in addition to funds for the Art Club) and another $100 in late November "to round out the project."

68 Sir Henry Miers and S.F. Markham prepared *A Report on the Museums of Canada* for the Carnegie Corporation and appended it to their 1932 *Directory of Museums and Art Galleries in Canada, Newfoundland*. It recommended the creation of regional museum associations, which suggested the potential of community cooperation.

69 "A Maritime circuit for exhibitions is fine. I have thought that something of the kind should be arranged and am glad that you are doing it." McLeod to Abell, 23 Oct. 1934, Acadia University Archive, 1900.028, Walter Abell fonds. In a letter to Keppel, 10 Nov. 1934, Abell mentions the possible inclusion of the CAA and the AFA in the project.

70 Copies of this letter are found in various Maritime archives as well as the National Gallery and the Carnegie archives. The lengthy letter also discusses exhibition and membership fees. In general the response to their letter was positive although Clarence Webster, writing on behalf of the New Brunswick Museum, was unimpressed and the University of New Brunswick was among those who declined because of their lack of art activities.

71 Abell had informed McCurry of his plans on 20 Oct. 1934. See NGC Archives, 5.11- M, Maritime Art Association. for this and other relevant correspondence pertaining to the MAA. By early 1935 McCurry had agreed to arrange traveling exhibitions and lecture tours for the region. Other material on Walter Abell and the MAA is found in the Acadia University Archive, 1900.028, Walter Abell fonds. Further documentation on the MAA is at the Public Archives and Records Office of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown.

72 The Constitution of the MAA was written by Abell in consultation with McCurry. Abell intended to decline the presidency if he received a positive reply to his applications for American scholarships

73 Abell to Humphrey, 24 May 1935, Jack Humphrey Papers, NGC Archives.

74 The MAA intentionally differed from the only provincial art association in the region, the Nova Scotia Society of Artists, which was mainly concerned with its own annual exhibitions. Abell had been elected an NSSA member in 1930, but never exhibited any work (he was a photographer), although he gave talks at their meetings and was on the jury of their 1937 Annual. See Mora Dianne O'NEILL, *Nova Scotia Society of Artists. Exhibitions and Members 1922-1972* (Halifax: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 1997) and also Sandra PAIKOWSKY, *Nova Scotian Pictures: Art in Nova Scotia 1940-1966/Images néo-écossaises. L'art de la Nouvelle-Écosse de 1940 à 1966* (Halifax: Dalhousie University Art Gallery, 1994).

75 It seems that the College Art Association was willing to help Abell with "special assistance" for MAA exhibitions, but "had no process in place;" see letter from Philip McMahon, President of the CAA to Keppel, 14 Aug. 1935. CCNY Records, CU RBML, Grant Files, Acadia University.

76 For information on the Committee, see BRISON, *Rockefeller, Carnegie and Canada*, 125-35, as well as the CC Grant File, Canadian Museums Program (Advisory Group on Canadian Museums), 1935-50, and the NGC Archives 7.4.c, Carnegie Corporation (Outside Activities/Organizations). The chair of the Ottawa committee was Dr. J. Clarence Webster. From 1934 to 1942, the MAA and its magazine would receive over $40,000 in Carnegie funding. Because Carnegie funding went to the MAA through Acadia, some correspondence concerning the Association is found in the University's file.

77 For example, Abell was interested in giving radio talks on international art but McCurry insisted that the content should directly relate to the National Gallery collection and be based on reproductions of its work. McCurry had asked President Patterson to use Acadia's radio station, but because it was ill-equipped for regional emission, the talks were broadcast by the CBC in Halifax. McCurry also exhorted Abell to involve Newfoundland within the MAA, and the St. John's Art Student Club joined in 1941.

78 See the *Montreal Gazette*, 18 Nov. 1939. According to the *AAM Annual Report*, 28 (which misspelled his name), Abell gave public talks on Nov. 13 and 17.

79 Unlike the Owen's Art Gallery in Sackville, the Nova Scotia Museum of Fine Arts in Halifax existed in name only; its permanent collection was housed at the provincial archives and the Nova Scotia College of Art. Materials pertaining to the NSMFA are found at the Nova Scotia Archives & Records Management, Halifax.

80 See Garry MAINPRIZE, *The National Gallery of Canada. A Hundred years of Exhibitions* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1984), for a listing of exhibitions sent to the Maritimes.

81 In his January 1943 letter sent to the entire MAA membership, Abell criticized Meagher's executive and financial management skills as well as his questionable knowledge of art. He also cited the MAA members' lack of involvement with other activities besides the association's annual exhibition.

82 Abell had a good knowledge of modernist Montreal art and was a major player at the Carnegie-supported Kingston Conference in 1941. New Brunswick painters Miller Brittain, Ted Campbell, Julia Crawford, Jack Humphrey, and Lucy Jarvis were the only other Maritimers at the Conference.

83 The November 1940 issue of *Parnassus* cites his appointment to its Editorial Board and contains a short notice on *Maritime Art* magazine.

84 Other art periodicals receiving Carnegie support were the *Art Bulletin*, the *American Journal of Archeology*, the *American Magazine of Art*, and *Art and Archeology*. The idea of a Canadian art periodical had also been discussed by the Carnegie Canadian Committee in 1933. Abell's wife Marcelle, Helen Beals at Acadia, and Leroy Zwicker in Halifax also aided in the magazine's production. For a recent discussion on the magazine, see Steven McNEIL, *Maritime Art. Canada's First Art Magazine, 1940-43* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2002).

85 Abell to Deichmann, 11 July 1942, Deichmann-Gregg Papers, NB Provincial Archives, MC497, file 328.

86 Abell to André Bieler, Queen's University Archives, coll. 2050, Box 4, André Bieler fonds. The letter also discusses whether the envisioned publication be an "organ of the Federation" [of Canadian Artists] or that "the national magazine be an independent self-sustaining organization, cooperating with all national and regional art societies in Canada who desired to cooperate."

87 Coleman to Robert Lester, "Notes on Canadian Trip, October 4-24, 1942," Nov. 3, 1942, CCNY Records, CU RBML, Series III, Grants, Box 70D, Canadian Museum Program (Advisory Group on Canadian Museums).

88 Despite Abell's earlier attempt to be hired by Michigan, a 31 March 1942 letter from Charles Dollard, at the Carnegie to Dean Lloyd Emmons, Michigan State College, recommended him based on President Patterson's reports and Carnegie's own satisfaction "with the resulting growth of art appreciation in Nova Scotia. His most outstanding contribution we believe has been in organizing small art societies in this largely rural area." See CCNY Records, CU RBML, Series III, Grant Files, Box 220, Michigan State University.

89 He maintained his ties to the Maritimes with a few summer trips to Nova Scotia. See Abell's letters to Lillian Freiman, McLaughlin Library, University of Guelph Archives and Special Collections, Lillian Freiman Collection, and his correspondence with Jack Humphrey and also with Fred Taylor; see National Archives of Canada, Frederick B. Taylor fonds R3299-0-8-E.

90 See the classic study, Ernest R. FORBES, *The Maritime Rights Movement, 1919-1927. A Study in Canadian Regionalism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979).

91 I wish to thank Kathleen MacKenzie, archivist at St. Francis-Xavier University for copies of Abell's letters.

92 Marcelle ABELL's other Canadian writings include "What is Wrong with the Teaching of French," *Dalhousie Review*, vol. XXI (1941-42): 299-312; *En Route, Canadien. A Pre-High School French Course* (Vancouver: Copp Clark, 1944) as well as her 1940 Acadia University M.A. thesis, "An Examination of Methods of Teaching Modern Languages in the Light of Psychology." An undated portrait of Marcelle by Helen Beals is in a private collection in the United States.

93 There was possibly only one other Quaker family in Wolfville at the time. According to the May 1935 issue of the *Acadia Athenaeum*, Abell led a forum on pacifism at the university on 25 April 1935 and he must have mentioned his own experience with the American Friends Overseas.

94 "Look Out of the Window," *Friends' Intelligencer*, 19 Second Month [February] 1927: 146-47. It was Quaker usage to refer to the months by their number rather than by their name (as I have done in this text) and issues of the *Intelligencer* are dated in that manner.

95 "The Fine Arts and Good Citizenship," CKIC, Wolfville, N.S., Feb. 1935, NGC Archives, 7.4.r, Radio Broadcasts (Outside Activities/Organizations).

96 The British art historian Eric Newton commented during his 1937 tour of Canada: "I shall be glad to leave the Maritimes. The people are hard and puritanical. Neither the breezy gusto of the Prairies nor the worldliness of the eastern towns. And not a bit welcoming." Eric NEWTON, *Diary of an English Art Critic. Eric Newton on a North American Lecture Tour in 1937* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997), 35.

97 It must also be understood that the National Gallery had to consider the less than satisfactory conditions for showing art in many Maritime venues when offering exhibitions to the MAA.

Résumé

« D'AILLEURS »
LA CORPORATION CARNEGIE, WALTER ABELL ET LES STRATÉGIES AMÉRICAINES POUR L'ART DES MARITIMES DES ANNÉES VINGT AUX ANNÉES QUARANTE

L'histoire de la communauté des provinces maritimes à partir de la fin des années vingt jusqu'au début des années quarante, a été influencée par des personnes et des facteurs extérieurs à la région ou « venus d'ailleurs ». Il y eut, en particulier, Frederick P. Keppel (1875-1943), président de la Carnegie Corporation de New York, et Walter Halsey Abell (1896-1957), écrivain sur l'art et éducateur originaire de Pennsylvanie, professeur à l'Université Acadia de Wolfville, Nouvelle-Écosse. La Carnegie Corporation s'intéressait depuis longtemps au Canada et leurs relations étaient favorisées par la facilité d'accès, une langue commune et l'héritage d'une interaction historique entre les deux pays. Durant sa présidence, Keppel soutenait que les arts visuels étaient la principale priorité philanthropique culturelle de la Corporation. Walter Abell, qui était venu à Acadia sous l'égide de la Corporation, a vu à ce que se réalise le désir de Keppel de favoriser un plus large accès aux beaux-arts dans trois secteurs distincts.

Formé en histoire de l'art au Swarthmore College et à la Barnes Foundation, Abell avait aussi été rédacteur en chef du journal quaker de Philadelphie, le *Friends' Intelligencer*, ainsi que professeur d'esthétique au Antioch College. À son arrivée à Acadia, en 1928, où il allait demeurer pendant quinze ans, il créa le premier département d'art et d'esthétique dans une université canadienne et développa des cours qui soulignaient l'importance de l'art dans la vie quotidienne. Il introduisit aussi le premier cours universitaire en art canadien. Inhabituelle aussi était l'attention qu'il portait à l'art autochtone et inuit. Son enseignement fut facilité en grande partie par un don de la Carnegie Corporation à l'université Acadia, en 1927, de matériel didactique sur l'art, comprenant près de deux cents livres, des reproductions photographiques en noir et blanc d'œuvres d'art et quelques gravures et tissus originaux.

En 1934 Abell fonda l'Acadia Art Club et, avec Elizabeth MacLeod, directrice de la Mount Allison University Art School à Sackville, il organisa des expositions et en emprunta d'autres de la College Art Association et de l'American Federation of Artists. Grâce à une petite subvention de la Corporation, ils créèrent, un an plus tard, la Maritime Art Association dont Abell fut le président, poste qu'il conserva pendant plusieurs années. La MAA fut la première alliance régionale canadienne de sociétés artistiques, d'écoles publiques, d'universités,

d'organismes sociaux, de groupes de service et civiques, d'artistes, d'étudiants en arts et de toutes personnes intéressées aux arts. Ses activités principales étaient la circulation d'expositions obtenues de la Galerie nationale du Canada (aujourd'hui Musée des beaux-arts du Canada) et la mise sur pied d'un programme de conférenciers qui faisaient la tournée de la région. L'exposition annuelle de la MAA, avec sa grande variété d'artistes locaux et une couverture journalistique enthousiaste, se révéla être sans doute la stratégie la plus efficace pour construire l'identité de la communauté artistique régionale. Plusieurs des essais qui accompagnaient les expositions avaient été écrits par Abell, et faisaient ressortir le contexte international pour la compréhension de l'œuvre des artistes des Maritimes.

Les appuis financiers à la MAA venaient du comité canadien de la Carnegie Corporation, administré par H.O. McCurry, alors directeur adjoint de la Galerie nationale du Canada. Malheureusement, McCurry comprenait fort peu les difficultés que présentait l'organisation d'expositions dans les Maritimes où les facilités professionnelles étaient rares. De plus, des querelles internes causèrent d'autres tensions avec l'Association elle-même. Malgré tout, la MAA créa les infrastructures pour la promotion et la diffusion de l'art dans les Maritimes – malgré, ou peut-être au vu des difficultés imposées d'abord par la Dépression puis par la Deuxième Guerre mondiale.

En 1940, Abell fonda le publication *Maritime Art*. C'était le premier périodique au Canada entièrement consacré aux arts visuels et qui allait devenir sa contribution la plus efficace et durable à la culture visuelle des Maritimes et du Canada. Grâce à l'appui financier de la Carnegie Corporation, la revue était remarquablement ouverte pour l'époque et ses articles étaient consacrés à tous les aspects des beaux-arts et de la communauté qui soutenait la culture canadienne. La revue devait ostensiblement révéler l'activité artistique de la région, mais, dès le début, Abell nourrissait des ambitions nationales pour le périodique. Ces ambitions devaient se réaliser en 1943, lorsque la revue (et Abell) déménagea à Ottawa, où elle prit le nom de *Canadian Art*.

Plusieurs facteurs motivaient le zèle que Walter Abell mettait à définir, activer et éduquer une communauté artistique dans les Maritimes. La Carnegie Corporation soutenait son travail parce qu'il réalisait leur mandat de «promouvoir le savoir par la diffusion» et la politique de Frederick Keppel d'avancement culturel par les arts visuels. Énergique et ambitieux, Abell semble avoir été poussé à dépasser les limites de Wolfville et son isolement des centres artistiques intellectuellement plus stimulants. Cherchant à faire de la population des Maritimes un public enthousiaste pour l'art, il voyait dans la région une terre prometteuse capable d'égaler l'action culturelle démocratique telle que définie aux États-Unis par les organisations artistiques avec lesquelles il avait noué des liens durables. Abell a probablement été influencé également par les ambitions du Maritime Rights Movement et du mouvement de développement coopératif et d'éducation des adultes du Antigonish Movement de Nouvelle-Écosse. Le

facteur le plus important dans son idée de développement d'une communauté artistique et coopérative dans les Maritimes venait peut-être du fait qu'il était quaker. Ses premiers écrits pour le *Friends' Intelligencer* montraient le pouvoir de l'action collective par la Société des amis et faisaient référence à l'art et à l'architecture comme à des métaphores de la compréhension mutuelle. Il allait exprimer ces idées dans les Maritimes à travers son action culturelle en faveur du développement esthétique de la communauté artistique.

