



fig.1 George Reid, **Ave Canada**, 1906-1918, oil on canvas, 89 x 52 cm, National Gallery of Canada.
(Photo: NGC)

CANADA RECEIVING THE HOMAGE OF HER CHILDREN

George Reid's *Ave Canada* and Gustav Hahn's *Hail Dominion*:

A Proposal of Murals for the Entrance Hall of Canada's Parliament Buildings

In April 1904, Canadian Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier received a letter from the executive of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. Written by George Reid (1860-1947) and signed by Reid, Franklin Brownell (1857-1946) and William Brymner (1855-1925), the letter praised Laurier for his words of encouragement at the opening of the Academy's 1903 annual exhibition and expressed the hope that the government would provide more support for the arts. Reid also proposed a scheme of mural paintings for the Centre Block of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa.¹ The murals were intended for the main entrance hall, the Commons and Senate chambers and the library.

This article explores Reid's proposal from his initial plan for the main entrance hall in 1904 through the steps taken to advance the project until its final rejection in 1907. It also examines the two preparatory murals for the project: *Ave Canada* (figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4) by George Reid and *Hail Dominion* (fig. 5) by Gustav Hahn (1866-1962), both produced at the artists' own initiative. Rounding out this discussion is a look at the *zeitgeist* of the times as it pertained to the politics and purposes of Canadian art. This will help to explain why the project failed despite serious attempts by Reid to convince the government and the Canadian public of the merits of mural decoration for expressing a national spirit.

Reid's letter to Laurier outlined his "suggestions for the decoration of the Parliament Buildings" as follows: "1st: The main entrance with a symbolic subject in processional form; 2nd: the separated panels of the chambers of the Commons and Senate with historical subjects; 3rd: The Library with an encircling frieze, representing great men of literature in periods appropriately accented. The ceiling, or dome, of the library treated with decorative ornament combined with figures." "For the purpose of making a definite beginning," Reid proposed that the project should commence with the mural scheme for the main entrance hall of the Centre Block, which would be entitled *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Faithful Sons*:

This is intended to treat in processional form, or semi-processional form, as would be found best when trial sketches have been made. The various sections of the Dominion could be appropriately represented with their



fig.2 George Reid, **Ave Canada**, detail of the center.

various occupations, and to make a picturesque effect the typical products could be borne in various ways, allowing the introduction of animals and vehicles; these with figures of men, women and children would combine into a pageant of brilliant colour with a centre where a figure symbolical of Canada, supported by figures representing the Provinces, and pages bearing the coats of arms, receives with acclaim the homage of her children.

Reid also explained that he would execute the series of canvas panels for the entrance area with the help of Hahn, Brownell, Brymner, Frederick Challener (1869-1959), William Cruikshank (1849-1922), and Edmond Dyonnet (1859-1954). By listing the artists ready to participate in the project, he hoped to persuade the government that more of the Parliament Buildings' walls could be decorated over time. With the involvement of a number of painters, "the result would be representative of the works of Canadian artists, thus constituting an important means for the encouragement and stimulation of Canadian art." He continued: "in order that the best results be secured we think it would be desirable that the Royal Canadian Academy should appoint committees to supervise such work as may be undertaken at any time, to pass

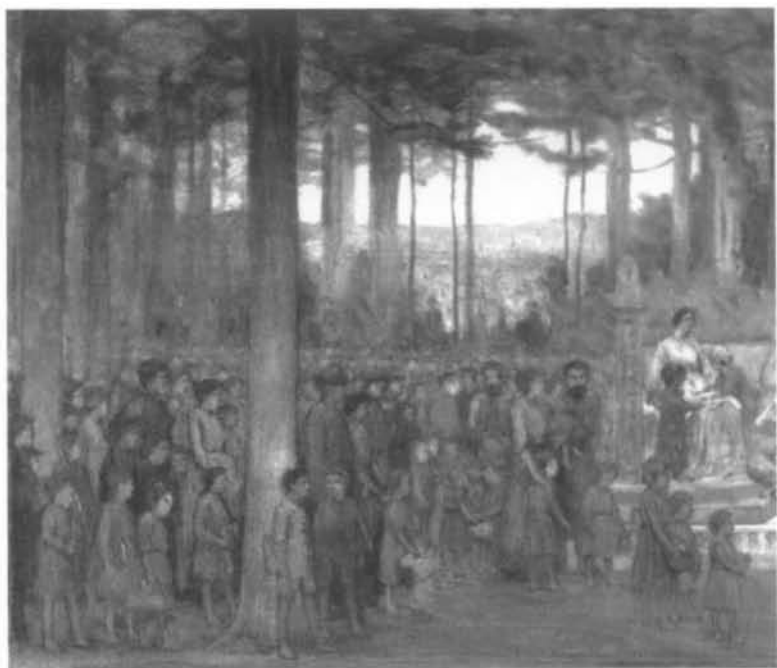


fig.3 George Reid, **Ave Canada**, detail of the left.



fig.4 George Reid, **Ave Canada**, detail of the right.



fig.5 Gustav Hahn, **Hail Dominion**, 1906, oil on burlap, 203 x 137 cm, National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: NGC)

upon such subjects as may be chosen, or upon sketches made for these subjects.” The letter also described the current status of mural decoration, pointing out that “during the past ten years there has been a great increase of interest, almost world-wide, in the art of mural decoration, and among the members of the Royal Canadian Academy there has been a corresponding tendency to a revival of that branch of painting.”²

The idea to decorate the Parliament Buildings with mural art was not new. A year earlier, Robert Harris (1849-1919), president of the RCA, had sent a similar letter to Laurier: “Again, it might be strongly recommended indeed, naturally following from previous suggestions, that as there are at least some places in the Parliament Buildings which with advantage lend themselves to schemes of mural decoration, an attempt should be made to utilize them for the portrayal of subjects connected with the history of the country and so forth.”³ Harris recommended that the RCA coordinate the project and work with a group of qualified artists to develop a mural scheme, but he is not as specific as Reid.

On 12 June 1905,⁴ Reid prepared a statement entitled “Report of work done in connection with the proposed decoration scheme for the Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, made for the information of the artists interested.” He related that after receiving his April 1904 letter, Laurier had asked the Chief Architect of the Public Works Department David Ewart⁵ to write a report on the mural project. In fact, knowing that the Chief Architect was in charge of preparing the plans and estimates for federal public works projects and of determining whether or not a project should proceed, Reid had already recommended to Laurier that Ewart be an *ex-officio* member of the RCA committee. According to Reid, Ewart had promised to do his utmost to have the proposal adopted since work had already begun to renovate the entrance hall with a new mosaic floor, a marble dado and other improvements; but Reid was aware that, by the fall of 1904 no definite progress had been made.⁶ His “Report” also explained that at meetings with Ewart held in Brownell’s Ottawa studio on 24 and 25 May 1905, the proposal had been discussed and Reid had shown Ewart his pastel sketch for the mural panel that would decorate the north wall of the entrance hall. As a result, Ewart suggested that the artists complete their sketches and bring them to him the following Christmas, after which time he would present the mural scheme to the government. Reid concludes the “Report” by saying that he had met with most of the participating artists on 28 May in his Toronto studio, where they outlined the specifications for the project and revised the estimated cost from \$15,000 to \$25,000.

On the same day, he sent a copy of the “Report” to Challener who had been unable to attend the artists’ meeting in Toronto.⁷ Reid also included his

“Specifications for Decorations for the Main Entrance Hall of the Parliament Buildings, Ottawa.” He had already presented this plan to the other painters, but the mural scheme now had a new title and description:

Subject:

The subject to be Canada Receiving the Homage of her Children.

Composition:

The composition to consist of an open air procession, with attention directed towards a central enthroned figure symbolical of Canada, having supporting figures symbolizing the Provinces and attendants bearing coats of arms, banner, etc.

General arrangement:

The procession to be formed of groups of figures of men, women and children of all types and ages, showing their occupations in the Arts and Industries by the bearing of various emblems. The phases of Canadian history to be expressed by representing the people belonging to the different periods. The main setting to be a [varied] Canadian landscape, composed of forest, fields, bodies of water and mountains, having habitations so arranged as to appropriately accompany the different scenes depicted. The figures representing Canada and the provinces to have an architectural setting. The style of the setting to be Gothic. The costumes to be conventional.

Arrangement of the subject on the walls:

The symbolical figures to occupy the centre and middle foreground of the north wall. The right and left wings to show the western and eastern development, reaching toward the centre in the foreground. The figures representing the early beginning of Canada to be in the centre and semicircular part of the south wall. The panels on the right and left of the same wall, and those of the east and west walls to show by gradual steps the development to the present time; the west side to represent the west, the east to represent the east.⁸

The memo also specified the “method of execution” of both the preliminary studies and the mural decorations. Based on a scale of one inch to the foot, the studies would be made on a sized cotton surface and mounted on stretchers that could be joined to form a model of the walls of the entrance hall. Using oil paint with turpentine and wax to ensure a matte surface, the colour would be thinly applied, leaving as much pale surface as possible to allow for retouching and



fig.6 Print of painted photograph, study for **Ave Canada**, George Agnew Reid fonds, *Scrapbook*, vol. 1, 274, 1907, Edward P. Taylor Research Library and Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario, A-23582. (Photo: AGO)

repainting when the sketches were brought together. The mural panels were to be placed "on a heavy canvas of a uniform texture" and mounted on the wall in "a thick bed of white lead and varnish." The panels would be painted separately in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal in the various artists' studios and then brought together in the entrance hall where "the tone, colour and treatment" would be "brought into harmony as far as possible by the artists working together for that purpose." After the murals had been positioned, painted borders would be attached at the top and bottom of each painting, creating a continuous line around the sides of the entrance hall except where interrupted by doors and windows. Reid also drew a diagram of the entrance hall indicating which parts of the mural scheme would be allotted to each of the artists in the group.

