

## Printmaking in Canada

**Printmaking in Canada: The Earliest Views and Portraits/Les débuts de l'estampe imprimée au Canada: vues et portraits. An exhibition held at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, 18 April –25 May 1980; circulated to the McCord Museum, Montréal, 11 June –13 July; Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, 25 July –1 September**

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cartoons, with speech 'balloons' telling narrative stories from Inuit mythology and family and regional history. Unlike many commercially more successful Inuit artists, Pitseolak did not avoid images of modernity or 'reality' in his portrait and historical images: saws, rifles, Peterhead boats, and so on; nor did he consciously change his style or imagery to suit the market. He believed, so he said, that he was 'above' that, because he had things to say that were more important to express – to whites and other Inuit – than mere money. He also expressed resentment, at times, at the financial success and fame of other artists whose more studiously 'primitive' works he considered less accurate, less important, and less honest than his own.

During his lifetime Pitseolak's graphic works did not achieve the fame of many other Cape Dorset artists, such as his namesake Pitseolak Ashoona, his neighbour Qirnuajuak, or his relatives Usuituk and Pautak. Yet among the Inuit population he was considered in the top two or three artists because of his accurately portrayed knowledge, his attention to detail, and his stubborn resistance to known influences of the market. Posthumously he has been increasingly recognized both as an artist and a historical personality, through the works of Dorothy Eber, through the issue of his previously hidden graphics in new lithographic series, and through this major exhibition and its catalogue.

The handsomely produced catalogue contains reproductions of a fair proportion of the photographic

and graphic images in the exhibition, enhanced by excellent texts. Dorothy Eber, who worked extensively with Peter Pitseolak and his materials, tells of her experiences with him and of his family's recollections of his character and early photographic experiences. David Bellman analyses Pitseolak's graphic expression, paying particular attention to his imagery and to his later efforts to record the spiritual and mythological side of Inuit life. The catalogue could only have been bettered by expansion with additional texts by others who knew Pitseolak in his earlier life, such as Lord Tweedsmuir, James Houston, or Terry Ryan.

The exhibition and its catalogue signify a new level of maturity in Canada's consideration of her Inuit artists. This is not a selling or a promotional exhibition, indeed it is not based on Pitseolak's graphic arts alone. The subject matter is more 'the man and his works,' a 'visual archive,' and a more rounded and penetrating consideration of the total personality. This more critical, at least more honest, accounting presents the artist and his manifold works in a more totally human way – yet this is as it should be and the way that Peter Pitseolak himself would have wanted it: an accurate record of part of the human scene – and Pitseolak's character and works are strong enough to benefit from, indeed they may have inspired, this deeper examination.

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## *Printmaking in Canada*

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*Printmaking in Canada: The Earliest Views and Portraits/Les débuts de l'estampe imprimée au Canada: vues et portraits.* An exhibition held at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, 18 April–25 May 1980; circulated to the McCord Museum, Montréal, 11 June–13 July; Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, 25 July–1 September.

Catalogue: Mary Allodi, *Printmaking in Canada: The Earliest Views and Portraits/Les débuts de l'estampe imprimée au Canada: vues et portraits*, with contributions from Peter Winkworth, Honor de Pencier, W.M.E. Cooke, Lydia Foy, Conrad E.W. Graham; Toronto, Royal Ontario Museum, 1980. 244 pp., 113 illus., \$5.00 (paper).

For some time now, Mary Allodi, with encouragement and assistance from her associates, has been ferreting out views and portraits *printed in Canada* prior to 1850.