Dans le meilleur des cas, la Carnegie Corporation et Walter Abell nourrissaient pour les Maritimes des ambitions culturelles qui étaient peut-être plus idéalistes que réalistes. Leurs aspirations continentalistes étaient contestées par un état d'esprit culturellement conservateur et limité et par une population trop petite pour fournir le soutien nécessaire à une communauté régionale artistique plus développée à l'époque. Néanmoins, sans la Carnegie Corporation, Frederick Keppel et, surtout, la détermination de Walter Abell, la communauté artistique des Maritimes de la fin des années vingt au début des années quarante aurait eu peu d'importance pour la région ou même pour le Canada. Il peut y avoir des avantages à venir « d'ailleurs ».

Traduction : Élise Bonnette

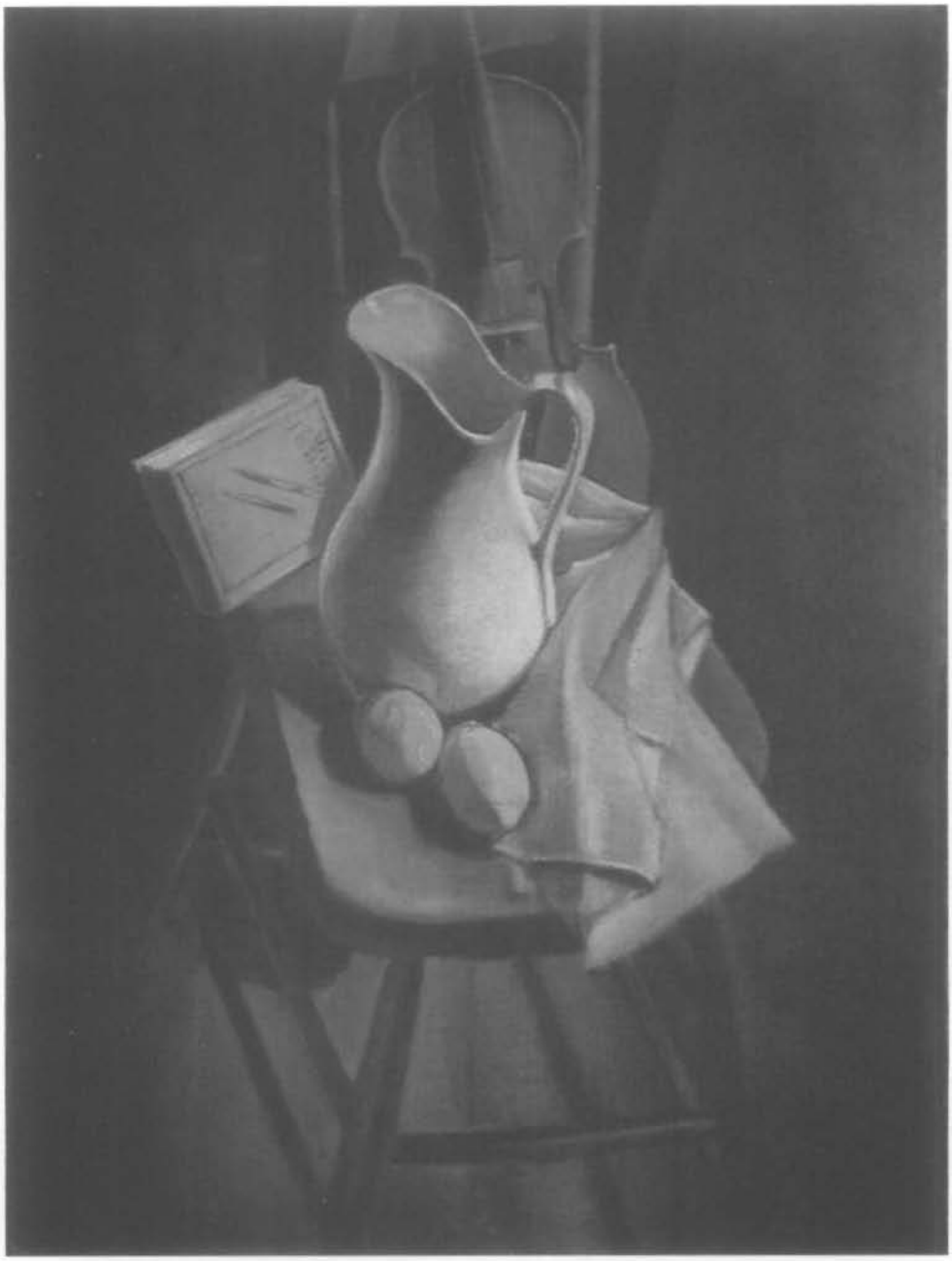


fig.3 Jack Humphrey, **The White Pitcher**, 1930, oil on canvas, 98 x 72 cm, Gift of The Second Beaverbrook Foundation. (Photo: Beaverbrook Art Gallery)

REGIONALIST OR CANADIAN 'MODERN' ?

Jack Humphrey's Claim to Fame

The work of New Brunswick artist Jack Humphrey (1901-1967) is generally understood today in the context of Atlantic regionalism. His considerable output, which included paintings of the Saint John harbour and the surrounding landscape as well as figure studies, is considered to be the expression of local subject matter, and relatively uninflected by national and international aesthetic concerns. Yet even a cursory examination of the critical discourse on Humphrey's work during his lifetime confirms his place in the history of modernism in Canada during the 1930s and 40s. Certainly Humphrey's own artistic intentions and ambitions, expressively revealed in his voluminous correspondence over the years, suggest such a reading of his *œuvre*. At the same time, such documentation raises compelling questions about the public perception and reception of his work.

The Jack Humphrey fonds at the National Gallery of Canada contain approximately five thousand letters written to and by the artist, spanning his career. His papers also include exhibition catalogues, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, exhibition histories, reviews, biographical data, family photographs, and sales records. There is a cumulative effect to reading such a broad range of materials, and a narrative of a life lived inevitably emerges. Jack Humphrey's life was devoted full-time to art; with a few exceptions, he did not take paid employment during almost forty years of uninterrupted artmaking. That he was able to eke out a living from his art is an exceptional circumstance for a Canadian artist of any period.

During his career, from the late 1930s until his death in 1967, Humphrey corresponded with the power-brokers of the Canadian art world, including such important writers and critics of the time as Walter Abell, Graham McInnes, Paul Duval, J. Russell Harper and Robert Ayre; with senior staff at the National Gallery of Canada, the CBC, and the Canada Council; with exhibiting societies such as the Contemporary Arts Society, the Ontario Society of Artists, the Canadian Group of Painters and the Art Association of Montreal; and with dealers and collectors. Humphrey also maintained correspondence with other artists, and a few close artist-friends, notably Lawren P. Harris, Erica and Kjeld Deichmann and Lucy Jarvis in the Maritimes.

Working in Saint John, Humphrey was removed from the centres of Montreal and Toronto and he maintained this intense level of correspondence primarily as a means of managing the reception of his work. He expended an inordinate amount of time and energy defining the image that he wanted to present of himself as an artist,

forging a career in Canadian art, and seeking the fame that he felt was his due. In effect, Humphrey divided his time between his artmaking and the development and management of his career. The frustration, bitterness and disappointment expressed in his letters have more to do with his perceived failures at the latter than with the former. His struggles, which were lifelong, were with individuals, agencies and voices of authority who could establish him as one of Canada's preeminent figures; and he often felt that they diminished and under-appreciated him, or misrepresented his work.

A year before his death in 1967 on the occasion of his retrospective at the National Gallery of Canada, Humphrey consulted closely with J. Russell Harper, who was writing the essay for the exhibition catalogue. Harper had submitted a draft of his text to Humphrey, who suggested revisions in a six-page, single-spaced, typed letter. Justifying these extensive changes, Humphrey wrote to Harper: "Do you not agree that the important thing is to get as near the truth as possible and make a document of lasting value to counteract errors which have occurred and been repeated in various former articles?"[1] In other words, this was Humphrey's opportunity to set the record straight, and it was the *record* – the critical path between production and reception, between intention and recognition – that had preoccupied him all his life.

What was the "truth" that Humphrey, by then in his mid-60s, felt had been obscured, and what were the "errors which had occurred and been repeated"? Primary among them was the popular reception of his work as regionalist in nature and intent, and the interpretation of his subject matter of sombre children and deserted Saint John streets, as a constructed chronicle of life in the Maritimes informed by the tenets of social realism. In the same letter to Harper, Humphrey denied any overt interest in the social-realist agenda, arguing that his work had to do with formal and not political or social concerns: "I have not reacted at all to longshoremen and stevedores, but I have noted that Saint John is up 'till now a commercial city as contrasted with Fredericton, a university city. In the summer, years ago, I painted Saint John streets and waterfront mainly because I could find planes and color, something not easy to dig out of the summertime greenery in the country."[2]

In fact, Humphrey was self-actualized not as a regionalist or social realist painter, but as an artist associated with the advanced art of his time as he understood it: the modernism of the School of Paris, of Cézanne and Matisse. He continually referred to his work as "universal" and to himself as a "modern," using the word as a noun as was common at the time. Interestingly, as early as the 1930s, his work was critically received in exactly those terms, and in a national context.

Humphrey began his artistic career in Canada during the Depression and between two world wars. The collected writings of Humphrey's earliest supporter, the critic, theorist and teacher Walter Abell, in many ways best describe the two prevailing streams in Canadian art at the time: European-derived

modernism and a figure-based school generated from American models. The predominant American approaches were social realism, which was associated with the Art Students League in New York and derived from the example of the Mexican muralists, and so-called American Scene Painting or Regionalism, associated with Thomas Hart Benton and Grant Wood in the mid-West. The Americans also provided Canadian artists with a political ideal of art and democracy through the projects of the Works Progress Administration. A strong proponent of modernism and especially the work of Cézanne, Abell theorized about the meaning of art in numerous publications, including his own *Maritime Art* magazine. At the same time he devoted his energies to lecture tours, radio broadcasts and articles on the theme of "Art and Democracy." The shifting of attitudes of the time towards pure abstraction would also find articulation in Abell's writing.

Following the dominance of the Group of Seven in the 1920s, other critics of the day were eager to detect a modern movement in Canadian art, particularly one that was characterized by an art for art's sake approach to painting. The Montreal critic Robert Ayre wrote in 1940 that, "The trend today is away from landscape. There is a turning inwards, a narrowing to the personal and intimate, a searching of hearts and a searching after the secrets of painting."[3] In a 1937 article with the evocative title "New Horizons in Canadian Art," Graham McInnes would also herald a period of formal innovation that expressed itself "above all, in a manner disciplined by the rigid requirements of the visual arts."[4]

It was within this critical climate that Humphrey launched his career in Canada. He had prepared himself by a lengthy period of study in the United States, first at the School of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts from 1921 to 1924 and then at the National Academy of Design in New York from 1924 to 1929. Both were conservative institutions. By most accounts, including Humphrey's own, the most significant influence on his work at the time was his teacher at the National Academy of Design, Charles Hawthorne, an accomplished figure painter. At his summer school in Cape Cod that Humphrey attended, Hawthorne would conduct his painting classes outdoors on the beach, often using local children as models. From Hawthorne, Humphrey learned how to paint, and throughout his life he would rely on these lessons for his conventional studio portraits, most often of children.

More critical to the development of Humphrey's early awareness of contemporary art and its issues were his visits to the numerous downtown galleries in New York City when he was a student. Catalogues and handlists in the Humphrey Papers suggest he saw numerous exhibitions of work by such artists as Arthur Dove, Gaston Lachaise and John Marin. Marin's watercolours of New York, informed by dynamic cubism and the futurists, would become influential in Humphrey's own efforts to interpret the cityscape of Saint John. There is no evidence that Humphrey's exposure to social realism in New York had any effect on his work at this time, in spite of two terms that he spent at the Art Students League – the veritable centre of

fig.1 Vaclav Vytlacil, **Still Life**, c.1920, charcoal on paper. (Photo: the author)

fig.2 Jack Humphrey, **Still-life with Oil Lamp**, 1930, charcoal on paper, 64 x 48 cm, coll. of the National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada)

social-realist thought and production – which followed his studies with Hawthorne. That Humphrey's interests lay elsewhere is suggested by his decision to study with Vaclav Vytlacil, a modernist recently arrived in New York from Hans Hofmann's school in Munich. While Humphrey was a student at the ASL, Vytlacil gave a series of twelve public lectures on Cézanne and the post-cubist movement in Paris, introducing the discourse on the modern movement at the Art Students' League.

For Humphrey, however, Vytlacil was perceived as a critical, early source of information on current modernist thought (fig.1). Following his studies with Vytlacil, Humphrey took the "Grand Tour," traveling to London, France and Germany, winding up at Hans Hofmann's School in Munich. His contact with modern art in Europe was instructional. In Paris, he looked at work by Matisse and Gauguin, and saw an exhibition of paintings by Cézanne containing, as he wrote in letters home, "some beauties."[5] He listed several titles up the margin of his letter, including *Boy in Red Vest*, a painting that may have influenced Humphrey's self-portraits from this period, which were quite advanced compared to his work of a few years earlier. In Munich, Humphrey registered at the Hofmann school where he remained for approximately three weeks, although there is strong evidence that Hofmann himself was not present at that time. Works from this period such as *Still Life with Oil Lamp* (fig.2), show Humphrey's experimentation with spatial distortion and the properties of two-dimensional planes, suggesting the cumulative influence of Vytlacil, Hofmann and his own European experience.