One of Reid's scrapbooks contains a photograph of the entrance hall dated 1907, which he had over-painted with a small but detailed sketch of the painting now titled *Ave Canada* (fig.6). It shows that he originally intended to place his mural along the full length of the north wall and a few metres of the east and west

walls. The mural would have been positioned above a large central platform and between the two flanking staircases that lead to the doors of the public stairs and to a circular landing and doors of the Senate and Commons chambers. However, this placement would have obscured the five large tracery windows on the north wall – an important part of the Gothic Revival interior, which also included several columns with elaborately carved capitals, an ornamental stone balustrade, a ceiling formed of sunken panels, and two large decorative windows on the south wall.⁹

According to Reid's biographer Muriel Miller, at approximately 3 metres high and 21.3 metres long, *Ave Canada* would have been the largest panel in the scheme. Miller also describes Reid's plan¹⁰ in greater detail than he had outlined in his memo in June 1905. For example, the sidewalls were to be a similar height but only 9.1 metres long; panels painted by Brownell would have depicted various industries representing the development of Canada East, and Canada West would show Dyonnet's image of the harvest. Three panels with figures of Canada's early history would have been painted by Brymner and placed on the central and semicircular parts of the south wall, which was broken by a doorway. On the rounded wall above the entrance door, in a space about 3 metres high by 15.2 metres long, Brymner would also have painted the arrival of Jacques Cartier. Views of settlers and hunters by Challener and Cruikshank were intended for the flat sections of the wall to the left and right of the large main doorway. In addition, painted sculptural figures in semi-classical costumes were to embellish the areas between the beams and arches. While Miller does not mention Hahn's *Hail Dominion* in her description, Reid's diagram shows that it would have been situated close to *Ave Canada*, in front of the columns at the north end of the hall. Immediately visible upon entering the Centre Block, these two murals would have created the context for the rest of the images on the adjacent walls.

It is no surprise that Reid and his fellow artists hoped to decorate the main entrance hall of Canada's most imposing building with mural paintings. In both Europe and the United States, commissions for murals in public buildings increased significantly during the decades preceding the turn of the century. Reid was well aware of their popularity, and he was also familiar with the American examples displayed at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893,¹¹ which were very different from the genre and landscape works on view in its Fine Arts Building.¹² Paintings in the Canadian section such as Reid's *The Foreclosure of the Mortgage*,¹³ *Lullaby* and *The Visit of the Clockmaker*, Challener's *Forty Winks on a Sunday Afternoon*, Cruikshank's *Drawing the Mast* and Brownell's *Lamp Light* focused on the everyday life of Canadians. They stood in sharp contrast to the majestic grandeur of nationhood presented in the American murals.

In the American public art at the Exposition, allegorical female figures represented civic ideals such as justice, law, government, tradition, progress, commerce and religious liberty. Their monumental forms dominated the fair grounds and the numerous art and industrial exhibitions celebrating America's material and visual culture. For example, in *Columbian Fountain* by Frederick MacMonnies (1863-1937), the Barge of State was guided by a female personification of Fame and propelled by eight female allegorical figures representing Music, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Agriculture, Science, Industry and Commerce. *The Republic*, designed by Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907) and sculpted by Daniel Chester French (1850-1931), was a twenty-metre high female goddess; wearing a chiton and a laurel wreath and she held a staff in one hand and an orb with a perched eagle in the other. On the inside of the dome of the Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building, Edwin Blashfield's (1848-1936) allegorical female figures showed the arts of the goldsmith, the ironworker, the armourer and the worker in bronze. Mary Cassatt's (1844-1926) now-lost mural *Modern Woman*, on display in the Woman's Building, was a contemporary parable where women and girls harvest the fruits of knowledge and science in an Arcadian garden.¹⁴ Reid's belief in the importance of the symbolic representations of mural decoration was further reinforced by his association with Blashfield and other American mural artists such as Carroll Beckwith (1852-1917), Will Low (1853-1932) and John Alexander (1856-1915), who were producing murals for the Library of Congress and new courthouses, state capitals and public libraries across the United States. For these artists, mural painting had an educational role: to arouse patriotism, inspire American virtues and teach the history of the nation.¹⁵ Beginning in the summer of 1891 and every summer for the next twenty-five years, Reid met with these painters at Onteora Park, an artist's colony in the Catskill Mountains where he had purchased a home.¹⁶

Reid was soon convinced that mural art was equally essential for the full expression of Canadian nationhood. In 1894 he was instrumental in forming the Society of Mural Decorators with the purpose of lobbying for the decoration of the new Toronto Municipal Buildings (now the Old City Hall). The Society's mural plan for the Council Chamber of the Municipal Buildings was conceived in 1895 and to some extent it could be seen as a precedent for the scheme Reid would later propose for Ottawa. The murals included depictions of industry, integrity and intelligence by Reid, Wyly Grier (1862-1957) and William Cruikshank, and another of peace, government and prosperity by Cruikshank and Frederick Challener. In the Council Chamber's entrance hall, Hahn and Reid also intended to paint classical personifications of Science and Art. Unfortunately, the entire mural scheme was rejected due to a lack of funds. Nevertheless, in an

attempt to convince the public of the importance of murals and in hopes of encouraging future commissions, Reid returned to the entrance hall in 1899 to paint, free of charge, *The Arrival of the Pioneers* and *Staking a Pioneer Farm*. At the same time Gustav Hahn decorated the wide border of the Council Chamber with designs of flowers and fruit, and painted classical personifications of Truth and Justice¹⁷ in the spandrels of the arches over the gallery.

As one of the founders in 1876 of the Ontario School of Art (now the Ontario College of Art and Design) and the president of the Ontario Society of Artists between 1897 and 1902, Reid was well-known in the province. Over the years, his commitment to mural painting also became widely acknowledged in Canada. In her article on Reid in the November 1907 issue of *Canadian Magazine*, Margaret Fairbairn writes that, “after two lengthy trips abroad” and “due in part to foreign influence,” all of Reid’s art since the 1890s “has been confined to mural decoration.”¹⁸ She continues: “Not a few of the artist’s admirers, have expressed a wish that he would return to his earlier manner.... Do they in the least, realize how impossible is growth without change...there is no standing still or turning back.”¹⁹

George Reid’s *Ave Canada*

There is a good reason for the apparent “foreign influence” in Reid’s *Ave Canada*: in searching a prototype for the entrance hall mural, he borrowed freely from Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s *Allegory of Good Government*. Painted between 1338 and 1340, the fresco expressed traditional civic virtues and coincidentally evoked what Reid also believed to be Canadian ideals of nationhood. It is situated on the sidewall of the Council Room (*Sala dei Nove*) of Siena’s Palazzo Pubblico, opposite *Allegory of Bad Government*. Together, they show the positive and negative aspects of political governance on city and village life, expressing the will of the Sienese government under the rule of the nine chief magistrates of the executive council.²⁰ At the centre of *Good Government* a male personification of Siena is flanked by seven female allegorical figures: the cardinal virtues of Magnanimity, Temperance and Justice on the right, and Prudence, Fortitude and Peace, and a second Justice, to the left. Small winged theological virtues – Faith, Hope and Charity – hover above the male personification; below, Ascius and Senius, the founders of the city, play at the feet of Remus their father. Representatives of Siena’s citizenry move in a stately procession along one portion of the fresco; on the other, soldiers from the cavalry and infantry stand guard. The arrangement of the figures was derived from the pageantry associated with the *jocundus adventus*,²¹ the street procession of clergy, town officers, bourgeoisie and guild members that greeted the sovereign entering a city or territory. The route was often lined with paintings and *tableaux vivants* that dramatized local legends and historical events, and symbolized the judicial and administrative characteristics of government.

In referencing Lorenzetti in *Ave Canada*, Reid was aware that he was creating a pageant;²² in fact, he described the mural's theme as "A pageant of brilliant colour" in his 1904 letter to Laurier. In *Ave Canada* a maternal queen is the central symbolic image of Canada, medieval symbols of good government have been replaced by the Canadian provinces depicted as princesses,²³ and the religious virtues are now two winged figures representing Britain and France. These angels crown the personification of Canada with a wreath and each holds a scroll signifying the code of law of the two founding nations. The small naked gods nestled at Siena's feet have become infants in the arms of the "provinces" and standing children offer a harvest of Canadian fruits and vegetables. Instead of the mace-like sceptre and shield held by Siena, a young knight standing to the side of "Canada" holds the country's official flag. Siena's male citizenry has been transformed into numerous family groups; they portray the civic, industrial, rural and artistic occupations of Canadians and pay homage to a sovereignty envisioned as an extended royal family.

While the initial impetus for Reid's *Ave Canada* may have been the Lorenzetti, it is also directly linked to another important influence on both Reid and his American counterparts: the work of Puvis de Chavannes.²⁴ *Ave Canada* reflects a careful study of his murals that Reid saw in Paris in 1888 and 1889 while studying at the *académies* Julian and Colarossi. In 1892, during a second visit to Paris, he made a further study of Puvis' decorations in the Hotel de Ville, the Pantheon and the Sorbonne. *Ave Canada* mirrors the French murals in its simplified forms, limited use of muted colours and a non-rigorous use of allegory. In such public commissions, Puvis often focused on the concept of patriarchy, implying that the organization of a nation is analogous to that of a "nuclear" family.²⁵ France is sometimes represented as Fecundity, with a young child symbolizing future generations and a father or mother as an embodiment of civic education. The stability and continuity of the French Republic are often expressed through evocations of parental love and tenderness. For example, in *Summer* (1891), a mural in the Hotel de Ville, France is symbolized by the nude woman in the centre of the painting as well as by the nursing mother and fertile landscape. In *Ave Canada*, Reid idealized the nation by evoking a similar sense of childhood and familial belonging.