The Eleventh Annual North American Print Conference held at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) provided the occasion for Allodi to present her research by way of this major exhibition of 104 Canadian-produced prints and a handsomely designed, fully illustrated, bilingual catalogue – both firsts of their kind. The Museum Assistance Programmes of the National Museums of Canada (NMC) gave a substantial grant towards the realization of the exhibition and catalogue, both of which were compressed into a hectic one-year period. NMC should be heartily commended for its choice. It is a shame, however, that an exhibition of this quality and importance is only to be circulated in the 'Golden Triangle,' but the agreement of thirteen institutional and a handful of private lenders was necessarily secured prior to approval of the NMC grant. Had there been sufficient lead time to confirm bookings in the Western and Atlantic Provinces, additional

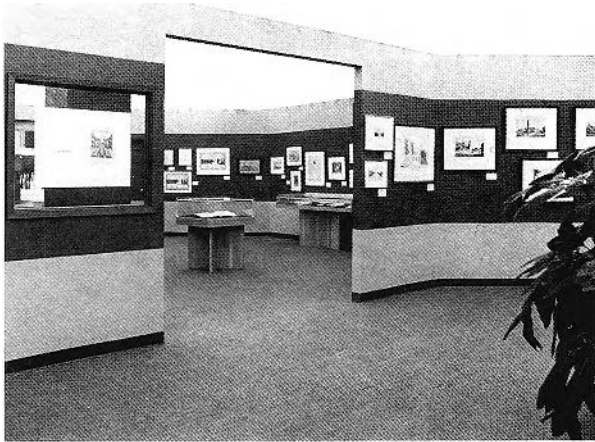


FIGURE 1. *Printmaking in Canada*. View of installation at the Public Archives of Canada (Photo: Public Archives of Canada).

funding for an extended itinerary would likely have been approved.

The installations in Toronto and, I am informed, in Montreal and Ottawa (Fig. 1), generally respected the chronological arrangement of the prints according to publication dates given in the catalogue, a most sensible approach to the material. As a result, the viewer can take stock of the evolution of techniques employed and quality of printing in Canada, comparing the production and locale of military presses run by amateurs with those of commercial enterprises, and remarking the relative popularity of subjects. These points are ably discussed in a readable Introduction to the catalogue. However, the space for temporary exhibitions in the Sigmund Samuel Canadiana Gallery of the ROM is far from being a curator's dream. The fine period furniture on permanent display and rotating picture exhibitions merit better facilities. Freshly painted or papered walls would make the room more inviting. The lighting is outmoded and inadequate: with track lighting, exhibitions could be suitably spotlighted and eye-strain eliminated while maintaining light levels at 50 lux for conservation reasons. The ROM has allocated substantial sums to the construction of an addition to the main building, but the Canadiana Gallery is still awaiting a simple facelift.

This said, the quality of impressions was kept in mind when selecting works for display. Disappointments are few, although I would have preferred seeing an uncoloured impression of Hochstetter's *The Falls of Montmorenci* (cat. 10). The colouring, done some years after publication and doubtless in response to consumer taste, is interesting but detracts from the charmingly naïve and rhythmic rendering of this engraving. Superior impressions of this as well as his *A View of Quebec, from Point Levy ...* (cat. 2) are in the bound volumes of the *Quebec Magazine* on loan from the Library of Parliament in Ottawa; however, they had to be opened at other illustrations. (The McCord

Museum, which owns the *Quebec Magazine* for August 1793, was able to compare coloured and uncoloured impressions of cat. 10). Portraits comprise twenty per cent of this exhibition and many are telling characterizations. The commanding, full-length portrait of *L' Genl Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, G.C.B./Govr Genl & Comr of the Forces in British N. America* (cat. 14; Fig. 2) was among my preferences for the catalogue cover illustration. While the McCord Museum impression is crisp and well coloured, it is considerably buckled for which reason I would have preferred to have seen exhibited the equally fine impression in the Public Archives of Canada (PAC). The PAC supplemented the exhibition with such items as the Burrows watercolour that is nearly identical in composition to Tazewell's lithograph of the ... *Truss Bridge over the Chaudiere Falls ...* after Burrows (cat. 39). Also shown there was a portrait of *Paccane, a Meamis Chief* (Fig. 3), reputedly drawn and etched in 1793/4 by Elizabeth Posthuma Gwillim Simcoe. Both this and the *Canise or Great Sail, Chippewa Chief* (Archives of Ontario, Toronto) were excluded by Allodi 'for lack of firm evidence as to date or place of execution (p. xii).' One could argue that there is as much justification for including the Simcoe etchings as that by Sir Alexander Croke (cat. 13). Mrs. Simcoe stayed in Québec City from October 1794 to February 1795, by which date the Neilson press had experience in printing illustrations for both the *Quebec Magazine* and *Quebec Almanack* and could have printed her small-scale, etched portraits. (This observation was first made by James Burant of the PAC, to whom I am indebted for responding to several queries for the purpose of this review.)

