

DISCOVERING AND PRESERVING A RARE CANADIAN FLAG

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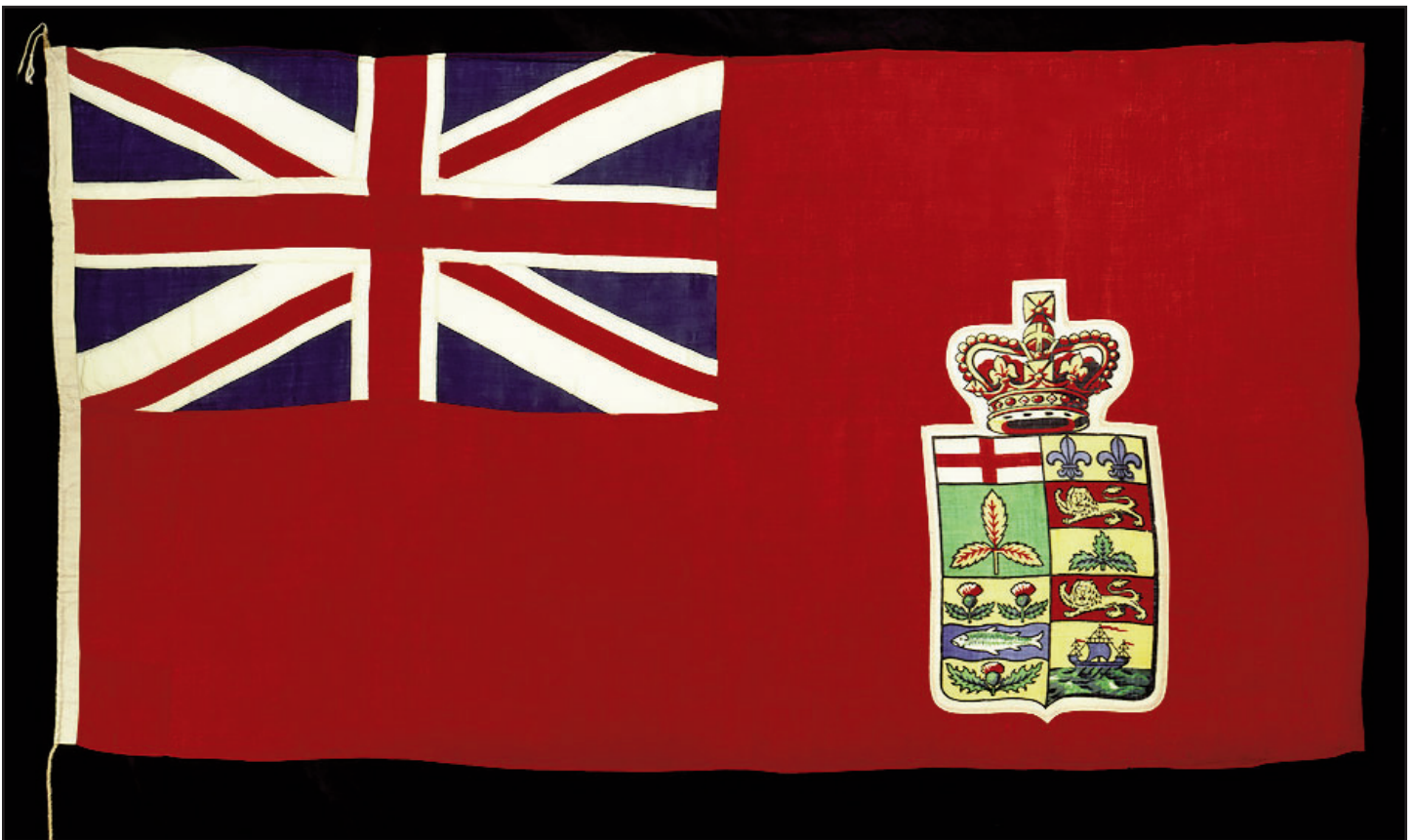
Heritage

Quebec

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News



From the Shannon Show to French Beans and Cauliflower

Communities Feel a Sense of Belonging through Heritage

Sons (and Daughters) of Enlightenment

The 78th Fraser Highlanders' Modernist Vision

A Home for Maybe

Reflections on the Rural World of the Laurentians

Quebec Heritage News

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Cover: Early Canadian Red Ensign of 1867-1870, as shown in Sotheby's 2010 Catalogue.
Copyright photo by David Clendenning in Studio, 2006.

EDITOR'S DESK

Finding My Way Around

by Rod MacLeod

I hate GPS, except to mess with. I set it to tell me how to get to X, and when it barks out a series of instructions I then do the opposite and listen to it squirm. When Artificial Intelligence takes over the world, as it will inevitably do one of these days, it will probably target me among the Most Wanted for having been so annoying, but in the meantime I enjoy my freedom. I refuse to be seduced, even by that sultry female voice whose willful mispronunciation of *Chemin* (“Kemin”) seems to just hover on the edge of a seductive “Come in!”

In fact, AI has all but taken over already when it comes to one marvellous part of our material heritage that we have effectively chucked. Thanks to GPS we always know where we are. We also know how to get to X (until the AI revolution, of course, which may well start by the discreet issuing of misdirections to drivers just to sow confusion). What we don't know, and can't get from GPS, is where we *might* go. We can set it to show alternative routes, and we can even get it to make suggestions (the high-tech equivalent of asking directions at a gas station), but we can't dream. There is no fantasy with GPS, no arm-chair travel. No travelling hopefully (which Robert Louis Stevenson claimed was more important than actually getting there) because GPS has effectively eliminated the hope.

If I want to dream, or plan, or even just get a sense of where places are in relation to each other, I use a map.

It might be a small-scale map – meaning that the area of interest is quite large. I might want to get a sense of whether Hudson is as far from my home as Granby (not in kilometres but in finger spreads), or whether I could reasonably include a visit to Lachute in a leisurely day trip that would also take me to Rawdon and Joliette. Or find out

whether Montreal is further south than Paris (it is, considerably).

I might, alternatively, consult a large-scale map – meaning that the area of interest is quite small. The British Ordnance Survey maps or the French IGN Topographie maps will indicate every road, path, trail, rail, stream, tunnel, bridge, cemetery, place of worship



(each denomination with its symbol), fort, silo, wind turbine, canoe club, mountain refuge, lighthouse, fountain, dam, tumulus, troglodyte cave, and phone box. If I am using one of these maps in the course of travel, I can orient myself in relation to these details: I might know, for instance, that I am two centimetres from the coast on the map and therefore half a kilometre away in real space. Or I might know that I am half way between the village I have left and the village I am going to because the bridge on the map is half way and I'm at the bridge. But orientation is just basic map reading; what is exciting is that I can anticipate: I can tell that there is a windmill coming up on the other side of that ridge that I can get to by taking a right-of-way path through that orchard. Even more exciting is that, if I am simply curled up at home wishing I could travel (as I write it is -42° windchill outside), by studying the map I can see myself cutting through that orchard or

climbing up to what I can tell is a rewarding lookout point because of all the little wavy elevation lines I will have to “cross” (you don't actually see them when you're there) while scaling the slope. Of course, you have to learn the language of maps to appreciate this sort of exploration. The little symbols for caves and silos bear a similar relationship to landscape that semiquavers and treble clefs do to music – and I admire people who can glance at sheet music and hear the piece in their minds. I have often looked at a map and thought: “That looks interesting; I'd like to go *there!*”

One reason that a map on this scale is fascinating is that by looking at it we can imagine we are high in the sky gazing down at actual roads, fields, ridges and windmills far below us. The reverse is also true: on the couple of occasions when I have travelled in a small enough plane a short enough distance (from St. Hubert to Sherbrooke, for instance, by Cessna) to be able to look down unimpeded at the ground, I've reflected how much it looked like a map. My father had the same reaction, training as a pilot during the Second World War: apart from the unquestionable glory of “slipping the surly bonds of Earth” and “topping the wind-swept heights with easy grace” (as John Gillespie put it), my father's great pleasure in flying was gazing down at roads and rivers, and seeing trucks and ships and cows and even people, all doing their thing, and he had to remind himself that they were figures in an actual landscape and not, as his dizzy brain kept insisting, part of a map. Being way up in the sky is still such an unfathomable experience for most of us that what we see of the ground seems more like a map than actual roads and fields. Windmills and ridges are surely not *that* tiny.

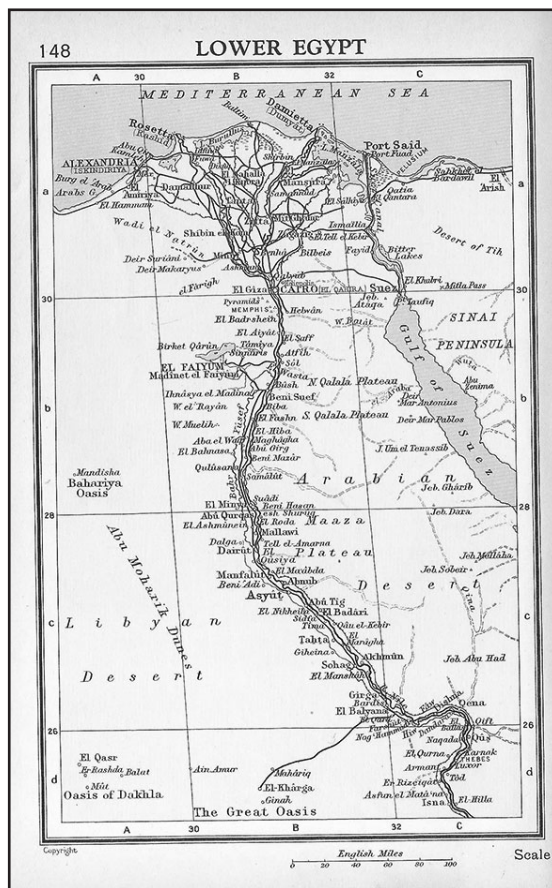
For my piloting father to have

compared an actual landscape to a map means that he was already used to maps. I'm sure basic training involved learning how to read maps, and for pilots, doing so could be a matter of life and death. Even so, I suspect his love for maps stemmed from something much deeper and less practical. My father was an avid driver even before the war, and saw a car not just as a vehicle for getting to places, or even a machine to go fast in, but as a way to explore the world. There are many routes to get where you're heading – and this is just as true even if you're not heading anywhere. The roads themselves may be as interesting as the destination: one road may be faster, one more scenic, and one may have more interesting things (fountains, dams, tumuli) along it. Of course, you can explore without a map, and have all kinds of exciting adventures (including running out of gas), but it can be just as exciting to see a number of possibilities on a map and pursue them for their own sakes. On this sort of pursuit, my father and I would later bond. Some of my happiest hours involved me holding a map and him behind the wheel: I would suggest we take this tiny road with hairpin turns through a town with a funny name rather than the highway and he would be game. It can be fun to go for a drive, but with a map you can go on a trip.

Whatever the source of my father's fascination for maps, it was probably not *The Handy Reference Atlas of the World* (published by John Bartholomew & Son Ltd, a company based in Edinburgh specializing in maps), which his friend Quentin gave him. For years, I assumed that the occasion for this gift was my father's graduation from flight training in the spring of 1941 and his imminent departure overseas, although it could just as easily have been the previous Christmas. No earlier than that, at any rate, since this volume was only published in 1940. It is possible the book was acquired after the war, largely in a spirit of humour, given its dramatically outdated content. Yet, the message inscribed on the volume's first leaf in Quentin's natty penmanship suggests that an adventure was about to begin: "For finding your way around." In my mind, my father carried this book

with him on the Atlantic crossing, along the English coast, and across Africa to Egypt – where a map of the Nile delta on page 148 was no doubt helpful.