Other works of the time such as *The White Pitcher* (fig.3), a painting largely influenced by Cezanne's exploration of spatial dynamics, indicate that Humphrey was by now fully engaged with the modernist project. He submitted it to the 59th Annual Ontario Society of Artists exhibition at the Art Gallery of Toronto in March 1931. The work was, in effect, Humphrey's calling card; his first foray into the national scene in Canada following his return from Europe. The same month, Humphrey successfully submitted two other still life paintings to the Art Association of Montreal. H.O. McCurry, Assistant Director of the National Gallery of Canada, and Eric Brown, Director of the Gallery, selected one of these and *The White Pitcher* for inclusion the following year in the *Seventh Annual Exhibition of Canadian Art* at the National Gallery. Between 1930 and 1940, *The White Pitcher* would be shown another six times and was illustrated in the 1936 *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*. The painting also garnered Humphrey his first mention in the national press. Reviewing the OSA exhibition in *The Canadian Forum*, Jehanne Bietry Salinger noted that: "There was a still life by Jack Humphrey of Saint John, New Brunswick which I should call the finest contribution to the exhibition. It is called *White Pitcher* and has qualities which are reminiscent of Cézanne's extreme sensibility."[6]

Humphrey's ambitions regarding modernism are exemplified by his decision to seek out the advice of Roger Fry, the preeminent figure associated with modernist thought internationally. Humphrey asked his cousin Ruth, who was in England, to

call on Fry in London with examples of his work for critique and review. In a letter to Humphrey, Ruth described her brief visit with Fry and reported his encouraging response to Humphrey's work:

> to begin with, he said "he has more in him than he knows himself".... "Pictures show a fine sense of composition, and I like the frankness of statement." He liked best the Boy's Head, the Mask and Plant and the blocky still life (bottles, jug, books, etc) which you call Things on a Table. Of the Boy's Head, he said that you had found colour in the shadows and generally had "gone further," i.e. had "developed the statements more fully" than in some of the others.[7]

In general, Ruth believed Fry's basic advice was that Humphrey should push things further and she commented that, "I felt that his attitude was: Here is good work, able to stand up to a penetrating criticism."

Over the next few years Humphrey received critical attention in Toronto and Montreal in articles and reviews, which now not only singled out individual works for praise but validated Humphrey as a 'modern' in Canada. Significant among these was an article in *The Canadian Forum* written by Walter Abell in June 1936. Titled simply "Jack Humphrey – Painter" and almost three pages long, the article located Humphrey within the international art scene, describing him as a "creative modern." Abell recalls his first encounter with Humphrey's work, and notes that:

> even for me, after early studies in Philadelphia within range of the hundred Renoirs, the hundred Cézannes, and other modern works of the Barnes Foundation, and after two years subsequently spent in Paris, the first impact was not without its shock and questioning. Something was here of the fauves – a brusque indifference to amenities, a bluntness that one was tempted to think deliberate and that struck one like a dash of salt water in the face.[8]

The next year, in July 1937, Abell put Humphrey's name before the American reader, in an article entitled "Some Canadian Moderns" for the *Magazine of Art*.[9] Years later in a 1954 article in *Canadian Art* entitled "East is West – Thoughts on the Unity and Meaning of Contemporary Art," Abell would argue that Jack Humphrey "while dealing with local, specific subject matter (regionalism) through his treatment of it transcends it – to be a truly modern artist."[10] In a review of a group exhibition at the Montreal Arts Club, published in *The Gazette* in February 1937, Robert Ayre described Humphrey as an artist "whose integrity gives authority, who works from the inside. In the two still lifes in this exhibition his colour is distinguished and his design sophisticated, though never tricky. One of them is splintered almost to Cubism but it holds fast to reality. An admirable painter, Humphrey should be far better known."[11] In 1938 Graham McInnes devoted the opening three paragraphs of his weekly column in *Saturday Night* to Humphrey's show of watercolours at Toronto's Picture Loan Society, calling his work "universal" and citing Humphrey as one of the finest painters in the Dominion. McInnes describes Humphrey's subject matter – the city of Saint John:

> its rows of dingy clapboard houses perched on the rocky hillside...its drab glamour...its faded glory. But I do not want to stress Humphrey's subject matter; his constant exploration of it is merely an indication that he has found something to bite on in his search for full formal realization. For in the last analysis, it is form – achieved through design – that Humphrey seeks. This is rare work; I wish I could write of it at greater length.[12]

In the late 1930s Humphrey's first important sale came with the acquisition of a self-portrait, entitled *Draped Head* by Hart House at the University of Toronto. Painted in 1931 it was not exhibited until Humphrey included it in a solo exhibition in Saint John in 1934, and then in the Canadian Group of Painters exhibition in 1937, which led to the Hart House purchase. The painting was reproduced in the catalogue and it was also selected for *A Century of Canadian Art* at the Tate Gallery, London in 1939. Years later, in 1952, Humphrey described the issues that had absorbed him during the production of this work:

> 'Draped Head' was painted near the start of my career as a practicing artist, after I had newly returned from nine months in Europe in the early 1930s. It is quite obvious that 'Draped Head' is not a portrait. Instead it is a symbol and a generality, but specific in its language of volume and paint. It may seem surprising that the painter made use of his own head for this aspiration. Two other heads, more portrait-like, had preceded it and were discarded.[13]

In February 1938, John Lyman wrote an article occasioned by that season's Canadian Group of Painters exhibition. Less an exhibition review and more a state of the union, the article afforded Lyman the opportunity to address the issues of modernism, nationalism, and the Group. "The real Canadian scene," he avered, "is in the consciousness of Canadian painters, whatever the object of their thought. It is what they make it and there is no other way of finding out what it is."[14] The reproduction of *Draped Head* at the head of Lyman's article confers on it the exemplary status of advanced art in Canada at the time (fig.4). The following year Humphrey was invited to join the Contemporary Arts Society, founded to promote, as Lyman articulated it, "living modern art" in Canada.

In 1933 Humphrey visited Vancouver briefly and produced a number of unusual decorative paintings, such as *Night* (fig.5), which he would exhibit in 1939 with the Canadian Group of Painters.[15] Among the possible influences on the Vancouver works are William Zorach, an artist Humphrey mentioned favourably in his correspondence and who had taught at the Art Students league in 1929 when Humphrey was there. In an expressionist work entitled *Hallowe'en* (fig.6), done several years later around 1940, Humphrey continued his experiments with the figure, radically compressing and tilting the pictorial space, distorting two small figures in the foreground. While it is a street scene, the work is certainly difficult to situate as regionalist. One thinks of the German artists Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Max Beckman, and it is worth noting that Humphrey owned a copy of the 1938 book *Modern German Art* with thirty-two photogravure plates of paintings by Grosz, Kokoschka, Dix, and other twentieth-century German artists.

Draped Head, by Jack Humphrey, Canadian Group Exhibition.

ART

By John Lyman

THE CANADIAN GROUP

It was a cheerful sign of the growing recognition of modern art that, after a lapse of several years, the Art Association again accorded its hospitality last month to the annual exhibition of the Canadian Group of Painters. The gallery, however, which was put at its disposal was too small to accommodate all the work originally presented in Toronto, and it was obliged to reduce it by approximately half, involving the elimination of some contributors.

The remainder was a mixed show, of uneven quality and diverse character, running from the "Canadian scene" to international abstraction, from simple recording to personal expression, from rigidity and dry definition to fruity suggestion. It is, therefore, impossible to generalize about it without doing injustice in particular. It was not all essentially modern, though a good many people believe bright colour and heavy emphasis confer modernism. Modernism resides in neither contemporary [illegible] contemporary theme, but rather in contemporary thought. But let's forget this tiresome word. Were there not people who think that to be modern in one's own time is abnormal, it would not even exist and we could talk of only good and bad painting.

That this show did, however, strike a different note from that of the recent Academy exhibition, though the two touched at points, must have been apparent to the most casual observer. There was little recourse to an appeal outside the medium. A man stood or fell by whether he had or had not something of his own to say. *Savoir faire* was not a requirement.

The difference was reflected, too, in the attitude of the public, both serious and hilarious. Beside a comfortable number of people who had some sensitive responses, there were those whose senses transmit only habitual stimuli and didn't know what they were looking at, those who found every sign of character "too . . . ," as well as those who attributed it to disrespect, perversity, bad eyesight or a loose screw. And, by the way, it seems to be a law of nature that the people who are the most uncomplimentary in what they do not understand are the most ruffled when its defenders are half so outspoken.

One thing in evidence in this show was that the fetish of the subject is losing hold. That is perhaps one reason why one heard said that it was not particularly Canadian. I do not think we need worry over that. Canadianism is the way [or racial ways] of thinking and feeling of Canadians, and such ways do not vacillate with a shift of attention. The popular notion is that the subject all but makes the picture, and this prejudice was further entrenched in the early days of the Group by their apologists who greatly exaggerated the importance of the external element. What

The Montrealer with Canadian Passing Show

Feb. 1, 1938

fig.4 John Lyman, *The Montrealer*, 1 February 1938 with reproduction of **Draped Head**. (Photo: the author)

fig.5 Jack Humphrey, **Night**, 1933, New Brunswick Museum. (Photo: the author)

In 1941, Humphrey attended the Kingston Conference. The highly conservative choice of American Scene painter Thomas Hart Benton as the keynote speaker underlined the climate for regionalism generated by the conference. Humphrey told Russell Harper that, "the Kingston conference produced little that was tangible except some further information on glazing and old-master techniques. I didn't discuss much, if any, only listened to the programmed speakers."[16] Humphrey recognized the groundswell of interest in art and democracy in Canada, and although he produced a number of works dealing with groups of figures in the 1940s, he never avowed an interest in regional realism. Nevertheless, Humphrey's interest in the figure, including studies of dockworkers, would be increasingly seen in a regionalist light, especially in the Saint John popular press. Even with his more traditional portraits of young children, such as *Joanne*, Humphrey insisted that there was a universal, rather than a regional appeal. He wrote to Harper: "In describing the regional portraits as no more regional than those of Rembrandt, I want to effect a proper appreciation of them by the upstart curators who were born yesterday with prejudices instead of a silver spoon."[17]

Interestingly, *Joanne* was one of two works by Humphrey selected by the National Gallery for the exhibition *Fifty Years of Painting in Canada* at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in 1949. The local papers recognized the potential popular appeal of this work. The Boston *Sunday Post* reproduced it with the cut line: "Local flavor in the exhibition of Canadian art is found in this oil portrait Joanne painted by Jack Humphrey."[18] (fig.7) In an article in the Boston *Daily Globe*, entitled "Canada Comes to Boston," *Joanne* was reproduced again with the caption "New Brunswick Lassie in pigtails was painted by the Saint John artist Jack Weldon Humphrey. Her name is Joanne and she obviously scrubbed her face clean for her portrait shown in the Canadian painting show at the Boston Art Museum."[19] In spite of this extreme parochialism, Humphrey registered pleasure at the attention that the work received in an international context. He wrote to H.O. McCurry: "It was really quite a lift to receive such favourable attention in the Boston Post and the Boston Globe for the portrait 'Joanne.' It was the best thing of its kind for quite some time."[20]

Throughout the 1950s and 60s, Humphrey ventured into abstraction, fueled by regular trips to New York to look at art and a year of painting in Paris in 1953. Nevertheless, he was still concerned with the perceived misunderstanding of his work as regionalist. He wrote to Robert Ayre in 1957: "More and more in order to obtain 1st rate acceptance painters must be well aware of the whole art world, must show their intimate understanding of it and proceed from that basis. If they do not they are likely to be...neglected, and placed in regional categories. To a devoted painter such categories are not tolerable."[21] In the exhibition prepared for Expo '67 entitled *Painting in Canada*, Humphrey was represented by one of his late-career, non-representational paintings. In his text for the accompanying publication, Barry Lord

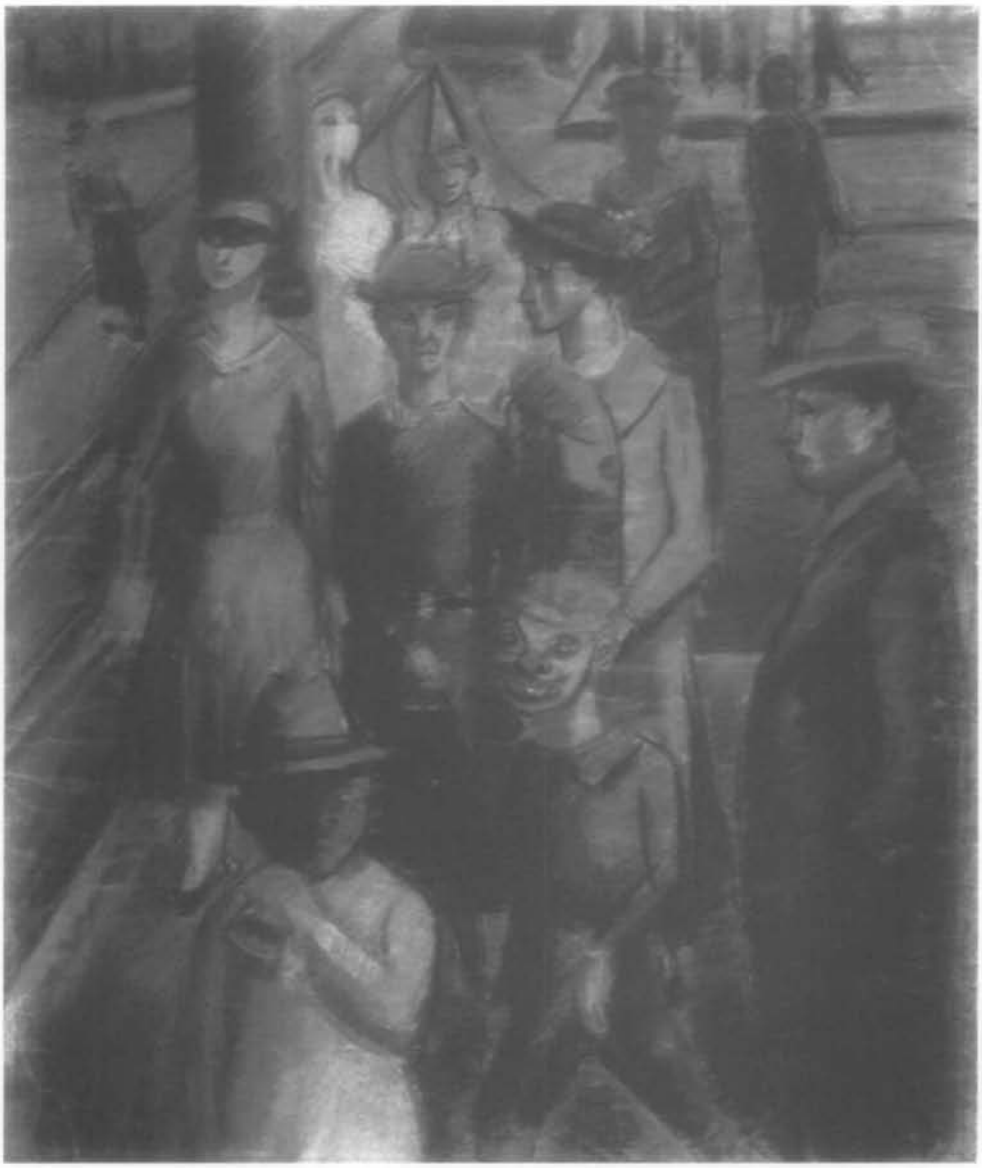


fig.6 Jack Humphrey, **Hallowe'en**, c.1940, pastel on paper, 57 x 47 cm, coll. of the National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada)

Hub Locale of First Canadian Art Exhibit in U.S.