Here, children would have reminded the public of the young people in Reid's successful earlier paintings. At the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, his three works – *The Foreclosure of the Mortgage*, *The Visit of the Clockmaker* and *Lullaby* – all pictured children, a particularly popular subject in North America as well as in Europe. Reid had been a student at the Ontario School of Art when Robert Harris painted *The News Boy* in 1880 and *The Young Genius* a year later; and one of Reid's teachers in Paris, William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825-1905) was renowned for his paintings of idealised peasant girls. While in France, Reid had also befriended the Canadian artist Paul Peel

(1860-92), who was just beginning a series of paintings of his own two children titled *After the Bath*. During this time Reid made several sympathetic paintings of rural children and pioneer life and began working on *The Foreclosure of the Mortgage*, all of which were recollections of his youth on an Ontario farm. The Canadian public responded with enthusiasm to the narrative qualities of family pictures like *The Foreclosure*:

In front of the chair stands the tall form of the man who has come to formally announce the foreclosure of the mortgage.... Directly in front of him is the heirloom – the old wooden cradle – and in it lies a sleeping infant with its face toward the window. The flushed and rounded cheek, the noble brow, the golden hair, the finely-formed head, the peaceful sleep.... The wonderful effect of the light on the child, cover, cradle and rug show the genius of the artist.... Happy should the artist be who uses his God-given talents to touch the hearts of humanity.²⁶

Mural painting presented Reid with a new challenge: the visual integration of children and families into a large-scale allegorical composition in which he could represent the various sectors of Canadian society while maintaining the atmosphere of warmth and intimacy associated with his genre paintings. Although his attention was now focused on mural art, he believed that: “The Canadian brush is bound to have for its ultimate end the expression of Canadian life, sentiments and characteristics; the expression in art, by genre pictures, and by symbolic and historical conceptions of the idea of nationality, and the development of a country so vast as ours.”²⁷ While Puvis offered a starting point with his classical subject matter, he had rejected the aura of realism that Reid believed *Ave Canada* required.

Reid may have also looked to the sentimental realist paintings of rustic provincial life by Jules Breton (1827-1906); his clustering together of Canadian families of a specific occupation is reminiscent of Breton’s family groupings of peasants, bourgeoisie and uniformed *gendarme* in *Plantation d’un calvaire* (1858). Diego Velazquez was an equally important influence; Reid had copied his paintings of royal children and dwarves when he travelled to Spain in 1896.²⁸ A variation of his *Copy after Velazquez: Portrait of a Dwarf with a Dog* appears on the right side of *Ave Canada* in the figure of the boy with a large goat. The posture and facial expressions of the children, who are turned sideways and glance at the viewer, recall Velazquez’s *Las Meninas* (1657), which Reid had copied in detail. Similarly, the group on the left side of *Ave Canada* mirrors the compositional density of the figures in Velazquez’s *The Surrender of Breda* (1635) and Reid also adapted some of their poses. Furthermore, the slender trees of *Ave Canada* recall the rhythmically arranged spears of *The Surrender*, while the humbled figure of Justinus of Nassau is transformed into the medieval knight paying homage to Canada. Finally, the architectural backdrop that separates the

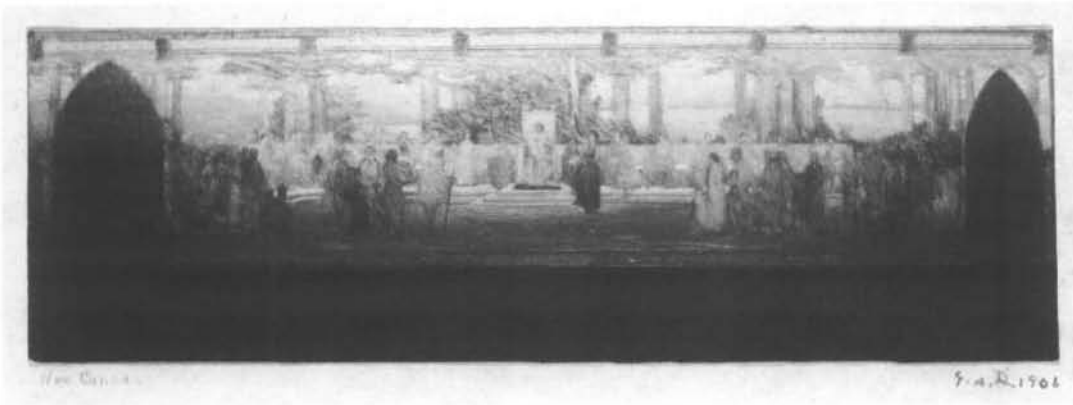


fig.7 Photograph of study for mural *Ave Canada*, 1906, George Agnew Reid fonds, *Scrapbook*, vol. 1, 273, 1906, Edward P. Taylor Research Library and Archives, Art Gallery of Ontario, A-23581. (Photo: AGO)

foreground and distant landscape in *Ave Canada* resembles another Velazquez painting, the *Villa Medici in Rome* (1630). These references reflect the traditional practice of copying to cultivate compositional ideas and techniques that was an important part of Reid's academic training in Paris.

In his execution of several preparatory studies for *Ave Canada*, Reid also made use of the processes he had learned in Paris;²⁹ they helped him compose the various elements of *Ave Canada*, to adapt certain segments, and to leave others relatively unchanged until he arrived at a design that could serve as the basis for the figure drawings and the under-painting of the mural canvas. The first of these studies was probably a freely painted pastel sketch with groups of figures drawn with wide brushes and calligraphic strokes. Although it is dated 1906 in Reid's scrapbook, this may be the work he refers to in his letter of 12 June 1905 to Challenger: "I am sending you a photograph of my pastel sketch.... I have sent copies of these enclosures and the photograph to each of the artists who are to undertake sketches."³⁰ Reid's scrapbook also contained a photograph of the



fig.8 George Reid, *Central Figure of Canada* from "Ave Canada," c1907, oil on canvas, 30 x 22 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario. Transferred from the Edward P. Taylor Research Library and Archives to the permanent collection, 1982. (no. 82/159.16) (Photo: AGO)

entrance hall onto which he had painted a sketch of *Ave Canada* (fig.7). It clearly shows that he considered the spaces between the columns when balancing the three distinctive parts of the composition. The figure of "Canada" is seen in yet another study (fig.8) originally pasted into the scrapbook now at the Art Gallery of Ontario. In this small sketch Reid focused on particular details such as her simple Greek drapery, youthful facial features and the outstretched hand, suggestive of benevolent leadership.

The scale of an oil study entitled *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Daughters* (fig.9) at the London Museum corresponds to the original dimensions of *Ave Canada* and the composition is more developed, with the foreground groups more completely rendered than the "provinces," still in outline. Given that the central platform, staircases, doors and cornice treatment were included in this study, it is obvious that the relation of *Ave Canada* to the architectural features of the entrance hall was his major consideration. The large oil sketch of *Ave Canada* (fig.1) at the National Gallery of Canada, begun in 1906, is the most advanced of all the studies.³¹ Compared to the London sketch, the colours are more varied, the figures of the provinces better defined, the foliage more complete, and the figure grouping is more compact and reaches further into the background. The design also accommodates the arched doorways at the top of the two staircases that would be to the far left and right of the installed painting. When Reid revised the canvas sometime before exhibiting it at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1918, he extended the wooded landscape into these lateral spaces.

These studies clearly show that Reid regarded the Canadian landscape as a central element and recognised its potential to embody the national spirit of Canada. In 1894, the artist and cultural critic William Sherwood had asserted that Canadian landscape painting was of utmost importance in representing the diverse scenery of a homeland and the sentiments of nationhood.³² Four years later Reid would further argue that mural painting expressed "a genuine love for the perfect, the beautiful; and as the air, the soil, the climate of our country colour our blood and stamp our natures, our art must be native to be healthy."³³ In *Ave Canada*, the landscape assumes a stronger role than in the two murals Reid had painted for the Toronto Municipal Buildings in 1899, where the trees and terrain serve primarily as supporting elements for the organization of the painting.³⁴ In the mural for Ottawa, the landscape occupies the upper half and full width of the composition; tree trunks are a rhythmical accompaniment to the figures, and the leafy foliage acts as a sheltering canopy. The serenity of the forest, lake, hills and sky complements the dignity of the people who are gathered in the meadow. Finally and perhaps most importantly, the landscape allegorizes the nation as a rural family nurtured by the fecundity of the land.



fig.9 George Reid, *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Daughters*, 1904, oil on linen, 58 x 176 cm, London Museum. (Photo: London Museum)

Reid believed that in addition to its placid rural setting, *Ave Canada* had medieval overtones in its costumes and composition that would also appeal to many Canadians. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when European and North American society became more urbanized as a result of industrialization, there was an accompanying revival of idealized medievalism.³⁵ Ideas drawn from medieval life permeated politics, economics, social attitudes and aesthetics. Pre-Raphaelite art, Gothic Revival architecture, and the Arts and Crafts movement were all widely embraced. Magazines often portrayed city life as artificial in contrast to rural life, which was envisioned as a refuge and a source of family values. According to James Mavor,³⁶ Chair of Political Economy and Constitutional History at the University of Toronto, and a vocal member of the Toronto Guild of Civic Art,³⁷ industrial development

had led to the disintegration of village communities and the break up of extended families. An ideal society, he argued, had both modern freedoms and the stability and security that come from a medieval way of life in which each member of the community demonstrates a concern for the group as a whole. Mavor, a native of Glasgow, Scotland where he had been a member of the Socialist League founded by William Morris, befriended Reid soon after his arrival in Toronto in 1892.³⁸ In his lectures and writings Mavor called for the reform of art and design as advocated in Morris's teachings. It is likely that Reid agreed with Mavor's sentiments.

Gustav Hahn's *Hail Dominion*

Today, Gustav Hahn's *Hail Dominion* (fig.5) hangs next to Reid's *Ave Canada* in the Canadian section of the National Gallery of Canada. In *Hail Dominion*, the nation is symbolized by the grouping of Mother Canada and her nine provincial "daughters." "Canada" is part goddess, part queen and part mother; a tall and imposing figure, she is powerful in her statuesque beauty as she embraces her two daughters at her side. Looking directly ahead to suggest visionary power and strong leadership, "Canada" embodies the promise of the nation and the assurance of future growth. The girls are in casual poses that imply the ease and devotion of a caring family. Holding fish, wheat, fruits and flowers to symbolize the provinces and Canada's natural resources, the figures are positioned on a flat rock in a forest setting. Evergreens in the background compliment the upright posture of several figures while vines of maple leaves frame the composition in a configuration reminiscent of an altarpiece. It is clear that in developing the form and composition of *Hail Dominion*, Hahn responded to *Ave Canada* to ensure a visual relationship between the two works. Similarly, the title *Hail Dominion* is obviously a variation of *Ave Canada*, and Canada and her provinces are allegorically represented by female figures in both murals. Hahn also uses medieval-like costumes and similar tones of green and blue.

