

THE INFLUENCE OF FRENCH IMPRESSIONISM  
ON CANADIAN PAINTING

by

MERVYN JOHN ARTHUR CROOKER

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Department of Fine Arts

The University of British Columbia.  
Vancouver 8, Canada

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## ABSTRACT

French Impressionism, the earliest vital and progressive modern art movement, was developed in France between 1870 and 1890. It was soon recognized as revolutionary, and the number of its followers grew as the style developed and became known. Paris, then the art center of the world, attracted many students, among whom were Canadian artists.

In 1878 William Brymner sailed for Europe, to return in 1882, the year of the seventh Impressionist Exhibition and the year that J.M. Barnsley and Horatio Walker arrived in Paris. Homer Watson, already an established artist, first travelled in Europe in 1887.

A growing facility in the use of color marked the evolution in the art of the nineteenth century. The painters John Constable, and Eugene Delacroix, the scientific color technicians M.E. Chevreul, James Maxwell, Ogden Rood, and Robert Henri, opened up new fields of interest. The progression from late Baroque and early English landscapes to the French experiments with color, culminated in Impressionist landscapes filled with sun and atmosphere.

The major Impressionist masters Pissarro, Monet, Renoir, and Sisley concerned themselves with the visual effects of light reflecting from the surfaces of objects. Newly invented pigments supplied their palettes with almost unlimited color, which they applied empirically, searching for the most brilliant effect

The decade from 1880 to 1890 marked the period when the established Canadian artists came in contact with French Impressionism. They returned home to teach and to paint, and became the Pre-Impressionist painters in

Canada. Their work exhibited an intermediary style corresponding to that of the Pre-Impressionist painters in Europe. A survey of the growing Impressionist tendencies in their art led to the first consistent Impressionist style of Maurice Cullen and Marc Suzor-Côté after 1895.

By 1900 the influence of Impressionist color technique had reached all art forms. Impressionism was an historically established style which had fostered other newer art forms, and many artists in Canada painted "Impressionist" pictures.

Impressionism continued to be seen in Canadian painting together with Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Art Nouveau, Cubism, Expressionism, and finally Abstraction. The term Abstract Impressionism is applied to some recent paintings to indicate the presence of a style which freed art from formulas by introducing individuality, expression, and color, and then became almost a formula itself.

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FOREWORD

"Art does not grow wider, it recapitulates, for good fruits grow espalier fashion; one hoards and then projects".

..... John Rewald, Impressionism.

At the tercentenary celebration of the Royal Society in London, July, 1964, Sir Cyril Hinshelwood said,

"There are communities in time as well as in space. The most original minds find their true affinities in continuing the sequence of their predecessors and their fulfilment only in their successors".



## INTRODUCTION

The influence of French Impressionism on Canadian art relates to the original French movement which was dominant in France from 1870 to 1890. Impressionism, as such, was very short lived, and the profound influence this style had on the art which followed offers a challenge to trace the influence of Impressionism on Canadian art.

Canadian art students, in the main conservative, valued their academic training. The officially recognized academic work was based on a training in technique and craftsmanship that they revered and this was understandably their target of excellence. In France, the artists who became Impressionists began their art training in the academies but this training dissatisfied them and they broke away to follow their own inclinations. Canadians went to the academies in France at a time when the aims of Impressionism, developed outside the academies by an avant-garde few, were being felt by the academic students.

Canadians were not only confronted with French Impressionism, but with the English school of Constable and Turner, the Dutch landscape school, the French Barbizon landscape school, the influence of the American luminists and the American Impressionists of Philadelphia. The influence of these schools was not only to affect the course of Art in Europe but was to spread to America and influence Canadian art as well. It is then not surprising that Canadian artists combined with their individual interpretations of the Canadian scene, elements that may be traced to the many styles of painting current at that time. It may be that many Canadian artists never fully understood Impressionist painting, and yet we find them using the superficial aspects of Impressionism, mixed not only with an academic approach but also with other European techniques.

We find in their work a heightening and a lightening of the palette, a freer technique of applying paint in more obvious painterly ways, outdoor subject matter, and the recording of special light effects. These were inheritances from Impressionist painters, but only a few Canadians painted totally Impressionist canvases.

To fully understand this inheritance it is necessary to look back to the many schools leading up to Impressionism in France.

In Canada, the wilds of North America were not of interest as subjects to painters since it was not a "lived-in", cleared, and tamed land as was all of Europe. The untamed rawness of the Canadian landscape was too intimate a reminder of unremitting toil to the early pioneers. Thus the love of rusticity here only slowly developed over the years and culminated in the Group of Seven.

The French Impressionists were not concerned with painting to a formula as were the academicians; in fact quite the opposite. They were part of a growing school always seeking innovations, new subjects, and new techniques, which were not taken up by Canadians until they had become historically established. Revolutionary non-academic schools of painting were accepted in Canada only after they were accepted in Europe, and even then were imperfectly emulated.

Painters from North America going to Europe would only know of these revolutionaries and their theories by talking to the artists, or by carefully studying their work. Even then, the aspects of Impressionism are so various that its complete understanding would be difficult. There never was an Impressionist formula. None of the Impressionists set down rules, which if followed would produce Impressionism. Each of the Impressionists had a different empirical approach for presenting the new

ideas which the group held in common. Therefore, "Canadian Impressionism" coming after French Impressionism exhibited only a few of the traits of the original French movement. Often these traits are superficial, and frequently relate only to the type of subject which the French Impressionists most favored, and often entirely ignore the technical means used to achieve the "effect".

In 1886, J.E. Hodgson, R.A., made the following observation in his report on the Colonial and Indian Exhibition held in London, "It has been rather a shock to me to observe evident traces of French influence - not the influence of the great French painters but the rank and file of mediocrity."<sup>1</sup> This statement refers to the influence of the French Impressionists on Canadian and other Colonial painters. It indicates as well the current official disfavor in which the French Impressionists were held, but perhaps most significant, it is the first recorded acknowledgment of the appearance of French Impressionism in Canadian art.

"By the turn of the century, the discoveries of the Impressionists had been brought back from Europe by students and younger painters, and had begun to seep in from other sources."<sup>2</sup>

"During the two decades before the first world war, Maurice Cullen, and Suzor-Côté began to explore the possibilities of the snowscape .... showing that Canada contained inexhaustible stores of subject matter, by applying the Impressionist palette to broad design and by painting from intimate contact with their surroundings."<sup>3</sup>

In Canadian art we will often find a French Impressionist subject treated with a Barbizon technique, Barbizon subjects treated with Impressionist techniques and academic subjects treated with mixed techniques.

Therefore the object of this Thesis will not be to present an unqualified "Canadian Impressionism" because there never was one. Instead it will try to find many diverse manifestations of Impressionism and its effect on Canadian painting and it will not hesitate to point out many isolated manifestations of French Impressionism in Canadian art which will not appear Impressionist in the all-over aspect.

In the next chapter, I will try to trace the elements leading up to the Impressionist movement in France, and show some of the predominant techniques or practices that have become known as French Impressionism. When this is established it will become possible to find many of these same elements in Canadian painting.

## CHAPTER II

One of the most obvious influences affecting Canadian painting was the growing interest in Europe of the non-academic landscape school of the Barbizons. The Barbizon school of painters had been founded in 1836 by Theodore Rousseau, at the village of Challey on the edge of the forest of Fontainebleau. Painters like Diaz de la Peña, Jules Dupré, Jean Francois Millet, Jean Baptiste Corot, Charles Francois Daubigny and Constant Tryon joined Theodore Rousseau to get away from studio painting, to paint landscapes out of doors, and to paint scenes like the seventeenth century Dutch masters, Meindert Hobbema and Jacob van Ruisdael. These painters wished to make a scientific study of the natural effects of sky, water, weather, meadows and light. They used the same meadow areas, the same animals, oak trees, cows and herdsmen as the Dutch school but they looked with their eyes and tried to make a portrait of a landscape. The out-of-doors was faithfully recorded with purple hills and a pink sky. Using a chromatic palette they tried to reproduce the actual colors seen, often mixing the color on the canvas. Brush strokes were evident and they sought light effects. The sky was to reproduce exact meteorological effects. Plants were to be botanically correct and the animals exact zoological specimens. They painted sky, water and land compositions with no people. These were pastoral scenes and if people were included they were the peasant workers of the soil.

In England, the Hartford Huntington water-color school with artists Joseph Turner, John Crome, John Cotman and John Constable was working in the same manner. In America as in no other country there had been an inherent love of trompe l'oeil effects, love of detailed superfine illusionism, suggested by the camera and which appeared throughout North

American art to be culminated in the work of William Harnett. In Canada Homer Watson and Horatio Walker were to follow.

The Barbizons were not illusionistic even when they painted accurately visual effects observed out-of-doors. In their work there is a psychic distance between the actual scene and the artistic execution which leaves room for the appreciation of a distinct and painterly technique.

Jean Francois Millet, 1814 - 1875, was a French peasant who became a celebrated Barbizon painter and who studied under Mauchell a former pupil of Jacques Louis David. It was in 1868 that Millet became famous, for his peasant subjects. "The quiet design of Millet's paintings accents his scrupulous truth of detail and contributes to the dignity with which he invests even the simplest rural tasks."<sup>4</sup> These peasant subjects were to be copied by Vincent van Gogh, 1880 - 1883. Millet's subjects, The Sower, The Digger, and Old Man Grieving are typical. In his painting of The Potato Eaters, 1884, van Gogh used Barbizon color based on the color theory of Delacroix; where the pure complimentary colors were used with grays, made by mixing these same complimentary colors.

Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot was educated in the neoclassic tradition. He did not belong to any school but was important in the development of modern art. His work can be divided into three stages. First his early work which followed nature and tried to present the actual rural scene. Secondly his middle period when his style changed dramatically and he began to use analogous colors. He told Pissarro to paint in the open air. To observe the lightest part of a scene and put that color down on the canvas. Then observe the darkest part and paint that area. Then use from three to five values of these colors mixed on the palette ready to compose

abstractly, with these values and gray.<sup>5</sup> He liked to paint in an out-of-focus haze which dissolved the forms as the Impressionists were to do. He used white for highlights. People could be silhouetted against the darks but subordinated to the landscape. This device was used by the Impressionists. A few spots of yellow, red or pure blue were used for accent to a single color nuance. He painted what he saw, and used an empirical perspective space relationship.

Another Barbizon painter who influenced the Impressionists was Johan-Barthold Jongkind who studied in The Hague and later in Paris. He was influenced by Corot and Bonington who were contemporaries of Eugene Delacroix. Jongkind's studio pictures were not too successful. His watercolors, however, done on the spot, caught the "most fleeting of sensations".<sup>6</sup> He had that rapidity of execution and sureness of touch which the Impressionists in turn strove to attain. He painted nature as he found it, as in the gray and pink charm of old Paris streets, factories or Dutch seafaring scenes. He had an intimate detailed knowledge of his subject and an acute ability to see. "I love this fellow Jongkind", Castagnary wrote, "He is an artist to his finger tips ... with him everything lies in the impression".<sup>7</sup> Jongkind tried to be faithful to his impressions and to represent what he knew of his subject under specific atmospheric conditions. Like Constable and Boudin he made atmospheric effects the real subject of his picture.

In France, the Impressionist Camille Pissarro, after the great Exposition of 1855, went to Corot for advice and help. Corot said, "the first two things to study are form and values...color and execution give charm to the work".<sup>8</sup> The young students disliked Thomas Couture's pre-occupation with idealization. He was at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and

could influence the young group, many of whom were students from America. The younger artists were tired of studio painting and of copying the great masters in the Louvre, as an end in itself. Edmond Duranty published an article Notes sur l'art, in Réalisme, July 10, 1856, stating, "Greek visions, Roman visions, medieval visions, visions of the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, centuries, with the nineteenth century forbidden. The man of antiquity painted what he saw. Create what you see."<sup>9</sup>

In 1855, the jury had refused two of Courbet's important canvasses so he exhibited at his own expense in the Pavillion du Réalisme, fifty paintings in the first one-man show ever to be given in Paris. His L'Atelier du Peintre, Allégorie Réelle, Déterminant une Phase de Sept Années de ma Vie Artistique, broke many academic rules. There was a new format with a realistic panoramic view of low-class people. Local color was used and the brush strokes in separate areas matched the texture of those areas. Here was individualism that was anti-academic.

The Illustrated London News, Sept. 1, 1855, published a wood engraving of the Central Hall of the Palais des Beaux-Arts at the Paris World's Fair. Here were exhibited for the first time significant works by living painters from all over Europe. Delacroix chose to exhibit a Turkish Bather among forty other canvasses. Corot showed only six, while Daubigny, Jongkind and Millet were hardly represented. Landscapes were considered the lowest form of art. The medals went to the followers of Ingres, and Ingres advised young Edgar Degas, (who had just given up Law School, to become a painter,) and who visited the exhibition with his father, to "Draw lines, young man, many lines; from memory or from nature; it is in this way that you will become a good artist".<sup>10</sup>

Eugène Boudin was encouraged by Millet and spent three years in Paris



from 1850 - 1853. The period of gray painting in seascapes was over, they began to paint in color. He returned to Le Havre to work with Jongkind. He loved the seabreezes, big clouds and silvery beaches along the Seine. "It is now twenty years since I first began to seek that delicacy, that all-pervading charm of light. How fresh it is; it is soft, faded, slightly rose-tinted. The objects dissolve. There is nothing but color values everywhere. The sea was superb, the sky soft and velvety; it later turned to yellow; it became warm and then the setting sun imbued everything with beautiful nuances of bluish-purple..."<sup>11</sup> Like Constable he disliked the old smoky dirty canvasses, and saw with the eye of an Impressionist. He did everything with lightness and elegance with exact tonal relationships. He wrote "we must seek out the simple beauties of nature".<sup>12</sup> He advised Monet "Study, learn to see and paint, draw, do landscapes. The ocean and the sky, animals, people and trees--just as nature created them--are so beautiful in their own setting of light and air, just as they are....All that is painted directly, at a given moment, has a force, power, and vitality which can never be duplicated in the studio".<sup>13</sup>

In the noisy atmosphere of the cafes of Paris, young painters like Pissarro and Dégas discussed their ideas with Fantin la Tour, Gustave Flaubert, pupils of Delacroix, Couture and Ingres. In the cafe Taranne, critics and writers, Baudelaire and Duranty, medical students like Dr. Gachet, all from different schools; "realists", "fantasists", "Ingrists" and "colorists" as they were called, met and discussed art.<sup>14</sup>

Many of the young artists left Paris to paint on their own. Later in the year, Pissarro was to have a landscape accepted at the Salon of 1859. Pierre Charles Baudelaire, in his Salon of 1859, chapter "Le Public

Moderne et la photographie" Variétés Critiques, Paris, stated, "From day to day art diminishes its self-respect, prostrates itself before exterior reality and the artist becomes more and more inclined to paint not what he dreams but what he sees."<sup>15</sup>

In the spring of 1874, a group of young painters in Paris, defied the official salon and organized an exhibition of their own. These Impressionists represented a continuation of the basic theories of their predecessors, since great artists of the past had contributed to the development of Impressionist principles. For twenty years, Ingres, Delacroix, Corot and Courbet had dominated the scene and it was men like Monet, Renoir and Pissarro who set out to incorporate with their own older basic principles, new ways which led to Impressionism. These men were the precursors of Modern Painting. These were individual artists and Impressionism was due to their varied and collective efforts. Boudin said, "Perfection is a collective work and without that person, this one would never have achieved the perfection he did".<sup>16</sup>

In England, an important root of French Impressionism had been developed. John Constable was one of the first landscape painters in the nineteenth century to paint what he actually observed out-of-doors. His colleagues were still painting according to seventeenth and eighteenth century formulas which resulted in characteristically dark, brown and yellow, sepia-cast works. They said that Constable's paintings were not painted according to tradition, as trees should be the color of an old violin. Constable defended his naturalistic green trees by putting a violin in a tree and asking his friends if the tree really did match the violin. It did not, and Constable became the inventor of a new way of color rendition which had not been used before.

He was intrigued with the luminous effects achieved by seventeenth century masters and by the combination of golden-yellow sepia tones with blue, complementary colors. The baroque tradition which favored blue and gold combinations with white also achieved a lively, and powerfully rich effect. This led Constable to explore the effects created by the action of complementary colors on one another taking blue and yellow as complementary and formulating other complementaries on this foundation.

As early as Leonardo Da Vinci's remarkable scientifically correct observation of the world, it had been discovered that the shadow of an object was tinged by a color complementary to the one of the object,<sup>17</sup> and Constable adopted this phenomenon in an attempt to paint more colorful and visually truer pictures. Constable, like Copley before him, went outside, observed nature, and sought the pure pigment color most closely equivalent to the actual color of the object he was depicting.

The technique he used to apply these newer, brighter, pure colors was also new. His brushstrokes were small and calculated in size to match the actual pigmented brush. He presented on canvas the same value as he had chosen as correct on the brush. Thus the surface of his canvases became a mass of small brushstrokes, each helping to define the general form of the object and each presenting a purer color, nearer to nature than had been seen before. Constable also used what has become known as a "divided color" technique, which was a direct influence on Delacroix and on the Impressionists. This consisted of his method for reproducing a bright natural effect by placing brushstrokes of distinct colors side by side. At a distance, these colors blended producing a more brilliant color than a single area of blended color. On green, for instance, he would modify a green by adding yellow to the green for a highlight, beside this

he would place an ordinary pure green for a diffused light, then add a blue to the green in the shadow, thus producing an analogous range of greens, from yellow green, through green, to blue green. This required a very careful empirical study of the visual effects of colors juxtaposed on the canvas as seen from a distance to achieve a natural effect.

Constable's Haywain, a picture typical of his developed style and showing all of these remarkable characteristics, was exhibited in Paris in 1824, where it was seen by Delacroix. This picture was such a revelation to him that he studied it very carefully for days and then proceeded to re-paint one of his own pictures to correspond with Constable's technique and to try to achieve the same effects of light and color.<sup>18</sup>

Delacroix modified Constable's color theory and in his journals records his own ideas about how he painted a picture to achieve the optimum color effect. His idea was to use three or four pure local colors as main accents in his picture. In the background he would use chromatic greys, made up of a mixture of the main pure colors of the major objects in the picture. The main areas of pure color in the foreground reacted with the related greys of the background to create a play of color back and forth in the picture, and this gave a more lively effect than color against an unrelated background.

Delacroix journeyed to North Africa where the more direct sun and brilliant colors brought out much stronger complementaries in the shadows, and resulted in a wider range of complementaries in his palette and a generally greater color facility on his part.

Today we find it hard to imagine the works of Constable or Delacroix as particularly bright or revolutionary but in their own time they presented a contrast to "academic" work as taught in the academies, where

academic work had to look like sculpture for figure compositions. It had to be historical, or morally allegorical. It had to show heroes at the height of their power doing great deeds to elevate the mind and approach the ideals of Greek art. The brushstrokes were to be blended to present a uniformly textured surface. This removed all trace of the painter's personality. The color was applied achromatically with highlights in white, and shadows in black. The light part of the picture was not to occupy more than one third of the picture format. Convention required a shading through grey, from light to dark areas, in order that light and dark were never juxtaposed and this avoided silhouette effects.

The composition had to be laid out on a Renaissance grid system to make every part rationally controlled. The composition was usually symmetrically placed about an axis.

Academic art was only concerned with figure representations involving life size figures and landscape was an unimportant part of the picture, as a mere background.

Landscape art, therefore, before the Barbizons of France, was only accepted as an art form in English water-colors, and indeed the Barbizons took much from the English water-color school.

The Barbizons bridged the gap between the English landscape school and the French Impressionists. Diaz de la Peña, the Barbizon painter, advised Renoir to discard earth colors and black, and to lighten his palette.<sup>19</sup>

A brief résumé of the tenets held by some of the French Impressionists will set the elements of Impressionism before us. These same elements appeared much later in Canadian painting. Impressionism in France was a non-academic bourgeois art which concentrated on land-

scapes presented with vibrant full colors and apparent light. The foremost concern, the depiction of visual light on painted canvas, was partly solved by the scientific color researches of the previous half century.

Sir Isaac Newton in 1766 had passed a beam of sunlight through a prism and charted the spectral colors on a screen. These colors he spaced around to form a circle. He chose seven distinct hues red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet to agree with certain mystical notions about the seven notes of the diatonic scale in music, and the seven planets of classical tradition.<sup>20</sup>

In 1802 Young did his work on color theory. Hermann Helmholtz was writing extensively from 1856 to 1866 on the subject of Physiological Optics. The Young - Helmholtz theory stated that in optics any color may be matched visually by adding together various amounts of the three primary colors. It is interesting to note that the three primary colors to which this theory referred were red, green and violet. In 1856, James Clark Maxwell developed the color wheel, which illustrated the principle that the spectral colors equally spaced on a spinning top or wheel produce white light.

As early as 1839<sup>21</sup> Chevreul stated that since light was the source of color, it was necessary to examine the composition of light. His prismatic spectrum was made up of six colors. Three simple ones: red, blue and yellow, and three compound colors produced by mixing the simple ones giving green, violet and orange. Chevreul found that the juxtaposition of two complementary colors heighten their intensity and that every object brightens if placed against something dark and conversely, an object appears darker placed against something light. In 1839 his book on color theory was written, although it was not published until

after 1875. His law of simultaneous contrasts especially interested painters.

The Impressionists knew of these theories, but they preferred to use a variety of pure colors spread more or less evenly throughout their whole picture, so that by their optical mixture, the eye would form a vibrating, changing, and very brilliant impression of light.

The Impressionists generally restricted their palette to pure hues of yellow, red and blue. Photographic reproductions later used these same three colors as the basis for their color prints.

The Impressionists had to follow their own instinctive feeling for light. In translating the purity and brilliance of their vision they eliminated earth colors, burnt sienna and black from their palettes.

Ingres in showing a blue dress would add white to the blue for a highlight giving a washed out effect, - plain blue for an area in indirect light, and would add black to the blue for the shadows using a monochromatic scale.<sup>22</sup>

Fragonard and Delacroix produced new luminosity by using different colors for half tones instead of adding black or white. Thus the Impressionists took over an already established formula. Edward Duranty, publisher of *Réalism* wrote "They discovered that light robs tones of color; that the purity of sunlight reflected from objects reimbues the objects with a luminous unity which blends the seven spectral rays of the prism into one colorless beam which is light. Intuitive step by intuitive step they succeeded in dissolving sunlight into individual rays, into its elements, and then in reinvesting it with unity through the harmony of the spectral colors which they applied to their canvasses."<sup>23</sup> This perception led the Impressionists to a shift in emphasis, from the

observation of the elements of light, to capturing the changing appearance of the subject under various light conditions; to the dissolution of form, in the creation of a world which was the reflection of a reflection. This approach became more and more limited as it chose to confine itself to representing a fleeting instant. This was coming toward the objective of the scientific analysis of optical effects, which, when it was finally achieved, distinguished the highly formulated work of the Neo Impressionists by Seurat, Signac, and Cross.