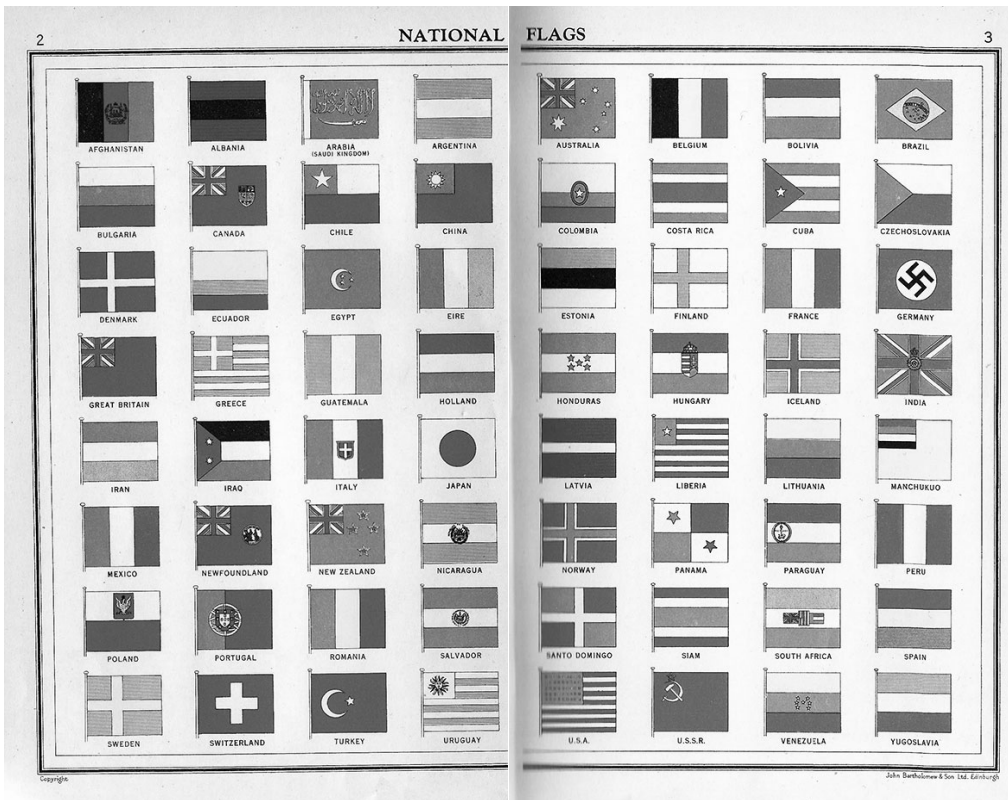
Except that this makes no sense. Quite apart from the dubious logistics of counting a heavy, bible-sized book among one's wartime kit, an atlas of the world would have hardly been a useful way for my father to have found his way



around. Atlases, in fact, do not lend themselves to planning, being primarily reference works – even those that do not make Bartholomew's claim of being "handy." Quentin's gift (which I imagine was left at home, whence it made its way like a great many other objects into my hands) is a book to look things up in. Eight decades on, many of those things are curious indeed. Among pages of statistics about mountains, rivers and waterfalls are more questionable (to our eyes) lists of "Voyages of Exploration" and "Notable Journeys" (including such gems as Philby's memorable crossing of the Arabian Desert in 1932 – remember that?). Not surprisingly, in 1940 London was the largest city in the world, with 8,203,942 inhabitants. (Shanghai only

came in sixth, with a measly 3,490,000.) What is bizarre is to see "British Empire" listed as the most populous country in the world, its 515,933,507 souls presumably comprising India as well as such modest bases as Canada. Despite their lowly status, India and Canada each rated an entry on the two-page spread of National Flags: the Viceroy's Star of India and the Red Ensign, respectively. Also represented on these pages, chillingly, is Germany, its swastika prominently displayed even though Luftwaffe bombs were falling while Bartholomew inked up his press. The atlas is a prized feature of my home library and serves as a window of sorts onto the world of "facts" as people understood them in 1940. It contains some nice maps: Germany with all its component states (Austria and Slovakia, for instance), Canada and Newfoundland, and South Victoria Land (part of Antarctica). But it isn't much of an inspiration for foreign travel – and would not have been back then, even were such a thing feasible during wartime.

My own introduction to maps came via an atlas: a majestic Reader's Digest / Rand McNally coffee-table-sized volume (nothing *handy* about it) that my grandparents gave me and over which I poured for hours on end. Its pages reflected the political divisions of the 1960s as devotedly as Bartholomew's reflected those of 1940, and I'm sure its statistical choices were also of its time, but in one respect it represented the world in a manner uncluttered by human idiosyncrasy: for every political map there was another that showed *relief*. On these maps, the blank areas were clearly deserts, mountain ranges were evident in gnarly dark brown patches, and the sea went down to the depths in eerie gradations of blue. With a relief map, you really did feel as if you were gazing down from space, just like the Apollo astronauts were currently doing. I applied this perspective to my Grade Five History project, creating a relief map of Quebec and the eastern seaboard out of plaster of paris and poster paints, and then drawing coloured lines to show the routes taken by the various early explorers to Canada. (In Grade Five, this was what I understood History to be about.) There was no



reason to show relief, of course, although in my mind it would have made little sense to depict Anticosti or the Gaspé peninsula as flat.

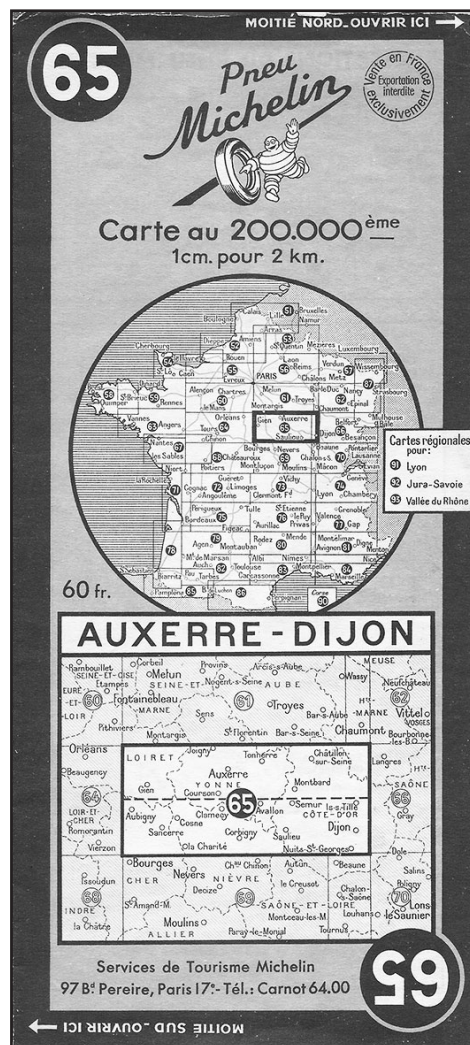
Maps, actual maps, for finding your way around, came into my line of sight as I began to raise my head from the back seat – the place where as a child I had sprawled untethered during long car trips, reading or playing. I began to notice that map-reading was a major activity in the front seat. For extended periods of time, my father would be at the wheel and my mother would be squinting down at a map pressed to her knees, her glasses clutched in her left hand (like me, she took them off to read) so that her right forefinger could follow a numbered line. Even when not navigating, she would keep the map open in her lap at the ready, anchoring it with one hand while the breeze from the unrolled side window snapped a corner to full billow like a jib in a tail wind. My curiosity growing, I asked to be shown the map, and then to have my own map to follow from my back-seat perch – an easy request to satisfy since road maps were available free from most gas stations. When I began making routing suggestions based on my own perusals of the map, my mother gradually, and happily, eased herself into retirement, while I,

just as happily, grappled with the responsibility of seizing the navigator's baton. I did not look back. (Unless we missed a turnoff, of course).

Contributing to the growing mystique of the map was the skill required to fold it – or at any rate to fold it properly. According to my father (as explained by my mother), “there is only one way to fold a map” – though exactly what that way was seemed steeped in ancient learning. My mother paid the dictum little heed, opting to fold the map at hand so that the part we were “on” was in the middle of whatever sections she held. I soon learned that getting a well-used map back to its original folded condition could be very satisfying, but also that success at this endeavour was so hit-and-miss (some map manufacturers clearly went out of their way to impose improbable folds in their products) as to be rarely worth the effort. Over the years, I tended to follow my mother's lead and find the sweet spot

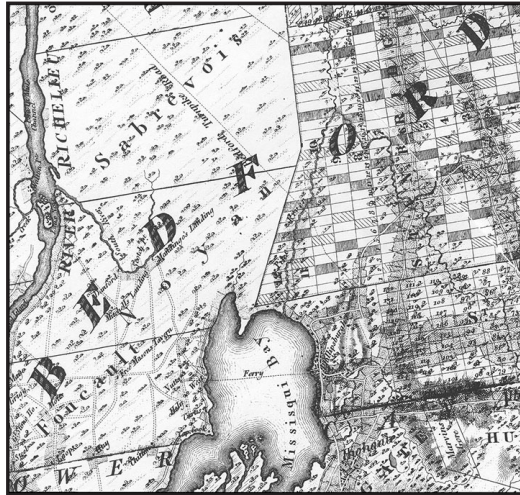
– particularly when it came to city maps, which must be arranged to open naturally and quickly on the area one is exploring, rather than requiring endless thumbing through unwanted pleats. I still have the maps I used in extended visits to beloved towns, and they still open to the important “page,” just as they did half a century ago.

Gas station maps soon gave way in my evolving sophistication to those produced by the Automobile Association (originally “Triple A” but for us it was the impressive-sounding “CAA”). These maps indicated distances between places (miles at first, then “miles in the U.S., kilometres in Canada”) and featured a series of dots alongside routes deemed especially scenic. CAA maps were useful in their way, but I was soon blindsided by the Michelin man, whose astounding creations meant, almost literally, that I could not be kept down on the farm after I'd seen Pared. Michelin maps had the kilometrage and the scenery indications (an atmospheric green line, rather than the dots), but they added a level of detail undreamt of in the CAA's automotive philosophy. And gorgeous colour for different complexities of road, and an impressive array of symbols. And relief: not enough to distract from the



primary purpose of helping you find your way around, but enough to let you know if you were crossing a plain, meandering up a mountain, or fording a marsh. Fully unfurled, a Michelin map gave you a bit of that gazing-down-from-space feeling, as well as the excitement of anticipating what lay round the next bend. For me, it was a short and natural step to the Ordnance Survey maps I discovered while living in England – without a car. At yet another level of precise detail, Ordnance Survey maps were perfect for train trips to distant towns with explorable environs, as well as for hikes across moors or through fields framed by hedges with kissing gates. Stonehenge was almost as intriguing-looking on the fold of the 1:25,000 map as it was when we finally saw it peering above the horizon.

Learning about the history of the Ordnance Survey, I came to appreciate the tremendous effort that had gone into creating these maps back in the late eighteenth century, when there were no satellites, no planes, and no photography – just rebel Jacobites who had hidden themselves in the uncharted Highland wilderness and required apprehending. In most places, detailed maps were created by and for the military. Canada was no exception: most of the earliest map-makers were army officers trained as engineers and land surveyors. British North America’s first surveyor-general, Samuel Holland, earned his surveying spurs preparing maps for the British forces during the Seven Years’ War, and went on to produce some gorgeous maps of the territory soon to become Canada. Holland’s successor (and nephew), Joseph Bouchette, put his training as a surveyor to use within the army, rather than the other way around – arguably a step toward professionalization. Bouchette would produce the quintessential tool for researchers of early nineteenth-century Quebec communities: *A topographical description of the province of Lower Canada*, published in 1815 along with its highly-detailed map. Bouchette’s work was of scientific as well as military interest, and the challenge of mapping the country was taken up in the Union period by geologists – specifically William Logan, who was appointed director of the Geological Survey of Canada in 1841



with offices in Montreal. The Survey was eventually relocated to the nation’s capital, and it was there that I went on numerous occasions in the late 1980s to acquire some of Canada’s own set of detailed maps. Unfortunately, because of the tremendous distances over here, I never got a lot of map for my buck: I had to buy four separate sheets to be able to see the entirety of the lake in the Gatineau where the family cottage was located. The Canadian countryside was also conspicuously less dotted with troglodyte caves and tumuli than its British counterpart – but one can’t have everything.

Now that we do have photography, planes, and especially satellites, the creation of maps is much easier, as well as more accurate. Accessing these maps has also grown easier – infinitely so, as the comprehensive detail of Google Earth has become available through the Internet: you can move from a scale that is continent-wide to one that shows your own back yard with a simple scroll of a mouse. In fact, to say “maps” no longer makes sense; what we now have is one map, covering one earth over whose entire surface you can roam at will, moving in any direction, each flick of a finger shifting hundreds of miles at a time. If necessary, you can roll right around the globe to return to your point of departure. No obstacles, no falling off the edge of knowledge. All is known; there be no dragons.

I am a passionate devotee of Google Maps (the plural is here to stay), which I peruse regularly. I take great pleasure in zooming out from a familiar point, zipping across an ocean, and then zooming in to an unfamiliar one, where I

can follow the course of rivers or get lost in the twisting streets of some ancient town. “Satellite View,” which is to all intents and purposes the real Google Earth deal, combines a Michelin-style attention to roads with a precise devotion to geography and topography. Unlike a paper map, you never have to turn the map over or reach for an adjoining sheet. The downside is that what you see at any one time is only what can fit on your screen – or (shudder) phone.

And yet, in a very tangible sense, this app for surfing the planet is not really a map. Google Earth isn’t a representation of our world, it’s a photo of it. There is no illusion of being far above the ground: you are actually seeing what the satellite saw, albeit from the comfort of your own desk (or the beach, or wherever you choose to browse). Google Earth is a great tool, but it isn’t a work of art the way Samuel Holland’s maps are, or even the way the *IGN Top 25 Randonnée et Plein Air 2548OT – Perpignan* that I used on my last holiday is a thing of beauty. It is also a joy forever: whereas Google is constantly changing (as it should) as the satellites update their records, my little blue IGN map has a place on my shelves, just like *Lucky Jim* and *Animal Farm* and *The Handy Reference Atlas of the World*, and can be taken down and consulted. There is a charm in paper maps, foldable maps, real maps, that we have forsaken for the convenience of the mouse.

But charm is nothing compared to the freedom we have forsaken for GPS. I recognize that it has its uses – indeed, on a couple of occasions it has saved me when I really didn’t know where I was. And I appreciate the efforts of the honey-voiced lady to keep me on “le bon chemin” and to patiently guide me back onto it when I deviate from her impeccable directions. It is well-intended, I know, but it’s not for me. I may seek advice from electronic sources, but I don’t want to be told how to get somewhere. I may choose to take the highway, but I don’t want to have to. I don’t want to stay on the straight and narrow. I want to deviate. I want to get off on my own. Off the grid. Off the beaten path.

And for that, I need a map.

Letters



All Clair

Once again, a fine issue of *Heritage News*. I read with interest the story about Grace Village with the photo of Sandra Klinck holding a photo of founder Clair Bernard Fisk, my cousin. This was not the first time Clair was mentioned in *Heritage News*. Readers may remember “Skiing to Grandma’s: Clair Bernard’s School Project, 1936” that I transcribed (*QHN*, Winter 2015).

Daniel Parkinson
Toronto, Ontario

Schools of Life

I always enjoy reading your editorials, and the one in the Fall 2022 issue (“Cold Wind”) is an excellent example. Not that the subject matter was enjoyable. On the contrary.