Nevertheless, the treatment of the figures and aspects of the composition of *Hail Dominion* suggest a different visual approach, which is partly the result of Hahn's art training. He was born in Germany and had studied at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Stuttgart when *Jugendstil* artwork was flourishing. Educated in painting, interior design and the applied arts, he also trained in a range of activities from the ornamental decoration of household objects to the mural art of domestic and public buildings.³⁹ In 1888, soon after arriving in Toronto with his parents and siblings, Hahn found a job at the decorating firm of Elliott & Sons. His assignments included painting murals in the halls and dining rooms of private houses as well as on the ceilings of churches such as Saint Paul's United and Saint James Cathedral. In 1893, he also produced murals on the ceiling and north and south walls of the Legislative Chamber of

the new Ontario Legislative Building,⁴⁰ where classical female personifications of Moderation, Justice, Power and Wisdom are entwined by a maple vine motif. Over the next twelve years, Hahn continued to favour the classical dreamlike forms, symmetrically arranged spaces and floral patterns typical of the *Jugendstil* movement. These tendencies are exemplified by *Decoration*, painted in 1899 and now at the National Gallery of Canada.

By 1906 when Hahn painted *Hail Dominion*, his composition had changed significantly. The allegorical figures of his earlier works had evolved into more realistic contemporary females. This change may be related to the influence of such British artists as John William Waterhouse (1849-1917), Arthur Hacker (1858-1919) and Byam Shaw (1872-1919), whose popularity was based on images of actual girls in mythological and allegorical roles. Hahn had seen their work during a visit to London, England in 1905⁴¹ and had collected magazine articles on their painting.⁴² In *Hail Dominion*, Hahn recast these young British women to evoke the innocence of youth in a visual parable of Canada. He distanced his work from the more exaggerated gestures of the British painters by creating figures that were more natural in appearance and pose. Using his daughters Hilda, aged eight, and Freya who was two years older, as models, he transformed their pre-adolescent bodies and facial features into the young women representing Canada's provincial daughters.⁴³ The girls gaze fondly at Mother Canada, whose face is a classical interpretation of their own mother, Ellen, and they wear dresses she created especially for the painting. While *Hail Dominion* portrayed Hahn's wife and daughters, it was also an ideal image of a Canada where female virtues signify concepts of private and public life.

At the RCA annual exhibition of 1906, *Hail Dominion* was listed in the catalogue as a "decorative panel" and was displayed with pastel studies of Hilda and Freya posing for the work.⁴⁴ Two studies at the National Gallery of Canada (figs.10 and 11) and others held privately, demonstrate Hahn's elegant line and soft touch, and reveal the special attention he devoted to his daughters' faces. *Hail Dominion* was also the diploma work that led to Hahn's promotion from an Associate to an Academician of the RCA in 1906.⁴⁵ Painted two years after the death of his father, *Hail Dominion* may have held further significance for Hahn. Otto, a lawyer and geologist with a doctorate in natural sciences, had come to Canada in 1879 on the invitation of the Dominion Minister of Agriculture. Appointed by the Canadian government to encourage emigration from Germany and Switzerland, Otto devoted his working life to promoting Canada and published numerous books and articles on the subject.⁴⁶ It is possible that Hahn's *Hail Dominion* paid tribute to his father by venerating the country that offered refuge to their family and others escaping the oppressive political climate of Germany.



fig.10 Gustav Hahn, *Young Girl (Study for "Hail Dominion!")*, 1906, red and white chalk and graphite on blue grey wove paper, 34 x 44 cm, National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: NGC)



fig.11 Gustav Hahn, *Two Heads (Study for "Hail Dominion!")*, 1906, pastel, graphite, and red chalk on blue grey wove paper, 36 x 33 cm, National Gallery of Canada. (Photo: NGC)

Aftermath

The government's refusal to support the mural project was communicated to Reid in 1907. As Muriel Miller writes: "The sketches were submitted to the government and the plan approved, but the matter had to be held in abeyance for the time being since there was no appropriation available."⁴⁷ Closer to the truth is the explanation that Reid provided in a report he submitted to the RCA⁴⁸ in December 1917, two years after most of the Centre Block had burned to the ground. (The fire may also have destroyed the other artists' sketches if they were then in the possession of the Public Works department.) Reid explained that the government's newly formed Advisory Arts Council made the negative decision. As president of the RCA, Reid had earlier recommended that, "there should be an advisory council of the Fine Arts composed of painters, sculptors and architects, such council to be appointed by the Royal Canadian Academy."⁴⁹ However, the government ignored Reid's suggestion and appointed prominent Montreal businessmen and art collectors, William Van Horne, Sir George Drummond and Senator Arthur Boyer to assess works being considered for purchase by Ottawa. In 1907 "the sketches for an initial part of the proposal were placed before the Council." Reid related that although two of the members were favourably disposed, the Council refused to support the project because "the Chairman had grave doubts about the ability of Canadian Artists to undertake such an important work, and the matter was deferred."⁵⁰

Reid did not mention that the Council had also been presented with another mural painting for the Parliament Buildings: *Jacques Cartier rencontre les Indiens à Stadaconé 1535* (1905-6) by Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté (1869-1937). The artist, who was living in Paris, had recently taken up Canadian historical subjects and Prime Minister Laurier had suggested that he submit the painting for the Council's consideration. However, it was deemed unacceptable because it was not sufficiently realistic. In a letter to Suzor-Coté of 22 November 1907, Laurier explained that they felt Cartier was too handsome and well dressed, "décidément trop beau,"⁵¹ and he agreed that the explorer could not have worn such fine clothing. When Suzor-Coté was informed that he would have to rework the painting to ensure a more authentic record of the event, he refused to make the changes. Given their concerns for "historical" realism, it is hardly surprising that the Council was not sympathetic to Reid's allegorical mural.

Hahn also was a vocal supporter of mural art, particularly in his capacity as head of the Department of Interior Design at the Ontario School of Art, where he had been teaching interior architecture and design since 1892. In March 1913, a review of Hahn's work shown at the Ontario Society of Artists annual exhibition⁵² stated that there were "few exhibitions in Toronto at which

Mr. Gustav Hahn, R.C.A. does not exhibit one or more sketch designs of mural decoration or the decoration itself. Sad to relate, this class of work, while it holds promise for the greatest art of the future, is in this corner of the world done oftener than not for the commercial decorator." After mentioning several of his murals in private residences, including a frieze of female figures in a music room, a lunette over a doorway and a triptych over a mantel, the reviewer misnamed *Hail Dominion* as "Canada and Her Daughters." However, he noted that it was one of Hahn's "large and important decorations," as it demonstrated his feeling for "flowing line, balance of design, and brilliant colour, along with a strong imaginative quality."

Around this time Hahn gave a talk on mural art in which he stated that few countries could boast a romantic age of pioneers and reiterated his belief that the ideals of citizenship should "be expressed in allegorical representation."⁵³ Tragically, Hahn's role as a proponent of mural art ended abruptly during the First World War when a wave of anti-German sentiment left him without commissions. Faced with the increasing difficulty of earning enough money to support his family, they were forced to move in 1918 to Brooklin, a small village outside Toronto where they made ends meet by growing their own fruits and vegetables. Despite these hardships Hahn was able to keep his Toronto studio as he secured occasional work as an art teacher. When resentment towards German immigrants subsided in the 1930s, he returned full-time to the Ontario College of Art where he revitalized the Department of Interior Decoration.

The First World War reinigorated Reid's attempts to convince the government, the public, artists, and his students at the Ontario College of Art of the merits of allegorical art. Despite having virtually no support, in a memorandum sent to the RCA in December 1917 he strongly encouraged the use of mural painting in its art programme as a means to commemorate Canadian soldiers who had fought and died in the war. Reid hoped the government would call upon Canadian artists "to pour forth their national feeling in expression of the heroic deeds of their fellow countrymen in France and Flanders." But he also noted that the failure of his earlier efforts to promote mural painting "may have been due to some lack in the mode of presentation or to the lack of public spirit and national pride."⁵⁴ Reid was possibly referring to the general opinion that allegorical art was no longer relevant. As early as 1894, James Mavor⁵⁵ had questioned the use of classical imagery in murals, recommending that layered allegorical themes be replaced by straightforward contemporary subjects: "A laboured attempt to illustrate a recondite allusion or to express in paint that which is probably not susceptible on any terms of being so expressed is apt to miss its point so far as concerns the average observer, while the story which is so simply told on canvas as to be intelligible to a child may also be the

most interesting to the cultivated intelligence.” While Reid’s *Ave Canada* demonstrated that he was receptive to the idea of a modern nation that could embrace medieval ideals, just as Mavor himself had once advocated, Reid could not abandon his belief that classically inspired allegorical imagery was perfectly suited to expressing Canada’s national spirit.