An exceptionally rare impression of *The Quebec Driving Club meeting at the Place d'Armes ...* (cat. 24) with full margins and cream-yellow wash is exhibited. Sketched by Ensign William Wallace 'from the Guard House of the Castle at the precise time the Driving Club were waiting for the Governor to appear and



FIGURE 2. *L' Genl Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, G.C.B.* Painted, engraved, and published by Robert Field, Halifax, N.S., 24 June 1816. Cat. 14. Ottawa, Public Archives of Canada (Photo: Public Archives of Canada).

FIGURE 3.  
*Paccane, a Meamis  
 Chief.* Reputedly  
 drawn and etched  
 by Elizabeth  
 Posthuma Gwillim  
 Simcoe, 1793-94.  
 Not in exhibition.  
 Ottawa, Public  
 Archives of  
 Canada (Photo:  
 Public Archives of  
 Canada).



head the train' (*The Picture of Quebec*, Québec, 1829, p. 15), this etching with aquatint by James Smillie is indeed 'the finest Canadian sleighing scene printed in Canada.' As the catalogue information on Wallace is based on secondary sources, it may be appropriate to summarize research undertaken for my forthcoming *Catalogue of Paintings, Watercolours and Drawings in the W.H. Coverdale Collection of Canadiana* (Ottawa, PAC). Wallace was born in Canterbury in November 1804. He passed the examination for a commission in the Royal Artillery or Royal Engineers in December 1824, but chose to accept a commission without purchase in the 71st Light Infantry in April 1825. He was immediately posted to Québec, where he stayed until May of 1827, before moving westward to work on the Rideau Canal. Promoted to lieutenant in October 1827, Wallace likely returned to England in September 1828 on obtaining a leave of absence. About one year later, he transferred to the 98th Regiment of Foot, from which he retired with rank of captain in 1841/42. The intriguing lithographs of sleighing scenes printed for the Quebec Driving Club in the early 1830s or thereabouts (cat. 50-53) obviously derive elements from the Wallace-Smillie print. Some corrections and additional information to these entries should be noted. The PAC owns not an impression of cat. 50, but rather a pen-and-ink drawing over pencil (Acc. 1934-271, measuring  $7\frac{1}{4}$  by  $10\frac{3}{8}$  inches) of the same subject; its inked inscription is identical to the printed one except that 'Matthew' is spelled with a double 't' similar to known lithographic variants.

Probably unknown to the author and hence omitted from the references, the untitled *A Border of Four Sleighs* (cat. 53) was listed among three pen-and-ink drawings attributed to Sir Joshua Jebb in the Montreal Book Auctions Ltd. catalogue of 31 October 1974, lot 223. They were in reality three different lithographs of sleighing scenes which were snapped up by a private collector for a mere \$75. Allodi did not have the opportunity to visit the Archives nationales du Québec, for had she studied Lady Aylmer's diary at first hand,

she would have discovered another lithograph similar to that of cat. 51, but lacking the menu. The omission of margins and caption to the illustration on p. 117 is aggravating as the catalogue reader cannot readily determine whether the sleighing scene is a detail or a separate print. It is in fact the latter, from a private collection and not included in the exhibition. Captions are also inexplicably omitted for the illustration of the title-page wrapper to Woolford's *Nova Scotia Scenery* on p. 35, and for the details of cat. 28 and 85, pp. 65 and 191.