Pierre Baudelaire's critique on the 1846 Salon puts forward the idea that color expresses harmony, melody and counterpoint and that color in art is analogous to melody in music.<sup>24</sup>

It is easy to exaggerate the influence of scientific formulas. These theories may have influenced the Impressionists but painters continued to use their eyes first, rather than learning any precise formulae. However, it was the growing scientific interest in color that suggested this way of seeing and painting.

The roots of Impressionism are found in many places. Claude Lorraine's luminism, Honoré Daumier's common people, John Constable's color, Gustave Courbet's realism, Eugene Delacroix's color, Jean Corot's landscapes, the Barbizon School painting out-of-doors at Fontainebleau, Johan Jongkind and Eugène Boudin at Le Havre, and Charles Daubigny's water, sky and low horizon canvasses.

Edouard Manet, one of the precursors of French Impressionism, began a more modern way of painting. His works echoed the Spanish master-works by Velasquez and Goya, but they also were indebted to Japanese prints which were coming into vogue in Paris about 1870. He eliminated half tones and highlights and strengthened his colors. The effectiveness of his



simplified images depended upon the selection of a few elements. Manet simplified the image without weakening it. His objective was to work out a way of painting that looked spontaneous. This instantaneous effect was to appear so expert that his work seemed to be the improvisation of a moment. This appearance was valued and sought after by the men who were then beginning the Impressionist way of painting; Claude Monet and Camille Pissarro.

The bold flat color areas of Manet were against the academic rules. There was little middle tone. The lights and darks were massed together. There were strong value contrasts and little intermediary shading. A silhouette appearance was the result and his restricted palette was reduced to three pure colors.

Manet introduced pictures that were more important than the subjects he depicted; where the color was new and different, and where flat areas, with no shadows were used.

The new concept that a work of art may find its reason for being in itself, rather than in what it says or is about, was a departure from the anecdotal idea that dominated salon painting in 1863. In 1874 the first Impressionist showing was at Nadar's studio. Because of Claude Monet's canvas entitled Impression, Sunrise, the painters in that exhibition were called Impressionists, by the critic L. Leroy, as a joke.<sup>25</sup> But even the artists recognized the appropriateness of the term and called themselves Impressionists.

Claude Monet was an early Impressionist and his seascapes are based on those of Jongkind and Boudin. Jongkind and Boudin painted at Le Havre, which was Monet's home, and emulated Daubigny's water and sky themes. In Monet's earliest work he uses a very reduced palette of blue and yellow,

complementary colors, mixed with white to form a light bright tint. The brushstroke changes from part to part of the picture, indicating different textures contrary to the academic rule, that brushstrokes be unified throughout the whole picture. Monet wanted the characteristics of the object to be caught by the brushstroke. He was concerned with the effects of sunlight when observing reflections and refractions. "It is precisely these sudden gleams, the magical light that plays on the surfaces of things that I am trying to capture, light that has the dove's breast hues of shot silk or the blue glints of flaming punch."<sup>26</sup>

M.E. Chevreul's simultaneous contrast theory had possibly indicated to Monet that the optical effect of showing white light, could be achieved by juxtaposing complementaries of the same value to produce luminous effects. It was as though light originated in the picture itself.<sup>27</sup>

The immediate effect of nature was taken by the Impressionist landscape school from an actual visual scene. Their outlook reflected a Heraclitian philosophy including the element of time in a world of change, transition and flux. They tried to capture bodies producing light, fires, and the sun. They tried to capture bodies absorbing light, the earth, mists and atmosphere. They tried to capture bodies reflecting light, steam, water, clouds and glass. They took the chaotic shapes of nature and recorded the chance movements of men with 'an innocent eye', and with no comment on the scene. They were the first painters to transcribe the optical image directly as you saw it without considering any superimposed order; and painted the actual scene out-of-doors.

They chose subjects not for their importance as subject matter, but as a study to show the light effects. The interest in showing light

effects occurred after Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Alfred Sisley went to England in 1870 and saw the work of Joseph Turner. On their return to France, Mallarme's literary interest in a subtle nuance in the use of words influenced the Impressionists to experiment with nuances in light dark, warm cool, complementary and rainbow pallettes pigments.

At the time of the 1855 International Exhibition in Paris, Camille Pissarro arrived in Paris to study art. He was very impressed by the works of Ingres, Delacroix, Courbet, and Corot. Pissarro always acknowledged his debt to Corot and like Corot he painted a series of country roads. In 1859 he met Monet at the Academie Suisse. He was in Pontoise in 1866, and in Louveciennes in 1869. In 1870 he spent two years in London, England with Monet during the Franco-Prussian War. On his return from England he settled again in Pontoise, 1872 - 1884, where he was in close communication with Paul Cézanne, Armand Guillaumin and Victor Vignon. It was Pissarro who introduced Cézanne to the Impressionist technique and helped to clear away his former somber manner. In 1902 Gauguin wrote; "If you examine Pissarro's art in its entirety, you find, despite its unevenness, not only an intense instinct for art which never contradicts itself, but also an art which is essentially intuitive in the best tradition. He copied everyone, you say? Why not? Everyone copied him, but denied him. He was one of my masters and I do not deny him."<sup>28</sup>

In his townscapes and country road-type scenes there are often strong perspective lines such as a road merging with a horizon and a composition which recalls Corot's works; but the principal element in his pictures is the light, soft and atmospheric which Pissarro had mastered.

Pissarro joined the Impressionists because of his great regard for Manet's work. He showed at every Impressionist exhibition from 1874 to

1886. Theodore Duret, in his account of the Salon of 1870 wrote "In one aspect of his work Pissarro is a realist. He would never rearrange nature to suit his composition. For him, a landscape on canvas must be an exact reproduction of a natural scene."<sup>29</sup>

After the Franco-Prussian War the Impressionists reassembled in Paris. Durand-Ruel moved to New Bond St. in Paris. In London, Daubigny had introduced Durand-Ruel to Monet and Pissarro. These men were strengthened by his support even though they had been ignored in London art circles. They had been captivated by the countryside and the suburbs of London and had painted the effects of fog, snow and spring sunshine. They visited museums and saw oils and watercolors by Turner and Constable which were a new revelation to them. It was the landscape painters, the masters of light and fleeting impressions, which affected them most; Turner especially. The brilliance of his pure colors caught their eye. They analyzed his technique. His snow and ice scenes impressed them. Signac, in his "From Delacroix to Neo Impressionism", wrote of Turner: "They were astonished at his ability to recreate the whiteness of snow, something they themselves with their broad brushstrokes had not been able to achieve. And they realized that this wonderful effect could not be achieved with a uniform white, but only through numerous closely applied dots in a variety of colors which, seen from a distance, merged to give the desired effect."<sup>30</sup>

Turner, especially in his later works, portrayed nature in her most turbulent moods with rolling seas and flying spray. His battleships and trains are like misty abstractions rather than like solid form. He and Constable certainly influenced the subject matter of Monet and Pissarro. A letter from Pissarro to Dewhurst, Nov. 1902 says; "Monet and I were

very enthusiastic over the London landscapes. Monet worked in the parks, whilst I, living at Lower Norwood, at that time a charming suburb, studied the effect of fog, snow and springtime. We worked from nature... We also visited museums. The watercolors and paintings of Turner and of Comstable, the canvases of Old Crome have certainly had influence upon us. We admired Gainsborough, Lawrence, and Reynolds; but we were struck chiefly by the landscape painters, who shared more in our aim with regard to 'plein air', light, and fugitive effects."<sup>31</sup> .... "Turner and Constable while they taught us something, showed us in their works that they had no understanding of the analysis of shadow, which in Turner's painting is simply used as an effect, a mere absence of light. As far as tone division is concerned, Turner proved the value of this as a method among methods, although he did not apply it correctly and naturally."<sup>32</sup> Monet stated in later years that Turner's art had had a limited bearing on his evolution. Both he and Pissarro, through direct observation, had in 1870, come closer to nature than Turner, whose work was antipathetic to him because of the exuberant romanticism of fancy.

While in London in 1870, Monet and Pissarro met James McNeill Whistler. Whistler's Old Battersea Bridge, 1865, probably based on a Japanese wood block print for its composition, is a very subtle harmony in greys and blue green. Whistler's subtitle for it Nocturne - Blue and Gold, reveals his interest in creating decorative effects. It is his technical refinement and his subtle color nuances, mainly in shades of grey but with luminous effects of yellow and pink, that must have fascinated Monet. In 1871 Monet did a number of works in and around London such as Waterloo Bridge and Westminster, in the Lord Astor Collection, London, which uses a much more divided brushstroke than

Whistler's blended works, but which shows an obvious debt to Whistler in its emulation of Whistler's light effects and general mood. From then on Monet became more and more interested in a light which dissolved form in a high-keyed foggy luminosity.

Alfred Sisley, 1839 - 1899, studied at Gleyre's Studio with Monet, Renoir and Bazille. In his first work, accepted by the Salon in 1867, he described himself as a pupil of Corot. Sisley painted only landscapes centered in the Ile-de-France area. His delicate feeling for nature is very suited to the snow scenes which he did so well. After 1885 he was more and more influenced by Monet. He adopted the Impressionist technique and colors, and was surprised at Renoir's light palette and colorful painting.

Sisley's The Road Through Marly, Seen from the Road to Sèvres is a tree-bordered road disappearing into space, influenced by Corot. Sisley always began with the sky, the major depth producing part of his landscapes. Snow at Louveciennes shows the influence of Monet on Sisley. The picture has taken on a flatter brighter scene showing the multiple reflections to be found in the snow. Again the road goes straight back into the picture plane giving a feeling of depth but the world seems buried in a great white silence and only the women and the tree trunk break the overall decoration. Sisley and Pissarro often painted very similar subjects in and around Louveciennes and Honfleur. Sisley contributed to four of the eight Impressionist exhibitions between 1874 and 1886.

One of the greatest colorists of the Impressionist School was Auguste Renoir who began his artistic career at fourteen as a porcelain painter at Limoges. The precision and delicacy needed in porcelain painting and the technique of painting on a transparent white ground seems to have influenced

his whole life's work.

In 1864 Renoir accompanied Monet, Sisley and Bazille when they went to sketch at Chailly in the forest of Fontainebleau.

Renoir used a rainbow palette applied in thin layers over a pure white reflecting base. This was a new technical procedure. There was no underpainting to establish light, dark areas. For the first time shading was not considered in terms of darkness. The only consideration was in bright pure colors. The jewel-like liveliness of the color he achieved by this technique is unique.

Renoir expresses the happy bourgeoisie attitude behind the Impressionist approach to art in his statement, "What I like is skin, a young girl's skin that is pink and shows that she has a good circulation. But what I like above all is serenity."<sup>33</sup> This quotation reveals how the artist delighted in the dappled light effects to be seen in his Nude in the Sunlight and gives us an idea about what he was trying to represent in the picture. Renoir said, "For me a picture must be lovable, cheerful, and pretty, yes pretty....There are enough tiresome things in life already without our taking the trouble to produce more."<sup>34</sup>

When Claude Monet left Gleyre's studio in 1863 he took Renoir and Sisley with him to paint in the forest of Fontainebleau. Monet and Boudin were the first to paint sea-bathing. In 1886 Manet said of Monet: "Just look at this young man who attempts to do plein air; as if the ancients had ever thought of such a thing!"<sup>35</sup>

After 1870 Monet gave up placing people in natural settings and restricted himself to studying problems of light and color. His art became the study of ever more subtle expressions of visual phenomena. The man who had dreamt of huge figure compositions, painted easel pictures. It

was only at the end of his life that he again took up works of great size and these are his huge waterlily studies, Les Nymphéas, in the Orangerie.

From 1872 to 1876 Monet lived near his friend, Gustave Caillebotte, in Argenteuil on the Petite Genevrières. There he did his freshest and freest work. The light reflected from the rippling water, prompted his most Impressionistic work. Monet lived on his houseboat and Renoir and Manet were frequent visitors. These three painted the same subjects, each in his own way.

Manet painted an Impressionist study of Monet in his canoe called The Canoe where blue and yellow are present in such an arrangement that they mix optically to give the impression of white light, the most intense, forceful, brilliant, white light of the open air, and its reflection from the water. There are large and monumental areas of dark and light without semi-tint transitions. The most limited palette is used and there is no horizon line. A wall of blue sea forms the background, while the simplified sweeping line of the boat encloses the two figures in a composition reminiscent of a Japanese print.

Claude Monet's Gare Saint-Lazare, 1877, is one of a series of railway views shown at the Third Impressionist Exhibition. Altogether he made seven variations on this theme. There were forerunners of this type of theme. Turner had painted Rain, Steam, and Speed in 1844. Monet and Pissarro may have seen these works in England in 1870.

The railway was a great novelty at that time and was used as a subject by Pissarro and Sisley as well as by Monet. These artists often travelled to the suburbs of Paris by train and naturally were interested in the effects of light filtered through glass and steam and touched by the pink colors of early morning. Like the clouds and reflections in water this



was all a part of that ephemeral universe which they chose to paint.

Monet also painted many views of haystacks in a field at Giverny. These were shown in all weather conditions. He painted a series of poplars on the banks of the Epte at different times of the day. In February, 1892 he went to live above a shop called "Au Caprice" in Rouen from which he could see the façade of the Cathedral. He reproduced its various aspects in several pictures, going from one to another according to the time of day and the weather. His technique was changing. His paint became a sort of stippled cement as if to imitate the grain and carvings of the old stones. Clemenceau classified the series of façades into four groups, the greys, the whites, the blues, and the rainbow hued.<sup>36</sup> Monet continued the project into 1893. He wrote, "I work as hard as I can but what I have undertaken is enormously difficult...My stay here is drawing near its close. This does not mean that I am ready to finish my cathedrals. Alas, the more I go on, the more difficult I find it to put down what I feel. It is forced labor, searching, testing, not achieving very much."<sup>37</sup> By 1894 he finished the series and had a highly successful showing of all the paintings at Durand-Ruel's in 1895.

The cathedral series was a programmed demonstration of Monet's theory about the painting of light. He painted the structure in morning light, full daylight, evening light, on dull days, rainy days and sunny days. But we may say that he never really painted the cathedral at all. The stones became cotton fluff bathed in pink, blue, and lavender iridescence. There is no formal composition and the abstract pattern of color has an unexpected relationship to contemporary art.

As early as 1890, Monet wrote to his friend, the critic Geffroy, about his attempting the subject of water with its reflections and depths. He

returned to this problem again and again. He turned to his own garden at Giverny with its water lilies rising to the surface of a pond that reflected trailing willows and cascades of purple wistaria, tall poplars, and beds of brilliant and exotic flowers for his last works.

"The water lily series, Les Nymphéas, represented the crowning achievement of Monet's long career. For these last works of an old man, this cultivation of his own garden, as it were, represents one of the most personal moments of Monet's art, when he brought together, on a subject that was distinctly his own, the themes and techniques of a lifetime of seeing."<sup>38</sup>

In Monet's later painting there is a high degree of apparent abstraction, the lack of recognizable limits and definitions, the reflections of trees, the hazy clouds, all proceeding across the canvas in seemingly abstract rhythms.

Roger Fry objected to the large element of abstraction and complained that the dissolution of the formal elements had followed directly from Monet's obsession with catching the most fugitive aspects of visual sensation.<sup>39</sup> Monet's admirers on the other hand, praised just this same formless poetic vagueness. "Monet's concern was for the immediate visual aspect of things, and then he sought the unusual sensations of color and light that flash upon the eye, irrespective of one's habitual knowledge of the subject. It was the apparent sensation that he put on the canvas. We know that the inner petals of a yellow sunflower are not, in fact, streaked with orange, but when Monet looked - he saw that stroke of orange lying along the petals and that was what he painted. The Neo Impressionists, using optical theories, saw that a stroke of red and an adjacent yellow, would merge in the retina of the viewer's eye, producing an orange more

brilliant than could be achieved by the conventional method of mixing pigments. If you look carefully at paintings from all of Monet's work it is difficult to find a single example of his using exactly this method. A red placed beside a yellow, or a purple next to a blue, is intended to have the value which Monet put down. What he had discovered was a method for making each individual stroke more brilliant in itself. Sometimes this was a sort of descriptive shorthand for bits of sky reflected in water or flecks of poppy in a field of yellow and green grass."<sup>40</sup>

Clemenceau observed that Monet mixed his colors on his palette as other artists did. "Another attribute accredited to Monet as a novel characteristic of his was his insistence upon paint and upon visible brushwork. When viewed close-up his subjects tended to disappear into a skein of brilliant brushwork. This was quite obviously one of the distinguishing features of Impressionist painting but it is an enlargement upon that same tendency as seen in Rembrandt or especially Velasquez, except that in Impressionism the brushstrokes remain as brushstrokes when viewed from a distance and do not resolve themselves into a photographic precision."<sup>41</sup>

One of the most important aspects of Monet's work, as a leading example of the whole "Impressionist" style, is his conformity to the actual scene and his dependence upon his subject, no matter how far removed his final "impression" seemed. If one compares photographs of his lily pond garden with his paintings of it, one is struck by his close adherence to visual fact. Monet took his composition from nature and moved himself to get the view that he wanted, rather than ordering the composition on the canvas. He was in the habit of working on several paintings at one time, painting each day on one after another only so long as a given light remained the same. We recall that Renoir did this too for his Moulin de la

Galette scene. Monet did not want a composite picture which incorporated the light of morning and afternoon as well. His dependence on the actual conditions of his subject shows up in his letters complaining in despair about a change in the weather or in the light, or about a river that flooded before he could finish a painting he had begun. He even had to buy the stand of poplars along the Epte River so they would not be cut down before he had completed his famous "poplar series". He depended on the visual scene and upon the visual brushwork.<sup>42</sup>

Monet had always been fascinated by water and reflections and his water garden was a perfect subject. He tended to choose a morning mist or afternoon shadow when the forms along the banks of his pond seemed to merge with their reflections, creating a kind of flat double image lying close to the picture's surface. Gradually he discarded clear definitions of edges of the pond or bank and gradually pushed the horizon line further and further to the top of his canvas until it disappears and there is no definitive boundary left to worry about. Then you see only pond surface.

In his water lily pond picture Monet captures the impression of the evening light and air, the weedy depths below the water, and the glassy reflecting surface of the pond. "Even in this most 'abstract' manner, Monet's art is still fixed upon the external world."<sup>43</sup>

Degas said that Monet's art was "that of a skilful but not very profound decorator",<sup>44</sup> and it is true that Monet never touched upon the spiritual, the psychological, or the sociological. His work is much more impersonal. Valéry said that it represented "the advent of pure sensibility in Painting."<sup>45</sup>

Impressionism had a very far reaching influence on all art forms. After the last of the group exhibitions in 1886, the impact of outdoor

painting, bright colors, an art free of commentary, a simple reporting of a scene, an art for art's sake type of expression, freed other art forms from dull colored, anecdotal, narrative associations.

Painting in terms of tone, rather than in terms of the depicted object itself, is Impressionism. It is the effect of light reflected on the retina of the eye from an object, rather than the reproduced form of the objects themselves. Impressionism also includes a theory of Color found in Monet, he wanted to paint in terms of pure light without any previous knowledge of the form. Trees appear not as tree forms but as bits of bluish and greenish color. He applies his color in dots and dabs, approximating the tonality and general shape as seen through intervening distance with its specific kind and degree of light and atmosphere.

In Germain Bazin's Impressionist Paintings in the Louvre, we find: "The first contact of Americans with Impressionism took place in 1883 at the Foreign Exhibition in Boston, to which Durand-Ruel had sent pictures by Manet, Monet, Sisley and Boudin."<sup>46</sup> "Durand-Ruel had the next large exhibition containing more than 300 works introducing Impressionism to New York in one overwhelming gesture. The exhibition opened on April 20, 1886, with 23 Degas, 14 Manet's, 48 Monet's, 42 Pissarro's, 38 Renoir's, 3 Seurat's (included at the request of Pissarro), 14 Sisley's, and pictures by Boudin, Cassatt, Caillebotte, Forain, Guillemin, Berthe Morisot, John Lewis Brown, Roll, and several others. On May 25, it was transported to the National Academy where its success was even greater."<sup>47</sup> "At Chicago, Impressionism penetrated to the heart of the World Fair of 1893...A private exhibition, entirely from American collections, showed eighteen Impressionist pictures only, which had a great success."<sup>48</sup>

American artists faced with even greater obstacles than European

artists have given us a painting tradition of which we may well be proud. They wanted to express a new world, wild and strange by European standards. They welded together their own culture with that of other lands, and used every influence, wherever it originated, to help them express, as profoundly as they could, life in America.

Canadian artists were to do the same but with the added advantage of having easy access to the developments in the United States. Art publications came to Canada from the United States. Artists visited back and forth across the border. Canadian and American artists worked side by side in the Academies of France and visited the same cafes and lived in the same quarters. Therefore the influence of Impressionism through American sources is almost as strong as the direct influence from France.

James McNeil Whistler, 1834 - 1903, was to satisfy that craving in America for the exotically beautiful and the decorative. Like Henry James and T.S. Eliot he was adopted by England when he moved to London. The French Impressionists were lovers of the sun, while Whistler, influenced by Velasquez and the Japanese prints, developed his passion for twilight and night. His Symphony in White, 1862, is however a light-filled canvas where broad areas of color form a white surface; with one area reflecting from the other.

An artist who worked in Paris and had a great influence in introducing Modern French Art movements to America was John Singer Sargent, a society painter. He did not follow Impressionism in his work but he admired Manet and Monet. He was their publicity agent across the Atlantic.<sup>49</sup>

Mary Cassatt, 1844 - 1926, after studying in the Pennsylvania Academy went abroad in 1866 to Madrid, Amsterdam, Antwerp and Paris to

study the old Masters. The works of Correggio at Parma were of special interest to her, but she joined the Impressionists in 1877 and exhibited four times with that group. She was encouraged in her work by Degas, but her importance to Americans and Canadians was the fact that she was responsible for advising her friends, the Havemeyers, the Whittemores, Mrs. J. Montgomery Sears and James Stillman to take an interest in French Impressionism and not only bring Impressionist exhibitions to America, but to purchase the work of the Impressionist painters.<sup>50</sup>

Benjamin Constant, who taught Mary Cassatt in Paris was the teacher of Theodore Robinson, 1852 - 1896. Robinson also studied with Carolus-Duran and Gérôme. In 1888 in his late thirties, Robinson discovered Claude Monet at Giverny and was one of the first Americans to follow the Impressionists and recognize Monet as the most powerful figure of the movement. He championed the cause in an article, "Claude Monet", published in 1892.<sup>51</sup> His diary from 1892 to 1896 is in the Frick Library, New York. He always used strong contrasts of light and shadow. His new technique of high keyed, broken color as seen in Willows, 1891, may have been an influence on William Brymner.