In the United States, there was also a shift in attitude toward mural decoration. At the close of the nineteenth century when Reid was emulating American muralists, a more direct and practical language was replacing allegory as a means to depict the nation. Defenders of American cultural nationalism were concerned that artists who were academically trained in Paris lingered over the themes and techniques of the past rather than exploring new ideas. Arguments against classicist mural paintings pointed to the need for naturalism, the importance of portraying historical subjects in real terms and the use of a direct and unaffected style.⁵⁶ Canadian art critics were also voicing an increasingly negative reaction to European influences in Canadian art. In 1894, J.A. Radford the art critic for *Canadian Magazine*, wrote that the “greatest fault with many Canadian artists is that after they travel abroad to study they lose their individuality.”⁵⁷ He also believed that “Artists ought to paint as they themselves see Nature” and recognize that as important chroniclers they should be “modelling the country’s patriotism, sentiment and taste” with the “correct pose of the figures, the folds of the drapery, the variety of costume.” Radford was relentless in his criticism and in 1907, when the Advisory Arts Council rejected Reid’s mural, he wrote that many Canadian paintings “are painted through foreign spectacles.”⁵⁸ Nonetheless, Reid maintained his belief that the nation should be portrayed symbolically and he never budged from the view he had articulated in a 1906 interview in *Acta Victoriana* that that “the symbolic treatment of the patriotic idea” and “all those ideas which demand imaginative treatment”⁵⁹ was the best way to represent Canada. Although he also stated that “the depiction of historical episodes in our development” was an important element within the “patriotic idea,” such events actually played a minor role in *Ave Canada*.

Reid’s *Ave Canada* and Hahn’s *Hail Dominion* reflected a symbolic content that had already lost its aesthetic and political viability. Both artists appear to have disregarded imagery that would have effectively expressed the current state of the country. “Canada” was a generic symbol of Canadian nationhood in much the same way as female allegorical figures had symbolized France and the United States. Moreover, the central figure of *Ave Canada* was more than a classically-inspired image: it was based on portraits of Queen Victoria such as on the first Great Seal of Canada issued in 1869 for use on all formal documents that carried the name of the monarch.⁶⁰ Dressed in her royal robes, Queen Victoria is seated on the coronation throne holding the orb and sceptre of supreme authority. Despite her youthful visage and less commanding

presence, did the personification of Canada in *Ave Canada* too closely resemble this regal image? Perhaps the allegorical language adopted by Reid and Hahn was ultimately confusing because of its similarity to the visual symbolism that had defined the relationship between Great Britain and Canada, but no longer adequately reflected its new nationhood.

The practice of forging Canadian images in the likeness of British royalty began with Confederation. On one side of the *Canadian Provinces Confederation Medal*, minted in 1867, is a bust portrait of Her Majesty the Queen and on the obverse is Britannia, pictured in profile as a warrior-woman with a lion at her side. Britannia presents the charter of Confederation to four allegorical female figures that represent the original provinces and each holds an implement that symbolizes the later provincial entrants to the united country.⁶¹ Thus Reid and Hahn had chosen an allegorical motif that illustrated a longstanding paradox: Canadians who were proud of their nation also remained loyal to the British motherland. Jean Blewett (1862-1934), a popular poet born in Scotia, Ontario, reflected this sentiment in her poem, *The Native Born* (1907):

Well we love that sea-girt island, and we strive to understand

All the greatness, all the grandeur, of the glorious Mother Land:

And we cheer her to the skies, cheer her till the echoes start

For the old land holds our homage, but the new land holds our heart!⁶²

In concert with Blewett's poem, Hahn and Reid portrayed Canadians' belief in a "new land" in their representations of the Canadian landscape. But by emphasising the concept of tribute, both artists even more strongly articulated Canada's allegiance to Britain and the notion that "the old land holds our homage."

While the 1867 Act of Confederation had created a federal authority, the provinces nonetheless expected to run their own affairs. By the time Hahn and Reid's paintings were created in 1906, the Canadian public had become quite adept at reading political cartoons that exploited the tensions between Ottawa and the provinces. These cartoons often employed the motif of family seen in Reid and Hahn's work, but without any suggestion of harmonious feeling. For example, the cartoonist and public figure John William Bengough (1851-1923), who was also the publisher of the weekly *Grip* magazine and a later contributor to *The Globe* and *The Montreal Star*, consistently depicted Canada and the provinces as members of a decidedly disorderly family. In an 1879 cartoon, "Miss Canada" is in her carriage (the Constitution) with six boys who, according to the inscriptions on their hats, represent the provinces of the Dominion and the horse's face is that of Sir John A. MacDonald. "Canada" remarks to the coachman: "It may be a good safe horse as you say, but still, I don't like to be left at his mercy." In another cartoon of the same year (fig. 12), the provinces are little girls who watch "Mademoiselle Quebec" order Sir John A. MacDonald to "Mind your own Federal business, and permit us to manage our local affairs to suit ourselves."



fig.13 John William Bengough, *Abbot to the Rescue*, *Grip* 38, no.7 (13 February 1892), 103. (Photo: the author)

from history as part of a pageant-play that Lascelles had based on a model originated by Louis Napoleon Parker⁶⁵ in 1905. Except for the final march, the processional features of earlier pageants had been replaced by a single performance.⁶⁶ Reid made drawings of several scenes from the play including Champlain's arrival in Quebec, Cartier at Fontainebleau, and the Iroquois returning after the massacre of Dollard, some of which he developed in later works.⁶⁷ Despite his introduction to new concepts of pageantry, Reid continued to believe in traditional modes of imagery and in 1918 he showed a slightly revised version of *Ave Canada* at Toronto's Canadian National Exhibition.⁶⁸ What may be the only review of the work was written by Hector Charlesworth for *Saturday Night* magazine;⁶⁹ and Reid placed it in his scrapbook under the 1906 photograph of *Ave Canada*.⁷⁰ According to Charlesworth,

I was very much interested in the study for a mural decoration 'Ave Canada' by the noted painter George A. Reid of Toronto. Mural decoration is an art very much neglected in this country. Mr. Reid's study shows a fine quality of thought and imagination, and has both balance of arrangement and variety of conception. It is to be hoped that some day Mr. Reid and a group of assistants have an opportunity to develop it on a large scale.

Although Charlesworth's apparent lack of knowledge of the history of the project lends an ironic tone to his comments, his last sentence accurately reflects Reid's own hope that *Ave Canada* would be placed in a public building. However, the mural was never again exhibited in Reid's lifetime and remained in his possession until his death. While it did not become a great national symbol, Reid achieved his ambition to provide civic edification through mural art when he decorated the walls of a Toronto school building. Two factors contributed to the realisation of this goal; the first was his role as an advisor to public schools on the educational merits of art. In 1914 Reid had helped prepare a pamphlet for the Ontario Department of Education on selecting works that were appropriate for the study of art and the decoration of schools.⁷¹ Never having strayed from his belief in the didactic value of mural art, Reid ensured that a full chapter of the pamphlet was devoted to the subject. Secondly, Reid was chairman of the Ontario Advisory Committee on War Memorials in 1919 and his input is obvious in the committee's statement that war memorials contain allegorical themes and be placed in public buildings that are "educational or humanitarian."⁷²

Between 1928 and 1929, Reid painted a series of eleven murals for the auditorium of the Jarvis Collegiate Institute in Toronto.⁷³ They were part of a war memorial that also included a bronze tablet listing the names of the Jarvis students killed in the war, a "chalice of undying light" under the tablet, and panels listing the names of students who returned from the war. Nine of Reid's murals, which realistically illustrate the early explorers of Canada and related events, are



fig.14 George Reid, *Patriotism and Sacrifice*, Auditorium, Jarvis Collegiate Institute, 1929. (Photo: Isaac Applebaum)

based on sketches he had made during the Quebec pageant of 1908.⁷⁴ The two largest murals, which measure 4.2 metres by 4.6 metres, extol the ideas of heroism, patriotism and self-sacrifice associated with the First World War (fig.14).⁷⁵ In the centre of *Sacrifice* (fig.15), a cenotaph is guarded by cadets holding the drooping flags of Great Britain and Canada, while a Girl Guide kneels to place a wreath at its base. Cadets and Boy Scouts also stand at attention on either side along with groups of families, students, educators, artists, and national leaders. Other children approach the monument bearing flowers and wreaths in homage to the dead. *Sacrifice* extols the virtue of offering one's own life in the service of a nation and as such, suggests the ultimate tribute of *Ave Canada*.

The second large work, *Patriotism* (fig.16), makes more direct reference to the original composition of *Ave Canada*. Canada is symbolised by a female figure standing on a raised dais; she holds the document of Canadian Confederation in her left hand and a wreath as a token of merit in her right hand. The figure is clearly modelled on *Ave Canada*'s seated regal figure but she now joins the rest of the nation in venerating the fallen soldiers. In a similar spirit, male cadets carrying provincial banners replace the princesses who