A welcome inclusion is the copperplate for the *North East View, Notre Dame Street, Montreal* (cat. 84) and the lithographic stone for *The Old Officers' Quarters, Fredericton, N.B., before the southwest end was torn down* (cat. 91). Since few plates and stones of this era have survived, the circumstances of the latter acquisition are instructive, for its crayon image could not be readily authenticated as a *Canadian subject* and an initial sales offer was declined. Quite apart from this, the PAC subsequently agreed to restore two lithographs from the Ganong Collection of the New Brunswick Museum for the current exhibition: when the subject of cat. 91 was recognized as being identical to the crayon image on the stone itself, negotiations were at once reopened.

In the context of such an exhibition, scanning early Canadian newspapers for advertisements relating to recent publications of prints requires dedication and a keen eye. Allodi has unearthed a wealth of new documentation, much of which, I am pleased to say, is reproduced in the catalogue. There is, for example, an apology for the delay in issuing the pamphlet *Notices of The Rideau Canal* (Kingston, 1832) in greater number, due to the inferior quality of lithographic ink used for the frontispiece (cat. 39). The editor of the *Canadian Literary Magazine* (April 1833) attached great importance to things Canadian with the boast: 'Mr. Tazewell, our Artist, has bestowed considerable pains upon the accompanying portrait [Walter Scott] – the first we believe ever engraved in Upper Canada – engraved too on Canadian stone, and from thence, by means of a Canadian press, transferred to Canadian paper' (cat. 41). While Allodi mentions a watercolour by Colonel Sir Richard Airey almost identical to the lithograph *London. Canada West* (cat. 103), comparison should also be made to an undated and unfinished pencil drawing of similar detail and composition by Captain John Herbert Caddy in the London Regional Art Gallery (Acc. 73.A.25). There is much new data on Adolphus Bourne, engraver, printer, and publisher who before 1850 had 'printed and published at least thirty separately issued prints in Montreal.' Allodi prepared the Bourne entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Volume XI; however the references neglect to state that this volume is in press rather than already published. In general, her text is written to appeal to layman and expert alike, with but one awkward construction (cat. 83) resulting in a bizarre burial possibility for an ecclesiastic: 'St. James Street, named after Abbé Jean-Jacques Olier of Paris, who landed at Montreal in 1642

with Maisonneuve, was laid out parallel to Notre Dame Street in the 1670s.'

The following remarks result from problems occasioned by the use of the catalogue as a research document but in no way undermine its very considerable value. While there is an 'Index of artists, printmakers and publishers' with birth and death dates for quick reference, a nominal index of other persons mentioned in the text is omitted. The so-called 'Catalogue entries' (pp. xxiv-xxvi) might be better titled 'List of plates' to avoid confusion with the catalogue entries proper which commence on p. 2; the comprehensive nature of the former make the absence of subject and geographical indexes of little consequence. The 'Abbreviations for institutions' omits BM for the British Museum, London; MND for the Musée de l'église Notre Dame, Montréal; and PRO for the Public Record Office, London. The British Library is not, as stated, in the British Museum. This error resulted from a misunderstanding as to the current location of the King George III Topographical Collection bequeathed to the British Museum in 1828. This collection is housed in the Map Library which until recently was part of the British Museum but is now under the direction of the British Library. To my knowledge, the Department of Manuscripts housing the Haldimand Papers and the Department of Prints and Drawings housing the Croke etchings (pp. 3 and 27 respectively) are still part of the British Museum.

My remarks concerning inaccuracies as to the number of extant impressions of various prints (always a significant observation in Canadiana and one especially insisted upon in the catalogue) will be restricted to the collections of the PAC with which I am most familiar. These errors reveal an inconsistent effort to distinguish between the permanent collection of the PAC and its Coverdale (also known as the Manoir Richelieu) Collection, acquired in 1970.