I am a Quebecer. I was born in Montreal, went to Trent University in Peterborough, became the assistant to the president, and presumably faced a great future there. But I was still a Quebecer. So after a year working with the university’s founding president, Tom Symons, I resigned, and returned to Montreal to teach high school History – in English, at first, then in French. (Or, as one of my students astutely pointed out, I taught history in translation.)

Very committed to improving my competence in la langue de Molière, I switched to the French school system to teach English as a Second Language (ESL). Fewer than two years later, I became the

first employee of what ultimately became Alliance Quebec. At the time, the only folks who were organized as English-speaking Quebecers were the Gaspesians. In response to the rise of French Quebec nationalism, my job was to support English speakers all over the province in organizing themselves as minority language communities. I also helped nurses and other professionals, many of them immigrants, to pass the French language test for professionals.

Four years later, I had moved to the YMCA of Montreal, one of whose board members put me on the Education and Training Committee of the *Chambre de Commerce du Montréal Métropolitain* – I was one of the few Anglos in what was still a very French-speaking body. In 1992, the *Chambre* sent me with a group of senior Francophone businessmen to Munich and Vienna. Their job was to drum up business; mine to bring back to Quebec an understanding of the dual training or apprenticeship system. Halfway across the Atlantic, the Executive Director of the *Chambre* told me that they were bringing me with them because they knew that I would share their information when I returned to Montreal. Naïve me – I had just assumed that everyone in my position would do the same!

During their meeting with our Viennese hosts, the Quebecers wanted to know what they thought would happen next in Eastern Europe, three years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Czech Republic? It had been democratic and capitalist in a previous life; the transfor-

mation would be rapid. Poland and Hungary? The transition would take longer, but it would take place. Russia? All bets were off!

Fast forward a decade and a half, and my Dutch wife and I decided that, despite our right to send our children to English Quebec public schools, we would enroll them in the French public school system. We signed them up at the local French public alternative school, although we had only a vague idea of what “alternative” meant. The next thing I knew, I had become part of the leadership of this socio-constructivist educational movement, which now, in 2022, inspires 48 small schools all over the province. Each school, and its federation, operate 100 per cent in French – Ça va de soi!

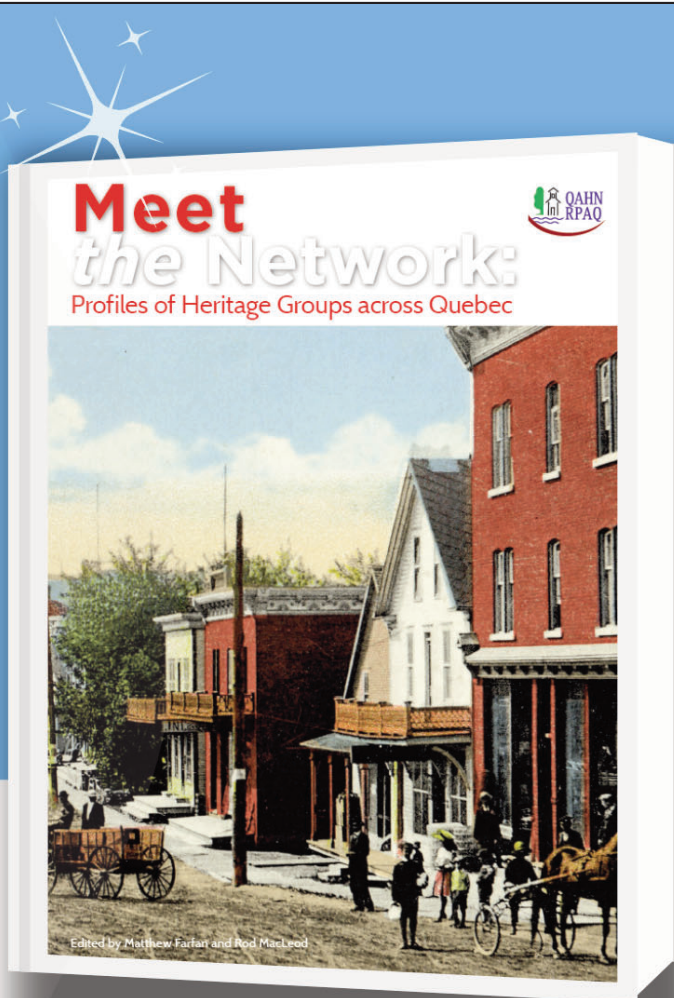
We enrolled our kids in the local French public high school, whose teachers seemed to care little about their responsibilities and some of whom were clearly incompetent. Meanwhile, most of our daughters’ primary school classmates went to private secondary schools. They became part of the most segregated school system in Canada, which suits the Francophone elite running this province just fine, because at the secondary level their children and grandchildren are enrolled in private schools and selective public schools.

My wife and I moved to the Eastern Townships 12 years ago. In the local French literacy program, I was asked to help a seriously dyslexic Francophone, who had never been to school, to learn to read in his mother tongue. It took 175 hours, spread over three years, but at 87 he was able to read his first book.

Meanwhile, the illiteracy rate in Quebec has dipped from 53% to something like 48%. Encouraging, but we still have a long way to go. The new Duplessies who are now running the store, show no sign of giving ALL Quebecers access to a quality French public school system that no longer produces illiterates.

Graham Weeks
Austin, Quebec





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Heritage and culture in our communities: Belonging and Identity in English-speaking Quebec

For a third consecutive year, the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) is partnering with heritage groups around the province to explore and share a broad range of stories and cultural traditions from English-speaking Quebec. Generously funded once again by the Quebec government's *Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise* (SQREA), the Belonging and Identity project supports initiatives led by member-organizations right across the

province. Presented here is the second in a two-part series about 15 creative and inspiring initiatives undertaken by local museums, historical societies and cultural organizations.

Heather Darch,
Project director

**Secrétariat aux relations
avec les Québécois
d'expression anglaise**

Québec 



SHANNON IRISH SHOW *A History in the Making* by Deborah Kiley & Kerry Ann King

The City of Shannon, located 30 km northwest of Quebec City, is the home of the Shannon Irish Show.

This little pocket of Irish culture, settled in the early nineteenth century, has thrived over the years, and a big part of it dwells in the hearts and in the talent of the people who have lived there for generations. Irish people have always taken great pride in the song, music, and dance of their homeland, and as time went on they wished to showcase and share the many talents of the local Irish community. In 1964, the first Shannon Irish Show was held. It continues to be a yearly event, held in March, and has become the launch of St. Patrick's Day festivities in the Quebec City area.

For many long-time Shannonites, 54 years of photos of the

Shannon Irish Show is just like going through your family history. There are so many familiar faces! It really is a journey through time from one Irish generation to the next.

The show, which from the onset was sponsored by the Catholic Women's League of Shannon, was more than just a day's event. For us kids, our winter months from January to March were always such an exciting time, with weekly practices leading up to the day of the big show. The singing and dancing rehearsals were held in people's homes, and there was always a treat of Kool-Aid and candy for us young ones for getting the job done. The next step involved trying on our hand-sewn costumes made by our moms, aunts, cousins, neighbours, or anyone who wanted to try their hand at sewing. As we got

closer to the big day, the general rehearsal evenings always ran long, with children giggling and whispering together while impatiently waiting for their turn on stage. The day of the show was even more exciting, as we watched the audience arrive, peeking out from behind the curtains. Once the lights were dimmed there was no turning back, and each group lined up as we had practiced. Once those big curtains opened, we found ourselves looking out into an audience of friendly faces including relatives, neighbours, friends, and folks who traveled from the surrounding villages and beyond. Their smiles helped us relax as we nervously waited for our cue to start.

This wonderful Irish event has been generations in the making, and that says something about small towns and their dedication to their community. People tend to be close to, and proud of, their roots. Such was the case of Shannon and the Irish who settled here. Many stories have been passed down over the years of the house parties and the sharing of songs and music. It is no wonder that we have had three generations of families performing in the same show. Our audience has watched these talented individuals grow up on stage. Some have performed for more than fifty years. The history of this show cannot be overstated!

Fast forward to today, where we find the children who appeared on stage in those early days now organizing, directing, and still performing. Over the years, there have been many nostalgic moments, such as hearing a signature song from days gone by sung by a child or grandchild. We Shannonites take great pride in knowing that the show has allowed us to preserve the rich history of our Irish ancestors, and we consider it a privilege to be able to share it with generations to come. The “Belonging & Identity” grant from QAHN and the *Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d’expression anglaise* will ensure that our wonderful show can be recorded using professional equipment. This way, it can be shared with an audience online, who may not be able to attend in person, but who have the spirit of the Irish in their hearts.

Deborah Kiley and Kerry Ann King, respectively vice-president and president of the CWL Shannon, both performed as children in the Shannon Irish Show and continued to perform over the years. They have been the coordinators of the Show since 2014.

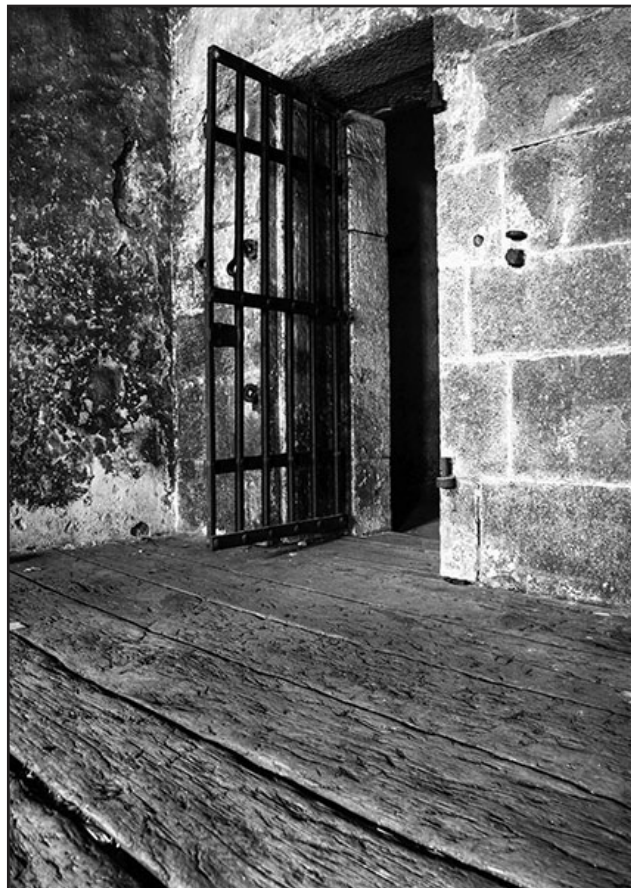
READING THE OBJECTS AROUND US

Artefacts in the Morrin Centre Library

by Kathleen Hulley

Toward the end of June 1868, a horse-drawn wagon carried thousands of books through the streets of old Quebec. The library collection of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec was being transported to its new home on St. Stanislas Street. The move took four days and involved a carter and four men. The Society would finally have a permanent space to hold its meetings and house its library and natural history collection. Since its founding in 1824, the LHSQ had moved from location to location around the city and experienced tragedy twice: it lost much of its museum collection in a fire in 1854, when it was situated in the Parliament buildings. Then, in 1862, when it was located on St. John Street, fire broke out once again.

The Society’s new home on St. Stanislas Street had a storied past of its own: it was the former Quebec Common Gaol from 1812



to 1867. Sixteen men had been hanged in front of the building, which had held thousands of inmates over the years, from murderers and thieves to debtors. Notable prisoners included author Philippe-Aubert de Gaspé, who spent three years within its walls for unpaid debts. Prior to the 1868 move, the building was renovated under Joseph-Ferdinand Peachy, the architect hired to rework the neo-classical building designed by François Baillairgé. The cells were replaced with library shelves that would be graced with the Society’s growing collection of books and journals – from iron bars to bookshelves, to paraphrase the title of the book about the history of the Morrin Centre.

The LHSQ library currently has over 27,000 books in its collection, and fascinating objects have been gradually added to the space, from a statue

of General Wolfe to a model ship, all making up what visitors to the Morrin Centre see today. This space and its objects tell the stories of the English-speaking population that left its mark on the city. For instance, the impressive model ship is a replica of the *Cosmo*, a square-rigged wooden sailing ship built in 1877 by Henry Fry in the waning years of Quebec’s shipbuilding era. The charming old clock was made by Peter Poulin, an important Quebec City watchmaker and jeweller. The wooden circular staircase once led members up to the library gallery, where they could browse journals that the Society exchanged with international societies, such as the New York Academy of Sciences. The remnants of the Quebec Library – a subscription library started by Governor Frederick Haldimand in 1779 and purchased by the LHSQ in 1866 – are on display behind glass. With their slightly burnt covers, some books bear the traces of past fires.

Thanks to a SRQEA-funded “Belonging & Identity” grant from QAHN, the Morrin Centre will now be able to better share information about specific objects on display in the library. We are in the process of conducting further research on the space



and selected objects, which will culminate in a self-guided tour booklet that will allow members and visitors to learn more about the library and the historical objects it contains. These objects, which have been selected based on frequent questions posed on our tours and by library visitors, include the statue of

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General Wolfe, the model of the *Cosmo*, a desk once owned by Sir George-Étienne Cartier, Peter Poulin's clock, two paintings of ships in the Arctic, a bust of James Douglas, chinaware from local English-speaking families, and two letter presses. Furthermore, the booklet will provide information about the library itself, as well as the Quebec Library Collection. Additional resources about the objects will also be made available online via the Morrin Centre's website.

We are looking forward to launching this project in the spring of 2023 and hope that it will further enhance the visitor and member experience at the Morrin Centre. Visitors will not only be able to browse the stacks, but will also have the chance

to learn more about the objects around them thanks to the booklet. So next time you're in the library of the LHSQ, take a moment to look more closely at the objects around you and to read about them. They too have a story to tell.