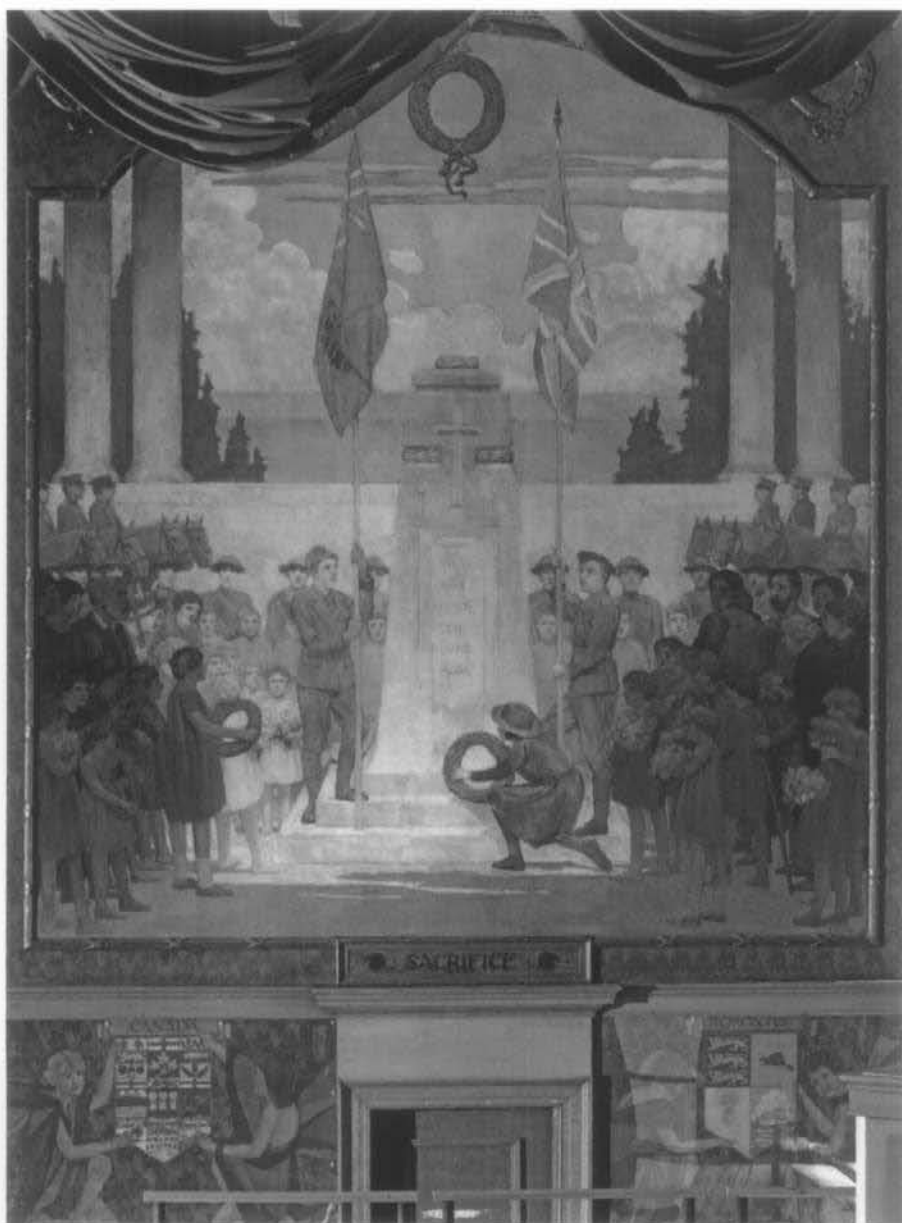


fig.15 George Reid, **Sacrifice**, Auditorium, Jarvis Collegiate Institute, 1929.
(Photo: Isaac Applebaum)

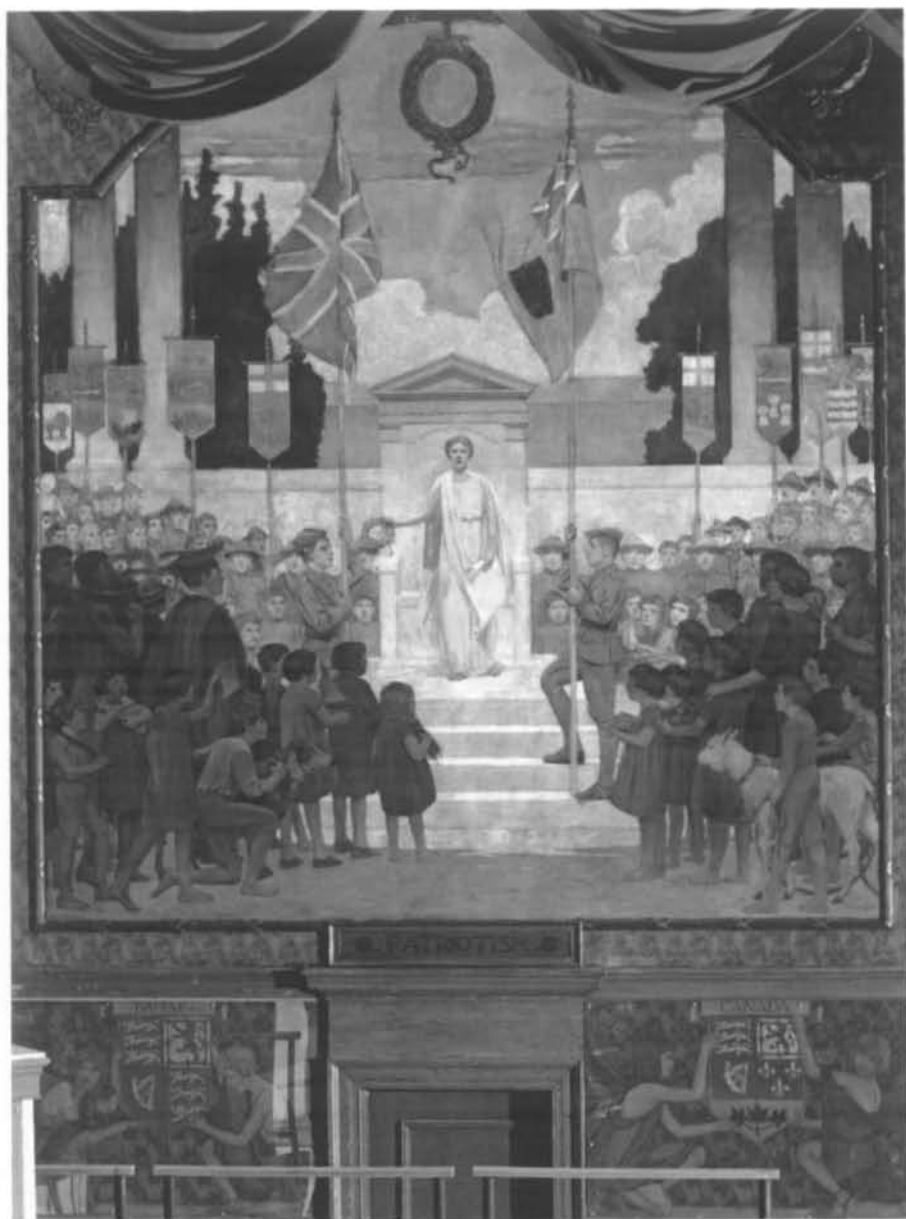


fig.16 George Reid, **Patriotism**, Auditorium, Jarvis Collegiate Institute, 1929.
(Photo: Isaac Applebaum)

once symbolized the provinces. Around the figure of Canada groups representing the family, law, education, labour, government and defence, pay homage to the nation. School cadets bear the flags of Great Britain and Canada, while in the near background soldiers and Boy Scouts fill the width of the composition. The only uniformed figures are soldiers on horseback in the far distance. Following the war, many Canadian teenage boys enrolled in the cadet corps or became members of the Boy Scouts, a movement that was militaristic in ideology but at the same time dedicated to constructive citizenship and community service.⁷⁶

At Jarvis Collegiate, Reid's allegorical image of Canada and her children was expanded to envision Canada's youth as the nation's future defenders. A transformed *Ave Canada* finally found its place in the setting of the public school, where for a short time mural painting emerged as a suitable means to educate Canadian children. Finally, Reid was able to offer what he long considered was the greatest gift of mural art: painting that aroused patriotism, inspired virtues and taught the history of the nation to its people.

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Notes

- 1 George A. Reid et al., to The Right Honourable Sir Wilfred Laurier, Ottawa, April 1904, National Archives of Canada, Prime Ministers' Fond, Wilfred Laurier, 225911-225913.
- 2 See REID, "Mural Decoration," *Canadian Architect and Builder* 11, no.1 (1898): 12-15; and "Mural Decoration," *Canadian Magazine* 10, no.6 (April 1898): 501-08, for his overview of mural painting and recent projects in Europe and the United States.
- 3 Although Harris was President of the RCA, his signature is conspicuously absent from Reid's letter. See Robert Harris, letter to Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, 20 April 1903. NAC, Prime Ministers' Fond, Wilfrid Laurier, 72338-72343.
- 4 Reid, "Report of work done in connection with the proposed decoration scheme for the Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, made for the information of the artists interested," 12 June 1905. *George Reid Scrapbooks* (c.1880s-1947), compiled by Reid and housed in the E.P. Taylor Reference Library, Art Gallery of Ontario, vol.1, n.p.
- 5 David Ewart was Chief Architect from 1897 to 1914.
- 6 See Margaret ARCHIBALD, *By Federal Design: The Chief Architect's Branch of the Department of Public Works, 1881-1914* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1983). She explains that the Chief Architect's Branch did not initiate public building projects. The mural proposal was very different from the type of work supervised by Public Works, which related to the construction and improvement of public buildings.
- 7 Reid to Challener, 12 June 1905, *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol.1, n.p.
- 8 Reid, "Specifications for proposed Decorations...", *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol.1, n.p.
- 9 John PAGE, *Report of John Page, Esq. Chief Engineer Public Works on the Public Buildings at Ottawa* (Ottawa: Hunter, Rose, 1868). According to the report, the entrance hall, which was approached through a large doorway situated under a carriage porch, "consisted of two parts: the first being a semicircular space, 32 feet by 11 feet...beyond this is the principal part, measuring 72 feet by 39 feet and 24 feet high." See also Carolyn A. YOUNG, *The Glory of Ottawa: Canada's First Parliament Buildings* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995).
- 10 See Muriel MILLER, *G.A. Reid: Canadian Artist* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1946).
- 11 See Howard Mumford JONES, "The Renaissance and American Origins," *Ideas in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1944), 140-51. According to Jones, in the spirit of the "American Renaissance," architects, painters, sculptors and decorators had collaborated to produce a uniquely American art with national ideals inspired by the art and architecture of the Italian Renaissance.
- 12 See *World's Columbian Exposition, Official Catalogue* (Chicago: W.B. Gonkey, 1893); and *Canadian Department of Fine Art. World's Columbian Exposition, 1893, Catalogue of Paintings* (Toronto: C.B. Robinson, 1893).
- 13 Reid's *Foreclosure of the Mortgage* (1893) won a medal at the Chicago Exposition.
- 14 See Sally WEBSTER, *Eve's Daughter/Modern Woman: A Mural by Mary Cassatt* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004) and Bailey VAN HOOK, *Angels of Art: Women*

and *Art in American Society, 1876-1914* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 110-15.

15 Edwin Howland BLASHFIELD, *Mural Painting in America: the Scammon lectures, delivered before the Art Institute of Chicago, March 1912, and since greatly enlarged* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913).

16 Rosalind PEPALL, "Architect and Muralist: The Painter George Reid in Onteora, New York," *Canadian Collector* 86 (July/August 1984): 44-47.