Like the Canadian artists who worked in Europe and returned to Canada, the Americans found the light in America different. The white New England farm houses were not the old stone villages of Normandy and Brittany. It was only in rural Quebec that peasants in smocks, driving oxen could be found.

Childe Hassam, 1859 - 1935, was trained in Boston as a luminist, and in 1883 he visited Great Britain, Holland, Italy and Spain. In 1886 he settled in Montmartre studying with Boulanger and Lefebvre. In 1899 he returned to New York. He painted Fifth Avenue, 1916 - 1918, then called

"Avenue of the Allies", and decorated with the many flags of the American allies, in a series of paintings under changing lights and color schemes as the Impressionists had done.<sup>52</sup> In 1878, Monet painted National Holiday, Rue St. Denis Paris, and Manet in the same year painted Rue Mosnier, Paris, decorated with flags. He was a painter of great vitality and originality whose experiments in light and color contributed immeasurably to the development of painting in America. His Union Square in Spring, in yellows, pinks and greens, is like a Pissarro Paris street scene Place du Théâtre-Français, 1898.<sup>53</sup>

Maurice Cullen and James Wilson Morrice did similar scenes in Canada. Morrice's Street Scene in Winter, 1901, may have influenced Cullen's Winter Street Scene, 1906. Morrice's South West Wind, 1905, is a simple row of poplar trees with the wind ruffling their leaves and turning up the silver undersides through which glimpses of white buildings and the sea can be seen. Flooded with clear white noonday light, this scene of summer wind, sun and freshness is translated into art. Arthur Lismer was to capture such a scene in The Guides Home, 1914.

John H. Twatchman, 1853 - 1902, like Theodore Robinson, began with the warm dark tones of Duveneck, whom he accompanied in 1876 to Munich, but his years in France changed his style. "The eye of Twatchman could perceive subtleties in a bank of snow or an ice-bound river which were beyond Hassam. He delighted in winter scenes. His canvas Snow-Bound, 1885, shows not only a delicate rendering of snow, but gives a powerful thrust to the rocks as they stand out against the swirling shapes of water and ice."<sup>54</sup> Suzor-Côté in Canada was to paint similar scenes along the <sup>f</sup>A Athabaska River.

J. Alden Weir, 1852 - 1919, a pupil of Gérôme in his Impressionist



canvas Visiting Neighbors, shows the influence of Renoir who died in the same year as Weir. There is a freshness in the summer sunshine that dapples the little girl and her donkey. Horatio Walker, at times, painted that same freshness using flecked brush strokes and Impressionist colors as seen in his The First Snow, (Fig. 106) now in the Beaverbrook Art Gallery of Fredericton, N.B..

Ernest Lawson, 1873 - 1939, a Canadian born near Halifax, Nova Scotia, had learned all that his teachers, Twachtman and Weir, could teach him of their Impressionist procedures. He was at the Julian Academy in 1893 and exhibited with the Canadian Art Club, Toronto, 1911 - 1915. Through his love of the solidity of things he built up a form of Impressionism where the paint was thick and revealed the light reflecting surfaces of old river cabins, boat houses and winter snow scenes along the Harlem and the Hudson Rivers.<sup>55</sup> His Boat House Winter Harlem River is very like a Suzor-Côté.

Having reviewed the main elements of Pre-Impressionism and the Impressionism of the major French masters, the next chapter will deal with the work of Canadian Pre-Impressionists, whose painting formed an important root to Canadian Impressionism.

### CHAPTER III

One of Canada's early Pre-Impressionist painters was Homer Ransford Watson, 1855 - 1936, who lived during a time when the influences of Constable and Turner from England, of the Barbizons and Impressionism from France and of the Hudson River School from America, were all contributing to art development in Canada.

Watson began by practicing drawing at home, copying Hogarth's Treatise and Gustave Doré's illustrations from Dante's Inferno. He joined Notman's Photographic Studio in Toronto where he met successful artists like John A. Fraser, Henry Sandham, Lucius J. O'Brien and Henri Perre. From Art periodicals Watson became familiar with the work of Thomas Cole and Asher B. Durand of the Hudson River School. He painted as a romantic poet painter and it was only in the last years of his life that he responded to the color of the Impressionists.

He wrote in a letter to Arthur Lismer, Sept. 30, 1930, "Why can't a fellow paint away without anyone wanting to know why and how he paints: in fact the why of his existence". He goes on to say, "I grew from these early drawings into trying to color them". His debt to drawing, the classical mastery of line, the production of several hundreds of pencil and pen sketches, are all based on the then academic approach to painting as seen in the paintings and periodicals of that time. "I never thought of color: my love preferred to take the form of structure and design, a mood of nature to be lived on canvas, in fact some story of the elements. Mostly gray days and stormy weather."<sup>56</sup>

In Coming Storm in the Adirondacs<sup>k</sup>, 1879, (Fig. 1) Watson depicts the moods of weather and the character of light and luminous tonal quality of changing lights on sky and water. These qualities and the subject

matter he had seen in the work of George Innes of the Hudson River School, whom he had met in New York, 1876 - 77. Outlines were dissolved in atmosphere and color.

Homer Watson's early choice of subject was obviously influenced by early photographs, which gave great detail throughout the whole picture. What he chose to represent in his painting was exactly the picture the early camera reproduced. His colors were correspondingly reduced. "In 1839 the Daguerreotypes were shown at the Chamber of Deputies in Paris. In one, representing the Pont Marie, all the minutest indentations and divisions of the ground or the building, the goods lying on the wharf, even the small stones under the water at the edge of the stream and the different degrees of transparency given to the water were all shown with the most incredible accuracy".<sup>57</sup> This type of depiction became a part of the photographic realist tradition which affected academic art.

Ruisdael was an artist Watson admired. In 1886 Watson painted The Old Mill, (Fig. 2) where there is the sharp delineation of his early work. There in an all-over harmony of a Turner sky, a Barbizon meadow and a turbulent stream and trees. It is a typical landscape near Watson's home.

His best known canvas, The Flood Gate,<sup>58</sup> 1900, is the one in which he admits being influenced by Constable. He portrays the "dignity and beauty of Waterloo County in a manner which parallels John Constable's love of Suffolk county". Watson states, "After I saw the 'Lock' of Constable, I said, 'Hang it, I will paint a subject Constable would have delighted to paint, and this is my grandfather's Mill Pond', so the Flood Gate came into being. This is a deliberate attempt to get the spirit of Constable into Canada." He states, however, "I was born

amid the hardwood trees and noted the beech, oak, and elm, as native as a jackpine."<sup>59</sup> Although the trees mentioned are found in England, there is a profound difference in organization and ecology.

After his sojourn in Europe and England in 1887, where he saw Barbizon paintings, was taught by Whistler, and was a close friend of Sir George Clausen; he paints Log-Cutting in the Woods, 1894 (Fig. 3). Here for the first time an all-over design is evident. There are similar areas of color in meadowland, tree-trunks and foliage, and more lightness and light filled areas. He states that he loved color but he felt that color did not make a picture.

In the Sand Pit, 1903,<sup>60</sup> we see Turner's visionary impressions of color, light and atmosphere, attempted. Here was a complete break with tradition and we find in his later work The Cabin in the Lane,<sup>61</sup> 1930, and Near Twilight,<sup>62</sup> 1934, a "losing and finding the line in light and air" and an effort to "formulate a new highly colored impressionistic landscape technique".<sup>63</sup> He wanted more time to paint, more time to develop his new theories of painting and color. He had given unity and order to Canadian landscape painting and now light and color were to be added.

The influence from France on Canadian painters came through diverse routes. Horatio Walker was called the Canadian Millet, perhaps because his teacher Wyatt Eaton was a pupil of Millet.<sup>64</sup> Early in 1845 Jean Francois Millet was visiting at Boudin's shop in Le Havre to buy his supplies for painting.<sup>65</sup> Constant Troyon, another customer of Boudin's, painted landscapes with cows and sheep and Horatio Walker may be closer to Troyon in his work, than he is to Millet. Monet, in a letter to Boudin, says he admires Troyon's huge canvases of animals yet thinks

them a little bit too black in the shadows.<sup>66</sup> In Paris, 1861, Troyon asked Boudin to paint the skies for his animal pictures since the demand for his canvases was so great he had difficulty keeping up a supply,<sup>67</sup> and Boudin was famous for his sea and sky compositions.

In 1873 Duret wrote to Manet, "Boston has some very beautiful Troyons"<sup>68</sup> By 1879 when the fourth Exposition of the "Artistes Indépendants" was held in Paris the pictures of Millet and Troyon were popular in America. However, the New York dealers informed Durand-Ruel with regard to the French Impressionist works, "These paintings will never be good for our markets"<sup>69</sup>

Horatio Walker visited England and France in 1882. In Paris the great Exhibition of the Indépendants opened on March 1, 1882, and Manet wrote to Berthe Morisot, "I found the whole brilliant crowd of Impressionists at work hanging a great many pictures in an enormous room....Duret, who knows what he is talking about, says that this year's exhibition is the best your group ever had....Pissarro has two or three figures of peasant women in landscapes, vastly superior to Millet in the veracity of draftsmanship and coloration."<sup>70</sup>

After eight years of struggle the Impressionists had an exhibition which truly represented their art; Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley, Berthe Morisot, Gauguin, Caillebotte, Vignon, and Guillaumin all were represented.

With all the controversy in Paris at that time and knowing the keen interest this would arouse in a visitor like Horatio Walker, it is not surprising that his art appears to be a synthesis of the many forces at work at that time. In 1883 Boston had a Foreign Exhibition of painting where Manet, Monet, Sisley and Boudin were represented.<sup>71</sup>

It was not until 1886 that Durand-Ruel had his first success in America with Impressionist painting. The American exhibit was prepared

for 1887. Three hundred works were exhibited. There were twenty-three Degas', fourteen Manet's, forty-eight Monet's, forty-two Pissarro's, thirty-eight Renoirs, three Seurat's, thirteen Sisley's, and Boudin, Mary Cassatt, Caillebotte, Guillaumin, and Berthe Morisot were represented.

In 1887 Horatio Walker belonged to the Society of American Artists, and winning the Bronze Medal in the Paris Exposition, 1889, he would be familiar with not only the work of Troyon and Millet but of the Impressionists as well.

Like Vincent van Gogh it may be that Horatio Walker was influenced by Millet. Van Gogh who made sketches of the miners in the Borinage in 1880 and who made copies after Millet's peasant laborers, wrote to his brother Theo, "Millet is the one modern painter who opens up a horizon for many". "Each artist has a characteristic set of colors, a characteristic technique and some remind me of sounds. Millet is perhaps a stately organ".<sup>72</sup>

When Vincent van Gogh was in the hospital at Saint Remy, Theo sent him lithographs of Millet. "Now that I am ill, I let the black and white by Millet pose for me as a subject. I improvise color on it not you understand altogether myself but searching for memories of their pictures, but from memory...The vague consonants of color which are at least right in feeling, that is my own interpretation. I don't like my own pictures in my bedroom so I copied one by Delacroix and one by Millet. I have now made seven copies of Millet's laborers in the fields. I can assure you that copying interests me intensely and I learn a great deal by it without losing the power of drawing figures. I want to tell you what I look for in this work and why it seems to me so good to copy. People do expect us painters always to make our own compositions and to be nothing but composers. In music it is not so, and if somebody plays

Beethoven he adds to it his own personal interpretation. In music and especially in singing, the interpretation of the composition means something. If this were not so, only composers who play their own works would be worth listening to. I place the works of Delacroix or Millet before my eyes as models and then I improvise other colors on top of theirs but naturally in doing this I am not completely myself but try to reproduce memories of their pictures. But memories, the vague echoes of color which I have in my mind, without bothering if they are exact, that is my interpretation. A lot of people do not copy, others do. I hit on this method by chance and find it teaches me things and above all it consoles me. My brushes run so quickly through my fingers like the bow on a violin that I thoroughly enjoy it. Today I have been trying to interpret the Sheep Shearing by Millet in colors ranging from lilac to yellow."<sup>73</sup>

Horatio Walker also does a sheep shearing picture.

Horatio Walker is not called an Impressionist painter but many influences of Impressionism are seen in his work. In an early work, Oxen Drinking, 1899, (Fig. 4) we see the vertical format and peasant laborer of a Millet and the luminous atmospheric sky effect of a Turner but the application of paint is Pissarro. In some places the color is heavy and grayed, but in other places along the backs of the oxen, on the surface water in the trough, and in the pools of water on the ground, Walker has used the hatching of small brush strokes of pure blue-green and red-orange to give light reflections and that instantaneous feeling so delightful in Impressionist work.<sup>74</sup>

By 1904 in Ice-Cutters, (Fig. 7) Walker has caught an instantaneous action and has simplified both his palette and his composition. "First he prepares his canvas soaking it in water and applies white lead with a

palette knife...no size or glue. The water prevents the oil from entering into the linen, and the resultant surface is the finest ground there is. He tests pure colors and pure colors mixed with white, the fewer paints the better."<sup>75</sup> The blue-green shadows of the ice, the purple shadows on the horse's face and neck complimented by the red-orange of the blanket are the two complimentaries he uses in his canvas. Purple and blue are also found in the clouds and in the shadows of the ice. Walker's interest in the reflections and refractions of color on the snow and in the ice and water is seen in the work of Monet, The Break-Up of the Ice New Vetheuil,<sup>76</sup> 1880, and was used later by Maurice Cullen in Ice Harvest, 1906, (Fig. 40)

It is only in the original canvas that the Impressionist qualities of Horses at the Trough, (Fig. 6) and Evening Ile d'Orleans, 1909, (Fig. 5) can be appreciated. Here again the under surface is pure white. The two colors used are chromium (viridian) green, the green of our postage stamps and paper money; and cadmium scarlet. The hatched brush stroke, the painterly quality in the application of the pigment, the use of pure color in many areas, the blue and purple shadows, the unposed out-door setting, the simple joy of the scene all are Impressionist inspired.

Little White Pigs and Mother,<sup>77</sup> 1911, may be compared to a Pissarro. There is a heavier freerer brush stroke than in a Pissarro, Pissarro's advice to the painter Louis Le Bail might apply to Horatio Walker, "Look for the kind of nature that suits your temperament. The motif should be observed more for shape and color than for drawing...Precise drawing is dry and hampers the impression...it is the brush stroke with the right value and color...Paint the essential character of things, work on everything simultaneously...use small brush strokes and put down your sensation immediately."<sup>78</sup> Walker's all-over free brush stroke is reminiscent



of Lowpath at Pontoise,<sup>79</sup> 1882, by Camille Pissarro which Walker may have seen in the Durand-Ruel collection of that year.

Rewald states that the Barbizons interpreted what they saw, Impressionists like Monet and Renoir painted pure sensations. They both adopted a comma-like brush stroke, a brush stroke which permitted them to record every nuance they observed. The surfaces of their canvases were thus covered with a vibrating tissue of small dots and strokes, none of which by itself defined form, yet all of which helped to create not only the particular features of the chosen motif but moreover the sunny air which bathed it and marked trees, grass, houses or water with the specific character of the day. Nature became the direct source of pure sensations and these sensations could best be reproduced by the technique of small dots and strokes which, instead of insisting on details, retained the general impression in all its richness of color and life.

Monet paints a field with white Turkeys<sup>80</sup> in 1880 that has a delightful a play of dark and light impressions. Walker also uses this textured surface in his water-color sketch and oil painting of White Turkeys<sup>81</sup>.

Horatio Walker uses Impressionist color in a snow scene The First Snow, (Fig. 106). Like Claude Monet's Snow Effect at Vétheuil, in the Louvre, Walker's picture has a rough rural atmosphere. The scene is almost traditional but the brush strokes make the surface vibrate as a united whole in a soft muted atmosphere of frost and snow.

Walker, in his The Sugar Bush,<sup>82</sup> 1922, shows a masterful all-over pattern of wide brush strokes of pure color put on with the sure deft skill of a master. Steam rises from the cauldron, light filters through the trees on the snow, and everything is reduced to an alternating pattern of light and dark.

Maurice Cullen by this time was doing Canadian snow scenes in the manner of the Impressionists and the trees in Walker's The Sugar Bush, are similar to Cullen's Winter Near Montreal, (Fig. 33).

An American critic states that Walker out-Barbizoned the Barbizons by exaggerating the contrasts of light and shade. His synthesis of Barbizon and Impressionism gave his work its appealing beauty.<sup>83</sup> The Royal Mail over the Ice Bridge,<sup>84</sup> 1914, has a rich color and the unusual effects of light are again a mixture of Turner's luminism and the light of the Impressionists.

James M. Barnsley, 1861 - 1929, is the outstanding marine painter among Canadian artists. J. Barry Lord places him between the Barbizon painter, Horatio Walker, and the Impressionist Maurice Cullen. A careful study of his paintings show, as in the work of Winslow Homer, many contradictory tendencies. "The bold directness of his brush work equals that of the Munich School, the simple breadth of his compositions rivals that of the Barbizon painters, and his clarity of visual analysis matches that of the Impressionists".<sup>85</sup> Close examination of his canvases show juxtaposed areas of pure color. The Barbizon painting River Bank, France<sup>86</sup> 1886, is the traditional aerial perspective of Corot, the careful detail in the type of trees; while in Study for La Jetée du Pollet, Dieppe, 1884, (Fig. 8), we see the light reflections from the sky on the water, in broad direct strokes of color, the bright blue shadow along the quai and the orange log ends against the heavy blue brush strokes of the walk, suggesting the influence of the Impressionists.

This canvas brings to mind the The Harbor of Lorient, 1869, that Manet particularly admired and which Berthe Morisot had just painted in Lorient. It represents her sister Edma against a view of the harbor,

"a work of exquisite freshness and subtle harmonies in which she had tried what Bazille had attempted in his Salon picture; to reproduce a figure in "plein air".<sup>87</sup>

Beginning his studies under Halsey C. Ives, James Barnsley learned to draw and model figures. His interest in Landscape may be attributed to his teacher Joseph Meeker who painted the bayous of the lower Mississippi. These landscape scenes Barnsley could paint near his home in Missouri, and in Ontario and Montreal where he visited. He sketched Marine paintings, studied a Turner watercolor and a Daubigny oil, but it was not until 1883 when he was in Paris that he would experience a change to out-door painting and lighter effects. In his On the Seine, Courbevoie, (Fig. 9) the casual way the figures are caught in motion, the suggestive treatment of the trees, the angle along the river bank, remind one of a Degas.

J. Barry Lord in his Introduction to the J.M. Barnsley catalogue, 1964-1965, states that "There is no documentary evidence that Barnsley knew Eugène-Louis Boudin 1824 - 1898...A number of drawings in The National Gallery Scrapbook demonstrate that the similarity of his marines to the famous French sea painter is more than coincidental. Durand-Ruel presented the first comprehensive Boudin exhibition to Paris in 1833, and he was represented in every Salon in which Barnsley figured. Indeed L'Entrée du Port a Dieppe<sup>88</sup>, 1886, may well have been directly inspired by Boudin's L'Entrée, (Salon 1883)."<sup>89</sup>

We can say there is a similar lightness and elegance and a love of the simple beauties of nature. "The Saint-Simeon farm situated on a cliff a little above Honfleur was famous among artists along the coast. The rural Inn and the Seine estuary had been called the "Barbizon of Normandy". Diaz, Troyon, Cals, Daubigny and Corot all painted there."<sup>90</sup>

Eugène Boudin was the painter of seascapes at Le Havre that Monet at first thought "disgusting",<sup>91</sup> but it was Boudin who came to Monet and told him, "Study, learn to see and to paint, draw, make landscapes. The sea and the sky, the animals, the people, the trees are so beautiful, just as nature made them, with their character, their genuineness, in the light, in the air, just as they are."<sup>92</sup> Monet admired Boudin and learned from the master. "Everything that is painted directly on the spot has always a strength, a power, a vividness of touch that one doesn't find again in the studio...retain one's first impression, which is the good one...it is not one part which should strike one in a picture but indeed the whole".<sup>93</sup>

At this time Barnsley was studying and painting near Paris. Courbet was admiring Boudin's skies and his fishing boats. Victor Hugo had published his epic and romantic volume of poems, La légende des Siècles, which were attacked and Hugo's name was coupled with that of Delacroix as being "devoted to the cult of imagination and color, sacrificing everything to the effect."<sup>94</sup>

What was said of Monet possibly by Astruc under the pseudonym Pigalle in L'Autographe au Salon, will apply equally well to Barnsley's painting of Le Jetée du Pollet Dieppe, 1884, (Fig. 10). Speaking of Monet's The Seine Estuary at Honfleur,<sup>95</sup> 1865, Astruc says, "Monet is the author of a seascape the most original and supple, the most strongly and harmoniously painted... what richness, what simplicity of view...the taste for harmonious schemes of color in the play of analogous tones, the feeling for values, the striking point of view...this sincere marine painter".<sup>96</sup> The oblique angle of a Degas, the light-filled canvas and the broad clear brush strokes of pure color in the water, the blue shadows along the quai and the blue and sepia yellow colors were used and developed by the Impressionists to make

their light-filled canvases.

Daubigny's canvas The Ferry,<sup>97</sup> 1860, which will be discussed more fully in connection with Maurice Cullen's work, may be compared with Barnsley's French Paddle Steamer, 1888, (Fig. 11). The same ferry, the same high tide, the same smoke effects and clouded sky, but Daubigny has used a heavier brush stroke on a more two dimensional canvas and has used some strokes of pure color. Barnsley has a lightfilled canvas which would be sketched out of doors. The movement of water, boat and clouds, and the light reflections from the water, while still academic, remind one of the Impressionists. This later work shows a much more flowing brush stroke than his earlier work, and has that clear fresh out-door feeling that is lighter than that of his contemporary French painters.

In High Tide at Dieppe, 1886, (Fig. 12) we see a finished work for which there are numerous sketches. Barnsley was able to capture the sights of the harbor. The grayed sails on the black and orange hull of the boat at anchor stand out against the blue of the sky and the water. The single simple tones of the figures depict typical genre fisher women. Reflections from the pools of water on the quai and the smoke from the steam boat suggest the weather conditions of the day. It is a particularly bright and light Barbizon harbor scene. In The Last Rays, 1887, (Fig. 13) we see his subtle handling of many tones of green. His very restricted palette was the mark of the early Impressionist.

It is necessary to look carefully at the development in the work of an artist teacher like William Brymner to appreciate one of the many influences of Impressionism on Canadian art.