More Than 100 Oil and Water Color Paintings to Be Shown in Fine Arts' Special Galleries

BY EMMETT MANNING

Boston is looking like the finals—Stanley Cup schoolgirl's who has just been informed the sophomore class has voted her "the girl with the prettiest legs."

Our upstairs neighbor—Canada—has picked the Hub as the locale of the first exhibition of modern Canadian paintings ever held in the United States.

From next Tuesday through September 25th, at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, over 100 oil and water color paintings — the cream of Canadian artwork — will fill seven special display galleries, representing "Forty Years of Canadian Painting."

It's going to be a gala event, knotted off in fine artist style with a private view and reception for museum members and special guests the day before the public opening.

His Excellency Humphrey Heron Wrong, Canadian ambassador to the United States, will arrive from Washington to open the exhibition officially.

"It's a matter of gratification to us that the first Canadian exhibition in the United States with a claim to completeness should be held in Boston," states our Right Hon. Vincent Massey, C.H., who is chairman of the board of trustees of the National Gallery of Canada.

"Our relations with the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston have been unusually close ones with most American galleries."

Best of the Nation

The event, though in an international scale, is the inviting your neighbor in for a parlor visit and suggesting they bring their family album along, which the Canadian government has done.

They put a four-hatted stash through their very collections and added the most outstanding of the artworks of private collectors from Maine's Bay to our doorstep.

The result is a comprehensive and complete assembly of the foremost canvases in Canada produced over the past 40 years. They are arriving the finest Sealtest of their artistic tree this city and hailing the Irrandids have a "soak" at it.

Local flavor in the exhibition of Canadian art is found in this oil portrait, "Joanne," painted by Jack Humphrey of St. John, N. B. Humphrey was a student at the Hub Museum of Fine Arts, where the exhibition will be held, beginning this Tuesday.

The show is free-of-charge, and not of significance to art-lovers alone.

There are an estimated million of persons of French-Canadian stock in New England. More than 400,000 of Canadian ancestry, who were either born in Canada or whose parents were, reside around Greater Boston. Putting it another way, one out of every five Bay Staters has ties with our upstairs neighbor.

So here's an ideal exhibition for those who haven't been able to manage a "trip to the Dominion" in the past number of summers.

With a solid turn toward an export, Canada's leading artists have received the rugged beauty and individuality of their great country as capital. All home-lived talent and all of it top-notch.

Names like Thomson, Jackson, Varley, Harris, Morrice, Colvin, may not strike familiar rings to those who don't follow the art movements—but, they represent figures who have created movement, developments in Canada's culture.

There'll be an added angle to the Hub exhibition. Canadian-born Europeans will find a nostalgic note when they view homesick scenes of northern ice cozy villages, woodland "settlements, the "Discovery" river," a street corner in Montreal, the ferry at Quebec, Algoma Lake, Laurentian village, the church at Magnetawan, the "pink pine" and other selections from a distinctly national panorama.

Character studies of rugged French-Canadian stock crop out in portraits of a lumberjack, a farm girl, a group of "inner home" portraits, courts emerging from Sunday mass to hoard their loathsomes, a Canadian story galore.

More than two dozen Canadian artists are represented in the exhibition, plus another dozen who migrated to Canada from England, South Africa, Calcutta, St. Petersburg, Switzerland. They caught the spirit of the northern country and put it down in oils and water colors for others to feel.

A period from about 1910 to the present is covered in the exhibition, during this time the rise of modern painting in Canada has been gathering momentum.

"Art in Canada since 1710," says H. O. McCurry, National Gallery director, "has undergone more fundamental developments than at any other period in the three centuries of our history."

Before then, artistry had merely scratched the surface of the artistic possibilities dormant in the vast territory.

National Feeling

The more immediate setting can be found in the art of the time of the country when, following the fashionable anchors of Europe, determined not only the style but also the subject-matter of Canadian artists.

It reminded for a group of seven "vigorous young artists," pioneering, as known "a national" movement of painting" on Tuesday, in 1872. Their hopes to paint the vast, savage scenery of the country.

Their step was paced by Maurice Cullen, Paris-trained impressionist, and James Wilson Morrice, Paris trained, both of whom abandoned the realistic tradition and turned to the direction of a more truly national movement.

As Director McCurry explains in his introduction to the exhibition catalogue, "... the Group of Seven no doubt felt the general influence of a variety of style currents of the early 20th century . . . but national finding took precedence in the their deep affection for Canada that found all such foreign elements and transformed them into a single new unity, a style characterized by the strong, wreathing patterns of trees and lake and hill . . ."

In the original Group of Seven were artists like Alex. Young Jackson, who considered an impressionist training and a passion for the open air; Tom Thomson, a native genius with an intimate knowledge of the forest and lake; Arthur Lismer and Franklin Carmichael (both having for cartoonist pasture; Robert Walker, an instinctive painter of nature; J. E. H. MacDonald, a poet's feeling for mood in landscape, and Lawren Harris with his dramatic adaptation for the forms of nature.

The national movement in art, established with a great wave of interest and consciousness which began around the period of the first World War and continued through the 1920s and '30s. By the outbreak of World war II, moreover, Canada had entered as a world power and her art began to show a greater diversity of style and subject.

As militant theme seeps into the exhibition, the contributions of several who served as official war artists with the Canadian military forces.

Not by far the most interesting display among the art of the period, the rural scene, of a wintry scene, or the stubbornness of nature influencing itself against a canadian gale.

The exhibition was brought to Boston through the efforts of C. H. Sherman, director of the Hub museum, Dr. H. O. McCurry, director of the National Gallery of Canada, museum authorities "whose interest in Canadian art and in Canadian museums we have come to appreciate," reports Director McCurry.

Boston Sunday Post 10/7/49 1

fig.7 *Sunday Post* (Boston), 10 July 1949 with reproduction of **Joanne**. (Photo: the author)

acknowledged Humphrey as an advanced artist, suggesting that it was only through him that abstract expression made an appearance in Canada outside Toronto and Montreal. Yet in his summary analysis of Humphrey's career, Lord states that while his "cubist lessons were immediately apparent in some brilliant still-lifes and self portraits of the early 1930s, more typical of his production of the next two decades were the conventional portraits and landscapes which associated him with the then fashionable regionalist ideas about painting and its proper subject matters."[22]

In spite of the accumulated critical and curatorial assessments of Humphrey as a modernist, throughout his life there was a tendency, especially in the popular press, to describe him as a chronicler of the Depression, a sensitive interpreter of Saint John, and the "Dean of Maritime Realism." As a painter of his time and of his place, Humphrey did in fact produce an important body of regional scenes that ensured steady sales and made him popular during his lifetime. Since his death, his best-known works have remained his portraits of children and views of the Saint John harbour, effectively absorbed into the canon of regional realism.

In a draft of a letter to Robert Ayre, versions of which he also sent to Paul Duval and Barry Lord, Humphrey clearly demonstrated his point of view on the regionalist label, which he found so limiting, and revealed his great fear of being perceived as provincial. In another of his efforts to set the record straight, he wrote:

> When I was doing the portraits I thought I was doing something universal, neither national nor regional, and "universal" is a word which Graham McInnes long ago applied to my watercolours. Evidently it is considered in some of Ontario that anything painted in Ontario, such as Algonquin Park or in the quaint villages of Quebec is national but anything painted in New Brunswick must be regional! The next step down from "regional" is "parochial" – the village painter. A problem arises here: Suppose I had my easel on the New Brunswick side of the New Brunswick-Quebec border and painted a village or some trees and clouds located in Quebec, i.e. the trees anyway. Which would I be, a national or a regional painter; and if the clouds crossed the New Brunswick border would they then become regional? I think the Group of Seven for all their past noise, were regional....[23]

GEMEY KELLY
Director, Owens Art Gallery
Mount Allison University

Notes

This paper presents research undertaken during a Fellowship at the National Gallery of Canada, which houses the Jack Humphrey fonds.

1 Jack Humphrey to J. Russell Harper, 6 June 1966, file copy, National Gallery of Canada Archives, Jack Humphrey fonds (NGC, JH fonds). Other important archival information may be found at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton and the New Brunswick Museum, Saint John.

2 Ibid.

3 Robert AYRE, "Art of Our Day in Canada," *Saturday Night* (28 Dec. 1940): 25.

4 Graham MCINNES, "New Horizons in Canadian Art," *New Frontier* (June 1937): 19, 20.

5 Humphrey to Charles Percy Humphrey and Nellie Weldon Humphrey, 6 June 1930, NGC, JH fonds.

6 Jehanne Bietry SALINGER, "One More Exhibition," *The Canadian Forum* (April 1931): 261-62.

7 Ruth Humphrey to Jack Humphrey, 13 July [1933], NGC, JH fonds.

8 Walter ABELL, "Jack Humphrey – Painter," *The Canadian Forum* (June 1936): 16-18.

9 ABELL, "Some Canadian Moderns," *Magazine of Art* 30, no.7 (July 1937): 422-27.

10 ABELL, "East is West – Thoughts on the Unity and Meaning of Contemporary Art," *Canadian Art* 11, no.2 (Winter 1954): 44-51, 73.

11 AYRE, "Arts Club Exhibition by Eleven Painters," *The Gazette* (Montreal), 3 Feb. 1937.

12 Graham MCINNES, "World of Art," *Saturday Night* (5 Feb. 1938): 7.

13 Jack Humphrey's notes for the Hart House catalogue, January 1952, NGC, JH fonds.

14 John LYMAN, "Art," *The Montrealer*, 1 Feb. 1938, 18.

15 Charles C. HILL, "Jack Humphrey: Growth and Retrenchment: The Early Years," an unpublished talk given at the National Gallery of Canada, provides a compelling look at the importance of the Vancouver period in Humphrey's work.

16 Humphrey to J. Russell Harper, 6 June 1966, file copy, NGC, JH fonds.

17 Ibid.

18 *Sunday Post* (Boston), 10 July 1949.

19 *Daily Globe* (Boston), 16 July 1949.

20 Humphrey to H.O. McCurry, 8 Sept. 1949, file copy, NGC, JH fonds.

21 Humphrey to Ayre, 24 Sept. 1957, Ayre Correspondence, NGC, JH fonds.

22 Barry LORD, *Painting in Canada* (Montreal: Canadian Government Pavilion, Expo 67, 1967), unpaginated. According to Lord, it was only after his return from France in 1952 that Humphrey created his so-called expressive works.

23 Humphrey to Ayre, undated draft, NGC, JH fonds.

Résumé

«MODERNE» RÉGIONALISTE OU CANADIEN ?

Le titre de gloire de Jack Humphrey

L'œuvre de l'artiste néo-brunswickois Jack Humphrey (1901-1967) se comprend généralement aujourd'hui dans le contexte du régionalisme atlantique. Cependant, ses nombreuses lettres, réunies dans le fonds Jack Humphrey du Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, confirment son désir d'être reconnu comme un peintre «moderne». De Saint John, où il travaillait, Humphrey a entretenu une correspondance suivie avec des écrivains et des critiques, des sociétés exposantes, des marchands d'art et des collectionneurs ainsi qu'avec d'autres artistes dans le but de développer et de gérer sa carrière. Ses lettres aux personnes influentes qui pouvaient le mettre au rang des personnalités canadiennes éminentes laissent supposer qu'il se sentait diminué ou sous-estimé ou que son œuvre était présentée sous un faux jour.

Un de ses principaux sujets d'inquiétude était de voir sa peinture considérée comme régionaliste, et ses tableaux faussement présentés comme une chronique de la vie dans les Maritimes construite selon les dogmes du réalisme social. Il s'associait plutôt lui-même à l'avant-garde de son temps tel qu'il le comprenait : le modernisme de l'École de Paris, de Cézanne et Matisse. Il parlait constamment de son œuvre comme étant «universelle» et se qualifiait lui-même de «moderne», employant ce mot comme substantif, comme cela se faisait couramment à l'époque. Son association au mouvement moderne canadien a commencé par de longues études à Boston et New York. Des expositions d'œuvres modernistes internationales à New York ont exercé une grande influence sur sa propre interprétation du panorama urbain de Saint John, N.B. Son stage à la Art Student's League avec Vaclav Vytlacil l'ont conduit à faire un voyage en Europe et à suivre des cours à l'école d'art de Hans Hofmann à Munich. De retour au Canada, Humphrey a, par la suite, été encouragé par l'éminent critique moderniste Roger Fry, qui avait connu son œuvre grâce au cousin de Humphrey à Londres.

Les critiques d'art de Toronto et de Montréal se sont intéressés à Humphrey. Leurs articles ne louaient pas seulement les œuvres, mais ils confirmaient Humphrey comme un «moderne» au Canada. Un article significatif est celui que Walter Abell a signé dans *The Canadian Forum* en 1936. L'année suivante, Abell présentait Humphrey aux lecteurs américains dans un article de *Magazine of Art* intitulé «Some Canadian Moderns». En 1954, un article par Abell dans *Canadian Art* soutenait que Humphrey avait transcendé le régionalisme «pour devenir un véritable artiste moderne». Des articles des années trente par Robert Ayre et John

Lyman à Montréal et par Graham McInnes à Toronto soulignent également son langage visuel moderniste. L'autoportrait de Humphrey, *Draped Head*, peint en 1931, pouvait être perçu comme un exemple significatif de l'avant-garde au Canada.

