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Canada

The Image of Canada.

Iconological Sources of Canadian Popular Symbolism:
nineteenth-century souvenir photographs.

Jana L. Bara

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Humanities

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at
Concordia University
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Canada

Abstract

The Image of Canada.
Iconological Sources of Canadian Popular Symbolism:
nineteenth-century souvenir photographs.

Jana L. Bara, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 1991

Canada is an indistinct society.

It is symptomatic of the fragmented and unfocused national

psyche that in four centuries no symbolic summation has

emerged of Canada, - generally accepted, respected and

positively oriented - to represent a common identity by

concensus. The mosaic image needs inter-stellar perspective

to produce the perception of an adequate Gestalt.

Sporadic attempts have been initiated to impose a

received image, but have failed through their concern with

iconology, and even hagiography, rather than with any

consistent semiology: meaning has been subordinated to

expediency.

In absence of any centrally sanctioned symbols,

popular and even vulgar formulations have filled the vacuum

by default. Souvenir photographs of the Victorian period have

confirmed the canon, many of them originating in the Montreal

studios of William Notman.

An examination of the interplay of social and

political factors allows of some insight into the process of

formation of a national stereotype, and its calculated

manipulation and dissemination for commercial purposes.

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Mr. Norman McDonald of the Public Relations Department of
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Introduction

The popular stereotype of Canada, (Figs. 1, 2, 3) as reflected in contemporary souvenirs, is quite obviously incompatible with the official image, which is that of a civilized, modern, progressive and prosperous country. The international reputation of Canada in the last decade of the twentieth century is that of a nation universally respected for its record of participation in humanitarian efforts as a refuge for the homeless, a provider for the hungry, and a defender of the wronged.

The illustrations of Canada in commercial publicity and souvenirs reflect no urbane qualities and visitors expect evidence at first hand of the untouched wilderness and primitive way of life which has been synonymous with Canada since its formation.

The popular image of Canada persists as that of a romanticised and even idealised land of endless virgin forests, crystal-clear lakes, wide-open rolling prairies and majestic mountains, abounding in fauna both wild and domesticated (Figs. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9). This territory, stretching between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, is a sportsman's paradise. Canadian waters teem with fish, especially salmon and trout, which after a sporting fight, gallantly leap straight into the landing nets of visiting fishermen. Similarly, elk, moose, and deer pose obligingly on ridges and in forest clearings to offer the best possible

Fig. 1. Seagram's advertisement, Gugos, <u>Canadian Hunter Whisky</u>, 1989.

GET A CHARGE OUT OF IT

Canada is a celebration. Canada is your kind of summer. Come and enjoy the pomp and glory, the Mounties' Musical Ride of pounding hooves and flying colours. Enjoy the pageantry, the history, the tradition of friendship.

Canada offers you exciting cities and scenery as spectacular as any in the world. And when you get here, you'll find your dollars go further now because of the favourable exchange rate.

To take full advantage of this currency difference, we suggest you exchange your U.S. funds at any bank in Canada. Come celebrate your summer in Canada. We get a charge out of having you visit.

Canada
SO MUCH TO GO FOR.

Fig. 2. "Musical Ride", Advertisement, <u>National Geographic</u>, vol. 153, no. 6. June 1978.

Fig. 3. Anonymous, Mounties and Indians, Toronto: The
Postcard Factory, n/d, Ref. C49.
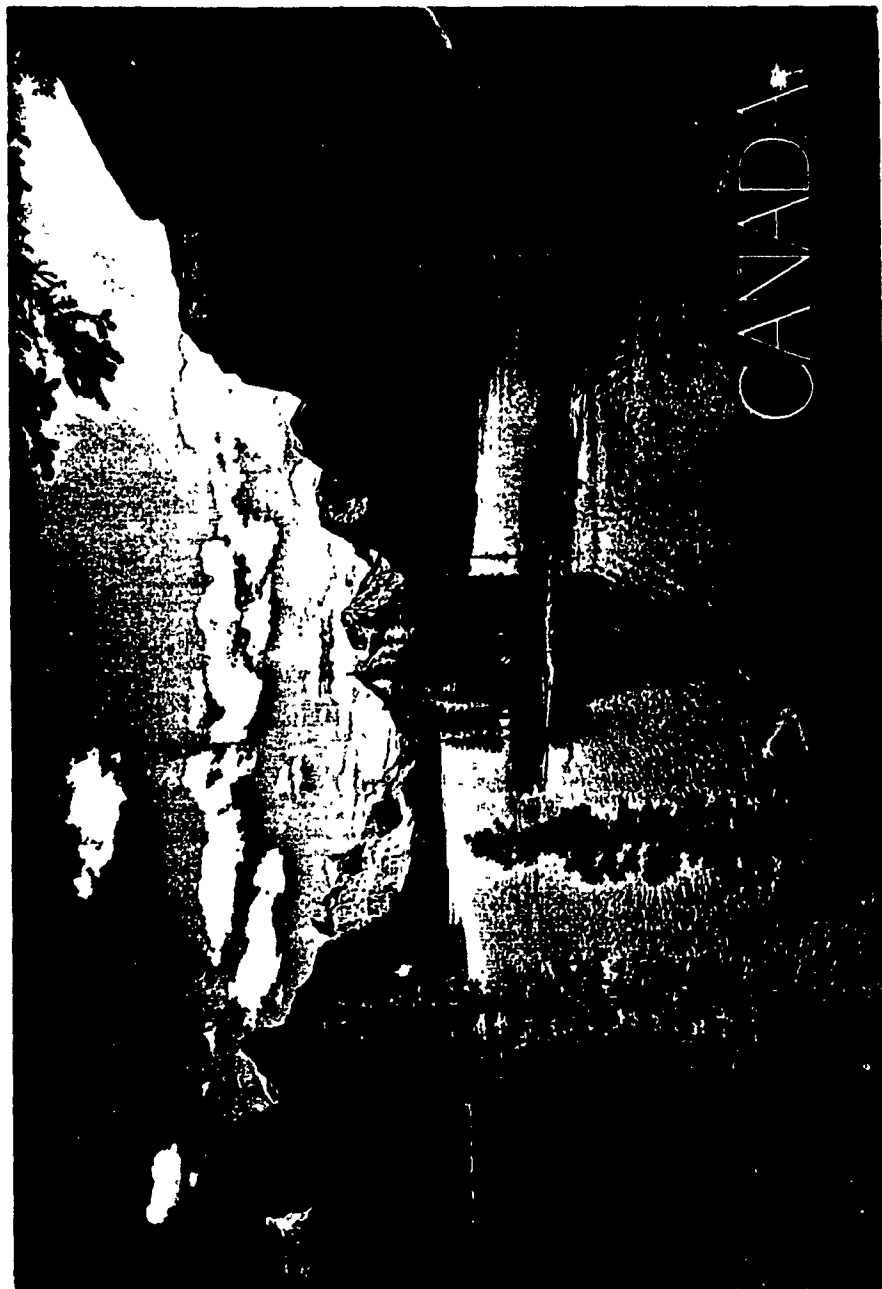
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Fig. 9. Wayne Lynch/Masterfile, Grizzly Bear, Toronto: The
Post Card Factory, n/d, Ref. C-77.

target in the cross-hairs of the telescopic sights of hunters.

Inevitably, the inhabitants of this Canadian Eden share characteristics of rugged innocence with their awesome environment. According to the popular clichés, Canada is inhabited by a larger-than-life breed of Mounties, (famous for "getting their man"), rugged backwoodsmen, and noble savages, whether Inuit or Indian, dressed in furs and tastefully decorated clothes (Figs. 10, 11, 12, 13).

The powerful and evocative characteristics and the visual appeal of popular Canadian icons render them very suitable for use in advertisements promoting Canadian products, souvenir post-cards, and travel-brochures, and for adaptations in the mass media. The images were endowed with increasing importance, as the process of image-making became progressively mechanized and automated. Technical enhancement likewise enlarged the volume and scope of image dissemination and popularisation, as drawings and engravings gave way to watercolours, paintings, photogravures, photographs, films and television programmes.

Thus it is not surprising that most prospective tourists exposed to such propaganda expect the topography and population of Canada to conform to their own preconceptions. When the realisation of over-publicised exotica fails to materialize in the view-finders of their cameras, visitors buy colourful souvenir photo-slides and post-cards to

Fig. 10. Compliments of the R.C.M.P., Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Toronto: The Post Card Factory, n/d, Ref. C-74V

Fig. 11. Sherman Hines/Masterfile, Canoeing on the Bow River, Toronto: The Post Card Factory, n/d, Ref. C-52.
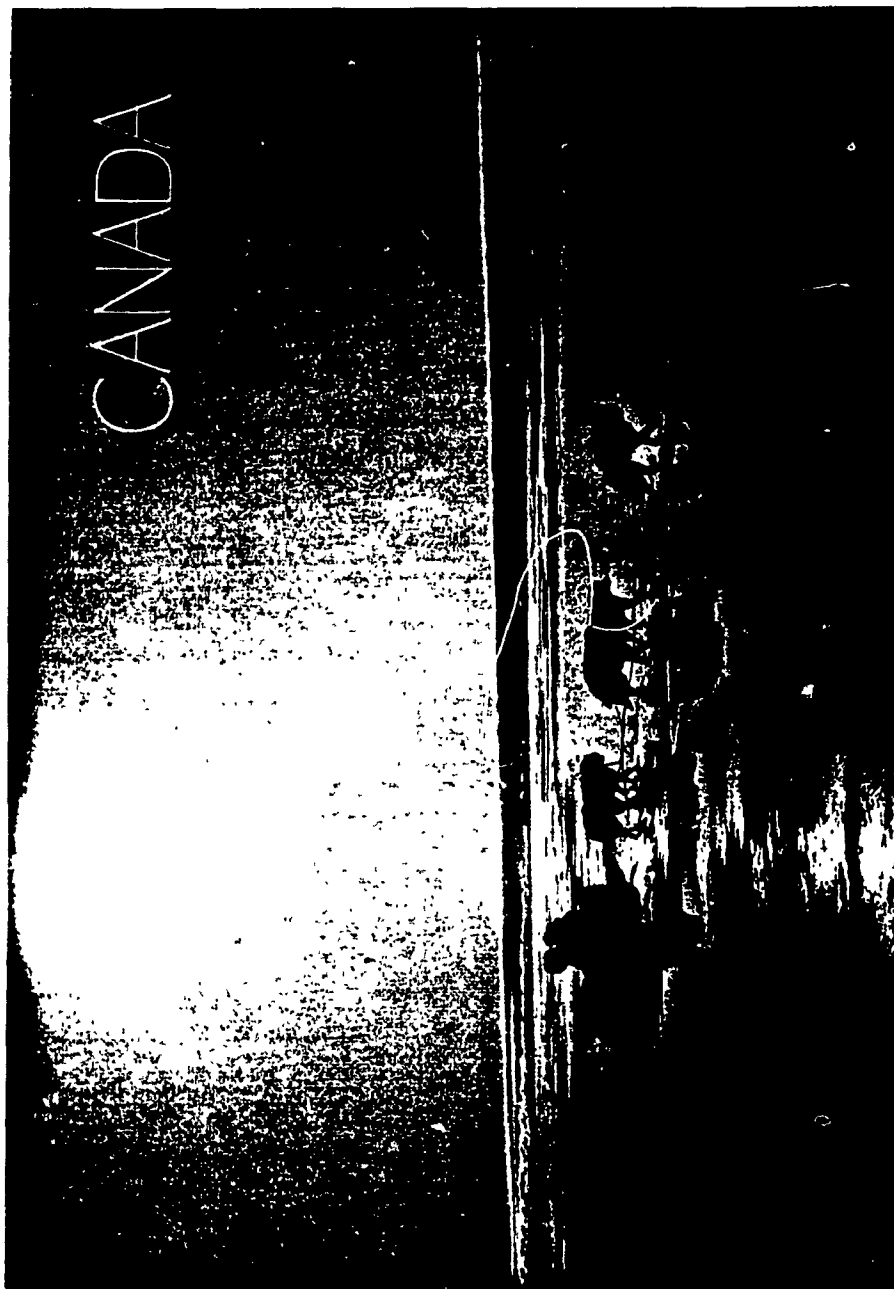
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Fig. 13. John de Visser/Masterfile, Alberta Cree Indian, Toronto: The Post Card Factory, n/d, Ref. C-60V.

document the Canadian scenes and features of their expectations which somehow must have escaped their searching eyes.

Although Canadian icons derive from their fundamental symbolism a certain quality of timelessness, their artistic merit is questionable, and most of such imagery can at best be classified as popular and at worst as <u>kitsch</u>. Nevertheless, the power and the implications of such images are all-pervasive. Even today, Canada is still represented by the same set of cliché images, unaffected by the passage of time, and accepted as enthusiastically as ever.

Popular Canadian imagery is largely an inheritance of the British colonial mentality, and the creative processes formed within its parameters. Intrinsically, these icons were also conditioned by a number of aesthetic and moral attitudes. Background of their symbolic values, has been treated in this study in an interdisciplinary, iconological analysis.

Iconological interpretation includes examination of images, types, allegories and symbols with cross-reference to philosophical, theological or political systems, of those ideas which form the coded evidence of the prevailing ideals of an era. The subjective interpretation of the intrinsic meaning of such images is checked <u>vis-à-vis</u> the corpus of relevant visual and literary evidence produced during and after the period under investigation.

It was the use of photography as a medium that ensured the dissemination, popularity, mobility, verisimilitude, and ultimately the persistence of Canadian popular imagery. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the steadily growing demand for photographic souvenirs was satisfied by contemporary photographers who presented their wares, if not on a silver platter, at least on a silver-coated daguerreotype plate. The traffic in photo-souvenirs matched the growing development of the tourist industry and the advancement of British Imperial expansionism. After over a century of repetition and distribution, such images have come to be accepted down to the present as true representations of the country.

Although the photographic process was first presented to the world in 1839, it was not until the 1860s that photographs, as a result of constant advances in technology, chemistry, and optics, became easily available and affordable to the general public. Photographs became the visual currency and the cultural property of the masses, who related to them much more readily than to the forms of "high art" which were still recognized as the province of the educated and refined upper classes. While paintings were made, photographs were taken.

Photographers reacted to every change in the fluctuating ideologies of the nineteenth century, and prints were produced en masse to satisfy every whim of the new

market with mechanical efficiency.

Photographs were above all realistic, and this attribute was represented as an inability to deceive. This truthfulness however, was highly illusory. In fact, the physical features of photographs were skillfully manipulated beyond the possibility of detection. As a result, cleverly contrived souvenir photographs, which appeared to be authentic, endowed Canadian mythical imagery with a prima facie aura of probability. The function of such pictures was not to clarify a story or an object, but rather to confer on them the appearance of reality.

Nineteenth-century souvenir photographs preceded both the commercial post-cards and the tourist snap-shots that made their appearance only in the closing decades of the century. Souvenir photographs also figured in early tourist advertisements and served as the basis for engraved illustrations in contemporary periodicals. Through these multiplications Canadian souvenir photographs became the most widely-circulated and realistic visual representations of the country.

Canada is an idea. Early photographic expressions of the idea evolved as attempts at a romanticised mythopoeic representation of views of the great North land, which were given world-wide circulation and authority by the popularity of landscape as a genre in contemporary painting.

In the century following the Treaty of Paris in 1763,

the decisive power in Canada was Great Britain. The structure
and status of society in the colony were influenced by the
importation of both populations and ideas from the British
Isles.

By the 1860s, Canada had already been settled by white
colonists for over two centuries. The influx of immigrants
still continued, and grew in volume. The cultures which the
more recent newcomers encountered in nineteenth-century
Canada were not only those of the native peoples, but also of
Canadien descendants of French settlers who had established
the colony of Nouvelle France in the seventeenth century.

Native Indians, who were taken as the first
iconographic archetype of the New World, and whose image
became indigenous to Canadian mythology and history,
presented few problems for the British. On the other hand,
French Canada as the British saw it, proved highly
intransigent, adhering to its own distinct and separate way
of life, and resisting the cultural domination implicit in
the Conquest.

French civil law was preserved, and religious and
linguistic liberties confirmed. In consequence, the French
and British populations in Canada lived apart in a state of
cultural incompability which originated in the
dissimilarities of their spiritual values, languages, and
educational and jurisprudential systems.

These essential differences in ideological approaches

to life itself were often carried over, in indirect and subtle ways, into various forms of visual expression. In the choice and treatment of subjects in photo-souvenirs are reflected divisions in social outlook and group loyalties, as well as variations in the ambience of the epoch.

In souvenirs created for the British market the imagery was charged with symbols evoking traditional loyalties, looking backward across the Atlantic, as well as materialistic tendencies reflected in the display of property and status symbols, such as horses, hunting dogs and equipment, and furs (Fig. 14.) They became tokens of the continuity and permanence of the British Empire.

Among the subjects in the curriculum of English-language schools in Canada, the long and eventful process of British history was given a prominent place. In contrast with the two-thousand-year succession of dynastic wars, voyages of discovery and explorations, military adventures, scientific and cultural advancements, religious reforms, and large-scale expansionism, the history of Canada itself seems uneventful, uninteresting and even dull. On the surface, Canadian history, especially after the Confederation, is little more than a continuous sequence of commercial developments and business ventures of the local bourgeoisie, inspired to high achievement by the ethic of hard work ard material success fundamental to their predominantly Protestant Weltanschauung.

In marked contrast, French-Canadian culture reflected

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Fig. 14. Montreal, McCord Museum of Canadian History, Notman
Photographic Archive, Notman Studio, (thereafter NPA.) Lewis
L. Hagar's Group, 76907, 1872.

the sacrosanct historical role of the French as Crusaders of
the Christian Faith and missionaries of civilization. Quebec
was a stronghold of the Roman Catholic Church in North
America, and the religious element became an integral part of
French-Canadian cultural expression, which remained strongly
influenced by its pious origins. The standard literary image
of the French Canadians, was that of "prêtres, soldats et
laboureurs," as it appeared in countless nineteenth-century
French-Canadian poems, weekly church sermons, and political
orations.

As opposed to British-Canadian symbolism, oriented
towards the themes of work-as-adventure, dominance and
control of the earthly creation, the images produced by
French-Canadian culture were reflected in more abstract and
poetic concepts and subjects, unsullied by considerations of
everyday human existence. Art and poetry often celebrated the
gallantry or nobility of military heroes in defeat, the
dedication and eloquence of political leaders, or soul-
elevating aspects of the wonders of God's creation. Images of
churches, convents, seminaries and their interiors, Saints,
(Figs. 15, 16) missionary martyrs, and benefactors and
dignitaries of Catholic religious orders in Quebec were, in
the second half of the nineteenth century, the favoured
subjects chosen for dissemination in the form of photographic
souvenirs. Such keep-sakes continued the pious practice of
distributing "holy pictures" featuring saints, shrines and

Fig. 15. Archives nationales du Québec, Quebec City, J.
Ernest Livernois, <u>Couvent des Ursulines: dortoir de l'École
normale</u>, 1889.

Fig. 16. NPA, <u>Saint Jean-Baptiste</u>, 45356-BII, 1877.

works of religious art. Within the limited circle of like-minded and culturally self-sufficient Québécois, they were accepted and treasured, but seldom found any circulation outside of North America. Even if such images found their way to Europe, their interest was limited by their religious associations, in disregard of their place of origin.

Canada came to be represented abroad mainly by those images and souvenirs which were British in their origins and traditions. The message encoded in these souvenirs was that of a land of limitless opportunity in the colonial context of a new Dominion within a world-wide Commonwealth.

While scores of such venturesome Canadian images were disseminated all over the world, Canadians at home devoted their energies to arduous but profitable activities in building up the country. This process was occasionally interrupted by armed conflicts, which were, however, both small in scale and limited in duration. Initiated from within Canada or the United States, these outbreaks were neutralised by the Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Militia or task forces from regiments of the British Garrison. Threats from within and without required an armed presence, especially during the years of the Civil War in the United States, between 1861 and 1865, when the Canadian home forces received the greatest reinforcement in numbers of British troops.[1] The

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[1] William Lewis Morton, gen. ed., introduction, Monck Letters and Journals 1863-1868 (Toronto/Montreal: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1970) xii.

British military establishment was a source of profit to entrepreneurs, suppliers and contractors, as army regiments depended on local merchants for the provision of commissary resources. Garrisons also constituted a market for interesting local artifacts of all kinds, as members of the armed forces sought mementos of their tour of duty. Many such souvenirs took the form of photographs.

If the facts of Canadian history are relatively unexciting and such national emblems as the beaver and the maple-tree are simplistic, uninspiring and static, the popular imagery of the country, in contrast, is decisively engaging. Images of trappers, hunters, Mounted Policemen, Indians, and hardy pioneers in the wilderness, were found colourful, exotic and desirable as souvenirs of Canada by tourists, visitors, and members of the British naval and military forces.

Officers of the Garrison often belonged to the British aristocracy, and even to the Royal family. Educated, affluent, and leisured, they were collectors, compilers of records, and authors of memoirs and autobiographies. The three-year term of their tour of duty in Canada was usually uneventful, as there was seldom any call on their services for military action. As a consequence, their activities were concentrated on para-military forms of sports considered beneficial to the maintenance of the aggressive and competitive spirit. Souvenir photographs recorded such manly

and soldierly pursuits, and members of the forces posed
proudly as mighty hunters, masquerading in native dress,
habitant or Indian, or swathed in furs, in mute testimony to
their way of life in an environment far removed from the
mother-country. Others purchased ready-made studio-scenes
which featured hunting expeditions with all of the
impedimenta of sleighs and toboggans, tents, camp-fires,
traps, guns, snow-shoes, local guides and stuffed animals,
arranged in front of snow-covered backdrops and an abundance
of fresh coniferous greenery. The best-known creator of
photo-souvenirs of this type was William Notman of Montreal.

Of all of the photographers in nineteenth-century
Canada, William Notman (1839-1898), a Scottish immigrant to
Montreal, who combined artistic sense with a keen business
acumen, contributed most to the creation and international
dissemination of the Canadian image. His photographs, which
stand out among the multitude of mediocre or inferior
pictures produced in Canada in his time, were exhibited and
distributed across North America, as well as in Europe, and
won prizes and medals in professional exhibitions.

Notman was internationally known and his photographs
were engraved as illustrations in periodicals and books in
Canada, Britain and the United States (Figs. 17, 18). The
success of his photographs was related to his artistic and
propagandistic ability to elevate and influence the
perception of his patrons from the empirical level of
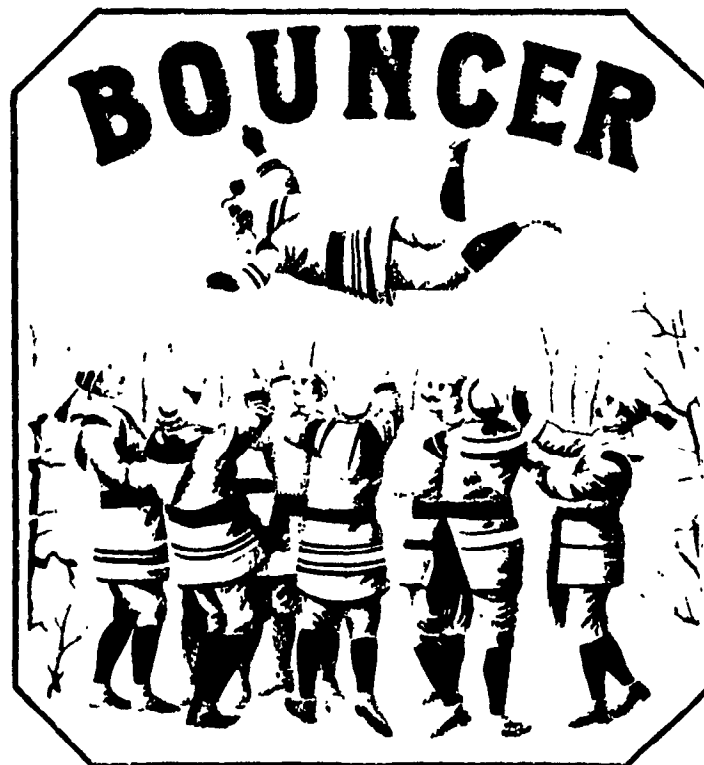
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Fig. 18. Postcards inspired by Notman's photographs,
published in Robert Collins, The Age of Innocence 1870/1880,
Toronto: Canada's Illustrated Heritage, N.S.L. Natural
Science of Canada Limited, 1977.

comprehension to that of the mythic. His task was facilitated by the readiness of the public to accept the apparent realism of photographs as proof of their truthfulness.[2]

Notman's souvenir-photographs included views of soldiers of the Queen trudging through snow-drifts on snow-shoes, hunters with their trophies, sleigh-passengers wrapped in furs, kilted Scots, and teams engaged in sports. Such photo-souvenirs provided a means of self-definition for each individual, and his integration into the collective image not only of Canada but, by association, into the greater scheme of the British Empire.[3]

Notman's business abilities and the capacity of his twenty studios and branches in Canada and the U.S.A., combined with his unstinting support of community works and charities[4] proved an equally decisive element in the creation, dissemination and preservation of the Canadian myth.

Images of loyal British subjects, handed down as a part of the cultural heritage, were distributed inside and outside Canada until, by the power invested in them by

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[2] William Ivins, Prints and Visual Communications (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press 1953) 94.

[3] Richard Rudisill, Mirror Image: The Influence of the Daguerreotype on American Society (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P., 1971) 198-199.

[4] Stanley C. Triggs, William Notman: The Stamp of a Studio (Art Gallery of Ontario Toronto: Tne Coach House Press, 1985) 30.

photography, and by ceaseless repetition, they attained status as Canadian icons.

When in 1870, the reform of the British Imperial forces resulted in the withdrawal of the garrisons in Canada, for economic as well as strategic reasons, the souvenir-photographs that had captured the exotic and romantic aspects of the country - snow, pine-forests and hunting, - survived as stock representations of Canada throughout the world.

Britishness became synonymous with the cultural identity of British-born Canadian colonials. At all levels "...the need of a new country was not to be original but to prove the old possible in the new, to re-affirm accepted modes in new conditions. The task was not creative, but re-creative."[5] Thus the new identity and outlook formed by British residents was an amalgam of imported old values, never totally discarded, but conveniently adjusted and assimilated to the standards found in Canada and modified for the requirements of day-to-day living.

Although the English-speaking population of Canada in the second half of the nineteenth century was acutely aware of its status within the British Empire, the consciousness of Canada as home and native land, as distinct from Britain, gradually developed into a locally-oriented form of neo-patriotism or nationalism.

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[5] William Lewis Morton, Shield of Achilles (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1968) 328.

When Confederation was proclaimed in 1867 with a new
emphasis on Canadian identity, new fundamental ideals and
symbols, other than religious, were needed to keep Canada
united over its vast territories and to integrate the
population groups separated by regional and ecologically-
influenced economic interests.[6] In fact, the formal heraldic
symbols of the different Provinces forming the new Dominion
provided an official expression emphasizing the separateness
of the regions.

Post-Confederation attempts to introduce a unified
national image included dramatizations of Canadian historical
events, celebrating both of the so-called founding nations
and their contribution to the creation of the country.
Attempts to embellish Canadian history, and establish local
heroes, led to the compilation of voluminous almanacs
illustrated with portraits of clergymen, politicians,
merchants, knighted industrialists, financiers, and educators
(Fig. 19, 20, 21, 22).

Although on the surface the likenesses of such sober
and industrious social paragons loudly proclaim their degree
of success, and seem diametrically opposed to the venturesome
and colourful prototypes of popular Canadian imagery, any
differences between the two are purely cosmetic. Both the
static image of an entrepreneur or politician commemorating

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[6] Armour Leslie and Elizabeth Trott, The Faces of Reason
(Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1981) 19.

Fig. 19. NPA, William Notman, Sir John A. MacDonald, 7950-I, 1863.
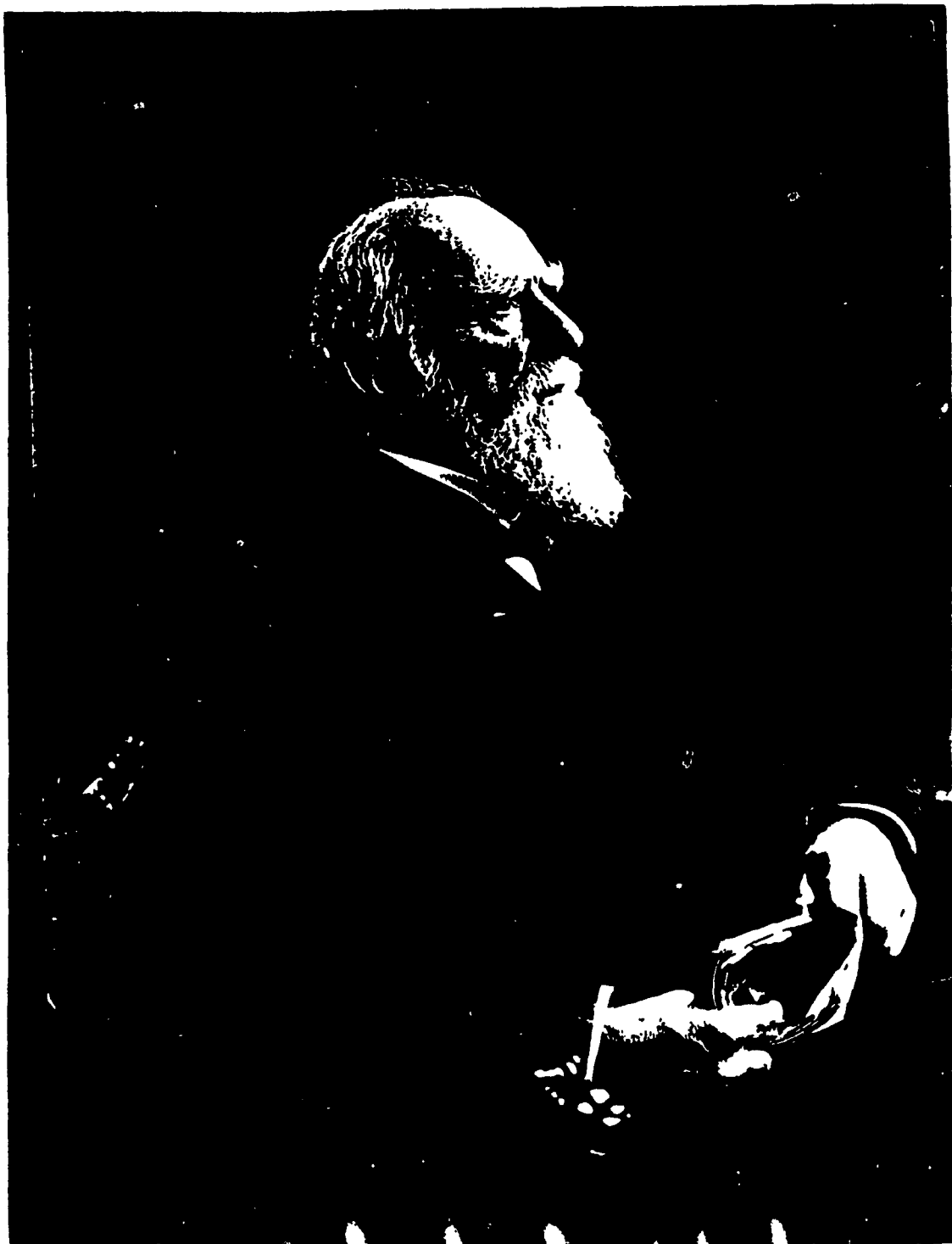
Fig. 20. NPA, William Notman, <u>Sir Donald Smith, Lord Strathcona</u>, 110266-II, 1895.

Fig. 21. NPA, William Notman, <u>Louis-Joseph Papineau</u>, 849-I, 1861.
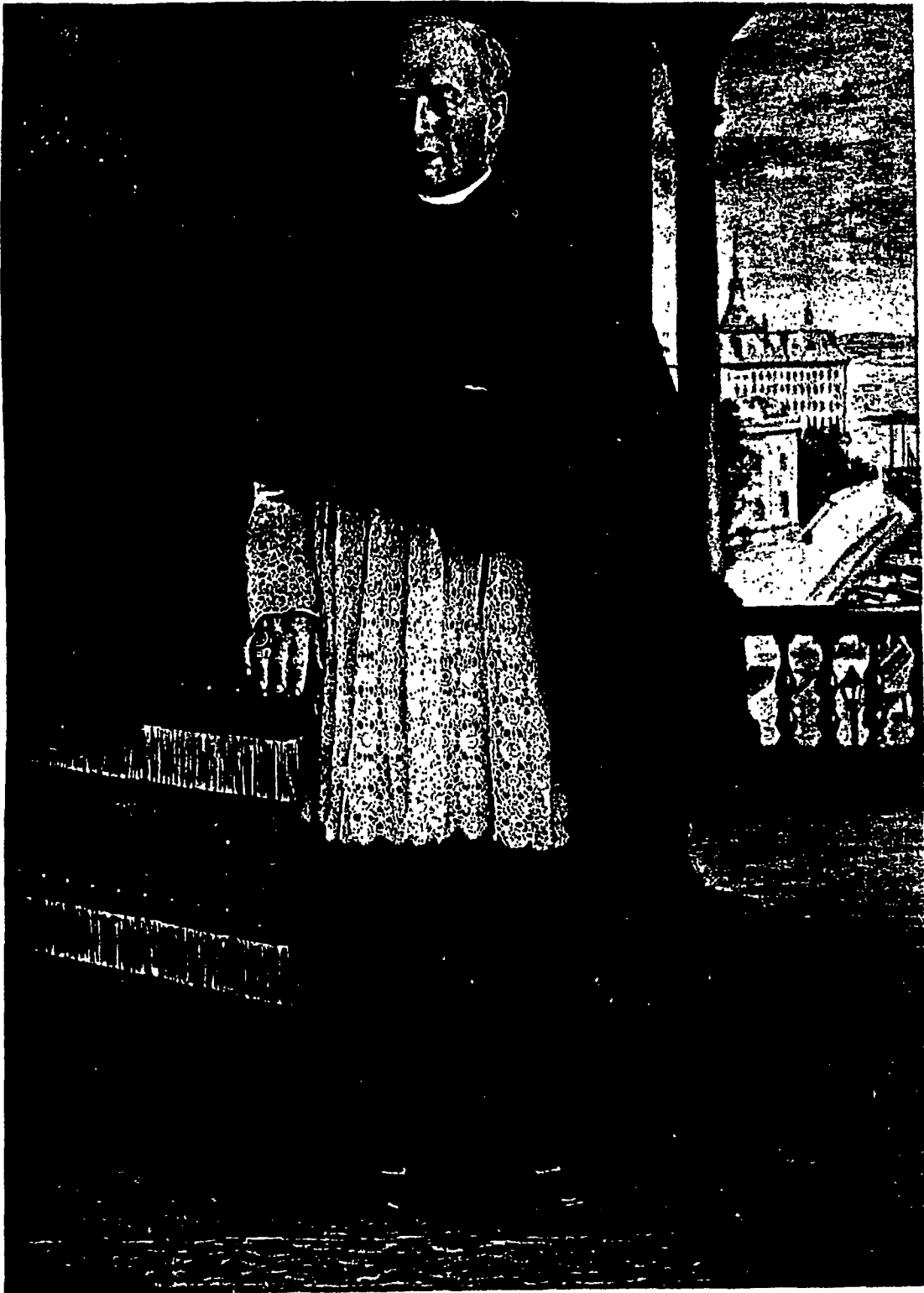
Fig. 22. J. Ernest Livernois, and attributed to Edith Hemming
Elzéar-Alexandre Tascherau, mixed media, Societé du Musée du
Séminaire de Québec, A.S.Q., 1886.

his social achievement and the dynamic prototype of a Canadian struggling to succeed, claim common intrinsic origins in the philosophical, religious and educational ideologies which shaped British culture both at home and in its numerous colonies.

Work was the ultimate Protestant adventure, and wordly success granted by a benevolent Providence was its reward. The promise of "All this and heaven too" prompted many an adventurous Britisher to seize the opportunity beckoning to him in Canada. By risking his skin for furs, or venturing his fortune in investments in railroad shares or land speculations, he could work his way up the financial ladder, and secure for himself an enviable position in the upper echelons of the Canadian Establishment.

The extent of Canadian national feeling, intensified by the self-confidence born of increasing industrialization, and accentuated by the threat of annexation by the United States, was expressed and carefully fostered in Canadian imagery. Canada came to be represented as a country abounding in natural beauty and resources, (Figs. 23, 24) and, in proportion as settlements and prosperity advanced with each new mile of railway-track, the imagery of Canada included a new symbolism of progress and cultural sophistication, still in the best British tradition.

Confederate British Canada was from its beginnings beset with the problem of upholding the British domination of

Fig. 23. NPA, William Notman & Son, <u>Lake Louise Alberta</u>, _064, 1889.

Fig. 24. NPA, William Notman & Son, Banff Hotel, Banff, B.C., 4704, 1909.