Kathleen Hulley is Head of Library and Collections at the Morrin Centre and the editor of Society Pages, the LHSQ's quarterly publication. She holds an MLIS as well as a PhD in music history and theory.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Finding Friends while Building a Community

by Robert Winters and Ana Milic

More than 30 years ago, Fiona Clark ignited the imagination of a group of older learners with the concept of peer learning. During her tenure as Assistant Director of Continuing Studies at McGill University, Clark realized that a community of lifelong learners would enrich not only McGill, but the whole of Montreal. She believed that if mature students could continue to learn, why not people even older? After researching the innovative Peer Learning model for retired people used at Harvard University, she got the green light from McGill in 1989 to set up the program there. It soon secured a permanent place, and was known as the McGill Institute for Learning in Retirement, the forerunner of the McGill Community for Lifelong Learning (MCLL).

The MCLL is a volunteer-run community of about 800 senior learners that is managed by a council elected from its membership. Operating under the umbrella of the McGill School of Continuing Studies (SCS), the MCLL promotes lifelong learning through peer-learning study groups.

Peer learning and active participation are the two cornerstones of the MCLL's curriculum and activities. The informal, small-group approach has made our study groups and lectures very accessible. They appeal to people who want to continue to learn for the sheer joy of it, and who wish to participate by sharing their varied passions, knowledge, ideas, experience and interests with each other.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the MCLL was forced



to look for alternate ways of keeping a sense of community spirit alive at a time of physical distancing. The MCLL launched an online program using Zoom software that trains members, provides hosts, and assists members one-on-one. Over the past two years, MCLL volunteers have shown they can create and maintain a culture of caring and engagement, even when the connection is virtual.

We are always looking for ways to highlight the MCLL's vibrant community life, which is stimulated by new contacts and friendships in the pursuit of lifelong learning. As part of this community-building effort, we want to explore the wide variety of experiences and backgrounds of individuals at the MCLL. We were excited to find out about the SRQEA funding opportunity from QAHN, and immediately thought of a video project that will include short video interview clips with members talking about fascinating anecdotes and compelling life lessons they have learned, as well as recounting the key role the

MCLL has played in building a sense of belonging within a community of lifelong learners with varied backgrounds and interests.

Our video project – *Voices of Lifelong Learners* – is already under way. Our members are thrilled to take part in the project, and we are briefing them on the questions we wish to explore. The interviewer (also an MCLL member) will be there to facilitate the story-telling process and enable smooth delivery of the stories. Members will be encouraged to share digital images of their choice that are relevant to their stories (e.g., their hometown, family, images from their youth, workplace, and so on).

One of our members, for example, will recount the challenges of growing up in Montreal in the 1950s when language and cultural differences could lead to friction for young people in some neighbourhoods, especially for those lacking in important language skills. Another member became very aware of the role of language in her work in the area of artificial intelligence (AI) as she helped develop what became Siri, a computer program that can talk to you. She found it ironic that French was the main language used by international researchers in an AI research centre in Australia, whereas researchers spoke in English when she came to Montreal to work in the same field.

We hope *Voices of Lifelong Learners* will help us foster and strengthen a sense of belonging for MCLL members, many of

whom live alone. Social interaction and intellectual stimulation are crucial in promoting healthy post-retirement living. During the pandemic, it became clear there was an increased need for meaningful connections despite the challenges of physical distancing. The inspiring stories highlighted by this project will help our members realize that they are a resilient and vibrant community.

Through this project, we also want to demonstrate how seniors are embracing digital media tools to tell their stories, share compelling experiences they have had, and talk about important life lessons they want to pass on to their peers and to younger generations. By creating these short video clips posted via social media, this project also aims to promote inter-generational communication and appreciation for the rich lives of our seniors.

Stay tuned!

Robert Winters, the president of the MCLL, is a journalist and editor who was a founder of the Townships Sun.

Ana Milic is the MCLL's program administrator and an aspiring scholar with 10+ years of experience in supporting popular education, lifelong, peer learning and community outreach initiatives in post-secondary educational contexts.

TASTING THE PAST

Food, Memory, and Identity in Missisquoi

by Tyson Rosberg

Our wants were abundantly supplied, and at times even super-abundantly, by the kindness of our neighbours, who sent us far more beautiful vegetables of all kinds than we could have got in Montreal: potatoes, cabbages, peas, French beans, tomatoes, Indian corn, cauliflower, and melons all found their way into our kitchen, and were all the sweeter for being free-will gifts. One farmer drove over from a village twelve miles off, with a beautiful specimen of his garden produce.



So wrote Ashton Oxenden, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, in his journal during his sojourn in the Eastern Townships in the summer of 1871. The bishop made “a pretty little new house in the peaceful village of Dunham” his home for those three months. His journals, laced with delicious stories of shared meals and rural tea parties, amply chronicle the foods of farm life.

In our fast-food world of UberEats, convenience foods, and

supermarkets, it might be hard for many to appreciate the importance of food history and identity that flavour Oxenden’s words. His writings speak to a lost time when food was carefully prepared at home, using proudly locally-grown ingredients, and where those who shared it were deeply bound to their communities and to the land – a connection that today exists for many people only as a nostalgic memory. Food embodies community; it is, quite literally, the source of life.



When we think about History, food may not be the first thing that comes to mind. And yet, food has always been the keystone of human existence. Food is one of our closest gateways into the past, a way to experience another time while engaging our senses in a way that no book, memoir, or diary can. Who does not have a memory of fresh-baked bread or of grandma’s homemade cookies? Or a cherished family recipe, lovingly handed down across generations? Or a meal capable of whisking one back to childhood with only a sniff or a taste?

Food defines who we are, where we come from, and what we deem important. More than just details about what people ate (or did not eat), historical accounts of food provide a unique insight into the daily life of those who preceded us, insights into social norms and etiquette, and ways of life.

The Missisquoi Museum opened in 1964. While it is located in Stanbridge East, Quebec, it seeks to preserve the rich history and heritage of all of Missisquoi County. Many of the artefacts in our collection can be traced back to the historic English-speaking communities of this region. Housed in the former brick workings of the Cornell flour mill, which began operation in 1830, it is fitting that 2023’s seasonal exhibit at the Missisquoi Museum is dedicated to giving today’s community a taste of the interplay between history, food, and communal identity. This project seeks to rediscover the deep connections binding food and community, reuniting physical sustenance with conviviality.

The funding for this project has been graciously provided by the *Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d’expression anglaise* through QAHN’s “Belonging & Identity” project. This funding will help us to produce printed materials to ensure that next year’s exhibit is more fully dynamic and engaging for our visitors. Alongside educational wall panels, the exhibit will also include a series of recipe cards, featuring historic recipes uniquely found in our archives; these cards will be able to be brought home by visitors, thus inviting our guests to experience food as a learning tool to bring the tastes and smells of history alive.

Also featured in the exhibit calendar will be a cooking workshop on the lost art of making homemade bread led by Dr. Nicholas Tošaj, professor of History at John Abbott College,

author, affiliate of the Culinary Research Centre and presenter at the Oxford Food Symposium. Professor Tošaj specializes in food history and pedagogy, and will help bring history alive for workshop participants and exhibit visitors alike. An old-fashioned picnic and tea party is also planned for the summer so that visitors can again encounter history with all of their senses.

The Missisquoi Museum is open Tuesday to Sunday, from May 21 to October 9. We hope that you can come savour our history with us!

Tyson Rosberg is originally from Canada’s West Coast and is a newcomer to the Townships. He holds a Masters of History from Concordia University, where his thesis focused on Canadian memories of farm life during the Great Depression. Tyson is passionate about all things rural, and has been the curator of the Missisquoi Museum since 2020.

Hon. **Pascale St-Onge**
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BEING SOUTH ASIAN IN QUEBEC

A New Online Exhibit from the Rang Collective

by Sunita Nigam

In the 1970s, Dr. Vijay Nigam, his wife Uma, and their four children moved from Longueuil to the Eastern Townships, where Dr. Nigam accepted a position doing cancer research and teaching at the *Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Sherbrooke*, and where Uma would open the first Indian restaurant in the region: Shalimar, which is still a busy family-run business. The couple moved from India to the United States in the 1950s, where Nigam carried out postdoctoral research at Tufts University and the University of Minnesota. They moved to Montreal in 1960, where Nigam conducted research at the Cancer Institute of Montreal at Hôpital Notre-Dame. A somewhat representative case of early South Asian Immigration to Quebec (largely, a trickle of young professionals, including doctors and university professors and students), the Nigams were among the 165 South Asians living in the province prior to 1967.

In their 2021 collection *The Invisible Community: Being South Asian in Quebec*, editors Mahsa Bakhshaei, Marie McAndrew, Ratna Ghosh, and Priti Singh argue that although “Statistics Canada... predicts that the South Asian population will be the main visible minority group in 2036 in Quebec,” and while South Asian diasporas are gaining major political and cultural visibility across the globe, South Asians have remained a largely “invisible group” in Quebec’s cultural and political imaginary.

Far from representing a homogeneous group, the South Asian population includes a diversity of peoples from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bhutan, and the Maldives. One of the most linguistically diverse places on the planet, South Asia has four language families comprised of 650 distinct languages. The survival of many of these languages is all the more impressive considering the centuries of colonial rule (especially British, but also French, Dutch, and Portuguese) across the region. South Asia tends to prefer bi-, tri-, and pluri-lingualism rather than simply tolerate it. In fact, “there has been a plurilingual tradition of communication in South Asia since precolonial times... and local scholars consider plurilingualism as ‘natural’ to the ecology of this region.” South Asia is also a place of great religious diversity. Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Christianity are some of the many religions practiced across the region. Thus, South Asians are far less a coherent community than they are part of a geographic, cultural, and economic network characterized by difference, dynamism, displacement, and exchange.

Because of Canada’s racist immigration laws that were not relaxed until 1967, the first numerically significant wave of South Asian migration to Quebec did not occur until after this year. The South Asians that came to Quebec as part of this post-

1967 wave were professionals who were seen as essential drivers of scientific, medical, and technological development for Quebec. While there were only 165 South Asians living in Quebec in 1961, by 1981, the population had grown to 16,541. After this point, religious and ethnic conflicts across South Asia led to new waves of immigration and refuge-seeking in Quebec and the South Asian population in the province became increasingly socio-economically diverse.

While in the rest of Canada the South Asian experience has been documented and explored with some rigour, this is far less the case in Quebec. Because of the long history of British colonialism in South Asia, South Asians are more likely to have English rather than French as their language of public use. Significantly, only 6 percent of South Asian Canadians live in Quebec, where they represent approximately 1 percent of

the population. However, the growth of the South Asian population in Quebec, combined with the fact that South Asians face particular challenges as they seek to integrate into Quebec society, suggests that there is value in learning about the distinct histories and experiences of South Asians, here.

With its new online exhibit *Being South Asian in Quebec*, supported with funding from QAHN and the SRQEA, and curated by Sunita Nigam, the fledgling Quebec-based South Asian Arts Collective / The Rang Collective: Arts for Solidarity seeks to ‘visibilize’ South Asian histories and experiences across the province. Rang is a new registered non-profit non-hierarchical cooperative organization mandated to create dialogue and awareness around social justice issues for marginalized South Asian communities through cultural events across Quebec. *Being South Asian in Quebec* will create a context for making the experiences of Quebec’s South Asians more vivid within the province’s cultural and political imaginary.

Sunita Nigam is a writer, editor and educator. She holds a PhD in English from McGill University, where she published on the relationship between urban placemaking and cultural performance forms in Mexico City, New York and Montreal. Beyond her academic work, Sunita works as a research consultant in the community sector in Quebec.



RED ENSIGN

Discovering and Saving a Rare Canadian Flag

by David Clendenning

In 1965, the Maple Leaf replaced the Canadian Red Ensign as the national flag of Canada. Red Ensigns across the country were being retired. Two years later, I discovered a pristine example of what would turn out to be the “first” Canadian Red Ensign (circa 1868) hidden away in a small antique store in Quebec. This is the story of that flag’s recovery from obscurity, its authentication as a rare Canadian historical artefact, and the struggle to find it a place in Canada’s national heritage.

During a road trip from Halifax to Expo 67 in Montreal, I took a detour to visit the lovely town of Knowlton, Quebec. While touring the village, I happened upon an antique shop in which I spotted a large, immaculate, blood-red Ensign draped over a stair banister.

The flag displayed a canton of the Union Jack and, in the fly, a quartered shield containing the arms of the four original provinces (Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia), surmounted by the Royal Crown of Queen Victoria. The coat of arms of Ontario appeared to be particularly primitive, as if the designer of the flag was not sure what a maple leaf looked like. The cloth was in pristine condition with just a few small insect holes; it looked original and old. The construction of the Union Jack in the upper hoist consisted of individual pieces of red, white, and blue wool fabric, laboriously and precisely sewn together.

I could barely contain my excitement. As a university student of Canadian history at the time when the Red Ensign was replaced by the Maple Leaf, I was acutely aware of the Red Ensign’s history. It was the flag of my boyhood and its significance felt personal.

The asking price was \$190 which, at the time, was not an insignificant amount; I had hoped to celebrate in style at Expo 67! However, I felt strongly that there was something special about this flag. Excitedly, I left the shop with my new purchase, protected in an acid-free box.



In the ensuing 40 years, I moved from Toronto to Ottawa and worked abroad as a member of Canada’s Trade Commissioner Service. The flag remained in storage in a military steel ammunition box which had belonged to my father (Lieutenant-Colonel Randall D. Clendenning (1904-1968) of the 1st Motor Machine Gun Brigade, 1928-1935).