Humphrey reconnaissait le mouvement d'opinion en faveur de l'art et de la démocratie au Canada et, bien qu'il ait peint, dans les années 1940, un certain nombre de toiles représentant des groupes de figures, il n'a jamais manifesté d'intérêt pour le réalisme régional. Même dans le cas de ses portraits plus traditionnels de jeunes enfants, tel *Joanne*, Humphrey soutenait que leur attrait était plus universel que régional.

Durant les années 1950 et 1960, Humphrey s'aventura dans l'abstraction, stimulé par ses fréquentes visites dans les galeries et musées de New York et une année à Paris en 1953. Malgré tout, il s'inquiétait toujours de ce qu'il percevait comme une fausse présentation de son œuvre comme régionaliste. Dans une lettre à Robert Ayre, en 1957, il se plaint de ce malentendu à propos de son œuvre : «Pour un peintre attaché à son art, de telles catégories sont intolérables.» Même dans son catalogue pour l'exposition d'Expo 67 *La peinture au Canada*, qui comprenait une des dernières toiles non représentatives de Humphrey, Barry Lord continuait à l'associer à des «idées régionalistes à la mode sur la peinture et les sujets qui lui sont propres». Assurément, en tant que peintre de son temps et de son lieu, Humphrey a, de fait, produit un nombre important de scènes régionales qui lui assuraient des ventes régulières et l'ont rendu populaire de son vivant. Et, après sa mort, ses œuvres les plus connues de portraits d'enfants et de vues du port de Saint John ont été effectivement intégrées au canon du réalisme régional.

Néanmoins, dans le brouillon d'une lettre non datée à Robert Ayre ainsi qu'à Paul Duval et Barry Lord, il cherche encore à tirer les choses au clair :

> Quand je faisais les portraits, je pensais faire quelque chose d'universel, et non pas national ou régional, et «universel» est un qualificatif que Graham McInnes a appliqué à mes aquarelles il y a longtemps. Évidemment on pense dans certaines parties de l'Ontario que tout ce qui est peint en Ontario, comme le parc Algonquin, ou dans de charmants villages du Québec est national, mais que tout ce qui est peint au Nouveau-Brunswick est forcément régional ! De là à dire «provincial» il n'y a qu'un pas – le peintre de village. Cela pose un problème : supposons que j'installe mon chevalet du côté néo-brunswickois de la frontière entre le Nouveau-Brunswick et le Québec et que je peigne un village, ou quelques arbres et des nuages situés au Québec, du moins les arbres. Est-ce que je serais un peintre national ou régional ; et si les nuages traversaient la frontière, est-ce qu'ils deviendraient alors régionaux ? Je crois que le Groupe des Sept, malgré tout le bruit qu'on a fait autour d'eux, étaient régionaux....

Traduction : Élise Bonnette

fig.1 H.W. Smith, **Egerton Ryerson**, engraving, n.d. (Photo: Ryerson Archives)

EGERTON RYERSON AND THE OLD MASTER COPY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

In 1855 and 1856 Egerton Ryerson (1803-82), the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, and his daughter Sophia traveled through Europe buying copies of works of art for the Educational Museum that he would open in the Toronto Normal School upon his return. A major figure in the religious, political and educational life of nineteenth-century Ontario, Ryerson was successively a Methodist minister, a lobbyist for equal status for Methodists and other non-Anglican Protestant groups, and architect of Ontario's educational system (fig.1). Appointed Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada in 1844, he laid the groundwork for the centralized free compulsory education system much as it exists today. He set up structures to ensure a standardized curriculum, the printing of textbooks by Canadian authors, the training, examination and inspection of teachers, pedagogical conventions, libraries in schools, and founded the professional publication, the *Journal of Education.*

In 1852 he established the Normal School in St. James Square, at Gerrard and Yonge streets in Toronto, and it was here in 1857 that he established his Museum of Natural History and Fine Arts for the education and pleasure of both future teachers and the public. When it closed in 1920, most of its paintings disappeared, as did the museum itself in terms of its textual presence in Canadian art historical writing. This erasure could be explained by the fact that projects like Ryerson's have been viewed as misguided Victorian follies, and the artists who made them possible regarded as hacks unworthy of commemoration. In her 1984 book, Fern Bayer, the curator of the Ontario government's collection, brought the Educational Museum to the attention of Canadians as the province owns the majority of the few extant works collected by Ryerson.[1] This article looks behind the paintings at the ideas that underlay his museum and the Old Master copy.

Painted copies of Old Master paintings were a fundamental part of the art world of the nineteenth century and a mainstay of European cultural tourism. Travelers bought copies of the famous paintings they had seen in Paris, Antwerp or Florence and elsewhere, to serve both as mementos of European travel and as home decoration once they returned to their native lands. Tourists sometimes commissioned copies of favourite or famous works they had seen in the museums,

but in other cases they bought ready-made copies. Professional copyists worked in many European cities, but were especially active in Florence where the copying business was regulated by an elaborate set of rules and procedures. The making and selling of copies was part of the extremely lucrative tourist trade that was, next to agriculture, the city's main source of revenue. The tourists, both men and women, also copied. Along with the professionals, they wrote letters applying for permission to reserve a four-to-six-week spot in front of particular paintings in the Uffizi Gallery or the Pitti Palace. Some travelers brought home one or two copies, perhaps of Raphael's *Madonna of the Chair*, a sweet-faced Magdalen by Carlo Dolci, or a Rachel Ruysch flower painting. Others, however, bought in quantity and these copies would sometimes form a substantial part of important and admired art collections.

Along with their role in private collections, copies of Old Masters also served another function in nineteenth-century culture, one with a broader scope and more specific aims. The first half of the century saw the development of a new type of art institution, the museum of copies, intended to serve as an instrument of moral as well as cultural education, and directed in particular at the lower social levels of the developing urban centres. The shifting complex of beliefs about the social and moral utility of art had informed European culture since the era of classical Greece, but in the latter part of the eighteenth century it had taken on an increasingly urgent tone. In earlier decades, philosophical notions about the connections between art and the moral development of the viewer had tended to assume an elite audience, but by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries they came to include a lower-class urban audience in their purview.

Indeed, public perception often came to regard art as a substitute for religion in terms of its ability to help create good citizens from potentially disruptive, even criminal elements, and thus lower-class viewers assumed special importance. The ennobling effects of art were assumed to arise from both the aesthetic experience engendered by outstanding artworks and through uplifting subject matter. Sir Joshua Reynolds had popularized the idea that the development of taste assisted in the development of moral character. Such beliefs were then vulgarized in the popular press and widely diffused in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Britain and in the United States. In the process, Reynolds' arguments were replaced by the simpler idea that the individual profited by looking at exemplary behaviour depicted in paintings. An American essayist, writing in 1815, summarized his views on the subject in the following words: "the great object of all the pleasures of cultivated taste is to disentangle the mind from appetite and to teach it to look for its pleasures in intellectual gratification, till at length that freedom from the thralldom of sense, which began in taste, may, as it is exalted and refined, conclude in virtue."[2]

While eighteenth-century thinkers sometimes believed that only the leisured classes had the time and perhaps the innate capacity to benefit from aesthetic experience, the postulated viewer then shifted to include increasingly lower social levels. As Lillian B. Miller demonstrates in *Patrons and Patriotism: The Encouragement of the Fine Arts in the United States 1790-1860*, the British discourse broadened into a democratic concept of art and morality in America where works of art were considered capable of elevating the taste, knowledge and morality of all classes of society.[3] The Philadelphia artist Rembrandt Peale clearly had this in mind when, in 1845 he wrote a description of his painting *The Court of Death*, 1820 (Detroit Institute of Art). He took special pride in the fact that his cook was able to correctly interpret its allegorical burden: "my old black cook, Aunt Hannah, on seeing the Picture, exclaimed 'Lack-a-day! How I feel for that old man, and his good daughter! There's his Son lying drowned before him, but he says the Lord's Prayer, Thy will be done'."[4]

Peale explains that he chose his imagery with the express intention that the painting "could be understood by the unlearned and the learned." His discussion of viewers' reactions indicates that their moral response was uppermost in his mind, and the ideal of moral betterment for all levels of society is highlighted by his singling out viewers from the least educated groups in his society: servants, African-Americans, and small children. Hannah reads correctly while a spoiled little girl is unable to absorb the painting's message: "After the explanations relative to the Aspect of Virtue and that of fascinating vice, a pretty little Girl was asked by the Teacher which she preferred? With an arch expression she answered, 'I love the one that supports her father, but I would rather be like the other beautiful creature.' It is to be hoped she was afterwards better instructed."[5]

The emphasis on the potential of art to mould good behaviour was part of the rhetoric of the movement to found new American museums. On occasion, this rhetoric even extended to warding off crime. The writer William Cullen Bryant, at a committee meeting planning New York's Metropolitan Museum, stated: "It is important that we should counter the temptations to vice in this great and too rapidly growing capital by attracting entertainments of an innocent and improving character."[6] These new public museums sought paintings that could inspire the viewer to lofty spiritual and moral states, as well as perform the more mundane task of educating viewers about past or distant cultures. A consequence of the idea that art could thus take over the declining place of religion was the development of the view that the subject matter of a painting and its membership in the category of masterpieces could be more important than being an original artwork.

Collecting works for the American Academy of the Fine Arts formed in New York in 1802, the artist John Vanderlyn arrived in Europe with a salary of $500 a year and a generous purchasing account provided by the seventy-nine individuals

who had subscribed fifty dollars each to buy copies for the Academy.[7] Sarah Worthington Peters made five buying trips to Europe in the mid-nineteenth century for the Ladies' Gallery of Cincinnati. Her choice of copies was typical: Raphael's *School of Athens* (1510-11, Vatican Palace) substantial even in half size, Murillo's *Virgin of Seville* (1670, Louvre), Poussin's *Diogenes Casting Away the Cup* (1647, Louvre), Van Dyke's *Charles I* (1635, Louvre), Raphael's *Virgin with the Veil* (1510-11, Louvre) and two self-portraits by Rembrandt.[8] The belief that it was possible for a copy to be faithful reproduction of the original, the emphasis on the importance of subject matter, and the impossibility of obtaining either famous originals or even of a large quantity of original little-known works of high quality, made the copy eminently acceptable for such museums - indeed their *sine qua non*.[9]

Similar projects were initiated in Europe, among them John Ruskin's museum of copies, the Museum of Saint George, founded in 1875 to serve the working men of Sheffield; and the ill-fated Musée des Copies in Paris that opened its doors in 1873 and closed them a mere nine months later.[10] But it was in the New World where masterpieces were in shorter supply that the idea found its widest application. American museums of this kind, sometimes combining natural history with works of art, had been founded as early as the late eighteenth century, Charles Willson Peale's Philadelphia Museum being an example.[11] Their further development in the nineteenth century was in part an expression of a desire to catch up with and emulate the cultural institutions of the European tradition. However, it was also a consequence of the conviction that art had a moral function that could contribute to the smooth and peaceful functioning of society. Although this phenomenon was most widespread in the United States, Canada also had an exemplary instance in Egerton Ryerson's museum of copies, founded in 1857. A decade earlier the Toronto Society of Arts had formed a collection of at least sixty-one plaster casts of sculptures, and copies of paintings by Italian, Flemish, Dutch and French Renaissance, and Baroque artists as well as contemporary Canadian and European works. These works were presented in the Society's exhibitions in 1847 and 1848.[12] However, Ryerson's was the first museum in the city to put copies on permanent display.

During the ten months in the mid-1850s that Ryerson and his daughter Sophia spent traveling in Europe, he wrote numerous letters to John George Hodgins, his Deputy Superintendent in the Ontario Education Department. They give detailed accounts of his activities and also his thoughts on the museum and the art works he was buying for its collection. His letters show that Ryerson shared the same complex of ideas about the social usefulness of art that prevailed in the American discourse. To be sure, Ryerson was concerned with elevating the level of culture in a general sense, but his correspondence also reveals a strong concern with the social role of art. This is confirmed by the name of his proposed

institution – the Educational Museum – and its affiliation with the Normal School. Future teachers, as well as the public, would have their minds and spirits broadened through acquaintance with art.

The consummate public servant, Ryerson chronicled his thoughts in minute detail. While his letters reveal him to be a man of his time in his artistic preferences, they also suggest that he did not select works merely on the basis of the established canon. He pondered his purchases long and carefully, and his collecting enterprise as a whole was marked by thorough planning and conscientious execution of his plans. As well as revealing something of his evolving thoughts on art, his letters provide an unusually complete account of how a buyer of copies would have gone about his or her task. They show the indefatigable Ryerson enacting a virtual *langue* of copy buying, a routine that one doubts many other buyers managed to achieve. Examined in conjunction with correspondence and memoranda related to the regulation of copyists in the Florentine grand-ducal galleries, the letters provide a rare glimpse into the process of commissioning and buying Old Master copies.[13]

In the course of his tour, Ryerson purchased two hundred and thirty-six paintings by one hundred and forty-four artists, all but a handful of them copies as well as nearly a thousand plaster casts of sculpture and a multitude of other items. Originally, however, he had not planned to buy paintings at all. When he left for Europe in July of 1855 with Sophia and the latter's (unnamed) young lady companion, he intended to collect objects for what he envisioned primarily as a museum of natural history and examples of such things as the agricultural implements he expected to buy at the Paris Exposition. But encouragement and advice from an old acquaintance, Sir John Beverley Robinson (1791-1863), Chief Justice of Upper Canada, and from Robinson's son-in-law Capt. John Henry Lefroy (1817-1890), as well as from the Earl and Countess of Grey led him to change his mind. Writing to Hodgins from Antwerp on 5 December 1855, Ryerson speculates enthusiastically on the additional prospect of an art collection. "I have," he says,

> received a long & excellent letter from Capt. Lefroy on taking measures to encourage & promote a taste for the fine arts in Upper Canada, by commencing a collection of paintings [copies] & statuary – one or two paintings of *each* school, & some statues & busts – in Plaster of course – such as have been proposed/proferred for the Sydenham Palace. I think I shall go to London next week, & confer with Capt. Lefroy more fully on the subject, & procure & order all that we may get from London, & then return to the Continent. But I do not wish to leave Paris until I have observed & selected all that I think advisable in the Exhibition, which I go from day to day, as regularly as I go to the office while at home. Every time I go I see new objects & become more conscious how little I know of the whole exhibition.