Canada against attack from within and without. It had to curb
the separatist ambitions of French Canada, and realize the
successful settlement of the Prairies with British settlers,
in order to counter-balance the threat of American
annexation. It had to keep a careful equilibrium between
British and American investments that were mandatory for the
further development of most Canadian enterprises, and yet
remain independent of the political dictates of its mighty
neighbour to the south. The combination of these threats
resulted in the natural and deliberate intensification of
pro-British sentiment and a nationalist Canadian spirit. Thus
the Canadian photographic _cartes-de-visite_ became the _cartes-
d'-identité_ of both French and British Canadians during a
period of increasing national self-consciousness.

The end of the nineteenth century saw an escalation of
immigration from Europe by people who were largely
uneducated, culturally distinct, and to whom th
ideologically-based British symbols and images fc   . in
Canada were utterly alien. Within one generation, these
immigrants became assimilated, but not acculturated, in
Canada. Ideologically, they remained separate from the
Canadian cultural mainstream.

Under these circumstances, the once meaningful symbols
of Canada as an inseparable portion of the mighty British
Empire became for many new Canadians only meaningless
shibboleths.

If the "wild" image of Canada still persists, it is because the image of an "untouched Canadian wilderness," retains some echoes of the Biblical Eden, wherein the inhabitants were endowed with the God-given right to have "...dominion over every living thing." There is, after all, an abiding attraction in the domination and control of a limitless and variegated abundance (Fig. 25).

Fig. 25. NPA, Anonymous, <u>Interior of a House</u>, MP 137/74 (59),
c. 1900.

Chapter 1

Identity and iconology: the definition of Canadian mentalité.

The symbolical values of images relate to the
culture in which they originate, and are passed on in the
collective memory from generation to generation. Humanity
lives largely through its perceptions of reality, which are
manipulated in symbolic forms and which are not only the
expressions of creative processes and the cultural
manifestation of the group they represent, but are effective
in communicating its principles.[7] A symbol does not only
stand for a thing, or for an idea, but is also a focus of
relationships whether visible or audible, symbols possess a
power of condensation and can inspire multitudes to a unified
response, which in turn can be directed into a single impact
of great intensity.[8] "Every creative achievement is an
invention, and to invent something is, subjectively to
construct it, and, objectively to find it."[9]. Symbols, which
unify subjective and objective are parts of the "continuing
presence of our own becoming and being"[10] and give meaning
to our culture.

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[7] Everett, M. Stowe. <u>Communicating Reality Through Symbols</u>.
(Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952) 109.

[8] Northrop Frye, "The Symbol as a Medium of Exchange",
<u>Symbols in Life and Art: The Royal Society of Canada Symposium in
Memory of George Whalley</u>, James A. Leith ed., :The Royal Society
of Canada: McGill-Queen's UP, 1987) 5.

[9] Frye, 14.

[10] Frye, 16.

Extrinsic symbols, as they were depicted in nineteenth century souvenir photographs from Canada, point to the intrinsic reality and consciousness of the culture from which they sprang[11] and which they often interpret.

In the Victorian era in Canada, symbols have figured as condensed expressions of various relationships, reflecting wider and complex mental states within cultural conventions and contexts. Any analysis of the iconological sources of souvenir photographs in Canada calls for an examination of the ideological influences imported from Great Britain as part of the cultural patrimony of those immigrants who had came to form the largest segment of the Canadian population by the time of Confederation in 1867.

By all contemporary accounts, the 'fifties and 'sixties were the decades of plenty. Great Britain, in the 1860s, was basking in the Pax Britannica and enjoying the material rewards of the Industrial Revolution.

As the Age of Progress advanced, drastic changes occurred in the traditional class structure, and society underwent major upheavals as the emphasis shifted from land to capital, which became the new criterion for determination of social position. It was an age in which the stratification and the ethics of middle-class society became solidified and codified. A whole class hierarchy shifted, and a combination

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[11] Frye, 6.

of urban squalor, colonial adventure, and economic pressures
resulted in extensive emigration from Great Britain to the
colonies.

The well-being of Great Britain was dependent on
the continuing march of imperialism and colonialism; colonies
were important both as sources of raw materials and as
markets for the goods manufactured in English workshops and
factories.[12] The possibility of seeking better conditions
overseas no doubt contributed to stability in England, by
offering to the discontented a solution to their grievances
denied to other nations which erupted periodically into
revolutionary violence. One of the colonies where an
emmigrant from Britain could make a fresh start was British
North America.

The territory, won from the French in the battle of
the Plains of Abraham in 1759, proved strategically, as well
as economically, to be a valuable territory. The dividends
from the Canadian fur-trade had filled the coffers of
privileged British investors nearly for a century. The
forests of the Maritimes and Eastern provinces provided
valuable oak and pine for European shipwrights, builders and
furniture-makers. The land itself gave a chance to many a
Britisher to improve his own situation while strengthening
the holdings of the Empire.

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[12] Donald Creighton, The Empire of the St. Lawrence
(Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd., 1956) 25.

Society in Canada in the second half of the nineteenth century was profoundly influenced by the major importation of manpower and ideas from the British Isles. The new immigrants brought with them as part of their intellectual baggage the idea of progress, an idea which found its richest articulation in Victorian England. Paradoxically, the newcomers arrived handicapped with bigotry and prejudices against anything that was not British.

The territory which the British gained by conquest in 1759 had already been occupied and cultivated for over a century, largely by the French. More and more British colonists therefore went westwards to cultivate the arable lands of Upper Canada. The immigrants of the 1860s looked more frequently for their opportunity in the cities, where they could practise a trade or profession, or find employment in a service. With the gradual opening of the North-West a trickle of immigrants followed the rail-road, and upon completion of the CPR in 1885, whole shiploads of new immigrants were channelled to the Prairies.

Various support industries, such as banking and shipping, were concentrated in the Eastern part of Canada, and were mostly in the hands of British entrepreneurs.

After Confederation in 1867, although the capital city of the Canadian Dominion was officially Ottawa, it was Montreal, the strategically-situated port on the St. Lawrence River, in close proximity to the American border, that

retained its first importance as a centre of international commerce and local culture.

Montreal offered opportunities for large-scale investors, as well as for small tradesmen and merchants. The population of the city, at the time of Confederation numbered nearly one hundred thousand, and many of its prominent members were Scottish merchants and capitalists, who conducted thriving businesses in timber and furs, and initiated such significant enterprises as steamship lines and railways.[13] The Irish formed the most numerous colony of new-comers from the British Isles, but it was the Scots who controlled the banks, the major educational institutions and, to a considerable degree, the Government.[14]

The historical background of British colonial possessions in North America, before and after the formation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, was intrinsically commercial. Colonial emphasis on the exploitation of human and natural resources, as represented by the activities of the Hudson's Bay Company and other enterprises, had produced a set of rules adopted by the new exponents of Confederation, to sanctify in the name of progress the traditional ways of British business. The added element of tradition elevated the money-making schemes of Canadian businessmen into the more

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[13] McKay's Montreal City Directory 1867-1868 (Montreal: Mrs. R.W. Stewart-McKay, 1868) N. pag.

[14] Pierre Berton, Why We Act Like Canadians (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982) 77-78.

honourable activity of nation-building. In their
righteousness they looked down on their enterprising
neighbours to the South, who were seen as lacking any finer
sentiments or manners, and whose industry was decried as mere
unsavoury money-grubbing. Although American financiers
invested in chronically under-funded Canadian projects and
industries, some resentful Canadians labeled their neighbours
as vulgar, common people, irreligious, materialistic, rude,
vain, and without honour,[15] and took pride in "not being like
them." Foreigners who visited both Canada and the United
States often remarked on the obvious differences[16] in the
deportment of the two populations. Travelling Britishers
naturally favoured the "simple honesty"[17] of prosperous-
looking and respectful Canadians.[18] Visitors who encountered
French-Canadians in Quebec were frequently impressed by their

[15] Berton, Why We Act..., 51.

[16] J.G. Kohl, Travels in Canada and Through the States
of New York and Pennsylvania vol.i. (London: George Manwarig
1861) 81, 102, 159.

[17] Ernest Duvergier de Haurane, A Frenchman in Lincoln's
America.Huit Mois en Amérique: Lettres et Notes de Voyage,
1864-1865.vol.i, Translated and edited by Ralph H. Bowen,
(Chicago: R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, 1974) 434.

[18] Similarly, the correspondent of the London Times
Russell, and the journal-writing, over-critical wives of the
Governors-General Lord Monck and Dufferin, preferred
Canadians in comparison to Americans, who were described as
disrespectful and mostly oblivious of any social
distinctions.

hospitability, cleanliness and good manners.[19]

Despite the expressions of high-minded disdain directed toward their American neighbours, the practical captains of Canadian industry, who could ill-afford to be "snowed-in" for six months of the year, still welcomed any resources available for the construction of canals, railways, and roads to link Canadian centres with American ports. American investments in Canada were shrewdly placed, and American capital co-financed railway construction down to the level of the "spades and shovels, axes and hammers used by the workmen and labourers who built them."[20] A constant reciprocal exchange of population and cultural traits also flowed across the border, as Canadians sought employment in American cities, and American farmers moved North in search of land-grants. The relationship between Canada and America in the second half of the nineteenth century was largely dominated by concerns of tariffs, standardisation of subsidies, free trade, and open borders.

The seventies brought on a depression accompanied by labour unrest. The Canadian labour force became unionised, and expressed its growing dissatisfaction with prevailing working conditions by organizing public demonstrations.

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[19] John Lambert, Travels Through Canada and the United States of North America, in the Years 1806, 1807, & 1808. Two volumes. Third edition (London, 1816), i, 158-61.

[20] Donald Creighton, Towards the Discovery of Canada (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1972) 129.

Prices fell, bankruptcies and unemployment figures soared, and while money markets tightened, emigration from Canada increased. The seventies was a decade during which thousands of young people from Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes left home to seek their fortunes in the Canadian North-West or in the United States. Imports of American popular culture, which already affected the Canadian life-style, increased greatly with these newly-developed contacts.

Likewise, the escalation of American investments in Canadian industrial and business ventures, and the influx of American financiers into the chronically depressed Canadian money-markets, represented a threat to the independence of the Canadian economy, as "...even oil-wells and gold mines have, to a large extent, fallen into the hands of the solid men of Boston, and of the hard men of New England...".[21] To wrench Can, la out of the stranglehold of American economical control and secure adequate funds to finance Canadian industrialization, Canadian financiers looked to London which, at the time, was the uncontested financial capital of the world.[22]

The official relations between Canada and the United States were cordial, but the contemporary press reflected Canadian resistance to the powerful American financial

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[21] W.H. Russell, Canada: Defences, Conditions, and Resources (Boston: T.O.H.P. Burnham, 1865) 123.

[22] Moyles,R.G. and Doug Owram, Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1988) 146.

influence and interference. The prevailing British-Canadian attitude of superiority and animosity directed at the meddlesome southern neighbour emerged in cartoons, newspaper leaders and popular songs. The general dislike of Americans by Canadians came into dramatic focus in the lines of the unofficial laureate of Empire, Rudyard Kipling, who described the prototype American as someone whose "... hands are black with blood" and whose "heart leaps, as a babe's, at little things."[23]

The military and economic threat from the United States, ready to pursue its manifest destiny beyond the 49th parallel, continued well into the years after the Confederation formed by the British North American Act of 1867. Especially the wide open and largely empty regions west of Ottawa attracted a variety of American entrepreneurs. This interest, and threatening American expansionism, prompted Canadian politicians to settle the Prairies. The purpose was to integrate the new Western territories, together with the Province of British Columbia, into the Confederation.

The Prairies, which form such a large portion of present-day Canada, could not at the time be accorded Provincial status, as the Indian and the Métis people located there were by the nature of their largely nomadic life-style disqualified from classification by the Government as

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[23] Rudyard Kipling, "An American", Ballads, Poems and Other Verses (New York: R.F. Fenno, 1899) 211.

"settlers."[24] The Indians and Métis did not enclose the lands on which they lived and hunted the buffalo, nor did they keep herds of cattle, or in any way improve the land for crop-bearing.[25]

A large portion of the country was still in the ownership of the Hudson's Bay Company, which only in 1869 agreed to sell to the Government their rights over Rupert's Land, which contained the Red River settlement.

When teams of surveyers and road-building gangs began building a much-needed road between the Red River settlement and Lake Superior, the unwillingness of the Métis to surrender their lands for development and the ensuing white settlement,[26] precipitated the rebellion of 1869. The demands of the Métis, led by Louis Riel (1844-1885), for responsible Provincial government in South Saskatchewan, also threatened the unity and safety of the Confederation, and a military expedition under the command of Colonel Garnet Wolseley, suppressed the rebellion and brought the Prairies under control.

This demonstration of British might and Canadian readiness to stand on guard for what they considered their property, was also meant to curtail the forays into "dry"

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[24] J.L. Finlay and D.N. Sprague, The Structure of Canadian History (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada Inc., 1984) 190.

[25] Finlay and Sprague, 190.

[26] Desmond Morton, A Short History of Canada 81.

Canadian territory of American speculators and whiskey-dealers with their pro-American agitation. To avoid any further possibilities of American annexation, peaceful or forcible, and to eliminate growing tensions, in 1870 the remains of the Red River settlement and the rest of the local population, comprising some 12,000 souls, were brought into Confederation as the new Province of Manitoba.[27] The subsequent influx of settlers resulted in the need for the creation of the North-West Mounted Police in 1873.

Although, during the years of depression, the threat of American annexation seemed more like a promise, (and there had been voices calling for unification with the powerful neighbour), British Canadians were linked to their mother country by their origins, juridical and parliamentary traditions, and economic, commercial and military dependence. They were reluctant to relinquish the connection, and the exaggerated Britishness of mentality of English-speaking Canadians was blatant in its many-faceted expression. Propagandistic literature intended to attract British settlers of good quality used superlatives in descriptions of Canada, as it stressed the many similarities to Britain.[28]

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[27] British Columbia joined the Confederation in 1871, and the Canadian frontier was settled while the Canadian Pacific Railway was being built to link up central Canada with the Pacific coast in 1885. Prince Edward Island joined in 1873, Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905, and Newfoundland in 1949.

[28] The Marquis of Lorne, Canadian Pictures Drawn with Pen and Pencil (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1884) 22.

Canada, with its healthy, bracing and invigorating Northern climate was the country of an assured and prosperous future for any loyal Britisher. The author of one such propagandistic text, the Marquis of Lorne, Governor-General of Canada between 1878 and 1883, advertised Canadian schools as excellent, the inhabitants orderly, and the communications easy from one region to another. The government was just, and Scotch and English emigrants to Canada could imagine "that they had never left the Old World."[29] Canada was the promised land for "many a poor English labourer", who could make "good wages for a good day's work" as for "many a poor English gentleman" who could "obtain sport at small expense among the fowl, the fish, and the deer" and grow old in the peace of mind that his children, as they grew up, remained English in all essentials.[30]

The loyalty of Canadian British subjects was loudly proclaimed and seemingly unquestionable, but history had proved time and time again that Canadians were above all practical. As long as patriotic ideals and the representatives of the Crown did not hinder the development and money-making schemes of Canadian entrepreneurs, the Dominion was a dutiful and loyal "Imperial daughter." When interests clashed over Canadian investments or tariffs, the cold and forbidding "Lady of the Snows" asserted her right to

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[29] Lorne, 22.

[30] Lorne, 22.

independence and self-determination.[31]

Strong esprit de corps prevailing among Canadians of British descent inevitably resulted in mercantile success. Collectivism, a well-marked characteristic of the Englishman, was his "most precious piece of luggage", universally recognized as a "quality that contributes most vigorously to his success, and that secures wealth and unquestioned political dominance for him wherever he goes...."[32]

Canadian history is one continuous catalogue of profitable ventures originated by the Canadian Government or private investors, which step by step, brought Canada into definition as an independent nation. Thus, traders, merchants, and entrepreneurs became heroes, or hero-makers, in the traditional moulds of Western civilization.

Some of the early capitalist-adventurers, whether nobly or lowly-born, became romanticised by remoteness in time, and the French coureurs de bois, and voyageurs, as well as the intrepid clerks and factors of the Hudson's Bay company went down into Canadian myth and history metamorphosed into heroic prototypes.

Canada was proud of its merchants. When the Hon. George Moffatt died in Montreal in 1865, his epitaph in the local paper decribed him as: "English by birth, upright and

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[31] Moyles and Owram, 230.

[32] Napoléon Bourassa, "Quelques réflections critiques à propos de l'Art Association de Montréal." La Revue canadienne (1 March 1864, 170-182).

honourable Canadian merchant, and a Conservative." A rhymed

version attempted an uplifting eulogy of these qualities:

> Oh! loyal friend - Oh! statesman wise and just,
> Peer of Old England's noblest merchant sons -
> What through thy ashes mingle with the dust,
> Life's record lives - and speaks in trumpet tongues.[33]

Many a business deal or joint venture of Canadian

"Caesars of the wilderness" produced long-lasting

consequences in economics, politics and general culture, as

the middle-class heroes took over the Canadian Olympus and

mythology.

It was the successful men, with their roots and

connections in Britain, who dominated Canadian commerce and

society and whose patronage greatly influenced the artistic

expression in Canada. Their taste or lack thereof largely

dictated the cultural parameters which determined the image

of Canada as it came to its reflection in art.

In contrast to the success of commercial enterprises

linked to British interests, British art, as it came to

expression in Canada, was judged mean, small in scale and

concerned with the vulgarities of ordinary life.[34] This

critique was published in _La Revue canadienne_ by Napoléon

Bourassa, professor of drawing and painting at the Collége

Sainte-Marie in Montreal and a member of the Art Association

of Montreal. Bourassa published this commentary on the

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[33] _The Saturday Reader_ Montreal, 8 February (1865): 274.

[34] Bourassa, 170-182.

exhibition of the Art Association of Montreal (established in 1860), when it held its second Fine Arts Conversazione in 1864.[35] There were grounds for the harshness of his critique.

Like their counterparts in Britain, members of the Canadian Establishment and the new-rich had social duties and obligations to fulfil. Along with eminence in society came responsibilities towards the community, which elevated shop-keepers and merchants into inexpert patrons of higher learning, the sciences, the arts, and public good works.

In Britain, as well as in the colonies, the ultimate proof of material achievement and cultural refinement for the affluent members of the middle-classe was the acquisition of objets d'art. Most Canadian patrons followed the trends prevalent in the home-country and collected such art-works as were approved by the Establishment as proper and uplifting.

Initially, these merchant-princes-turned-collectors, showed attitudes towards the artist that were ambivalent at best, as they reflected the prevailing social perception of the creative genius as a non-respectable wastrel, atheist, radical, and often an immoral parasite.[36] This unflattering view was modified as it became apparent that Royalty and nobility accepted and patronized artists, and rewarded them

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[35] Bourassa, 170-182.

[36] Richard, D. Altick, Victorian People and Ideas (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1974) 279.

with both wealth and titles.[37]

At the same time, some of the great voices in contemporary Britain spoke out in support of art, seeking to re-introduce it in its ancient Platonic role as a "manifestation of the Divine, expressing itself through the artist's genius"[38] and therefore contributing to the well-being of humankind. The prophetic and critical opinions of such eminent figures as Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, and William Morris called for the redemption of a grossly acquisitive society by the uplifting influence of art.

The ideal of their artistic socialism emphasized the right to "beauty for all" within a paternalistic, collectivist society,[39] which in some instances was close to the political ideals of Utopia. They demanded that every article be both beautiful as well as useful, and aligned the influence of art with the well-being of society.

Although there were those who followed such prophets of beauty, most of the British new-rich used art as a form of conspicuous consumption, by turning their palatial homes into museum show-cases for their wealth. They paid lip-service to Ruskin and Morris, who popularized the idea of art as an accompaniment to everyday life, but bought wholesale whatever appealed to their uneducated tastes.

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[37] Altick, 279.

[38] Altick, 282.

[39] Altick, 284.

In Canada, a society led by successful merchant barons professed the same ideals and standards as those practised by a British establishment in which the educated tastes and traditions of an ancient aristocracy still prevailed.

The newly-rich collectors of art, both in Britain and Canada favoured art which was immediately comprehensible in its content and style. Thus the paintings of the period showed an increasing dominance of realism, and object over symbol.[40]

The cultural inheritance of the mother country was revered, for better or for worse. Displaced by circumstances, immigrants to Canada invariably viewed their cultural heritage as a spiritual mainstay, and elevated it to religious heights as a credo, sacred and unalterable. In nineteenth-century Canada this idolization of the culture of the mother-land produced a distinctly colonial approach to the question of artistic standards.

In Great Britain, the ultimate accolade of official favour and patronage was conferred on works of art exhibited under the auspices of the Royal Academy. The subjects for such paintings were selected from historical events, classical mythology, or literary topics. Painters who devoted their creativity to such art were amply rewarded by profitable commissions, social approbation, and sometimes

[40] Aleksa Celebonovic, Some Call it Kitsch: masterpieces of bourgeois realism (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., n/d.) 38.

even the most coveted of all types of official recognition -
elevation to the ranks of the peerage.[41]

The official cultural expressions of Victorian Britain
were marked by delicacy and even prudery, which imposed the
application of half-a-dozen euphemisms to sanitise any
mention of death or other taboo aspects of the human
condition. Despite this reticence, the images of such themes
survived and even flourished. The secret of their popularity
lay in the selection of historical contexts to represent
personalities and allegorical figures in dramatizations of
events or legendary encounters in another historical era,
thus providing escape from reality in space and time.

Paintings depicting noble wrath, heroic death or proud
poverty burgeoned in the academic imagery of nineteenth-
century Britain, reflecting a large assortment of
classically- or romantically-disguised themes. Episodes from
the heroic past of ancient Greece and Rome, or medieval
Britain, as well as views of non-European exotic locations,
were adapted and developed for the educated patron.
Nineteenth-century paintings often featured classical
subjects in an uneasy symbiosis with Romantic, and later
Realistic, themes and styles, as long-cherished qualities of
order, dignity, and authority competed for attention with
motifs of pathos or sentimentality in the treatment of every-

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[41] Helene E. Roberts, "Art Reviewing in Early
Nineteenth-Century Periodicals," Victorian Periodical
Newsletter 19 (1973): 9-20.

day anecdotes and tragedies.

The Classicist iconographic tradition was so securely grafted onto British art that the natives from remote British colonies were represented in conventions appropriate to the traditions of statues and busts of Greek philosophers or Roman consuls.

While early nineteenth-century Classicised British art reflected admiration for the ancient ideals of Greece and Rome, variations on the theme of Victorian Hellenism, produced in the second half of the century showed more the characteristics of allegorical reminders of the "Decline and Fall." Scenes of romanticised Classical excess were frequent.[42] A Classical subject was considered an unimpeachable excuse for the depiction of nude or lightly-draped human figures. Photography followed suit. Ultimately, the genre demanded a _kitsch_ travesty of Graeco-Roman style, and in the later years of the century, representations of opulence and decadence featured rose-petals and leopard skins, settings of classical architecture, private or public baths, resplendent with milk-white marble and blood-red porphyry, as visually impressive backgrounds for the languorous portraits of a new generation of "Victorians in togas", among whose painters were Alma-Tadema, Albert Moore,

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[42] Christopher Wood, _Olympian Dreamers: Victorian Classical Painters 1860-1914_ (London: Constable, 1983) 15-20.

and Frederic Leighton.[43]

The popularity of such themes notwithstanding, the state of the arts in Canada was best summarized in Samuel Butler's satirical poem "O Montreal", written in 1875, which was inspired by the sight of a neglected plaster replica of the statue of the Discobolos found turned with its face to the wall in a basement corridor of the Montreal Museum of Natural History. Apparently the statue was considered unfit for public display because of its nudity.[44]

It was only in 1890 in Toronto that a canvas, depicting an adolescent, androgynous nude entitled Venetian Bather by Paul Peel, (1860-1892) was publicly exhibited. This may have been the first nude ever publicly exhibited in the city.[45]

Toronto had proved its art-consciousness early in its history, yet, although in 1834 the city could already boast a Society of Artists and Amateurs, this group survived only one year. It disintegrated after the resignation of the temporary residents from Britain and the USA, who formed the membership of the organization. An attempt to revive the Society in 1847 succeeded, and the organization was re-named the Toronto

[43] Vern G. Swanson, "L. Alma-Tadema his Forgers and Imitators," 19c Nineteenth century winter 1977, Philadelphia: Christopher Forbes, 66-70.

[44] Samuel Butler, The Note-Books of Samuel Butler (New York: Ams Press, 1968) 392-393.

[45] Denis Reid, A Concise History of Canadian Painting (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1973) 97.

Society of Arts.

The first Montreal Society of Artists was founded in the same year, 1847. The Art Association of Montreal followed in 1860, and the Society of Canadian Artists in 1867. Montreal remained an important centre of art activity.[46] However, when the Ontario Society of Artists was established in 1873, the focus moved from Montreal to Toronto.

Possibilities of exposure to the public at the exhibitions organised by art societies in both Toronto and Montreal attracted various cosmopolitan painters such C.J. Way, Henry Sandham, John A. Frazer, Allan Edson, Otto Jacobi, William Raphael and Adolph Vogt, who at one time or another had lived and worked in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Canada.

Ultimately, conditions in Canada were not conducive to pioneering in the arts, and most Canadian painters of the second half of the century were trained in the academies of Paris, London, Philadelphia, or New York, and often worked abroad. Intellectual stagnation in the arts forced Canadian painters into exile. Many chose to reside in France, England, and even the United States, never returning to Canada.

The themes prevailing in Canadian painting in the second half of the nineteenth century related closely to Nature and contemporary human subjects. The Canadian public was saved from the worst of European kitsch, and, at the same

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[46] Reid, A Concise History of Canadian Painting 79.

time deprived of the best of the new trends, but it could not escape classicistic ornamentation, which found expression in the applied arts, in interior decoration and furniture design. Fine decorative details, claiming direct or remote Graeco-Roman descent, embellished ladies' clothes, jewellery, china, and manufactured artifacts and utilities. Even mass-produced goods carried quasi-classical decoration and ornament. The latest models of sewing-machines, kitchen-stoves, and similar products of the Industrial Revolution, and the practical Victorian spirit, were adorned with motifs such as acanthus leaves, or indiscriminately applied architectural details, allegedly Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, or even Etruscan.

In keeping with the largely utilitarian spirit of the Industrial Age, even public education came to be assessed in terms of its usefulness, and the classics which had formed the curriculum in the older grammar schools in Britain were held to be of little practical advantage to a generation destined to vocations in industry and commerce. The new educational curriculum focussed instead on the literary works of authors indigenous to Britain, such as William Shakespeare, Sir Walter Scott, and John Milton. Ultimately, the choice of art-forms favoured by the new patrons, whether industrialists, merchants, or small-scale entrepreneurs and tradesmen, was influenced by the degree of familiarity with

the subject and the realism of treatment.[47]

The largest consumer-group for popularised art could no longer claim the privilege of being educated in the time-hallowed classical traditions of the British public school system, and favoured subjects of patriotic or religious devotion or self-sacrifice, which competed for popularity with sentimental renditions of moralistic allegories, devoid of intellectual content but charged with high-flown sentiment and ideals. To the Victorians of the second half of the century, the theme of any given art-work was more important than its expression; the focus was upon its moral message and subject-matter, rather than its technique.[48]

The art which catered to the prosperous members of the middle-classes featured a fusion of historical subjects, expressive of civic and moral values with Romantic pathos, and showed a high degree of finish. The resulting style, dubbed art pompier in contemporary France, has often been condemned by modern critics as "bourgeois realism" or even kitsch.[49] Although the technical and professional aspects of such art were impeccable, and representative paintings were completed with competence and skill, they fell into the category of popular art. Their lack of originality and static reaffirmation of the known rendered them intellectually

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[47] Altick, 273.

[48] Altick, 273.

[49] Celebanovic, 14.

sterile and ideologically schematic.[50]

The social currents of plutocracy, capitalism and industrial technology turned nineteenth-century art into an article of consumption for an aesthetically untrained and immature public.[51] Under such circumstances, in the prevailing atmosphere of intellectual insecurity, any deviations from accepted form could only result in relegation by the critics to the status of the subversive or the unwholesome. The unorthodox approach and technique of William Turner (1775-1851) were in this way subject to hostile and uncompromising criticism, until John Ruskin rose in his defence. Ruskin ultimately made his own name as the most influential art critic of nineteenth-century England and when in the 1850s, critics from the ranks of the Establishment rejected as vulgar the subjects and colour innovations in works by painters of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, it was Ruskin who became the champion of their cause and defended their art against the Philistines.[52]

Although the members of the Brotherhood rebelled against Academic artificiality and the frivolity of subject which governed painting in the 1850s, their own escapist

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[50] Abraham Kaplan, "The Aesthetics of the Popular Arts," The Popular Arts: A Critical Reader, eds. Irving Deer, Harriet A. Deer, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967): 320-321.

[51] Kaplan, 319.

[52] Leslie Parris, The Pre-Raphaelites (London: Tate Gallery,1980) 6.

works, charged with emotion and sentiment, famous for the combination of Christian mysticism and sensuousness of their female models, soon became popular purchases among Victorian middle-class patrons. The subjects that smacked faintly of Romishness, as well as the female models, fascinated the Victorian public, and titillated their imagination. The exotic, brooding, mysterious, full-lipped damsels foreshadowed the qualities of the notorious femme-fatale which appeared in the works of the Aesthetes in the 1880s, and the Decadents in the 1890s.[53]

In Canada the image of woman remained respectable. Woman was depicted either as an Angel in the House, or as a meritorious aspirant to that condition. Popular imagery favoured the prototype of a fictitious, innocent peasant girl in a setting of Nature, often depicted carrying flowers or standing in a blooming meadow. Such an image of the adolescent female carried a sentimental message, as a reaffirmation of the moral clichés abounding in eighteenth-century genre pictures. They were also an extension of the Romantic trend to favour primitive, rural and exotic subjects.

If the prototype of a young village-woman was often depicted in natural settings, her city counterpart, the "Muffin", favoured more sophisticated surroundings. Unmarried young women of well-to-do Canadian families often went

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[53] Altick, 288.

driving or sleighing with the dashing officers of military
regiments stationed in Canada, for whom the circumstances of
their tour of duty were very pleasant. A major problem for
them seemed to be how to resist social pressures and remain
unmarried,[54] a task in which commanding officers often had to
intervene and post home impressionable young subalterns to
"save them from imprudent marriages."[55]

The charming and socially active young females called
"Muffins" were often described in the log-books of various
travellers and in the journals of the visitors.

> "...The Canadian girls are very attractive, and in many
> cases very fascinating in their manners. They are free
> and easy in their deportment when in company, and exhibit
> very little of that reserve so often found in young
> ladies in England."[56]

Contrasting favourably with her "too reserved and timid"
English cousin and her American counterpart, described as too
"bold", the "elegant, self-confident" Canadian "Muffin"
seemed nearly perfect.[57]

In Montreal and Quebec City, covered ice-skating rinks
became popular meeting-places for the young officers of the
garrison and their "Muffins." Since snow-drifts too often

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[54] Viscount Wolseley, The Story of a Soldier's Life.
vol. ii, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903) 116.

[55] Wolseley, 116.

[56] Anonymous, (Two Brothers) "Society and Amusements,
1860", Early Travellers in the Canadas 1791-1867 Gerald M.
Craig ed., (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited,
1955) 254.

[57] Two Brothers, 254.

covered the available outdoor skating surfaces during most of the winter, and the North winds blew too strongly, the facilities were moved under cover and soon every major city in Canada boasted an indoor rink.

Everybody in Canada seemed to skate in the winter-time. "The little children skate, so do their most portentous mammas."[58] Officers of the garrison learning to skate, were a source of entertainment for the onlookers who often wondered if "they will split up or dash out their brains."[59] The young ladies who pretended to avoid them skated around them "as seagulls sweep by a drowning man." "And if a fellow should fall - and be saved by a lady? Well! It may end in an introduction, and a condition of `muffinage'".[60] These popular entertainments did not terminate with the withdrawal of the garrison in 1870, when dashing officers were replaced by the local "swells."

But Canada was basically a man's country, and frequently the photo-portraits of Canadian females reflect their enforced dependence on men. Women were shown as attractive appendages hanging lovingly on the strong arms of their menfolk. Even the "Muffins" who enjoyed their relative freedom and excursions in company of young officers, unthought-of back in Britain, were only following their

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[58] Russell, Canada: Defences..... (1865) 74.

[59] Russell, Canada: Defences..... (1865) 74.

[60] Russell, Canada: Defences..... (1865) 74.

socially pre-ordained fate that led them to marriage. When
the young girl of the Canadian bourgeoisie attained the
coveted state of a young matron her image changed with her
status.

Other than the polished keep-sake images of "Muffins",
a young, comely female model was featured as the
representation of Canada in political caricatures. But in the
early 1870s, when there appeared the possibility of conflict
with the United States, which caused aggressive escalation of
Canadian nationalism, the country came to be represented by a
male stereotyped caricature known as Johnny Canuck.

Although there were intrepid and brave women in the
West in the last decades of the century, they were the
matrons of the new settler families and their heroism was
usually practised in keeping their household healthy and
well-cared-for in conditions of an impossible environment and
isolation. There were occasional exceptions when some lady
from the privileged class distinguished herself as
sportswoman, Amazon or huntress (Fig. 26). Victorian society
disapproved of any traces of aggressiveness in female
behaviour, and in commercial advertisements it was the
idealized sweetheart or materfamilias who was featured.

Throughout the centuries various symbolic
personifications were represented in female form, and when
advertising became a major factor in commercial
merchandising, images of females became important in

Fig. 26. Provincial Archives of Alberta, Charles W. Mathers, *Miss Woodard and Two Dogs*, B.8580, 1895.

publicity for patent medicines, tisanes, household fitments,
sewing-machines and similar home conveniences. In advertising
posters which came to full development in the 1870s-1880s,
young women were represented as embodiments of various Arts
as Muses, and as many other symbolic impersonations of such
virtues as Love, Faith, Fidelity, and Liberty.

Such stereotypes were an inextricable part of pre-
fabricated popular art with all its cultural prejudices. They
were characterised by an ingratiating combination of familiar
and safe symbolism and exciting novelty presentation.[61]

Forms of art intended to appeal to a wide public were
further popularised through engravings offered as
reproductions for mass-distribution, and as an indication of
a collective attitude towards arts and culture.[62] Sentimental
renditions of animals were especially favoured and frequently
reproduced. Popular contemporary paintings showed a mixture
of religious themes, such as Hunt's Light of the World,
animal studies like Landseer's Dignity and Impudence, and the
celebrations of scientific and industrial progress such as
Ford Madox Brown's Work. Reproductions were published in
contemporary periodicals, and sold to adorn the walls of the
homes of the middle and working classes. The popular market
also favoured sentimental depictions of children, patriotic

[61] Kaplan, 323-325.

[62] Edward W. Earle ed., Point of View: The Stereograph
in America - A Cultural History (New York: Visual Studies
Workshop Press, 1979) 14.

subjects drawn from Britain's history, and Biblical or genre scenes, often charged with some uplifting moral message and considered useful as illustrations of appropriate social attitudes.

Although members of the British nobility collected mostly foreign art, largely French or Dutch, middle-class Victorians patronized home-grown talent. Thus the new patronage in Britain affected the nature of artistic production,[63] and small cabinet pictures of homely subjects, and anecdotal themes appeared, to supply a market which grew progressively more popular and secular in spirit. Popular art, like popular politics, catered to sensation and measured its success by the inducement of the greatest happiness in the greatest number of individuals.

In the last years of the century, artistic expression was influenced by a mood of world-weary excess and ennui, in artists disgusted with the debasement of the arts in the service of an uncritical and semi-educated public. Aesthetes renounced the democratic tradition that vulgarized art in the Victorian era and pursued élitist, inner sensibilities within their own being.[64]

The aesthetic values evident in nineteenth-century art

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[63] George P. Landow, "There Began to be a Great Talking about the Fine Arts," The Mind and Art of Victorian England, ed. Joseph L. Altholz, (Minneapolis: The U of Minnesota P., 1976) 125.

[64] Altick, 294.

were extended to the <u>objets d'art</u> and souvenirs which
cluttered Victorian homes. Souvenirs gained enormous
popularity, as travel for pleasure was increasingly enjoyed
by tourists from the affluent middle-classes.

The significance of the souvenir in the nineteenth
century (an inheritance from the previous century, as an age
of travel and the Grand Tour), with emphasis on taste,
refinement and sensibility, dignified keepsakes as stimuli to
the finer sentiments.

The curriculum of any major British educational
institution in the eighteenth century included studies in the
arts and humanities, and sketching was a popular pastime of
the educated. Souvenirs brought back to England from tours
abroad were often a product of the traveller's own artistic
abilities. Tourists who were not themselves artistically
inclined or gifted sought out miniature copies of famous
architectural monuments and sculptures, offered for sale as
souvenirs in the tourist centres of the world.