After my return to Canada in 1989 from a posting in Turkey, I happened across the flag while rifling through my

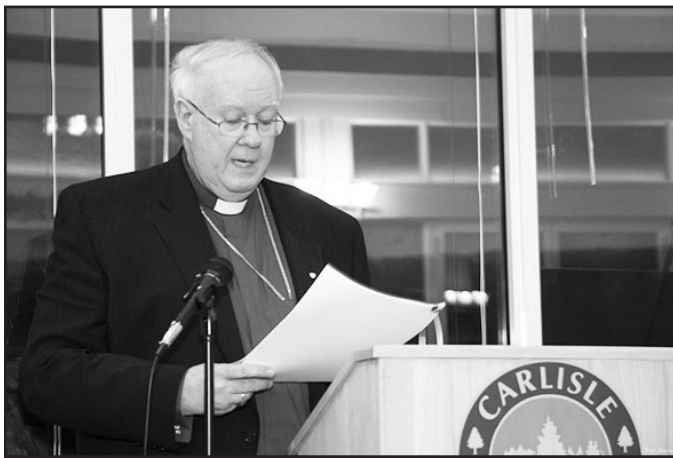
stored belongings. I felt a rush of excitement and I decided that I would do whatever research was necessary to confirm the flag’s authenticity, provenance, cultural importance, and monetary value.

In November 2008, the Ottawa Public Library Foundation held a fundraising event (“An Evening with Sir John A.”) at the Château Laurier in Ottawa: historical material on Sir John A., including his portrait and several historic letters, were to be displayed in the lobby. The organizers asked me to include the Red Ensign in the exhibition. The restorer setting up the display prepared an independent condition report on the flag, which noted its excellent condition, size, and material texture, all of which proved to be extremely helpful in eventually determining the flag’s provenance.

Soon after the exhibition, I took the flag to the Canadian Conservation Institute to confirm its date and the material’s authenticity. The Institute took further steps to protect the four-by-seven foot flag by placing it on acid-free tissue paper and carefully rolling it into a cylinder.

In July 2009, I presented the flag to Ralph Spence, the recently-retired Anglican Bishop of Niagara, Ontario. Bishop Spence was closely associated with the Canadian Heraldry Authority and considered to be Canada’s definitive expert in the field of vexillology – the scientific study of flags. At that time, he possessed Canada’s foremost collection of old Canadian flags.

On seeing the flag for the first time, Bishop Spence exclaimed, “You have it!” He authenticated the artefact as an extremely rare Red Ensign, dating from shortly after May 1868, the year in which the quartered four-province



Canadian badge first appeared. This very early flag would have been used between 1868 and 1870, before Manitoba came into Confederation. The original Canadian Red Ensign displayed the arms of the four original provinces on its shield (clockwise from top left: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick). In the early days, flag manufacturers would often supplement this design with laurel wreaths and crowns (in this case the crown of Queen Victoria). There was no standard design for the Red Ensign until the early 1920s.

The flag's value was much harder to ascertain, however. Bishop Spence decried the sad state of valuations of historical artefacts in Canada, especially textiles such as flags. A recent sale of a historically significant flag – an old Governor General flag – had fetched a mere \$900.

In order to determine a fair market value for the flag, I contacted Andrew Gibbs, an independent appraiser at Heffel Fine Art auction house. Due to the rarity of the flag, I suggested that Gibbs search beyond Canada's borders to find comparable flags of international importance.

In arriving at an appraisal price, Gibbs considered the sale prices of other iconic flags: an early nineteenth-century Napoleonic service boat flag (\$80,500); a silk sledging flag from Scott's British Antarctic Expedition (\$69,400); an 1862 Confederate battle flag (\$94,300); an eighteenth-century Union flag flown at Battle of the Glorious First of June (\$91,000); a 12-star first national Confederate flag (\$71,700); and a 34-star American national flag commemorating Kansas statehood (\$53,775). An appraisal price of \$50,000 was reached

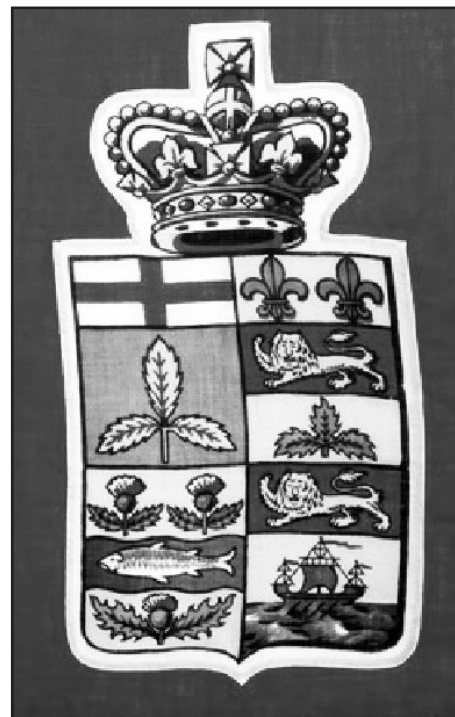
for the Red Ensign.

I offered the flag first to the Government of Canada, but without proof that the flag had actually flown on Parliament Hill the government would not take it. They suggested I contact the Canadian Museum of History, and I did so in May 2009.

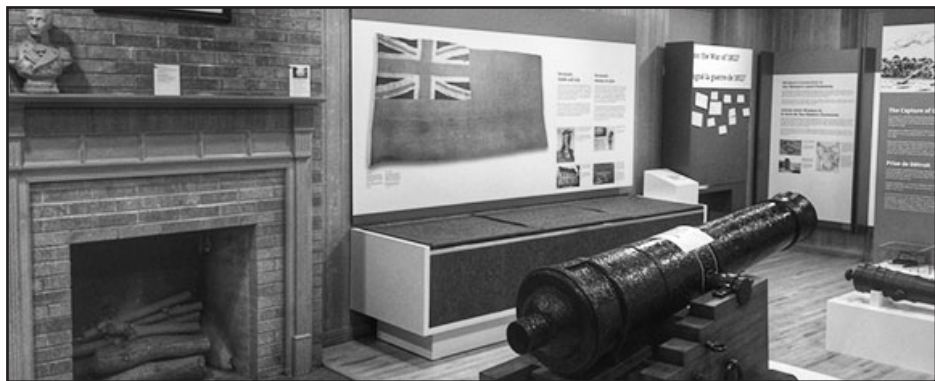
However, the museum also declined, eventually informing me that it already had a comparable flag in its collection. My curiosity piqued, I asked to see the museum's flag.

The museum's version (CMCC-SMCC No. 2007.79.1) and my Red Ensign were the same approximate size. They had been made in England at the same factory and appeared to be of the same period. Both flags had an orange tinge through the red colour, something that was not seen in later versions of the Red Ensign.

The differences were also pronounced: my Red Ensign was in pristine



shape, while the museum's was worn and not in a good condition. The badge in the fly of my version was almost a third larger than the badge in the museum's flag. This and the orange tinge meant that arguably mine was a "prototype" and, thus, the "first" of the original



Tecumseh's Flag

A Red Ensign was captured from the Shawnee chief, Tecumseh, when he was killed by a Swan Creek Black-River Chippewau during the battle of the Thames on October 5, 1813. The flag (54' x 8'8") was a standard Red Ensign mercantile flag which had been in use throughout the British Empire since 1801. It is now at the Windsor Community Museum. Tecumseh was the leader of the First Nations confederacy that was formed to resist American intrusion on Indigenous land in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Early in the War of 1812-15, Tecumseh was made a Brigadier-General in the British Army by General Isaac Brock for his valour, loyalty and leadership, and was entitled to carry a Red Ensign (www.uppercanadahistory.ca). A Blue Ensign of similar size was captured at the Battle of the Thames which is now in the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian in New York City.

Red Ensigns of 1868. No known extant object could compete with this identification to challenge its position as “Canada’s first Red Ensign.”

By then, I had become greatly attached to the flag, but I also thought it should have a better home, especially because it was a unique historical artefact from the first years of Canada’s nationhood and of great cultural interest to Canada. My search for an appropriate place for the flag continued.

After some further months, I determined that my only option was to auction the flag with the hope that it would remain in Canadian hands.

Following discussions with a few different auction houses, I decided on Sotheby’s Canada for two reasons. First, Sotheby’s was committed to selling Canadian art, but also occasionally sold important Canadian artefacts. A few years previously, the war club that the Shawnee warrior and chief, Tecumseh, presented to Major-General Sir Isaac Brock during the War of 1812, was offered for private sale to Canadian cultural institutions [see side bar, previous page.] I had been shocked to learn that the artefact was turned down; it ended up in the United States. With Sotheby’s based in Toronto, I thought I had a fighting chance to keep the Red Ensign in Canada.

My second reason for choosing Sotheby’s was that their president, David Silcox, at a private meeting at the Château Laurier, agreed to undertake a major marketing initiative to promote the flag to their clients and the public. This was something other auction houses did not offer. We shook hands, drank a scotch, and I handed over my Red Ensign for Silcox to take back to Toronto.

Sotheby’s superb promotional efforts resulted in significant press coverage prior to the June 2010 auction in Toronto. The flag was displayed on several television shows; a highlight was David Silcox’s interview on CTV’s Canada AM, at the time Canada’s most-watched morning newsmagazine show. Silcox told how, for nearly a century, Canadians flew the Canadian Red Ensign to distinguish themselves from all others and it was the pretender to the national flag. The segment captured the importance of the Red Ensign in an

emotional and patriotic way.

The auction at the Royal Ontario Museum took place on the evening of June 2, 2010, and attracted many collectors. The flag was Lot 46 and listed as follows:

Canadian School, Red Ensign, c. 1868. Printed and stitched wool, linen edge, hemp rope. All seams are folded over and sewn in a straight stitch. 119 by 226.0 cm, 47 by 89 in. Estimate \$40,000 – 60,000.

The bids moved quickly from the opening offer of \$40,000 to \$90,000. Then, beyond all expectations, a new Canadian collector emerged to seal the final sale price. He paid \$117,500 – a record for a Canadian textile artefact.

There was considerable press coverage following the auction. It transpired that the purchaser was a retired investment banker from Western Canada who came primarily to purchase the Canadian Red Ensign.

I was overjoyed that the selling price for the Ensign reached such a lofty height. It vindicated my conviction that the flag’s value should reflect its importance in Canadian history.

I was very relieved that the flag was to stay in Canadian hands. I was proud to have been the flag’s guardian for over

50 years. I hope that someday it will end up in its true home, either Canada’s Parliament or Canada’s Library and Archives, where it can be taken care of as a relic of more than one hundred and fifty years deserves.

This substantially revised article is based on a previous study of this particular flag which was published in 2020: David Clendenning, “The Forgotten Flag – A Rare Discovery of an Early Canadian Red Ensign, circa 1868,” Bout de papier: Canada’s Magazine of Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs, 31 (1), Ottawa, 2020.

David Clendenning served as a Canadian diplomat and trade commissioner in Washington, Lagos, Ankara, and Port-of-Spain. He retired from the Foreign Service in 2011. Before joining the Canadian public service in 1973, he worked for wealth management firms in Toronto, Ottawa and New York City. He discovered photography in the early 2000s and has become a well-known fine art and documentary photographer. David lives in Ottawa and devotes most of his time to tennis, writing, and traveling to photograph historic architecture and exotic landscapes.

Canada under the Red Ensign

Normally, auction house catalogues print words in black on a white background. At the 2010 auction, the centre page promoting the Canadian ensign was reversed to white text on a jet-black background, with the brilliant red of the flag placed across the top. The note gave not only an accurate description of the flag, but it also provided the story of the importance of the flag to Canadians and their national identity.

The Red Ensign, from which this historic flag was adapted, was the official flag of the British Merchant Marine. By definition, it was meant to be flown only by ships at sea. Early in the 17th century, it had been a flag of the Royal Navy, but

King Charles II had confirmed it as the merchantmen’s pennant in 1674. The Hudson’s Bay Company, chartered in 1670 and the oldest commercial corporation in the Americas, therefore flew it aboard their ships.

The Red Ensign had crept almost surreptitiously inland all along the eastern seaboard over the years prior to Confederation and was already in use by merchantmen in Canada, a use that was finally made official under a British Admiralty warrant issued in 1892. Local versions of the Ensign were allowed. The adaptation of the Red Ensign in Canada with this 1868 version, therefore, was never made

precisely official and never approved or adopted by Parliament. Sir John A. MacDonald made sure, however, that it flew over Parliament Hill and above Canadian public buildings. In 1891, the Governor General, Lord Stanley – he of the Stanley Cup in hockey – declared it to be “the recognized Flag of the Dominion, both afloat and ashore.”

The Red Ensign was the Canadian flag during the First and Second World Wars: first it flew over those killed at Vimy, the Somme, Passchendaele, Ypres, Flanders, and other battlefields; then it was part of the Italian campaign, the liberation of Holland, Hong Kong, and the Battles of Britain and the North Atlantic. Later, it supported our troops in Korea. It then continued to serve until Canada adopted its own flag in 1965.

The Red Ensign is a powerful Canadian symbol, which has a long,

affectionate, and great history in Canada, having flown over our early settlements, our distant outposts, our government buildings, our schools and post offices, and our cemeteries and war graves, for well over 350 years. This particular ver-



sion and this particular flag, representing Canada in the year of its Confederation, is one of the rarest and most magnificent of all, with its exceptional condition and its brilliant original colours still forcefully intact. The power of its pure, rich colour, the scale of it, and the pivotal moment it represents in our country’s history, is unmatched.

Note that one of the earliest known images of the Red Ensign appears in *View of York*, a landscape painted around 1816 by Robert Irvine (1792-1823), a Scottish-born employee of the North West Company who fought in the War of 1812-15. According to associate curator Anna Hudson of the Art Gallery of Ontario, *View of York* “sets the historical precedent for the flag as a symbol of claimed space.” (Rick Archbold, *I Stand for Canada: The Story of the Maple Leaf Flag*, 2005.)