17 See Marylin MCKAY, *A National Soul: Canadian Mural Painting 1860s-1930s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 40, and Rosalind PEPALL, "The Murals by George A. Reid in the Toronto Municipal Buildings (1897-1899)." MA thesis, Concordia University, 1982.

18 Margaret L. FAIRBAIRN, "The Art of George A. Reid," *Canadian Magazine* 22 no.1 (November 1907): 6.

19 Ibid., 8.

20 See, among others, Joseph POLZER, "Ambrogio Lorenzetti's War and Peace Murals Revisited: Contributions to the Meaning of the Good Government Allegory," *Artibus et Historiae* 23, no.4 (2002): 63-105.

21 See Lawrence McBride BRYANT, "The French Royal Entry Ceremonies: Politics, Society, and Art in Renaissance Paris." Ph.D. thesis, The University of Iowa, 1978. The concept of *jocundus adventus* implied both the actual entry of the king or lord and his right to certain honours and gifts on his arrival. See also BRYANT, *The King and the City in the Parisian Royal Entry Ceremony: Politics, Ritual and Art in the Renaissance* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1986).

22 For a discussion of the relationship between pageants and mural painting in the United States during this era, see Trudy BALTZ, "Pageantry and Mural Painting: Community Rituals in Allegorical Form," *Winterthur Portfolio* 15, no.3 (January 1980): 211-28.

23 Alberta and Saskatchewan became provinces in 1905.

24 Rosalind PEPALL, "The Murals in the Toronto Municipal Buildings: George Reid's Debt to Puvis de Chavannes," *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* IX, no.2 (1986): 142-60. See also Laurier LACROIX, "Puvis de Chavannes and Canada," *The Journal of Canadian Art History/Annales d'histoire de l'art canadien* IV, no.1 (1977): 6-12.

25 Claudine MITCHELL, "Time and Idea of Patriarchy in the Pastorals of Puvis de Chavannes," *Art History* 10, no.2 (June 1987): 188-202 and Jennifer L. SHAW, "Imagining the Motherland: Puvis de Chavannes, Modernism and the Fantasy of France," *Art Bulletin* 79, no.6 (December 1997): 586-610.

26 Unsigned, "Canadian Art in the Palace of the White City," *The Montreal Weekly Witness* (30 August 1893). For a contemporaneous discussion of Reid's paintings of children see Hjalmar Hjorth BOYESEN, "Boyhood and Girlhood," *The Monthly Illustrator* 4, no.12 (April 1895): 3-8.

27 Unsigned, "A Canadian Artist," *Home Magazine* (21 May 1908): 906.

28 "Art," *Saturday Night* 9, no.50 (31 October 1896): 9. "Mr. G.A. Reid has brought with him from Spain a number of very fine copies of Velazquez."

- 29 For a discussion of the French academic curriculum see Albert BOIME, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Phaidon, 1971).
- 30 Reid, *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol.2, 272.
- 31 The date in the National Gallery of Canada registrar's files is 1918. Reid made slight alterations to the painting when he installed the mural in his Toronto home in 1918. The completion date in MILLER, G.A. Reid, 104, is 1916.
- 32 William A. SHERWOOD, "A National Spirit in Art," *Canadian Magazine* 3, no.6 (October 1894): 500.
- 33 REID, "Mural Decoration," *Canadian Magazine* 10, no.6 (April 1898): 504.
- 34 PEPALL, "The Murals in the Toronto Municipal Buildings," 155.
- 35 See Ramsay COOK, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) and T.J. Jackson LEARS, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).
- 36 SHORTT, S.E.D., "James Mavor: The Empirical Ideal," *The Search for an Ideal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 119-35.
- 37 Fern BAYER, "The 'Ontario Collection' and the Ontario Society of Artists Policy and Purchases, 1873-1914," *RACAR* 8, no.1 (1981): 42. The Toronto Guild of Civic Art Committee, a group of laymen were responsible for the selection of art for the "Ontario Collection" from 1900 to 1907.
- 38 Rosalind PEPALL, "Under the Spell of Morris: A Canadian Perspective," in *The Earthly Paradise: Art and Crafts by William Morris and His Circle from Canadian Collections*, ed. Katharine A. Lochnan, Douglas E. Schoenherr and Carole Silver (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario and Key Porter Books, 1993), 19-35.
- 39 George K. WEISSENBORN, "Gustav Hahn, Beloved Teacher and Art Nouveau Pioneer (1866-1962)," *German-Canadian Yearbook*, vol. 6 (Toronto: Historical Society of Mecklenburg Upper Canada, 1981), 238-40.
- 40 MCKAY, *A National Soul*, 39.
- 41 The visit to London followed Hahn's brief return to Germany, where his father had died suddenly while visiting family. Kathy Hooke, "Gustav Hahn in Europe." Unpublished paper, Hahn Family Archive, Peterborough, Ont.
- 42 Hahn Family Archives.
- 43 Kathy Hooke, interview with the author, 16 October 2003. Kathy Hooke is the wife of Gustav Hahn's grandson and the Hahn family archivist.
- 44 Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Exhibition Catalogue* (Toronto: Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, 1906), 15.
- 45 WEISSENBORN, "Gustav Hahn, Beloved Teacher," 238. Hahn was made an Associate of the RCA in 1901.
- 46 Otto HAHN's writings on Canada include *Canada: meine Reise an den Nipissing (Ontario) und die Schweizerkolonie* (Reutlingen: Carl Rupp, 1878); *Canada: ein Auswanderungs-Ziel für Deutsche* (Reutlingen: Eduard Schauwecker, 1880); *Canada: die Berichte der vier deutschen*

Delegierten über ihre Reise nach Canada im Herbst 1881/zusammengestellt und eingeleitet (Reutlingen: Eduard Schauwecker, 1882).

47 MILLER, G.A. Reid, 104.

48 See Reid, "Note on Mural Painting in Canada Prepared for the Information of the Council of the Royal Canadian Academy for Use at Its Meetings Called for the Consideration of the Work Now in Progress in England and France to Commemorate the Operation of the Canadian Forces in the War by Means of Paintings 1917." *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol.2, 347.

49 REID, "Royal Canadian Academy of Arts: Memorial Regarding the Present Conditions and Needs of Canadian Art." This document was sent to the Governor General and signed by Reid on behalf of the Council of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, 7 Jan. 1906. It was published in the *Canadian Architect and Builder* 20, no.6 (1907): 98, with the addition of this comment: "the Government did not see its way clear to carry out the plan as proposed and themselves appointed a permanent Commission of three."

50 For Reid's reaction to the decision, see p.6, *Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. Report for 1907-08*: "It should not be thought, however, that the appointment of the Advisory Council relieves the Academy of its responsibilities connected with the Public Art, or takes from it opportunities for exerting its influence on the patronage of Art by the Government; but it should be looked upon as the beginning of a more adequate encouragement and patronage of the Fine Arts in Canada."

51 Sir Wilfrid Laurier to Suzor-Coté, Ottawa, 22 November 1907, National Archives of Canada (132598); quoted in Laurier LACROIX, *Suzor-Coté: lumière et matière* (Québec: Musée du Québec, 2002), 144.

52 M.L.A.F. "Easel Picture To-day, Mural Vogue Coming: Gustav Hahn, R.C.A. of Gifted Family is Talented Contributor," *Toronto Daily Star*, 19 March 1913.

53 Gustav Hahn, "The Development of National Interest in Mural Work," unpublished talk, c.1913. Hahn Family Archives.

54 Reid, "Note on Mural Painting in Canada...", 347.

55 James MAVOR, *Notes on the Objects of the Toronto Guild of Civic Art and on the Exhibition of Prints of Mural Paintings with Condensed Catalogue* (Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison, 1898), 6.

56 See Sarah MOORE, "In Search of an American Iconography: Critical Reaction to the Murals at the Library of Congress," *Winterthur Portfolio* 25, no.4 (January 1990): 231-39.

57 J.A. RADFORD, "Canadian Art Schools, Artists and Art," *Canadian Magazine* 2 no.5 (March 1894): 462-66.

58 RADFORD, "Canadian Art and Its Critics," *Canadian Magazine* 24, no.3 (September 1907): 517.

59 J.L.R., "George Agnew Reid, an interview," *Acta Victoriana* 30, no.3 (1906-7): 125.

60 When the Statute of Westminster granted Canada legislative independence in 1931, the Great Seal became that of the King or Queen of Canada and is in the custody of the Governor-General.