With the development of railways and steam-ship lines,
the volume of tourism increased as it became a popular
activity for the middle classes. Ready-made souvenirs in
great variety were manufactured for the mass-market. They
were outside of any control by educated tastes, and their
aesthetic value was determined by the perceived lowest common
denominator of middle-class taste. The market for <u>bric-à-brac</u>
expanded, and the market in debased art-work was patronised

by rich _parvenus_ lacking in any real aesthetic education, and
by a general public whose taste was vitiated by the
introduction of machine-produced "art."[65]

The intentions of the manufacturers of souvenir
objects were grossly materialistic, and _kitsch_ items were
created to cater to the ever-growing numbers of customers in
the new industry of popular tourism. This development
converted the expression "souvenir" into a synonym for mass-
produced "bad taste."

The souvenir is significant as much for its symbolic
associations as for its intrinsic worth. Almost any small
object, such as a sea-shell, pebble, pine-cone, or dried
flower can become a token of remembrance and a personal
souvenir. Keepsakes, invested with transcendental meaning,
become visual, concrete expressions of a state of feeling,
arrested into a similacrum of permanence. Victorian parlours
and sitting-rooms became shrines for collections of such
souvenirs, which were often manufactured in the form of
objets d'art with some minimal utility as picture-frames,
containers, figurines, or paper-weights.

Views of tourist attractions were especially sought
after as souvenirs. Topographic sketches, which supplied the
answer to this demand in the eighteenth century, and the
first half of the nineteenth, were soon rendered superfluous

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[65] Artur Rothstein, _Photojournalism_. 3d ed. Garden City,
(New York: Amphoto, 1974) 38.

by the cheaper and more realistic photographs. In the
Victorian era nothing seemed more realistic or truer to
Nature than the accepted new standard of sentimental exchange
- the souvenir photograph.

Chapter 2

The one-eyed giant:

the status of photography in the nineteenth-century

cultural context.

The arrival of each new medium of communication
influences the character of social interchange. Few changed
it more rapidly than photography. While the usage of printed
matter was conditioned by the ability to read, photography
was immediately accessible to the whole of Western
civilization.

Photography in its early stages of development in
Europe was mostly a pastime for the wealthy and the leisured,
a challenge to artists eager to experiment with a new medium,
and a scientific amusement for the upper classes.[66]
Americans showed an immediate rapport with the new medium,
which in the U.S. had little initial appeal as a hobby, and
was rapidly organized as a commercial undertaking for
purposes of profit. Not that the quality of American
photographs suffered because of this commercial approach. At
the first international display of photography, which took
place at the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London
in 1851, American photographs won three of the five medals

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[66] Cuthbert Bede, (The Rev. Edward Bradley) <u>Photographic
Pleasures</u> (London, 1855) 54.

awarded for daguerreotypes.[67]

News of the Daguerreotype process in 1839 was announced in Canadian periodicals almost instantaneously.[68] Articles on the subject of photography, reprinted from various French and English newspapers, were followed by advertisements of daguerreotypists from Europe and America who visited Canada as early as the 1840[69].

Photography became popular as a new profession. The technique of production was easy to learn, and soon the numbers of practising commercial photographers escalated in the Maritimes and Eastern Canada. The main interest of working photographers, who made short tours of Canadian cities and the countryside, was to practise portraiture or the "art of photographic likeness." Although in their advertisements many photographers styled themselves either "professor" or "artist", their artistry was limited to

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[67] Helmut Gernsheim, Alison Gernsheim, A Concise History of Photography (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965) 60. In March 1840 the first portrait studio in the world was opened in New York by Alexander S. Woolcott.

[68] The Colonial Pearl, Halifax, 18 October 1839, reprinted the description of Daguerre's process from the London Globe, 23 August 1839. A year later, the Quebec Gazette for 7 October 1840, announced: "Wonders. We can speak with certainty of the Daguerreotype, the new invention lately introduced in France and England, and the United States, which is now in operation in this city, at Mr. Grace's, in St. Joseph-street, Upper Town."

[69] Local sources of reports included: Prince Edward Island's Royal Gazette, October 1840, Quebec City's Quebec Gazette, 7 October 1840, and Le Canadien, 7 October 1840, Newfoundland's Public Ledger, 10 March 1843, Toronto's Patriot, 27 July 1841.

pointing their camera and taking an "accurate likeness" of their patron. This activity held little claim to artistic merit, as few photographers combined the talent and the resources to practise photography as a form of art.[70]

Only a small number of the daguerreotypes produced in Canada before the 1850s have survived down to our time. The process produced unique photo-images, without any negative from which multiple prints could be copied. Furthermore, daguerreotypes were very fragile, and easily damaged or destroyed.[71] Many portraits became personal souvenirs with attached sentimental value, and remained in the possesion of private individuals and families.

Although interest in photography was great since its beginnings, it became popular with the mass public only after 1854, when the carte-de-visite albumen paper print format was devised and patented by André-Adolphe Disdéri.

One major advantage of the carte-de-visite was its ability to condense eight photographs onto one negative plate. The size of a finished and trimmed print was 2 1/4" x 3 1/2", mounted on a 2 1/2" x 4" card, corresponding to the

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[70] Theresa Rowat, "Island Photography 1839-1873" The Island Magazine # 14 (1983): 21.

[71] Peter Turner, History of Photography (London: Bison Books Ltd., 1987) 34. The durability of photographs increased with the introduction of the reproductive negative-positive wet-plate process, which became popular in Europe from the early 1850s until 1878, when it was superseded by the simpler and improved dry-plate technique.

dimensions of the visiting-card of the period.[72]

A life-like portrait could now be purchased by anyone
for a nominal sum. In 1868, the Montreal Photograph Gallery
of J.G. Parks advertised one dozen cartes-de-visite at a
price of a mere $1.50,[73] an affordable undertaking,
considering that a male clerk in Eaton's store in Toronto,
which opened in 1869, earned eight dollars per week, and a
pound of roast beef or veal cutlets could be purchased for
ten cents, a dozen eggs for twenty-five cents, and a pound of
butter for the same amount.[74] Photographs seemed to
accommodate all demands of the artistic, as well as the
economic, concerns of Victorian Canadians:

> ...The sun himself has become the limner. Science has
> unlocked her secrets; Art had applied them, while
> knowledge and experience have taught us that light, the
> first, the purest, and the most universal of God's gifts,
> has, by fusion with subtle agencies, become the source,
> it is scarcely an exaggeration to say, of the most
> cherished and economical of man's luxuries.[75]

The economies made possible by this new format, and
its enthusiastic reception by the general public, produced
the "cartomania" to which all kinds of Victorians, including

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[72] In the late 1860s, cartes-de-visite were displaced
in public favour by the larger "cabinet" size format (4" x 5
1/2").

[73] Lovell's Montreal City Directory, 1867-1868.
Montreal: John Lovell, 1868, 256.

[74] Robert Collins, The Age of Innocence 1870/1880.
(Toronto: Canada's Illustrated Heritage, N.S.L. Natural
Science of Canada Limited, 1977) 30, 64.

[75] William Notman, Portraits of British Americans with
Biographical sketches by Fennings Taylor (Ottawa: 1868) ii.

Royalty, succumbed, and which has survived to the present day. Cartes-de-visite were sold at stationery shops, and soon all genres of photographs were produced by the thousands in answer to the demands of a new circle of collectors.[76]

The subjects and styles of photographs were identical with those popular in contemporary painting. Portrait, genre and landscape predominated, although there were secondary ventures into exotica, erotica, historical painting, animal studies, and ethnic costume studies.

Photographs of celebrities, as well as portraits of friends, were a popular item of exchange among enthusiasts in the 1860s. In Canada, the growing taste for collecting likenesses was described as deriving from:

> ...the higher sentiments of the mind - from reverence and respect, from the love of kindred and the charms of friendship, from the regard of private worth or from appreciation of public service.[77]

Next in popularity were the series of cartes-de-visite views from far-away places. Similar subjects were also featured in the fashionable three-dimensional stereoscopic-view cards.[78]

The appeal of photography was such that practically

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[76] Gernsheim and Gernsheim, 118.

[77] W. Notman, ii.

[78] Although in the late 1860s the larger cabinet photograph format superseded in popularity the stereographs and cartes-de-visite, the latter continued in production throughout the following quarter-century.

any and all available photographs and stereographs were
widely circulated and collected for what was considered their
descriptive, illustrative, documentary, or educational
value. In time, exotic views from all over the world came to
dominate the market for cartophiles and collectors.

From the beginning, the attribute of inherent
integrity was attached to the photographic image. If the
iconographic properties should remain unclear, the title of
the image would relate it to its cultural context.
Consequently, the value of the depicted object was
transcended and became an abstraction of the viewer's
culture.[79] The unprecedented realism of the first photographs
resulted in a popular uncritical belief in the truthfulness
of the camera.[80] This quality converted photography into a
near-perfect technique for advertising, propaganda, and the
commercialization of souvenir pictures.

In Great Britain, images from the numerous, far-flung
colonies and dominions were extremely popular, and
stereographs and photographs from British territories
overseas became visual promissory notes, and the dividends of
Imperial colonial assets. Among such photographs and
stereoscopic views, which appeared already in 1850s, were
examples from the Canadian North-West. These regions, under

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[79] Earle, 15.

[80] "America in the Stereoscope," The Art Journal, vi.
no.7 (July 1860) 221.

the most favourable of circumstances, were not easily accessible before the advent of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and many a photographer reached the Prairies only after an arduous trip via San Francisco and Vancouver. Any photographs produced outdoors before the 1880s are considered valuable, as prior to the introduction of the dry-plate process, photo-production was technically very complicated. Open-air photography, in the days of the wet-plate process,[81] required transportation of quantities of heavy and fragile equipment. In the primitive conditions of the Canadian Western frontier, photographic apparatus had to be carried in canoes and horse-drawn carts, and in the winter-time by dog-sleighs.[82]

Such were the circumstances surrounding the creation of a portfolio by Humphrey Lloyd Hime, who came to the West from Toronto in the survey train of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition in 1857.[83] Hime's portfolio, which contained thirty photographs of the Canadian West, represents the earliest known photographic images of the Canadian Western wilderness and its native inhabitants.

[81] John Werge, The Evolution of Photography, (London: n.p. 1890) 30. Collodion positives on glass, known as ambrotypes, became a popular form of photograph in Canada in the late 1850s. Ambrotypes were, in fact, an inexpensive substitute for daguerreotypes, which they superficially resembled. They were rarely made after 1865, when albumen paper photographs were introduced, to be superseded in 1878, by mass-produced dry gelatine plates.

[82] Ralph Greenhill, Early Photography in Canada (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1965) 51.

[83] Greenhill, 50.

It was published in London in 1860.[84]

In the nineteenth century, Western civilization extended its influence world-wide. Most voyages of exploration and military expeditions, were moves for the domination of strategically and economically important regions by expansionist European powers. Photographers saw and seized their opportunities for symbiotic co-existence with armies, naval flotillas and expeditions of geologists, geographers, and topographers. Everywhere, official photographers became accepted as camp-followers in baggage-trains. Their photographs often took on the characteristics of a visual reportage, and the images brought back from far-flung expeditions were eagerly collected for their exotic, scientific, and educational value, and published in lavishly-decorated album sets, to be displayed by the well-to-do.[85]

The intensification of industrialization in the second half of the nineteenth century led to world-wide revolutions in transportation, which in turn enormously stimulated commercial exchange, as well as tourism for pleasure. Railways and shipping lines now connected up remote parts of the world, and with the popularity of tourism the production of commercially manufactured photo-souvenirs increased. In time, carte-de-visite views of exotic scenes and locations

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[84] Greenhill, 50.

[85] Alan Thomas, 25.

from all over the world came to dominate the collectors' market, and were widely circulated. Hundreds of thousands of photographs from the four corners of the world flooded publishing houses and periodicals, to be reproduced in the form of woodcuts or steel engravings.[86]

Around 1859-60, choice images of landscapes, notable personages, fauna and flora and other subjects considered collectible or interesting, were also produced as three-dimensional stereoscopic-view cards. The success of the small box-type stereoscope with its effect of three-dimensional binocular vision was assured by the introduction of the collodion process, which made possible cheap mass-production of card-mounted paper stereographs. These could be sold at a quarter or less of the price of stereoscopic daguerreotypes or glass ambrotype views. Stereoscopes were sold everywhere, and photographers travelled the world over to secure new and interesting images. The stereoscopic viewer was enormously popular in middle-class parlours, where it competed for attention with the photographic album.[87] The stereograph became "the card of introduction to make all humankind acquaintances."[88]

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[86] Gene, Markowski, The Art of Photography. Image and Illusion (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc. 1984) 11-16.

[87] Earle, 9-12. The stereoscope, which brought life-like images of exotic locations straight into Victorian households, enjoyed a great vogue until the 1870s.

[88] Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and Stereograph." The Altlantic Monthly (June 1859) 744.

In 1859, after the London Stereoscopic Company sent its leading photographer William England to North America, the photographic image of Canada came to be mass-reproduced for stereoscopes and presented to the world. Stereographs taken in Canada and the United States were lauded for their clarity, surpassing all written descriptions.[89]

From the beginning, the uneven distribution of population in Canada influenced the location of photographic establishments in the country. The Maritimes, the Saint Lawrence River basin and the Great Lakes region, which had been under intensive development for more than a century, and where the countryside was densely populated, were also the first areas capable of supporting permanent photo-studios. In the first decades of the history of photography, not every community could provide for a full-time photographer. John Jury in Charlottetown on Prince Edward Island, for example, advertised his daguerreotype studio in conjunction with his watchmaking business.[90] Jules Benoît Livernois in Quebec City expanded his photographic business to include a rubber-stamp agency[91] and a book and stationery store.[92]

In the thinly-populated West and the Prairies,

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[89] The Art Journal London, July (1860): N. pag.

[90] Rowat, 15.

[91] McLaughlin's Quebec Directory 1855-1856, 232.

[92] Le Journal de Québec Quebec City, 11 January (1855): N. pag.

permanent photographic studios appeared much later than in Eastern Canada. The first known advertisement for photographic services in the Prairies was that of Rev. Alonzo Barnard, which appeared in the Nor'Wester, 14 February 1860. Financing of his photographic enterprise was not his only problem, and judging from the wording of his advertisement, his must have been a difficult struggle for survival. In exchange for his photographic services the Reverend was ready to receive cash payments, and accept the equivalent in "...Wheat, Flour or Wood."[93]

Even in the 1880s, the problem of career choice was acute for John L. Brown of British Columbia, who divided his energies between his photo-studio and his grocery and dry goods business in New Westminster and Kamloops. His activities culminated in 1898 in the purchase of a barber-shop.[94]

Photography, once it captured the imagination of a wider public, proliferated rapidly. Whereas in 1851 Lovell's Canada Directory listed only eleven daguerrotypists, Mitchell & Co.'s Canada Classified Directory for 1865 listed more than 360 photographers, including thirty-four in Montreal,

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[93] Nor'Wester 14 February (1860): N. pag. For this valuable information I am indebted to Ms. Elizabeth Blight, Head, Still Images Section, Provincial Archives, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

[94] David Mattison, Camera Workers: The British Columbia Photographers Dictionary 1885-1900. Victoria: Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data, 1987, B-21.

seventeen .1 Toronto, and sixteen in Quebec City.[95]

The usual repertoire of Canadian <u>cartes-de-visite</u> was
summed up in a segment of rhymed advertisement by Cyrus Lewis
of Charlottetown Prince Edward Island, in 1868:

> ...Our men of peace, and men of war
> Army and Navy, Bench and Bar,
> Doctors of celebrated fame,
> And clergymen of reveren'd name,....[96]

Views from far-away places were second in popularity
to portrait photographs.[97] Photographs of the Great Canadian
Outdoors were sought after by European visitors and tourists
for whom views of the primeval wilderness and the realities
of everyday life in Canada became charged with romantic
overtones, contrasting with the familiar park-like settings
of domesticated Nature at home. And <u>vice-versa</u>, on the
frontiers of civilization, a photograph of a sovereign, or a
metropolitan celebrity, became a nostalgic reminder of
loyalties, the splendours of a far-off homeland and an
ordered way of life.[98]

Because the general situation in the Canada of the
second half of the century was more conducive to commerce
than to the arts, a large proportion of Canadian photographs
were commercial and documentary in character. Images of

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[95] Greenhill, 33.

[96] Cyrus Lewis advertisement, <u>Patriot</u> Charlottetown,
16 January (1868): N. pag.

[97] Alan Thomas, 55.

[98] Alan Thomas, 121.

monuments to the progress and prosperity of the country, such as new banks or bridges, and governmental, religious, educational or commercial buildings, were for the first time documented by the lens of a camera.[99]

At the same time, the West Coast, separated from the industrial East by the barrier of the Rocky Mountains and the forbidding expanse of the Prairies, experienced a surge of development instigated by the gold rushes between 1858 and 1866. The population of British Columbia increased through a great influx of prospectors, land-speculators, miners, lumber-men and suppliers of all wares imaginable. Since most of the arrivals in the Fraser River gold rush came from California, precautions had to be taken to neutralise the threat of annexation to the U.S.. British Columbia became a British colony in 1858.

Numbers of itinerant photographers in various expeditions to the West Coast, mounted from the United States or Eastern Canada, produced a large number of early pictures of documentary and ethnologic interest. Photographs of Indians were soon added to the carte-de-visite portfolios of British Columbia photographers.[100] As the services offered by local "photographic artists" were governed by the demands of

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[99] In the last decade of the century, many early views of such subjects were re-published as post-cards, often without indications of copyright or production credits.

[100] Frederick Dally, advertisement in the First Victoria Directory, Second Issue, and British Columbia Guide Mallandine, April (1868): N. pag.

their clientele, West Coast photographers were often confined
to production of photo-portraits and photographs of
"....Mining Claims, Houses, Groups, Scenery, and all kinds of
out-door Photography."[101] Views of "mills" and "logging
camps" could be arranged by the obliging photographers as
well.[102]

The 1850s and 1860s were decades of great urban
development and railway-building in the Maritimes, and
Eastern and Western Canada. The constantly expanding system
of railways stimulated foreign investments, and escalated the
growth of population. In the late sixties and seventies,
immigrants from all over Britain, sent by the East London
Emigration Society to Quebec, Ontario or the West, were
coming, not in hundreds but in thousands.[103] The Canada
Emigration Gazette was established in 1866, to be distributed
free of charge, for the purpose of disseminating "among
intending emigrants correct information of the extent,
resources, institutions, means of employment, rates of
living, and facilities for acquiring land, in Canada."[104] A
large proportion of these settlers was directed to the

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[101] P. Dally, advertisement in the Cariboo Sentinel
Barkerville, 12 August (1867): N. pag.

[102] D. Withrow, advertisement, The British Columbian
New Westminster, 20 March (1869): N. pag.

[103] The Illustrated London News London, England, 23
April (1870): 414.

[104] The Saturday Reader Montreal, (1866): 82.

Prairies.

The photographers of the Land and Geological Surveys were responsible for many of the early images of the West, before the CPR project was undertaken. As well, the progress of the various Canadian railway systems was well documented in photographs, and none excited more interest than the CPR enterprise. Documentation of its progress was shared between Canadian and American photographers.

When the Prairies experienced the 1885 Northwest-Rebellion of the Métis led by Louis Riel, the nearly bankrupt CPR rallied, finished the missing portions of its track north of Lake Superior, and transported regiments of Canadian troops to the West by rail.[105] Some events of the armed conflict in the West were documented in photographs by Captain James Peters, Canada's first military photographer, in command of "A" battery in General Middleton's Regiment of Canadian Artillery.[106] A hobby-photographer, he took many photographs on the battlefields of Fish Creek and Batoche. Many of his plates were destroyed accidentally by Peters himself,[107] but the surviving prints depict scenes of the Battle of Batoche and portraits of Louis Riel after he was

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[105] Morton, A Short History of Canada, 98-99.

[106] William Belier, "James Peters: Canada's First Military Photographer" Photographic Canadiana, vol. 10, #1, May-June (1989): 8.

[107] James Peters, "Photographs Taken Under Fire," Canadian Military Gazette 1, no. 32 15 Dec. (1885): 252.

taken prisoner.[108]

Railway trains brought more photographers into the Prairies, some taking photographs under contract for various periodicals. Such was the mission of W. Hanson Boorne, commissioned in 1887 by the McLeod Gazette and the Calgary Herald, to photograph the last Indian Sundance before its abolition by the government.[109] In notes written for the newspapers, Boorne expressed his excitement concerning the chance to photograph the "Brave-Making", since such photographs had apparently never been made before.[110] The local Indians were extremely wary of being photographed, and believed that the "spirit picture" or photograph would steal away part of their soul.[111] Even in 1887, to be able to perform his feat, and to reach the Blood Indian Reserve, Boorne had to transport his "tent, outfit, provisions for

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[108] Belier, 8.

[109] W. Hanson Boorne, Transcript of notes, made on the spot, at a 'Sundance' of the Blood Indians, at the Blood Indian Reserve, near Fort McLeod, N.W.T. (since Alberta), July 1887. Photographed by W. Hanson Boorne, in July 1887. Being the last Genuine Indian Sundance held by Indians, before being abolished by the Canadian Government." (Written for the McLeod Gazette and the Calgary Herald) Notman Photographic Archive, McCord Museum of Canadian Art.

[110] Boorne, Transcript, 1.

[111] W. Hanson Boorne, Notes upon the North-West Canadian Indians, after the Riel Rebellion in 1885, And the last Annual 'Sun-Dance'. Retyped notes from June 1936, 1. In the rewritten, and more elaborate version by Boorne from 1936, he described how the Indians, angered by his interference, threw their blankets over him and his camera to prevent him from taking their photographs.

several weeks, and camera, &c. with a companion" in a light wagon pulled by two horses.[112] He nearly lost all his belongings when his wagon was upset in crossing the junction of the Belly and Kootenay Rivers. Fortunately, his camera and "outfit"[113] in a waterproof case survived, tied high up on the seat of his rig.[114] He successfully accomplished his assignment and produced rare images of great historical and ethnographic value (Fig. 27).

His photographs were published in many Canadian and American magazines and newspapers at the time, and Boorne was awarded a gold medal at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, where his selection of photographs of Indians was exhibited in the CPR section. He also referred to the award of other Canadian medals for his work.[115]

The demand grew for popular souvenir-photographs featuring Indians, as more and more white colonists came to the West, and lived in contact with aboriginal peoples.

In their content, souvenir-photographs reflected as much the progress and advance of a country as they were an expression of conspicuous consumption for the prosperous

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[112] Boorne, Transcript, 1.

[113] Boorne, Notes, 1. This rewritten version of his 1887 trip specifies the contents of the "outfit". He carried "an excellent camera and complete outfit for developing and printing."

[114] Boorne, Notes, 1.

[115] Boorne, Transcript, 4.

Fig. 27. NPA, W. Hanson Boorne, <u>Indian Sun-Dance</u>, 104, 1887.

nineteenth-century middle classes. Photographic records of residences, house interiors, family members, carriages, and domestic staff were visible evidence of social and financial status of an individual. Photographs were exchanged and mailed to kinsfolk and friends who took pleasure, and perhaps even gained status, by receiving such souvenir photographs, (and later post-cards), from their prosperous correspondents. The practice of souvenir-collecting became one of the universal characteristics of the age.

One recorded pioneer of the photo-souvenir business was the American daguerreotypist Platt D. Babbitt, who in 1853 was granted the concession for photography on the American side of the Niagara Falls. While tourists were admiring the view, he photographed them against the spectacular background and offered them the pictures as inexpensive souvenirs.[116] But the Falls had been popularized in daguerreotypes long before Babbitt started plying his trade. As early as 1844, the enterprising Frederick and William Langenheim of Philadelphia, took various views of Niagara Falls, and sent the images to the principal crowned heads of Europe.[117] "Before 1860 at least six photographers opened galleries at Niagara Falls, to sell stereographs and

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[116] Earle, 26.

[117] William Welling, <u>Collector's Guide to Nineteenth-Century Photographs</u> (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976) 31.

photographs to the tourist trade."[118]

Photographic souvenirs could be purchased for a minimal fee in almost any photographer's shop throughout the civilized world. Alternatively, souvenir pictures could be commissioned from the resident photographer at any famous location or monument, to provide a record of the traveller, alone or surrounded by local people, as proof of his travel to distant locations. This latter type of souvenir held a special appeal for the collector, as his own likeness, posed front and centre before some highly recognizable monument, or its facsimile, became also visible evidence of his distinction as a voyager. Landscape, architecture and views diminished in importance as primary subjects of photographs and more often a famous location was relegated to serving as a mere backdrop to dignify a portrait of some tourist, determinedly staring into the lens.[119] By the second half of the century, virtually every tourist centre in the world boasted at least one photographic establishment.

Photographs made near-perfect souvenirs. They were small, and could be carried with ease; as well, they could be mailed inexpensively to almost anywhere in the world. Countless advertisements for artistic photo-images on finer

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[118] Anthony's Photographic Bulletin New York, December (1872): 766.

[119] Thomas Southall, "White Mountains Stereographs and the Development of a Collective Vision" Points of View: The Stereograph in America - Cultural History, 105.

or more durable materials than paper, such as tin, porcelain, silk, leather, glass, and ivory, appeared throughout the sixties and seventies. Photographs even became a means of personalizing one's belongings such as handkerchiefs, with a photographically transferred likeness of the owner. The handles of umbrellas, frequently lost or in dispute as to ownership, were considered suitable locations for placement of such proprietary photo-identification.[120]

Since the emergence of photography, its artistic status was both claimed and challenged in endless polemics. The issues for the debate were drawn from the disciplines of aesthetics, philosophy and law. Discourses on both the virtues and the shortcomings of photography were frequent in European academic debates and in periodical articles, essays, books, and even verse.

Many artists and critics denounced photography as imitative, lacking intrinsic value, and limited in creativity. Others condemned photography for its technicality, and labeled it as a mere craft or trade.

Scientific techniques, especially in chemistry, which went hand-in-hand with the development of photography, had gained great popularity, and a knowledge of basic chemistry was disseminated in short popular lessons in various periodicals. A knowledge of chemistry was considered mandatory as much for the successful practice of photography

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[120] _The Saturday Reader_ Montreal, September (1865): 5.

as for agriculture, physics, mineralogy, geology, and even
the simpler household duties and chores.[121]

Virtually every magazine or journal published reports
on photography from its birth in 1839 and continued to do so,
even when journals devoted exclusively to its study were
published. By 1889 as many as sixty periodicals specializing
in photography were reportedly circulating throughout the
world.[122]

The vast majority of books published in the nineteenth
century that dealt with the history of photography or
photographic processes were published in England and
France.[123] British periodicals, such as the British Journal
of Photography, the Photographic News, and the London
Photographic Journal, were available also in North America,
and local photographers, both professional and amateur, were
also well served there by the American Journal of
Photography, The Philadelphia Photographer, the Photographic
and Fine Art Journal, and Anthony's Photographic Bulletin,
published in the U.S.A., which transcribed all important news
and subjects of interest from European publications.

In the beginning, although photography had its own

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[121] The Saturday Reader Montreal, September (1865): 14.

[122] Harper's Magazine Boston, August (1889): N. pag.

[123] Photographic Times vol. 2. Dec. (1872): 103, 182.
This source mentions that until 1872, only one U.S. firm –
Beneman and Wilson in Philadelphia, had devoted itself
principally to photographic publishing.

inherent capacity for duplication of images, its representations of the world were mass-produced through the established medium of engraving, for circulation in printed works. In 1869, the Canadian Illustrated News published by Geo. Desbarats in Montreal was the first to mass-produce the halftone process[124] in a portrait-photograph of Prince Arthur taken by William Notman.

Some American journals, such as The Philadelphia Photographer, were illustrated with original, separately bound-in pages with tipped-in photographs, printed by various new photographic processes up until the 1890s, when the adoption of the halftone process allowed the reproduction of photographs from the plates used to print the text.[125]

In Canada, articles on technology, chemical processes and aesthetics in photography, were frequently reprinted in ordinary local newspapers and periodicals. In 1870 the Canadian Journal of Photography was established in Toronto, but the contributions of interest to Canadian photographers consisted of a few original entries, while the bulk was rewritten from the vast repertoire of The Philadelphia Photographer.[126]

The Philadelphia Photographer, which could be obtained

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[124] Developed by the Leggo brothers in Montreal.

[125] William Welling, Photography in America: The Formative Years 1839-1900 (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1978) 99.

[126] Greenhill, 46.

in Canada by subscription from the United States, offered photographic news from all over the world, with varied and abundant information in the fields of photo-technology, optics, chemistry and art. The issue of photography as art, so explosive in Europe, was treated differently in North America. Although articles addressing the problem of the status of photography as art did appear in the North American magazines, their pronouncements were overwhelmingly in favour of advancing the interests of photography,[127] and American photo-practitioners had little patience with the "petty quarrels and pithy correspondence"[128] between artists and photographers that went on in British periodicals. The artificial issue of the rivalry between art and photography was deemed ridiculous, and "good photographers, and far-famed artists" successfully and profitably combined the best elements of the two techniques. While many European photographers argued for the acceptance of their medium as one of the fine arts, their American colleagues strove for the introduction of art into their photographs.

Their inventive approach often ennabled them to cut straight through the problem. Acceptable photographs of landscape could be secured after certain adjustments to the arrangement of features in the panorama. As an American

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[127] Edward Satterlee, "Is Photography a Fine Art?" The Philadelphia Photographer Philadelphia, October (1869): 326.

[128] The Philadelphia Photographer Philadelphia, April (1866): 128.

photo-artist advised his colleagues:

> ...always have with you on your photographic trips, a
> spade and a good axe...I remember on one occasion finding
> it necessary to cut down four large forest trees, in
> order to get a view of a peculiar formation of rock-work,
> which could not have been obtained otherwise, and
> oftentimes have been obliged to remove limbs from trees
> in order to get a proper view.[129]

The axe was not the only aid used to enhance the

content of photographic images. In order to simulate the

effect of original hand-work, nineteenth century

photographers attempted a compromise and produced "artistic

hybrids" of painting and photography. They tinted, painted,

and cut-and-pasted their prints on painted backgrounds, or

applied combinations of all these techniques to produce an

art-form which would combine the truthfulness of the

photograph with the artistic technique of the painting. For a

time, such artifices became fashionable by-products of

photography. The results, although detrimental to both

disciplines, appealed to Victorian standards of taste, and

became very popular.

Genre paintings, so popular in the eighteenth century,

were reflected in Victorian photo-composites "taken from

life", which were often heavy with sentimentalism, piety, and

righteous morality. To create one of these images, as many as

thirty or more negatives were often used. Through

miscalculations in the scale of cut-out photographed figures,

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[129] James Mullen, "Landscape Photography", Anthony's
Photographic Bulletin, (January 1874) 55.

and the combination of various scales of perspective, some photo-composites were characterized by an eerie sensation of unreality. This phenomenon was also reflected in the oil-paintings made by artists who used such aids, as is evident in some works of the Pre-Raphaelites.

As in the United States, the relationship between Canadian artists and photographers was equally amicable, perhaps because a large percentage of Canadian painters and photographers borrowed from both disciplines.[130]

Illustrative of such an amiable and profitable relationship were the studios of Notman's photographic establishments in Montreal and Toronto. The walls of the reception rooms were hung with works by local painters, displayed side by side with sculptures and photographs.[131] This display of bona fide works of art added to the ambience of the room, turning it into an antechamber of the temple of art that was represented by the studio itself.

The outrage of European sophisticates at the presumptions of upstart photographers-cum-artists and their

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[130] McKay's Montreal City Directory, 1867-1868. Montreal: 1862, 484. Advertisement for "Boisseau's Photographic Rooms" specified:"Ambrotypes and Photographs of every Size, from smallest to the Size of Life, Plain, or finished in Crayon, Water, or Oil Colours." In the same advertisement, A. Boisseau claimed to be a pupil of Paul Delaroche and to have practiced "Portrait Painting over twenty years, in Paris, (France), and in the principal cities of the United States and Canada; and has had an experience of twelve years as a Photographer."

[131] Triggs, 148.

commercialism did not seem to excite any reaction in Canada. While Europe was astir with scandals, protests, and law-suits, involving photography in one way or another, Canadians apparently never questioned its artistic merits. The Royal approval of photography was a well-known fact, which, although it did not impress some better-educated individuals in England, was more than adequate to sustain Canadian photographers, morally and intellectually dependent on the Establishment.

Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and her Consort Prince Albert, took a great interest in photography, and not only collected photographs on a large scale but were themselves amateur photographers. As well, British nobility visiting Canada showed a great enthusiasm for photography. The diaries and the log-books of the visitors and temporary residents in Canada all contain references to photography. Most Canadian Governors-General and their wives were more than positively inclined towards photography, and during their terms of residence collected souvenir-photographs of local scenes and views, and frequently patronized local photo-studios to have their likeness photographed. A book written by the Marquis of Lorne in 1884, and entitled Canadian Pictures Drawn with Pen and Pencil, was partially illustrated with engravings of the photographs collected by Lorne in Canada. Thus the status of photography as one of the fine arts, sanctified by the patronage of British Royalty and nobility, was accepted

without question in Canada.

Photography was omnipresent, easy, and inexpensive to produce. It was also developing its own history. While the early traditions governing photography had originated in painting, later developments took as their departure point the growing corpus of photographic production. This establishment of independent norms helped to shape the visual perception of viewers into an acceptance of only those images which met their culturally conditioned expectations.[132] The function of such pictures was not to clarify the subject, but to make it seem real. Eventually such symbolic records replaced memories of the actual events.

Typical of such photo-over-matter conditioning is the European fiction of Canada as a country of unlimited wilderness, and nothing but wilderness, which harks back to the 1870s, when the introduction of the dry-plate technique facilitated outdoor photography. Photographic studios in Canadian cities invariably offered numbers of souvenir-photographs which featured the "wild" aspects of Canada, such as natives, views of water-falls, rapids, hunters with their trophies, and other picturesque aspects of the wilderness.

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[132] Rudisill, 225.

Chapter 3

Through the misted lens:

Nature - temple of God, or workshop of the nation?

In the choice of their "views from Nature", most
Canadian photographers followed the example of the British
Army topographical artists who in the first half of the
century produced numerous sketches and watercolours of scenes
in the Atlantic Provinces and Eastern Canada. These views
usually featured major centres of population and their
immediate surroundings.

Canadian scenery represented a new challenge for
the photographer and collector. It was through the camera
lens that some of the most famous Canadian scenery was seen
for the first time. Photographs appeared as documentation of
the progress of the CPR railway network, depicting the heart
of heavily-wooded mountains previously unvisited and
unfamiliar to the public. Photographic views of the Rockies
produced in the 1880s give an impression of overpowering
compression, in comparison to the wide-open vistas of
countryside depicted in pastoral paintings, which followed
the centuries-old tradition of showing a stylised, humanised
landscape, based on the European model.

Since photographic images from the Rocky Mountains
and the foothills of Alberta were first offered to the general
public in the form of photo-souvenirs, sold on trains and in

hotels, their aesthetic qualities were subordinated to their documentary purpose. The Romantic notion of the majestic beauty of Nature, endowed with complex traditional philosophical implications, was replaced by a sober and more scientific approach. Even theologians saw the scientific truths concerning Nature as evidence of the existence of God, re-affirming a Biblically inspired message that Nature was "never wasteful, always busy, incredibly productive."[133] Busy also were Canadian railway-builders.

Photographs of the imposing views of natural sites, especially from the foothills of Alberta, carried a covert message of the onward march of progress and the conquest of the wilderness. Now man was in the heart of the wilderness and his camera served as a magic lantern, illuminating picturesque scenery, previously shrouded in mystery and myth. Aesthetics were of secondary consideration in a cultural code of values in which progress was stressed over all else.

Civilizations have always viewed the wilderness from a respectful distance - through a window, from behind a walled enclosure, within some controlling religious or philosophical context. Canadian artists followed the well-established pattern.

Most academic landscape-paintings obeyed the artistic dictates established in previous centuries and were, in

[133] Carl Berger, Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada The 1982 Joanne Goodman Lectures, (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1983) 37.

effect, idealizations and improvements upon Nature which paid little respect to realism or truthfulness. The practice of leaving out the uninteresting was continued, often resulting in the foreshortening and fragmentation of ground-planes,[134] thus endowing the whole pictorial space with a certain ambiguity. In contrast, the camera recorded faithfully and in its entirety whatever fell within its depth of field. The scope of contemporary camera-lenses was limited, and the Canadian landscape therefore had to be fragmented, in order to be mastered visually.

In the days when extensive landscape panoramas were popular as an art-form and as inspirational material for mass education, segmented landscape photographs were sold individually, or in sets, so as to form a continuous picture.[135]

Through the repetition of the unique features in views that characterised certain locations, distinctive natural and cultural local features came to be known, identified, and metamorphosed into ideograms of Canada, in the form of souvenir photographs. Instant recognition of a location at first glance was the desired effect; artistry was a secondary

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[134] Gaile McGregor, The Wacousta Syndrome: Explorations in the Canadian Landscape (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1985) 16-17.