By 1865, the first stage of construction on the new Parliament in Ottawa was completed in time to host the final session of Parliament of the Province of Canada in 1866 before Confederation in 1867. Prior to Confederation, a Red Ensign flew over the East Block of the Parliament Buildings – as captured by an 1866 watercolour by Otto Reinhold Jacobi (1812-1901) now in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (Acc. No. 1879.3).



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ODD OBJECTS

THOMPSON FAMILY MOURNING WREATH

Missisquoi Museum, Stanbridge East

by Isaac McNeil

Among the revolutionary upheavals marking nineteenth-century society was a new relationship with death. The Victorian era is known for its fascinating mourning customs – including the beautiful, if dark, mourning wreaths, made from wire, string and human hair.

One of these mourning wreaths, formerly belonging to Minnie Thompson of Dunham, Quebec, can be found at the Missisquoi Museum. This artefact, dating to the 1860s, provides a unique opportunity to explore not just the history of the Thompson family but of the Victorian era in the Eastern Townships.

The artefact's artistic quality is striking. The wire and string are arranged with care, and in incredible detail, so that the hair is wrapped around the structure, giving the impression that the hair is what holds the entire piece together. The result is a long-lasting floral arrangement with a personal touch. Creating a mourning wreath required a great deal of artisanal skill. This was an object that was intended as a treasure to be cherished.

Mourning wreaths could serve as eternal bouquets with a material connection to the departed (Bellissimo and Montgomery). Moreover, they were created in such a way as to allow for alteration; additions could be made for newly departed family members. As such, the memento could embody the stability of a family line during a time when death was omnipresent.

Let us explore the historical origins of these unusual objects.

How did these mourning practices come to such prominence in the Victorian era? The general context was high infant mortality and low life expectancy, but there were other factors at play. Increased economic productivity and the onset of industrial production meant that, for certain segments of the population, new products and commodities were becoming available – including the



wire required to create mourning wreaths, and the tools necessary to shape and cut the wire. Importantly, hair art was a common practice in Victorian culture, making the hair wreath more of an industrial era development than a new art form entirely (Garton).

How did Victorian mourning customs make their way to Dunham in the 1860s? Minnie Thompson lived in the first township established by British Loyalists, a population that helped to cement Britain's social and cultural influence in the region. Here, significantly, one seventh of the land comprising the township was held directly by the crown and another seventh by the Anglican Church.

Within this context, Minnie Thompson's mourning wreath can be quite helpful in acquiring a glimpse into the life of those to whom it was important. We can assume, for example, that Minnie Thompson came from a family of reasonable means, given that they could acquire such luxuries as mourning memorabilia. Moreover, we can tell by the family's choice to have a mourning

wreath that they were still culturally and socially linked with customs in Britain.

Bishop's University History student Isaac McNeil interned for QAHN in Winter 2022.

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THE SHAMBLES FARM

by Joseph Graham

When we lived in the West Bolton, in the Eastern Townships, forever ago, Sheila and I liked to take the truck and travel the back roads looking for that bucolic yard, abandoned and neglected, that surrounded the shambles farmhouse, our name for any abandoned place that evoked nostalgia. We dreamed of doctoring one of these places back to life, saving the collapsing barn, repairing the front porch... pulling up to the front door for the first time as the new owners. We never did it, though. We just went back to the farm and made supper, or went to bed, imagining.

The problem was, on a certain level we knew these remote places were dead. Their lives had been lived, and we were in no position to know, and fix, the backstory of the family, someone else's collapsed past, so its stories could keep being told.

Heritage conservation is only sort of possible because much of our heritage is dependent upon our ongoing use of it. West Bolton was a community that consisted of farms, one beside another, healthy and sustaining. Over the years, however, most of the farms had been acquired by city folk. They bought them to be in a farming milieu, and they spent money to keep the farm seeming like the one the farmer they bought from would have recognized. We fell in love with the farming heritage and participated as much as possible, working to keep my uncle's farm, itself one of these, feeling like a real farm.

In the spring of 1978, we returned to the Laurentians, me in Arthur Hutchins's truck with a large amount of hay and grain, fencing wire, a cow, a calf, a dog, a cat, and three hundred chickens. The cow was the prize. A pure-bred Jersey called Maple Cliff Dawn Horizon. Her first freshening, having a calf and milk, had taken so long that we called her Maybe. I

will never forget the expression on my brother's face as I watched from the cab of Mr. Hutchins' old truck, pulling up to my mother's long-abandoned stable, part of its own shambles farm with a future only in my mother's imagination.

The three hundred chickens were not the only cause for my brother's long face.



Mr. Hutchins's truck had broken down trying to climb the unfamiliar, endless hills of the Laurentian Autoroute – we were very late. If Mr. Hutchins wasn't old by my standards today, his truck was. He was one of those farmer-Townshippers that I enjoyed living among. He supplied us with woodchips, a whole truckful every three or four months – ideal bedding for the beef cows on my uncle's farm. We invited him in for supper if he arrived late in the day with his woodchips, and he seemed to enjoy himself. Arthur ate well, smiled a bit and never talked, except in short, one- or two-word answers to questions once he was sure they were addressed to him. I could not tell you if he was more comfortable in English or in French. He was most comfortable in silence.

When he went back to his rig, where for some mysterious reason his uncle would sit waiting, we inevitably found a two-dollar bill – remember those? – under his plate. The reddish-pink bill featuring a younger queen on one side and Inuit hunters on the other commemorated Canada's presence in Resolute Bay and the far north, where they transferred Inuit

people to stake a territorial claim during the Cold War. A young Inuk described them as human flagpoles. The government could not transplant their community heritage in which their lives had been founded over millennia, and the experiment was a disaster for the flagpoles. Arthur's two-dollar bill contained a message for us, too.

We could take a cow and calf, chickens and fencing, but we could not take the farming heritage of West Bolton – it had to already be where we were going to be useful. The calf would teach us that. Mature cows can be docile, but growing calves test fences endlessly, and where the calf goes, the cow will follow.

Our menagerie summered at Mom's stable while we moved into a little log cabin I had built in my teens. Our plan was to build a new house with our own four hands, slaughter and sell the chickens, aside from the six laying hens, and then move the hens, the cow and the calf into the log cabin before winter, just after we moved ourselves out of it. We worked on the new building through the summer, taking only two days off. It was returning from one of those days off that we discovered the calf problem.

When we left the Townships, we acknowledged that we would not be able to milk the cow twice a day. We would have no electricity or refrigeration in the log cabin or in the stable, no sanitary way of keeping the milk. I went to the Stukely auction and bought a little bull calf, a Holstein, black and white patched, that would be the lucky beneficiary of good Jersey milk. I roughed-out an enclosure with an electrified barb wire fence and visited the stable's new occupants once or twice a day. I didn't make it over there before leaving for that second day off.

Coming home, as we drove down through the pine forest above Rolland Deslauriers's house, to our surprise he was on the road, signaling us to stop.

If Arthur Hutchins wasn't really that

old, Rolland Deslauriers was. Behind him was his log farmhouse and the red pine forest that he had planted in a field that he abandoned for the purpose, he had once told me, in 1949, the year I was born. Rolland and his wife Rollande were the last family to have farmed along our range road. All the farms, fields and most of the buildings were long gone, acquired by city folk as their own pet farms around the time of the Spanish Flu. Their fields had grown into trees, but the lines on Rolland's face still showed his farming heritage. They expressed his life, but not his speech. When he talked, there was no twinkle, no creases of laughter, just clear words that I was left to interpret. The calf and cow, he said, had broken through my fence, but he assured us they were back now. He slowly described how he had spotted them coming down the road, followed by half the neighbourhood, the current owners of the old farms, running, calling and yelling "Here!" "Heel!" "Home...!" His stone-carved face expressed nothing else until a tear formed in his eye and ran down over the lines, as his whole inner being convulsed in laughter, visible only through that lone tear. We had made his day.

Thanking him and following the road onward to our cabin, we sat in silence, both realizing that our dream of keeping a cow had just ended. We were like the Inuk on Hutchins's two-dollar bill. Without the social heritage, this was not a home for Maple Cliff Dawn Horizon. We would have to find her a proper home, best in an area that still had a farming heritage. That was a tall order.



The Laurentian hills have always been a gentle, wooded countryside that the residents cared for over millennia, living a stewardship that improved the forests, increased the fauna and encouraged fish. They ranged over large areas using rivers and trails, celebrating plenty in great community events, or spreading out to get through difficult seasons and years. Women and men lived in mutual respect and all the other living things were members of the family too, with respected rights to territory. It was a balance that, like all societies, had its good years and its bad, but it kept its faith and promises.

When the forests were cut down and the stumps and rocks became bourns in legal descriptions of ownership, most of these stewarding people withdrew, and the new people tried their hand, burning the remaining trees and stumps, selling the

ash, and turning the meagre soil to plant crops. None of this happened very long ago, and the newcomers did not pay any attention to the forest heritage of the societies that they pushed away, the same fatal flaw commemorated on the two-dollar bill.

Without the forest heritage, it would take a long time to create a farming heritage, but before that could happen, another new wave of people came out of the city with different ideas. They bought farms that were barely two generations established and made them into playthings. They caught the fish, hunted the animals, and played in the lakes and reviving woodlands. These were the people we had to look through to find someone who would love Maple Cliff Dawn Horizon. Their heritage had become one of roads, machines and recreation. As Rolland Deslauriers had shown us so clearly, they did not know cows, but the nearest surviving farming culture was very far away. A local butcher was willing to buy Maybe for meat, but that only motivated us to look harder.

Then we heard about Old Mr. HEEbert, as his name was pronounced by some, and he lived only seven miles away. He lived at the end of a single-track road that ran parallel to the highway. I approached slowly, just driving by the first time, along the highway from where I could see his farm. The barn looked orderly and sturdy. I saw sheep and cows grazing on a green, fenced field.

A few days later, I drove to the end of the dirt road, parked, and walked towards the barn. He was working outside of it and looked over at me with a scowl tucked



Top: Canada \$2 bill, 1970s. cbc.ca/news/indigenous/human-flagpoles-dark-story-behind-inuit-scene-on-2-bill.

Bottom: Laurentian log cabin, 1978. Photo: Joseph Graham.

between an unkempt gray beard and an unruly head of long, grayish white hair. What did I want, was his first question, spoken with a bark that challenged my presence. I saw his rough hands at the end of worn sleeves, his overalls, his boots – all looking neglected, framed in a background of order. The barn was as impressive up close, and the pasture was grazed. The animals looked healthy. Beyond them was the house, looking more like the man himself, a small version of a shambles. I came straight to the point, pleading for a home for Maybe. He seemed to soften a bit, then he abruptly dismissed me, telling me he'd think about it and that I should come by again in a few days.

Of course, I did. Here was a man who had succeeded at maintaining the farming heritage on a single property. If nothing else, I had to admire his success. When I returned, he told me he could take the cow for a while to see if he wanted to keep her, and if he did, he would pay me the same price as the butcher had offered for the meat. The only condition was that I would help him with his fencing in the meantime. Bringing Maybe, I helped with his excellent fencing and also slowly got to know this genuine community Elder. I learned that he called his farm *Ferme le Sauveur* because, he said, he was the only person left growing food. He wasn't thinking of his monetary value as a producer, but as the person who had a mission to make sure there was food and knowledge of how to maintain it when the society collapsed and everyone was faced with starvation. His full name, he showed me on his aviation pilot's licence, was Louis-Joseph Hébert, the same name, he pointed out, as the very first French farmer in New France, Louis Hébert. His barn, on top of being well-organized, contained a fleet of 1950s farming equipment, old Massey-Harris machines polished and looking ready to go. Massey Harris was the precursor of Massey-Ferguson.

We took a break at one point – not the first visit – and went into the house. It was indeed on cribs, lacking a foundation. Inside, it was a mess. Scrawled on all the walls were hand-written quotations from the bible and the radio blared from Montreal's CJAD, filled with all the negativity of the private radio newscasts. Clearly this man was in a deep,



depressive state.

Fluently bi-cultural, he told me his story, how his parents had moved to New England for work, and how he had grown up there in a French milieu, married and had children. When he was older and the children were at the age of independence, he followed his doctor's advice, to move to a drier region to deal with his asthma. St. Agathe, the Quebec centre for tuberculosis treatment, seemed an obvious choice for him and his wife. His children did not join them, nor did they approve.

He did not tell me what year he moved, but as his story continued I learned that, when his wife died, he struggled to continue. He must have been in the depths of his depression when one day he was served with a notice of expropriation from the Quebec ministry of transport. They were extending the Laurentian Autoroute and his house was in the way. He mustered an immediate response, telling them that he could not be expropriated because he was dead. It gave him a new energy to be dead, but the massive new root of the transportation tree forced his house back,

away from the new corridor. Since he maintained steadfastly that he was in fact dead, but left here in the world to prepare to feed the hungry, he could not sign the expropriation. No doubt he slowed things down a bit, but in time, his house was relocated at the ministry's expense, seated onto the crib I saw. Neighbours rallied, running a water hose as far as the barn, and electrical extensions, enabling him to continue to listen to the news.

The money for the expropriation was kept in trust, waiting for a miracle, for the dead man to come back to life. In the meantime, he paid his taxes in cash, walked to the village when he needed things, and persisted. One day, when I arrived to help with the work, he gave me the price we had agreed to, all in old ten-dollar bills that dated from long before Mr. Hawkins's two-dollar bill. I remembered the older currency, and so did the bank. Mr. Hébert was true to his word.