For the six line-engraved views of Montreal (cat. 28-33) by LENEY, Sproule, and Bourne, and for the John Murray views of Montreal (cat. 82-85), Allodi cites Percy F. Godenrath, *Catalogue of the Manoir Richelieu Collection of Canadiana*, Montréal, Canada Steamship Lines, 1930). In the first case, the impressions located are attributed to the PAC rather than PAC Cov., a distinction made elsewhere, although cat. 29 omits any reference to the PAC. In addition to the Coverdale set of Murray views, the PAC owns four, not two, impressions of cat. 83 and five, not two, impressions of cat. 85. The PAC owns three, not two, impressions of cat. 64, and no reference is given to another impression in the Coverdale Collection (Cov. 2041) despite its listing in Godenrath's *Supplementary Catalogue* of 1939 which was consulted by Allodi. The companion view (cat. 65) is correctly given as being from this same collection (Cov. 2041a) but no source is stated. Both views are listed in Godenrath's *Catalogue of ... the Tercentenary of the City of Montréal* (Montreal, Canada Steamship Lines and Art Association of Montreal, 1942, cat. 88 and 88a). No mention is made

of a complete set of James Duncan views of Montréal (cat. 74-79) in the permanent collection and an incomplete one in the Coverdale Collection (Cov. 2271-2274). An impression of *The Garrison, Toronto* (cat. 89) in the latter collection (Cov. 2058) also has been overlooked. These omissions are rather perplexing since a check of the various artist and subject indexes for the Coverdale Collection would have shown the presence or absence of specific prints. While information as to the number of impressions of given prints in the permanent collection would have required tedious verification by the PAC staff, the nature of Allodi's pioneering catalogue required that this be attempted.

The whereabouts of 'the English lithograph of "The Hermitage" which illustrated an 1836 land company booklet' (cat. 90) eluded me for some time. Allodi verified that this print was supposed to be in the *N.S. & N.B. Land Co. 1836* which should have been more properly identified as: *Sketches in New Brunswick, taken principally with the intention of shewing the Nature and description of the Land in the Tract purchased by the New Brunswick & Nova Scotia Land Company, in the year 1833; and of illustrating the operations of the Association during the years 1834 & 1835* (printed by Day and Haghe Lith<sup>rs</sup> and published by Ackermann & Co., London, 1836). This booklet has twelve lithographs by S. Russell and R.T. Bone after P[hilip?] Harry, W[illiam] P[orden] Kay, and E[dward] N[icholas] Kendall.

However, 'The Hermitage' is not among them. It is rather a separately issued, uncoloured lithograph inscribed *The Hermitage/Frederickton, New Brunswick/The Residence of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Thomas Baillie/E.N. Kendall delin./W.P. Kay Lithog.* (McCord Museum, Acc. M20063) and is distinguishable from the plates in *Sketches in New Brunswick* by differences in sheet size, and the style and format of inscriptions, notably the absence of credit line to printer and publisher.

In this context, it might be noted that a few captions in the exhibition do not state the title of the publication in which the print appeared or was intended to accompany, e.g. 34-36. This information is important when loose sheets such as cat. 34 are exhibited, so as not to mislead the viewer into thinking them to have been issued separately.

The absence of folio or page notations from manuscript sources is frustrating. This occurs with the Neilson Papers, MG 24 B 1, v. 138 (pp. 15, 19); C.O. 42, v. 221 (p. 57); and RG 9, series 1 A 1, v. 52 and 53 (p. 136). As to typographical errors, Twyman 1970 should read p. 33, not p. 22 (cat. 23), while the almost undecipherable signature in the subject of cat. 68 should read *P.E. Cro ... ?* not *J.E. Cro ... ?* A citation to the Tooley volume on p. 136 is missing from the References section: Ronald Vere Tooley, *English Books with Coloured Plates 1790 to 1860: A Bibliographical Account of the Most Important Books Illustrated by English Artists in Colour Aquatint and Colour Lithography* (London, Batsford, 1954).