[135] William Notman, in his Montreal studio, had produced a panoramic view of the city, which in 1860, was included in the "Maple Box" containing souvenir photographs submitted as a gift to the Queen.

consideration.

While a painter could reject the uninteresting, add whatever details he deemed appropriate, and create his own abstraction of a landscape, the only control the photographer could exercise vis-à-vis his environment was his choice of a point-of-view.[136] In comparison with the artificial near-perfection of academic landscape paintings, produced to cater to nineteenth-century aesthetic sensibilities, the faithful photographic reflections of the country-side seemed saturated with over-abundant, inconsequential detail, uninteresting and even monotonous in its lack either artistic treatment or colour. Yet photographic views still remained very much in demand.

The popularity of photographs depicting small sectional views of the massive ranges of the Rocky Mountains, the endless plains of the Prairies, and the dense British Columbian rain-forest, was assured by their exotic interest and their novelty. Such photographs were received with an enthusiasm and curiosity comparable to the Medieval passion for descriptions of any terra incognita, or present-day interest in images of the surface of the Moon.

Most Canadian photographers of the nineteenth century lived and worked in one or another of the major cities. Few penetrated deep into the interior, but when a chance arose of

[136] Aline B. Louchheim, "Introduction," The Art and Technique of Colour Photography ed. Alexander Lieberman, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951) 13.

mounting a photographic expedition under the auspices of some official venture, it was eagerly accepted by enterprising individuals searching for more exciting images.

Photographs of the "wonders of Nature" such as water-falls, lakes, river-panoramas, and mountain vistas, were produced in series by enterprising Canadian photographers, and purchased by souvenir-hunting tourists. Such photo-souvenirs became so popular that towards the end of the nineteenth century, entire booklets of souvenir images, together with souvenir post-cards, were sold to tourists wherever they went.

With the passage of decades, and endless repetitions of the most obviously characteristic elements of Canadian Nature, the image of the "Canadian landscape" became abstracted into a concept of pines, Rockies, and crystal-clear lakes - a cliché still reminiscent of the older image of the "Earthly Paradise."

North America in general, and especially the remoter parts of Canada, inherited the eighteenth-century Romantic image of the "last Paradise."[137] The attribution was justifiable, as a large portion of densely-forested land abounding with wild animals was indeed wilderness untrodden by the foot of the white man, and still unspoiled and pure. This image was reinforced during the long winter season, when

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[137] Alexis de Tocqueville, _Journey to America_, ed., J.P. Mayer, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971) 44, 69.

all was covered with a white mantle of snow, navigable rivers froze over, and central Canada was isolated from the rest of the civilized world for four months. Even railway contact with the United States was often in rrupted by severe snow-storms. Snow drifts were so heavy that blocked tracks could be opened again only by snow-plough locomotives. All the features of Canadian landscape and climate combined to convey an impression to the visitor of picturesque majesty.

Nature had a powerful hold on the nineteenth-century imagination. Its definition was almost infinitely flexible, according to the philosophic implications of any given reference. God and Nature in their sublimity were often equated, and the two expressions were used interchangeably. "Sublime" was one of the epithets inherited from the artistic vocabulary of the previous century and retained in nineteenth-century terminology. When used in connection with landscape, terms such as "awesome", "picturesque", and "sublime" were considered proper to describe the metaphysical Gesamtkunstwerk of Nature.

The late eighteenth-century interpretation of the sublime in terms of Burke's definition,[138] was associated

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[138] Edmund Burke, A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origins of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful ed. Boulton E.T. (New York: 1973). The definition of sublime is: "...whatsoever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, is a source of the sublime" including "...darkness, or destructive power, solitude and silence and the roaring of animals."

with impressions of fear, gloom, and majesty. The scenes of
the Romantic sublime were filled with terror, violence, and
dread. Roaring cataracts, rumbling earthquakes, the din of
storms, and crash of thunder, accompanied by the fiery blaze
of erupting volcanoes, and lurid flashes of lightning were
calculated to emphasize the insignificance of man in the face
of God's terrible power. The deity ruling such a savage
Nature was the vengeful, terrible, Old Testament God of
Wrath. In this formulation, the sublime was the intellectual
preserve of the educated and refined, and a reflection of
contemporary philosophical thought.

In the nineteenth century the meaning of "sublime"
shifted towards a more realistic and prosaic version. The
tumultuous waters stilled, and were steeped in silence and
calm. The landscape became Christianized, picturesque,
pastoral, and restful, under the peace of a merciful, all-
forgiving and humanised God-saviour. The ideal of Nature was
shrouded in silence and solitude, thus creating that type of
sublimity closest to the Creator.[139] This revised version of
sublimity was widely disseminated in the form of Luminist
paintings, illustrations and photographs, and democratized in
the process.

In Britain, with the emergence of Darwinism in the
1850s, and its increasing influence throughout the second

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[139] Barbara Novak, <u>Nature and Culture: American
Landscape and Painting 1825-1875</u> (New York: Oxford
University Press, 1980) 150.

half of the nineteenth century, the traditional concept of God receded more and more. Even theologians accepted science as a handmaiden of religion, and now contemplated Nature from a scientific point of view, as a part of Natural Theology.

The nineteenth-century version of science as a revelation of the activity and plans of God in Nature, dating back to the Instauratio Magna of Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and his "blueprint for the new science",[140] was featured in the thought of Canadian scholars well into the 1870s.[141] Effortlessly, it blended with the well-established doctrine of Scottish Common Sense, which was the philosophical mainstay of most of English-speaking Canada. The dualistic approach to nature inherent in the school of Common Sense, which made no distinction between subject and object[142] made possible a "synchronous affirmation of science on the one hand, and an identification of the human intellect and the Divine Mind on the other."[143]

In the post-Confederation decades, any other theological or philosophical issues, which could possibly be in conflict with the practical approach to life and Nature of

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[140] A.B. McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era (Montreal: McGill-Queen's U P, 1979) 95.

[141] McKillop, 95.

[142] McKillop, 28.

[143] S.E. Ahlstrom, "The Scottish Philosophy and American Theology," Church History xxiv (1955): 267-268.

middle-class entrepreneurs, had little overt effect on their daily dealings in the market-place.

For many, Nature had become a commodity to be exploited commercially. The new significance of Nature in the nineteenth century, according to the viewpoints of the followers of Darwin, Scottish Common Sense, or Natural Theology, coincided with the relentless destruction of the wilderness.[144] It soon became apparent that Nature and the machine could both be harnessed to a single purpose, to fulfil the British concept of a Canada prosperous under the Crown and blessed by a benevolent Creator.[145] The emotion of awe, previously reserved for the sublimity of Nature, was now transferred to the products of progress, such as steamships and trains, steadily pushing back the limits of the unknown.

The ancient theme of the heroic endeavour of man, attempts to subjugate his environment against all the odds and adversities, was highly appropriate for British North America. The struggle existed on both the physical and the emotional levels. While many individual sufferings could be countered by the gaining of material achievements, the feeling of admiration for the greatness of surrounding Nature never disappeared, and stamped itself into both literature and the arts in Canada.

In such conditions, the overwhelming majority of the

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[144] Novak, 4.

[145] Novak, 168.

emigrants who had enjoyed the benefits of higher education and superior social standing from Great Britain idolized their homeland and their affection was reflected in their attempts to recreate their old civilization in the harsh surroundings of their exile.

Whereas in the U.S.A., unfriendly and even hostile to Great Britain, the need for appropriate new images and icons was urgent, in British North America the veneration of ancient British symbols was obligatory. The attitudes of colonists towards their surroundings as well as their loyalties were recorded in the art they favoured and produced.

"The creative instinct has a great deal to do with the assertion of territorial rights,"[146] and colonial artists attempted as best they could to imitate, recreate and reproduce the themes and styles supporting the territorial claims of Great Britain in Canada.

Britons, although they never discarded their heritage, and dwelt on nostalgic memories of their homeland and its glorious past, did not neglect the requirements of their situation to fashion a new way of life, and some measure of cultural identity. The ideologies exported from a revered but remote mother-country took on new visual forms in Canada.

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[146] Northrop Frye, The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination, (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1971) 135.

The semantic clichés which appeared in books or poems
on Canada, such as "roughing it in the bush", "land of mighty
lake and forest", "maiden of the frost" and similar
references to the Canadian reality, existed in symbiosis with
their symbolic visual equivalents. Together, they brought the
imagery of Canada and its symbolism to iconographical
finality.

However, as the railways advanced Westward, and
industrialization progressed in the East, nobody lamented the
destruction of the wilderness. The Canadian wilderness was
too elemental in its characteristics, and seemed too vast
ever to recede to the degree that its absence would be
noticed. Consequently, there was very little reference to its
gradual reduction.

Penetrating constantly deeper into the West, turning
the sod of the Prairies, crossing the Rockies and clearing
the rain-forests of British Columbia, the colonists settling
and developing the land were never exposed to criticism for
destroying "God's first temples"[147] as was often the case in
the U.S.A..[148]

In the United States the idealism of the eighteenth-
century, with its implicit need to define art as classic in
form and romantic in content, underwent a crystallization in

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[147] Novak, 151.

[148] Perry Miller, "Nature and the National Ego," Errand
into the Wilderness (New York: Harper & Row, 1964) 211.

the early years of the nineteenth century. The social

function of art now included the recording of the rapidly-

receding frontiers of the wilderness, the last vestiges of

the Garden of Eden. German mysticism, with artistic

sentimentalism as its by-product, played its part in

inspiring nostalgic attempts to regain the lost Paradise,

which were apparent in the second half of the nineteenth

century.

American Transcendentalists saw the affinity between

matter and mind, oversimplifying the fundamental problems of

both philosophy and religion in near-mystic terms:[149]

> Behind nature, throughout nature, spirit is present: one
> and not compound, it does not act upon us from without,
> that is in space and time, but spiritually, or through
> ourselves; therefore, that spirit, that is the Supreme
> Being, does not build up nature around us, but puts it
> forth through us...Nature is thus an incarnation of God,
> a projection of God; its serene order is inviolable to
> us; it is, therefore, to us, the present expositor of the
> divine mind.[150]

Such arguments did not prevail in Canada. Canada was

not "God's country" in any Emersonian Transcendentalist

sense. Neither was it a Wordsworthian pastoral idyll where

flora, fauna and the landscape in general were beautiful,

simple, full of spontaneity and unreflective goodness,

finding an echo in the heart of man, "whenever he casts off

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[149] Frederic Ives Carpenter, Emerson Handbook (New York: Hendricks House Inc. 1953) 53.

[150] Riley Woodbridge, American Thought: From Puritanism to Pragmatism and Beyond (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1959) 168.

the perverting influences of civilization."[151]

A typically Victorian compromise in logic was to interpret "Nature" as simply "scenery" or "landscape." Thus the sublime confusion of the physical and the metaphysical became the real essence of later Romanticism,[152] and the impenetrable wilderness of the Western forests, far from inviting comparison to a temple of Nature, must have seemed more like a great, communal store-room filled with raw materials. The dense expanse of bush had little in common with the park-like, hand-planted domestic woodlands of Europe. While the scholars of nineteenth century Europe strove to "get back to the beginning" and were obsessed with the idea of the "creation," Canadians struggled to get out of the bush and into a civilized future.

The idea of Nature as a transcendental or religious experience[153] re-surfaced periodically in nineteenth-century Canadian poetry, and the inspiration for such comparisons was drawn from Romantic English and American sources. Up until the year 1886, before the railway spanned the country coast to coast, the whole of Canada west of Ottawa, was an almost

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[151] Hoxie Neale Fairchild, The Noble Savage, a Study in Romantic Naturalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928) 376-7.

[152] Fairchild, 376-7.

[153] Alexander McLachlan, "The Emigrant", Nineteenth - Century Narrative Poems David Sinclair, ed., (Toronto, Montreal: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972) 131.

untrodden wilderness[154] with its untapped natural resources wide open to exploitation. The settlements that sprang up alongside the rail lines were small, and isolated from their neighbours by great distances and impenetrable forests. Domestic needs proved more pressing than ecological and moral responsibilities, and the "humanizing" of Nature began. The wilderness was doomed, and the artists were there to document its demise.

Destruction knew no laws. Photographs of lumber camps in Quebec or British Columbia fulfilled a multiple role by documenting the advancement of civilization into the domain of bears and wolves, by advertising the abundance of natural resources, and by covertly extending an invitation for investment. Every photograph was charged with tendentious rhetoric, the meaning of which was subject to cultural interpretation.[155]

Cultural definitions of Canadian Nature, in contemporary poetry by British-Canadians, overflowed with references to murmuring lofty pines, swaying in the northern winds or the sweetness of the maple groves, and the profound peace of the tranquil forest. The same verses often also celebrated the axe which felled the very same mist-shrouded

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[154] Morton, Monck's Letters, 231.

[155] Allan Sekula, "On the Invention of Photographic Meaning," Artforum, January (1975): 37-45.

woods.[156] The British had a mission to fulfil, of spreading British dominion and exalting its glory. The ethic, after all, was one of dedication, work and progress followed by the practical sons of Old Britain, who with eager eyes:

> ...talk'd of steamers on the cliff-bound lakes,
>   And iron tracks across the prairie lands,
> And mills to crush the quartz of wealthy hills,
>   And mills to grind the singing stream of grain....[157]

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Canada experienced an increase in industrialization, which while it left intact most of the ideas, institutions and social organization of the past, nevertheless introduced a promise of a better life through new mechanical inventions. In Canada, where adequate reserves of manpower were lacking, the products of technology and mechanical invention were welcomed for their usefulness, and accepted almost without reservation. The theme of progress was conspicuous in the photographs of the most obvious vehicles of civilization and industrialization - the train and the steamship. Nowhere was their advancement more appreciated than in the Western Provinces.

Expansion towards the West was a Government-directed, large-scale venture that changed irrevocably the face of the Prairies and the life-style of its native populations. Apart

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[156] Isabella Valancy Crawford, "The Axe of the Pioneer," A Book of Canadian Prose and Verse Edmund Kemper Broadus and Eleanor Hammond Broadus eds. (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1924) 51.

[157] Crawford, 52.

from the European penetration of Canada, the second stage of activity which drastically changed the status of native peoples, was brought about by Government purchase in 1868, of the North-Western Territories, previously owned by the Hudson's Bay Company. Subsequent surveying expeditions, undertaken by the Government and the CPR, brought to public attention the latent territorial dispute of the Métis and Prairie Indians. These grievances culminated in the first Red River Rebellion in 1869.

Situated alongside the lines of the Canadian Pacific Railway advancing towards the natural resources of the West were the traditional Indian bison-hunting grounds, spread across the Prairies, and reaching to the foothills of the Rockies. According to the white man's set of values, natives who adhered to their own socio-religious practices, were classified as inferior to civilized men.[158] This condemnation led to the notion that "savages", by their nature and way of life, had forfeited their tenure of territories on which they followed a nomadic way of life, and which they did not improve in any way. To such land, so obviously a domicilium vacuum, Europeans felt righteously and legally entitled. Appropriations of territories inhabited by "heathens and infidels" had been legally sanctified since the Crusades, when any means serving the interests of Holy Mother Church

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[158] Francis Jennings, The Invasion of America (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1975) 59

were considered permissible, and automatically praiseworthy.[159] An application of this highly specious philosophy was to be seen in the exploitative relationship of European colonists with the natives of North America.

Medieval codes concerning the treatment of savages in the territories claimed for Church or sovereign could not be justified in their original form in nineteenth-century Canada, and a series of treaties were signed by various Governors-General and Prairie tribes, over decades, as the railway proceeded Westward.

The photographers who visited the West, in the retinue either of various survey expeditions or visiting dignitaries, brought back images of the countryside and of Indians in their natural surroundings. By the 1870s, most established photographers advertised their packaged series of "Indian souvenir photos."

In 1885, after the last spike was driven, trains brought visitors from Europe and eastern Canada to the Pacific Coast. The increase in tourism led to the development of the famous scenic resorts in the Canadian Rockies. In 1887 a national park, the Rocky Mountains Park, was created around hot springs in Banff. This was done upon the insistence of Sir William Van Horne, general manager of the CPR, who saw the commercial potential in providing hotel accommodation for

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[159] Henry Osborn Taylor, The Medieval Mind: A History of Development of Thought and Emotion in the Middle ages 4th ed. (London, 1925), I, 332-335.

the tourists already streaming into the area. The Banff

Springs Hotel was ready for business by 1888.[160] Souvenir-

photographs of views along the railway were sold on CPR

trains, in hotels, and in every railway station. Little

wayside stations along the CPR tracks also became meeting-

places for the "...ever-present groups of stolid, dirty, but

picturesque Indians"[161] offering their artifacts as souvenirs

to the passengers of passing trains.

Natives themselves were thus degraded as yet another

feature of the Canadian wilderness and a subject for souvenir

pictures which came to rival in popularity the panoramic

pictures of wilderness landscape views.

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[160] Robert G. Wilson, "Canada Through the Stereoscope:
Banff", Photographic Canadiana, vol.ii, n.3, October-
December (1985): 3.

[161] J. Castell Hopkins, "Canada and the Canadian
Pacific Railway" Canada: An Encyclopedia of the Country
vol.ii, ed. J. Castell Hopkins (Toronto: Linscott Publishing
company 1899) 169

Chapter 4

Nature personified:

the image of Canadian natives in souvenir photographs.

From the beginning, the American Continent had been
represented by the image of a native, wearing feather
decorations, and accompanied by examples of flora and fauna
that were originally thought indigenous to the whole
continent, such as palm-trees, parrots, and alligators. Some
later variations of such allegories circulated in Europe,
showing tobacco-plants or ears of Indian corn, and
armadillos. The male or female figure representing America
was usually dressed in the mandatory straw-skirt, often with
the addition of leafy garlands, according to the convention
of depicting "savages" partially undressed, if not entirely
nude. In paintings, Indians often figured as decorative
accessories, or geographical denominators, symbolising their
North American location (Fig. 28).

The Indian population, considered indigenous to
Canada, provided the first archetype for Canadian iconography
and in the second half of the nineteenth century Indians were
considered a tourist attraction in themselves. Indian
artifacts had long before been among the first curiosities
brought to European courts as souvenirs to represent the
American continent.

The popularity of Indian souvenirs persisted, and many

AMERICA.

Fig. 28. Illustration for the Prosopographia America, c. 1580-1600, Paris, Bibliothèque des Arts Décoratifs, Coll. iconographique Maciet.

an enterprising merchant in nineteenth-century Canadian
cities advertised "Indian handicrafts", or "artifacts", which
consisted mostly of moccasins, snow-shoes, or birch-bark
boxes, and baskets. These curios, typical of North America,
were sought after by tourists and visitors. According to
numerous letters, travel-logs and private diaries, there were
three types of articles to be acquired while visiting Canada
- furs, Indian artifacts, and photographs, either of
magnificent Canadian landscapes or native peoples.[162]

Although prior to the spanning of Canada by the CPR,
the photo-studio portfolios of Canadian photographers always
contained some _carte-de-visite_ (and later cabinet-sized)
photographs of Indians, natives were seldom depicted in their
natural environment, but rather posed in ceremonial garb, for
theatrical souvenir-portraits produced in studios. Photo-
souvenirs of "studio Indians," produced in the second half of
the nineteenth century, usually showed natives who were
Christianized and well-accustomed to contacts with
civilization. The Indians often wore a mixture of European
and native clothes, and carried weapons or feather fans
which, superimposed against the background and furnishings of
a Victorian photo-studio, looked as much out of place as
their owners. The facial expressions of the "studio-braves"
varied from picture to picture, and could be considered as

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[162] Both Lady Monck and Lady Dufferin, the wives of
Governor-Generals between 1861-1868 and 1872-1878, mention
such purchases repeatedly.

illustrating a gambit of attitudes from cautious, suspicious, hostile, dignified, reserved and even quiet amusement (Fig. 29). Such nineteenth-century studio-posed photographs showed Indians in the roles pre-conceived in the art and literature of the European Romanticism of the previous century, which considered the so-called primitive peoples as an integral part of Nature.

The Romantic notion of the spiritual nobility of "primitive peoples" arose from favourable descriptions of natives recorded by some early explorers, various classical and medieval conventions concerning tne Wild Man, and the speculations of philosophers and men of letters.[163] The synthesis of these elements resulted in the concept of the Natural Man and the Noble Savage as variations on a theme formalised by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in eighteenth-century France. For Rousseau, the savage was essentially the natural man concealed in every member of society, inhibited and constrained by the framework of civilized society, and, as such, something more than a philosophical abstraction. Rousseau saw the savage as he was, "before the Fall," before "the punishment for our vain efforts to emerge from the happy state of ignorance in which the Eternal Wisdom placed us."[164] Man in the state of nature was savage and lawless, but

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[163] Fairchild, 2.

[164] Émile Bréhier, The History of Philosophy, vol. V., "The Eighteenth Century," (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1967) 157.

Fig. 29. NPA, <u>Tier Skanensati Peter Laforce</u>, 41670-BII, 1876.

essentially noble.

The Noble Savage existed solely inside the covers of literary works which were enormously popular in Europe, and which became a source of inspiration for a whole new library of adventure stories from the pens of nineteenth-century authors, some of whom never set foot on the soil of North America.[165] Thus both mythical binaries of the North American Red Man, which originated in Greek mythology as the noble Apollonian archetype and its Dionysian savage counterpart, were perpetuated throughout the centuries with a few modifications.

The philosophical abstraction of the Natural Man, popularised through contemporary literature and art, came to reflect the Noble Savage as a model of dignity, simplicity, physical strength, and moral integrity, - qualities which were considered as positive aspects of primitivism.[166] The Romantic notion of the Noble Savage developed almost as much out of a criticism of the deficiencies of contemporary society and civilization as from an interest in primitive cultures.

Naturally, the European poetic descriptions of the Noble Savages and their Elysian environment had very little

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[165] German author Karl May (1842-1912) and his novels of the American "Wild West" are a typical example.

[166] Roy Harvey Pearce, The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization rev. ed. (Baltimore: n.p. 1965) 242.

in common with the harsh reality of the Canadian wilderness and the lives of its native inhabitants. Canadians of both French and British origin saw the natives in a different light. The image of the Red Man, as preserved in the Québécois collective memory, was illuminated by the flames of the sacrificial fires in which missionaries were martyred, and coloured by blood spilled on both sides. Regardless of the animosities between Amerindians and European settlers, various practical aspects of the native way of life were adopted and adapted to the needs of the newcomers to Canada, and were reflected in Canadian imagery. These included snow-shoes, toboggans, canoes, some items of clothing, and sports such as lacrosse.

Rousseau's notion of the Noble Savage was as alien in Quebec as the ideals of the French Revolution of 1789. The educated French who remained in Quebec after the Conquest, were culturally isolated from France, and absorbed in local problems of their own. Only the Catholic Church of New France persisted in the struggle for the salvation of "les sauvages" through Christianization and education.

The first demand for pictures for educating and converting the savages in Canada came from Jesuits, who sent letters with instructions for such paintings to be sent out from France. In this correspondence they specified and detailed especially:

> ...the devils, dragons, hell-fire and other inconveniences which awaited bad Indians in the future.

Souls in Paradise were also to be portrayed and the heads were to be full in face, not in profile, and to look at the beholder with open eyes. The colours were to be bright and there were to be no animals or flowers to distract the attention of the Indians. Most of the pictures were to be mounted in portable form....[167]

In reinforcement of the message of preachers, a Huron maiden Kateri Tekakwitha became a saintly example for her people. In the light of the religiously-based cultural values which shaped the ideologies of New France, such a model was necessary, since a native paragon was needed, who could stand comparison with the virtues of the culturally remote symbolism in the depictions and examples of European saints.

Pagan or Christianized, Indians were seldom considered a fit subject for any other artistic treatment, outside of the commemorative paintings of French explorers and educators. The studio portraits of Lorette Hurons taken by Quebec City photographer Jules Ernest Livernois in 1885, can be considered as documentary evidence of the Church triumphant in its civilizing efforts (Fig. 30).

These portraits could well be those of white men masquerading as Indians. The impression of assimilation to the image of white supremacy is emphasized by the moustaches, worn by most of the chiefs, as well as their clothes, which are more reminiscent of theatrical costumes, than of authentic native dress. The double-breasted, knee-length

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[167] Robert Harris, "Art in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces", Canada: An Encyclopedia of the Country J. Castell Hopkins ed., vol iii, (Toronto: Lonscott publ. Comp., 1899) 366.

Fig. 30. Archives nationales du Québec, Quebec City, Livernois Bequest, Ernest Livernois, Band Chiefs of the Lorette Hurons, c. 1885.

cloth coats are edged with contrasting materials, and girdled with ceintures-flèchées, their sleeves tied with simple arm-bands above the elbow. Although the chiefs' traditional feather bonnets, and the medals hung on ribbons around their necks, represent their ethnic origins, the attitudes and expressions of these men are placid, and the appearance of the group is more evocative of a small contemporary club meeting than the traditional image of primitive savages as envisaged by tourists of the era.

The natives in Quebec were Christianized and integrated, more or less, into the social structure superimposed on them by the white man. Lady Monck, on visiting the Indian village at Lorette in 1864 commented in her journal: "The Indians are all Christians now all over Canada. Though they are called and call themselves `les sauvages', they looked quite Sunday-like, not working, and sitting about doing nothing; of course they are R.C.'s."[168]

In the Livernois presentations, natives were portrayed with some dignity and a degree of civilization. These were qualities rarely present in similar photographs made by other North American photographers who in their approach to a large, uncultivated public applied a coarser lowest common-denominator of taste, and too readily satisfied the demands for souvenirs depicting Indians as savages shown in hand-to-

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[168] Lady Monck, 103.

hand combat, preferably with their own kind.

Among the many available specimens of the Indian photo-repertoire of Canadian photographers, the tableaux produced by W. Hanson Boorne of Calgary are notable for the staged ferocity of Sarcee Indians shown in traditional costumes. They are posed in the simulation of a hand-to-tomahawk duel in front of a hand-painted back-drop of forest scenery in the photographer's studio (Fig. 31).

In contrived photographs of this type, the fierceness of the Indians was shown as directed towards each other, rather than white colonists, thus rendering these images both exciting and acceptable for viewing by respectable Victorians.

Only from about 1860, when improvements in equipment allowed the production of plates on remote locations, did photographs of Canadian natives became more documentary and realistic in character.[169]

Gone were braves on fiery steeds chasing buffalos, (and for that matter, so were the buffalos themselves), who had figured in earlier depictions of native North Americans. Only Indians in natural situations were found interesting by contemporary painters. As seen in civilized conditions they

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[169] Any photographic expedition at that time had to transport weighty equipment consisting of heavy box-cameras, tripods, dark tents, many pounds of developing chemicals, and hundreds of fragile glass negatives.

Fig. 31. NPA, W. Hanson Boorne, <u>Mutsenamakan & Stumetsekini,
Sarcee Indians</u>, 206, c. 1885.

were not considered worth depiction.[170]

Although the evidence of abject poverty and squalor often to be observed on Indian reservations may have made it an interesting subject for a humanitarian, its lack of aesthetic appeal, and its unsuitability for the souvenir market, rendered it unpopular as subject-matter for the ordinary working photographer (Fig. 32).

The Indian and the life-style to which he had been reduced by the colonisation of the country, was too unappealing to secure a prominent position in Canadian iconography. Thus the commercial and contrived staged photo-studio dramatizations of Indian life replaced reality and were accepted as reliable representations of Canadian native peoples. Such symbolic hybrids were especially powerful in their expression, as their authenticity, or lack of it, was difficult to assess for anyone but an expert.

Illustrations and engravings based on such photographs of romanticised natives which appeared in popular literature and magazines for the young, such as the Boy's Own Paper, were instrumental in teaching desirable patterns of behaviour for future colonial administrators, soldiers, and curators of the Empire, vis-à-vis the natives included in its far-flung territories. This responsibility was shared with British

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[170] W.A. Sherwood, "The National Aspect of Canadian Art", Canada: An Encyclopedia of the Country vol.ii, ed. J. Castell Hopkins (Toronto: Linscott Publishing company 1899) 367

Fig. 32. NPA, Anonymous, <u>Stanislaus Francis Tadousac</u>, 8079,
c. 1900.

educational institutions, as the colonies needed numberless pro-consuls and representatives of the central authority to lead the "lesser breeds without the law" into the fold of the civilized Christian world.

In the earliest colonial days, Indians were irreplaceable, although exploited, partners in the fur trade which had laid the foundations for the prosperity of both the French and the British in North America. Ever since the seventeenth century, small groups of Canadian Indians were periodically shipped to England, to be presented at Court in support of some political manoeuvre of the period.[171] In the second half of the nineteenth century, however, the British, locked more and more into their colonial values and racial prejudices, had little use for natives, except as a source of ever-popular Indian souvenirs, exotic entertainment for visiting Royalty and nobility, and services as hunting guides. Only the immigrants, soldiers of the British Garrison, newly-landed visitors to Canada, and young educated city-dwellers held any romantic illusions about the local natives.[172]

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[171] Richmond P. Bond, Queen Anne's American Kings, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952) 4.

[172] "Espiègle," The Saturday Reader, Sept.(1865): 5. W.B. Cordier & Co. Publisher, Montreal. A correspondent whose nom de plume was Espiégle, expressed his emotions upon visiting the far-famed Saguenay region in these words: "I became primeval. I wanted to put on a blanket and a pair of moccasins, and get into a canoe. I even thought that a feather or two and a little paint could not be out of the way."

For a time, the only Indians still living in the state of Nature, and fitting the eighteenth century description of the Natural Man, were the tribes that roamed the Canadian Prairies. But even this last preserve of "God's country" in North America was already foredoomed.

The advancement of the Canadian Pacific Railway into the West entailed the settlement of the Prairies. Within a decade, the ancient ways of life in the Prairies became extinct, and the once independent Indian tribes had to resign themselves to a life in reservations. The near-extinction of once enormous migrant herds of bison brought dire consequences. With their means of survival thus depleted, most of the prairie Indian tribes signed away their lands in various treaties, and became dependents of the Canadian Government. Although in 1881 tribes of Assiniboine, Chippewa, Ojibway, Cree and Blackfoot Indians formally ceded title to the vast lands of the North-West and swore allegiance to the Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, there was no peace in the West. The smouldering memories of the 1870 rebellion flared up once again in 1885, but the dream of an independent Métis nation died with the hapless Riel.

While the natives declined, the sanitized romantic image of the brave and proud prairie Indian lingered on, perpetuated in both literature and the fine arts. In time, the images attained mythical qualities and proportions. Reality could never measure up to myth, and even periodic

demonstrations of the former prowess of the Canadian
aboriginal population, in the form of war-dances, lacrosse
games, and processions of feathered natives, were intended
only to entertain visiting British dignitaries.

Without knowledge of the accurate meaning of the
complex symbolism belonging to various Indian cultural groups
there could never develop that understanding which is
essential to the process of humanization of "savages" thus
isolated in space and time. Their habits and their culture
were frequently and thoroughly described and documented
without being fully understood. These technically correct,
but culturally misunderstood and biased interpretations
misled the generations to come.

The appeal of the Red Man to the educated white
gentleman-adventurer was kindled by nostalgic longings for
freedom to roam, hunt, make war, and generally lead the life
that was prohibited within the fold of a European society
ruled by a set of values designed to inhibit any
irregularities and deviations from an artificially elevated
group-image.

Young enthusiasts indulged in "playing Indians" and
genuine Indian articles of clothing were sometimes collected
and worn by mustachioed and bewhiskered city-dwellers as
fancy-dress costume for photographic portraits. Occasionally,
the outfits were correctly complemented by original native
artifacts or weapons. At other times, native decorations were

combined indiscriminately and tastelessly with the sitter's everyday dress (Fig. 33).

Once the basic and obvious symbolism of the North-American savage - the Indian - was captured and reduced to the commonplace, the white man substituted a new representation of the wildness, by turning to non-human subjects. Nature was considered desirable in any shape or condition, and souvenir compositions featuring "nature morte" became even more popular as a means of capturing and retaining the images of vanishing wild game.

Visiting huntsmen, in search of souvenirs of their glorious adventures in the Canadian wilderness, often commissioned photographs, whether staged or in natural surroundings, complete with local Indian guides, slaughtered game, stuffed wild animals, sleighs, and tents, - in short, all the accoutrements of the hunting expedition (Fig. 34).

Increasingly, "wildness" came to be expressed in photographs of "Mighty Hunters." Men posed for photographs dressed in native clothes or with trophies of game animals. Both the freshly-bagged quarry hauled into the studio, and the fruits of some taxidermist's labours were pressed into service for staged hunting photo-portraits and souvenir photographs (Fig. 35).

Making these portraits became something of a theatrical production, a psycho-drama in which photographers captured their patrons acting out their personal fantasies in

Fig. 33. NPA, Mr. Bourdon as Indian Chief (Black Feet), 78062, 1872.
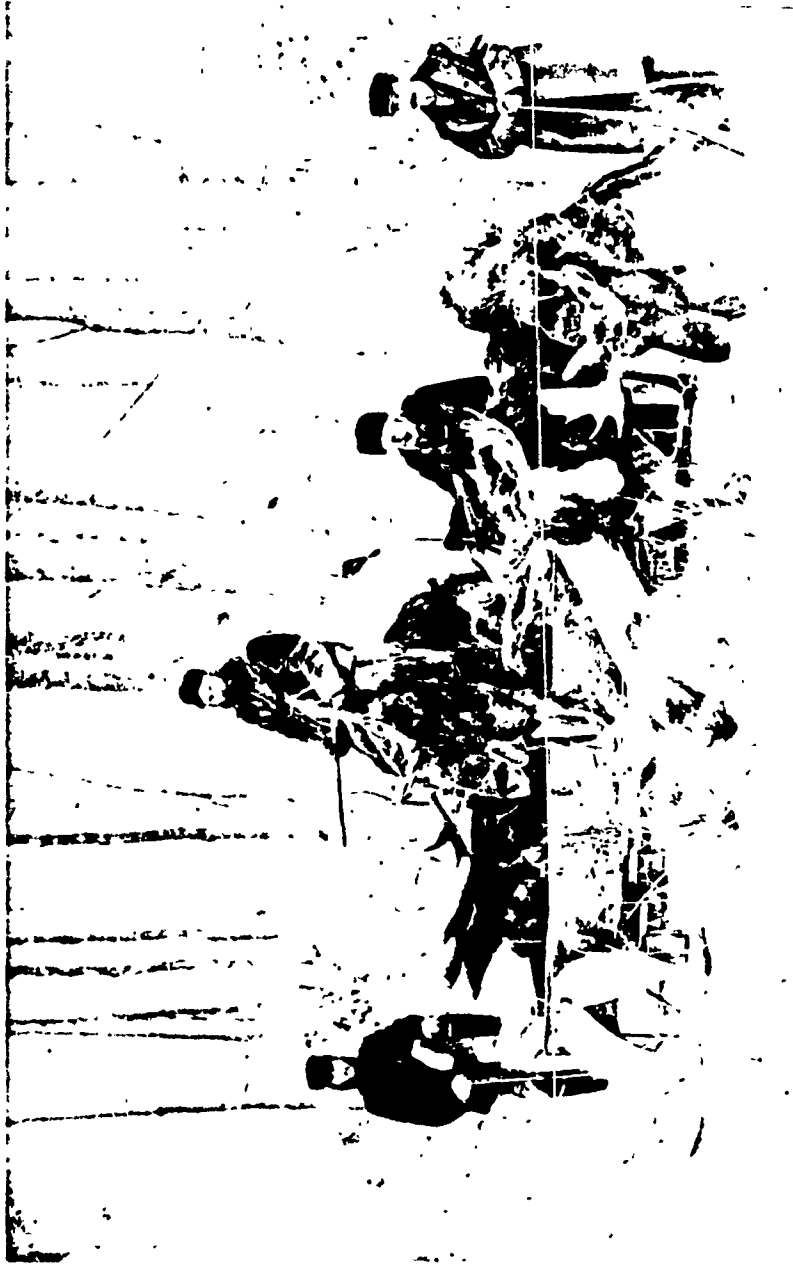
Fig. 34. Manitoba Provincial Archives, Winnipeg, Anonymous, Hunting, Moose 2, N13000, c. 1900.

Fig. 35. NPA, William Notman, Cariboo Hunting, Col. Rhodes, 19360, 1866.

front of the camera. Their subjects got more than they bargained for. In reality, these photographs captured the ailing soul of modern civilized humanity, which mistook its own greed for triumph over the forces of the wild. While the essence of Nature proved unattainable, at least ownership was possible of its symbols, dead or alive.

The relationship of man towards Nature was interpreted as the God-sent Biblical divine right to "dominion over fish, fowl, cattle and every living thing." Thus animals and birds ceased to be considered as part of God's creation and became the object of rapine or plunder. In Canada this resulted in a rapid thinning of the forest, and destruction of vast numbers of fur-bearing animals and herds of caribou. No attempts were made to find an excuse for this waste, for the destroyers "knew not they had sinned."