William Brymner is a facile painter who, in his early work, conforms to the academic formula taught by his teachers Bouguereau and Robert-Fleury

at the Atelier Julien in Paris where he studied from 1878 to 1885. He also shows the influence of other schools of painting and of Impressionism which over the years made its impact on his work and which he was able to pass on to his students. "In the same province, painting at the same time, and helping to develop a Canadian school of painting, were William Brymner, Suzor-Côté, James Wilson Morrice, G. Horne Russell, Maurice Cullen and later Clarence Gagnon".<sup>98</sup>

The Art Gallery of Toronto Catalogue of October, 1949, "50 Years of Painting in Canada" states: "1900 - 1912 - The New Century opened with the Royal Canadian Academy of Art and the Ontario Society of Artists firmly established in the minds of student and public alike, as the founts of knowledge in Canada. Both had organized schools, and both were exhibiting societies. Most of the leading painters, especially the more senior, represented the British tradition, but this tradition had been touched by developments in Holland and France, which also had their exponents here. Within a short time a few Canadian students returning from abroad brought with them, whether consciously or not, the direct impact of Impressionism (already thirty years old), introducing this third factor on the scene.

Art magazines with their new facilities for color reproduction began to play their part at the turn of the century, and along with exhibitions have tended to lessen the time lag between originating and receptive centers like Paris and Toronto respectively."

Robert Pilot states "I remember that in 1912 he gave me sixty copies of the Studio magazine to study from. A great boon to me".<sup>99</sup>

A visit with Miss Grace Brymner of Lawrence Avenue East, Toronto, a niece of William Brymner, was most rewarding. Many of Brymner's paintings,

catalogues, letters, medals and awards are in her possession. Miss Brymner has family pictures painted by Brymner of her grandfather, Douglas Brymner, 1886, (Fig. 14) her father Robert Brymner, 1890, (Fig. 15) at age 15, and a cast of William Brymner (Fig. 16) from the original bronze exhibited in Ottawa 1918, and done by the sculptor George W. Hill. Hill studied in Paris, was made ARCA in 1905, RCA in 1915 and was the Sculptor for the D'Arcy McGee monument, Ottawa, and the South African War Memorial, Dominion Square, Montreal, 1908. The Robert Brymners were bankers in New Westminster, B.C., and their fine old home is now the Melrose Park Private Hospital overlooking the Fraser River. Miss Brymner's father was twenty years younger than his brother William, and one of the family paintings is of Robert Brymner, then eleven years old, in the family boat at Baie St. Paul near Montreal, painted in 1886 (Fig. 17).

Brymner's Sad Memories, (Fig. 18) about 1885, is a genre picture of the family housekeeper in France, now in the collection of Miss Grace Brymner. It represents an early interest in seventeenth century Dutch pictures where the interior view lit by a window, shows an interest in realistic space-creating detail. Brymner's fascination with seventeenth century work is also reflected in the picture of his brother Robert where the name of the artist, the name of the sitter, and the date are all written in Latin capital letters around the edges of the canvas like an early Holbein.

In 1886 under the auspices of the Royal Canadian Academy, an exhibition of Canadian painting was sent to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition at South Kensington, London. Brymner's Early Moonrise in September, 1886, (Fig. 19) was exhibited. This was the first all-Canadian exhibition to be sent out of Canada and the exhibit was shown

in Ottawa before being sent to London. The London critics were generous with their praise. Lord Lansdowne was interested in the Canadian exhibit and asked Mr. J.E. Hodgson, R.A. professor of painting at the Royal Academy to comment.

"Hodgson predicted great things for painters like Bell-Smith, Paul Peel, Homer Watson, Wickson, Brymner, Harris, Fowler and others; but his viewpoint was one of a mid-Victorian English critic and he was against the influence of the French Impressionists, of which he detected some slight signs in the Exhibition". Artists were leaving out all detail and avoiding some parts altogether. In the closing remarks of his report, Hodgson states, "I would like to see Canadian Art Canadian to the backbone;---a thing developed by nature in a special soil and climate".<sup>100</sup>

However, new influences were at work in Canadian Painting and from then on a "great formative period of Canadian painting" had begun.

William Brymner who was director of the classes for the Art Association of Montreal for thirty five years, was to influence this development and like the great French teacher, Gustave Moreau, who, when he found himself in contact with young students, devoted himself to the task of teaching with wisdom and heartfelt warmth. He developed the individual characteristics of each pupil and though consciously old-fashioned, urged his pupils to experiment and be modern, to be interested in color, to leave the studio and to paint out-of-doors.<sup>101</sup>

Brymner in Champ de Mars Winter, 1892, (Fig. 20) shows a fascinating Impressionist style with figures crossing an expanse of ice and snow with the town in the background. There are overlapping planes of light and dark areas. The dark blue shadow foreground, contrasts with the sunlit path in the middle ground. It is like a Monet snow scene at



Louveciennes, with figures, houses, poplar trees and luminous sky effects. The date, 1892, marks this work an early Canadian snow scene, influenced by the French Impressionists. Snow scenes were typically Impressionist subjects because they afforded the opportunity to show striking contrasts of light reflected from the snow.

Brymner's landscape Early Moonrise in September, 1899, (Fig. 21) in the National Gallery, Ottawa, is a later picture of his 1886 traditional Barbizon pastoral scene. Compared with Camille Corot's The Gust of Wind,<sup>102</sup> in the G. Renand Collection, Paris, we see the same wind-swept trees, and the same all-over haze obscuring detail. Corot had told Pissarro to establish his lightest tone, then his darkest tone and to grade between the two with two or three related hues. In this picture Brymner also uses a restricted palette.

Brymner was in Paris from 1875 to 1885 and would no doubt meet the artist Theodore Robinson, 1852 - 1896, who was a link between French and American Impressionism. Robinson was born in Vermont and went to France in 1876 to study painting. In 1886, at the age of thirty-four, he met Claude Monet at Giverny.<sup>103</sup> Robinson then adopted the new technique of using high-keyed, broken color to convey the shimmer of light and the cool tones of shadows. In his Willows,<sup>104</sup> 1891, we see the informal flat patterned composition and color rendering of Impressionist painting. It is more than coincidental that Brymner painted his first picture Early Moonrise, 1886, like Robinson's Willows. Brymner had just won the International Jury of Awards Silver Medal, at St. Louis, for his Bord de Forêt, 1889. He again paints Early Moonrise in September, using lighter colors, more blue in the shadows and a lighter brush stroke. In 1891 Robinson also paints an Impressionistic picture Spring at Giverny.

Mary Cassatt who joined the Impressionists at Degas' invitation employs sharp drawing and a Degas-like composition. In her Young Woman Sewing,<sup>105</sup> 1886, she uses the Japanese influence of a diagonal background. Blue and yellow depict the white dress as Renoir would have done. Brymmer's Woman Sewing relates to this theme.

The Woman Sewing, 1900, (Fig. 22) in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, is representative of an advance in technique from Brymmer's early work, to a freer brush stroke and to divided color. This Impressionist subject is painted indoors. The areas are simplified. The filmy curtains are of delicate blue and yellow colors. This gives light and movement to the area while dappled reflections from the window fall across the shoulders and the needlework of the woman. Complementing the blue of the skirt is the orange coverlet, and the deep shadows of purple, and purple patterns on the floor, contrast strongly with the yellow light of the window. Following the lead of Velasquez, Renoir painted two canvases of women sewing. Mary Cassatt's canvas The Bath,<sup>106</sup> 1891, has a similar floor pattern but shows a strong linear quality.

William Brymmer painted Carita, 1910, (Fig. 24) in the Spanish style. He had studied with Carolus-Duran in Paris from 1878 to 1886. John Singer Sargent, like Whistler before him, was also a student of Carolus-Duran from 1874 to 1879. Duran was a friend of Manet and an exponent of the Spanish style. He also urged his students to go out and study nature in the fields. After 1879 Sargent painted a number of spirited copies after Spanish masters and it is therefore not surprising that Brymmer, as a class mate of Sargent in Paris, should also paint a Spanish type picture.

Later, in 1910, Brymmer painted The Vaughan Sisters (Fig. 23). Here the background technique reminds one of Fantin Latour, where an orange has

been overpainted with a blue wash. The flower vase is a Japanese touch reminiscent of Whistler. The pose is similar to the one in John Singer Sargent's The Wyndham Sisters<sup>107</sup>, 1900. Sargent and Monet often painted together in Monet's garden at Giverny. In 1889 Sargent depicted Monet painting in his garden,<sup>108</sup> and it may be that there was a mutual influence during this period. The delicate pale blue and pink dresses are very near Impressionism. The black bows in the orange hair, the rendering of the pink blossoms adjacent to the delicate ice-blue of the gown are reminiscent of Auguste Renoir's La Loge,<sup>109</sup> 1874, and Glacken's Chez Mouquin,<sup>110</sup> 1905.

In 1915 Brymner painted his Reclining Nude (Fig. 25). It was exhibited in the thirty-seventh Annual Exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy in Montreal. The critics found that "sound craftsmanship was well exemplified".<sup>111</sup> This exhibition had pure landscapes as a theme and in contrast to the academic work of Brymner we find The Yellow Tree by J.W. Beatty; Maples Early Spring, by A.Y. Jackson; Solitude (pastel), North River (pastel), Montreal Harbour (oil), by Maurice Cullen; and Melodies and Golden Glow by A. Suzor-Côté which will be discussed later.<sup>112</sup>

By 1915 the critics noted that "The last two or three years have afforded very conclusive evidence of progress in the evolution of Canadian art toward the attainment of a position of greater independence and self confidence".<sup>113</sup> Robert Pilot says of Brymner, "His studio on Bleury Street, Montreal, was lined with books. He was an omnifarious reader and a great student. In the summer of 1919 I spent several months painting at St. Eustache and lived in the small studio that Cullen and Brymner had built there many years before. Several years later, due to his friendship with Cullen and the fact that they painted together in the countryside so often, he changed his vision of the out-of-doors following Cullen's 'plein air'

painting. On his retirement the class presented him with the complete works of George Borrow. This gave him great pleasure and he often discussed the merits and color of "Lavengro", "Romany Rye", and "The Bible in Spain".<sup>114</sup>

There is a great development in Brymner's style from the early Barbizon work to his later facile lyric qualities. Throughout his career he allowed his students to follow wherever their inclinations led them and his later use of Impressionist techniques led many of his students - Mable May, Frederick Hutchison, William Clapp, Randolph Hewton, Prudence Heward, Ozias Leduc, and others, to Impressionism.

## CHAPTER IV

Maurice Galbraith Cullen was born at St. John's, Newfoundland in 1866. In 1870 his family moved to Montreal. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to the firm of Gault Brothers to learn Commerce, but at some time between 1884 and 1888 he began night classes with the Abbé Joseph Chalbert's National Institute of The Fine Arts and Sciences, taking design, esthetics, and technique. After four years with Gault, Cullen said, "No, I was not born for a commercial career."<sup>115</sup> He then left his job and devoted himself entirely to sculpture.

Chalbert's Institute was patterned after the Sorbonne in Paris. He had brought back from Europe a rare and very complete collection of plaster casts, which served to teach his pupils from Antique models.

In 1886 Cullen enrolled in the school of the sculptor Philippe Hébert, where he studied for three years. He helped Hébert carve the statues on the roof of St. James' Cathedral. These statues were carved in wood and encased in copper. In the meantime his mother died leaving him property valued at two thousand dollars which he sold. The money enabled him to go to Europe to continue his studies and he arrived in Paris about 1889, accompanied by his Uncle Dr. Ward. There he studied at the studio of Gérôme for a short while, at the Academy of Fine Arts, and at the Colarossi Atelier under the direction of Courtois and Rixen.

On first arriving in Paris, Cullen met Fritz Thallow, a Norwegian artist, who persuaded him to study painting. His first instructors were Delaunay and Latouche.<sup>116</sup> It is interesting to note that around 1870 the Impressionists sold their work through Latouche who had a small shop at the corner of the Rue Lafitte.<sup>117</sup> Latouche showed with the Impressionists in 1874 at Nadar's<sup>118</sup> and it was at this Exhibition that Louis Leroy

named the movement Impressionism because of Monet's canvas Impression, Sunrise. The possibilities of color fascinated Cullen. French art was in a colorful epoch, so he began painting full time late in 1890. He returned to the Beaux Arts Academy and rejoined his Canadian compatriots Gill, Lamarche, Alphonse Jongers, Ludger Larose, Franchère, Joseph St. Charles, and Dubé.

In Paris the work of the Impressionists had a marked appeal for Cullen, especially the study of atmospheric effects. He took instruction from Emile Delaunay, the Classical painter, who had won the Prix de Rome and who was a member of the Institute. James Wilson Morrice and Maurice Cullen became friends, and both saw Harpignies for corrections each week. They also vacationed together on the Breton coast 1894.

Another associate of Cullen was Philippe Roll, a well-know pastellist, who taught Cullen the pastel technique.

In 1895 Cullen was elected an associate of the National Society of Fine Arts. In 1896 he became a full member with Fromuth and Matisse.

Among the earliest works of Maurice Cullen in Canada is The Mill Stream at Moret, 1894, (Fig. 26). This picture was painted in the vicinity of Sisley's home, and is done in Sisley's style. There are broken tones of white, blue, and pink, to be found in the water and in the sky. The misty sky effects are very reminiscent of Constable's and Turner's effects, and it must be remembered that both Sisley and Cullen were admirers of the earlier English artists' luminous effects.

Moret in Summer, (Fig. 27) and Moret, Winter, (Fig. 28) of about 1895, when compared with the Renoir called La Seine à Chatou, (Fig. 29) shows a striking similarity of composition, handling of light and pigment, and general Impressionist theme. Both of these Cullens were done in his first

trip to Europe and the proximity of Sisley's and Pissarro's homes, where these subjects were painted, may suggest some very close connection between the Impressionist masters and the work of Maurice Cullen. However, Cullen's work shows a more conservative regard for natural appearances.

The treatment of the foreground foliage in Cullen's work is so close to the same parallel strokes and deft application of colors found in Sisley's and Renoir's works, that the similarity is intriguing. Sisley's lyrical interpretation is also found in the work of Pissarro. His limited palette with green, yellow, and blue, all with much white added, is adopted in Cullen's early work both in France and in Canada.

In 1895 Cullen returned to Canada. He was working for the winter of 1895 - 1896 with J.W. Morrice of Beaupré where he painted Logging in Winter Beaupré (Fig. 31). In the summer of 1896 Cullen and Morrice went to Venice. They spent the winter of 1896 - 1897 in Algiers, and then travelled to Giverny, Le Pouldu, and the Breton coast.

Cullen's full Impressionist expression is seen in Environs of Paris, 1895, (Fig. 30). The heavy impasto type of painting with a palette reduced to blue, yellow and green has the Impressionist technique. It is very close to works done by Pissarro and Sisley, and the addition of black with green, suggests Chevreul as a source for this color scheme. Cézanne and Pissarro were both using black with green in their Impressionist works dating after their stay together at Pontoise in 1877.

Chevreul's theories, which were so important in establishing Seurat's scientific application of Impressionist color, had a renewed influence thereafter on continuing Impressionists. Chevreul's book on The Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colors, although written about 1839 was not widely known until its first full scale publication in 1875. The "Art Nouveau"

sinuous curve of the pathway, used as a gracefully decorative feature to lead the eye into the picture depth, was beginning to be noticed in French art at that time.

Cullen's first painting done on his return to Canada Logging in Winter Beaupré, 1896, (Fig. 31) retains its Impressionist inspiration and uses black in conjunction with green. In this canvas Cullen turns his attention to a Canadian subject while keeping the reduced Impressionist palette he adopted in France of blue and yellow with green, and much white. The snow has blue shadows beneath the trees, and sunlight breaks through the branches to show up in white patches in the snow, or as bright yellow spots on the tree trunks. The effect is a very luminous one where the composition is composed with three overlapping planes of foreground hill, distant hill, and back-drop of sky. The effect of light in this canvas is indicative of Cullen's association with Impressionist painters in France. There is a thorough and completely new departure from previous Barbizon influences seen in Canada to a newer lighter way of painting.

Robert Pilot in his address to the Arts Club of Montreal in 1937 states that "when Cullen first showed these snow pictures he was considered a radical, 'Blue Snow forsoothe!' Snow painting then, with Kipling's 'Lady of the Snow', was looked at askance as bad for immigration."<sup>120</sup>

Another remarkable early picture also from the Hamilton Art Gallery collection and dated 1896, carries the Impressionist title Winter Sunlight Beaupré, (Fig. 32) This is a panoramic vista, looking across fields and river to distant hills. The progression of horizontal planes from the foreground done in blue shadow, to the bright white snow in the middle plane, to another blue river plane, then to dark banks and purple hills



in the distance; is covered by an overcast dull blue sky. A small undated sketch in oil on cardboard called Winter near Montreal (fig. 33) is very similar in color, composition and handling to the works Logging in Winter Beaupré, (Fig. 31) and Winter Sunlight Beaupré, (Fig. 32).

Cullen traveled from Paris to Giverny, Moret, Pont Aven, Venice and Algiers. He had a studio in Paris and in Pont Aven. He was a friend of Fromuth in Concarneau and a close friend of Albert. These three painters mutually influenced one another. Albert was a French painter of Scandinavian birth, whose career was cut short by his early death. Fromuth was a French painter of American birth who lived a retired life at Concarneau in Brittany, where he painted and did brilliant pastels.

In 1900 Cullen won a bronze medal at the Paris International Exhibition. In 1901 he received an honorable mention at the Paris Salon and was elected Officer of the Academy. In 1902 he again went to Venice and France.

In a letter to Edmond Morris, a Montreal newspaperman, William Brymner writes on the 28th of August, 1902, from Giverny par Vernon, Eure France: "Morrice and Cullen were both at Venice and they came with me to Florence. Morrice and I went alone to Florence and Siena and now I have settled here for a few weeks and am trying to do some work. I sail on the 30th of September from Liverpool"... "Cullen is here, so is Collins - this is the place Monet lives at. He has a house, garden, and automobile - They have all got automobiles."<sup>121</sup> The close association between Canadian painters was carried on overseas as well as at home. It is also recorded that on November 17, 1909, Brymner, Cullen and Watson all went to Hamilton together to organize an Ontario Society of Art show.

"From 1902 to 1908 Cullen worked at Beaupré and Quebec, following the

seasons round - the green smiling summer, the wondrous colour of the October trees and the gleaming beauty of the winter. Just as he followed the seasons, so too he followed the hours of the day to record the transitory effect of light, which beautifies things for a moment and then is gone. "At some time of the day," he used to remark, "the commonest subject is beautiful".<sup>122</sup> Sometimes in the winter, he painted with Morrice at Beaupré, and he spent the summers with Brymner and Dyonnet at St. Eustade. There was a very close association between these artists. In 1906 Morrice did The Ferry at Quebec which was shown in the 1907 Paris Salon, the year that Cullen did The Old Ferry Boat, (Fig. 41).

As Robert Pilot points out, "practically no one did snow pictures in Canada before Cullen's return, apart from Krieghoff". Cullen's association with modern European painters led him, on his return from Europe to "a searching and prolonged study of the light on snow, and he worked winter after winter out of doors. Sometimes finishing his canvases in the "plein air"... "He built up from these years of sincere study a knowledge of the light on snow, with its intricate laws of complementary color and of reflected tone which is very very good. In the picture of Wolf's Cove, at Quebec, there are perhaps twenty decidedly different snow tones in the picture, produced by reflected color, and by the different angles catching the sun. It is scientific in its analysis and splendid in the sureness of its knowledge."<sup>123</sup>

Winter Evening, Quebec, 1905, (Fig. 34) and Levis from Quebec, 1906, (Fig. 35) represent the typical bird's eye view of the Impressionists. It encompasses the near and distant shores of a river where houses and boats are all seen with an interest in light effects. There are dark blue shadows in the foreground and background planes, and a sunfilled middle

plane.

Newton MacTavish recognizes in Cullen's Levis from Quebec (Fig. 35) the ephemeral effects characteristic of Impressionist works. "Everyone who has visited Quebec and crossed the river to Levis remembers the imposing spectacle from that point even in summer. But look at Mr. Cullen's rendition of the same place in winter, it is imposing in summer; now it is beautiful, and the small Ferry boat crossing amongst the broken ice leaving its trail of smoke is an exquisite sight".<sup>124</sup>

"L'Action Catholique" newspaper of Quebec, dated January 11, 1957, reads; "Cullen shows us Montreal, Quebec, and Levis in winter; the dazzling light of the snow interests him very much if one is to judge by the care which he takes to capture the luminous reflections. Most of his canvases show ice-enveloped scenes on the St. Lawrence, at Longueuil, at Beaupré; these scenes are, it seems, a pretext to make felt the power which is released from the reddish sky making the pale sun glow; the diffused light which illuminates the scene gives a charm to the winter sky. Cullen draws out these effects seizing upon even the twilight, as is proven in his Dufferin Terrace, covered in shades of dusk. In the canvas titled The Cache River in March, the artist depicts nature half asleep under an already dissolving snow and gives a magic to the canvas, where a part of the scene reflects in the water of a river, banks covered in ice."<sup>125</sup>

These early 1900 - 1910 pictures done in and around Quebec seem to lose the freshness and brilliancy of his first works done in Canada directly after returning from France. Like Plamondon before him, on returning to Canada there is a period in his work which stays very close to the European influence, and then a gradual turning away from the

European influence to a less advanced, more somber home style.

The influence of J.W. Morrice may be substantial at this time, since Morrice retained for some time the dull pale colors of the Nabis before his revolutionary change to emulate Matisse, 1911 - 1912. This early Morrice period 1900 - 1910 is characteristically greyed. It has heavy misty atmospheric effects. Cullen's views of Quebec, exhibit the heavy leaden mists of winter. These may be considered as "effects" much like those sought by the Impressionists but the handling of them, lacks the lightness and brilliance that the Impressionists would have depicted. Winter Street Scene, (Fig. 36) and Snowstorm Evening, (Fig. 37) could almost be early twentieth century Morrices.

Maurice Cullen's more somber palette may also have been caused by his close association with E. Dyonnet, and William Brymner. These compatriots painted in an accomplished academic way which was more related to the work of Whistler, Sargent, and early Manet, than to the Impressionist technique.

Although Cullen kept Pissarro's palette of blue, yellow, green, and white he does not choose to show the brighter aspects of Impressionism which made the French school famous. Packing Ice, 1906, (Fig. 38) is Cullen's earliest "Ice picture". It may have been inspired by Horatio Walker's earlier picture The Ice Cutters, 1904, (Fig. 7). Here blue shadows, distant mist effects, broad brush strokes, a panoramic bird's eye view, and the luminous effects in the sky all suggest an Impressionist influence. The sky effects in Packing Ice, 1906, (Fig. 38), The Last Loads, 1907, (Fig. 39) and Ice Harvest, 1914, (Fig. 40) are very related to Guillaumin's treatment of sky in Sunset at Ivry,<sup>126</sup> 1873, and Sisley's The Flood at Port-Marly,<sup>127</sup> 1876. The luminous effect achieved by using

two colors, one dark, and one light, and by modelling small patches of darks and lights in an all-over pattern across the whole sky, all with a greyed down or whitened appearance, give the mottled luminescence which appealed to Cullen in the early twentieth century, and which is seen in his sky studies between 1902 - 1910.