Notwithstanding these criticisms, the exhibition and catalogue are first-rate. By concentrating her research

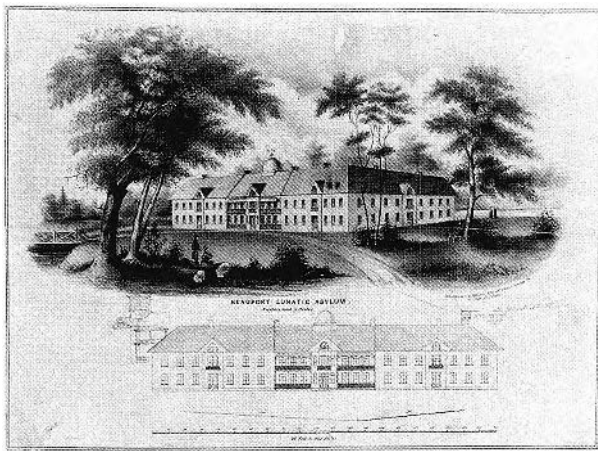


FIGURE 4. *Beauport Lunatic Asylum. Neighbourhood of Quebec.* Lithographed by G. Matthews, Montréal, from a drawing by R.C. Todd. Cat. 101. Ottawa, Public Archives of Canada (Photo: Public Archives of Canada).

on printmaking in Canada prior to 1850 (Fig. 4), Allodi is ploughing new and exciting ground. The catalogue is a 'steal' at \$5.00 (better that copies sell than collect dust) and is an invaluable reference for ongoing research, inviting comparison to parallel trends in Europe and the United States. Her study will put collectors, curators, and other interested parties on the alert for other early views and portraits, and no doubt will result in the modification of statistics concerning rarity. Allodi was delighted with the extension of the activity dates of John Gillespie as a result of my locating an uncoloured lithographic portrait inscribed *Duncan McNab of Islay Esq' [Toronto C.W. 1860] J. Gillespie del. [Drawn by Jno Ellis Lith' Toronto (Daly House Museum, Brandon, Manitoba).* New discoveries could well lead to a sequel to the present exhibition. If Allodi ever had reservations about the timeliness of this event, she should lay them to rest and be justly proud of her achievement.

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## *The Landscape Architecture of Frederick Todd*

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*Frederick G. Todd: Landscape Architecture for Urban Canada, 1900-1940.* An exhibition held at the McCord Museum, Montréal, 9 July–21 September 1980. No catalogue.

Frederick Todd was Canada's first resident landscape architect. He was born in Concord, New Hampshire, on 11 March 1876, and died in Montréal in 1948. He was one of a notable group of professional men from the United States who came to Canada about the turn of the century. The exhibition is the first major one to be devoted to his work. It has been organized by Peter Jacobs of the School of Landscape Architecture of the Université de Montréal. Above all, it presents a picture of a humanist concerned with people and their relationship to nature. It tells the story of a young New Englander, with late-nineteenth-century schooling and four years' apprenticeship with the Olmstedes, who came to Montréal and spent a lifetime developing pleasant places for people to live and visit from British Columbia to Newfoundland.

Frederick Law Olmsted was 64 and his son was 26 when, in 1896, Todd began to work in their office in Brookline, Massachusetts, as a man of 20. By then all of their great parks had been completed and town planning was their interest. In four years Todd learned their landscape and planning principles, particularly

the idea of achieving works of beauty and utility with 'nature herself as partner.' It also seems likely he learned a good deal from old Olmsted the writer and social reformer. For example, in the comments he makes upon the park movement near the beginning of his career in Canada, Todd stresses that 'people whose lives are lived among the bustle and strife of a large city require some place where they can rest after the day's exertion: mothers with little ones, whose life in the narrow tenements is ill-suited to fit them for life's battle: to all these what a boon are the public parks where the air at least is more pure than on the street and the children can romp on the grass or roam through the woods.' And, towards the end of his career, he explains that 'St. Helens Island Park [Fig. 1] will provide Montreal's underprivileged citizens with a much needed rest and recreation centre. Within walking distance of the homes of 100,000 people, it is also readily accessible to others who live further away.' And in describing the execution of the work, he expresses his 'satisfaction of seeing men who had been out of work and on the dole for years, "finding" themselves again through honest toil. For over a year and a half more than 1,000 men, representing almost every trade and including ordinary laborers as well, have been at work on the island. They have received standard wages and of course, have been expected to