Parallel to this blissful ignorance, various scientists, zoologists, botanists, anthropologists, geologists and collectors used photography to document, preserve, collect and record data for future generations. Native artifacts and costumes, samples of minerals, flora and fauna, birds, fish, and insects, were avidly collected, preserved and photographed.

Nature-lovers turned their homes into mausoleums, filled with stuffed creatures contrived to look more natural than when alive (Fig. 36). These near-perfect souvenirs of Nature itself, often displayed side by side with the

Fig. 36. NPA, Anonymous, Interior of a House, MP 137/74 (60),
c. 1900.

artifacts produced by natives, were serially fabricated in an attempt to register the imagined triumph of civilized humanity over that threatening aspect of Nature - its wildness, in its physical, theological and philosophical contexts.

Chapter 5

A lone voice crying in the wilderness: the <u>Weltanschauung</u> of Canada.

The heady mixture of beauty and brutality present in the wilderness of Canadian Nature could never be dominated physically, but its threatening aspects could be ideologically neutralised through a judicious combination of selected texts from the Bible and the Common-Sense approach, both of which interpreted the exploitation of Nature as good stewardship in the name of the Lord.

The men who administered Canada, in the second half of the nineteenth century, as well as the newly-arrived British immigrants, were adherents for the most part of one or other of the Protestant Reformed denominations, and attended State educational institutions.

North American State schools generally prepared their students to assume a position of dominance in relation to their surroundings, and so to contribute to the material prosperity of the whole community.[173] This approach was supported by Protestant religious teachings, which pervaded and held a central position in the curriculum.

The all-embracing influence of religion and its dominance of the Canadian intellectual scene in the form of unquestionable moral teachings, constant in their

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[173] Moore, 103.

unchallenged and centuries-old interpretations, becomes obvious in consideration of the flow of intellectually unstable, elusive, and ever-changing philosophical issues of the century. Religion was the _terra firma_ which formed the basis for the development of both French and British Canadian philosophical trends. It played a centrally important role in the lives of Victorians, and the strong sense of security which it offered undoubtedly provided a recurring leit-motiv among Canadian thinkers on theology and religious issues.[174]

Intellectuals among the first French colonists had received their education in Catholic schools and seminaries in France.[175] Catholic schools in Quebec stressed a curriculum of studies based on a philosophy of life which interpreted the human condition in terms of a Divine scheme for the Creation, and were designed to foster the students' spirituality.

It was therefore not only the ancient military and commercial rivalries of the French and the British which caused cleavages in the everyday outlook of Canadians and their forms of expression. Intellectually, Canada was as divided as the value-systems and ideologies of the two so-called founding peoples, who had travelled Westward from

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[174] John A. Irwing, _Science and Values_ (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1952) 10.

[175] Moore, 99.

Europe in search of empire.[176]

If the luxury of wide-ranging philosophical thought
was thus denied to French colonials, this shortcoming was
considered negligible in view of the benefits gained by the
Church and the whole community in the education offered to
gifted young men by the clergy of such orders as the Jesuits
or Sulpicians. In trade-schools founded by the Church, many a
boy of humble background learned a useful and profitable
profession, while receiving a grounding in religious faith
and morality.[177]

Educators who had any interest in metaphysics, were
closely attuned to Church teaching, and thus any independent
development of philosophical thought in French Canada was
inhibited, and abstract thinking remained closely influenced
by ecclesiastical attitudes.

The religious beliefs of ordinary French-Canadians, or
habitants, frequently described, analyzed, and evaluated in
contemporary literary works, were the unchallengeable
ultimate reference points of their entire life-style, and an
inseparable part of their culture. For three hundred years,
and especially in the early days of la Nouvelle France, they
represented the sole source of comfort and hope that could
cushion the blows of fate in an inhospitable country.

The inward-looking self-reliance of the French colony

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[176] Irwing, Science and Values 56.

[177] Moore, 104.

was yet another race-saving quality. The French cultural heritage, religion, language, and territories were protected by the post-Conquest covenant with the British. French Canadians therefore continued in their way of life according to their ideals, which, in turn, were expressed in their symbols. Essentially, rural Quebec was barely affected by the British presence.[178]

This self-containment was out of place in the overall situation in nineteenth century Canada, and was both the vice and virtue of the French Canada, as Thoreau saw it:

> ...The English government has been remarkably liberal to its Catholic subjects in Canada, permitting them to wear their own fetters, both political and religious, as far as was possible for subjects....[179]

Among the Britishers, second in importance to religion was the secular faith in the greatness of Britain, and the sense of belonging within its vast Empire. The moral imagination and the concern for preserving cultural tradition were imperatives which were central to the colonial frame of mind in Canada.[180]

The power of the new British government was made visible by the presence of its garrisons, and repeatedly brought to public attention in military parades, reviews, and tattoos mounted by the regiments in residence.

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[178] Creighton, The Story of Canada 83.

[179] Thoreau, 64.

[180] McKillop, 3.

In the graystone walled streets of Quebec City and
Montreal, the British military and the French religious basis
for everyday living showed up in the vivid contrast of
scarlet and black, as the red coats of British Army uniforms
mingled with the black cassocks and habits of clerics and
nuns. In the eyes of a critical American tourist, Canada
under these circumstances, seemed to "be suffering between
two fires, - the soldiery and the priesthood."[181]

If the display of a certain arrogance and air of
superiority by British residents were so easily detected by
an American tourist, it must have been even more obvious and
offensive to members of the French-Canadian intelligentsia.
The Québecois theologian-philosopher, Louis-Adolphe Paquet
(1859-1942), a nationalist in outlook and a supporter of the
cause of Henri Bourassa (1868-1952), and an accomplished
orator, delivered a speech on "La vocation de la race
française en Amérique", on the occasion of a St. Jean-
Baptiste celebration, in which he succinctly summed up the
ideology and the raison d'être of French Canada:

> ...Oui, sachons-le bien, nous ne sommes pas seulement une
> race civilisée, nous sommes des pionniers de la
> civilisation; nous ne sommes pas seulement un peuple
> religieux, nous sommes des messagers de l'idée
> religieuse; nous ne sommes pas seulement des fils soumis
> de l'Eglise, nous sommes, nous devons être, du nombre de
> ses zélateurs, de ses défenseurs et de ses apôtres. Notre
> mission est moins de manier des capitaux que de remuer
> des idées; elle consiste moins à allumer le feu des
> usines qu'à entretenir et à faire rayonner au loin le

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[181] Thoreau, 84.

foyer lumineux de la religion et de la pensée.[182]

Thus the French-Canadian <u>patriotes</u> were left to hold
high the torch illuminating religion and culture, as an
integral part of their civilization, while the more pragmatic
British-Canadian philosophy served as a vehicle for the
official Canadian symbolism.

The intellectual life of Quebec was permanently
preoccupied with adequate forms of reaction to the British
presence, which frequently found expression in manifestations
of the uniqueness and distinctivenes of French Canadians,
sanctity of their cultural and religious mission in North
America, and the purity of their race.[183] Inevitably, on the
English-speaking side, the historical process in philosophy
developed differently. The religious beliefs of the majority
of British colonists, governed by the dynamism of the
Protestant work-ethic, regarded hard work and the ensuing
material rewards as a form of the blessing of Providence.
This attitude was to be reinforced by the first system of
coherent philosophical thought generally adopted in Canada,
known as the doctrine of Scottish Common Sense.

Scottish Common Sense became the intellectual

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[182] Robert Rumilly, <u>Histoire de la province de Québec</u>.
vol.x, (Montreal: Valiquette, 1943) 121. Although this
speech was delivered in 1902, it precisely expressed French-
Canadian sentiments which had persisted for centuries.

[183] J.T. Stevenson, "Canadian Philosophy from a
Cosmopolitan Point of View", <u>Dialogue</u> vol. xxv, no. 1 Spring
(1986): 17-30.

discipline which dominated early nineteenth-century British-Canadian educational institutions, and it was inevitable that the value of various symbols was heavily coloured by its influence.

The teachings of the school of Common Sense were imported to Canada with a contingent of immigrant educators. Mostly graduates of the Scottish universities, these pastors brought with them their social conscience, Common Sense outlook, moral intuitionism, and a knowledge of the works of David Hume (1711-1776), and Thomas Reid (1710-1796).[184] They were interested not so much in converting the savages as concerned with the preservation and improvement of the "cultural traditions and moral imperative, central to the Anglo-Canadian frame of mind."[185]

The quasi-religious belief found mute but powerful expression in the age-old trappings of official symbolism in Canadian heraldry. Symbols exist and operate on two levels simultaneously, as they present sensory and perceptual elements, external images and inner meanings. This duality, and the inherent conflict between symbolic knowledge and metasymbolic understanding, causes the confusion which often results in employing symbols merely as means, and accepting

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[184] Amour and Trott, 39.

[185] McKillop, 3.

them as ends.[186] The power of symbols, representing the ideals of collectively accepted doctrines, often transcends the dogma itself. Although practical application of the actual doctrine often fails miserably, this is ignored by adherents conditioned to recognize only the abstract theory and its symbolic expressions. In the process, the means or symbol becomes an end in its own right.[187]

Ideals and values are frequently transmitted, and are apparent in the doctrines of ecclesiastic institutions, programmes of secular educational systems, and in the philosophical outlook of any given civilization. Thus some superficial comprehension of socio-cultural issues requires prior knowledge of the mentality and Weltanschauung dominating the intrinsic make-up of a given culture.

The observant Thoreau, travelling in Lower Canada, noticed bilingual advertisements in French and English and remarked on "...the formality of the English, and the covert or open reference to their queen and the British lion."[188]

The philosophical beliefs of the British population which came to dominate English-speaking educational institutions in Canada after the Conquest, were imported from

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[186] F. Ernst Johnson, ed. Religious Symbolism (Harper & Brothers, 1955) 78.

[187] Northrop Frye, "The Symbol as a Medium of Exchange," Symbols in Life and Art: The Royal Society of Canada Symposium in Memory of George Whalley Leith, James A. ed. (Canada: Royal Society of Canada, McGill-Queen's UP, 1987) 5.

[188] Thoreau, 9.

outside, in the same way as the material necessities and luxuries of the civilized lifestyle. The Scottish philosophy of Common Sense, as the earliest unified system of philosophy to be widely held in Canada, prevailed during the period from 1850 to 1872, when Objective Idealism supplanted it, to continue until the 1920s.

The dominating influence of the Common Sense school among colonial intellectuals of British origin in Canada is not surprising, given the mercantile and social prominence of the Scottish Establishment. For example, at McGill College in Montreal, founded in 1821 by the well-to-do Scottish fur-t ading entrepreneur James McGill, philosophy was a study linked to theology, until the ruling of the Anglican Bishop George Jehosaphat Mountain (1789-1863), in 1853, that it should be detached and treated as a separate curriculum.[189]

However, neither speculative philosophical writings nor religious systems in fact provide in themselves the full ideological background for civilizations or cultures. They serve rather to represent idealised versions of goals and aspirations towards which populations are encouraged to strive.[190] One of the Canadian teachers of philosophy who harboured no illusions about the impact of philosophy on the masses and the advancement of civilization was James George

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[189] Irving, "Philosophy in Central Canada From 1850 to 1900" 276.

[190] Armour and Trott, 14.

(1801-1870). He was yet another Scottish cleric appointed in 1853 to the chair of Logic and Mental and Moral Philosophy at Queen's College in Kingston.

He considered philosophy to be an excellent discipline as a foundation for studies in Science and the Arts, but in contrast to religion, totally useless and purely ornamental as regards instruction in ethics or any attempts at laying down "principles for social life and civil government." He summarily dismissed all works of philosophy from Plato down to Jeremy Bentham as "miserably inefficient" in their exercise of a civilizing influence on the popular mind. In a public lecture entitled "What is Civilization?", delivered in Kingston in 1859, he answers the question by defining it as "... the conscience and intellect of people thoroughly cultivated, and the intellect in all cases acting under the direction of an enlighted conscience....".[191] In George's view, science, technology, and above all religion, held the keys to the future of civilization.

The future of civilization, and the idea of Progress, were pre-occupations of the period, which philosophical systems were expected to clarify by theoretical formulations that would reconcile the interests and attitudes of the individual and society. It is generally accepted that the teaching of modern philosophy in English-speaking Canada

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[191] James George, What is Civilization? (Kingston, 1859) 48-49.

began with the appointment in 1850 of an Oxford graduate, James Beaven (1801-1875), to the professorship of Metaphysics and Ethics in the University of Toronto.[192]

He was a shrewd and pragmatic clergyman of the Church of England, who, after emigrating to Canada, published an independent work examining the rational foundations of Natural Theology. In this work, entitled <u>Elements of Natural Theology</u> (1846), Beaven abandoned professional theological analysis in favour of an independent philosophical investigation.[193]

He was a capable administrator. His attempts to improve the state of education in Canadian universities coincided with the activities of another clergyman-educator Egerton Ryerson (1803-1882), who strove in Toronto to improve the standards of Ontario Secondary School institutions and to lay the groundwork for their function as preparatory schools to the university. Along with such prestigious thinkers as John Stuart Mill, he approved of the British tradition which held that "the languages and literature of ancient Greece and Rome are the most perfect of all educational instruments...."[194] The Classics accordingly became the core

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[192] John A. Irwing, "A Hundred Years of Canadian Philosophy," <u>Philosophy in Canada. A Symposium</u>. (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1952) 6.

[193] Amour and Trott, 32-33.

[194] R.D. Gidney, D.A. Lawr, "Edgerton Ryerson and the Origins of the Ontario Secondary School", <u>Canadian Historical Review</u>, LX, 4, (Toronto: U of Toronto P., 1979)

discipline in the curriculum of Ontario grammar schools in the 1860's.

Beaven was no mere theorist, and in his second book, Recreations of a Long Vacation (1850), he described a visit to the Indian missions of the Anglican Church. His assessment of North American natives is rather unflattering, as he describes them as "child-like" and "savages." His approach was typical, as scholarly debates continued over presupposed differences between the mentalities of primitive and advanced societies. The minds of "civilized men" and "savages" were considered "incomparable and incompatible"[195], as there was as yet no recognition of the common interest of all human societies in creating and developing idea-systems to maintain a cohesive identity.[196]

The symbolism underlying the intellectual culture of so-called "primitive societies" was disregarded or excluded from any consideration. Cultures considered as lacking a developed set of familiar symbols were labelled as primitive, backward, and barbarous.[197]

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[195] Ernst Cassirer, "The Technique of our Modern Political Myths", Symbol, Myth, and Culture: Essays and Lectures of Ernst Cassirer 1935-1945 Donald, Phillip Verene, Ed. (New Haven and London: Yale UP., 1979) 244. Cassirer uses this example and refers to the work by Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, How Natives Think (London and New York: George Allen and Unwin, 1926) N. pag.

[196] Cassirer, 244-249.

[197] Wittkower, 14, 186.

If Beaven was unkind in his assessment of the natives,
he was equally severe when he criticised his fellow-Britons
in Canada. He found disappointing their unthinking preference
for anything English, and their lack of interest in any
expressions of Indian culture, such as artifacts or
"curiosities." In reality, he misrepresented the situation,
since native Indian artifacts and souvenirs were in fact
sought by visitors from abroad, and offered for sale by some
merchants and traders. For example, McIver & Co.
manufacturers of military hats and caps in Montreal
advertised: "A large assortment of Indian Bark Work",[198]
Indians peddled their wares in the streets of Canadian
cities, and photo-souvenirs depicting natives were always
included in the carte-de-visite catalogues of Canadian photo-
studios.

Beaven's description of Canadian Nature was much
kinder. He approached Nature with sensibility and realism, as
an element which was at once useful, enjoyable, and worthy of
respect.[199] His enthusiasm for Natural theology, the dualism
of mind and matter, reason and revelation, and science and
religion, was shared by Doctor James Boswell and Professor
Daniel Wilson in Toronto, and Principal William Dawson in

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[198] McIver & Co., Military Hat and Cap Manufacturers'
advertisment, Lovell's Montreal City Directory, 1869-1870, N.
pag.

[199] James Beaven,   Recreations of a Long Vacation
(Toronto: H. and W. Rowsell, 1846) 31.

McGill College in Montreal.[200] As it seems, Canada had numerous professors of philosophy, but no real philosophers.

After a quarter-of-a-century of the dominance of Scottish Common Sense, the Utilitarian doctrine inspired an upsurge of learned debates in the new Canadian universities in the 1860s and 1870s. Utilitarianism was a consequence of, and a reaction to, the advancement of industrialization in Great Britain. Developments in various scientific disciplines entailed the examination of new discoveries made by naturalists, theologians and philosophers, who strove for a reconciliation between conventional religious teaching and scientific fact. The new data also created conflicts, as traditional values were being questioned, re-examined, and reassessed.

In England the empiricist philosophy developed into Utilitarianism through the works of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), James Mill (1773-1836), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), while in contemoporary Scotland at that period the prevailing philosophy remained that of Common Sense, with modifications by Sir William Hamilton (1788-1856). Canadian educational institutions of the period were under the influence of Presbyterian Scottish ministers, who resisted any attempt to move towards a more liberal interpretations of Christianity. Utilitarianism therefore came under heavy criticism in the Canadian

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[200] McKillop, 29.

universities, which were the centres of philosophical activity.[201]

John Stuart Mill was one of the intellectually curious who responded to the challenge of his changing world by speculating upon the future of man, while examining the nature of reality, and the question of the existence of God.[202] Mill conceded that God "more likely than not existed", while leaving man in charge of his own destiny. The pursuit of the ideal of happiness for all was the ultimate goal of mankind, and actions were to be judged solely by their results.[203] Although Mill, like his father James Mill, and Jeremy Bentham before him, continually referred to the principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, the individual as the smallest unit of mankind remained his focus of interest.[204]

According to Mill, pleasure was bound up with duty to oneself and one's fellow-beings. This principle was closely connected with the self-justification of affluence and abundance of worldly wealth.[205] Yet Mill saw dangers in the possibility of dominance by the mediocre, and an ensuing

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[201] Irwing, Science and Values 66.

[202] Amour and Trott, 12-13.

[203] John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism Mary Warnock, ed. (Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd, 1978) 27.

[204] Irving, Science and Values, 34.

[205] Armour and Trott, 12.

standardization of democratic human society. Not by
assimilation, but by diversity, do societies prosper and
develop, according to his outlook. But he aspired to the
establishment of a social order in which any distinction
between individual and collective happiness would disappear.

Paradoxically, he also preached equality, with the
Golden Rule of "Love thy neighbour as thyself", as the
doctrine leading to the achievement of individual happiness.
This Utilitarian concept of happiness was generally opposed
by nineteenth-century British thinkers.[206]

The concept of well-being or happiness held by a
single inherently egoistic human being is likely to differ
from that of any of his peers. It is the inherent
competitiveness amongst men, and the theoretical
presupposition of a great uniformity within an ideal
humanity, that exposed the Utilitarian credo to severe
criticism by Karl Marx (1806-1883) and like-minded radical
intellectuals of the time.[207] In Canada, the whole empirical
British tradition came under scrutiny by Professor John
Watson (1847-1939) who condemned the equation of value with
utility and argued that this approach only led to "Absolute

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[206] Basil Willey, Nineteenth Century Studies:
Coleridge to Matthew Arnold (London: Chatto & Windus, 1964)
172-174.

[207] Irwing, Science and Values 19.

Nihilism."[208]

Idealism in the Canada of the 1870s was represented by a succession of scholars, of whom Watson, educated in Glasgow, proved the most original and influential.[209] He was influenced by British Idealism, and inspired by both Platonic and Hegelian ideas. Contemporary Scotland was still under the influence of Common Sense, and the English universities were under the spell of the empiricism of the Utilitarian doctrine. In Canada, Watson devoted himself to developing the religious phase of Absolute Idealism and to:

> ...converting the half-superstitious beliefs, with which most men are satisfied, into a rational faith, which should be able to reconcile itself with the progress of the natural sciences, with the highest results of historical criticism, and with the deepest truth of philosophy....".[210]

He employed philosophy as an useful means of reinforcement and reiteration of the "assurance which Religion gives to the individual man of the existence of a Supreme Being" who is to be revered and loved.[211]

A prolific writer, Watson continued in his study Schelling's Transcendental Idealism (1882), to deliberate on the problems which had been of interest to his American

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[208] John Watson, The Relation of Philosophy to Science. An Inaugural Lecture... (Kingston, 1872) 22.

[209] Irwing, Philosophy in Canada. A Symposium 7.

[210] Irving, "The Development of Philosophy in Central Canada from 1850 to 1900" 252.

[211] John Watson, The Relation of Philosophy and Science (Kingston, 1873) 36-37.

predecessors a half-century previously. In 1895 he published Comte, Mill, and Spencer with an addendum in 1898 Notes, Historical and Critical, to Comte, Mill and Spencer. These two volumes pointing with uncompromising accuracy to the weaknesses of the Utilitarian phase of empiricism, became the mandatory basis of introductory philosophy courses in most Canadian universities, and brought him international recognition.[212] An examination of the meagre literary output of nineteenth-century Canadian philosophers reveals that Utilitarian thought was admitted into their works only as a subject of criticism.

Another prolific scholar comparable to Watson, who left his mark on Canadian philosophy, was John Clark Murray (1836-1917). A graduate of Edinburgh University, he came to Canada to lecture at Queen's College in Kingston, and later at McGill College in Montreal. He was unlike his colleagues who rarely published any philosophical studies, other than sermons or public addresses. During his life in Canada he published nine books dealing with various philosophical problems, forty articles, a large number of reviews, and occasional verse. Although the volume of his publications was impressive by Canadian standards, his philosophical loyalties did not differ greatly from those of his colleagues. His position in philosophy is described by Irving as one of "eclectic idealism", which, nevertheless, was influenced by

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[212] Irwing, Philosophy in Canada. A Symposium 8-9.

the works of Hamilton,[213] the revivalist of the Scottish Common Sense School of metaphysics. The great Scottish tradition of the nineteenth century dominated philosophy classes in many Canadian universities and survived side by side with Idealism well into the twentieth century.[214]

Idealism also held its own in the United States of America. Although Pragmatism was the fashionable philosophical doctrine in the 1870s and afterwards, Idealism re-appeared in cultural periodicals and in debates on the issue of artistic integrity. This ancient controversy centred on the validity of the objective existence of truth, versus the subjective concept of truth followed by the artist, and continued to occupy the attention of philosophers as well as artists.

The steady progress of Idealistic metaphysics, which spread from Germany among the intellectuals of Europe, continued throughout the nineteenth century. In Britain, the metaphysical subtleties of Idealistic rationalism were countered by empiric Realism, which, in fact, was an extension of the traditional Common-Sense approach to religion and philosophy held by generations of thinkers and men of action.

Because Common-Sense was an inseparable part of the

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[213] Irving, "The Development of Philosophy in Central Canada From 1850 to 1900" 279.

[214] Irving, "The Development of Philosophy in Central Canada From 1850 to 1900" 285.

intellectual make-up of the English-speaking Canadian intelligentsia, and even of the middle classes, the philosophical problems that disturbed the great minds of Europe excited little reaction when they reached Canada, as no philosophical works dealing with such themes are known to have been published in the country, or produced by any resident scholar.

The rapid advancement of science, which in Europe caused the abandonment of old habits of thought, perceptions, and ideals,[215] stirred little excitement in the backwaters of Canadian intellectual life. Science and its discoveries were welcomed and rapidly incorporated into religious dogma and the central scheme of progress.

Throughout the nineteenth century, philosophical findings on the human condition were reinforced in popular pamphlets and lectures by socially-conscious lay authors such as Matthew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, and John Ruskin, who wrote and preached in the cause of the British poor and the working-classes, in an attempt to improve their deteriorating life-style, and to lessen their misery.

Although ordinary Canadians were never part of the intellectual debates on the university level, the lecture circuit was fairly popular in Canada, and basic books on philosophy were offered by local publishers. Lectures and speeches on various philosophical subjects were publicised,

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[215] Santayana, 233.

and reports were published in contemporary magazines.

The versions of "grass-roots" philosophies that benefited educated individuals within the Canada of the second half of the century, were often only a scientific apologia for the free-wheeling capitalistic enterprises throughout the continent. Science was becoming the new idol of Western civilization. It could be applied successfully to explain almost anything, and even disguise motives such as greed, under the name of progress. Love of money, that all-powerful incentive of the age of Common-Sense, came under attack by individuals from the ranks of the humanists. The great achievements of modern science, in the form of railroads, telegraphs, canals, and industrial and engineering heavy equipment - were these really benefitting humanity? Or were they only the means to acquisition of wealth by calculating individuals? Courses of action were not planned according to consideration of the degree achieved of ultimate good for the country or humanity, but rather were derived from the highest probability of monetary profits for investors.[216]

In Canada, the symbolical values of the objectives or objects representing success for hopeful immigrants, shifted subtly. Material possessions which in Britain had been

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[216] Jukes, Dr. Extract from a lecture delivered before the St. Catherines Mechanics' Institute: "Man's Object in Advancing the Arts and Sciences", The Anglo-American Magazine, no. 4, April (1854): 406-409.

exclusively the external evidence of hereditary membership in the class of land-owning gentry, in the Dominion came to represent the achievement of financial affluence, and thus of worldly success in general.

The ready availability of land in North America laid the basis for an independent and pragmatic society of colonists, who had no reason to respect any traditional association of high social standing with the possession of large land-holdings.

Broad acres, and clear title to their ownership, were a secure basis on which to build independent attitudes and living-styles. A lack of loftier aspirations was echoed in literature and fine arts. "The dashing, bold, and superficial style - the rapid, though coarse delineation which pleases"[217] was preferred to "deep and earnest considerations, requiring any mental effort."[218] Of course, such a Weltanschauung ultimately reflected a lapse into Kitsch, and during the last decades of the century, found its expression in Symbolist decadence and the intellectual Weltschmertz.

Any philosophical problems debated or analyzed by North-American thinkers of the nineteenth century, had been derivatives of various European doctrines, and were augmented from equally foreign Oriental sources. In Canada, the

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[217] Jukes, 408.

[218] Jukes, 408.

original German, English, French or Greek philosophical texts were available, together with the secondary materials inspired by various commentaries, such as the writings of Goethe, Comte, and Coleridge, and later the popularized theories of Nietzsche and Carlyle. English-speaking Canadian politicians, journalists and public figures, such as William Lyon Mackenzie (1795-1861), often revealed a knowledge of British ideologies and intellectual trends in their quotations from the works of Hume, Reid and other Scottish philosophers. Thomas d'Arcy McGee (1825-1868) while lecturing on "Good Will", in Montreal in 1861, was able to refer to the writings of Coleridge, Hobbes, and Edmund Burke, in the short text of his address.[219]

It is tempting to speculate what the nature of a Canadian philosophy might have been, without the early animosities produced by the conflict of interests between Americans and Canadians, which continued into the nineteenth century, thus inhibiting the penetration of American intellectual influences. Close contact would have probably stimulated academic discussion between scholars of the two nations, but was not likely to introduce any new developments in the field, as American academic philosophy was much akin to the teachings offered in the curriculum of Canadian

[219] Edmund Kemper Broadus and Eleanor Hammond Broadus eds. A Book of Canadian Prose and Verse (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1924) N. pag.

universities.[220] Although American books and periodicals were available in Canada, both French and Brit'sh Canadians, steeped in their own particular brands of cultural chauvinism, were not ready to renounce preferences for their own traditional models. Independent Americans and their culture were in any case categorized by Canadians as upstart and vulgar.

An analysis of the ideological influences present in Canada, and the differences between French and British cultural groups, leads to a simple dichotomy. The rift between the prevailing philosophical adherences of the French and the British in Canada is a continuation and development of the original separation of philosophical schools of thought which, although the various terms overlap, remained largely unchanged throughout the course of the centuries.[221]

Thus the dominant British culture, so concerned with corporate and private ownership, produced Heroes to its image, Heroes who reflected the remote philosophical undercurrents and tenets of Canada.

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[220] Thomas Mathien, "The Natural History of Philosophy in Canada", _Dialogue_ xxv (1986): 53-65.

[221] Armour and Trott, _The Faces of Reason_ 26.

Chapter 6

The call of the wild:

echoes from William Notman's studio.

Nineteenth-century Western culture saw the Man-Nature relationship change, from the Romantic Man-in-his-world concept, into the Industrial Man-as-master-and-lord-of-creation, and in the second half of the century, with the rise of Darwinism, into Man-as-another-organism-among-many.

The Canadian wilderness, in the second half of the nineteenth century, proved as irresistible an attraction for poets as for men of commerce and sportsmen. While the poets celebrated the sublime, the awesome or the beautiful in Nature, and men of enterprise were more interested in "things useful and ordinary", sporting men sought adventure.

The hunters and anglers of the latter category often included officers of the British regiments stationed in Canada between 1759 and 1871. The British garrisons left their mark on economic and social life and added a military touch to the already predominantly masculine make-up of the symbolism of the Canadian scene.

The British military presence was profitable for local commerce, as Army units depended on local merchants for their supplies. As a major component in the population of large cities, garrisons were centres for social and athletic activities.

In contrast to other territories, Canada experienced a period of relative tranquillity in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Fenian raids in 1866 and 1870 and the Red River Rebellion in 1870 were among the few incidents which required intervention by British regiments. These events excited little interest in Britain[222] or on the international scene. In consequence, officers of the British garrisons in Canada benefited from the many opportunities to pursue their interests and hobbies. Manly activities such as sports and "sporting zoology"[223] became major outlets for their energies.

The abundance of game in Canada and the absence of hunting regulations[224] restricting the numbers of animals bagged, were conducive to expeditions which netted sleigh-

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[222] Viscount Garnet Wolseley, The Story of a Soldier's Life vol.ii, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903) 223. Wolseley wrote: "No one even at home paid much, if any, attention to our proceedings in a territory whose great rivers and forests were unknown to them even by name." He bitterly complains that the home Press had no room in their columns "for any consideration or discussion of far-off prairie affairs...." and that there was "no one in authority to say even `Well done!'" to the successful, virtually bloodless and certainly the "cheapest operation" carried out by the Red River Expedition.

[223] Berger, 11.

[224] Gerald Craig, ed. "The United States and Canada as Seen by Two Brothers in 1858 and 1861," (London, 1862), The Early travellers in the Canadas (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada Limited, 1955) 247. The two brothers document that: "....the game laws are not particularly stringent...."

load after sleigh-load of slaughtered game.[225] Ideologically,
the wilderness still held the eighteenth-century appeal of a
Paradise or sanctuary in which a man could in all innocence
"communicate with God", and escape the constrictions of his
Victorian civilization. But in the second half of the
nineteenth century the concept of Nature as a setting for
adventure became more apparent within the colonial Empire,
with its numerous, far-flung, exotic dependencies.

The Canadian wilderness was not civilised, not
humanised, and not benevolent. It was vast, unpredictable,
and unforgiving. Ventures into the bush involved many
hardships and dangers, which instilled a healthy respect for
the ways of the wild. The "mighty hunters of the North"[226],
(Fig. 37) returning triumphantly with the spoils of their
hunting expeditions, were hailed as heroes.

Canadian mythology was a reflection of a society's
past, present and future.[227] It was a product of a racial
heritage and the Judaeo-Christian tradition, defined in

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[225] Morton, Monck Letters, 2, 8. Lord Monck, Governor-
General of Canada, in a letter dated January 1, 1863 to his
son Henry, mentioned the hunting prowess of Colonel (rtd.)
William Rhodes of Benmore who "Killed ten caribboo,[sic]
besides a great many other things." Another letter from
February 7, 1863 reports that "Colonel Menzies and Colonel
Rhodes have just returned from a shooting expedition in
which they got sixteen caribboo [sic]."

[226] Frances, Elizabeth, Owen, Monck, My Canadian Leaves
(London, 1891) 148-149. Lady Monck mentions Colonel Rhodes
as "the mighty hunter" and specified that he preferred
"Manly sports such as Cariboo [sic] shooting....".

[227] Frye, The Critical Path..., 36.

Fig. 37. NPA, <u>Messrs. McNab and Bond</u>, 43352-II, 1876.

photographs, which in turn were the product of a co-operation between the photographers and their clients. The Canadian continuation of the traditional prototype of the hunter as seeker, or hero, came to its stereotyped nineteenth century re-definition, when the earlier rugged images of the hardy pioneer became gentrified into an image of the gentleman-sportsman.

It was not the British military prototype which entered Canadian iconography, but rather the once-removed adventuresome, sports-loving hunter-officer of the British garrison in Canada. The gentleman-hunter, dressed in buck-skins, or embroidered Canadian habitant woollen coat, was a direct continuation of the already existing archetype of a hero-hunter, indigenous to Canadian iconography since its beginnings.

But there was now a difference. While the earlier hunters killed for subsistence or profit, the Victorian gentlemen-sportsmen hunted and killed for the mere pleasure of a pastime involving shooting skills.

Man's conquest of Nature was celebrated in choice examples of _nature morte_ which were mummified and preserved in every possible way. Trophies such as antlers and whole animal heads were mounted, large fishes and birds stuffed, hides tanned and trimmed as hearth-rugs (Fig. 38).

Army regiments were usually stationed in Canada for a tour of duty of three years, and the shortness of this spell
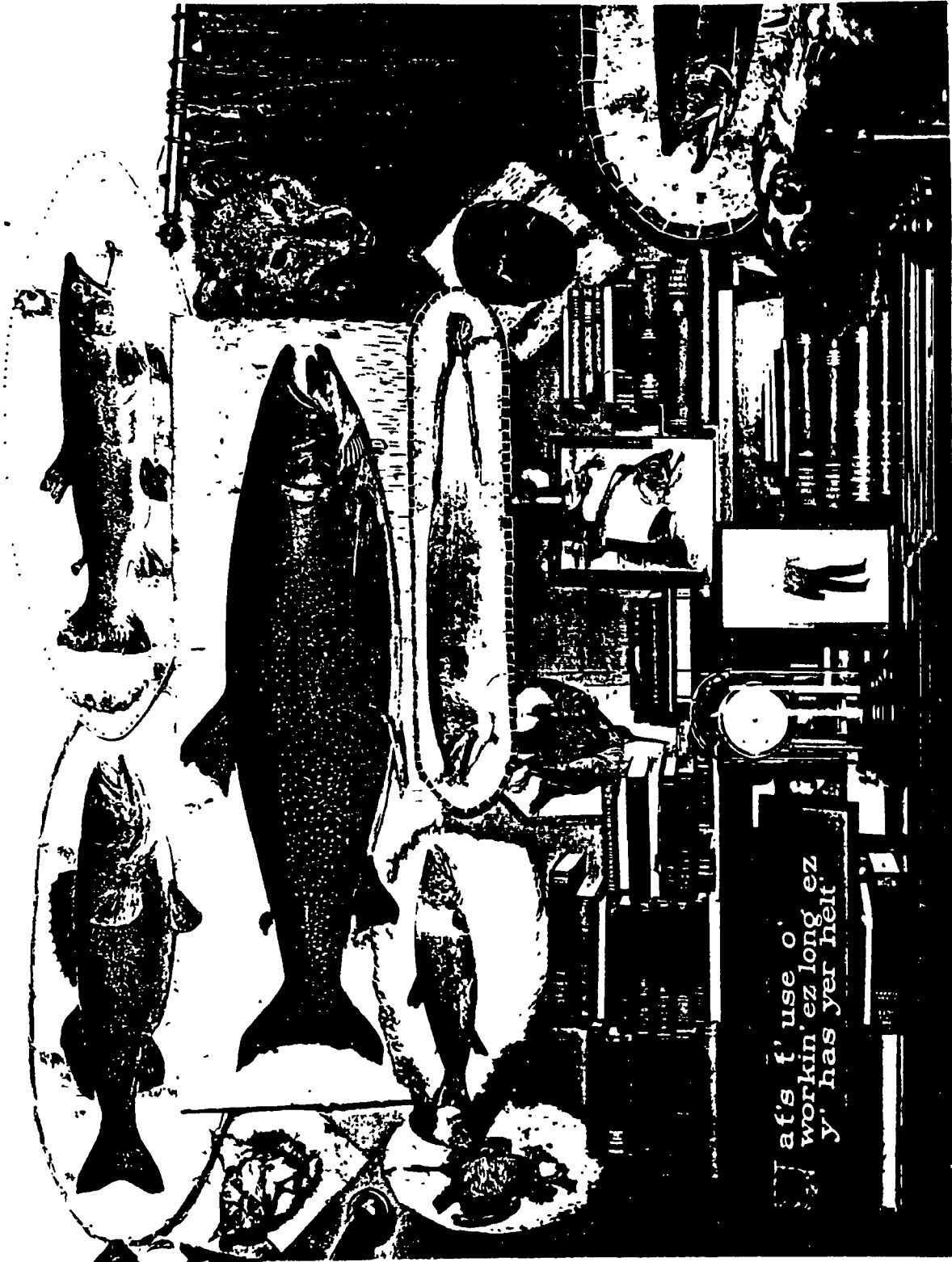
Fig. 38. NPA, Anonymous, <u>Interior of a House</u>, MP 137/74 (55), c. 1900.

of residence created a great market for souvenirs. Striving
to capture and preserve for posterity their glorious
adventures in the Canadian wilderness, some hunters
commissioned souvenir photographs to document their hunting
expeditions. By extension, these pictures also confirmed the
already established image of the Canadian wilderness as a
hunter's paradise (Fig. 39).