Maurice Cullen's The Old Ferry Boat, 1907, (Fig. 41) is itself derived from the French and English mid-century painters who were intrigued with the new steam-powered water craft. Turner did boats to get effects of steam and the glow of coal-fired boilers in his works. Daubigny who visited England in 1855 would see these earlier works and incorporate the subject into his own picture style.

In The Ferry,<sup>128</sup> 1860, Daubigny shows his interest in water and boat scenes. He was the first painter to have a "botin", a floating boat studio, on which he sailed up and down the Oise River. Monet copies this idea later.

Daubigny places the horizon line half way up the picture plane and shows sky and water effects and includes the sun breaking through the sky. Cullen was very fond of showing the sun or the moon in his works as were all the Barbizons. To call Cullen's Old Ferry, (Fig. 41), an Impressionist picture is a far stretch of the imagination. It lacks the bird's eye view of the Impressionists. Instead, it has the straight-on view of Daubigny and it has a composition in black, white and greys that was a part of Cullen's technique and was related to the work of Whistler, Velasquez, and Carolus-Duran. The use of greys as seen in Cullen's Ferry Boat, (Fig. 41), he learned from his teaching master Carolus-Duran. Carolus-Duran was a friend of Manet and an exponent of that Spanish style which reigned in upper class Parisian circles.<sup>129</sup> Manet painted his first pictures in

this style as seen in his Spanish Guitarist,<sup>130</sup> 1863. Carolus-Duran modelled his work after Velasquez and encouraged his pupils to do the same. Among his pupils were James McNeil Whistler, John Singer Sargent, William Brymmer, and Maurice Cullen.

Cullen's Old Ferry, (Fig. 41), is a 'tour-de-force' in the use of greys, but in it he has the later nineteenth century interest in fog, mist, and steam effects, and the passion for the indistinct. The depth creating devices in his picture are not related to linear perspective but are those of the mist pervaded aerial perspectives of Turner and Monet. As a snow scene it takes its inspiration from the Impressionists Sisley, Pissarro, and Monet. The subject is perfectly still, a derelict boat perched upon some ice. There is great interest in the technical means by which this canvas is achieved. The style of the brushwork is between that of the Realists, Courbet and Daubigny, and the indistinct divided single strokes of the Impressionists. Although the general coloration is as correctly observed as that of the best Barbizon tradition, there is an extremely subtle play between the blues of sky and water heightened with white, and the golden ochre coloration of the boat, brought out by the gold of the frame.

Cullen's Summer Night, 1907, (Fig. 42) is related to Monet's Series of Haystacks. Cullen did only one picture of the hay cart and he makes it a more Barbizon work by including a cart, a driver, and two oxen. Like the Impressionists Cullen's pictures are based on the actual scene, painted on the spot, or done from studies sketched out of doors. In his Summer Night Cullen has aimed at the light effects of a setting sun beginning to tinge the horizon with a reddish glow as it leaves the sky a darkening blue. Purple shadows are cast on distant hills and reflect in

the shining water. In this picture separate brushstrokes are used to color the sky. Separate strokes of blue mixed with white give the pastel Impressionist appearance.

Cullen's picture, though obviously influenced by Monet's Impressionism in the background, is curiously Barbizon in the foreground. The subject of oxen pulling a hay cart, done in sepias and brown, even though applied in separated brushstrokes, is not strictly Impressionistic. Robert Pilot, in describing Cullen's method of preparing canvases says he covered his canvas with white lead mixed with a little raw umber which gave a warm neutral tone foundation. This warm pale buff can be seen in this picture beneath the blue sky strokes, and beneath the darker foreground browns. This gives an early Impressionist blue and yellow luminist quality reminiscent of a Boudin or a Jongkind.<sup>131</sup>

Like the Impressionists, Cullen does not use a system of linear perspective as earlier landscape artists including Constable and Turner did; rather he uses the misty aerial perspective to suggest great background depth, and disposes his subject empirically on a foreground plane which is one of a series of planes running horizontally across the picture format.

The inclusion of the sun is a very Barbizon element which is not found in Seurat's Haystack<sup>132</sup> of 1882 or in Monet's Haystack<sup>133</sup> series of 1884 done in Giverny. It was a feature which Cullen particularly liked, because it afforded the opportunity for more light effects. This is Cullen's diploma picture. The calm atmosphere and the slow moving Oxen bring to mind Borleau's verses: "Quatre boeufs attelés d'un pas tranquille et lent, Promenaient dans Paris un monarque indolent"<sup>134</sup>

A part of an address by Arthur Lismer is recorded in the Hamilton

Spectator, Nov. 10, 1956, and it indicates what other painters saw in Cullen's work, and it also suggests its derivative nature. "Cullen studied painting in France at the end of the Impressionist and at the beginning of the Post-Impressionist period, but he did not become an expatriate. He came home and set up his easel on the ice. He combined the Impressionistic mood with a Canadian spirit. The Viewer cannot fail to be struck by the underlying theme of almost all the pictures. Cullen's preoccupation with light, and more particularly with the effect of light on snow. Cullen's interest in fogs and mists are reminiscent also of the English painter Turner."<sup>135</sup>

Cullen's Ice Harvest, (Fig. 40), 1914, his last 'Ice' picture, follows very closely the effects sought in Packing Ice, (Fig. 38), and Summer Night, (Fig. 42).

Confiding to his friend Wm. R. Watson that what he needed to be happy was "A studio of my own, a shack in the mountains, a garden for an acre of flowers and a heavy snowfall every winter."<sup>136</sup> Watson says "He made a long and special study of ice formation and ice color under varied lights and conditions. There is the steel blue of mid-winter ice, viridian, jade and even golden-amber of the flooded ice along the marge of mountain streams."<sup>137</sup>

His studies in 1912 and after, made at Lac Tremblant, on the invitation of Rickson Outhet, show the out-of-doors of the Laurentians. His pictures of this period begin a landscape phase where the wilds are shown in much the same way that the Group of Seven, as they later became known, painted. Landscape, (Fig. 43) of about 1915 in the National Gallery, Ottawa, is representative of this phase which lasted for the rest of his life. Landscape, (Fig. 43) shown in the Montreal Spring Exhibition of 1921, has an interesting mist effect which may have inspired James Edward Hervey



MacDonald's Mist Fantasy, dated 1922.

During the war, Cullen was asked by the Government of Canada, along with other Canadian artists, to paint war scenes for the Armed Services Records. In 1918 he was elected to the R.C.A. Two remarkably Impressionistic war pictures, Our Guns at Bonn University, (Fig. 44) and Bombing Area Seaford, (Fig. 45), both of 1918, show the blue and yellow reduced palette of the Impressionists. On his return to Canada after the war, Cullen continued painting in the Laurentian area.

"Cullen not only got to the guts of things<sup>138</sup> but to the soul of them as well. He was mentally and physically robust and loved to tramp on snow shoes through the northern woods for his subjects. He said 'nature is a book with most of the leaves uncut.' He gloried in the Laurentians and to become familiar with mountains built himself a shack at the edge of Lac Tremblant and lived and worked alone for three months of each year. Here he painted some of his finest works....He experimented with the light colors of the Impressionists and achieved the creation of an atmosphere without the loss of form."<sup>139</sup> "He rendered snow on canvas studiously and consistently, until now we regard him as the interpreter par excellence of what is pre-eminently a glorious contribution to the Canadian winter."<sup>140</sup>

A March Evening, 1923, (Fig. 46) is typical of this outdoor period and it leads directly to The Valley of the Devil River, 1927, (Fig. 47).

This is a most interesting Cullen to consider. In it, Cullen returns to the panoramic bird's eye view. This picture, done after Canada's famous Group of Seven landscapes of the wilds, unites the Impressionist palette with a broader treatment of brushstroke in large areas of color bounded by sinuous curved lines. There are blue snow shadows, and alternating planes of light and dark. Aerial perspective is used to give

the distant peak a hazy blue, far-away, appearance, and this contrasts vividly with the golden tones of the foreground plane. The dark swath of the river and the trees cutting diagonally across the center of the picture makes an axis about which the curve of the foreground yellow plane, and the curve of the distant river bank form symmetrical reverse images. The careful simplification of nature, the balancing from side to side, of curve for curve, and rise of hills on the left front, to rise of hills in the right distance, and the interest in subtle nuances is typical of Monet, Pissarro, and Sisley landscapes. Yet the flatness of the planes, the clear sharp lines, the apparent depth into the picture, and the playing down of light effects is indicative of a different aim in art from Impressionism.

This last picture may somehow show what the Ottawa Citizen, Sept. 3, 1957, felt was the end product of "The fierce struggle of the young Cullen to apply the innovations of the Impressionists to the Canadian landscape."<sup>141</sup>

Speaking about his color theory, Cullen remarked: "Try never to mix more than two colors together - add a third color for tone only. Do not scrub the colors together on the palette, rather weave them together so that actually the colors are still pure but by being in opposition to each other, they give the feeling of being one tone. This gives greater variety and brilliance to the completed work."<sup>142</sup>

After Cullen's death in March, 1934, Marius Barbeau, Saturday Night, June 9, 1934, wrote of "The Art of Maurice Cullen". "For years Mr. Cullen rendered snow upon canvas studiously and consistently...and he has carried on this work in spite of popular and official prejudice against it. Mr. Cullen whose artistic sense of beauty and as an interpreter of nature in her most majestic moods has gone on without realizing that others have

been discouraging or tabooing the very thing that he has been at great pains to preserve. Mr. Cullen's pictures are most beautiful when they show the play of light and color upon the snow."<sup>143</sup>

Jean Chauvin speaking of the art of Maurice Cullen says; "Beginning at the turn of the century Cullen made the first break with the European tradition; he was the first to free our painting from a provincial imitation of older styles abroad.

His method was freely to adopt the contemporary Impressionist techniques to our milieu - to our climate, the breadth of our landscape, and the quality of our light...He was the first to look at Canadian scenery through Canadian eyes, thus opening up a way for the Group of Seven and later developments."<sup>144</sup>

Marc Aurel de Foy Suzor-Côté was born on April 5, 1869 at Arthabaska, Quebec. "His derivative way of painting like the French, his gift for studio pieces, including Nudes, eventually gave way to a more individual style and a lively interest in his native country. Soon after 1900 he was satisfied to remain for four years in Montreal and at Arthabaska. It is then that he became a Canadian painter and also a sculptor.

His outlook and accomplishments were influenced by the prevailing Impressionism of his generation, also by an arbitrary limitation to gentle landscapes patterned after those of France. Even within Canada he looked for pasture and cultivated lands, old habitations, and country roads, like those of his native Arthabaska, almost never for the rugged wilderness. The mellow light permeating his pigments was that of Normandy or Ile-de-France, not the clear and crisp iridescence of Canada."<sup>145</sup>

It is a two-hour bus ride from Quebec City to Arthabaska, called the "country of roses" in the Algonquin language, and the home of Canada's great

Impressionist painter. No-one in the town knows which was the home of Suzor-Côté, but the Curé pointed out the grave of Côté (Fig. 48) in the churchyard of the Chapel of the Sacred Heart, overlooking the valley of the Nicolet River, (Fig. 49). Nearby, with a view of the rolling pastoral countryside, is the home of Sir Wilfred Laurier, (Fig. 50) with its bronze plaque (Fig. 51). The house, which is preserved as a museum, contains replicas of Suzor-Côté's bronzes, an academic portrait of Mme. Laurier, and sketches in charcoal in the halls and up the staircase. These sketches were commissioned for Louis Hemon's novel Maria Chapdelaine.

Suzor-Côté's father was a notary of Arthabaska. His mother, Cécile de Foy Suzor, came from a cultured and musical Quebec family. In his school studies Suzor-Côté excelled in drawing under Brother Nepotien, who said, "This one will surely be an artist".<sup>146</sup>

On leaving the college, Suzor articulated with M. Guay, a merchant at Victoriaville, but commerce did not interest him as did music and art.

His first painting lessons were taken in 1886 from Maxime Rousseau, a decorator of churches in Montreal where he quickly learned to manage colors and to do the heads of martyrs and angels so well that he was paid five dollars a day. He devoted himself to religious painting and church decoration for two years. He also studied with Chalbert at the National Institute of Fine Arts in Montreal.

At the age of twenty, in 1889, Suzor-Côté decided to go to Paris, where he studied singing at the Conservatory under Boulanger and Edouard Masson, making great progress.

He was to have made his debut at the Opera Comique in the Fall of 1892, but a throat infection caused him to give up singing and to take up his second great talent, painting.

For four years Suzor-Côté followed Léon Bonnat's course at the Ecole de Beaux Arts. The works of Bonnat have been described as "audacious harmonies of the palette", "painting in a photographic way", and "illusionistically true portraits".<sup>147</sup> These three traits of Suzor-Côté's first master are seen in his own early prize-winning work, filled with outdated formulas. Suzor took a studio with the sculptor, Alfred Laliberté, in Montparnasse. In 1894 he returned to Canada for two years. He was now an established artist and was awarded a homecoming banquet by Sir Wilfred Laurier.

In 1896 he returned to France. In 1898 he attended the classes of Benjamin Constant and Jules Lefebvre at the Colarosi and Julian Academies. He took design from Fernand Cormon. There he learned portrait and history painting. His most notable pictures at that time were Pastoral, (Fig. 53), 1899, and Entre Voisin, 1900. Entre Voisin is like a Dutch seventeenth century interior genre-type painting. Four men are shown plotting in a poacher's hut near a flaming fireplace. In order to paint this picture Suzor-Côté had to work for over two months in a small, smokey hovel in Normandy, in the most unpleasant and unsavory surroundings. He would get the men to pile peat on the fire to give a ruddy glow to the interior and cause a heavy atmospheric effect. "Yes, and the dirt had such delightful colors".<sup>148</sup>

The critics found the picture, "very well observed and rendered with great talent",<sup>149</sup> and "an excellent painter of people is Suzor-Côté",<sup>150</sup> and "Mr. Suzor-Côté shows two very lovely landscapes of rare artistic worth".<sup>151</sup>

Recalling his early career, Côté said "under the benevolent and wise gaze of the French masters, Mr. M. Jules Lefebvre, Benjamin Constant, and

Léon Bonnat, whose lessons I especially followed with precision, and the contemplation of the masterpieces in the Louvre, I slowly gained a little knowledge. I had begun to think, to reflect, and to be moved before nature and all the beautiful Impressionistic scenes which are before us in each season, at each hour of the day..."<sup>152</sup>

The people of Montreal knew of the work of Suzor-Côté. At the Art Gallery of W. Scott and Sons, in Notre Dame Street, after 1900 there was an exhibit of sixty-five canvases done in oil and pastels in France. The sale of these canvases enabled Suzor-Côté to return to France. His historical works were done around 1906 and included Death of Montcalm, Frontenac and The Arrival of Jacques Cartier at Stadacona.

Returning from the Fields, 1904, was shown in the Salon and may be based on a Millais composition by that name, but Côté has reproduced the atmosphere of a Canadian scene. In his figures he has depicted the true Habitant, and the interesting events of his daily life.

Port Blanc en Bretagne, 1906, (Fig. 54) is one of Suzor-Côté's first Impressionist canvases. It has the high horizon line, the bird's eye view, the blue and golden ochre colors to achieve luminous effects, and it shows a land, sea, sky, landscape that would have appealed to the Impressionists. The blues and the yellows are mixed with white to get the same value. There are blue shadows, and the color is applied in discreet tones in separate brushstrokes in the Impressionist way.

Suzor-Côté visited all the festive gatherings of the Canadian colony in Paris. They met at the Café-aux-Fleurs, and discussed the review of Beatrice La Palme at the Opera Comique in Mireille in 1905. Suzor attended the Trocadero with his friend Laliberté for the presentation of The Damnation of Faust, where the title role was sung by the operatic tenor

Rudolphe Plamondon. He visited the salons of Viallard, Stone and Nantel. He saw a Morrice canvas and said to his friend, "His painting has so few colors, it is so lovely, so discreet, so grand!!"<sup>153</sup> Donald W. Buchanan states that Côté did not know Morrice but that this spontaneous appreciation from Suzor-Côté was worth more than all the journalistic praises of Paris to Morrice.

Next was his period of travel to England, Scotland, Spain, Italy, Holland, Russia and Germany about 1907. Writing to his family he says, "We see the great works in Rotterdam and the Hague and we seem so ignorant."<sup>154</sup>

In London Suzor-Côté met Pablo Casals, the famous cellist, who bought two of his snow scenes. "Two little marvels", said Casals, "which inspired me to make the trip to Canada".<sup>155</sup>

In 1907 Côté finds another personal and vivid mode of expression in the plastic art of sculpture. His first portrait bust was of Sir Wilfred Laurier. In Canada he pursued many subjects in sculpture which were typical of the primitive life lead at that time in Rural Quebec.

Suzor-Côté's bronzes, begun about 1907, may have been suggested by his studio companion, the sculptor Laliberté. He took much inspiration from Rodin. His surfaces are left showing the texture of the material and the marks of the tools as Impressionist canvases do. There is also the indistinct, almost atmospheric effect in Côté's sculpture, as well as a feeling of action as light falls across the faceted surface. Caughnawaga Women (Fig. 55), one of the forty or fifty bronze figures and groups done by Côté, represents Indian women of the Caughnawaga Nation going to market in Montreal.

The Caughnawaga men build the giant skyscrapers of eastern America as

well as the bridges, climbing very high without fear on steel girders and with a sureness and skill not to be matched by others. The group is reminiscent of Rodin's Burgers of Calais, or the heavily draped figure of Balzac. Both artists present an ambiguity and suggestiveness in a shimmering surface. The handling of the material and the texture of the material is evident. Other important works of sculpture by Suzor-Côté are The Woodcutter Walking, Maria Chapdelaine, The Trapper, and The Woodcutter.

In 1908 the Canadian Art Club exhibited the newest works of Canadian painting. Critics said there was sound execution in every picture. There were three large Homer Watson's, Ernest Lawson showed eight canvasses that were "a thrill of pure sunlight"<sup>156</sup> and Cullen did a pastel called Solitude. The brilliant works of Suzor-Côté were small, Sugar Bush in Autumn, A Village Street, and Quebec Winter, were individual visions in the matter of color and mellow charm. James W. Morrice exhibited Market Place St. Malo.

Suzor-Côté painted some of his most beautiful snow scenes in Canada. These are very remarkable for a most earnest and sincere effort to conquer the difficulties of presenting the brilliant sunshine on snow, trees and country-side.

Winter Landscape, 1909, (Fig. 56) is a view of the Nicolet River, near Suzor's home in Arthabaska. Like Snow at Louveciennes,<sup>157</sup> 1878, by Sisley, this fine snow picture is airy and light. The banks of fluffy white immaculate snow shows us that white is not white. Just as snow scenes had permitted the artists to investigate the problems of shadows, the study of water offered an excellent opportunity to observe reverberations and reflections. So-called local color was a pure convention. Every object presents to the eye a scheme of color derived from its proper color,



from its surroundings, and from atmospheric conditions.

"Impressionism injected its powerful influence into Canadian painting through the work of Maurice Cullen and M.A. de Foy Suzor-Côté, both of whom recognized a natural affinity between the Impressionistic technique and the varied lights and colors of the Canadian snowscape."<sup>158</sup>

The Settlement on the Hillside, 1909, (Fig. 57) is another fine snow scene. One of the fascinations of snow scenes was their difficulty of execution. To paint a large area of canvas white or almost white, and yet have enough variation in the white to present lively color renditions of the color values of light reflected from snow showing many colored highlights and shadows is very difficult to accomplish. Although Courbet was the first French painter to do snow scenes, Monet carried the interpretation further, finding brighter blues in the shade, purples in dark shadows and many differences of yellow to white tones in the snow. Settlement on the Hillside, (Fig. 57) and Stream in Winter, (Fig. 58) are both very related to Monet's snow scenes like The Magpie,<sup>159</sup> 1869, and also assume the heavy crusty surface treatment of Monet's later Rouen Facade<sup>160</sup> series of 1894. Golden ochre and orange roughly correspond to pale and dark blue, as complimentaries and much white is used. Some neutral browns and greys are formed by mixing the complimentaries.

The works of Monet were earlier than those of Sisley or Pissarro who continued the early type of Impressionism on into the twentieth century. Pissarro's palette and surface texture of 1901 as seen in his Church of Saint-Jacques at Dieppe,<sup>161</sup> is very similar to that of Suzor-Côté from 1906 to the end of his life.

Suzor-Côté's, The Peribonka Church<sup>162</sup> facade seems borrowed in inspiration from Monet's Cathedral at Rouen,<sup>163</sup> or Sisley's Church at Moret.<sup>164</sup>

It is touching that Suzor-Côté should show the quaint little village church of Peribonka in the Impressionist style of the great French Cathedrals done by Monet, Pissarro and Sisley.

Suzor-Côté, as well as William Brymner, did lovely nudes. Etude de Nu,<sup>165</sup> and Melodies,<sup>166</sup> are two Impressionist ones seen in an enveloping atmosphere suggestive of twilight. Seurat's Model in Profile, and Model from the Back<sup>167</sup> are very similar in pose and idea to the ones chosen by Suzor-Côté for his studies. Degas' nudes must be the link between academic nudes and Côté's later-day Impressionist nudes.

Jean Chauvin, writing in Ateliers, says that: "We are indebted to him, for many female nudes in oils and pastels, the only nudes shown in our salons which seem reserved only for landscapes. What does one see there, indeed, these many years? Few portraits, few still lifes, few compositions, no historical subjects, no genre paintings, no interiors or familiar scenes, no nudes, landscapes and seascapes only. Is it the contagion of the fever for landscape that rages in all European schools?"<sup>168</sup>

Monet's On the Beach,<sup>169</sup> 1870, shows a lady with a parasol sitting on a bench in a pose which is identical, only reversed, to Suzor-Côté's Youth and Sunlight,<sup>170</sup> 1913. The lady with a parasol was a favorite subject of Impressionists. Renoir shows them in fields, and Monet did another famous pair called, Lady with a Parasol Turned Towards the Right, and the same subject Turned Towards the Left,<sup>171</sup> both of 1886. Suzor's Impressionist interest is seen in the middle class enjoyment of a sunny day. The young lady is on a green grassy hill overlooking a pond. Light is reflected from the water and the shadows are alive with suggestions of blues and mauve.

"Youth in Sunlight" has the light-filled manner of Monet and Pissarro. The small touches of pure color are characteristic of the Impressionists. Here is the typical Impressionist use of Japanese composition whereby the figure of the girl is seen from an unusual angle, and is silhouetted in a decorative way against a flat background."<sup>172</sup>

Of all these Impressionistic figure studies, Youth and Sunlight is his best known. "Last autumn where at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy in Montreal appeared the vision "Youth and Sunlight" by Suzor-Côté of a fresh and happy looking young girl holding a white sunshade over her head, seated on a garden bench in the blazing mid-day sun. His friends were dazzled.