In London, Ryerson committed himself to the idea of a collection of copies, and on his return to Paris began buying paintings in earnest. Given his dedication to the cause of universal compulsory education, it is not surprising that as the concept of his museum took more detailed and larger shape, it would resemble the American model described in Lillian Miller's *Patrons and Patriotism*. In Ryerson's 1858 report to Hodgins, he reveals his concern for the educational aspect of his museum as well as the democratic scope of its intended audience:

> in Canada, where there are no such Art Treasures, where we are so remote from them, where there is no private wealth available to procure them to any great extent, a collection (however limited) of copies of those paintings and statuary, which are most attractive and instructive in European Museums, and with which the trained teachers of our public schools may become familiar, and which will be accessible to the public, cannot fail to be a means of enjoyment, to numbers in all parts of Upper Canada.[14]

In an early 1856 letter written to the politician Georges-Étienne Cartier from Munich, Ryerson discussed at great length his belief in the elevating qualities of works of art. Attributing the comparative refinement he observes in the working classes in some European countries to the influence of art, he calls attention to its special usefulness for those who lack the resources of literacy and intellectual training:

> From the introduction into our country of these new elements of civilization and refinement, I anticipate the happiest results as in places in Europe where there is an order and propriety of conduct in the labouring classes, a gentleness and cheerfulness of manners that I have not observed among the same classes elsewhere. If all cannot read and speculate on abstract questions, all can see, and feel, and derive both pleasure and instruction from what the creations of Art present to the eye, the heart and to the imagination.[15]

Casting artworks as vehicles for the improvement of the working classes was, as noted above, an expression of a characteristically nineteenth-century idea. But Ryerson also takes up a theme with a much longer history when in a letter from Rome of February 18th. he tells Hodgins that, in contrast to the Dutch works, which will speak more directly to the less educated, the Italian paintings will have a particular appeal to "persons of some culture in the fine arts." He comments that they "will much exceed the others in interest, as well as, I think, for the most part, in beauty, although they are less varied in subject, less domestic, less connected with common life, yet more classical, more historical...more elevated in style & character." The notion that Northern art was less informed by the intellect and less formally elevated than Italian art seems to have appeared first in the Italian Renaissance, notably in the famous statement attributed to Michelangelo:

> It [Flemish painting] will appeal to women, especially to the very old and the very young, and also to monks and nuns and to certain noblemen with no sense of true harmony. In Flanders they paint with a view to external exactness or

> such things as may cheer you...without reason or art, without symmetry or proportion, without skillful choice or boldness and, finally, without substance or vigour.... It is practically only the work done in Italy we can call true painting, and that is why we call good painting Italian.[16]

In his eighteenth-century *Discourses*, Sir Joshua Reynolds introduced these same reservations about Northern painting into the mainstream of British culture. Recasting Michelangelo's attitude, Reynolds now cites Dutch secular works of the seventeenth century rather than earlier Flemish paintings; but the contrast with Italian art is the same:

> One would wish to be able to convey to the reader some idea of that excellence, the sight of which has afforded so much pleasure: but as their merit often consists in the truth of representation alone, whatever praise they deserve, whatever pleasure they give when under the eye, they make but a poor figure in description. It is to the eye only that the works of this school are addressed.[17]

Ryerson's interest in the social and educational utility of his collection is also expressed in his plans for its physical arrangement in the museum. He followed the now widespread practice of arranging artworks by nationality; and he also divided them by subject matter, a plan that suggests the French Academy's hierarchy of genres revised according to didactic principles. History painting, the highest tier, is subdivided into two categories: works of a scriptural nature and theme, that are "calculated to touch the heart...please the eye, and gratify the taste," and those with historical subjects and events that Ryerson saw as serving to illustrate the "costumes of different ages and Countries, important events of History and celebrated Characters." Northern genre pictures he classed together as representations of "Common life in its everyday relations, illustrating the Costumes, Habits, Usages of the People of Holland, Belgium and Germany." The other levels in his hierarchy were landscapes and marine scenes seen as "reflective of Animal Nature in action, at rest, alive and dead," and still life, with its depictions of fruit and flowers "in undecaying beauty and brilliance sometimes animated with examples of Insect life."[18] Ryerson's response to painting, however, was not entirely based on moral and social considerations; indeed he frequently reveals his sensitivity to their beauty in words that were undoubtedly heartfelt, if not entirely original:

> the paintings of sacred subjects by the Van Eycks...and Matsys, Rubens, Van Dyck, Rembrandt etc. can hardly be considered second to any Italian paintings of the same subjects. Yet there is an *unrivalled charm* in both the Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian & Francia, Raphael, Fra Bartolomeo, Guercino, Domenichino, the Carracci, Guido etc. etc. that cannot be resisted & grows upon you every time you look at them.[19]

Over a period of ten months Ryerson made purchases in eight or possibly nine cities. Among the Northern cities, he rated Antwerp where, "[t]he collections of copies...are much much larger & the prices more moderate than I had expected," higher than Paris, Frankfurt, Munich and Brussels. In Antwerp he scrutinized

copies in museums, in artists' studios, and in the Cathedral, where artists were at work copying Rubens: "of the Flemish School of Painting, here are the *chef d'œuvres* of the Great Masters such as Quentin Matsys, Rubens, Van Dyck etc.; and there a large number of artists are constantly employed in copying them for sale. I saw today no less than seven copies (for sale) of Ruben's great painting *Descent from the Cross*."[20] He also mentions that the winter months were a buyer's market: "This is the best season for buying paintings cheap here. Many Americans & others who have visited the Paris Exhibition have come here & bought paintings." A week later he describes the crush of would-be sellers:

> As I am the only purchaser of these [copies] in Antwerp (that is from Abroad) I am sought for in every direction & by every person who wishes to sell paintings. I have usually placed my own value on [illegible] for the objects I had in view, after having heard the prices demanded, & in some instances I have bought for just half the price at first demanded.... As a general rule I believe from what I am told that I have bought...paintings for at least one third less than similar ones were sold for a few months since; but all say it is more the dead season & there is no hope of selling any Paintings before next Summer.[21]

Ryerson worked hard at making his choices. In the same letter from Antwerp he refers to "a week during which I have examined some thousands of paintings & purchased 142.... In some instances I have compared! Two, three, four or six...[and] I have had recourse from time to time to examine the original paintings before buying copies." Writing on 18 December from his next stop Frankfurt, he notes with satisfaction the quality of his Belgian purchases: "the copies of Paul Veronese, Raphael & Guido de Reni, that I purchased in Antwerp are far superior to any that I have seen today in the Frankfurt Museum & better than any I saw in Paris...while the copies I got of Flemish, Dutch & German Masters are the best I have seen anywhere."[22] Two weeks later, he laments the high prices in Munich:

> To my disappointment I find objects of art dearer here than at Paris or in Belgium. Statuary is cheaper in Paris than here; & paintings & copies of celebrated Masters are cheaper in Belgium than here.... I am now more gratified than ever at the cheap & advantageous purchases I have made at Antwerp – finding that the prices of the same pictures are much higher in Cologne, Frankfurt & *Munich* than at Antwerp.[23]

Ryerson's letters include numerous details that help to fill out our picture of the interaction amongst copyists, dealers and buyers. The letter cited above indicates that although copies were normally available only in the cities where the originals hung – he had gone to Bologna expressly to buy copies of Francia, the Carracci and Domenichino – there were times when they could be purchased elsewhere. We also learn that on one occasion works that may have been originals were sold to him as old copies, that is to say contemporary with the original. He purchased certain older works that he says were "affirmed to be *originals, & declared*

by artists & men of taste & integrity in Antwerp. But I bought them at the price of copies – early copies - & so I represent them."[24] He was wise to be cautious; travelers not infrequently came home from the Grand Tour with misattributed art works.

Ryerson was also wise when he decided to reverse his initial plan to omit Italy from his tour. He had originally intended, he told Hodgins, "to dispense with those copies of Italian Paintings which I cannot purchase on this side of the Alps."[25] In Munich, however, he met an old friend, an unnamed Russian, who advised against this plan and who "says I can scarcely form an idea of the facilities with which I can purchase any objects of art I may desire, either at Florence or Rome – especially at Rome."[26] The advice was good. On 17 January Ryerson wrote from Florence expressing satisfaction with his change of plans: "I am very glad I came to Italy as my collection otherwise would have been so defective as to have proved unsatisfactory, if not a failure." He also visited Bologna and probably Siena, but he found Florence by far the best place for buying copies and distinctly better than Rome:

> Here I found everything more favourable than I had anticipated...as regards copies of the Great Masters of successive periods, the prices, & facilities of transmitting these directly to New York at the rate of about nine dollars inclusive of incidental charges. The beauty of some of the paintings I shall get is beyond anything I have yet seen. There is also beautiful Statuary here very cheap.[27]

Along with social contacts, Ryerson's London friends had also given him a list of "the names of the best copyists in Florence and Rome." One of them was the Quebec-born Old Master copyist Antoine-Sébastien Falardeau (1822-1889) who had arrived in Florence in 1846 and gone on to establish an extraordinarily successful career in the city (fig.2).[28] Considered by his contemporaries as being at the top of his profession, Falardeau had received grand-ducal honours, married the daughter of an aristocrat, and owned an enormous palazzo in Florence as well as a villa in Fiesole. Ryerson was clearly impressed by his work, calling his copies "among the best I have yet seen in Florence." In a letter to Hodgins of 17 January 1858, he also remarks on Falardeau's personal qualities and social standing: "I shall get several [of] his & he will aid me every way I desire. He is the cleverest & most intelligent, as well as amusing man I have yet seen in Florence. He is a perfect gentleman, is invited to the British Ambassadors; Grand Dukes, etc." Falardeau sold Ryerson some twenty-eight copies (fig.3) and gave him a gift of a copy of a *Head of a Young Pilgrim* by the eighteenth-century French painter Jean Grimoux. He also supplied him with approximately the same number of frames for copies painted by other artists.[29]

But Ryerson and his daughter did not limit themselves to the copyists recommended by friends. They carried out a thorough program of research of their own, setting themselves a rigorous schedule of visits to the public galleries, to dealers and to artists' studios:

fig.2 The Quebec-born Old Master copyist Antoine-Sébastien Falardeau (1822-1889) with one of his hunting dogs. The photo was sent by the artist's daughter Dianora Carraresi Falardeau to the artist's great-nephew Emile Falardeau in the 1930s. (Photo: Luigi Focardi, Stabilimento Fotografico di Luigi Focardi & C.)

fig.3 Antoine-Sébastien Falardeau, **Saint Catherine of Alexandria (after Mariotto Albertinelli 1474-1515)**, oil on canvas, 105 x 66 cm, Purchase from Antoine-Sebastien Falardeau for the Educational Museum of Upper Canada by Egerton Ryerson, 1856. (Photo: Government of Ontario Art Collection, Archives of Ontario)

> 2 meals a day, breakfast 8:30 dinner 5:30...once or twice a week up before 7 & never go to bed before 12. Nor have we gone to see anything that was not connected with the public objects I have in view. Yet the galleries, ateliers, & copies are so numerous, so various in subjects, sizes & quality that I am embarrassed & perplexed sometimes beyond expression. I find persons buying copies of paintings for themselves, are never less than three weeks & sometimes much longer...before they buy at all. But though I have worked as hard as I could for nearly two weeks here I seem only to have begun to see the ateliers & Marchands de Tableaux.[30]

After the abundance of Florence, Rome proved something of a letdown: "The first day I was quite disappointed & thought I would get nothing in Rome, as the copies appeared...inferior in quality & higher in price than in Florence."[31] Ryerson did purchase some works, but complained in the same letter not only about the quality of the copies, but about the originals too: "The Collection of Paintings, with the exception of a few chef d'œuvres, are incomparably superior in Florence than in Rome, & the copies better & cheaper. I buy no copies in Rome except those which are necessary to my purpose, & which can only be obtained in Rome." This letter also indicates that he made good use of the Roman contacts provided by his London friends:

> Lady Grey [aunt of Lord Grey] is going around with us to several Studios and other places, where she knows that there are good copies. I have also met with other persons who can give me all needful information on these matters.... Among other Letters of Introduction, I had one to Cardinal Antonelli [Pope Pius IX's Secretary of State], or rather "the King of Rome," as he is called.... He told me that any Objects of which I wished to get a copy I need only let him know, and permission should be given immediately. I had another Letter to Prince Hohenlohe, – Cousin to our Queen Victoria, – who resides at the Vatican.

Ryerson took pains to assemble what he felt was a representative collection for his institution. As might be expected, his Italian copies privileged the High Renaissance and Baroque, with Raphael, Titian, Leonardo da Vinci, Guido Reni, Carlo Dolci and Cristofano Allori represented by more than two copies apiece. He also purchased two copies each of works by Francia, Giulio Romano, Andrea del Sarto, Correggio, Veronese, the Carracci, Domenichino, Canaletto, and Murillo, along with single copies of Palma il Vecchio, Luini, Daniele da Volterra, Alessandro Allori, Caravaggio, Guercino, Castelfranco, Gerrit van Honthorst (Gherardo della Notte), Pietro da Cortona, Francesco Albani, Giovanni Martinelli, and Pietro Rotari. The Northern artists included Van Eyck, Matsys and Pieter Breughel but the majority were seventeenth-century Dutch painters such as Aelbert Cuyp, Adriaen van Ostade, Nicolas Maes, Jan Steen and Rembrandt as

well as copies of some Italianate works by Maerten van Heemskerck and Leonaert Bramer. Ryerson's purchases also included a handful of French and German copies along with "twenty-five or thirty not yet classified."[32]

This list, in particular Ryerson's Italian artists, echoes the roll call that appears over and over again in the mid-nineteenth-century copy requests submitted to the directors of the Pitti and Uffizi. It is in effect a nineteenth-century modification of the canon established in English-speaking circles in the eighteenth century, comprising primarily High Renaissance and Baroque with some eighteenth-century works, notably those of Vigée-LeBrun. In the 1858 catalogue for the Educational Museum only four – Fra Angelico, Perugino, Ghirlandaio and Jan Van Eyck – of the two hundred and thirty-seven paintings listed were by painters active before 1500.[33] Nevertheless, Ryerson did not restrict himself to the paintings recommended by his advisors. In one of the letters he wrote Hodgson from Munich in December of 1855, he notes that his friend John Lefroy "did not mention the German, Dutch, Flemish, French & Spanish Schools of Paintings, of which we shall have a handsome collection...[and he] has not mentioned Caravaggio, although he merits more prominence in the history of Italian painting than Guido Reni."[34] Ryerson's ranking of Caravaggio over the more popular Reni sets him apart from many of his contemporaries and supports the image of him as someone accustomed to listening to advice but making up his own mind.