Britain must have been inundated with images of fur-
swathed Army officers playing at "roughing it" in Canada. The
raw primeval appeal of facing danger, real or imagined, with
animal furs or skins for clothing, and a weapon in the hands,
proved to be all too powerful an enticement. Men, whether
humble or high-born, readily succumbed to the "call of the
wild", and those who were unable to participate in an
expedition into the Canadian wilderness, opted for a
simulation in the safety of the photo-studio[228] (Fig. 40).
Victorian "wilderness" photographs were not all a matter of
pathos and heroics. In the 1870s, a vogue existed for comic
portraits - reflecting the rambunctious and rather coarse
sense of humour of Victorian England. Canadian versions of
good clean fun were posed with men falling off toboggans or
tripping over bear-skin rugs. These burlesque photographs
were the fore-runners of the comic post-cards which made

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[228] Many visitors from abroad who came to Notman's
studio to have their picture taken opted for at least one
image accompanied by the accoutrements of the "wilderness",
posing either as sportsmen or hunters.

Fig. 39. NPA, William Notman, Cariboo Hunting - A Chance Shot, 19323-I, 1866.

Fig. 40. NPA, Notman Studio, <u>Mr. Rivis</u>, 34794-BI, 1868.

their appearance at the end of the century[229] (Fig. 41).

Photographs of hunters with game were produced by every well-established photo-studio in Canada, but those produced in the Montreal studio of William Notman (1839-1898) contributed most to the creation and international popularization of the Canadian image. Of all the photographers in nineteenth-century Canada, it was William Notman who produced photographs that stood out against the multitude of the generally mediocre pictures produced in Canada in his time. His works were exhibited and distributed across the North American continent, as well as in Europe, and were engraved as illustrations in periodicals, newspapers and books in Canada, Britain and the United States. Although the photographs of some Notman's contemporaries, such as James Inglis and Alexander Henderson of Montreal or Ernest Livernois of Quebec City, can be judged as aesthetically superior, it was Notman's souvenir-photographs, highly valued by contemporary critics for their artistry, which came to represent Canada worldwide, and it is Notman, who is chiefly and directly responsible for the photographic formulation of the Canadian image.[230]

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[229] Alan Thomas, 73.

[230] Although some of his competitors proved equally able, the sheer volume of Notman's production (today there are still 400,000 pictures in the Notman Photo Archive of the McCord Museum of Canadian History in Montreal), his contemporary fame as an artist, and his Royal connections, render Notman the best-known nineteenth-century photographer in Canada.

Fig. 41. NPA, Notman Studio, composite photograph, <u>The Spill</u>,
1999, 1889.

Photographs and stereograph-views of human subjects, landscapes, and monuments of culture and industry were produced by Notman's staff on nation-wide field-trips ranging from Vancouver, British Columbia, across the prairies and the Northwest Territories to Saint John's, Newfoundland.

Notman's images of the country and its inhabitants were distributed across Canada through his branch studios in Ottawa, Toronto, Halifax, and Saint John. Through various partnerships, he also established thirteen studios in the USA.[231] His works were published in the *Philadelphia Photographer* and other prestigious American and British journals. He submitted photographs for competition in international exhibitions both in Europe and North America, and won many awards and prizes.[232] His photographs reached the widest public, and were sought after and praised by members of the British nobility and Royalty.[233]

Notman, one of the immigrants destined to leave his mark on his adoptive country, was hard-working, shrewd and able. Born in 1826, in Paisley near Glasgow in Scotland, he grew up in a period of great discoveries. One of the

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[231] Stanley Triggs, *William Notman: The Stamp of a Studio* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1985) 30.

[232] Harper, Russell J., Stanley Triggs, eds. *Portrait of a Period* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1962) app.

[233] Notman photographed members of the Royal family, including Prince Arthur when he spent a year in the Garrison in Montreal and Princess Louise, who spent time in Canada as wife of the Governor-General the Marquis of Lorne.

developments of the age was the introduction of photography, which was eventually to become the focus of his life (Fig. 42).

In 1856, in pursuit of an improvement in his own and his family's fortunes, William Notman emigrated to Canada. On arrival in Montreal in August, he found employment with Ogilvy & Lewis, a wholesale dry-goods firm. His mind must have been fixed on photography, because he opened a photographic studio later the same year, at no. 11 Bleury street, in a lively business district of downtown Montreal.[234] From the outset, his photographs were showered with extravagant praise. Orders for portraits came pouring in, and within a year he was well established in his new enterprise.[235]

Notman skilfully manoeuvred his professional affairs and while consolidating his success, achieved prominence in a very short time in municipal, social and public life. Almost immediately upon his arrival in Montreal, he had aligned himself with important members of Montreal society, and while he himself did not attempt a political career, these established affiliations helped in the advancement of his studios.[236] Many of his new associates were Scots like himself.

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[234] Triggs, 23.

[235] Triggs, 24.

[236] Triggs, 27.

Fig. 42. NPA, William Notman, 24152-BI, 1866-1867.

Scots pl; ·~d an important role in the development of
Montreal. They were hard-working, ethnically and ethically
cohesive, and their native loyalties and commercial alliances
contributed to their pre-eminence in the city's commercial
and social circles. In 1869, there were only 3,235 Scots in a
population of 91,006 in Montreal, but they did so well in
business, that the listings of city merchants in Lovell's
Montreal City Directory for that year resembles the roll-call
at a Gathering of the Clans.[237] Montreal Caledonians,
according to the descriptions of visitors, were "...amongst
the wealthiest and most important men in the country."[238]

Notman assimilated very well with his new
surroundings, and the names of his new acquaintances, given
prominence in the pages of newspaper reports on the city's
commerce and politics, reappear in his studio photo-books
with marked frequency. He relied for his financial well-being
on the mass appeal of high-quality portraits, executed for a
reasonable price, and two-thirds of the estimated 400,000
negatives left by the enterprising Notman studios in Montreal
alone, consist of portrait-studies.[239]

A factor in the increase in Notman's business was a

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[237] The Lovell's Montreal City Directory for 1869-1870,
John Lovell, Montreal, 1870.

[238] S.P. Day, "Economic Growth at Montreal," Early
Travellers in the Canadas 1791-1867, Gerald M. Craig, ed.
(Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1955) 268.

[239] An educated estimate given by the Curator of the
NPA, Mr. Stanley Triggs.

commission he received in 1858 from the Grand Trunk Railway to photograph the construction of the Victoria Bridge, spanning the St. Lawrence River between Montreal Island and the South Shore settlements.[240] He undertook and executed this assignment with marked success.

On the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales in the summer of 1860 for the official inauguration of the bridge, Notman seized the opportunity to promote his work before his sovereign. He produced a portfolio of twenty-six photographs (10 x 12 inches), and two hundred and seventy-nine stereographs of the Victoria Bridge construction, with additional pictures and views of Canada, East and West. "Ten of the largest sized single plates yet taken in Canada" (18 x 24 inches) were also included,[241] depicting views of Montreal, Quebec City, Niagara Falls, and the Victoria Bridge. All the photographs were mounted and "placed in two leather binders with solid silver clasps, which were then enclosed in a bird's-eye-maple box fitted with silver mountings."[242]

Far-sighted businessman that he was, and aware of the publicity value of this presentation, Notman had had a replica of the Maple Box made, which was to be displayed in

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[240] Triggs, 24.

[241] F.P. Rubridge, Letter to T. Trudeau, Secretary, Department of Public Works, 1 Oct. 1860, no. 49288, subject no. 994, Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

[242] Triggs, 24.

his studio. The only difference between the two portfolios was in the selection of photographs included.[243] Notman's gesture was recognized by regal patronage, and Her Majesty was so delighted with the gift that she nominated William Notman "Photographer to the Queen". A new, impressive Grecian-style portico was added to the studio entrance in 1862, with an inscription proclaiming the distinction of Royal recognition.[244]

The tributary submission to Royalty proved an excellent investment, and it became fashionable for Montreal clients to have their pictures taken in front of the Notman studio entrance. Hundreds of photographs were taken of Montrealers, members of the city's upper social echelons and officers of the garrison posed in phaetons or sleighs. The display of fine carriage-horses and vehicles lined with precious furs, with fur-swathed ladies holding the reins, was indisputable objective proof of the ultimate wordly success of both the subjects and their photographer (Fig. 43).

A visit to the Notman's studio in Montreal was almost obligatory for the many visitors from Britain, and the studio record-books are filled with portraits of almost all the well-known personages of the era who came to Canada.

An entry on 9 July 1864, in the journal of Lady Monck, wife of the Governor-General of Canada between 1863 and 1868,

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[243] Notman Photographic Archives, archive inventory.

[244] Triggs, 25.
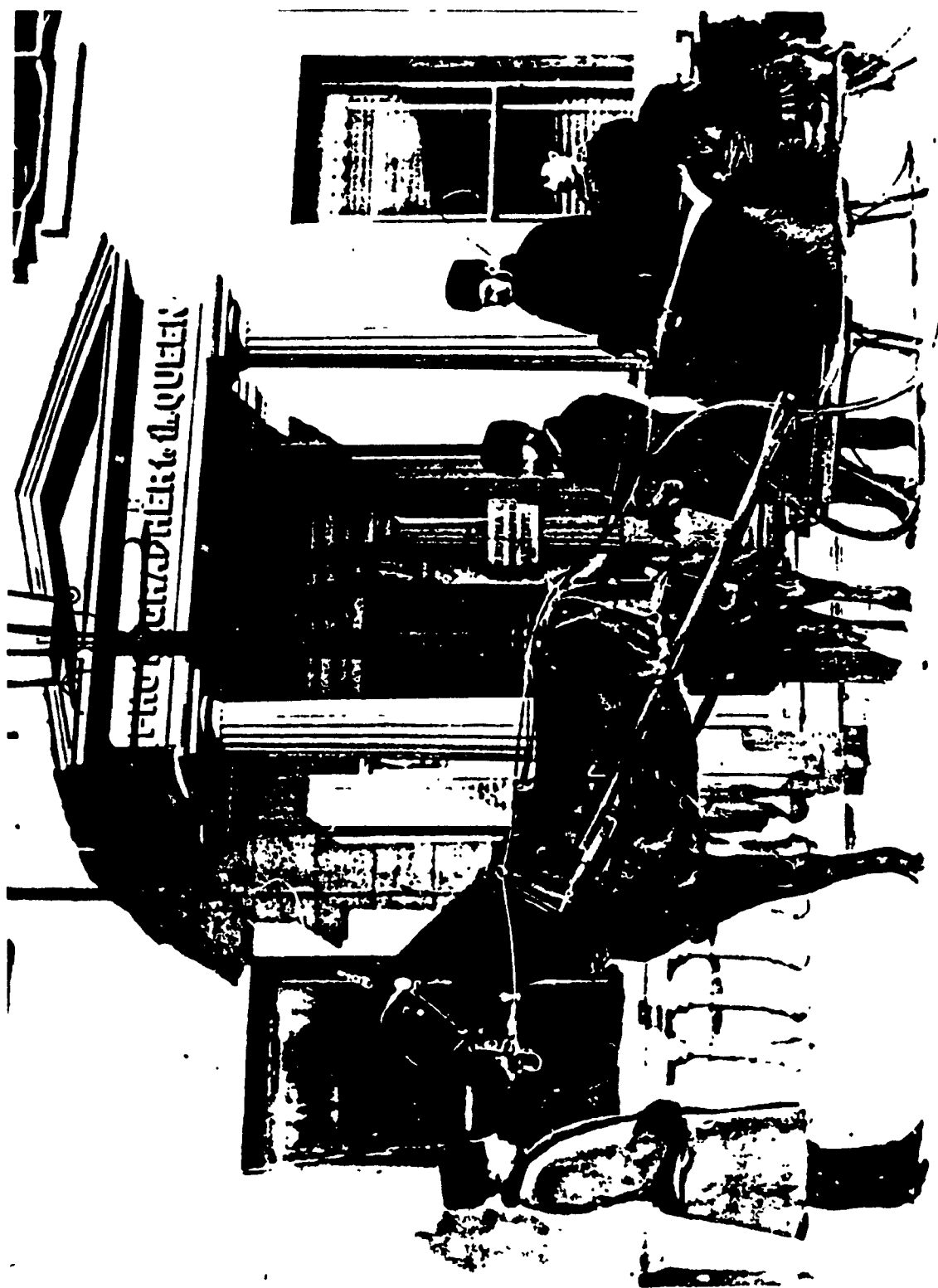
Fig. 43. NPA, <u>Mr. Wallace - Horse & Sleigh</u>, 35676-BI, 1868.

specified "...went to Notman's (the photographer's) where everyone was photo'd except me. He is about the best photographer in the world, so report says."[245]

Notman worked hard to deserve his fame. He advertised various services such as portraits over-painted with water-colours or oils, coloured stereographs, and composites. His studios were also commissioned to document in photographs the property of monied citizens, - mansions, furnishings, art-collections, equipages, family members, servants and pets.

In cooperation with Fenning Taylor, in 1865-8, Notman published Portraits of British Americans, illustrated mostly with photographs of famous Canadian contemporaries taken in his photo-studio. In 1866 there followed in portfolio format, Sports Pastimes and Pursuits in Canada.[246] The book of the Montreal ornithologist Henry Vennor entitled: Raptors: Our Birds of Prey, or the Eagles, Hawks and Owls of Canada illustrated with thirty photographs by Notman, was published in 1876.

In Canada, where the major monument was Nature itself, the obvious need to represent its realities resulted in the early development of new techniques and pictorial settings. Representations of the Canadian winter, in combination with the theme of hunting in particular, were in great demand and became a hallmark of the Notman studios. The serial

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[245] W.L. Morton, Monck Letters, 85.

[246] Triggs, 26.

production of winter souvenir-photographs became a lucrative business, and Notman providently and with great skill and imagination, re-created the typically snow-bound Canadian landscape in his Montreal studio, to accommodate tourists who desired to be photographed in comfort, but in a wilderness setting. To give "...friends at a distance an excellent idea of our Canadian winter...", "Portraits in Winter costume" were offered, as well as photographs of open-air sports and amusements such as snow-shoeing, tobogganing, sleighing, shooting, walking and skating.[247]

Supplementary to the portrait production was a large collection of Canadian views, advertised as "Photographic Views of all the Most Interesting Places in Canada", which was continuously enlarged as Canada was being opened to development. In 1889, after the successful spanning of Canada by the CPR railway, two new series entitled "Views of the Rocky Mountains", and "All Points of Interest in the Dominion"[248] were added to the ever-growing repertoire of souvenir photographs. A series depicting topics from everyday life was another addition to the demand of the Victorian public for fashionable genre-photographs.[249]

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[247] Notman's advertisement, The Montreal Herald, Montreal, 10 April (1867) N. pag.

[248] Notman's advertisement, RTO New Official Guide, (1889): 30.

[249] Aaron Scharf, Art and Photography (Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books, 1983) 79.

Of all Victorian themes, genre became the most sought after, even surpassing landscape in importance. Genre scenes were often pictorial transpositions of a concept, and carried symbolic values reflecting the ethical outlook of the age, thus endowing a painting or photograph with moral significance. Stereotyped story or genre photographs were popular in the second half of the nineteenth century and were often mass-produced to stimulate sentimental feelings in the hearts of vast numbers of viewers. In these photographs, a schematization of Victorian taste was achieved. They contained no new discoveries or revelations, but rather were re-affirmations of old ideals in a new medium.[250]

The Victorian preference for genre was reflected even in Notman's contemporary photographic re-constructions "from life", in the Canadian wilderness. The best-known was the Cariboo Hunting series, produced in the Montreal studio in 1867, as a successor to the Moose Hunting and Trapping series.

Notman managed to give his own convincing flavour of Canadiana to his genre photographs, and besides images of hunters with dead moose or other game, (Fig. 44) he created pictures of groups of men around a camp-fire, dressed in traditional back-woodsmen's attire, and with the indispensable accessories of the frontier, such as toboggans, tents, traps, firearms, axes, snow-shoes, dogs, (not

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[250] Kaplan, 321.

Fig. 44. NPA, William Notman, <u>Moose Hunting - Death of Moose</u>, 20492-I, 1866.

forgetting the trusty faithful Indian or habitant local guide) - all arranged in front of snowy backdrops and an abundance of freshly-cut conifers (Fig. 45). In these naïve and makeshift re-enactments, hunters alone or in groups were depicted in the process of trapping, hunting, and "killing" local wild animals, including seals (Fig. 46). The picture entitled Hunting Seal from the Trapping Series so impressed the founder and editor of the Philadelphia Photographer Edward L. Wilson, that he published it in 1867 in his magazine, praising the arrangement highly for its "life-like artistry".[251]

The obvious and heavy-handed sentimentality that accorded so well with the requirements of the Victorian public, in scenes which attempted to reproduce the reality of hunting expeditions in the Canadian wilderness, and which to the eyes of the modern viewer are no more than theatrically-staged superficial simulations, were received with enthusiasm both in Victorian Canada and abroad.[252] The unmistakably Canadian flavour of such photographs propagated at the same time a received stereotype in souvenir photographs and portraits of a Canada which still prevails, after more than a century.

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[251] Edward L. Wilson, "Our Picture", editorial, The Philadelphia Photographer, Philadelphia, (1867) 79.

[252] Edward L. Wilson, editorial, "Outdoor Photographs Taken Indoors", The Philadelphia Photographer, Philadelphia, (1866) 129-131.

Fig. 45. NPA, William Notman, Trapping Views — The Carcajou, 21953-BI, 1866.

Fig. 46. NPA, William Notman, <u>Trapping Views - The Seal Hunting</u>, 21956-I, 1866.

Notman's adherence to contemporary popular-art
conventions contributed to the great appeal and success of
his photographs. Realism was the professed aim, to be
achieved by fictitious means, and photographic
conversation-pieces depicted re-constructed scenes from the
Canadian wilderness. Salient features of Nature were shown as
oversimplified clichés in the clumsy backdrops of studio
settings. The realistic effect was partially achieved by the
inclusion of everyday props and the miming of real-life open-
air activities in which the sitters engaged with all the
rigid and straight-faced artificiality of their era. Thus the
stratagem of combining familiar and intimate symbolism with
the new technical process of image-making, was doubly
rewarding for viewers who, at first glance recognized the
safe, familiar ideological ground transformed by its
translation into the new medium.

At the present, it is the very over-simplification
of these scenes and condensation of their ideological values
that endowes their visual representations with both the
poignancy and the eloquence of an advertisement and the
characteristics of true kitsch.

The artistic philosophy of the age conferred on the
photographer the liberty to employ any means he thought

Notman quickly adopted any innovations in photographic technology, and himself brought some forms of photographic technique to near-perfection. While his assistants and artists dealt with the bulk of the studio portraiture, he divided his time between business and artistic experiments.

To endow his staged photographs with the greatest possible degree of realism, Notman devised clever simulations of snow and ice with the help of "salt, flour, wool, furs, and other analogous substances."[254] The winterized studio landscape was further embellished with freshly-cut pine-saplings, boulders, and split-wood fences. White India-ink sprayed in droplets over a developed glass-negative conveyed the effect in prints of a snow-storm.[255] In 1867, he prudently petitioned for a patent to protect the methods and photographic effects which he had originated.[256] His innovations were registered as "Notman's art of taking photographic pictures, representing winter scenes, by artificial means, with or without figures."[257]

This official patent in fact, established Notman as the sole creator of the popular photographic winter image of

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[254] Notman Photographic Archives, <u>Notman File</u>, Notman's Patent, 28 January 1867, arts. 2,3,4.

[255] Notman Photographic Archives, <u>Notman File</u>, Notman's Patent, 1867.

[256] Notman Photographic Archives, <u>Notman File</u>, Notman's Patent, 1867.

[257] Notman Photographic Archives, <u>Notman File</u>, Notman's Patent, 1867.

Canada. The existence of the patent also explains the uniqueness of Notman's "winter" photographs, and the lack of competition by other photo-establishments in Canada, in the production of similar images.

The Marquis of Lorne, Governor-General of Canada (1878-1883), speaking at the opening of the new Art Association of Montreal Art Gallery in 1879, referred to the extreme popularity of photography in Canada. He also attested to the wide circulation abroad of photographs of Canadian scenes, especially those illustrating the snow-bound landscape. These photographs, claimed the Governor-General, "...do give some of our friends in the Old Country the belief that it is the normal habit [in Canada] of young ladies to stand tranquilly in the deep snow, enjoying a temperature of 33 degrees below zero...".[258] This comment could only refer to the portraits created in Notman's studios, as Notman is the only known Canadian photographer of that period who, under the protection of his patent, could produce indoor photographs with artificial snow, ice and special wintry effects.

Notman's studio staff were only too happy to create personalized souvenirs for those who desired to figure in photo-mementos of their sojourn in Canada. It would be only

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[258] Marquis of Lorne, Records of the Founding of the Royal Canadian Academy, vol. i. pp. 6-7. Records of the Founding of the R.C.A. by His Excellency, the Marquis of Lorne and Her Royal Highness, the Princess Louise. Toronto: Globe Printing, 1879-1880.

natural if many a photo-souvenir from Canada found its way to friends and relatives in the mail, which, in Canada in 1870 reached an annual the figure of 24.5 million pieces.[259]

When in 1870, the presence of the British Garrison in Canada was discontinued, mainly for economic reasons, the souvenir-photographs that enshrined such exotic and romantic aspects, as "snow, pine-trees and hunting", with other features associated with Canada, remained as representations of the country, widely circulated throughout the world. In time, these images resulted in a set of visual clichés which, notwithstanding changing styles and tastes in art, are still perceived worldwide as representative of Canada.

An extreme example of the productions created in Notman's Montreal studio is the souvenir photograph of Mr. McNab dating from 1873 (Fig. 47). Dressed in buckskins, the solitary hunter is posed lounging comfortably in what seems to be a great caribou graveyard, within hailing distance of the metropolitan Montreal that serves as a backdrop for this macabre depiction of Sardanapalus, à la Canadienne.

The props in this scene, consisting of some seven heads of moose and caribou and a stuffed beaver, may explain the choice of the languid pose for the reclining figure of the hunter, by dictating a lower viewpoint for the camera lens. In his fringed garments, the hunter rests with his

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[259] Historical Statistics of Canada, Series S321-322: Post Office 1868 to 1960, (Toronto: Macmillan Coy of Canada, 1965) N. pag.

Fig. 47. NPA, William Notman, Mr. Campbell McNab, 81218-BI, 1873.

right arm propped on a small caribou head, his body settled in the soft folds of various furs and hides. The position of his hand, holding the sling of his rifle, slanting diagonally across his thigh, proclaims his control over the deadly potency of his weapon. A pair of snowshoes and a sleigh, in the foreground of the composition, suggest his means of transportation in the snowbound wilderness.

Nearly half a century after the exhibition of Eugène Delacroix's (1797-1863) controversial painting The Death of Sardanapalus (1828), (Fig. 48) the image of the decadent and suicidal ruler meditating among the carnage which he himself has ordered, finds a disturbing echo in Notman's hunting souvenir portrait. The image of Campbell McNab, in a strange way, seems to pre-figure the beginnings of the ecological death-wish pursued so earnestly by modern man.

In the pictures by Delacroix and Notman, the strong diagonal composition only intensifies the drama and pathos of an already charged subject. While Sardanapalus observes fatalistically the general destruction in progress around him, Mr. McNab appears to be pondering a fait accompli in wilful blindness to the consequences. The assumed photographic realism only serves to intensify the drama and pathos of modern man selfishly intent on destroying all around him before he himself perishes. Notman, perhaps unknowingly and far ahead of his time, staged and documented the death of Nature in his macabre kitsch settings.

Fig. 48. Musée du Louvre, Paris, Eugène Delaxroix, <u>The Death of Sardanapalus</u>, 1828, 395 x 495 cm.

Judged by the criteria of his period, Notman's style became known for its Canadian characteristics as well as for the high qualities of his artistry, and his oeuvre can be regarded as a faithful documentary record of the taste of the times. It earned him his unique place in the history of Canadian photography.

Curiously enough, there is no photograph of Notman himself in any other role but that of a "Prince of Canadian photographers"[260] and successful merchant. The man who created the image of "Canadian winter scenes" single-handed, whose studios produced hundreds of photo-portraits of sitters braving "wintry blizzards," the artist who created the Cariboo Hunting and Trapping series, saw himself primarily as "Photographer to the Queen", a prosperous businessman and a loyal subject who made his mark, and made it in the grand manner.

This impression of contented well-being is well expressed in the portrait of Notman as he sits, emulating the pose that Arthur Prince of Connaught had adopted the same day in his studio[261] (Fig. 49). While at the centre of interest in the Prince's portrait as symbol of his power and prerogative is the sword, Notman in his portrait brandishes only a carte-de-visite - the means that he employed so

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[260] Art Journal, New Series v, London: 1866, 306.

[261] Jana Bara, Furs in Fashion as Illustrated in the Photo-Portraiture of William Notman in the 1860s (Montreal: Concordia University, Master's Thesis, 1986) 62.

Fig. 49. NPA, William Notman, <u>Prince Arthur</u>, 41506-BI, 1869-70.

admirably in carving out his own kingdom in the simulated wilderness of his photographic studio (Fig. 50).

The limitations of Notman's medium and the constricted space of his Montreal studio precipitated the fragmentation of reality and its re-construction within a new, surreal, space and perspective, thus condensing the hunting scenes both dimensionally and ideologically (Fig. 51).

Notman's nineteenth-century artistic re-constructions of man's domination of Nature were expressions of certain mental processes ultimately derived from principles illustrated in the European Reformation. The God of the Authorized Version of the Bible, in the written record of His promises, provided generously for His elect. The Divine mandate to exercise mastery over the Creation largely determined colonists' exploitative attitudes towards the abundance of Canadian natural resources.

The attitude of outsiders was little better. Canada was seen as a vast game reserve, existing for the convenience of countless sportsmen and tourists, who recorded their first-hand experience in popular literature, periodicals, articles, letters, diaries, travel-logs, and memoirs.[262] The recreational and hunting photo-souvenirs sent or carried home by British soldiers and visitors from the USA and Europe thus

[262] Parts of Lady Dufferin's journal for 1872-1878 read as one continuous record of hooked salmon and trout, in which she enthusiastically participated, during a fishing expedition to the Saguenay region.

Fig. 50. NPA, <u>William Notman</u>, 41520-BI, 1869-70.

Fig. 51. NPA, William Notman, Moose Hunting - Early Morn - the Alarm, 20499-I, 1866.

contributed to the perpetuation of the image of Canada as a snow-bound wilderness, endowed with enormous natural bounty, and as a playground for transients.

The process of a steady, and increasing alienation of humanity and Nature was reflected even in Notman's souvenir photographs, which, although praised for their simulations of the Canadian wilderness, were documents of its domination by man. The photo-studio version of the wilderness, intended for mass-consumption, was devoid of any of the feelings of awe and fear inherent in the depictions of Nature in the previous century. In Notman's photographs, Nature figured as a seemingly endless reminder of God's favour, and as a decorative coulisse to enhance the spectacle of profitable and healthy human activities.

But the men who managed post-Confederation Canada were not sportsmen seeking excitement in the wilderness; they were wealthy merchants with ambitions to succeed in commerce for reasons of profit. These men needed Horsemen to protect their empire. A Canadian mounted Hero emerged to answer their purpose in due course.

Chapter 7

The pedigree of the Hero :

the Canada's favourite Horseman and his ideological context.

The Mounted policeman became the first post-Confederation hero of Canada, and his image dominates Canadian mythology and iconography even today. Although he was not cast in the mould of the previous heroes of Canadian commerce, he was, by extension, the law-enforcing protector of legitimate commercial entrepreneurship and a servant of the people. Patterned on the mythical icon of Apollo, conqueror of evil and defender of good, the Mounted policeman was also a true racially superior Nordic, as nineteenth-century racist ideals defined him.[263] The role of protector of an orderly and established way of life was an inseparable part of the Mounted policeman's image.

Officially, the North West Mounted Police force was created to ward off American wolf-hunters and other trespassers, and keep order in the Prairies, slowly filling with new settlers. The founding of the North West Mounted corps was in fact not precipitated by the need to protect white inhabitants from "bloodthirsty" Indians, but to save

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[263] Joseph A. Kestner, Mythology and Misogyny (Wisconsin: U of Wisconsin P, 1989) 41.

the natives from the vices of white men,[264] especially the "rot-gut" whiskey peddled by American traders. Canadian Indians were not the only ones to benefit from the new rule of law. Hard-pressed bands of Sioux warriors, with their women and children, led by chief Sitting Bull, fled American harassment after the Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876, crossed the border, and entrusted themselves to the care and protection of Superintendent James Morrow Walsh and his troops.[265]

The doctrine of uncompromising fairness in dealing with Indians, and the military protection of the Mounted Police on the Prairies were appreciated both by native chiefs and, in a diplomatic extension, by government officials whose various treaty-signing ceremonies were always conducted in the presence of a North West Mounted Police honour guard. The respect that the Indians held for the Mounted policeman - the Father, which became a decisive factor in Government relations with the tribes, was well expressed in the testimony of Blackfoot chief Crowfoot during the signing of treaty No. 7 in September 1877. He said: "The police have protected us as the feathers of the bird protect it from the frost of winter." The chief's brother Red Crow echoed this statement in his own less poetic, but equally complimentary

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[264] Berton, 24.

[265] R.C. Macleod, The North West Mounted Police 1873-1919 (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association Booklets, No. 31. 1978) 8.

verdict when he said: "Everything that the Mounted Police have done had been for our good."[266]

The paternal qualities of the Mounted Police came to be appreciated by a whole nation that craved a strong, dependable father-figures, as well as order and authority.[267] The last embodiment of the ancient tradition of mounted knights in the Empire reached enormous popularity as a trusted guardian of law, responsible behaviour and morality, among white colonists as much as the native peoples. The Redcoat as "Pioneer of a Glorious Future," (as a member of the NWMP was admiringly called by Assistant Commissioner MacLeod), soon was perceived as an invincible personification of the Law, highly respected, and as such, seldom forced to unholster his pistol even in the face of cattle-rustlers, illicit whiskey traders, and gun-runners. The policemen were equally adept in fighting prairie- and house-fires, epidemics, and all sorts of vermin.[268] The temper of the new hero was forged in the white heat of the merciless summer Prairie sun, without even a tree to offer protective shade, and in the winter that brought howling blizzards straight

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[266] Hugh Dempsey, Men in Scarlet (Historical Society of Alberta: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974) 69.

[267] Berton, 28.

[268] Robert Collins, The Age of Innocence 1870/1880, (Toronto: Canada's Illustrated Heritage, N.S.L. Natural Science of Canada Limited, 1977). This source mentions the snake-killing competition staged by the Mounties at Swan River in honour of the Queen's birthday 24 May 1875. In the process, the post was allegedly cleared of 1,110 reptiles.

from the North Pole sweeping across the plains, and lowering temperatures to 30 or 40 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. Between the two extremes came dust, mud and clouds of blood-thirsty insects. Monotonous diet, isolation and boredom added to the adversities that became part of the daily routine of a member of the NWMP.

Obviously, such hardship served to make the hero appear stronger and more admirable in the eyes of those who looked up to him. In his strength and invincibility, the Mounted policeman became a representative of the Canadian collective ego and by his own qualities, he also endowed the whole nation with a surrogate superiority. He became the Canadian champion of civilised values in the northern wilderness.

Although the policemen also enforced the ban on such "slothful" activities as drinking, card-playing, and the native Indian Sun-Dance,[269] and as a body were not free themselves of misdeeds and scandals, they embodied the ideal of the common man, in whose eyes "the Mounties" could do no wrong.

The Mounted policeman, as a true Canadian hero and mythical figure, corresponded closely to the criteria of the Scottish man of letters Thomas Carlyle (1795-1873). author of the then definitive essay On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History published in 1841. Although Carlyle's ideas

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[269] Berton, 29.

were not novel, they were, in their time, important in the
formation of minds ill-prepared for any philosophically-
based approaches to the demanding problems of the period. His
idealistic theory was an assimilation of related elements
gathered from many sources, and edited into new popular
formulations, which were taken up by governmental
propagandists and used to condition a new generation of a
mass-educated proletariat.

Carlyle considered that the Hero should maintain a
paternalistic relationship towards his charges - a form of
benevolent despotism. In society, which by its nature, was
such that "none but chosen souls can rise to any height above
the level of the swinish herd",[270] the Hero acted as a kind
of Good Shepherd, if not as a swineherd.

Carlyle's Hero was infallible, and all his deeds for
the benefit of the common man were divinely sanctified.[271]
His own excellence entitled him to adoration without limit
and a loyalty akin to religious worship.[272] Hero-worship was
to uplift every true man's spirituality, making him feel
elevated by doing reverence to what was above him.[273] The
Hero was a great dominant force who alone protected the mob

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[270] Eric Bentley, The Cult of the Superman (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1947) 4.

[271] Thomas Carlyle, Sartor Resartus - On Heroes and Hero Worship (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd. 1959) 252.

[272] Carlyle, 249.

[273] Carlyle, 252.

from its own excess. His deeds were never to be questioned. He emerged from the mass, he acted, he died, and he became immortal within the orbit of humanity. To remain strong, he always had to preserve a certain alienation, and an identity of his own as an exceptional being, but on the metaphysical level he was never separate from humanity. He could only exist in the context of a symbiotic relationship with those whom he protected and guided.

Although Carlyle's work, featuring one of his own idols - Frederick the Great of Prussia - did not receive an enthusiastic reception in the Montreal of the 1860s,[274] his prototype of saviour and protector was a version of an ancient, and perennial Hero-figure, indigenous to every civilization in history.

The implementation of the Carlylean formulation for Heroism was enhanced by the Canadian Hero's preference for peace and security, rather than liberty and the pursuit of happiness, for those whom he so manfully protected, including the "lesser breeds."[275] "Manful" was one of the key epithets of Victorian British culture, as imported into federated

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[274] Anonymous, "Carlyle", The Saturday Reader 23 December, vol.i, no.16, Montreal, (1865): 241. In this critique of Carlyle's biography of Frederick of Prussia, Carlyle was described as "....a literary Cagliostro, who might have been a great man, and who has degenerated into a charlatan." His language was criticised as "an olla of the dialect of Touchstone, Sarah Gamp, and a Virginia negro whose pronunciation has been reformed." In other words it was "Carlylism run mad."

[275] Berton, 24.

Canada.

Written descriptions and artists' illustrations, as well as photographs, show the manliest of Canadian males, resplendent in scarlet tunic, posing with colleagues, or astride his horse, with a firm grip on the reins, and purposefully gazing into the far distance. The Mounted Policeman of the North-West became instantly an inspiration and a subject for romantic literature, art, music.[276] Later, he continues to be featured in films, television progammes and even humorous greeting cards (Figs. 52, 53).

The Canadian hero, incorporated into the ideological formula of Hollywood film scenarios for productions set in Canada, continued to act out his original role, which became more romanticised with time, until it culminated in the famous slogan: "The Mounties always get their man."[277] Apparently the members of the RCMP abhor both this cliché reputation and the abbreviation Mountie.[278]

The cult of muscular Christian manliness was an intellectual hybrid of élitist Calvinism with its religious

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[276] A collection of Mounted Police Waltzes dedicated to Lieut. Colonel Macleod C.M.G. is in the collection of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Museum, Regina, Saskatchewan.

[277] Pierre Berton, Hollywood's Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1975) 111. Berton claims that "of the 575 motion pictures that Hollywood has made about Canada, 256 have featured the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or their predecessors, the Royal North-West Mounted Police."

[278] Berton, Hollywood's Canada 117.

Fig. 52. Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Anonymous, <u>North West Mounted Police 23</u>, N12998, 1888.

Fig. 53. Taber Chadwick, <u>You Stand out from the Herd</u>, Chicago Illinois: California Dreamers, greeting-card, 1984.

righteousness, and the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest, which also coincided with nineteenth-century notions of nationalism and the racial superiority of Nordic peoples. Various versions of the myth of the Superman, which penetrated political, literary and even artistic expression in Britain, served again as underpinning for jingoistic patriotism in the nineteenth century. Countless interpretations and re-interpretations of similar racial theories had been known throughout European history. Even Darwinism and its message of progress was used as a form of nineteenth-century apologia for the aggressive forays of the powers of Western Europe to expand into new colonies and markets.

The name of Charles Darwin (1809-1882) was most often associated with the conflict between science and religion in the nineteenth century. When his Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection was published in 1859, almost immediately the whole spiritual sub-structure of Western civilization shook under the assault on the central belief of Western organized religions - the existence of God.[279]

The Anglican Church promptly rebutted Darwin's work and mercilessly ridiculed its findings. Although maligned by the Church and its supporters, Darwinism was accepted by contemporary politicians, industrialists, and social

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[279] Lee E. Grugel, Society and Religion During the Age of Industrialization: Christianity and Victorian England (USA: University Press of America, 1979) 64.

strategists. Indirectly, Darwin in his theory of natural selection sanctified predatory aspects of competitive industrialism and its consequences in imperialism, and offered an intellectual basis in allegedly scientific thinking for dogmatic assertions on class, nation, and race.[280] Pessimism permeated European contemporary thought and art, exemplified in the paintings and literary works of the Symbolists and the philosophical Nihilism of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900).