Louis-Joseph Hébert maintained his farm for years, before death revisited and claimed him. His heirs sold the farm and it became a small golf course. I never had the heart to return and see exactly what they had done. The last Shambles Farm was gone, and we were on our own.

Joseph Graham's new book, Insatiable Hunger, reinterprets our historic understanding of the colonial period, here and in New England. It tells some of the stories that we were not taught in school.





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MONTREAL'S GRANDEST TOWN RESIDENCE

The Bingham Mansion

by Mark Meredith

Bingham Mansion was completed in 1822 for William Bingham (1800-1852) and his wife, Marie-Charlotte Chartier de Lotbinière (1805-1866). The house immediately became the centre of fashionable society in Montreal, and remained so until 1833, when the couple left for Paris. Afterwards, it served as the official residence of the governors general of Canada, the first home of the High School of Montreal, and, with additions at the rear, Donegana's Hotel – which was the largest hotel in the British colonies until it fell victim to the Montreal Riots of 1849. The mansion was replaced by a distinctly inferior building that kept the Donegana name and became a hotbed for Confederate spies and blockade runners during the American Civil War.

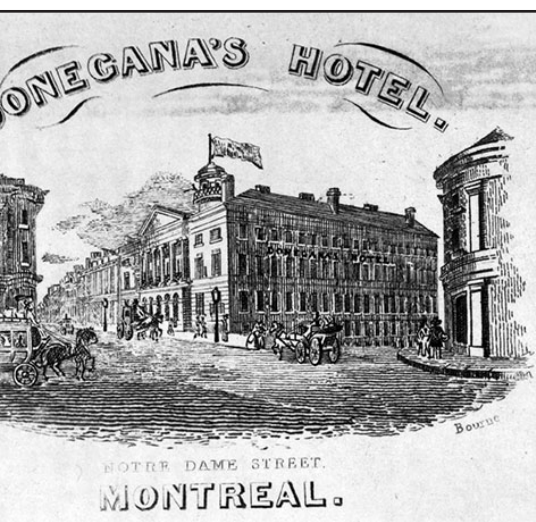
Young William Bingham was the only son of one of America's first millionaires and the same man (and his family connections) who John Quincy Adams admitted was really in control of “the Presidency, the Capital and the Country” during the Revolution and Washington's administration. By four, William had lost both his parents and he was raised by his maternal grandfather, Thomas Willing, having already inherited a significant fortune that included over one million acres of land in Maine and co-ownership of Lansdowne House, which was “supposed to be the best country house in America.”

After living for a brief period in England with his sister Ann and her husband, Lord Baring (the banker), William returned to Philadelphia where he was involved in “all sorts of scrapes” before it was decided that a marriage must be arranged for him.

In 1821, a potential wife was found in Montreal. Charlotte, the “Seigneuresse de Rigaud,” was one of the three very

wealthy daughters and co-heiresses of Alain Chartier de Lotbinière, who had become friends with William's father when he was taken prisoner during the American Revolution. William wasted no time setting out to impress his future family and immediately commissioned the new house. Despite this flamboyant

gesture – and no doubt others like it – the months crept by and the marriage contract remained ominously unsigned. But the new year brought in a fresh wind: his would-be father-in-law dropped dead on New Year's Day, 1822, and barely two weeks later the marriage contract was signed and sealed. Louis-Joseph Papineau lamented this rapid turn of events to his daughter, calling the young American “un vaurien” – a scoundrel!



The new house was built on St. Denis Hill at the northwest corner of Notre Dame and Bonsecours Streets – what would become known as “Bingham's Corner.” Even before it was finished, Bingham had certainly made his presence known: “Bingham was very rich and dazzled the Montrealers by his expenditure,” a contemporary commented. “His equipage was very stylish, and he dashed through the narrow streets of the old town with outriders and four

horses always at full speed to the amazement of the habitants.” From 1815, the David Ross House on the Champ de Mars was considered “the grandest town residence in British North America.” Bingham's quickly robbed it of that title. The facade of his imposing three-story, neo-classical mansion measured 100 feet in length; it was centred by five arches on the ground floor supporting a terrace on the second floor, with waist-height, iron balustrades between six Doric columns that rose two stories high, crowned by a triangular pediment. The Palladian mansion was modelled on Lansdowne House in London, the home of Bingham's father's great friend and former British prime minister, the Marquess of Lansdowne. That house was where the Treaty of Paris, which ended the American Revolution, was drafted in 1782, and was later home to William Waldorf Astor and “the Earl of Oxford Street,” Harry Gordon Selfridge.

It is a loss to Montreal's history that practically nothing is known about Bingham's house except that it contained “three immense doors on the ground floor” that led to the ballroom, where the young couple were renowned for holding “a great many entertainments” and that there were extensive formal gardens to the rear with a conservatory well-stocked with various interesting plants that were reported to have done “credit to Mrs. Bingham's taste and knowledge of floriculture.”

Harrison Gray Otis, who had been entertained on several occasions at the Bingham family home in Philadelphia, recalled that William and Charlotte lived “in the best style at Montreal, where their house was open to all gay people, especially to officers of the British regiments.”

A guest at one ball recalled Mrs.

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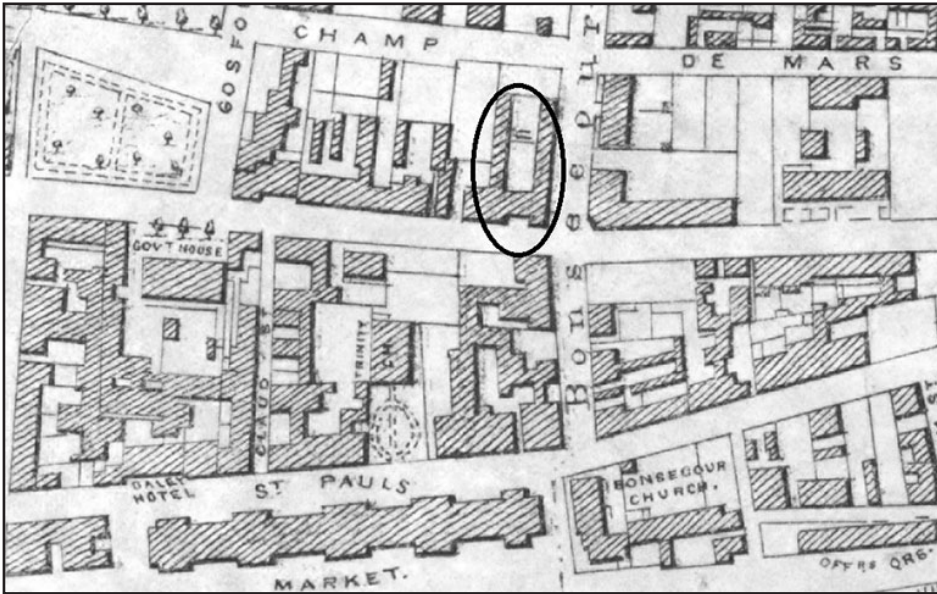
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Bingham dressed in “black velvet, with a white satin front, and white satin shoes, and a white plume in her hair (dancing) the minuet beautifully.” It would certainly appear that Charlotte enjoyed herself immensely during those years: her husband claimed in later life that of his five children born at Montreal, he was only certain of the legitimacy of his eldest son!

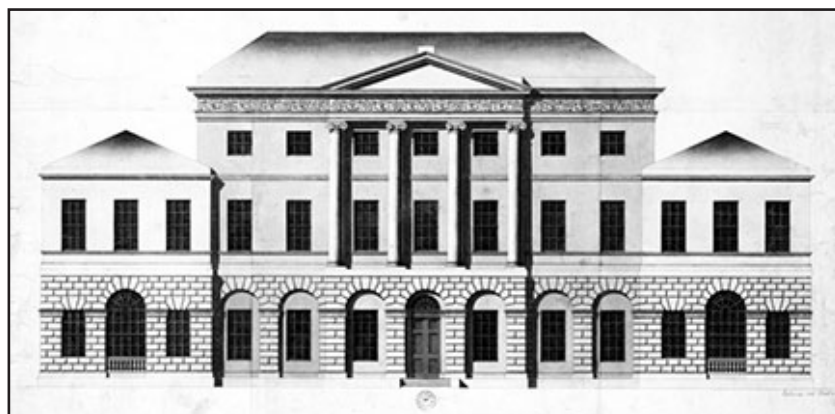
In 1824, Prince Carl Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar and his wife, Princess Ida of Saxe-Meiningen – sister-in-law of King William IV – arrived in Montreal ahead of schedule during their tour of British North America. That evening, the Prince and his entourage were invited to a ball at the Bingham mansion, which he described in his memoirs:

Mr Bingham, from Philadelphia, had married a rich heiress here, and turned Catholic to get possession of her estate, gave a ball to-day, in honour of the first birthday of his... daughter and politely invited our company. We accepted the invitation, and rode to the ball at 9 o'clock. He was twenty-four years of age, and his wife nineteen; has many friends, because his cellar is well filled, and has the talent to spend his money liberally among the people. We found

assembled in his rich and tastefully furnished halls the whole fashionable world of Montreal.

They mostly dance French contra dances, commonly called Spanish dances. To the contra dances, in honour of the officers of the 70th regiment, who are the favourite young gentlemen, they have adopted tedious Scotch melodies; to the Spanish dances they played German waltzes. The native ladies conversed in a very soft Canadian bad French, not even excepting our handsome landlady.

I took particular notice of a Miss Ermatinger the daughter of a Swiss - Charles Oakes Ermatinger – and an Indian woman, on account of her singular but very beautiful Indian countenance. She was dressed in the best taste of all, and danced very well. Indeed, there was a great deal of animation at this ball, as well as a great deal of luxury, particularly a profusion of



silver plate and glass in the house of Mr. Bingham, whose sister is the wife of the banker, Baring, of London.

Michel Bélisle related a story told to him by a de Lotbinière descendant:

When living in Montreal, around 1825, young Bingham liked to drive his carriage drawn by six horses, until one day he was arrested and taken to court where he was informed that in the British Empire only Royalty was allowed to harness six horses to a carriage. He was given a slight fine for which he insisted on paying double because, he said “tomorrow, I intend to go out again with my six animals pulling my carriage and I do not wish to be stopped.”

On being threatened with possible imprisonment for disobeying the law, he quipped that being an American he was not affected by English law. The next day the Justices of the Peace were out in force waiting for Bingham to drive out from his home. They were not disappointed. When the Bingham set out for their daily drive, they were both comfortably seated in his luxurious carriage drawn by six animals... five horses and a cow!

In 1834, the Bingham family left Montreal for Paris and for a short time they leased their old home to John Colborne, 1st Baron Seaton. In 1838, the Earl of Durham was appointed governor general of Canada and he chose the Bingham mansion over the run-down Château de Ramezay for his official residence, as did

his successors until 1843. Durham requested that it be furnished in “superior style” and the Bingham family spared no expense fitting it out “in a splendid manner” to oblige the exacting standards of their new tenant. This included adding a cupola with a gallery that offered a 360-degree view of the city.

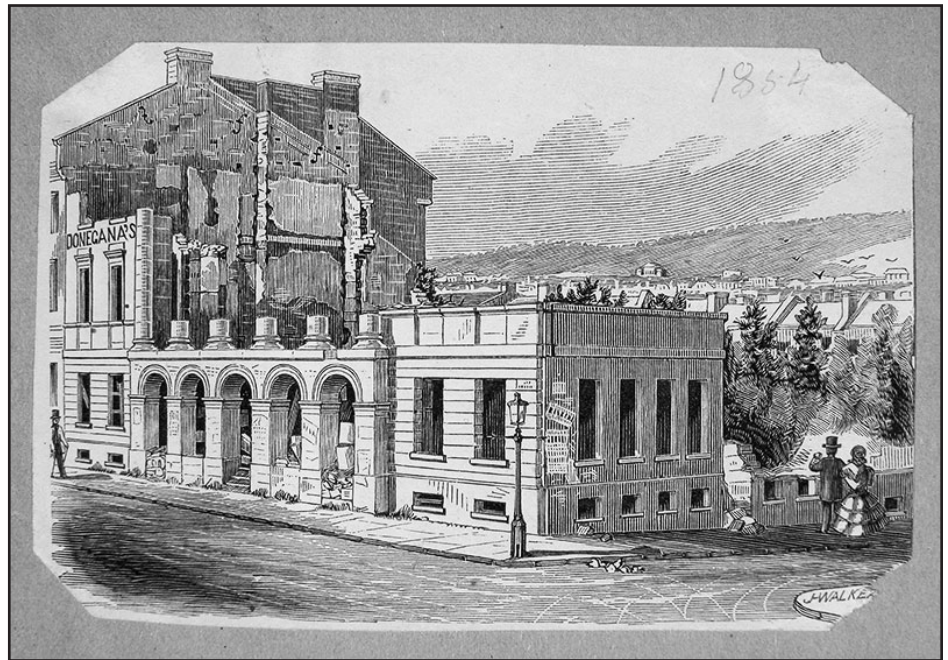
By 1843, the Bingham's had moved from Paris to Broome Park in England and, foreseeing no further use for their mansion in Montreal, they sold up. In September of that year, it became the first home of the High School of Montreal, with its 167 newly-enrolled students. At the end of the first academic year, the closing ceremony, presided over by Peter McGill and Charles Metcalfe, was held in what had been the Bingham's ballroom.

In 1845, the school moved to its purpose-built home on Belmont Street, and the house was now purchased by a consortium of businessmen on behalf of hotelier, Jean-Marie Donegana – well-known as the successful general manager of Rasco's Hotel in Montreal. The facade of the building was kept as it had been when it was the Bingham's home, but extensive additions were made to the rear in what had been the formal gardens.