Egerton and Sophia Ryerson returned to Canada in the summer of 1856 and the Museum of Natural History and Fine Arts, as it was then named, opened the following year. It was renamed the Ontario Provincial Museum after Confederation. Its significance declined when the Department of Education relocated to Queen's Park in 1912, the year of the opening of the Royal Ontario Museum. Ryerson's Museum closed in the 1920s and its copies were distributed to normal schools and other institutions throughout the province. Since then the majority of the paintings have disappeared. The few survivors are now found in the Ontario Legislature Building in Toronto and the Art Gallery of Peterborough. They remain modest and often-misinterpreted reminders of an institution that once represented a passionate expression of the conviction that art should play a significant role in the lives of Canadians from all walks of life.

VIRGINIA NIXON
Liberal Arts College
Concordia University

Notes

1 Fern BAYER, *The Ontario Collection* (Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1984); the book contains several colour images of the copies.

2 *Analectic* 5 (June 15, 1815), 492, cited in Calvin TOMPKINS, *Merchants and Masterpieces* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1970), 18.

3 Lillian B. MILLER, *Patrons and Patriotism: The Encouragement of the Fine Arts in the United States 1790-1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

4 Rembrandt PEALE, "Letter on his Court of Death, 1845," in *American Art 1700-1960: Sources and Documents*, ed. John W. McCoubrey (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 55.

5 Ibid., 56.

6 Cited in TOMPKINS, *Merchants and Masterpieces*, 30.

7 MILLER, *Patrons and Patriotism*, 91-93, 149.

8 Ibid., 39 ff, 143, 199.

9 On the Old Master copy in the nineteenth century see Virginia NIXON, "Antoine-Sébastien Falardeau (1822-1889) and the Old Master Copy in the Nineteenth Century," M.A. Thesis, Concordia University, 1988.

10 See Jeanne CLEGG, "John Ruskin's Correspondence with Angelo Alessandri," *Bulletin of The John Rylands Library Manchester* 60 (1977-78): 404-33. It is now called the Ruskin Collection and housed in the Millenium Galleries in Sheffield. When the idea for the Musée des Copies in France was proposed by Louis-Adolphe Thiers in 1834 it received broad state support but by 1873 state-supported copying had been drastically reduced. See Paul DURO, "The 'Demoiselles à Copier' in the Second Empire," *Woman's Art Journal* (Spring/Summer 1986): 1-7, and DURO, "'Un Livre Ouvert à l'Instruction:' Study Museums in Paris in the Nineteenth Century," *Oxford Art Journal* 10, no.1 (1987): 44-57; Albert BOIME, "Le Musée des Copies," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 64 (1964): 237-47. Collections of photographic copies of art works are discussed in Trevor FAWCETT, "Graphic versus Photographic in the Nineteenth-Century Reproduction," *Art History* 9 (1986): 186-211.

11 See MILLER, *Patrons and Patriotism*, 90.

12 Artists included Rembrandt, Rubens, Van Dyck, Greuze, Canaletto, Murillo Raeburn, Titian, Raphael, Claude, Wouvermans, Ostade, Guido Reni, del Sarto, and Ribera [Lo Spagnoletto]. Carol D. LOWREY, "The Toronto Society of Arts, 1847-48: Patriotism and the Pursuit of Culture in Canada West," *RACAR* 12, no.1 (1985): 3-44.

13 Egerton Ryerson, Paris, to John George Hodgins, Toronto, 12 Sept. 1855. The correspondence with Hodgins in Toronto is found in the United Church Archives, Victoria University Library, University of Toronto, Roll 3, Ryerson Letters from 1847-1856. Unless otherwise noted, all quoted letters are from the United Church Archives. That Sofia had a traveling companion is mentioned in *The Story of My Life, by the late Rev. Egerton Ryerson, D.D, LL.D*, ed. John George Hodgins (Toronto: Briggs, 1883), 366.

14 *The Educational Museum and School of Art and Design for Upper Canada with a Plan of the English Educational Museum, Etc., Etc., From the Chief Superintendent's Report for 1856 to Which is Added an Appendix* (Toronto: Lovell & Gibson, 1858), 15.

15 Ryerson, Munich to G-É Cartier, 1 Jan. 1856, reprinted in J.C. HODGINS, *Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada from the Passing of the Constitutional Act of 1791 to the Close of Rev. Dr. Ryerson's Administration of the Education Department in 1876*, vol. 12 (Toronto: L.K. Cameronon, 1894-1910), 127, cited in BAYER, *The Ontario Collection*, 15.

16 Francisco DE HOLLANDA, *Four Dialogues on Painting*, trans. Aubrey F.G. Bell (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), 15-16.

17 Joshua REYNOLDS, *The Works...containing his Discourses...[and] A Journey to Flanders and Holland...*, vol. 2, 4th ed., 3 vols. (London: Printed for T. Cadell, jun. and W. Davies, 1809), 369.

18 Ryerson, Munich to G-É Cartier, 1 Jan. 1856, reprinted in J.G. HODGINS, *Documentary History*, cited in BAYER, *The Ontario Collection*, 18.

19 Ryerson, Rome to Hodgins, 18 Feb. 1856.

20 Ryerson, Antwerp to Hodgins, 5 Dec. 1855. He adds: "The prices varied from 12 pounds Sterling to 80 pounds. I also saw admirable copies of two of Van Dyke's masterpieces. I shall be able to get them for some 10 pounds each. I shall see them tomorrow. I think after having seen and examined & compared them all, as well as I can, as to both quality & price, I shall make a selection."

21 Ryerson, Antwerp to Hodgins, 12 Dec. 1855. He notes that: "Thousands of Paintings are bought here annually from England & the United States."

22 Ryerson, Frankfurt to Hodgins, 18 Dec. 1855.

23 Ryerson, Munich to Hodgins, 23 Dec. 1855.

24 Ryerson, Frankfurt, to Hodgins,18 Dec. 1855. See also BAYER, *The Ontario Collection*, 17-18 and 35-57. In a partially illegible letter of 25 Jan. 1856, to Hodgins from Florence, he refers to: "some of the best pictures I bought; especially two Raphaels (the one a copy by Julius Romano & the other by Sassoferato. A copy of Raphael by either of those...would sell here for £500." He comments: "I have had all cleaned...that required it, new frames made for all that were without frames, & old frames repaired & regilded, as needed."

25 Ryerson, Munich to Hodgins, Toronto, 23 Dec. 1855. He continues: "I propose to limit my further journey to Leipzig, Dresden & Berlin – the former for books, & the two latter for objects of art.... I have reluctantly given up Vienna & Italy. In Vienna I had a reason to expect some handsome contributions from the Government. In Italy I had hoped to give full effect to the suggestions of Col. Lefroy, & do much more. But I have already gone far beyond what he proposed. What he proposed in regard to Statuary was nothing in comparison of what I have purchased & shall purchase."

26 Ryerson, Munich to Hodgins, 31 Dec. 1855.

27 Ryerson, Florence to Hodgins, Toronto 17 Dec. 1856. Ryerson makes several references to the shipping of the copies. From Frankfurt, he wrote to Hodgins on 18 Dec. 1855: "Had it not been for the great expense of freight I would have had them all shipped by the Government Mail steamer which is to start for New York the 29th of this month, but as it is, I have arranged to send some twenty or thirty, (embracing several of the largest) paintings by the Steamer ("Belgique", I believe), so that you will receive them about the 14th of February. The rest will be sent by the first *sailing* ship, & will not reach you before Spring."

28 Ryerson, London to Hodgins, 28 Sept. 1855. On Falardeau see NIXON, "Antoine-Sébastien Falardeau." Ryerson appears to have consulted tourist guidebooks for two other Florentine copyists that he patronized, as Fern Bayer states that Raimondo Campanile and Giuseppe Mazzolini are mentioned in John Murray's widely used *Handbook for Travellers in Central Italy, Including the Papal States, Rome and the Cities of Etruria* (London: John Murray, 1843). Ryerson also bought from Petrini Fece, Agostino Gagliardi, and from Antonio Sasso who is mentioned in Henry James' *William Wetmore Story and his Friends* (New York: Kennedy Galleries, 1969 [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904]), 97, via the "little pale exotic card of 1847" that falls out of one of Story's books, bearing the legend "F. Antonio Sasso: Pitrore al Olio e all'Acquerelle, Negoziante di Quadri e di Mobilia Antica." The

Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec owns a copy of Titian's *Flora*, dated 1860, by Giuseppe Mazzolini (34.608), and a Mazzolini copy of a painting entitled the *Bay of Sorrento* [present location unknown] is listed in the Art Association of Montreal's 1870 spring exhibition catalogue (#5, coll. Jos. Mckay).

29 Another Falardeau copy of the Grimoux work was sold at a Shaw & Fréres auction in Montreal 19 July 1862. (*L'Ordre*, 18 juillet 1862; *La Minerve*, 19 juillet 1862). Purchases of frames are recorded in the Archives of Ontario, Ontario Department of Education Records, R.G.2, Series L-3, vol. 15, Record of Purchases for the Educational Museum and Library, 1853-1861. In Ryerson's invoices regarding frames, some specify the intended paintings, others note that the frames are made to order. One invoice refers to four frames from Carlo Bortolini, gilder, for copies by the Bolognese copyist Giuseppe Viscardi. The account book also lists paintings bought in Siena. "I would wish you to pay Mr. Falardeau from time to time for the pictures and frames he has engaged to make for me...." Ryerson wrote to the Florentine bankers Maquay & Pakenham. AO, R.G. 2, Department of Public Instruction Series C Outgoing General Correspondence C-1, Letter Book R (Vol. 16), Letter #1211 (letter copy) Transcription 1211 R. A second letter, also to Maquay & Pakenham, asks that payment be made to Falardeau for pictures "which you have received from Bologna." Vol. 18, Letter Book T, Transcription 3760, J.

30 Ryerson, Florence to Hodgins, 25 Jan. 1856. Copyists took commissions for specific paintings, but they also sold ready-made copies. Usually sales were made at the artist's studio or display salon but sometimes in the galleries. An 1885 document filed in the Archivio delle gallerie fiorentine asks for the names of the painters who showed their copies in "salle des copies de la gallerie degli Uffizi." (AGF, Affari dell'Anno 1885, Cartella D., No. 38, Pos. 2, cited in Rieke VAN LEEUWEN, *Kopieren in Florence: Kunstenaars uit de Lage Landen in Tòscane en de 19de-eeuwse Kunstreis naar Italie* (Florence: Nederlands Interuniversitair Kunsthistorisch Institut, 1985), 101. The author of *The Lions of Florence* does not mention the selling of paintings in the galleries, but he implies that the gallery is the place for prospective clients to make contact with copyists when he says that the five copyists whose names he gives "may be found in the galleries hard at work." *The Lions of Florence and its Environs: with a copious appendix, hints for picture buyers etc.* (Florence: Felix Le Monnier, 1852 ed.), 65.

31 Ryerson, Rome to Hodgins, 30 Jan. 1856.

32 *The Educational Museum and School of Art and Design for Upper Canada*, 32-40.

33 The list includes eighty-eight Italian, one hundred and twenty-two Dutch or Flemish, seven German, fifteen French and five Spanish works, along with the "twenty-five or thirty" unclassified ones. *The Educational Museum and School*, 33-40. For information on mid-nineteenth-century requests for permission to copy in the Uffizi and the Pitti Palace see NIXON, "Antoine-Sébastien Falardeau."

34 *Gerard REITLINGER, The Economics of Taste: The Rise and Fall of Picture Prices 1760-1960* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1961) does not list Caravaggio. Requests to copy his paintings were infrequent, but they do occur in the Florentine copy request files and some American institutions bought Caravaggio copies.

Résumé

EGERTON RYERSON ET LES COPIES DE MAÎTRES ANCIENS COMME INSTRUMENT D'ÉDUCATION POPULAIRE

En 1855-1856 l'éducateur torontois Egerton Ryerson (1803-82), surintendant principal des écoles publiques du Haut-Canada, accompagné de sa fille Sophia, voyage à travers l'Europe pour acheter des œuvres d'art pour le musée de copies qu'il allait fonder l'année suivante. En tout, il achète deux cent trente-six toiles de cent quarante-quatre artistes, presque toutes des copies, ainsi que près d'un millier de moulages en plâtre de sculptures et une multitude d'autres articles. Mais ce sont surtout les copies de maîtres anciens qui captivent son imagination. Dans une série de lettres à John George Hodgins, commis en chef du ministère de l'Instruction publique, il relate ses pérégrinations, en compagnie de Sophia, de Paris jusqu'à Rome et Florence en passant par Anvers et Munich, à la recherche de copies pour le musée.

Ces lettres sont précieuses pour les historiens de l'art. Tout d'abord, elle révèlent que le musée de Ryerson n'était pas une entreprise excentrique comme on l'a parfois perçu, mais qu'il s'inscrivait dans un vaste projet, dans l'Europe et l'Amérique du Nord du XIX^{e} siècle, visant à créer des musées comme instruments de progrès social et moral. Ryerson était, en effet, le fondateur du système d'éducation en Ontario, et il voyait son musée comme un outil éducatif dans la formation des enseignants et l'éducation du public, pour accroître leurs connaissances des cultures anciennes et lointaines, développer leur sensibilité et, en les mettant en contact avec l'art, contribuer à combattre le déclin moral que l'on commençait à percevoir comme une menace à une vie civique saine et paisible. En cela, son musée était l'équivalent d'institutions semblables aux États-Unis et en Angleterre au XIX^{e} siècle.