Although God had been proclaimed dead by philosophers and scientists, there emerged men of letters who now desperately sought for substitutes to justify and reinforce a central ethic system, which could replace religiously-based traditional codes. The belief in God was not completely abandoned by many Victorians, especially those who saw the emergence of no adequate spiritual replacement. Frequently, the dilemmas of the era were solved in a compromise of the type which seemed to be an accepted principle of thought for the pragmatists, who rejected the inconvenient and unclear, while extracting any useful residue. Darwinism could hardly be called a comprehensive doctrine, but it proved a source of convenient intellectual principles.[281]

Rejected by those who had little education or

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[280] Lewis Mumford, The Condition of Man (New York: Harcourt, Brace Company, 1944) 349-350.

[281] Mumford, 348.

scientific training, Darwinism was eagerly embraced by individuals who supported its nationalist and imperialist implications, represented as the "March of Empire."

Not even prominent contemporary British scholars and intellectual leaders were immune. One of the most influential thinkers of nineteenth-century Britain, John Ruskin (1819-1900), an Evangelically-inclined man of letters, felt the vocation to act as spiritual leader to his fellow-men.

In his "Inaugural Lecture on Art", delivered at Oxford in the spring of 1870, Ruskin harangued his receptive listeners on ideas of "destiny" and "race." The English race, "still undegenerated", "mingled of the best northern blood", was to "unfold the royal banners" and to march forward - to conquer. The sceptred isle must "reign or die" and, to survive, England must find colonies far and wide, and "seize every piece of fruitful waste ground...".[282] In such a context, Canada was nothing if not "waste ground", and "northern" into the bargain. Even the French habitants of Quebec were given credit for their Norman racial origins.[283]

Only their Britishness outweighed the northernness of Canadians. Their country was the only northern part of the British Empire, where "Britishness" was both birthright and

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[282] John Ruskin, "Inaugural Lecture on Art", Oxford 1870, Selections and Essays Frederick W. Roe, ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946) N. pag.

[283] Benjamin Sulte, Origin of the French Canadian. Paper Read before the British Association, Toronto, August, 1897, Ottawa, (1897): N. pag.

status quo. On the one hand, colonials were deprived of intellectual respectability, on the other, they found reassurance and security in their mission of re-establishing the hallowed traditions of Great Britain in Canada. In the eyes of British Darwinists and imperialists, Canada as a country and a nation came to merit its importance through its Northern location and the character of its inhabitants.

In the rhetoric of the time, the severity of the Northern climate was exalted as beneficial to the development of physical strength and character, thus turning the adverse aspects of Canada into dynamic forces working for national greatness.[284] The "true North, strong and Free", was often poetically described as the "Northern kingdom", the "Britain of the North", and symbolised as the "Lady of the Snows", or "Fair and stalwart maiden of the north."[285]

The Northern climate was guaranteed to attract and combine in prosperity the noble strains of the Celt, the Teuton, the Norman, and the Saxon. With such a choice of preferred settlers, any future Canadian Götterdämmerung was averted only by the admission of immigrants from the "monarchical countries of Europe" who alone were competent to

[284] Carl Berger, "The True North Strong and Free", Nationalism in Canada Peter Russell, ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Company of Canada Limited, 1966) 3-24.

[285] William Pitman Lett, Annexation and British Connection, Address to brother Jonathan (Ottawa, 1889) 10.

cultivate the lands of the Prairies[286] and thrive in the

harsh conditions and isolation that avaited them. Even these

ignorant, rude, and unmannerly European peasants were to be

transformed into paragons of manly independence and self-

reliance, once exposed to the beneficial influences of the

"Northern Climate,"[287] and the paternal guidance of the

North-West Mounted Police. In the view of the Canadian

Darwinist George Parkin, the new colonists had to develop

foresight, because the climate, especially in the Prairies,

either "...cures or kills the shiftless and

improvident...".[288] Racial determinism was echoed in British

North America by adherents of the Canada First Movement,

whose advocates often extolled the qualities of the "strong

and free" which, with "healthy", "vigorous", and "pure" were

favoured rhetorical epithets for editorials in periodicals,

public lectures, and speeches.

The passage of time had somehow brought about a

revision of the myths and stereotypes of classical, medieval

and Renaissance Europe, which had described Northerners as

"stupid and dull barbarians." The "bloodthirsty scourge" who

came from their Northern habitat to spread terror across

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[286] Berger, 8.

[287] Berger, 8. Berger was a New Brunswicker, ʌ most
forceful and idealistic spokesman of the Imperial Federation
League, and Principal of Upper Canada College during the
late 1890s.

[288] G.R. Parkin, The Great Dominion, Studies of
Canada (London, 1895) 211-215.

Europe in the ninth century[289] was now transmuted into the Nordic _Übermensch_ by a combination of Victorian Imperialistic propaganda, with literature, science and arts.

As usual, the reality never corresponded to the theory. The general ambience and cultural characteristics of the epoch are still clearly visible in pictures of ordinary, unheroic human subjects, displaying details which identify their origins, and indicate social outlook and group loyalties. Art has been defined as an "identification and intensification of reality",[290] and it is indeed the photographic portraiture of the Victorian period, which permits a glimpse of the psycho-social spirit of the age itself, with all its strengths and shortcomings.[291]

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[289] Mumford, 354.

[290] Ernest Cassirer, _The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms_ Vol. II, 117.

[291] Cassirer, _The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms_ Vol. II, 117.

Chapter 8

Young Canada: the spirit of progress.

Photographs which capture and summarise the characteristics of the two predominant national groups in Canada in the second half of the century, as well as the divisions between them, are numerous.

The scarcity of photo-images produced by French-Canadian photographers proves no obstacle to an analysis of the state of contemporary French culture in Canada. Although the cultural background of an individual photographer influences the aesthetic apearance of any given photograph, the symbolic qualities of the subject dominate the image and act as a key to its meaning.

It was the Notman's studio in Montreal which produced a photograph which could be considered representative of the French-Canadian outlook and religious loyalties of the period. The souvenir portrait of a little boy dressed in a sheep-skin as an infant Saint John the Baptist, is the expression of an old French-Canadian Roman Catholic tradition, which honours the patron saint into whose care the original colony was entrusted. As the feast-day of the patron sain approached yearly, scores of young boys were dressed up in this fashion, ana their portraits retained as family souvenirs (Fig. 55).

The name of the little sitter is not recorded, but it

Fig. 54. NPA, William Notman and John A. Fraser, watercolour
on photograph, <u>Master Hugh Allan</u>, 23532-BI, 1866-67.

is possible that he was a member of a well-to-do French-Canadian family, since over-painted photographs of this kind were produced only through an elaborate, time-consuming, and therefore expensive process. Although this seems to be the only painted photograph on the subject produced in Notman's Montreal studio, commemorative photographs of boys with curled hair, dressed in furs and posed as young versions of Saint John the Baptist were common-place.

A revealing photo-portrait from the same period, expressive of the psyche and self-image of Britons in Canada, was the painted photo-portrait of Master Hugh Allan, which was also taken in Notman's studio in Montreal and over-painted by his studio artist John A. Fraser, in 1866-67 (Fig. 54).

The boy in the photograph holding the fishing rod, and dressed in traditional Scottish garb (unsuitable for a fishing expedition but important for the identification of his cultural background), is a symbol of the British way of life and cultural tradition in Canada. The child was the heir to the considerable fortune of the Allan family, and a scion of the prominent Montreal Scottish dynasty whose patriarch, Sir Hugh Allan, shipping magnate and industrialist, in his time was president of fifteen corporations and vice-president of six others.[292]

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[292] Gustavus Myers, A History of Canadian Wealth (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company Publishers, 1975) xx.

Fig. 55. NPA, painted photograph, <u>St. Jean -Baptiste</u>, 6605-
BI, 1874.

A second-generation Canadian, the boy is not posed in any realistic historical setting, but stands proudly against an elaborate hand-painted background depicting conventionally the scenery of the far-off Scottish Highlands, down to the characteristic squat stone cottages of crofting areas. The fishing-rod in his hand identifies him as a leisured British gentleman-sportsman.

Within the context of this imaginary landscape and the boy's ceremonial dress, the ordinary fishing rod takes on a fresh meaning, and stands as a symbol of conspicuous leisure and even of power over the environment. The portrait is an expression of the British colonial mentality, as well as a statement of the child's clannish ethnic heritage, and the elevated social status of his family.

This portrait is charged with symbols inherent to the family background, evoking traditional loyalties, looking backward across the Atlantic. Master Allan was obviously a British subject, located by circumstances in Canada. Subtle indicators in the portrait elicit responses of remembrance and fidelity to a way of life, which in this presentation is idealised in symbolic form. This portrait was "British" in every aspect, and its qualities consistent in their symbolism with the aesthetic and religious beliefs of the Empire.

The contrasting painted photographs of the two children eloquently and objectively testify to the basic cultural differences and philosophical approaches to life of

British and French-Canadians living side by side in the Montreal of the second half of the nineteenth century. The factors that differentiate British from French Canadians originate in their separate ideological cultural approaches to life itself, and are reflected in the features of their separate systems of symbolism.[293]

In the second half of the nineteenth century many French and British residents considered themselves as Canadians, and disregarded any secondary sub-divisions in the classification. Nevertheless, in their understanding of Canada, both groups followed in the pattern pre-set by their cultures. To the Québécois, Canada meant the Province of Quebec, while British Canadians embraced the pan-territorial view of the Dominion.

While Québécois nationalists met under the auspices of the Saint Jean Baptiste Society, English-speaking Canadian intellectuals founded the Canada First Movement. It was established after the assasination of D'Arcy McGee in Ottawa in 1868, to carry on his vision of a magnificent destiny for Canada. The movement originated in Ontario and its members argued for the greater independence of the Dominion, and suggested the adoption of certain commercial policies even if

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[293] Douglas Jones, "Steel Syntax: The Railroad as Symbol in Canadian Poetry," Symbols in Life and Art: The Royal Society of Canada Symposium in Memory of George Whalley Leith, James A. ed. (Canada: Royal Society of Canada, McGill-Queen's UP, 1987) 35.

these proved harmful to Britain and the Empire.[294]
Consciousness of Canada as a separate nation had surfaced
before the time of Confederation, as evidenced by some
photographs produced by William Notman.

Notman's interest in a Canada forming a constituent
part of the British Empire was well expressed in his
photographs that are a celebration of the Canadian wilderness
and the nation-building activities of his enterprising fellow
British-Canadians.

Although Notman as an entrepreneur seem to have been
careful to project his business interests by association with
any and all political factions existing in the Montreal of
his time, his own political inclinations, expressed through
his art, seem to reflect certain tendencies connected with
the Canada First Movement.

A photo-allegorical idea of the new country was
captured in Notman's photograph entitled Young Canada (Fig.
56). This photograph, like his well-known composite-vignette
photographs, reflected his own preoccupation with Canada as a
new nation, and his inclination to promote Canadian
patric sm and define a national character before any such
movements were officially founded.[295]

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[294] David Lee, "The Boosters", Horizon Canada vol.
5, no. 53, (1986): 1268-1272.

[295] Lee, 1268-1272. Apparently this intention was
identical with that of the Firsters and some independent
intellectuals in Canada at that time.

Fig. 56. NPA, William Notman, <u>Young Canada</u>, 24437-BI, 1866.

Young Canada is a portrait of Notman's own son, born in Montreal. By the artist's choice of title, the image was transformed into an eloquent expression of the new Canadian national identity. The text of the title translated in importance the identity of the individual and transformed the portrait of a boy into a national icon.[296]

The symbolism of this image derived from some aspects of the native and French-Canadian cultural heritage, combined with the traditional heritage of Britain. The child born to a Scottish father and an English mother is posed in a gray homespun wool coat, girdled with the colourful ceinture-flêchée, usually worn by French-Canadian habitants and adopted by British sportsmen for their winter games and forays into Nature. He is wearing leather moccasins and mounted on snow-shoes, an age-old Indian device to facilitate walking in deep drifts. A walking-cane, which was one of the favourite accessories of city apparel at the time, incongruously expresses the sitter's social position and connections. The studio setting includes snow-powdered boulders and live evergreen saplings, as a representation of Canadian Nature in its northern, wind-blown ruggedness.

The photograph commingles the cultural heritage and the hopes which the colonials held for the future of their new country of lofty pines and sturdy maple-trees.

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[296] Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," Image, Music, Text, translated by Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977) 25-27.

The maple branch was featured as the focal point in a patriotic and propagandistic composite photograph by William Notman dating from 1882, which echoes in its caption-title a line of poetry by the Poet Laureate, Lord Alfred Tennyson, - Canada Whom We Love and Prize (Fig. 57).

The image of Canada represented here was to be repeated as the central feature in many glossy brochures published with the aim of fostering tourism. It presents Canada's position as a progressive country, endowed with breath-taking scenery as well as with the sophistication to be expected in civilized life. It contains several vignettes in which the human element dominates.

Canadians are depicted following leisure pursuits, engaged en masse in various sporting activities such as sleighing, rowing, golfing, curling, skating, snowshoeing, fishing, sailing, and playing team sports such as lacrosse and football. The scenes are set either in the pristine snow-covered winter country-side, or in a summery pastoral idyll, with open vistas of the majestic St. Lawrence River featuring romantic views of sailboats and grazing and watering cattle. In these open-air settings, Nature serves as a mere backdrop featured in an urbanized and non-threatening context, in which the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlock, are easily accessible to city-dwellers who need not venture too far from the warm security of their comfortable residences. Even winter is made a background for familiar
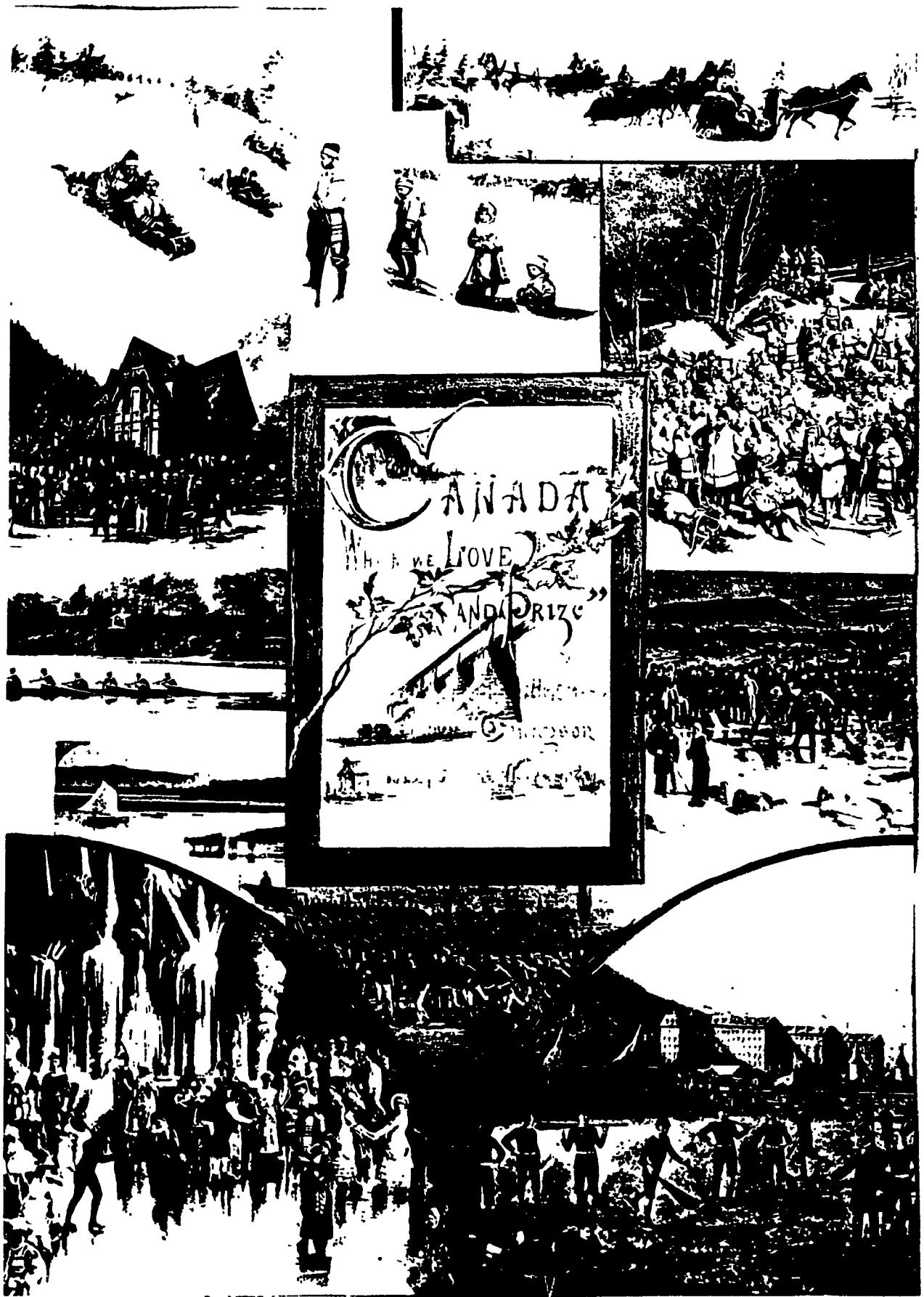
Fig. 57. NPA, William Notman, composite photograph, Canada
Whom We Love and Prize, 64973-II, 1882.

open-air activities for fur-swathed ladies and gentlemen riding their horse-drawn sleighs lined with heavy luxurious fur-rugs, and tobogganing families with young children dressed in gaily-coloured French-Canadian woollen coats. Members of various Montreal sports-clubs are depicted making the most of the winter, as citizens enjoying themselves, skating in the pell-mell of the masked winter carnival scene around a fairy-tale ice-castle. The whole photo-composite bespeaks a way of life rich in possibilities for a prosperous commitment to peace, plenty, and the pursuit of happiness. In cheerfully informal groupings, within which the knowledgeable observer can identify members of the nobility, and even Royalty, these Canadians stand as reliable witnesses to the strength of the democratic principle.

The cast of personages is noticeably all-white, and predominantly male, as is only appropriate to the vigorous and muscular exercises chosen for presentation. Well-equipped sleighs, snow-shoes, racing shells, sailboats and sporting equipment are eloquent proof of abundant personal resources. A settled and stable social pattern, producing peaceful living conditions by exclusion or disregard of lesser ethnic groupings, is reflected in every vignette. Confrontation is restricted to the sports field, governed by the inalterable Rules of the Game.

No evidence of progress and affluence is omitted from the composite, or left to chance. Superimposed on the collage

collage of scenes is a four-square testimony to the hand of man. Two river scenes, busy with merchant vessels pursuing their lawful advancement of commercial profits, serve to frame a low-angle view of the Victoria bridge across the St. Lawrence River, acclaimed in its day as a triumph of engineering and scientific design. Large, lofty buildings, consecrated to education or leisure, loom in the backgrounds of selected scenes. Leisure, the acknowledged hall-mark of success, is amply represented here as available for all.

The whole is ennobled by a quotation from Alfred, Lord Tennyson, whose sonorous address as Poet Laureate to a personified Canada came directly from the steps of the Imperial throne. A tastefully-draped branch of maple binds the whole with a sinuous diagonal motif. This composite production from the Notman studio epitomizes and summarizes in visual terms many of the factors that had come to be associated with the sub-genre of the souvenir photograph in the half-century since the invention of the photographic process.

In terms of phenomenology or epistemology, the document is hopelessly corrupt, as its idealised rendition of reality is almost entirely factitious and illusory. Although individual background features, such as the Victoria Bridge, the Ice Palace, or the creations of contemporary architecture, did in fact exist, the assemblies and reunions of human individuals in the illustrations had no basis in

actuality. They were fabricated by William Notman and his staff in his studios, laboratories and art departments. The style of these counterfeits adhered to the artistic conventions governing proportion, perspective and composition, to simulate records of contemporary happenings that could never possibly have occurred with such realistic perfection.

Eth' :s were subordinated to technique in the service of art. Art had dedicated itself to political expediency. The cycle was complete. Philosophy served the profit motive, as the shifting world of appearance and the world of ideal reality were united in photographs which deceived the eye, and manipulated perception. In a single Gestalt, the elements had been combined for an all-out assault on the collective psyche of the period.

The message was that the Good Life was available in the New World to all who were prepared to transplant themselves into a more wholesome version of the British way of life. As a souvenir of Canada, the ensemble owes more to artistic selection and contrivance than to the vaunted truthfulness of the camera. As a projection of a stereotyped image, it has had a durability and influence beyond the imagination of its creator.

Although Notman's Canada Whom We Love and Prize presented a much more civilized image of Canada than the earlier "Canada as wilderness" series, the damage was done.

The country was increasingly perceived as an extreme of the Northern location and climate, and as such, a challenge to the strong, intrepid and invincible heroes of the North.

Nature itself remained the most marketable national resource in Canada, but the popular images of the wilderness, terrifying, dangerous and malignant, were considered damaging to the enterprises in which Canadian, English and American financiers had invested their capital. Heavy snow-falls, in particular, represented one element of the climate that could paralyse even otherwise invincible locomotives. Ever since the CPR had commenced its enterprise of spanning Canada there was a need to change the country's "snowed-in" image. Trains endowed the country with some degree of superficial civilization, to which associated hotels and tourist interests added a semblance of rudimentary sophistication.

William Van Horne was one of the first individuals to realize that the wild image had to be tamed if it were to prove profitable. As a railroad entrepreneur he took it upon himself to change the snow-shrouded image of Canada. If there were to be tourists from abroad to ride his trains and to patronize his hotels, strategically situated alongside the CPR tracks, the image of Canada as uncivilized wilderness had to be subdued.

It is not known if Van Horne ever took Willie· ɔtman to task for his realistic and highly popular re-creations of the icons of the Canadian winter scene, or if leading

citizens of Montreal were criticized by Van Horne for posing in "fur coats and hats with fake snow on their shoulders and mor.· at their ankles."[297] In any case, the railway magnate in a publicity campaign declared war on the stereotyped image of the snow-covered Canadian wilderness.[298] With the approval and support of the Canadian Government, intent on the settlement and development of the Prairies, he started a vigorous international campaign advertising Canada as a temperate, fertile, picturesque and progressive country, ideal for tourists as much as for settlers and farmers. He was known to have refused to assist with the promotion of a winter carnival in Winnipeg. Harbouring little liking for "ice palaces, Indians and dog trains", he discouraged the use of such features in the overseas publicity of the CPR. He readily identified the circumstances which dictated such policies:

> ...For some inscrutable reason nearly everybody in Canada has his photograph taken in furs with salt scattered over to represent snow....Few people in England have ever seen a Canadian pictured except in winter dress. For this reason, the name of Canada is almost universally associated with an Arctic climate and this idea is one of the most difficult to remove from the minds of people abroad.[299]

The failure of his attempt to alter the established image may be judged by reference to the present-day tourist

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[297] Berton, Why we act... 83

[298] Berton, Why we act... 83.

[299] Berton, Why we act....84.

souvenirs, which perpetuate all the worst features of the regressive Canadian image. The myth is stronger than the ideal, especially if the ideal is overmuch removed from reality. The myth has also stood in the way of progress, and the ensuing conflict has preoccupied civil servants, politicians, and investors ever since Van Horne's campaign. Satisfactory settlement of the Prairie provinces remained a problem until well into the twentieth century.

But Van Horne succeded in re-inforcing the ideas associated with Canada from the beginning, of quest and exploration, subduing and civilizing the wilderness.

The early reality was one of survival, and even in Canada after Confederation, the image of the wilderness was still impressive and capable of inspiring respect. Although the Westward march of Empire was steadily progressing, and settled territories east of Ottawa underwent considerable cultivation and industralization, the theme of an invincible wilderness still dominated the image and description of Canada. To both British and French Canadians it reflected, at different levels, fears and hopes coloured by the ideologies of the epoch.

The aims of the British were practical. The tangible, physical aspects of the wilderness were to be conquered and rendered useful, in accordance with the Benthamite Utilitarian ideology. For British Canadians, the idea of the Quest Perilous was an integral part of their <u>Weltanschauung</u>,

uniting elements of materialism, imperialism, colonialism, and capitalism inside the Protestant work-ethic, which inspired everyday life in nineteenth-century Great Britain and its possessions. The theme of the quest, re-introduced into the fine arts during the Victorian medieval revival, was a figurative spiritual seeking of the Grail by mythical Gothic knights. In reality, and under the official label of progress, it was a race for the control of human and natural resources. In Canada, the main vehicle in the quest for control of the country was the locomotive, with all its connotations, real and literary.

The train figures prominently in both Canadian history and iconography. In early photographs from the CPR construction period, trains included in landscapes were dwarfed by the colossal scale of the background of the Canadian wilderness. Against the vastness of the Prairies, or the monumentality of the Rocky Mountains, trains seemed small and unimportant, and the wooden bridgework constructions spanning valleys and rivers, the tunnels piercing mountains and the labourers laying the tracks and operating machinery shrinking into insignificance (Fig. 58). In the West Nature was the monument.

Although sylvan and scenic views were plentiful in the Maritime Provinces, as well as in Quebec and Ontario, the scale of Nature in the East was smaller, and the symbols of industrialization and progress more frequently present in

Fig. 58. NPA, William Notman & Son, Mount Napta and Yoho Valley from the Kicking Horse Pass, B.C., 2069, 1889.

photographs. They were given emphasis as features, by appearing against a background of a tamed Nature, in which the hand of man was increasingly intrusive. The machine, as ship, snow-plough, or locomotive, was photographed and in these images tribute was paid out of respect for the success of human enterprise and endeavour based on exploitation of natural resources. In panoramas of cities, ship-yards, ports, work-shops and factories, the human element and the products of civilization and industry dominated the composition.

Alexander Henderson in Montreal in the 1860s, whose Canadian photo-landscapes are known for their sensitivity and poetic approach, photographed a locomotive snow-plough as an elemental force translated into metal, forging ahead through enormous snow-banks (Fig. 59). The low-angle viewpoint, and the absence of any visible human figures only reinforces the impression of the omnipotence and magnificence of mechanical force, apparently irresistible and unlimited. This exciting theme was brought to artistic perfection by William Notman, in whose painted photograph a locomotive hurtles through a swirling snow-storm with supernatural invincibility (Fig. 60).

Trains became a fixture in Canadian life, as well as in Canadian imagery. The Biblical concept of time as an unceasing flow, was suddenly altered by the railway time-table, which came to regulate piece-working capitalistic enterprises. Time was money, and the nineteenth-century

Fig. 59. NPA, Alexander Henderson, Engines Clearing the Track
G.T.R., MP 1452(90) A, 1869.

Fig. 60. NPA, painted photograph, <u>Snow-plowgh</u>, 48779, 1878.

Canadian railway system became a well-conducted institution, regulating the entire country with the simple sounds of its train-whistles. The admirable dependability and strength of trains were considerations secondary only to the savings they represented in time and labour.

The famous photograph of the ceremonial driving of the last spike was taken at the completion of the transcontinental railway in 1885[300] (Fig. 61). This photograph, of little aesthetic appeal, became one of the major Canadian icons and a photographic monument to a Canada triumphant over the forces of Nature.

Sir John A. Macdonald's government finally succeded in its task of linking the whole of Canada, and was poised to develop the West. The existence of Canada as a nation of "peace, order, and good government", and its unification, were thus secured by means of a transcontinental railway which, according to the national motto A Mari usque ad Mare, span the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The train became a symbol of progress, and the vehicle for spreading Western civilization.

But the settlement of the Prairies, so important for the continuity and prosperity of federated Canada, was initiated much earlier when the CPR transcontinental railway was started in 1875 at the twin communities of Port Arthur

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[300] The originator of this photograph is quoted as Alexander Ross, from British Columbia.

Fig. 61. NPA, Alexander Ross, <u>Alexander Strathcona Driving the Last Spike</u>, Craigellachie, B.C., MP 296A, 1885.

and Fort William on Lake Superior, [Thunder Bay] progressed westward, to reach the Prairies in the mid-1880s.

The record year for numbers of immigrants to Canada was 1881, and it was by the railway network that the new settlers were directed towards the Western Provinces. Once again, the farmers of Great Britain became the prime target for the new wave of propaganda which was intended to enlist anyone interested in obtaining a "free 160 acres of land" for the asking. The "asking" was a nominal sum of $10.00 to cover the costs of registering the claim, with the commitment to reside on the homestead for six months of the year for the first three years, and, at the same time to cultivate at least five acres of the land.

The Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Immigration Branch, the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Department of Agriculture, and the Allan Steamship Company produced and circulated hundreds of thousands of printed guides for would-be settlers.[301]

The theme so attractively presented by Van Horne of Canada as a sun-lit land of opportunity, plenty, and a promising future resurfaced in such propaganda, while any images containing snow were suppressed. The riches of the Prairies were described in superlatives, and the impact of such propagandistic texts was multiplied by accompanying images of prosperous farms, with well-to-do farmers and well-

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[301] Moyles and Owram, 117.

groomed livestock surrounded by endless, rolling wheat-fields (Fig. 62). Such images attracted immigrants from Ontario, Great Britain, the United States, Germany, Holland, Russia and Scandinavia. As well, persecuted religious groups such as Dukhobors, Hutterites, Mennonites, and Mormons found freedom of worship on the Prairies.

Although the CPR was a major element in the development of Canada as a country, the unstable fortunes of the company often brought it to the verge of bankruptcy. Its involvement in corrupt land speculation periodically brought on scandals, political crises and a decline in the flow of immigrants.

Immigration all but stopped in 1883 as the West was gripped by unrest, which culminated in 1885 as the Métis rose again in a second rebellion. The news of the suppression of this ill-fated insurrection, and the execution of Louis Riel, only emphasized the need for the settlement of the West and for involvement by Easterners. General interest shifted towards the West as the industrialized Eastern provinces hastened to supply the new markets with the abundant resources of manufactured goods and the technology that was lacking in the Prairies.

Thus by building up the West the Eastern Provinces strengthened their own position as financial and industrial power-house for the new Canada.

Fig. 62. Provincial Archives of Alberta, Ernest Brown, Tom Daly and Oats, B.9033, 1906.

Chapter 9

A house divided:

Livernois - curator of the Québecois image.

The industrial East was the economical and cultural
mainstay of Canada, and the province of Quebec held the
senior position in the Confederation. Although many new
immigrants to Canada landed and remained in Montreal, more
and more were channelled to the West. Most of the newcomers
were still British.

At the same time, the intellectual leaders of
French-Canada, mindful of the earlier lesson of the
occupation of the Eastern Townships by early Loyalist
settlers, and the disintegration of the dream of an
independent Catholic Manitoba,[302] were painfully aware of
the drainage of Quebec youths to the neighbouring United
States in search of employment. The construction of the
railway linking Quebec City and Lac Saint-Jean, built between
1875 and 1895, was intended to arrest the drift of French-
Canadians to the United States, and re-direct it to
cultivation of farm-land in the Lac Saint-Jean region.[303] A
booklet intended to attract new colonists was produced by the
provincial Commissioner of Public Lands, Arthur Buies, and

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[302] Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, The Dream of Nation (Toronto:
Gage Publishing Limited, 1983) 151.

[303] Duvergier de Haurane, 457

illustrated with photographs taken in the district by Jules Ernest Livernois.[304]

The attitude of the British administration towards the French-speaking population and its designs for assimilation were resented by the Canadiens, and opposed by a growing movement towards nationalism in Quebec in the second half of the nineteenth century.[305] The Québécois were strongly attached to their institutions, and influenced by traditions which were conservative in character. Self-contained, the French-Canadians were impervious to outside influences,[306] and to the chagrin of some of their intellectual leaders, were also indifferent to taking advantage of those developments and opportunities which arose under the British administration.[307]

For two centuries, circumstances had led the Québécois towards self-reliance and autonomy in spiritual and intellectual affairs. They progressed through their own experience to other conclusions than the British, and were more apprehensive of the abstract dangers which the wildness lurking in human hearts represented to civilization and to

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[304] Arthur Buies, La région du Lac Saint-Jean, Grenier de la Province de Québec. Guide des colons (La Cie de chemin de fer de Québec et du Lac Saint-Jean, 1890).

[305] Russell, Canada: Defenses.... 163.

[306] William Henry Moore, The Clash! A Study in Nationalities (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd, 1918) 6-12.

[307] L.O. David, ed. "Le Dévouement", L'Opinion Publique Montreal, 26 Fevrier (1870) 57.

the spiritual imperative of seeking salvation in God. Theirs
were humanistic concerns with the wilderness within humanity
itself. In terms of the threat to human well-being,
civilisation was revealed as an artificial defensive system,
devised in a futile attempt by mankind to escape from what
theologians termed "original sin", and philosophers "base
human nature."

To the inhabitants of French Canada, in general,
things material held no dimension of a glorious past, of
beauty, heroism, or of any other redeeming quality, overt or
covert. In their ethos, displays of wealth were not
considered tasteful, and symbols of pride and worldliness
were never associated with religious or philosophical ideals
and their cultural expression.

French-Canadian ideology, as well as its expression in
artistic forms, was from the beginning much more abstract and
subtle than that of British-Canadians.[308] While the British
measured the progress of the country by the state of its
balance-sheet, and eagerly included among their symbols all
new demonstrations of progress, the Québécois looked upon
economics merely as a means, and not an end of life[309] and
preferred uplifting historic, spiritual and idyllic images,
void of any signs of the mundane or the ordinary.[310] In

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[308] Jones, 35.

[309] Moore, 140-141.

[310] Jones, 35.

matters of culture, the British middle classes emphasized the Hebraic tradition of <u>doing</u> rather than the Hellenic preference for <u>knowing</u>.[311] In Canada, the latter seemed to be more the intellectual province of the French-speaking intelligentsia. Such a mentality was reflected in souvenirs celebrating local military heroes, or political leaders. Soul-ennobling subjects were often chosen for their cultural or religious associations.[312] Photographs of paintings, statues, and the churches or institutions in which they were displayed, entered the studio catalogues of <u>cartes-de-visite</u> intended for public consumption.

Although <u>Québécois</u> respectfully regarded France as the source of their culture and their race, they saw Rome as the source of their faith. On the negative side, the dominant <u>Anglais</u> were considered as the source of all evils. Any signs of loyalty to Britain, expressed by French-Canadian politicians were a matter of reason.[313] The British, in turn, in their self-imposed superiority, saw French-Canadians either from the mythographic and anthropologic point of view, as Nordic descendants of a "artistic, cultured and heroic"

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[311] Matthew Arnold, <u>Culture and Anarchy</u> (1868) (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1960) 37.

[312] Louis Fréchette. "A la Baie d'Hudson", "Prologue, les oiseaux de neige", <u>A Book of Canadian Prose and Verse</u>. Edmund Kemper Broadus and Eleanor Hammond Broadus eds. (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1924) 42, 47.

[313] Sigfried, 88.

race,[314] or viewed them with suspicion and mistrust.

On the surface the two cultures lived in an _entente cordiale_, which in reality was closer to an armed truce, as the old ideological contradictions which had separated the French and the British for centuries in Europe, were too deeply ingrained to be resolved.[315] The ancient hostility, as perpetuated in Canada, was echoed in letters and writings of British settlers and visitors, who labelled French-Canadians as unpractical, unambitious, backward and Popish.[316] It was not the piety of the French-Canadians and their alleged dependence on their clergy, but their cultural code which prompted such misconceptions. The Roman Catholic faith was as integral a part of French-Canadian culture, as the language and the code of civil rights.

The religious tenets of the French population of Canada clearly defined their role as pioneers of civilization, and missionaries of religious values in North America.[317] Their purpose on earth was not to acquire riches, but to enrich life by the dissemination of the true faith. The importance of technological progress was secondary to the

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[314] James Lumsden, _Through Canada in Harvest Time_ (London: T. Fisher Unwin 1903) 19.

[315] André Sigfried, _The Race Question in Canada_ (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1966) 87.

[316] D.H. MacVicar, "French Evangelization in Canada", _The Catholic Presbyterian_ July-December (1880): 28.

[317] Jules-Paul Tardivel, _Pour la Patrie_ (Montréal: Cadieux et Derome, 1895) 7.

advancement of thought and culture,[318] in the sanctified quest for the elevation of humanity by ideas.

Not only were the Weltanschauungen of French and British naturally antagonistic; they were in fact incompatible. French-Canadian ideology, as well as its expression in artistic forms, was from the beginning much more humanistic than the practical realism of British-Canadians.[319] French symbols and icons, which were the expressions of such a cultural code, were based on philosophical values dissimilar to those of the British, and were largely misunderstood by the latter. British symbolism in the same way could be little appreciated in terms of the denominators of cultural values of the French-speaking inhabitants of Canada. The intrinsic value of the images expressing the different symbolisms of the two groups, even within a common framework of Western culture, was thus misinterpreted and incorrectly evaluated.