The picture is full of "La Joie de Vivre" and the subtlest effects of light and shade have been caught and are held captive here forever."<sup>173</sup>

Francois Taillon,<sup>174</sup> 1921, a portrait of a sturdy French-Canadian farmer, shows a mixed technique. The portrait is a fine Impressionist rendering of character. The background, done in broad squared-off brush stroke areas, is more like van Gogh's broad interpretation of Impressionism. The methods of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism were old and well-known by then, and the combination of technique, though mostly Impressionist, is derived from both sources. Suzor-Côté was very adept at character studies in portraiture. His illustrations in Maria Chapdelaine, 1921, of Népotien Laliberté, Hormidas Bérubé and Madame Chapdelaine, give a sensitive pictorial equivalent to the story of the French Canadian peasants of the last century.

Suzor-Côté's Sugar Camp, Arthabaska, 1917, shows a wide range of values including the silvers and reds that mark the Maples in the spring when the sap is on the move. There are blue shadows cast on the snow and on the cabin's roof, giving a decorative tracery effect found so often in

Sisley's and Monet's snow scenes. When compared with his earlier canvas, Primitive Sugar Camp, 1910, it is seen that Côté kept very close to an original inspiration working and reworking it the way the Impressionists did, to give the impression of the instant.

Suzor-Côté is the most consistently Impressionist Canadian painter. He is the only painter who stayed with the Impressionist technique long after the artists in France had given up the idiom. His early work, dating from 1892 to 1905, the period of his training, is characteristically reserved and academic. However, from his return to Canada in 1908, until his death in 1937, he painted a continuous series of Impressionist pictures. Suzor-Côté was a French-Canadian peasant who went overseas to learn an academic way of painting, then on returning to Canada brought with him what appealed to him most. It was the Impressionist palette that pleased him, and that was what he chose to use on his return. The studio of Suzor-Côté as visited by Jean Chauvin in 1927, represented Côté's varied interests and his double heritage and appreciation of what was old and picturesque in Canada and in France. There were priceless French Aubusson rugs, old Breton chests, a three hundred year old marquetry and mahogany harpsichord and Indian curios all gathered together. Perhaps no other Canadian painter has blended so rich a heritage of music, painting and sculpture, with the native and peasant life of Quebec.

## CHAPTER V

One of the earliest major art patrons in Canada was Sir William Van Horne, 1843 - 1915. He is described in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts Catalogue as "The foremost railroad organizer of his day, and a creator of the C.P.R...A gifted amateur painter, and an enlightened collector and connoisseur."<sup>175</sup> His picture Steel Mills at Sydney, Cape Breton, 1907, (Fig. 60) shows a dramatic view of steel-mills in full-blast, seen across the water at night. Van Horne made many trips abroad and was always interested in modern art, especially when it had some relation to rail-ways and heavy industry. It is interesting that Armand Guillaumin, just two years older than Van Horne, began working for the Paris-Orleans Railway Company and painted in his leisure hours around Paris where he lived. He showed in six of the eight Impressionist exhibitions and painted a very unusual view of Sunset At Ivry,<sup>176</sup> about 1873. It was shown in the first Impressionist exhibition at Nadar's in 1874, depicting a sunset scene, with factories in the distance sending up volumes of brilliantly colored smoke, all reflected in the winding river in the foreground. Guillaumin, who became independently wealthy in 1892 could presumably move in the circles frequented by Van Horne and it is most likely that Van Horne admired this picture at some time, as his own is patterned so closely after it. Like Monet, Guillaumin studied sunrise and sunset effects and was the first to use factory chimneys as subjects.<sup>177</sup>

Since William Brymmer taught at the Art Association, Montreal, from 1886 until 1921, and his later paintings, Feeding Chickens, 1912, Late Afternoon, and Sea Foam, 1911, assume a superficial lightness, a choice of subject and the indistinctness of Impressionism; it is not surprising that three of his pupils are essentially Impressionists. These are Mabel May, Frederick W. Hutchison, and William Henry Clapp.

Mabel May's work is closely associated with that of other Montreal painters. There are subtleties in the color of the Montreal school which is more Impressionistic than the work of the Toronto group. Miss May was also influenced by the French Impressionists when she was in Paris from 1912 to 1913. The Regatta, 1914, (Fig. 61) draws heavily for inspiration on Monet's works at Argenteuil of 1874 and 1875. The picture is very similar in composition to Manet's The Seine at Argenteuil,<sup>178</sup> however, the handling is looser and less distinct, more like the work of Renoir and Monet of 1874. The brushstroke follows the form of what the artist paints and does not follow any prearranged pattern.

Frederick W. Hutchison, 1871 - 1953 was born in Montreal. As a student in Paris he was a pupil of Benjamin Constant. Returning to America he was associated with the art life of the United States travelling between New York State, Illinois, and his summer home in Quebec. His October Snow, Baie St. Paul, (Fig. 62) shows the interest in warm light and cool shadow on snow and houses. "This picture is a subtle and poetic arrangement with emphasis placed on atmospheric envelopment and charm of color".<sup>179</sup> His landscapes have a fine diffusion of light. He is a true Impressionist with an exquisite sense of color. The sun-filled picture On The Road To Murray Bay, (Fig. 63) is a bird's eye view down a winding roadway into a valley. The irregular brushstrokes of pure pigment are reminiscent of the early Impressionist works by Pissarro, Monet and Renoir. The colors are reduced to blue, yellow and green with much white added. Hutchinson's work has that lighter brighter color of Renoir which, when applied to a Canadian scene, makes a most pleasing picture.

Blair Bruce's very early Impressionistic works of 1887 were done in the neighborhood of Monet's home in Giverny and take the same subjects

chosen by Monet and Sargent when they painted together at Monet's home in 1889. The pose, viewpoint and light effects in Bruce's Pleasant Moment, 1887, (Fig. 64) are also similar to Berthe Morisot's picture, The Artist's Sister, Mme. Pontillon Seated on the Grass,<sup>180</sup> 1873, Manet's The Monet Family in Their Garden in Argenteuil,<sup>181</sup> 1874, and Renoir's Mme. Monet and Her Son in Their Garden at Argenteuil,<sup>182</sup> 1874. In Bruce's Giverny France, 1887, (Fig. 65) there is an emulation of Renoir's Path Climbing Through Long Grass,<sup>183</sup> 1878. Bruce must have seen these pictures or others like them, in France, 1881 - 1895. His works are not Impressionist in technique but borrowing from the superficial 'plein-air' effects of Impressionism they show an early French Impressionist influence on a Canadian artist who went abroad to live and paint.

William Henry Clapp was born in Montreal in 1879 where he, too, began his art studies under William Brymner. In Paris he studied with Jean-Paul Laurens, Lucien Simon, Ernest Laurent, Tony Robert-Fleury, and with Laparra. The effects of strong sunlight interested him and played a large part in the landscapes he painted in France, Spain, and Cuba. He won the Jessie Dow prize in Montreal in 1908.

Morning in Spain, 1907, (Fig. 66) is like a Sisley landscape while The Orchard Quebec, 1909, (Fig. 67) is reminiscent of Pissarro's Orchard of Pontoise,<sup>184</sup> 1877, and his Picking Apples,<sup>185</sup> 1886. The New Church, 1913, (Fig. 68) has a more Pointilist style but Lumber Boats, (Fig. 69) may be compared with Monet's Beach at St. Adresse,<sup>186</sup> 1867, so closely does the technique compare. As a painter, Clapp may be classed with the Impressionists although his manner of painting also suggests the Pointillism or Divisionism of the later Neo-Impressionists. His color is more Impressionistic because it does not employ the scientifically formulated

color laws which Seurat followed. "He uses an empirically studied system to paint the objective, determined by his interest in what he termed 'physical vision', the coming in contact of color forces with the retina of the eye."<sup>187</sup>

In a letter written in Italy by A.Y. Jackson on Dec. 6, 1912, to Albert Laberge, art editor of "La Presse", Montreal, Jackson finds "The Futurists, Cubists, and Post-Impressionists are working feverishly and already the old Impressionist movement seems like ancient history in Paris. I suppose Montreal still laughs at Clapp, the loud empty laugh which speaks the vacant mind. But they will learn."<sup>188</sup> From his letter, one may conclude that Jackson considered Clapp's technique Impressionist. Jackson found that Montreal was not ready to accept an art form that was already "ancient history in Paris". This quotation also points out that as late as 1912, the Impressionist way of painting was considered by some Canadian artists to be a current and acceptable way of painting.

Ernest Lawson, 1873 - 1939 was a landscape painter who used the French Impressionist style. Newton MacTavish has compared his palette to crushed jewels.<sup>189</sup> Certainly his vibrating brushstrokes and divided color areas are applied in rich oil pigment that tends to obliterate form.

His early Impressionist technique seen in Snowbound Boats, 1907, (Fig. 70) he learned from his teachers John Twachtman and Alden Weir. He lived most of his life in the United States where in 1908 the MacBeth Galleries exhibited canvases painted by eight of the younger American artists including Lawson. Winter, 1914, (Fig. 71) and Misty Day, 1918, (Fig. 72) are also representative of his early atmospheric Impressionism. His later works seen in The Bathers, (Fig. 73) and Sailboats, (Fig. 74)



both show a much brighter and clearer interpretation, more influenced by Post-Impressionism.

Ida G. Hamilton's Sunlight and Shadows of 1923, (Fig. 75) reminds one of Pissarro's The Red Roofs, 1877, Louvre, Paris. In both works there is a dissociation of the elements of houses, trees, and fields. The landscape is presented in a single equal vibration of colors of the same value. The dappled shadow effect of the leaves and fence on the road, and the all over bright decorative effect, makes this a virtuoso Impressionist picture. It is not exactly like any single Impressionist master's work but is a faithful eclectic copying of the Impressionist elements of style at a much later period to give an almost perfect Impressionist effect. "One has to begin any outline of the Group of Seven by mentioning Lawren Harris". He it was who saw an exhibition of sketches by James Edward Hervey MacDonald and knew the possibilities of Canadian landscape painting. With the help of Dr. James McCallum he persuaded men like Tom Thomson, Arthur Lismer, Frederick Varley, Alexander Jackson, Franklin Carmichael and Franz Johnston to join a group and develop a school of painting which held its first exhibition in 1920. The oldest member of the group was James MacDonald, 1873 - 1932, who began working as a designer in the commercial printing and advertizing firm of Grip and Company in 1895. He worked steadily there until 1904 when he left Canada to study art at the Carlton Studio, London. On his return home in 1907 he again took up work with Grip Company as a senior member. He painted and sketched in his spare time. In 1909 he travelled into northern Ontario for the first time, and in 1910 went to Georgian Bay. His early snow pictures draw heavily on Impressionist masters for inspiration. Tracks and Traffic,

1912, (Fig. 76) is immediately reminiscent of Monet's series of studies of La Gare St. Lazare.<sup>191</sup> The railway was a great novelty to the Impressionists. Since Turner's Rain, Steam and Speed of 1844, Monet, Pissarro, and Sisley studied with great interest the effects of steam and smoke changing with the wind, but fixed as cloud effects and reflections on their canvases. MacDonald's picture includes distant factory chimneys sending up clouds of smoke, as well as a locomotive's steamy vapors, and the Gas Works near the waterfront of Toronto. Lawren Harris' picture The Gas Works, 1912, (Fig. 105) is very similar in atmospheric qualities to the MacDonald.

Edge of a Town, (Fig. 77) in the University Women's Club, Toronto, has a blue shadow effect on the snow as dusk falls behind figures making their way toward home. The dappled light effect on the ground was a specialty of Renoir as seen in The Swing,<sup>192</sup> 1876, or La Moulin de La Galette,<sup>193</sup> 1876.

Shadow effects on snow particularly interested MacDonald. Winter Sunshine, (Fig. 78) presents a broad vista over snow-covered fields as an Elm casts blue shadows across the foreground plane and the shaded forward slopes of the roofs present blue patches in the middle ground.

High Park, the Luxembourg Gardens of Toronto, was a favorite sketching ground for MacDonald. It was close to the Grip Company offices, and near his Toronto residence and at the turn of the century presented an undisturbed park area in which to paint. In Morning After Snow, (Fig. 79) done in High Park, the footprints crossing the snow provide the incidental human touch to the landscape which the Impressionists usually included. Later snow scenes neglected this touch. The mauves and blues of late Impressionism are seen in Early Evening,

Winter, 1912, (Fig. 80). A large fuzzy sun shows through a snowstorm. This is a very indistinct rendering, a searching for all the light effects of the Impressionists, and perhaps it falls into the error of the late Impressionists in being too diffused.

MacDonald developed the interest in shadow and snow effects further than the French Impressionists. In The Pine Shadows Moonlight, 1912, (Fig. 81) MacDonald introduces a new concept into his picture. The shadow of the tree on the snow is the main subject, and the canvas becomes a decorative pattern of light and dark areas.

It was in 1912 that MacDonald and Harris visited the Exhibition of Scandinavian Art at the Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York.

In 1894 Gustave Geffroy published his History of Impressionism, thus giving Impressionism a place in the history of art. In 1897 there were Impressionist exhibitions in London and Stockholm. This early contact of Sweden with Impressionism would reach Canada indirectly through the 1912 Buffalo exhibition. From this large scale conception of shadows MacDonald finds another new approach to Impressionism in Snowbound, 1915, (Fig. 82) a closeup view of branches bent low by the snow with shadows beneath and bright highlights behind. At this time Lawren Harris and MacDonald were working closely together and the similarity between MacDonald's Snow Bound, (Fig. 82) and the snow scene of Harris (Fig. 83) in the Robert B. McMichael collection is very striking. A similar remarkable early Tom Thomson canvas in the McMichael Collection, having distinct Impressionist features is In Algonquin Park, 1914 (Fig. 84). It is reminiscent of the work of the American Impressionists Twachtman, Weir and Lawson.

In MacDonald's Falls, Montreal River, 1920, (Fig. 85) the application

of paint in small brushstrokes of pure color appears Impressionist in isolated areas. In the allover effect the canvases' larger areas of color, sweeping sinuous lines, and abstract forms reflect the influence of many styles.

In his Sketch No. 2 for Tangled Garden, (Fig. 86) we see an intimate bit of the artist's garden with reserved grayed foliage and yellow flowers against a pale blue sky. There are irregular brush strokes which remind one of the Impressionist garden studies but in his final canvas of Tangled Garden,<sup>194</sup> 1916, there is a change to a riot of thick and pasty Fauve color which shocked the public and the critics.

Tom Thomson has painted, in the vivid bright colors of Canada, one of our most Impressionist canvases. His Bateaux (Fig. 87) is a more vigorous painting of Claude Monet's Regatta at Argenteuil,<sup>195</sup> 1872. "It was at Argenteuil that the Impressionist technique was really invented. The light as reflected in the rippling water cast up reflections beneath the arches of the bridge, while the white sails reflected in the river provide a natural example of the separate of strokes and color."<sup>196</sup> This was Monet's home and there he did his boldest fresh and free work.

Arthur Lismer who painted with Tom Thomson in the north says of him, "Thomson belonged to no group. He was as timid as a deer. Every nerve and fibre seemed to be waiting for the time and place to register some creative impression. He was almost monastic in his desire for seclusion, in his seeking out of lonely spots. He was a creature of depression and of ecstastic moments. I've been with him in the woods when I've got the definite feeling that he was part of them, that the birds and animals recognized something in him that they had themselves. That's why I say that the rest of us were painting pictures; he was expressing moods. He

was simply a part of nature."<sup>197</sup>

Tom Thomson exemplifies one of the greatest influences on the younger Canadian painters. He was not always an Impressionist painter, but the spirit of Impressionism led him to the landscape subject, the outdoor scene, and the dependence on the visual scene for a subject which he then painted with a free-flowing execution, catching the feeling of the instant in pure color. Subjects like sunset, autumn landscapes, northern lights; the interest in the colorful fall effects of northern landscapes; intangible themes like a west wind, a shimmering lake, a golden autumn, and moonlight are Impressionist in spirit. Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Art Nouveau, and Expressionism are other influences to be found in his works.

The sketches for his canvases have much more spontaneity and freshness of color than the finished painting. Spring Ice, 1916, (Fig. 88) with its lyric harmonies of blue and green, perhaps comes closest to the freedom of the sketches. Wide color areas are syncopated with smaller areas of Impressionist brush strokes. There is a high horizon line, an all-over cool feeling of spring, blue shadows and an instantaneous impression. But the swirl of brush stroke and the heavy areas of paint are not the refined delicate modelling of Impressionism but a new more forceful, urgent, and emotional rendering. In Edge of the Log Run, 1916, (Fig. 89) the strong color is swirled and piled high as the artist depicts the dynamism of the run. Figures 90 and 91, from the McMichael collection illustrate how the artist has gone beyond Impressionism to a broad dynamic brush stroke and yet retains a color rendering that sparkles, scintillates and moves in water and sky, in an Impressionist way; which has all the force of color and brush work that the great northland inspired.

Franklin Carmichael, 1890 - 1945, a pupil of William Cruikshank might have adopted the misty Barbizon style of his teacher. Instead he became an expert design teacher in his own right and as a water colorist he painted delicate, beautifully designed work. Autumn: Orillia, (Fig. 92) is an Impressionist work overlaid with a lace-like pattern of tree trunks and branches giving a designed decorative effect, suggestive of Mark Toby's Calligraphic writing. His Winter Landscape (Fig. 93) shows the meticulous care with which he put down each brush stroke in building up this Impressionist canvas.

The great colorist of the group was Frederick Horsman Varley, 1881 -. His Portrait of Janet, (Fig. 94) is of a delightful child in her white dress, standing in the light-filled out-of-doors. Only in the expressive face does the fine draughtsmanship of the artist become evident. Vera, (Fig. 95) a portrait of a young woman done in the jewel colors of a Renoir may also have small areas of Impressionist painting combined with areas of Fauve color and the outlining of Post-Impressionism.

In a personal interview with the painter Arthur Lismer, in his Art Association office in Montreal in the fall of 1964, Mr. Lismer, when asked about his painting The Guide's Home, Algonquin, 1914, (Fig. 96) said "That is definitely French Impressionism and I never repeated it". He felt that the influence of Impressionism was not as consciously felt by painters as by the critics in Canada. The French Impressionist landscape subject was intimate and appealed to the more volatile French. The more sober associates, later to form the Group of Seven, found that the Impressionist mode of expression was not suited to the wilds of Canadian landscape. Lismer thought that Canadian painting adopted Impressionist color, but only used the small Impressionist brushstroke as an accent and

contrast to the broader areas used in painting Canadian scenery. He pointed out the thorough-going influence Impressionism had in interior decoration, textiles, and in bringing the newly invented scientific colors to the fore.

Afternoon Sunlight, 1915 - 1916, (Fig. 97) and Springtime on the Farm, 1916 - 1917, (Fig. 98) are two canvases of the same scene painted in different seasons of the year. Like the Impressionists, Lismer suggests the presence of people but does not show them. A ladder stands beside the tree in the fenced-in enclosure. Smoke comes from the chimney and a wash is on the line. Two geese are moving along outside the picket fence. These intimate personal touches are found in Impressionism.

"It seemed to Arthur Lismer as though French Impressionism, by which he was so stirred, was indeed vibration, not simply of the soul but also an actual physical vibration."<sup>198</sup>

Alexander Young Jackson states "It was through Cullen and Morrice that we in Montreal first became aware of the fresh and invigorating movements going on in the art circles of France;<sup>199</sup> ... On Cullen's first return from France he held an exhibition at the Fraser Institute ... To us he was a hero."<sup>200</sup> "Few people liked the work I brought home from Europe. The French Impressionist influence in it was regarded as extreme modernism".<sup>201</sup>

An early canvas Canoe Lake, (Fig. 99) is an Impressionist snow scene. Two war pictures Churches at Lievin, 1918 (Fig. 100) and A Screened Road, 1918, (Fig. 101) show Impressionist influences. In his canvas Road to St. Simon,<sup>202</sup> 1940, he uses the Impressionist color of blue and yellow but the sinuous curves and wide sweeps of color areas belong to Post-Impressionism. Winter Morning,<sup>203</sup> is a glorious

Impressionist influenced canvas of blue and ochre; but instead of brush strokes there are swirls of paint. The vast area of foothills rise higher and higher on the canvas in undulating curves reminiscent of William Cullen Bryant's poem The Prairies. Jackson's painting from the McMichael collection (Fig. 102) is another such canvas.

It was Lawren Harris, 1885 - , who had the energy and drive to fulfil J.E.H. MacDonald's dream of a school of painting in Canada that would realize the wealth of motifs which presented themselves.

"Versatility has been the keynote of Lawren Harris' long career.... His variations have always been dictated by subject matter and an inner spiritual compulsion".<sup>204</sup>

Harris had studied 'Art Nouveau' and Jugendstil in Berlin, and 'Art Nouveau' was the style used by the commercial artists in Canada before 1913. It was in 1913 that Lawren Harris met Thom Thomson and it is hard to say just what the exchange of ideas was between these two men. It was Thomson who introduced Harris to landscape painting as they went sketching together into Algonquin Park in 1914. Thomson's Snow in October, 1914, (Fig. 103) and March suggest Harris' Winter Woods,<sup>205</sup> 1914, but the canvases of Lawren Harris have a touch of formality not found in the work of Thomson. From a decorative pattern using Impressionist color and brush stroke as seen in Houses, Richmond Street, Toronto,<sup>206</sup> 1911, the style of Harris became simpler, the forms more powerful and the lines more accentuated. The brush stroke and color of Impressionism is combined with an Arabesque line, the silhouette effect and elements of Art Nouveau. Harris did a series of snow pictures in the early twenties, one of which Snow II, (Fig. 104) is a very Impressionist scene of a grove of spruce trees in the foreground laden with snow and bathed in iridescent blue,



mauve, purple, pink, white, and yellow shadows, with very dark greens. In the sun-filled background bright whites, oranges and yellows complement the foreground colors and set up Impressionist vibrations of color.

Thomson had watched the style of Harris develop and change from the more traditional Naturalism through Impressionism toward a more abstract design and his own painting mirrors this progression. Thus we see Impressionism not being discarded but being developed.

It is difficult to include and assess all the Impressionist painters working in Canada after 1900. When part of the Caillebotte collection of Impressionist paintings was accepted by the Luxembourg in 1896 and the Moreau-Nelaton collection by the Louvre in 1906. Canadian artists studying abroad could see great French Impressionist works. By 1910 many Canadian artists were painting pictures in the Impressionist style, but the influence of Impressionism carries on into contemporary work.