- 61 The *Canadian Provinces Confederation Medal* depicted the four provinces that originally formed the Dominion of Canada, through the British North America Act of 1867: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. The medal is discussed in the *Canadian Illustrated News* 1, no.6 (11 December 1869): 93.
- 62 Jean BLEWETT, "The Native Born" in *The Call of the Homeland*, ed. R.P. SCOTT and Katharine T. WALLIS (London: Blackie & Sons, 1907), 96. See also R.G. MOYLES and Doug OWRAM, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 19: "It was this basic paradox...that faced British imperialists throughout the Age of Imperialism, and which they either rejected or strove hard to understand. And it manifested itself not only in the poetry but in the politics as well."
- 63 H.V. NELLES, *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 280-82.
- 64 Frank LASCELLES, *Quebec Ancient and Modern: Containing Over 150 Illustrations and A Short History of the City Founded by Champlain* (Montreal: Cambridge Corp., 1909).
- 65 See Anthony PARKER, *Pageants: Their Presentation and Production* (London: Bodley Head, 1954).
- 66 "Mr. Lascelles in forecasting the pageant, said that not only were the incidents from early Canadian history full of picturesque possibility, but nowhere could there be found a setting to excel in beauty or historic interest the corner of the Plains of Abraham upon which the gigantic grand stand had been erected, at a point overlooking the St. Lawrence. The spectacle opened with the arrival of Cartier, three-quarter of a century before the coming of Champlain, and closed with Montcalm and Lévis, Wolfe and Murray, with their regiments, parading amid salutes from the guns of the warships in the bay." *Our King and Queen: A Pictorial Record of Their Times*, vol.1, ed. J.A. Hammerton (London: Educational Book Co. Ltd., 1929), 386.
- 67 Reid's painting, *The Arrival of Champlain at Quebec*, National Gallery of Canada, 1909, oil on burlap, 182.7 x 274.2 x 2.3 cm, is based on drawings such as *Fur Traders at Montreal*, C-11013A; *Fur Traders at Montreal*, C-11014A; *Arrival of Champlain at Quebec*, C-11015A; *Champlain*, C-11016; *Return of the Indians from Long Sault*, C-3137; *Jacques Cartier erects a Cross*, C-96999; and a triptych, *The Pageants at Quebec for the Tercentenary Celebration, 1908*, C-142814-6, at the National Archives of Canada.
- 68 *Catalogue of Department of Fine Arts, Canadian National Exhibition* (Toronto: Saturday Night Press, 1918); "Ave Canada. Study for Mural Decoration" is #184.
- 69 Hector CHARLESWORTH, "Toronto's New Art Gallery: Its First Exhibition Provided by the Royal Canadian Academy," *Saturday Night* 31, no.2 (20 April 1918): 3.
- 70 *George Reid Scrapbooks*, vol. 2, 273.
- 71 See *List of Reproductions of Works of Art. A Selected List of Reproductions of Works of Art Suitable for Art Study and for the Decoration of Schools: Information Concerning the Purchase of Pictures, and Suggestions for the Decoration of Schools. Prepared by the Committee on Art Instruction Appointed by the Ontario Society of Artists at the Request of the Department of Education. Educational Pamphlets no.5* (Toronto: The Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 1914).
- 72 Ontario Advisory Committee on War Memorials, "War Memorials: Circular of Suggested Proposals as to Their Treatment and Form," Toronto, April 1919.

73 REID, *Descriptive Notes of Mural Decorations. Designed and Painted by G.A. Reid, R.C.A., O.S.A., assisted by Lorna Claire, A.O.C.A.* (Toronto: Jarvis Collegiate Institute Auditorium, undated); L.G. MCKERRACHER, "Our Canadian Art Section: Jarvis Collegiate Murals," *Teachers' Bulletin* (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation Bulletin) 2, no.2 (April 1931): 39-42.

74 The subjects are *Ericson Discovering North America, 1000 A.D.*; *Groups of Discoverers from Eric the Red to Columbus*; *Groups of Discoverers from Cartier to Hudson*; *Cabot Erects a Cross in Nova Scotia, 1497*; *Cartier Erects a Cross at Gaspé, 1534*; *Founding of Hudson's Bay Company, 1668*; *The United Empire Loyalists Ascending the St. Lawrence, 1784*; *Mackenzie Discovers the Pacific, 1793*; *Patriotism*; *Sacrifice*.

75 Reid's murals are among many World War I memorials commissioned in the 1920s and 1930s by private citizens across the country and by the Canadian government. See Alan R. YOUNG, "We Throw the Torch': Canadian Memorials of the Great War and the Mythology of Heroic Sacrifice," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 24, no.4 (1989-90): 5-28.

76 For a discussion of the boy scout movement and the cadet corps see Allen WARREN, "Popular Manliness: Baden-Powell, Scouting, and the Development of Manly Character," in *Manliness and Morality: Middle Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940*, ed. J.A. Mangan and James Walvin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 199-219.

LE CANADA RECEVANT L'HOMMAGE DE SES ENFANTS

Ave Canada de George Reid, et *Hail Dominion* de Gustav Hahn :
Un projet de murales pour le hall d'honneur du Parlement du Canada

En avril 1904, le premier ministre du Canada, sir Wilfrid Laurier, recevait une lettre de la direction de l'Académie royale des arts du Canada. Cette lettre, rédigée par George Reid et signée par Reid, Franklin Brownell et William Brymner, proposait une série de peintures murales, intitulée *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Faithful Sons* (titre modifié plus tard en *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Children*) pour le hall d'honneur de l'édifice du centre de la Colline du Parlement à Ottawa. Reid expliquait qu'il allait réaliser les murales avec le concours de ses confrères artistes Brownell, Brymner, Frederick Challener, William Cruikshank, Edmond Dyonnet et Gustav Hahn. Le présent article étudie la proposition de Reid et la progression du projet jusqu'à son rejet final en 1917. Il étudie également les murales préparatoires exécutées par Reid et Hahn de leur propre chef : *Ave Canada* (1907-1918, Musée des beaux-arts du Canada) et une version apparentée, *Canada Receiving the Homage of Her Daughters* (1904, London Museum) par Reid; et *Hail Dominion* (1906, Musée des beaux-arts du Canada) par Hahn. Le présent texte explore aussi les raisons pour lesquelles Reid et Hahn ont choisi d'idéaliser le Canada en évoquant un sentiment d'appartenance familiale, et pourquoi le projet a échoué, malgré de sérieuses tentatives de convaincre le gouvernement du Canada et le grand public de la capacité d'un décor mural allégorique d'exprimer un esprit national.

Le prototype de l'*Ave Canada* de Reid était la fresque *Allégorie d'un Bon Gouvernement*, peinte par Ambrogio Lorenzetti, entre 1338 et 1340, dans la Salle des Neuf du Palazzo Pubblico de Sienne. Cependant, le concept et le mode d'exécution de Reid sont liés plus directement à d'autres sources : les procédés qu'il a appris aux académies Julian et Colarossi, en 1892; les murales de Puvis de Chavanne qu'il avait vues à Paris; l'art public des peintres américains à l'exposition colombienne mondiale de Chicago en 1893; et les portraits d'enfants royaux et de nains par Diego Vélasquez, que Reid avait copiés au cours d'un voyage en Espagne en 1896. Dans *Ave Canada*, l'accent mis sur la progéniture symbolique de la patrie faisait sens pour Reid, car les Canadiens se rappelleraient ses populaires

œuvres antérieures sur la vie de famille, particulièrement *The Foreclosure of the Mortgage* (1891).

En développant la forme et la composition de *Hail Dominion*, Hahn répondait au thème et aux éléments picturaux d'*Ave Canada* afin d'assurer un rapport harmonieux entre les œuvres. Toutefois, le traitement des figures et des aspects de la composition suggèrent une approche visuelle différente. Hahn est arrivé à Toronto en 1888 venant d'Allemagne, après avoir étudié la peinture, la décoration d'intérieur et les arts appliqués à la *Kunstgewerbeschule* de Stuttgart, à l'époque où le style Art Nouveau était florissant. Pour transformer les personnages allégoriques de ses murales antérieures en femmes plus contemporaines, Hahn s'est servi de sa femme et de deux de ses filles comme modèles. *Hail Dominion* était l'image idéale d'un Canada où les vertus féminines exprimaient des concepts communs de la vie privée et publique.

À l'époque où Hahn et Reid réalisaient leurs tableaux, les critiques d'art s'élevaient contre les influences européennes sur l'art canadien, et en particulier l'utilisation d'allégories classiques dans la décoration murale. Les tableaux d'Hahn et de Reid reflétaient un contenu symbolique qui avait déjà perdu sa viabilité esthétique et politique. Ils avaient tous deux ignoré des images qui auraient efficacement exprimé la souveraineté du Canada par la Confédération. Au lieu de cela, leurs images évoquaient les représentations symboliques bien connues de la reine Victoria et ses filles du Canada, et ne reflétaient plus le nouveau sentiment national du pays. De plus, les Canadiens avaient pris l'habitude de regarder des caricatures politiques qui exploitaient les tensions entre le Canada et ses provinces. Ces caricatures représentaient constamment le pays comme une famille décidément désorganisée, comme on le voit dans l'œuvre du caricaturiste et éditeur John William Bengough. La satire politique représentait souvent le Canada comme une mère maussade, inquiète, dépourvue, agressive ou d'une bonne humeur excessive, et reflétait plus justement la réalité politique canadienne que les images idéalisées de Reid et de Hahn qui donnaient à leur œuvre une certaine banalité.

Le rôle de Hahn comme promoteur de la peinture murale, en tant que directeur du département de design d'intérieur de l'Ontario School of Art, prend fin abruptement pendant la Première Guerre mondiale, alors qu'une vague de sentiments anti-allemands le prive de commandes. Après la guerre, Reid continue de faire la promotion de la peinture murale en tant que président de la Royal Canadian Academy et professeur au Ontario College of Art. Vingt-quatre ans après avoir écrit au premier ministre Laurier pour lui proposer une série de murales, Reid voit enfin les onze tableaux d'une version modifiée d'*Ave Canada* trouver place dans l'auditorium du Jarvis Collegiate Institute de Toronto entre 1928 et 1929. Neuf des tableaux représentent les premiers explorateurs du Canada et les événements connexes, et sont fondés sur les croquis d'un spectacle qu'il avait

vu des gradins érigés sur les Plaines d'Abraham lors des célébrations du tricentenaire de la ville de Québec, en 1908. Les deux plus grandes murales exaltent les idées d'héroïsme, de patriotisme et de don de soi associées à la Première Guerre mondiale. *Sacrifice*, avec son cénotaphe central, exalte la vertu du don de sa vie au service de la patrie et suggère ainsi l'hommage ultime rendu au Canada par ses enfants. *Patriotism* fait encore plus directement référence à la composition originale d'*Ave Canada*. La figure royale du Canada, qui était assise dans *Ave Canada*, est ici debout sur une estrade et se joint à la patrie pour vénérer les soldats tombés au champ d'honneur. Des cadets masculins portant les bannières des provinces remplacent les princesses qui représentaient les provinces dans *Ave Canada*. À Jarvis, la figure allégorique du Canada a été développée par Reid pour exprimer la jeunesse des futurs défenseurs de la patrie. Reid a enfin pu offrir ce qu'il avait depuis longtemps considéré comme le plus grand don de la peinture murale : une peinture qui suscite le patriotisme, inspire la vertu et enseigne l'histoire de la patrie à son peuple.

Traduction : Élise Bonnette