To casual visitors, the pre-conceived image of the French Canadian habitant was as exotic as that of the native Indian, and scenes from the life of Quebec peasants became a popular subject for small souvenir paintings, such as those executed by Cornelius Krieghoff (1812-1901). His scenes of

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[318] Armour and Trott, The Faces of Reason 39.

[319] Douglas Jones, "Steel Syntax: The Railroad as Symbol in Canadian Poetry", Symbols in Life and Art: The Royal Society of Canada Symposium in Memory of George Whalley. Leith, James A. ed. (Canada: Royal Society of Canada, McGill-Queen's UP, 1987) 35.

rural life of the <u>Québécois</u> were in demand throughout the 1860s by collectors of Canadian souvenirs, and of North American works of art.

Foreign tourists in Quebec were enchanted by the picturesque villages, laid out along the shores of the Saint Lawrence River, entertained by the vitality of the winter activities, so typical of the province, and amused by the way of life of the <u>habitants</u>. Locals were viewed either as unambitious and unprogressive, or philosophical and well-adjusted to life. For the tourists, the image of the French Canadian was that of a pipe-smoking Jean-Baptiste, a sturdy, canny, and good-natured peasant in his red or blue woollen tuque, trudging around his farm in his heavy, wooden <u>sabots</u>.[320]

This condescending and grotesque caricature was far removed from the image held by French Canadians of themselves. <u>Québécois</u> intellectuals, politicians and clergy, although they represented a minority within the largely under-educated mass of the general population, were divided politically into Radicals or <u>rouges,</u> and Conservatives or <u>bleus</u>, while their religious loyalties lay either with the Gallican or Ultramontanist factions.[321] Sometimes they allied themselves with like-minded groups in Ontario, but knew that

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[320] Harriet Jephson, "The French-Canadian Habitant", <u>National Review 21</u> (1893): 51-57.

[321] Trofimenkoff, 101-113.

if their divinely-ordained civilizing mission in history was to be fulfilled, they were to advance behind the banners of the Roman Catholic Church. Pro-British sympathisers, and traitors to the mission of the survival and preservation of French-Canadian culture in Quebec, were mercilessly and publicly castigated for any deviations from the sacred cause. Lady Monck described such an instance in her journal entry for January, 1865: "Madame Duval [wife of a judge in Quebec City] at the hall began telling me how she was refused Absolution and the Holy Sacrament because she had fast dances at her house."[322] Although dancing in general was the best-loved enertainment of French Canadians, it was frowned upon by their clergy. But the "fast dances" to which the judge's wife invited the official representatives of the British Empire in the North America may have been not the chief reason for such extreme treatment.

The intellectual and economical centre of French Canada was Quebec City, which by 1860 had a population of 59,990 souls,[323] and was the administrative capital of Canada. Strategically situated on Cap Diamond overlooking the Saint Lawrence River, and strongly fortified, the city was well defended and served as the official seat of the Governor-General. It was an important French-speaking centre in industrial, political, religious, educational and cultural

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[322] Lady Monck, 199.

[323] Ten-year census of Canada 1850-1860.

affairs, which was rivalled only by Montreal in eminence.

Its lumber camps, sawmills, and numerous ship-yards came to characterise the locality. In addition, many small industrial manufactures, such as tanneries and other leather-oriented and related commercial activities flourished in the area.

The picturesque city became one of the most frequented tourist locations in nineteenth-century North America, attracting visitors from all parts of the world. The romantic setting, historic lay-out and architecture, proximity to sites such as the Montmorency Falls, the Sainte-Anne Falls, and summer resorts such as Cacouna, Murray Bay, Tadoussac, and Kamouraska, became popular with English-speaking, souvenir-hunting tourists.

Quebec City photographers of the era advertised stereoscopic views of important buildings, monuments, and panoramas of the surrounding area, as well as portraits of prominent contemporaries and historic figures. In the second half of the nineteenth century there were initially a number of photographers in Quebec City, but some of these quickly went out of business. Studios owned by English-speaking proprietors, which left their mark on the history of photography in the province, included those of George William Ellison, an Irish immigrant whose first advertisements appeared in 1848, and John Lewis Jones, active between 1865 and 1904.

Only a small portion of the photographic output of the period is extant, as many destructive fires periodically took their toll in lives and property. Some of the photographic establishments stricken by fire never recovered, and countless quantities of photographic material were lost forever.

While there were numerous photographers from the ranks of British Canadians, the only well-known French Canadian photographic establishment which left any legacy for posterity, was that of the Livernois family in Quebec City.

As William Notman's Montreal studio became the best-known in Canada for photographs in the British tradition, it was Ernest Livernois' studios in Quebec City which produced the only known photographic documentation of the French-Canadian mentalité.

The firm was founded by Jules Isaï Benoît de Livernois (1830-1865), who, with his wife Élise L'Heureux (1827-1896) set up in business in 1854, when their first advertisement appeared in Quebec City's annual business directories.[324] The Livernois establishment offered a high quality product, and was highly popular and favoured by prominent members of the Roman Catholic Church and the Québécois élite alike.[325]

The founder of the firm, Jules Benoît Livernois had married Élisabeth L'Heureux in 1849 and, in order to provide

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[324] Le Journal de Québec, Quebec City, 5 December 1854.

[325] Le Journal de Québec, Quebec City, 5 December 1854.

for his family, had entered into a retail business venture, which proved unsuccessful. In 1853, to improve his situation and benefit from the opportunities which arose during the Gold Rush, he left for California. With little to show for his enterprise, he returned after one year and applied his energies again to establishing a business of his own in Quebec City.

He was industrious, ambitious, and a keen businessman, whose success was based on his readiness to exploit any opportunity that arose as a result of the steadily advancing process of industrialization. Since in 1854 Quebec was a city of numerous tanneries and a flourishing shoe-manufacturing industry, Jules Benoît became local agent for a sewing-machine firm, which offered specialised equipment to shoe-makers, cobblers, hatters and shirt manufacturers.[326]

In the same year, Livernois also became owner of a daguerreotype studio in the Lower Town.[327] He expanded his activities to include a rubber-stamp agency[328] and a book and stationery store.[329] He was then twenty-five years old.

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[326] Le Journal de Québec, Quebec City, 5 December 1854.

[327] An advertisement for his sewing machine business appeared in the issue of Le Journal de Québec, 5 December 1854. It also announced the opening of his daguerreotype studio.

[328] McLaughlin's Quebec Directory 1855-1856 232.

[329] Le Journal de Québec, Quebec City, 11 January 1855.

Madame Livernois managed the Saint-Roch photo-studio,[330] while her husband opened and operated the book shop in the proximity of Laval university and the Séminaire de Québec.

The city's seminaries and convents, including the Séminaire de Québec dated from as far back as the seventeenth century, and the opening of the University in 1854, rendered Quebec City a Canadian educational capital, bustling with intellectual as well as nationalistic energy. Jules Benoît was soon making the acquaintance of clergymen, academics and writers who visited his shop. He continued to enjoy the friendship of some of these customers, even after 1855, when he sold his stationery store, and opened a second daguerreotype studio in the Upper Town, devoting all his activities to photography.[331]

His two studios offered portraits and cartes-de-visite of historical personalities and important contemporaries, both lay and religious, from Quebec as well as Europe. His Liste de portraits-cartes pour albums des membres du clergé catholique du Canada, etc., etc., etc.[332] contained portraits of parish priests and eminent local church dignitaries.

Livernois also photographed and reproduced various

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[330] Michel Lessard, The Livernois Photographers. (Musée du Québec, 1987) 71.

[331] Lessard, 72.

[332] Archives nationales du Québec, [Henceforward listed as A.N.Q.Q] Quebec City, Livernois Bequest, Liste de portraits-cartes pour albums des membres du clergé catholique du Canada, etc., etc., etc., July 1863.

artistic works, such as "canvases, portraits, views, engravings and antique paintings,"[333] and views of some buildings which were later demolished without any trace, such as the church of Saint-Laurent on the île d'Orléans and holiday resorts at Murray Bay and Tadoussac.[334] His efforts in preserving and disseminating reproductions of works of art through carte-de-visite photographs, were hailed by his new intellectual acquaintances as a great contribution to the elevation of the education and national consciousness of his fellow-countrymen.[335]

According to the cultural and social codes of nineteenth-century Europe, a photographer had some claim to be considered as an artist, and many photographers claimed this title in their advertisements. By virtue of their choice of largely religious and historical subjects, photographic-artists were considered as valuable members of French-Canadian society, because they honoured the greatness of their indigenous culture through their historical cartes-de-visite and portraits of eminent citizens of the Province.

Livernois enthusiastically discharged his

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[333] Henri Raymond Casgrain. Jules Livernois. (Quebec City, 1866) 37.

[334] Lessard, 77.

[335] Pierre Joseph Olivier Chauveau, a figure in nineteenth-century French-Canadian literature and politics, and a champion of photography in the Journal de l'Instruction publique, June 1863, and historian Henri Raymond Casgrain in Jules Livernois biography, 37.

responsibility as curator of his native culture and, in 1863, in order to perfect his art and learn new techniques in photography, made a visit to Europe.[336] After a three-month tour, which took him to England, Scotland and France, he added to his studio-picture portfolios photographs of engraved portraits of all French rulers, members of European royalty and famous artists, writers, scientists, and politicians. In the same year, the special significance of the Québécois clergy was reflected in a limited edition collection of the Galerie photographique des évêques du Québec, depuis Mgr. Laval jusqu'à nos jours.[337]

The European trip had perhaps reinforced his realisation of the importance of souvenir photographs, because in the following year, he photographed the scenery in and around Quebec City, and sent a photographer to record views and landscapes in the popular holiday centres of Tadoussac, Cacouna, Rivière-du-Loup and Kamouraska.[338]

His business was thriving, and the year 1865 proved very profitable and rewarding, as he opened a third studio in the Lower Town at 43 Rue Saint-Joseph,[339] and produced an

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[336] Journal de l'Instruction publique, Quebec City, June 1863.

[337] Galerie photographique des évêques du Québec, depuis Mgr. Laval jusqu'à nos jours. (Quebec City: J.B. Livernois, 1863).

[338] Nouvelle galerie historique de la Maison Livernois. (Quebec City, 1866).

[339] The Quebec Directory 1865-1866.

album with an English title: <u>A List of J.B. Livernois'</u>

<u>Canadian Collection of Photographic Reproductions of</u>

<u>Historical Engravings and Views of Historical Places</u>. The

catalogue of this collection lists forty-four items, which

range from photographic reproductions of art-works on

Canadian patriotic themes such as the "Arrival of Jacques

Cartier at Quebec", and "The Death of Montcalm", through

religious subjects such as the "Martyrdom of Jesuit

Missionaries by the Indians", to the "View of modern Quebec,

from Point Levis." The contents of this publication were

well-chosen to appeal to a wide clientele, as themes popular

with his French-Canadian compatriots were presented side by

side with souvenirs intended to appeal to the patriotic

sensibilities of British residents and tourists, such as the

photographs of scenes depicting the "Death of Wolfe," "First

landing of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in Canada at the River

Ste. Marguerite, Saguenay," and "View of taking of Quebec,

1759."[340]

This album also contained numerous views of local

religious institutions and churches, as well as selected

views of the city and its surroundings.[341] In 1865, twenty-

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[340] J.B. Livernois. <u>J.B., Livernois' Canadian</u>
<u>Collection of Photographic Reproductions of Historical</u>
<u>Engravings and Views of Historical Places</u>. Album, Q..ebec
City, 1865. Public Archives of Canada, National Photography
Collection.

[341] Lessard, 75. These photographs were also presented
at the Paris International Exhibition in 1867.

five plates of albumen paper prints by Livernois were chosen
to illustrate the book entitled Maple Leaves,[342] written by
one of his friends among the Quebec intellectuals - James M.
LeMoine (1825-1912) - the noted jurist, scientist, and
Canadian historian.[343] It was the last important work
completed personally by Jules Benoît Livernois. He died in
October 1865, aged only thirty-five.

To judge from advertisements in the local
newspapers.[344] his widow Élise L'Heureux Livernois, carried
on the family business after the untimely death of her
husband. In the following year the Livernois & Bienvenu
business partnership was formed between Mme Élise and her new
assistant photographer, Louis Bienvenu, who shortly
afterwards also became her son-in-law, by marrying her
daughter Julia. The marriage lasted hardly one year, due to
Julia's premature death[345] but the business partnership
survived until 1873, when Jules Benoît's eldest son Jules
Ernest Edmond Benoît Livernois (1851-1933) was old enough to
take over his father's firm.[346]

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[342] J.M. LeMoine, Maple Leaves Third Series. Canadian
History and Quebec Scenery. (Quebec City: Hunter, Rose &
Co., 1865).

[343] Lessard, 77.

[344] Le Journal de Québec, Quebec City, 19 August 1865.

[345] Baptism, marriage and burial registers, Saint-Roch
(Quebec City), 24 July 1867.

[346] Archives nationales du Québec, Quebec City, Clerk
Jean Baptiste Hébert, (2790), 17 December 1873.

The family business, built up through the efforts of Jules Benoît and his wife, was continued and improved by Jules Ernest, who through a combination of business acumen and artistic talent brought the Livernois studios to their peak of fame as a Québécois institution. Although the personal life of Jules Ernest was clouded by the loss of many members of his family, he found comfort and solace in religion[347] and hard work, and enjoyed a remarkable commercial and social success.

In his business and social life he associated with able men. His private life and leisure pursuits were passed in a seclusion little removed from elitist exclusivity. He was the founder of the Stadacona Fishing Club, in which membership was limited to twelve,[348] and later in 1897, with the help of an old family friend, the Reverend Casgrain, he successfully concluded the purchase of exclusive fishing rights on the Rivière Bonaventure.[349]

In his cordial relationship with representatives of the influential Québécois clergy, Jules Ernest followed the contemporary formula for success, which produced numerous rewards in the form of commissions and patronage. In

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[347] The expression of his religious conviction in the form of financial donations was praised by his friend the founder of La Verité, Jules Paul Tardivel in its issue for 18 February 1899.

[348] Arthur Buies. Sur le parcours du Chemin de fer du Lac Saint-Jean. (Quebec City: Darveau, 1887) 31.

[349] Lessard, 93.

competition for the business of the permanent English-speaking population of Quebec City and tourists, Jules Ernest adapted some of his artistic output to their concepts of Canada, and produced souvenir photographs inscribed in English. His advertisements appeared in both English and French periodicals.

Although at first sight, Jules Ernest's poetic photographs of the natural features of the Quebec landscape differ little from the images propagated by British-Canadian photographers, Livernois' work was influenced by the humanistic traditions inherent in French culture. His images of Nature combine a humanistic approach and a well-developed formal aesthetic. He favoured scenes of the wilderness tamed and enlivened by the human presence. Many of his landscape photographs include bridges, fences, farm buildings, ships, and his favourite artistic device - a human figure lost in contemplation of Nature - is a revival of the eighteenth-century Romantic theme of man in communion with Nature (Fig. 63). This approach differed from the rugged ideal of the unpopulated, perilous and untamed wilderness generally popular with British tourists.

Jules Ernest produced a series of photographs with views of turbulent rivers, water-falls, and peaceful idyllic scenes of lakes, and summer holiday-makers engaged in fishing, boating, and bathing. As well, he offered views depicting activities characteristic of the city and its
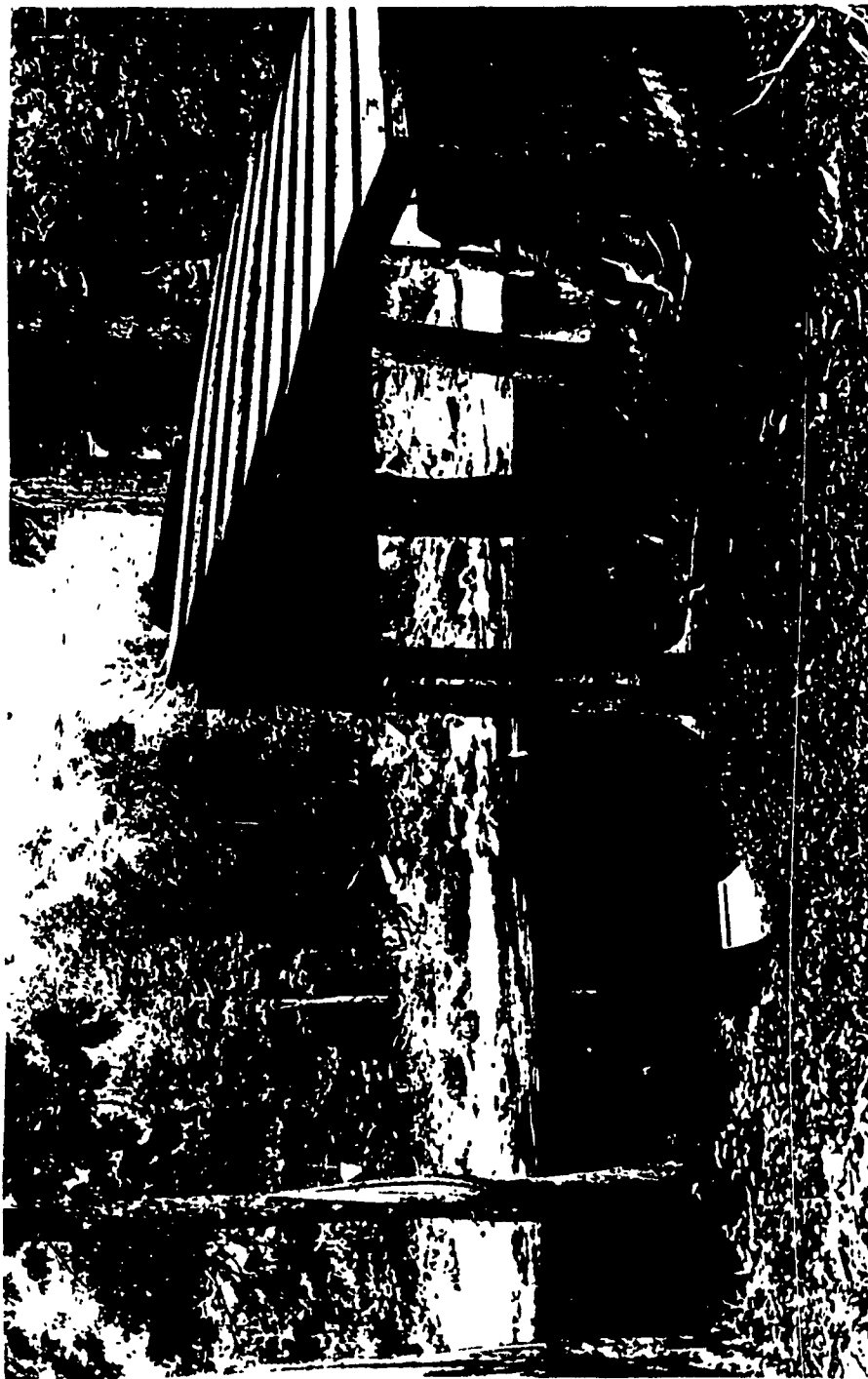
Fig. 63. Archives nationales du Québec, Quebec City, Ernest Livernois, <u>Man Contemplating</u>, c. 1885.

hinterland. Pictures of butting and squaring of timbers in local lumber-yards, maple sugar-making in the bush, and Indian camps or solitary natives were obvious choices as souvenirs for tourists and visitors to the Province.

Livernois' presentations of Canadian natives showed a sensitivity rarely present in photographs of the subject by the many Canadian photographers who in vying for the patronage of an uneducated and prejudiced public often produced souvenirs depicting Indians as blood-thirsty savages (Fig. 64).

The images of Quebec produced by Livernois reflected the ideals of a people convinced of its civilizing mission in North America for the glory of God and the Church, a nation whose heroes were "Prêtres, laboureurs et soldats." Ernest was deeply committed to the French-Canadian national cause, and an ardent supporter of the Catholic Church in Quebec. Running a successful business required a certain breadth and flexibility of outlook. He therefore photographed dignitaries of the Catholic Church as readily as he portrayed members of British royalty. His concession to Confederate Canada was indicated on the reverse side of his photographs in the form of his professional trade-mark between 1870 and 1900, which shows the crest of the Prince of Wales with the familiar "Ich dien" motto on a scroll above three white plumes. The right to display these royal arms may have been granted to his mother's business partner Bienvenu, who had photographed

Fig. 64. Archives nationales du Québec, Quebec City, Ernest Livernois, <u>Philippe Vincent of the Lorette Huron village</u>. c. 1880.

Prince Arthur during his visit in 1869 to Spencerwood, the Governor-General's residence in Quebec City. Photographs from 1890 also show the Red Ensign, which was then the national flag of Canada, flying over the roof of the photographer's summer residence in Petite-Rivière (Fig. 65).

Yet religious and nationalistic subjects, reflecting the ideologies and culture of Quebec, dominated his studio output intended for local consumption by his compatriots. The gallery of historic and national personages initiated by his father was enlarged with portraits of important religious personalities, such as Monseigneur Elzéar Alexandre Tascherau, and eminent lawyers, merchants, scholars, politicians, and visitors of importance.

The studio album from the 1880s contains portraits of contemporary Canadian politicians, which were published in local periodicals over the legend "Conservative members at the Quebec Assembly."[350] The Livernois studios also produced group portraits of graduates of various religious institutions, members of cultural clubs, orchestras, visiting theatre troupes, and sports teams. Jules Ernest's connections, as well as his abilities, initiated some very profitable contracts, such as that of documenting the railway construction between Quebec City and Lac Saint-Jean,[351] in

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[350] Le Canadien, Quebec City, 16 May 1878.

[351] Jules Ernest Livernois. Chemins de fer du gouvernement du Québec. Lignes de chemin de fer de Québec, Montréal-Ottawa et de l'Ouest. (Quebec City, 1 February 1879).

Fig. 65. Archives nationales du Québec, Quebec City. Ernest Livernois, <u>Ernest Livernois' Summer Residence in Petite-Rivière</u>.

1879.

While William Notman, his contemporary in Montreal, photographed the residences of the upper echelons of industrialists in that city, Ernest produced several series of photographs of seminaries, convents, boarding-schools, and churches in Quebec City and the hotels of the summer resorts in the area. In the commercial photographs produced for clerical institutions, Jules Ernest shows an artistry seldom evident in similar collections of subjects as uninteresting as empty classrooms or endless vistas of corridors (Fig. 66). He showed great ability in his choice and application of artificial and natural lighting, and his photographs seem to glow with an almost unworldly light, which was extremely effective in illuminating and inspiriting his highly compact compositions that rely on balance within the photo-frame (Fig. 67).

Not surprisingly, Jules Ernest's photographs were used as the basis for many engraved illustrations in the Canadian Illustrated News as well as L'Opinion Publique, before direct photomechanical reproductions became technically possible in the 1880s. These activities were closely related to Jules Ernest's documentary photographs of important news events, such as official visits by religious or secular dignitaries and potentates, as well as the Press coverage of fires or other civic disasters and which, regardless of the tragic aspects of their subject, were as widely acclaimed as the

Fig. 66. Private Collection, Ernest Livernois, <u>Corridor of the Ursuline Convent</u>, 1889.

Fig. 67. Private Collection, Ernest Livernois, Grand
Séminaire, Foot of Staircase, c. 1885.

other productions of the Livernois studios.

His souvenir photographs were very successful. In 1894 Jules Ernest produced a souvenir photo-album entitled Quebec Illustrated in Photo-Gravure,[352] and in 1897, another, Quebec of Today Photo-Gravures.[353] Several similar volumes followed after 1900.

When in 1898 Ernest's son Jules (1877-1952) took over the family firm, the distinctive iconography of Quebec, as expressed in the photographs of the Livernois firm, was firmly established and in harmony with contemporary cultural standards. For French-Canadians, who feared eventual assimilation through the constantly increasing British immigration, the survival and preservation of their cultural identity took on urgency and priority in social and political affairs. Their culture was intensely concentric, and lived upon itself and for itself. Thus the icons of French-Canadian culture, in the form of souvenirs, disseminated within the limited circuit of like-minded and culturally self-sufficient French-Canadians seldom left Canadian shores. Only the biased descriptions and depictions which originated with foreigners living in or visiting Quebec, were circulated outside of the country as illustrations of the real Canada.

It was the souvenirs endowed with symbolism which was

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[352] J.E. Livernois. Quebec Illustrated in Photo-Gravure (New York: The Albertype Co., 1894) n/p.

[353] J.E. Livernois. Quebec of Today Photo-Gravures (Quebec City: J.E. Livernois, 1897) n/p.

British in its origins and outlook, produced and disseminated
by British Canadians that came to represent the country
abroad, and created the stereotype that persists today.

Conclusions.

Early images of Canada suggested characteristics of
a wild and primitive style of living that proved to have a
surprising durability as a part of Canadian mythology and
visual expression. Northern ruggedness became the most
obvious characteristic in Canadian symbolism and iconography,
and was accepted as typical and descriptive of Canada and its
inhabitants. The image contained no element of the coarseness
associated with peasants bound to the soil they tilled, but
rather the stellar quality, the nobility of aristocratic,
free, and self-reliant individuals, with a God-given command
to prosper.

Although this image has become degraded and
degenerate, through propaganda and advertising, its
permanence is impressive. In reality, Canada can be
considered as a progressive modern country with high living
standards, admired both for its natural beauty, and its
generosity in humanistic endeavours. However, the widespread
popular image it transmits is of a savage untamed land,
covered in arctic snows, where wolf-packs roam in the
darkness of the northern night.

A nation emerged slowly, and gained some measure of
prosperity under the auspices of a form of British
colonialism that guaranteed the status of a Canadian ruling
class. If the importance of the Imperial connection receded

somewhat after Confederation, loyalty to the British Crown, which had been always considerable, remained strong and still continues to inspire enthusiasts.

For centuries Canada represented a haven, an asylum for the persecuted and vanquished, as well as for adventurers and the enterprising of many nations. The country was built up by pragmatic immigrants hungry for land and the possibility of a prosperous and stable life. The emphasis on survival and material success in the new country entailed cultural mediocrity, and the best of nineteenth-century Canadian art was labelled "provincial" by the critical standards of Europe.

French-Canadians whose bonds with Europe had been for three centuries chiefly conceptual and formal, drew their strength and inspiration from the Church and from the land on which they had lived for generations. The Church assumed the role of custodian of French Catholic values and the central institution for national survival. It controlled the educational system in Quebec and channelled the sons of the French _élite_ into traditional professions,[354] providing continuity in the intelligentsia and supplying cadres of politicians, civil servants and public figures. The hopes of French Canadians were directed towards salvation, both religious and secular. Their culture was self-perpetuating

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[354] J.R. Mallory, "French and English in Canada: Uneasy Union", Current History, April (1972): 190.

and self-contained. Their symbols were expressive of a process of conservatism and self-preservation.

English-speaking Canadians of American and British origins formed the largest portion of the Canadian middle-class and were largely in control of the commercial wealth. Classed generally as "English" by the French-Canadian population, Anglophones perpetuated their own cultural traditions, which were more extrovert and practically oriented. Their dynamic symbolism formed the base for formulation of both the official and the popular concepts of Canada.

French and British equally exaggerated the importance of their role in Canada and their position in history. British Canadians were more British than the Queen, while their French counterparts were seen as more Catholic than the Pope. Extremist factions on both sides were equally exclusivist and xenophobic.

The expansionist American political philosophy of "Manifest Destiny" represented throughout the Victorian period a tacit threat to the under-populated regions of Western Canada. To counter it, Canadian governments in the second half of the nineteenth century undertook large-scale recruitment campaigns to attract new settlers, chiefly from the British Isles. The new immigrants found familiar institutions and cultural conventions awaiting them in local variations, leaving little leeway for the appreciation of

alien values or unfamiliar ways of thought and behaviour.

With the influx of waves of immigrants from Continental Europe in the last decades of the century, the proportion of Canadians who clung to British associations inevitably lessened. Isolated in their own small communities, the newcomers had little interest outside their own well-being and prosperity, their loyalties remaining a reflection of their own original cultures.

Gradually even the English-speaking, Canadian-born, population, diluted by an influx of American settlers, came to regard the British Imperial tradition as secondary and remote. Confederation nominally brought about a political union but left unaffected the ideologies which for centuries had divided both the French and the British. Canada became a cultural backwater, typified as "nothing but snow, wolves and Indians." Other than the motive of commercial profit, there had never existed any single leit-motiv in the country's history, or any watch-word that could be used as a rallying slogan. Every attempt by Canadian politicians, educators, and entrepreneurs to develop a united, unique, and prosperous nation, was frustrated by the extremes of its vast geography, its lingering colonial attitudes, and by adverse forces of materialism, provincialism, regionalism, religious chauvinism, and racism. "Enlightened self-interest" was the

most useful and therefore most popular social principle.[355]

The definition of a Canadian identity has been debated for centuries. What Canada really is has remained a mystery. The only consensus reached is a tautology of its differentiation from America, Britain or Europe.[356] In the face of such negative and unsatisfactory formulations, popular myths and mythologic images have taken root and flourished, unhindered by any competition.

The present Canadian image is an extension of the past, composed from many visual elements, passed down from one generation to another. Certain themes have entered the Canadian collective consciousness, a Mounted policeman hugging his horse, an intrepid hunter confronting a towering grizzly bear, an Indian in his feathered head-dress, mounted on his pony, sending his arrows into a herd of stampeding bison, a train making its way through a landscape of lakes and mountain peaks.... Each image captured a step in the development of the country and a part of its iconography.[357]

Episodes from the history of Canada, as well as the beauty of its natural features, have been recorded by artists and photographers, and rendered in styles following prevailing contemporary European art traditions. The images

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[355] Arthur R.M. Lower, Canadians in the Making (Toronto: Longmans Green and Company, 1958) 215.

[356] Cavell, Sometimes a Great Nation (Banff, Alberta: Altitude Publishing, 1984) 8.

[357] Cavell, Sometimes a Great Nation, 15.

of the Canadian wilderness and its inhabitants reflected the
sensibilities of European academies of art. Nineteenth-
century bourgeois sentimental realism was a vehicle for
expression of the deterministic ideals of a middle-class
conditioned to mediocrity by education and religion. Art was
largely a hand-maiden to the omnipotent institutions of
Church and Government and their propagandistic schemes.[358]

Exaggerated and detailed romantic images of the
wilderness, whethe⁻ picturesque condensations of panoramas of
the Canadian West or park-like, civilized views of the
country-side of the Eastern Provinces, and souvenirs
depicting natives, savage or noble, heroic Mounties,
aristocratic sportsmen, and the simple bucolic activities of
rural people, were collected and exported by visitors and
tourists. Such images became the major references for
information on the country, in correlation with popular
novels, poetry, travel-logs, diaries, and letters.

Photography seemed the ideal medium to answer the
demand for realistic and detailed images for those Victorians
who collected souvenirs, and enumerated, documented and
conducted researches in all sub-divisions in science, the
humanities, and the arts. Photography mechanized,
democratized and eventually vulgarized the process of image-
making, which before 1839 had been largely an elitist

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[358] George Woodcock, "Nationalism and the Canadian
Genius", ArtsCanada #232/233, December 1979/January 1980):
4-5.

artistic enterprise. Photographs were inexpensive, easily accessible, and their popularity was enhanced by their assumed veracity. It was believed that "the camera cannot lie", and its Protean qualities predisposed photography to become a vehicle for all sorts of propaganda for those who manipulated images for political or commercial ends.

To successful colonials, photographs represented documentary evidence of their accomplishments and proof to their kin back home of a prosperous way of life in Canada. The very act of photographing a subject lent it importance, dignity and even nobility. Photographs became semi-sacred icons, both individualy and collectively. Painting reflects a culture; photography is an active element in forming the culture itself.[359]

Photography rendered obsolete previous systems of graphic representation, and compelled reconsideration of image values.[360] By the act of removal of a lens-cap, the whole of humanity acquired the vision of that proverbial, intuitive third eye represented by the camera, expressed dimensionally in photographs of previously unseen, and therefore unknown, images. If our mode of seeing is affected by our beliefs, our ability to analyse an image is made possible by the extent of our knowledge.

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[359] Max Kozloff, "Box in the Wilderness", Artforum, vol. xiv. October (1975): 58.

[360] Johnstone, 32.

Throughout history, ideas in written or visual form have been conveyed and transformed from one culture, time and place to others. In the nineteenth century, many ideas found their definitive formulation in photography. Photography was of universal importance and universally accessible, and so it became possible for any individual to add to the common repository of knowledge and imagery. The deceptive simplicity of the photographic discipline resulted in the emergence of enthusiasts with no artistic training, who produced a great many photographs considered as dull and uninteresting even by the standards of their contemporaries. Relatively few photographs dating from the first few decades of the existence of photography, stand out for their aesthetic appeal, while many have become important for their documentary qualities. Few are remarkable by combining both elements, while marking important historical and cultural events. Among the more interesting images from the period are the popular souvenir-photographs.

The Canadian souvenirs produced by William Notman were instrumental in the definition, creation and dissemination of what has become known as the Canadian image. Notman's photographs are among the images that have survived the test of time. His Canadian souvenir-photographs seem to have been intended to superimpose both traditional and new ideals on the re-created reality of the Canadian wilderness.

An analysis of the content of these pictures, in the

light of the _Weltanschauung_ prevailing in Victorian Canada, gives an iconological summary that reflects the ideological forces which shaped the Canadian image, and directed it into the mainstream of history.

On a more general level, they reveal the decay of the human relationship with Nature, resulting in a progressive alienation through successive shifts in the social, economic, and political interests of administrations in British North America. These destructive dynamics, codified at first as the Protestant work-ethic, were given philosophical reinforcement by the creators of such useful concepts as Utilitarianism and Transcendentalism. In the Canada of the second half of the nineteenth century, where any Idealistic ideas infiltrating from Europe or the United States went unheeded, all things bright and beautiful were synonymous with things useful.

Notman's souvenir-photographs are curious composites of complete and incomplete facts, of the traditional and timeless superimposed against a background representing a filtered and adapted version of actuality. Once removed from the pressing requirements of active response in the face of facts, photographs accommodated the need for a form of objective reality external to the human mind and leaving any reaction to the discretion of the viewer. Notman's photographs exemplified emotions recollected in reality.

As a visual extension of myths, through their intrinsic fundamentality, propagandistic universality, and

popular aesthetic appeal, these photographs were endowed with seeming veracity and enormous durability, which explains the perseverance of their symbolism.

Symbols exist and operate on two levels simultaneously, as they present sensory and perceptual elements, external images and inner meanings. This duality, and the inherent conflict between symbolic knowledge and metasymbolic understanding, causes the confusion which often results in employing symbols merely as means, and accepting them as ends.[361] The power of symbols, representing the ideals of collectively accepted doctrines, often transcends the dogma itself. Although practical application of the actual doctrine often fails miserably, this is ignored by adherents conditioned to recognize only the abstract theory and its symbolic expressions. In the process, the means or symbol becomes an end in its own right.[362]

Canadian icons, reflecting some of the perennial values of humanity, are still in existence because of their fidelity to such ideals. The unfailing steady popularity of the symbols in the idealized Canadian collective memory was assured by the intellectual stability, clarity and actuality derived from their elementary integrity. The powerful effect of the Canadian wilderness as a catalyst of human endurance

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[361] F. Ernst Johnson, ed. Religious Symbolism (Harper & Brothers, 1955) 78.

[362] Frye, "The Symbol as a Medium of Exchange" 5.

was a central feature in Canadian icons and rendered them irresistible as a moral affirmation of human endeavour. These elementary qualities were expressed in covert form in the civilized and traditionally-progressive self-image of Canadian icons, as well as, on a different level, in the obvious nostalgic representations of the Canadian Hero and the wilderness. The aspects of wilderness are ever-present in Canadian images, in both positive and negative aspects.

The external image of the country, present in souvenirs intended for tourists and visitors, is that of Canadian past dramatized, exaggerated and romanticised. The great popularity of such images is ensured by their former dynamism, that characterised the initial Canadian process of "becoming" as opposed to the static representations of already accomplished "being." The contemporary documentary versions of the civilized and prosperous image of the country became dehumanised and expressed mostly in the images of monumental urban architecture, crowding the skylines of Canadian cities.

The few standardised Canadian human archetypes, costumed and posed against traditional backrounds are distant echoes of their nineteenth-century romantic prototypes. Removed in time, their chief attraction is of nostalgia, which furthermore renders them sentimental and kitsch. Nonetheless, they serve more or less as a reminder of the existence of wilderness which has continued to haunt and

challenge mankind throughout the centuries.

Thus the early conversion of perceived aspects of Canada into photo-souvenirs, and the role that the development of this phenomenon played in the creation of the enduring Canadian image worldwide underlines the importance of these images. They are an incomparable source of historical record for the evolution of Canadian culture and its image as it emerged at the apogee of the Victorian Age, which persists to-day after nearly a century and a half of development.

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