"The Impressionist tradition, and the love of vibrant colors as autonomous factors of emotion, sometimes independent of the form, are still continued by artists of a refined sensibility and a very sure taste. Their works dating from after 1945, do not mark a stylistic break, nor even an essential transformation in relation to paintings executed before that date, for these artists had by then reached the age of forty or more, and their aesthetic conceptions and personal techniques had become stabilized. They brilliantly continue a French tradition of sensitive and sensual gracefulness, which often seems a normal development of Impressionism."<sup>207</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

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B I O G R A P H I E S

THE PRE-IMPRESSIONISTS  
and  
IMPRESSIONISTS IN CANADA



HOMER RANSFORD WATSON 1855 - 1936

Homer Watson was called The Sage of Doon. He spent his whole life painting the Ontario landscape as seen near his home at Doon, a village in the valley of the Grand River near the city of Kitchener. In 1874 he joined Notman's Photographic Studio in Toronto. In 1876 he visited New York City and met George Innis who encouraged and greatly influenced the Canadian artist to paint in the Adirondacks and along the Hudson River. Watson's The Pioneer Mill, 1889, was exhibited at the Royal Canadian Academy exhibition inaugurated by the Marquis of Lorne and Princess Louise. Queen Victoria bought one of his paintings and James Spooner, an art dealer in Toronto, promoted his work. Oscar Wilde, visiting Toronto in 1882, called Watson the "Canadian Constable", and later introduced Watson to Whistler in London. His paintings were exhibited in London at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886 where he won a bronze medal. Watson visited London, 1887 - 90, and was a great friend of Sir George Chausen. While in London he could study the works of Constable. Whistler taught Watson etching and from London Watson visited Paris where he saw the exhibits of Old Masters and Barbizon painters.

Montreal art patrons were buying not only old master works but Impressionist paintings. In 1893 he was awarded the bronze medal at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, and in 1896 he sketched on the Ile d'Orleans with Horatio Walker. In 1901 Watson visited England with Horatio Walker. Sir William Van Horne, R.B. Angus, James Ross, and A.C. Hutchinson were buying Watson's paintings and promoting exhibitions of his work. By 1902 he was a success. He had won a gold medal at the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo. He was a president of the Canadian Art Club for four years after its founding in 1907. Canadian painting was

being recognized. In 1911 an exhibition of Canadian painting in Liverpool received favourable criticism. In 1914 Watson became a War artist and made a recording of the First Canadian Contingent at Valcartier Camp. From 1918 - 1921 he was president of the Royal Canadian Academy and J. Russell Harper states in his National Gallery of Canada brochure that Watson was the man who "brought into sharp focus the moods of nature, the surface patterns, the nostalgia of the Ontario woodland, which Perre, Jacobi, Martin and a host of other Canadians of the time saw only as dreamy blurred pastiches of European painting without any individual Canadian character. He was, as it were, the man who first saw Canada as Canada".

In 1922 Watson began an active study of Impressionism. He visited Western Canada. Fred S. Haines, principal of the Art Gallery of Toronto, held a retrospective exhibition of his work in 1930. He died at Doon in 1936 and was given a posthumous L.L.D. degree by Western University, London, Ontario.

HORATIO WALKER, 1858 - 1938, was born at Listowel, Perth County, Ontario in 1858. His grandmother came from an old French family of Rouen. At an early age Horatio liked to draw pigs and in 1870 he was taken to Quebec City by his father, Thomas Walker. He was then apprenticed to Notman and Fraser, Photographers, Toronto. At the age of twenty he opened a studio of his own in New York City, and from there he visited Rochester, Buffalo and other American cities from 1878 - 1880. He took a walking tour from Montreal to Quebec City in 1880 and the next year he sold his first picture of pigs called The Sty in New York City. In 1882 he visited the English and French Museums. He spent two years in Spain, Belgium and Holland before settling in St. Petronille on the Isle of Orleans, P.Q. where, for forty-two years, he was to live among the farmers and their families and paint pictures of their daily lives that were bright, lively and colorful. In 1887 he was a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and of the Royal Institute, England. In 1888 he won the Evans Award of the American Water-Color Society. His pictures were popular and costly and were shown in American collections. As a country gentleman, Walker would paint about five large canvases a year and do many preliminary drawings. M.C.J. Simard, an erudite collector and amateur critic, paid him visits looking for works of art for the Museum of Quebec. In 1896 he sketched with Homer Watson on his Ile d'Orleans. In 1901 he visited England with Homer Watson and visited the studios of Sir George Clausen and J.M. Whistler. In 1906 he was Gold Medalist at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. In 1907 he became a member of the Canadian Art Club founded to give Canadian painters an opportunity to be members and exhibit whether they lived in Canada or abroad, so that a standard of

excellence could thus be maintained. The original members of the group were: Homer Watson, President; Curtis Williamson, Secretary; Archibald Browne, W.E. Atkinson, Horatio Walker, James Wilson Morrice, Franklin Brownell and Edmund Morris.

In 1925 he was made president of the Royal Canadian Academy.

As a tourist of that time one could stand before the sunlit windows of the Chateau Frontenac, waiting for a cab driver to drive one to the artist's studio. One drove past the gilt rococco monument of Cardinal Tachereau "with its chubby cherubs which were as out of place in that setting as a tourist". The cable car would take one down to the Dufferin Terrace behind the Champlain monument where Champlain bows and doffs his hat. One passes on to the quai and from there crosses to the Isle of Orleans. "The carriage goes by the little village of St. Petronille and along a wall of rock which faces the spill-way to the Mont Morency Falls and then encloses the domaine of Horatio Walker. The master accords one a look into his suite in a spacious pavillion which he has made his atillier. He is tall and thin with a curling moustache which gives him a cavalier look like a Velasquez. Brilliant draperies hang to the right of large bay windows and the studio walls have frescoes representing the seasons. There are old shoes about and bundles of pencils. A chimney under the roof is decorated with precious Chinese trinkets. There is a Samovar and a death mask of Cromwell. Everywhere there is old armour and beautiful pottery. There are a dozen easels with pictures, water colors and pastels, not to speak of sketches without number." Walker lived and sketched on the Ile d'Orleans in the summer and moved to New York in the winter. He was a member of many important societies in America and had been awarded several gold medals. "Painting the primitive

peasant life of Quebec he was called "The Canadian Millet". There may be a certain analogy but his art springs from a deep and sincere sympathy and understanding of the habitant life about him".

He received an L.L.D. (Toronto) 1915 and an Hon. Doctorate Laval (Laval) 1934. He died at his home on the Isle of Orleans in 1938.

JAMES MACDONALD BARNESLEY, 1861 - 1929, was the son of a paper mill operator near Dundas, Ontario. His mother, Mrs. Bansley, operated the mill after the death of his father and in 1871 changed their name to Barnesley. Two years later the family moved to St. Louis, where Barnesley went to the St. Louis School of Fine Arts.

Under the direction of Halsey Ives he learned to sketch in the lake district of Upper New York State. He was awarded a gold medal on graduation and in 1883 he had a studio in Paris.

He exhibited Le Quai St. Bernard in the Salon which also exhibited Luigi Loir's Le Point du jour a Auteuil and Boudin's L'Entrée and La Sortie. This same year also saw the first comprehensive Boudin exhibition at the Durand-Ruel Galleries. Barnesley sketched and painted in Dieppe and along the Seine near Paris. He won a first class gold medal at an exhibition in Versailles and exhibited with the Royal Canadian Academy. He visited Venice, Scotland and Ireland before returning to St. Louis. In 1890 he visited Holland and in 1891 he joined William Brymner in Ireland at Killarney and Cork. In 1892 he was awarded first prize for landscape at the Montreal Spring Exhibition. He was admitted to Verdun Protestant Hospital, chronically ill. The Canadian section of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago of 1893 exhibited one oil and three water colors. In 1920 his works were shown at the Royal Canadian Academy Exhibition and the last showing of his work was in the Montreal Spring Exhibition of 1921.

WILLIAM BRYMNER was born at Greenoch, Scotland on December 14, 1855. His parents came to Canada when he was a child in May, 1857 and settled in Melbourne, an eastern township of Quebec. His father, Dr. Douglas Brymner, helped to found the Dominion Archives in 1872 and became the first government archivist at Ottawa. William Brymner began his artistic career as a student of architecture in the office of the chief government architect in Ottawa. Later he was articled by his father at the office of R.C. Urender in Montreal, to complete his studies in architecture.

He studied at the Atelier Julian, 1878 - 1885, under Tony Robert Fleury who, seeing drawings by Brymner at the Academy asked, "What do you intend to do?" "I am going to be an architect". "Don't do that. If you take my advice you'll try painting. There you will succeed".

Brymner studied painting in Paris under Bouguereau and Tony Robert-Fleury and also with Carolus-Duran. Brymner exhibited a painting in the 1885 Salon, Bord de Forêt. In 1886 he won the International Jury of awards Silver Medal at St. Louis.

He was elected as an Associate of the R.C.A. in 1885, was made a full member in 1886, and president in 1909. Brymner was asked to accept the directorship of the classes of the Art Association of Montreal in 1885. This post he held from 1886 until 1921. In this notable 35 years of teaching he saw classes grow from less than ten to over one hundred. Many of his pupils gained distinction in Canadian art. At the Pan American exhibition of 1901 he was awarded the gold medal.

In 1907 he spent a summer in Venice. In 1908 Brymner stayed at Martigues near Marseilles, where he wrote a sketch of his life and recalled that the "effects" in Canada were as beautiful as elsewhere. While there, he painted a market scene in water color, and a sunset,

both are vivid impressions set down with confidence. He painted in water color on canvas.

In 1916 he received the distinguished honor from his Majesty, King George V, "Companion of St. Michael and St. George".

On January 24, 1921 Brymner and his wife left Canada to spend two years in France, Spain and Italy. Sir William Van Horne of the C.P.R. was a patron and encouraged Brymner.

He died at Waltasey, Cheshire June 20, 1925. The Montreal Gazette of February 2, 1926, states: In a memorial exhibit forty-three works were exhibited, "landscapes with or without figures, marines, quay side scenes with shipping, portraits and still life".

The Watson Art Galleries in December 1925, records: "He attempted no grand flights. Saw subjects for his brush in everything around him and set them down with a convincing sincerity".



MAURICE GALBRAITH CULLEN was born at St. John's, Newfoundland in 1886. Some time between 1884 and 1888 he began his design studies with Abbe Joseph C. Chalbert, at the National Institute of the Fine Arts and Sciences, Montreal. Chalbert's pupils included Ludger Larose, Joseph Saint-Charles, Joseph C. Franchère and A. de Foy Suzor-Côté. The Institute was roughly patterned after the Sorbonne in Paris. In it Chalbert had accumulated a rare and complete collection of plaster casts which served to teach the pupils from antique models.

In 1886 - 1889 Cullen enrolled in the school of the sculptor Philippe Hebert, where he studied for three years. He helped Hebert carve the statues on the roof of St. James' Cathedral. He sailed for Paris about 1889 with his Uncle Dr. Ward. He studied sculpture with Halland Gerome at the Beaux Arts Academy, and at the Colarossi Atelier with Courtois and Rixen. About 1890 he returned to the Beaux Arts Academy. The work of the Impressionists made a profound influence on Cullen, and the study of atmospheric effects soon took him to Brittany between 1890 - 1895, to paint in the open air with James Wilson Morrice. Cullen returned to Canada in 1895, coming back by way of El Kauturn, Biskra, Alcantara, Spain, Italy, Le Pouldu, and Giverny. He showed in the Salons of Paris 1900 and 1901.

Between 1902 and 1908 Cullen travelled between Paris and Montreal. These trips included Beaupré, Quebec, Montreal, Italy and France, and Brittany. When in Canada he painted with Brymmer, Morrice and Dyonnet.

From 1911 to the end of his life, Cullen painted in the wilds of the Laurentians, at Lac Tremblant, and along the Cache River. During the war, in 1918, the Canadian Government commissioned him to go overseas as a war artist, and on his return home in 1919 he again made his home in the Laurentian area until his death on March 28, 1934.

MARC AUREL de FOY SUZOR-CÔTÉ was born in 1869 at Arthabaska. In school he excelled in the drawing class of Brother Népotien. At the age of eighteen he arrived at the Atelier of Maxime Rousseau, a church decorator.

In 1889 Suzor helped Rousseau to decorate the walls of the Parish church and the chapel of the local college. He also decorated churches around Arthabaska, at St. Hyacinthe and at St. Jacques. He studied with Chalbert at the National Institute of Fine Arts at Montreal. His school mates were Joseph St. Charles and Franchère. In 1889 he sent some drawings to Montreal where they were exhibited.

On arriving in Paris in 1890, Suzor enrolled at the Conservatory of Music, where he undertook an opera course under Boulanger and Edouard Masson. He studied music for two years until a throat operation forced him out of music and into painting. Léon Bonnat was his teacher for four years at the School of Fine Arts. Suzor-Côté, Maurice Cullen and James Wilson Morrice, were all studying together in Paris. The sculptor, Alfred Laliberté took a studio with Suzor in Montparnasse. Suzor travelled to Fontainebleau, Ramboulette, Ivry, and Senlis, Normandy and Brittany.

For the first time in 1894 he decided to try for the official Salon. He submitted a Normandy Interior, which was accepted. In 1894 he came home to Arthabaska for two years. He returned to France in 1896 and stayed until 1900. In 1898 he attended Benjamin Constant and Jules Lefebvre's classes at the Academy learning portraiture and historical painting. The Death of Archimedes won Suzor the grand prize and he won the silver medal at the Calarosi Academy.

He showed a Pastourelle in the 1898 Salon, and he spent two years between 1899 and 1900 in Germany. In 1901, Suzor won the Bronze Medal

at the Paris International Exposition for Entre Voisin and in 1901 showed at the Paris Salon to win an honorable mention, and to be made an officer of the Academy of the French Government. In 1906 he did a large historical picture The Landing of Jacques Cartier at Quebec.

One of his first bronzes dates about 1907, The Trapper. He and the other Canadian students met at the Cafe-Aux-Fleurs.

In 1907 he started a period of travel, visiting England, Scotland, Russia, Germany, Spain, Italy and Holland. In 1908, he returned to Canada and set up as a "Pied a Terre", a studio in Montreal on Victoria Street near St. Catherine's, where he was to spend the winters until 1917. In the summers Suzor-Côté painted in the Arthabaska region and along the Nicolet River.

From Suzor's sketches of the Quebec peasantry he made bronzes. In 1910 Edmund Dyonnet, R.C.A. of Montreal, as secretary of the R.C.A. took an exhibition of Canadian painting to the Crystal Palace in London for the Festival of Empire, which included Suzor-Côté's Primitive Sugar Camp. The exhibition was cancelled because of the death of Edward VII in 1910, but was shown in Liverpool before Dyonnet's return to Canada.

In 1912 Suzor joined the Royal Canadian Academy. By 1917 Suzor-Côté was doing some of his best Impressionist work. He won the Jessie Dow prize in 1929, the year he suffered a stroke. For the next ten years he lived in retirement at Daytona Beach, Florida, where he died in 1939.

## APPENDIX

PICTURES BY HORATIO WALKER



FIG. 4  
OXEN DRINKING  
OIL ON CANVAS  
47 1/2" X 35 1/2"  
1899  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 5  
EVENING ILE D'ORLEANS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
28" X 36"  
1909  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 6  
HORSES AT THE TROUGH  
OIL ON CANVAS  
50" X 40"  
N.D.  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY HOMER RANSFORD WATSON



FIG. 1  
A COMING STORM IN THE  
ADIRONDACKS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
34" X 47"  
1879  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS



FIG. 2  
THE OLD MILL  
OIL ON CANVAS  
38 1/4" X 58"  
1886  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 3  
LOG CUTTING IN THE  
WOODS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
18" X 24"  
1894  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY HORATIO WALKER



FIG. 7  
THE ICE CUTTERS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
21" X 38"  
1904  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS



THE ICE CUTTERS  
DETAIL



THE ICE CUTTERS  
DETAIL

PICTURES BY JAMES MACDONALD BARNESLEY



FIG. 8  
STUDY FOR LA JETÉE  
DU POLLET DIEPPE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
14 3/4' X 21 5/8"  
1884  
MRS. W.C. MUNDERLOK  
MONTREAL



FIG. 9  
ON THE SEINE  
COURBEVOIE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
18 3/4" X 32 1/2"  
PARIS 1883  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 10  
LA JETÉE DU POLLET  
DIEPPE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
43" X 68 1/2"  
1885  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



PICTURES BY JAMES MACDONALD BARNESLEY



LA JETÉE DU  
POLLET DIEPPE  
DETAIL



FIG. 11  
FRENCH PADDLE  
STEAMER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
18 1/8" X 30"  
1888  
DR. & MRS. D. RAFF  
WESTMOUNT



FIG. 12  
HIGH TIDE AT DIEPPE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
42 1/2" X 58 3/8"  
1886  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY JAMES MACDONALD BARNESLEY



HIGH TIDE AT DIEPPE  
DETAIL



FIG. 13  
THE LAST RAYS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
55" X 75 3/4"  
1887  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY WILLIAM BRYMNER

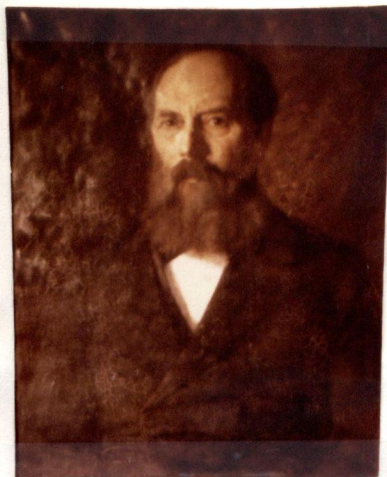


FIG. 14  
DOUGLAS BRYMNER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1886  
MISS GRACE BRYMNER  
TORONTO

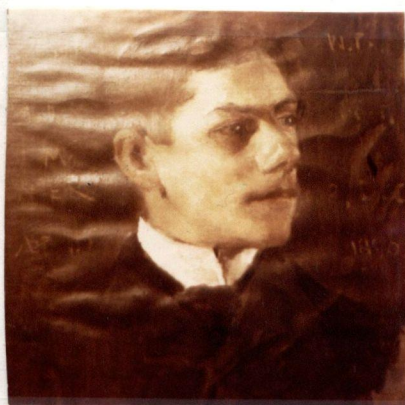


FIG. 15  
ROBERT BRYMNER  
AGE 15  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1890  
MISS GRACE BRYMNER  
TORONTO

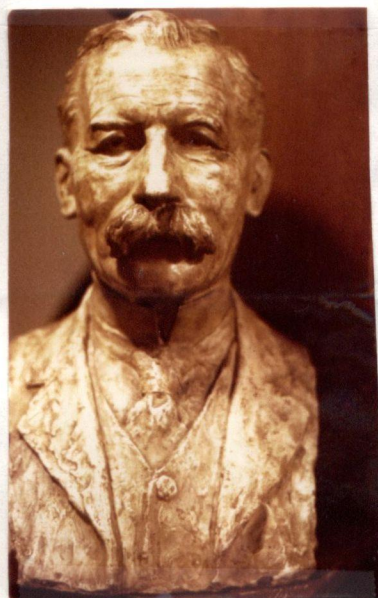


FIG. 16  
WILLIAM BRYMNER  
BY: GEORGE W. HILL  
PLASTER CAST OF  
ORIGINAL BRONZE  
IN NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA  
19" HIGH  
1918

PICTURES BY WILLIAM BRYMNER

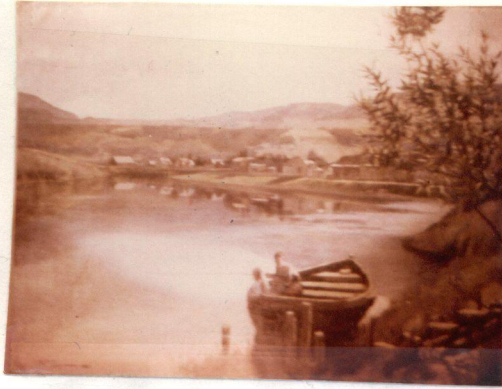


FIG. 17  
BAIE ST. PAUL  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1886  
MISS GRACE BRYMNER  
TORONTO

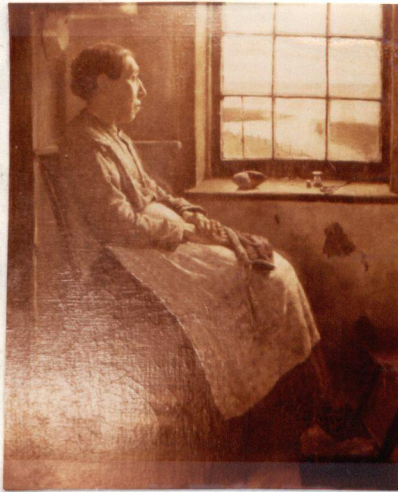


FIG. 18  
SAD MEMORIES  
OIL ON CANVAS  
ABOUT 1885  
MISS GRACE BRYMNER  
TORONTO



FIG. 19  
EARLY MOONRISE IN  
SEPTEMBER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1886  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY WILLIAM BRYMNER



FIG. 20  
CHAMP DE MARS  
WINTER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
29 1/2" X 40"  
1892  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS



FIG. 21  
EARLY MOONRISE IN  
SEPTEMBER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
28 1/2" X 39 1/2"  
1899  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 22  
WOMAN SEWING  
OIL ON CANVAS  
25 1/2" X 16"  
ABOUT 1900  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY WILLIAM BRYMNER



FIG. 23  
THE VAUGHAN SISTERS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
40" X 50 1/2"  
1910  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY

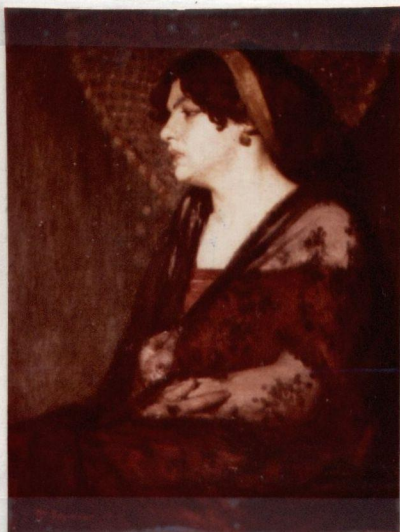


FIG. 24  
CARITA  
OIL ON CANVAS  
32 1/2" X 23 3/4"  
1910  
TORONTO ART GALLERY

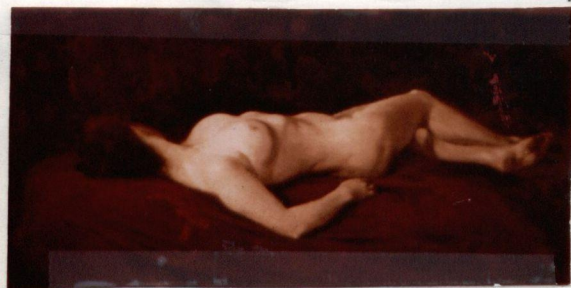


FIG. 25  
RECLINING FIGURE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
18 1/2" X 34 1/2"  
1915  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY MAURICE CULLEN



FIG. 26  
THE MILL STREAM  
OIL ON CANVAS  
FRANCE 1894  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY



FIG. 27  
MORET IN SUMMER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
FRANCE, 1896  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY



FIG. 28  
MORET IN WINTER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
FRANCE, 1895  
TORONTO ART GALLERY

PICTURE BY AUGUSTE RENOIR



FIG. 29  
LA SEINE À CHATOU  
OIL ON CANVAS  
ABOUT 1878  
TORONTO ART GALLERY

PICTURES BY MAURICE CULLEN



FIG. 30  
ENVIRONS OF PARIS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1895  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 31  
LOGGING IN WINTER  
BEAUPRÉ  
OIL ON CANVAS  
25" X 32"  
1896  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY



PICTURES BY MAURICE CULLEN

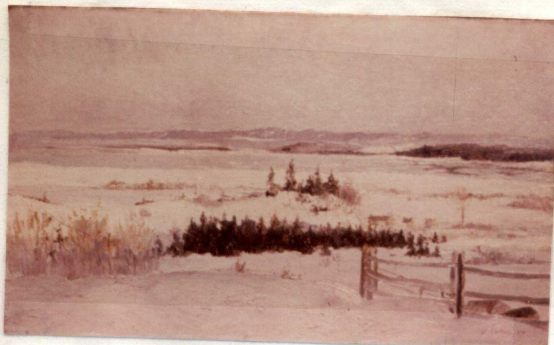


FIG. 32  
WINTER SUNLIGHT BEAUPRÉ  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1896  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY

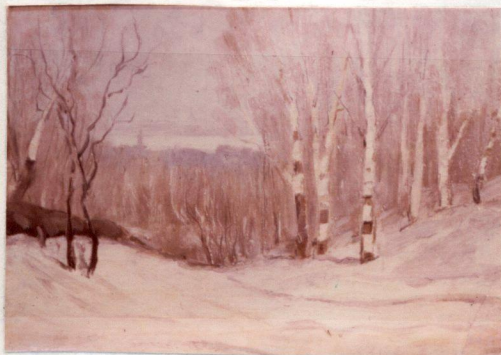


FIG. 33  
WINTER NEAR MONTREAL  
OIL ON CARDBOARD SKETCH  
8 1/4" X 11 3/4"  
N.D.  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 34  
WINTER EVENING QUEBEC  
OIL ON CANVAS  
29 1/2" X 39 1/4"  
1905  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURES BY MAURICE CULLEN



FIG. 35  
LEVIS FROM QUEBEC  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1906  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 36  
WINTER STREET SCENE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
ABOUT 1912  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS



FIG. 37  
SNOW STORM EVENING  
OIL ON CANVAS  
18" X 15"  
1914  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PAINTINGS BY MAURICE CULLEN



FIG. 38  
PACKING ICE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
29 1/2" X 39 1/2"  
1906  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

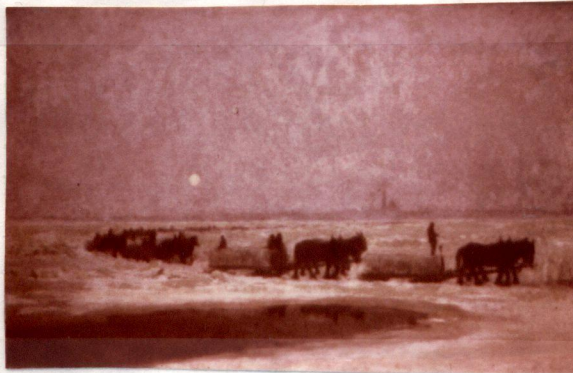


FIG. 39  
THE LAST LOADS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1906  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 40  
ICE HARVEST  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1914  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY MAURICE CULLEN

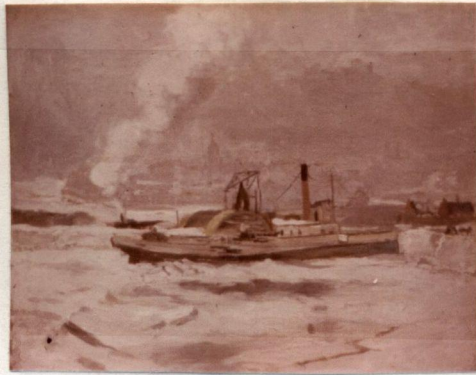


FIG. 41  
THE OLD FERRY BOAT,  
LOUIS BASIN, QUEBEC  
OIL ON CANVAS  
23 3/4" X 28 3/4"  
1907  
NATIONAL GALLERY OTTAWA



FIG. 42  
SUMMER NIGHT  
OIL ON CANVAS  
ABOUT 1907  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 43  
LANDSCAPE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
22" X 28"  
ABOUT 1912  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURES BY MAURICE CULLEN



FIG. 44  
OUR GUNS AT BONN  
UNIVERSITY  
OIL ON CANVAS  
56" X 70"  
1918  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 45  
BOMBING AREA SEAFORD  
OIL ON CANVAS  
34" X 44"  
1918  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

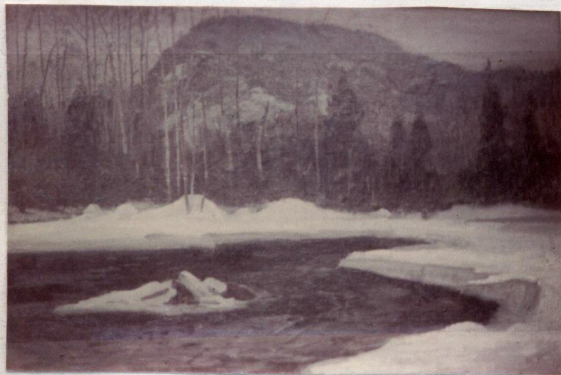


FIG. 46  
A MARCH EVENING  
OIL ON CANVAS  
30" X 45"  
1923  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
CANADA

PICTURE BY MAURICE CULLEN



FIG. 47  
VALLEY OF THE DEVIL  
RIVER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
30" X 40"  
1927  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 48  
GRAVESTONE OF  
SUZOR-CÔTÉ AND  
THE CHURCH AT  
ARTHABASKA



FIG. 49  
OVERLOOKING THE VALLEY  
OF THE NICOLET



FIG. 50  
HOME OF SIR WILFRED  
LAURIER, ARTHABASKA



FIG. 51  
BRONZE PLAQUE AT THE  
LAURIER HOUSE

PICTURES BY MARC AUREL DE FOY SUZOR-CÔTÉ



FIG. 52  
AUTUMN LANDSCAPE  
EVENING, PARIS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
24" X 32"  
1900  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 53  
LANDSCAPE  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS



PICTURES BY MARC SUZOR-CÔTÉ

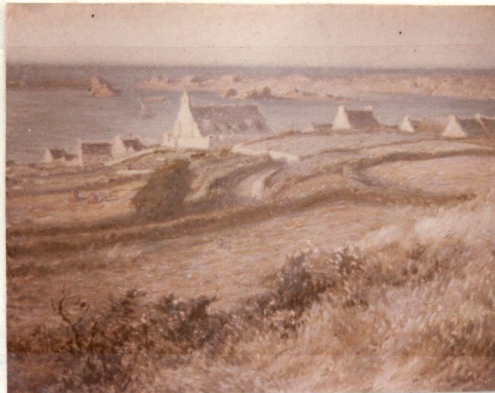


FIG. 54  
PORT BLANC EN BRETAGNE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1906  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 55  
CAUGHNAWAGA WOMEN  
BRONZE  
17 1/2" X 22"  
1909  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 56  
WINTER LANDSCAPE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
28 1/4" X 37 1/4"  
1909  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURES BY MARC SUZOR-CÔTÉ



FIG. 57  
THE SETTLEMENT ON  
THE HILLSIDE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
23" X 28 3/4"  
1909  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

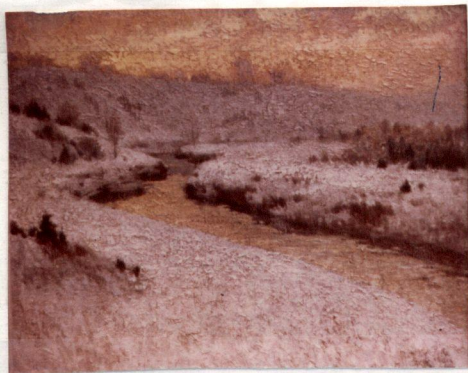


FIG. 58  
STREAM IN WINTER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
23 7/8" X 28 3/4"  
N.D.  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 59  
ARTHABASKA RIVER  
OIL ON A PANEL  
N.D.  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURE BY SIR WILLIAM VAN HORNE



FIG. 60  
STEEL-MILLS AT  
SYDNEY, CAPE BRETON  
OIL ON CANVAS  
37 1/2" X 48 1/4"  
1907  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS

PICTURE BY MABEL MAY



FIG. 61  
THE REGATTA  
OIL ON CANVAS  
18" X 22"  
1914  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURE BY FREDERICK W. HUTCHISON

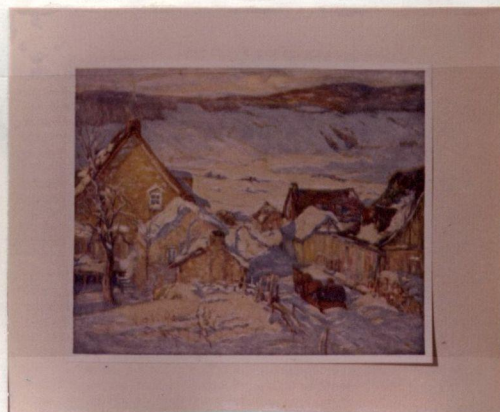


FIG. 62  
OCTOBER SNOW  
BAIE ST. PAUL

PICTURE BY FREDERICK W. HUTCHISON



FIG. 63  
ON THE ROAD TO  
MURRAY BAY  
OIL ON CANVAS  
40" X 50"  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS

PICTURES BY BLAIR BRUCE



FIG. 64  
PLEASANT MOMENT  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1887  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY



FIG. 65  
GIVERNY FRANCE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1887  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY

PICTURES BY WILLIAM HENRY CLAPP



FIG. 66  
MORNING IN SPAIN  
OIL ON CANVAS  
29" X 36 1/2"  
1907  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 67  
IN THE ORCHARD  
QUEBEC  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1909  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY



FIG. 68  
THE NEW CHURCH  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1913  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURE BY WILLIAM HENRY CLAPP

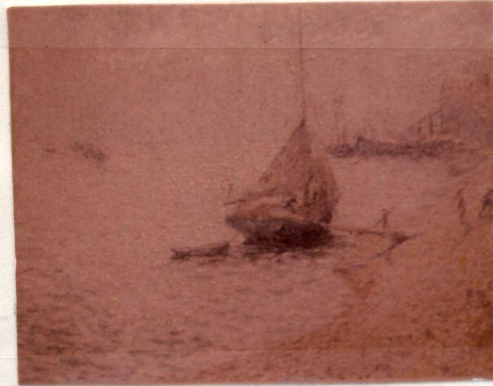


FIG. 69  
LUMBER BOATS  
OIL ON CANVAS

HAMILTON ART GALLERY

PICTURES BY ERNEST LAWSON



FIG. 70  
SNOW-BOUND BOATS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
24 3/4" X 29 3/4"  
1907  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 71  
WINTER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
24 3/4" X 29 3/4"  
1914  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURES BY ERNEST LAWSON



FIG. 72  
MISTY DAY  
OIL ON CANVAS  
20" X 24"  
1918  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 73  
THE BATHERS

HAMILTON ART GALLERY

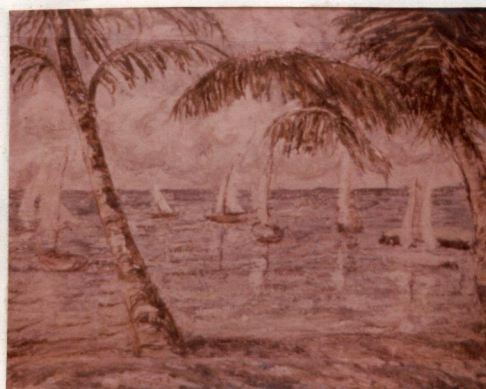


FIG. 74  
SAILBOATS

HAMILTON ART GALLERY

PICTURE BY IDA G. HAMILTON



FIG. 75  
SUNLIGHT AND SHADOWS  
OIL ON CANVAS

1923  
HAMILTON ART GALLERY

PICTURES BY JAMES EDWARD HERVEY MACDONALD

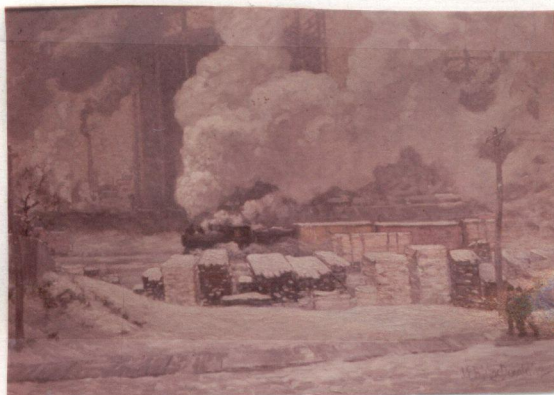


FIG. 76  
TRACKS AND TRAFFIC  
OIL ON CANVAS

1912  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 77  
EDGE OF A TOWN  
OIL ON CANVAS

UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB  
TORONTO



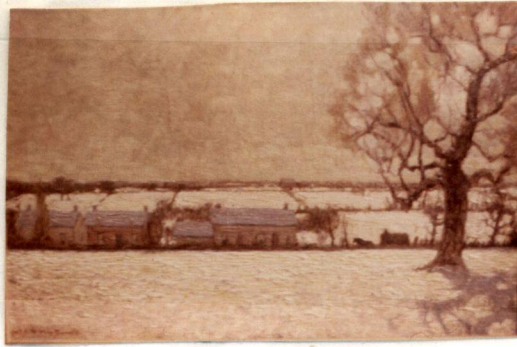


FIG. 78  
WINTER SUNSHINE  
OIL ON CANVAS

HAMILTON ART GALLERY

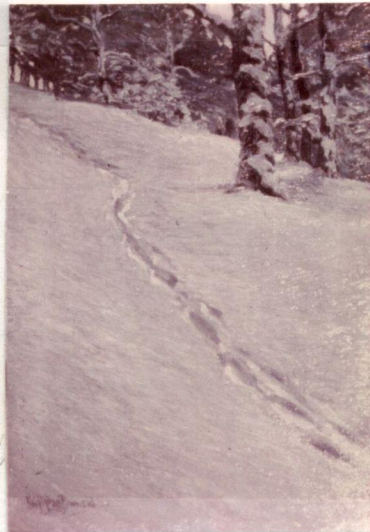


FIG. 79  
MORNING AFTER SNOW  
HIGH PARK  
OIL ON CANVAS

1912-1914  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 80  
EARLY EVENING WINTER  
OIL ON CANVAS

1912  
TORONTO ART GALLERY

PICTURES BY J.E.H. MACDONALD



FIG. 81  
IN THE PINE SHADOWS  
MOONLIGHT  
OIL ON CANVAS  
31 1/2" X 27 1/4"  
1912  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 82  
SNOW-BOUND  
OIL ON CANVAS  
19 1/2" X 29 1/2"  
1915  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURE BY LAWREN HARRIS

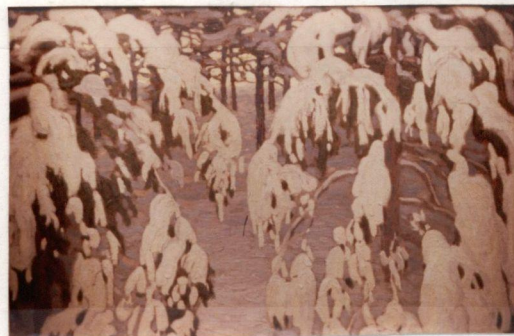


FIG. 83  
SNOW SCENE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
  
1915-1916  
R.B. McMICHAEL

PICTURE BY TOM THOMSON



FIG. 84  
IN ALGONQUIN PARK  
OIL ON CANVAS

1914  
R.B. McMICHAEL

PICTURES BY J.E.H. MACDONALD



FIG. 85  
FALLS MONTREAL RIVER  
OIL ON CANVAS

1920  
TORONTO ART GALLERY



DETAIL

PICTURE BY J.E.H. MACDONALD



FIG. 86  
TANGLED GARDEN  
SKETCH NO. 2  
OIL ON PANEL

1916  
TORONTO ART GALLERY

PICTURES BY TOM THOMSON



FIG. 87  
BATEAUX  
OIL ON PANEL  
8 1/2" X 10 1/2"

TORONTO ART GALLERY



FIG. 88  
SPRING ICE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
27 3/4" X 39 3/4"  
1916  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURES BY TOM THOMSON



FIG. 89  
EDGE OF THE LOG RUN  
OIL ON PANEL

1916  
R.B. McMICHAEL



FIG. 90  
NORTHERN LAKE  
OIL ON PANEL

ABOUT 1916  
R.B. McMICHAEL

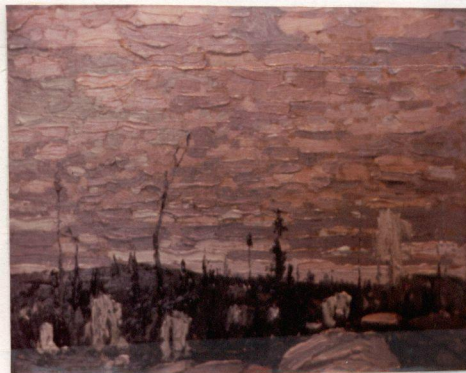


FIG. 91  
NORTHERN SKY  
OIL ON PANEL

ABOUT 1916  
R.B. McMICHAEL

PICTURES BY FRANKLIN CARMICHAEL

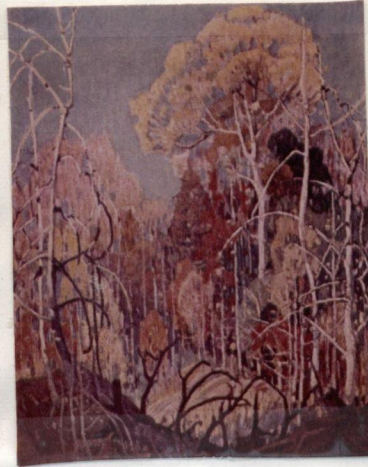


FIG. 92  
SILVERY TANGLE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
40" X 47"

BEAVERBROOK ART  
GALLERY



FIG. 93  
WINTER LANDSCAPE  
OIL ON CANVAS  
35" X 27"

MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS

DETAILS



PICTURES BY FREDERICK HORSMAN VARLEY

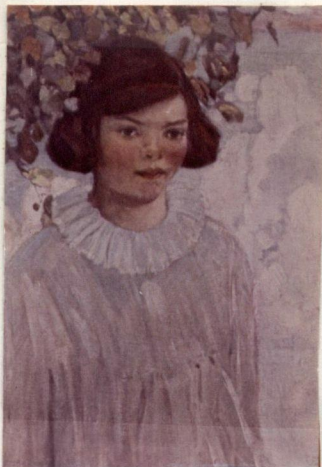


FIG. 94  
PORTRAIT OF JANET  
OIL ON CANVAS

BEAVERBROOK ART  
GALLERY



FIG. 95  
VERA  
OIL ON CANVAS  
24" X 20"  
1930  
VINCENT MASSEY

PICTURES BY ARTHUR LISMER



FIG. 96  
THE GUIDE'S HOME  
OIL ON CANVAS  
39 1/2" X 44 1/2"  
1914  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA



FIG. 97  
AFTERNOON SUNLIGHT  
OIL ON CANVAS  
28' X 36"  
1915-1916  
MONTREAL MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS

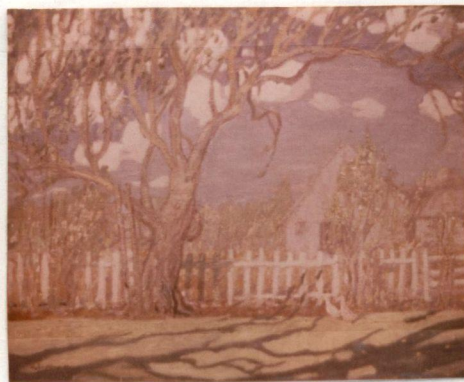


FIG. 98  
SPRINGTIME ON THE  
FARM  
OIL ON CANVAS  
26" X 32"  
1916-1917  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS



PICTURES BY ALEXANDER YOUNG JACKSON



FIG. 99  
CANOE LAKE  
OIL ON CANVAS

HAMILTON ART GALLERY



FIG. 100  
CHURCHES AT LIEVIN  
OIL ON CANVAS

1918  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS



FIG. 101  
A SCREENED ROAD  
OIL ON CANVAS

1918  
MONTREAL MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS

PICTURE BY A.Y. JACKSON

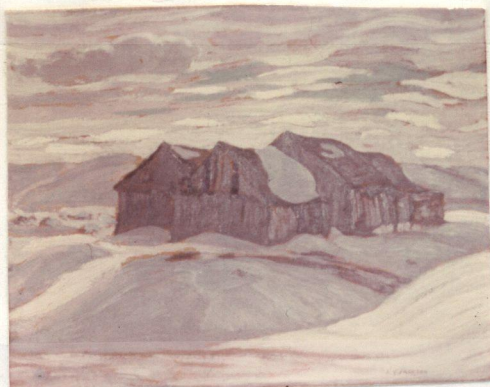


FIG. 102  
OLD BARNs QUEBEC  
OIL ON CANVAS  
44" X 34"  
ABOUT 1940  
R.B. McMICHAEL

PICTURE BY TOM THOMSON



FIG. 103  
SNOW IN OCTOBER  
OIL ON CANVAS  
32 1/4" X 34 1/4"

NATIONAL GALLERY  
OTTAWA

PICTURE BY LAWREN HARRIS

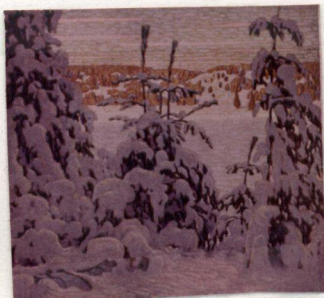


FIG. 104  
SNOW II  
OIL ON CANVAS

PICTURE BY LAWREN HARRIS

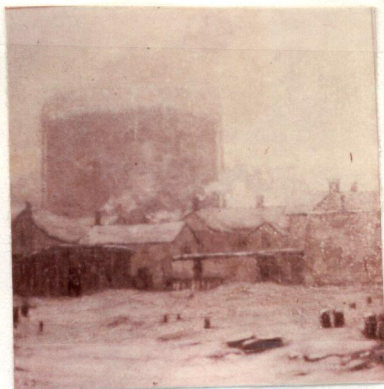


FIG. 105  
THE GAS WORKS  
OIL ON CANVAS  
1912

TORONTO ART  
GALLERY

PICTURE BY HORATIO WALKER



FIG. 106  
THE FIRST SNOW  
OIL ON CANVAS

BEAVERBROOK ART  
GALLERY FREDERICTON  
N.B.

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