Pour réaliser une telle entreprise il fallait nécessairement des copies d'œuvres d'art célèbres, puisque les originaux n'étaient évidemment pas à vendre. De plus, les caprices du marché de l'art étaient tels qu'il n'était pas rare que les acheteurs préfèrent une bonne copie à un original d'origine douteuse ou possiblement faux. Des copistes professionnels travaillaient dans plusieurs villes d'Europe. Leurs œuvres étaient achetées par des touristes aux revenus moyens ou élevés. La popularité des copies n'était pas due entièrement à leur coût relativement peu élevé – le talent, la réputation et les prix des copistes variaient –, elles étaient aussi appréciées comme rappels de certains tableaux célèbres admirés dans des musées.

Pour Ryerson, Florence était par excellence la ville des copies. Le tourisme était, après l'agriculture, la principale source de revenus de la Toscane au XIX^e^ siècle, et les autorités florentines ne ménageaient pas leurs efforts pour que copistes, autorités muséales et clients se coordonnent dans une harmonie profitable. Des règles strictes régissaient l'accès des copistes aux originaux et les listes d'attente étaient longues pour les toiles les plus célèbres, surtout la *Vierge à la chaise* de Raphaël. Le père et la fille se levaient de bonne heure et passaient la journée à examiner les tableaux de la Galerie des Offices et du palais Pitti, à visiter les ateliers des copistes et les galeries des marchands. Le soir – Ryerson dit qu'ils se couchaient rarement avant minuit – ils allaient rendre visite à des contacts haut placés pour lesquels leurs amis de Londres leur avaient donné des lettres de recommandation. De plus, ils devaient certainement profiter des activités que la Cour grand-ducale offrait pour le divertissement des touristes.

Les lettres de Ryerson sont particulièrement précieuses parce que, alors que les archives florentines contiennent une abondance de documentation relative aux rapports entre copistes et autorités muséales, les lettres à Hodgins montrent le point de vue de l'acheteur – bien qu'on puisse douter qu'il y ait eu plusieurs acheteurs aussi méticuleux et systématiques que Ryerson. De plus, les contacts de Ryerson avec Antoine-Sébastien Falardeau (1822-1889), copiste de maîtres anciens originaire de Québec de qui il a acheté un certain nombre de toiles, jette plus de lumière sur cet artiste qui était l'un des copistes les plus réputés de Florence au milieu du XIX^e^ siècle. Les observations de Ryerson confirment la haute opinion qu'on avait du talent de Falardeau et la haute estime dans laquelle on tenait le Québécois que d'autres voyageurs mentionnent aussi dans leurs lettres.

En matière d'art, Ryerson partageait les préférences de son temps, préférences établies pour une large part par les aristocrates et écrivains anglais qui racontaient leurs voyages en Italie à la fin du XVIII^e^ siècle. On recherchait par-dessus tout les maîtres de la Haute Renaissance et du Baroque, en particulier Le Titien, Guido Reni, Carlo Dolci, Léonard de Vinci, Raphaël et Le Corrège. Parmi les œuvres populaires du XVIII^e^ siècle on compte l'auto-portrait, très souvent copié, peint par Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun à son arrivée à Florence après sa fuite de Paris envahi par les révolutionnaires. On recherchait aussi des toiles du baroque hollandais, bien que Ryerson, comme plusieurs autres, les décrive comme étant d'un art moins élevé que l'art italien, mais, peut-être pour cette raison même, il les considère comme particulièrement appropriées pour les moins instruits des visiteurs de son musée. Il se conformait aussi au goût conventionnel en achetant très peu de copies – quatre pour être précis – de toiles peintes avant 1500. Il est considéré comme légèrement audacieux, toute comparaison gardée, dans ses remarques sur l'excellence du Caravage.

Le Museum of Natural History and Fine Arts fut ouvert 1857, relocalisé en 1912, et fermé dans les années 1920. Quelques-unes des toiles font maintenant partie des collections de la législature ontarienne, à Toronto, et de la Art Gallery of Peterborough. Mais la plupart ont disparu.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA
Ideas Art Architecture

Douglas ORD
Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003
464p., illus., $49.95

Douglas Ord's *The National Gallery of Canada: Ideas Art Architecture* reads more like an extended polemic than "the first thorough analysis of the history of the National Gallery of Canada." At book's end, the reader feels as though she has been taken on an adventure tour of Canadian art and cultural politics and left with little more than one author's interpretation of a series of discrete events, documents and references bound together by their connection to the National Gallery. However the book gives no sense of the institution's history. I should state from the outset that I also work on the Gallery and, as Ord notes, my work "takes a fundamentally different approach" from his. In particular, my interest

in the Gallery's exhibitionary practices has led me to focus primarily on its collections and the narratives conveyed by the permanent and temporary displays of art within the larger context of a national institution. Ord, on the other hand, seeks to analyse the Gallery as a crucible for the varying discourses of nationhood and metaphysics that have occurred within the Canadian art world of the twentieth century. This is an ambitious project that in some ways succeeds in questioning the place of the National Gallery in the formation of a nation – particularly evident in the inability of most federal governments to support the Gallery in any material way – but ultimately his book fails to explore in any depth either the actual workings of the National Gallery as an art institution, or its complicated and often fraught history.

For readers with some knowledge of the Gallery's history, Ord's conjectures and identification of the many "unintended ironies" and paradoxes that attach to the Gallery are by turn provocative, amusing, and frustratingly superficial. For the reader unfamiliar with the Gallery, very few of the 397 pages of text clearly map out the Gallery's development from depository of the Royal Canadian Academy's diploma works in 1880 to its present monumental stature. Instead, Ord addresses what is arguably the most fascinating aspect of the NGC's history: its close association in the first half of the twentieth century with Christian Science. He constructs an elaborate theoretical model wherein the triadic relationship of art, nation and metaphysics that is at the core of first Director Eric Brown's world-view becomes the framework through which the subsequent history of the Gallery is read. In order to make this theoretical model work, Ord spends much of his book exploring the transformation of conceptions of spirit from its earliest religious connotations in Christian Science and Theosophy to its more secular iterations from the 1950s onward. Of particular relevance to the author is the concept of "national spirit" which, because the Gallery's formative moment occurred under the leadership of a Christian Scientist, is almost always given a metaphysical interpretation. In some chapters, the lengths gone to attach a religious affiliation to various figures – e.g. the aesthetic evangelism of Alan Jarvis, Vincent Massey's imperial Anglicanism, Jean Sutherland Boggs's parallels with Christian philosopher George Grant – do not produce any kind of clarification of the particular contributions of the figure under consideration. Rather, they function more to assert the legitimacy of Ord's model, which had been set up from the beginning, rather than established as a pattern or leitmotif that emerges throughout the course of the Gallery's existence.

The lack of clarity in Ord's narrative is surprising given the evident depth and breadth of his research. His familiarity with the Gallery's own archives in particular is revealed in almost every paragraph. With an enviable level of detail, he has mined the personal files of each director as well as the frustratingly incomplete minutes produced by the National Museums Corporation which governed the National Gallery between 1968 and 1990. What is irritating about

Ord's book is not the lack of research, nor the seriousness of the endeavour, but the way in which the information obtained has been used to support an argument that seems intended to demonstrate the author's cleverness rather than contributing to our understanding of the complex history of the National Gallery of Canada. There is a certain old-fashioned postmodernism at work here: a rhetorical style that seeks to privilege the author's creativity in constructing a theoretical framework within which all material is made to "make sense" rather than building an argument from the material events and discourses that he has so meticulously unearthed from the archive.

There is an important rhetorical consequence in this methodology: quotations are taken from texts with little discussion of how these particular statements/excerpts connect to the text as a whole, and there is little differentiation made between the numerous texts that have been selected. The discussion of Eric Brown is an important case in point. Brown's frequent essays in the *Christian Science Monitor*, unpublished lectures and writings, and statements made in the National Gallery's Annual Reports are all given equal weight and viewed as having similar rhetorical functions. The parallels that Ord pulls out between these sources are interesting, but their analytical power is severely diminished by the fact that he ignores or refuses to situate the text within its broader contexts of production and reception. Different audiences require different rhetorical strategies: the presentation of a Director's account of his activities to Gallery stakeholders differs in argument as well as tone from the essays of a fellow believer published in a general audience magazine. As a result, Ord's reading of the texts is often too literal.

Eric Brown is an important example because this could have been the occasion for an in-depth and rigorous analysis of the role of Christian Science in Canadian art circles specifically at the beginning of the twentieth century. There is much discussion in the literature on Canadian art of the role of Theosophy, practiced most famously by Lawren Harris but adopted by a number of other artists in the first decades of the twentieth century. Ord underlines some interesting parallels between the two faiths and their manipulation by Brown and Harris to point to the importance of the development of a national spirit in art. Despite such parallels, and despite the adherence to Christian Science by many figures associated with the National Gallery (Brown, his successor Harry McCurry, artists Wyly Grier and J.E.H. MacDonald, patrons and Directors of the Board of Trustees such as Harry Southam), this aspect of early twentieth-century Canadian cultural life has been virtually ignored by scholars. Ord again, however, does himself a disservice by selecting small fragments of Brown's writings and seeking analogues in the writing of Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy. There is seemingly little justification for the sources chosen except that they closely cross-reference one another. In addition, although Ord ponders the irony that one of the great champions of

Canadian art should rely on the writings of an American (and a woman at that), he does not look at the broader context of the practice of Christian Science in Canada. How did Mrs. Eddy's writings come into Canada? How were Christian Science beliefs adapted to the Canadian context? Why were so many people in the field of arts and business practicing Christian Scientists and why did they pledge their allegiance to the fledgling National Gallery?

Another flaw in Ord's account of the National Gallery is his almost exclusive focus on the figures of the directors. Although the director of any major museum plays a fundamental role in developing a broad vision for the institution, this role is by necessity mediated by the working relationships with curators, education and public relations departments, and boards of trustees. With rare exceptions, *The National Gallery of Canada: Ideas Art Architecture* is the story of individuals, most of them directors, whose personal vision and idiosyncrasies gave the institution its particular shape. Curatorial figures rarely appear; Robert Hubbard and Donald Buchanan are considered as helpmates to Directors McCurry, Jarvis and Comfort rather than as scholars in their own right. Brydon Smith fares much better, but this is largely because as the figure who introduced American modernism to the Gallery, he functions as a foil to Jean Sutherland Boggs whose antipathy to minimalism rendered her an unsuitable spokesperson for the Gallery's new area of acquisition. Nowhere in this account is the work of the Gallery director fully explored in relation to the myriad of other figures and offices that enable the Gallery to function at all.

This approach certainly makes sense in the early years of the Gallery when Eric Brown was hired to act as both Director and Curator of Pictures. It should be noted however, that Ord errs in his assertion that a common association with Christian Science underlay the decision by Sir Edmund Walker, first Chairman of the National Gallery's Board of Trustees, to hire Brown. Walker was not an adherent to Christian Science. The combined policy and aesthetic decisions made by the director were much more intertwined and, although members of the Board of Trustees also played a crucial role in the running and artistic direction of the Gallery, Brown's vision was paramount. The charismatic figures of Allan Jarvis and Jean Sutherland Boggs also fare well in this approach since they undertook quite significant schemes during their tenure. The spectacle of Jarvis' botched attempt to acquire paintings from the Prince of Lichtenstein, and Boggs' importance as an art historian of great stature set both directors apart from others after the Brown years. The institution itself is also a crucial player but Ord addresses it largely as a shell whose architectural allusions to metaphysical concerns frame the work of its directors. It is crucial to see the work of the institution as the product of a number of figures working together. Directors provide the larger vision of the institution and deal with the administrative side of things, but they work alongside curators who have expertise in a variety of fields and are primarily responsible for the selection of

works for purchase and for the production of exhibitions that bring the visitors to the Gallery in the first place. Finally, the particular feature of the National Gallery of Canada is its status as an arm's-length federal institution that has a mandate to "promote and protect the heritage of Canada and all its people" (NGC Act 1990). The Gallery's requirement to interpret that mandate while maintaining a position of aesthetic autonomy is sometimes fraught with tension, and often visible in the exhibition of works from the permanent collection.

Where *The National Gallery of Canada: Ideas Art Architecture* demonstrates its value is in its account of the years when the National Gallery was stripped of its autonomous status as a federal institution and made part of the National Museums Corporation (1968-1990). During this period, policies of "democratization and decentralization" brought all four of the National Museums (National Gallery, National Museum of Man, Museum of Science and Technology, Museum of Nature) under one governmental umbrella. The desired administrative rationalization, however, only resulted in diminishing the authority of each Museum's director, and for the National Gallery in particular, subsumed its development of a program of aesthetic excellence within the goals of an instrumental nationalism. It is telling that during this twenty-two-year period, three directors resigned outright (Boggs, Martin, Shih) each complaining that the bureaucracy and micro-managerial style of the National Museums Corporation made their job impossible.

The success of these chapters lies in Ord's careful mapping of the sequence of events that occurred during the NMC's management of the National Gallery, with a specific focus on the deterioration of the already difficult relationship between gallery and government. The minutes of both the NMC's Board of Trustees and the emasculated "Advisory Board" of the National Gallery allows him to fully convey the control that the NMC "mega-bureaucracy" had on the National Gallery, as well as the detrimental effect that the lack of recognition of the National Gallery as a fundamentally different institution from the other National Museums had on its collecting and exhibiting practices in the 1970s and 80s. What emerges in this account is the story of an institution under siege, with the role of the various players (in the Gallery as well as in the NMC) located firmly within the institutions they were leading. The result is a fuller picture of the constraints within which the work of the Gallery was accomplished, and the picture of the director emerges less as a figure personally implicated in a series of events, than as the relatively powerless head of an organization whose operation is necessarily cut through by other figures and organizations.

The importance of the National Gallery of Canada to the collective artistic psyche of the nation cannot be denied, and the fact that Douglas Ord's book is the first lengthy consideration of the Gallery since Jean Sutherland Boggs's 1971 volume is significant enough that it is deemed worthy of two reviews in

The Journal of Canadian Art History. Unfortunately, the author's focus on teasing out ironies and cross-references and almost complete lack of interest in the "workings" of this institution leaves the reader with a sense of the extent of Mr. Ord's research rather than any new knowledge about museums in general and the National Gallery in particular. This is unfortunate because it completely obscures some of his excellent critiques, such as the new building's attention to itself rather than to art and the implications that has for our understanding of the Gallery as a state-funded institution. The result does a disservice to the complexities of an institution such as the National Gallery of Canada.

ANNE WHITELAW
Department of Art and Design
University of Alberta