The building now stretched all the way to Champ de Mars Street. It was the largest hotel in the British colonies. Every luxury was made available and each of the 150 apartments had its own bathroom with hot and cold baths available at any hour of the day. The dining room measured 100 feet by 218 feet and the gas lighting that lit the hotel was said to have given “a marvellous effect to the rich marble decorations” in the lobbies.

English traveller John Bigsby found Montreal “a stirring and opulent town” in 1845, “advanced in all the luxuries and comforts of high civilisation.” He no doubt had Donegana's in mind when he remarked that its inns were “as remarkable for their palatial exterior” as for their “excellent accommodation within.” Donegana’s was considered on a par with New York's Astor House, built by J. J. Astor, and as good any hotel in London.

Just as it had done when home to the Bingham's, Donegana's attracted the cream of Montreal society and played host to a number of artistic performances, attracting leading names from Italy and France. A British army officer described it as “a magnificent establishment” and found the furnishings equal to its “splendid” architecture: “Everything was conducted... in the first style: the furniture was superb, and the attendance. All French waiters, most admirable, while the cuisine was



of the most recherché character.”

In about 1847, another British officer, Captain Lord Mark Kerr, decided to stir up some excitement in the hotel when he had heard there was an abundance of American tourists staying. Kerr rode his horse into the dining room, stepping nonchalantly around the tables. At first the room was stunned into silence, but the silence quickly turned to laughter and Kerr found himself

showered with invitations to New York!

What had been Montreal's grandest home and then its grandest hotel “was entirely consumed by fire” on August 16, 1849.

The site was sold in 1850 and a new hotel under American management (J. H. Daley) was built in its place. It was cleverly renamed “The Donegana Hotel,” being no longer associated with Donegana himself. The replacement was not only disappointingly unimpressive to look at, but it also had a distinctly second-class reputation. During the American Civil War, when Montreal became the unofficial base of the Confederate Secret Service, the St. Lawrence Hotel and the Donegana Hotel were overrun with spies and blockade runners. The second hotel stood until 1880, when it was demolished to make way for the Hôpital Notre-Dame.

MONTREAL. 219

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Mark Meredith has always been passionate about history, particularly the history behind houses and the stories and people that shape them. Having worked for twenty years in the building industry, he is now a recognized writer and lecturer in both the United States and Europe. In 2019, Mark founded HouseHistree (househistree.com) a website that explores “genealogy through houses.”

Top: John Henry Walker, “Ruins of Donegana's Hotel,” c.1854. McCord Museum M16364.

Bottom: Advertisement for Donegana's Hotel, 1852. BANQ, Massicotte collection, MAS 3-189-a.

FEMINISM, CAPITALISM, MILITARISM

The 78th Fraser Highlanders, 1757-1812

by Jon Bradley and Sam Allison

The 78th Frasers were raised in 1757 from Highlanders in European mercenary regiments and from the Highlands, Islands and Lowlands of Scotland. Disbanded in 1763, this military machine changed the role of women in North American society (feminism). Ownership of land by ordinary soldiers fueled the production and distribution of wealth (capitalism). The Scots, and by extension, their soldiers, were at the forefront of some of the most progressive and enlightened ideas of the time.

Eighteenth Century Scotland: Modernity and the Enlightenment

The Scottish Enlightenment was in full bloom when the Fraser Highlanders were recruited in the late 1750s. Scholars such as the economist, Adam Smith (*The Wealth of Nations*) and inventors such as James Watt (steam engines) were changing the world. Medicine, agriculture, geography, mathematics, and architecture were only some of the disciplines that made Scottish universities the best in Europe. Scotland also had the world's first and best national school system. Each parish supported a school to enable boys and girls to read the Bible. Literacy and numeracy explain why ordinary Scots, such as "ploughman poet" Robbie Burns, achieved world fame. Burns' "Auld Lang Syne" is reputedly the best-known song in the world. Even inoculation for smallpox, initiated by Scots doctors in Britain, was common. When the Americans besieged Quebec City in 1776, much of their army, including their general, died of smallpox. The defending Royal Highland Emigrants, many of whom were former Fraser Highlanders, recorded very few smallpox deaths due to their high rates of inoculation. Yet, modernity is seldom associated with Highlanders in North America at this time nor is it acknowledged by historians.

Feminism: Recruitment and Settlement

In 1757, women played a large role in the story of the 78th by enlisting men for the regiment. Poor widows enrolled their sons for the three pounds sterling each was entitled to. Upper class women accommodated and fed the new recruits. Soldiers' wives also nursed the wounded, fed the troops, and cleaned the camp, which helped ward off disease. In 1763, soldiers from the 78th who were demobbed in the

hunted and fished, and during the winter worked in the timber trade for cash. The potato brought to America by the Scots governor Murray, unlike wheat, was a reliable ground crop. Timber became a major economic asset for masts or potash. Consequently, Scots thrived in the forest far from the riverfronts where the French had settled. Yet, this life was harsh, not at all romantic.

Capitalism: Double-dipping and Immigration

The table (see next page) compiled from a massive study by American historian Bernard Bailyn, shows that between 1750 and 1800 more Scottish women and children in family groups emigrated than those of any other nationality. Bailyn's study also reveals that few Highlanders were indentured. Curiously, the Scots were conspicuously poorer than the English, and the passage to North America was not cheap. Even today, a voyage of three weeks is expensive and precludes many people. How then did so many women and children find their way to North America?

We must remember that this period predated the mass Highland Clearances that characterized Scotland after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. Migration during the 1763-1815 period was financed by Scots soldiers who had served in Canada. The 78th had double-dipped from 1760 to 1763 on a massive scale by working on the frontier and rivers while being paid by the army. Indeed, Governor Murray was astounded to receive a loan of 2,000 pounds from the 78th to tide him over until the paymasters' ships arrived; this was an immense sum in those days. By working on the frontier from 1760 to 1763, clansmen became formidable frontiersmen, boatsmen, and fishermen who were able to afford the high cost of bringing



Highlands returned to North America not only with their own wives and families but with the wives and families of those in the 78th who had stayed. Land claims show that the 78th settled in family groups. Yet, uniting those at home in Scotland with those who had been demobbed in North America often took many years.

Wives were essential as they cultivated potatoes and other crops, and tended to the animals and the household. The men

Eighteenth Century Migratory Patterns of English and Scots

(Bernard Baylin, Harvard University)

Emigrants	Male	Female	Child 1-14	Young Men 14-30	Family Groups	Emigrants per Ship	Ships 150+	Indentured to Americans
English	84%	16%	16%	66%	20%	15	7%	68%
Scots	60%	40%	40%	20%	48%	70	66%	18%

their wives and children over to America.

Bernard Baylin was puzzled by the sheer volume of letters sent across the Atlantic by the Scots. He failed to realize that these letters had established a *military-migratory-land* pattern. Highlanders were pulled in by money earned in Canada rather than *pushed out* to Canada by unfavourable economic conditions in Scotland.

Capitalism and Militarism

Highland letters during the American Revolution of 1776-1783 describe Canada as the "Promised Land," a biblical, economic and political interpretation. Veterans of the 78th were promised 200 acres of land plus 100 acres for their wives if they re-enlisted to fight the Patriots. After 1783, their military loyalty ("Loyalists") won that land. In contrast, the Patriot soldiers received no land until 1812, when most of them had died. The Frasers fought for the Old King and more land, while the Patriots fought for no king and no land. In fact, we were unable to trace any Fraser Highlanders who sided with the rebels. The Promised Land led to a massive exodus



from the Thirteen *English* Colonies north to what became, because of Scots militarism, *British* North America. The Highland Loyalists lost the War but won a major economic, political and social asset, Canada.

A Progressive Society

The destruction and violence of the failed 1745 Jacobite Rebellion led by Bonnie Prince Charlie resulted in an economic hardship that gripped Scotland. This horrified the Scots. So, by the time of the American Revolution in 1776, enlightened Scottish intellectuals advocated political and economic Reform, not Rebellion or Revolution. The Scottish idea of Reform influenced the 78th. For example, Alan Stewart of the 78th became colonel of a Black American regiment raised to fight the Patriots under George Washington. After the Revolution, Stewart not only brought his freed slaves to what is now Nova Scotia / New Brunswick, but he found land for at least one of them. The absence of records makes it difficult to trace these men.

The new 1791 Constitution of Lower Canada was heavily influenced by a Highland Loyalist, John Richardson. Women, Jews, Catholics, First Nations, and African Canadians were all entitled to vote if they owned or rented a small piece of property. Many of them did vote, but over the years, women and First Nations people lost this right. Richardson, an enthusiastic reader of Adam Smith, supported many types of enlightened causes, such as the Ladies Benevolent Society, canals, steamboats, the Montreal General Hospital and McGill University. However, Richardson is remembered for founding Canada's first bank, the Bank of Montreal, which used a system of branch banking similar to that in Scotland. This institution won the contract to be the British Government bank that paid the British Army in

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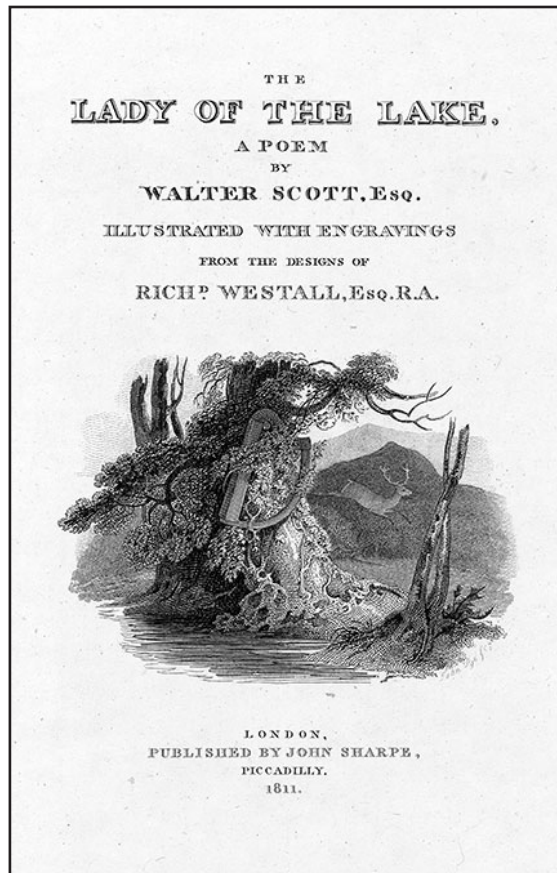
Canada. This gave great stability to the Canadian economy during the global banking crash of 1837. This crash and the heavy rains of 1837 explain the socio-economic unrest that shook North America and Europe of the time.

Fiction Overwhelms Reality: Sir Walter's Scott-Land

Sir Walter Scott's nineteenth-century novels, poems, and plays created an imaginary "Scott-Land" with invented traditions totally unrelated to eighteenth-century Highland reality. Scott used an old Scottish word "glam," meaning enchantment by fairies, and he invented the word "glamorous," which he applied to the Highlands and Highlanders.

However, Highlanders were not rooted to clan lands, reluctant to emigrate or enlist in the British Army. They did not blindly follow their chiefs and the "rightful" Jacobite King. Highly professional soldiers fought for different sides in different wars and had a long mercenary history in Europe. In fact, many hundreds of thousands had migrated eastwards to Europe from the thirteenth century onwards. The Fraser Highlanders did not start Highland migration, they merely redirected it westwards to the New World.

Indeed, the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec complained about the "false theatrical versions of stories about the Battle on the Plains of Abraham." Fortunately, we have other sources. Sergeant James Thompson fought on the Plains and wrote copiously about his experiences. Sergeant Thompson's house



still stands in Quebec City. Several non-commissioned officers from the 78th became seigneurs in Quebec. Upward socio-economic mobility encouraged Highland geographic mobility. Sadly, as shown by the TV hit *Outlander*, on both sides of the Atlantic, Scott-Land lives.

The feminism, capitalism, and militarism of the Scots in Canada from 1763 to 1815 reflected an enlightened brain gain. The militarism of the 78th was combined with a feminism, and capitalism that looked down on New England geographically, socially and politically while eventually transforming New France into Canada, as an independent, economic, social and political reality. This pattern of helping those at home to immigrate to Canada pioneered by Highland Scots continues today.

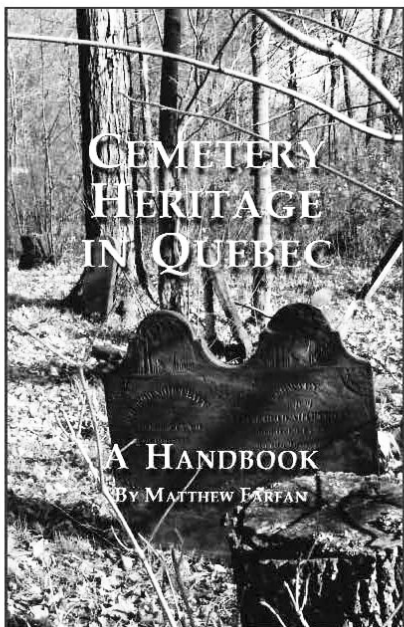
Sam Allison is the author of Driv'n by Fortune: The Scots' March to Modernity in America, 1745-1812 (2015), as well as several high school history and economics books. Now retired from the Faculty of Education at McGill, Sam is guest editor of the London Journal of Canadian Studies.

Jon Bradley is a retired McGill University Faculty of Education professor, the co-author of the second edition of Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing in Education (2017) and guest editor of the London Journal of Canadian Studies.



Top: Title page from Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*, 1811.
Middle: 78th Fraser Highlanders logo.

Bottom: *The Scottish Enlightenment* (banner), digital.nls.uk/learning/scottish-enlightenment.



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