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**LUCIUS R. O'BRIEN: A VICTORIAN IN NORTH AMERICA
AMERICAN INFLUENCE ON HIS EARLY WORK, 1873-1880**

Elizabeth Mulley

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Art History

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

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ABSTRACT

Lucius R. O'Brien: A Victorian in North America American Influence on His Early Work, 1873-1880

Elizabeth Mulley

Lucius R. O'Brien was a well-known Canadian landscape painter in the second half of the nineteenth century. Active in the promotion of art in Ontario, he served as vice-president of the Ontario Society of Artists from 1874 until 1880, at which time, in recognition of his leading role in Canadian art, he was appointed as first president of the Royal Canadian Academy.

O'Brien produced poetic, reserved scenes of nature that attest to his own upper-class Victorian background and the consequent firm belief in the rightness of Canada's position within the Commonwealth. Dependent on the British cultural presence, O'Brien nevertheless was substantially affected by contemporary American art. The Hudson River and luminist paintings provided the stylistic models, and the American vision of the land as a metaphor for new world strength and purity suited his own patriotic concerns.

Victorian culture shaped O'Brien's response to the world, and American art provided a meaningful stylistic source. This thesis will examine the ways in which these major influences affected O'Brien's interpretation of the Canadian landscape.

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INTRODUCTION

In the historiography of Canadian art, Lucius R. O'Brien (1832-99) has been noted more for his role in the promotion of cultural life than for his painting. The first retrospective exhibition of his work in 1990,¹ held almost a century after his death, has attempted to alter this view, placing O'Brien in the forefront of art practice in nineteenth-century Canada. With the hindsight of one hundred years he emerges as "the pre-eminent Canadian artist of his day."²

Contemporary criticism repeatedly praised O'Brien's delicate touch and careful finish at the expense, it seems, of strength and innovation.³ A review in the Mall, 8 March 1880, of Sunrise on the Saguenay⁴, O'Brien's best known painting today, and a highly symbolic painting at the time, suggested that "by toning down supposed coarseness, its force has been impaired."⁵ The critic for the Globe, 9 March 1880, expressed a similar view, this time regarding a New Brunswick scene, stating that the work lacked "that sullen grandeur which the subject would seem to demand."⁶ The intention of these paintings, it was understood, was to symbolize Canadian identity, an image founded on the variety and ruggedness of the new land. The criticism seems all the more grudging since it was O'Brien more than any other artist who was instrumental in establishing the landscape as a metaphor for national awareness.

One of the issues to be investigated, then, is this discrepancy between O'Brien's preoccupation with developing a truly Canadian expression in art, based on new world geography, and the resulting domesticated, poetic landscapes. This contradiction was as much a result of O'Brien's character, who by "birth, breeding and education"⁷ was himself predisposed to a refined interpretation of nationalism, as it was a consequence of the larger context of nineteenth century colonial Canadian mentality.

Although O'Brien envisioned Canada's future as a protected one within the Empire, he might not have felt it appropriate, in his painting, to look directly and solely to English stylistic sources. The search for a national identity was solidly grounded in the physical aspect of the new land. Although, in the early years, it was acceptable to refer to old world conventions in order to convey the idea of culture, as national awareness grew, so did concern for a more indigenous style to fit the subject. A logical place to have found the appropriate vision to convey the freshness and uniqueness of Canadian landscape was in America.

American life was grounded in an all-inclusive mythology of Nature, a celebration of the land which involved religious, moral and social ideals. Since unspoiled nature conveyed God's grace and visible presence to man, it was believed, the American citizen, as the new Adam, inhabited a land of truth, beauty and limitless possibility. Thus the depiction of new world landscape became associated with nationalistic sentiment, providing models for and parallels with the Canadian search for identity. As a colonial country, however,

Canada could not relate entirely to the exhilarating restlessness , the spirit of self-confident exploration, guided by God, not King, that was reflected in the portrayal of that landscape.

The investigation of O'Brien's relationship to American art is made more complex by the fact that the underlying conventions of American art, until about 1870, were based on British models. The Hudson River painters, the American Pre-Raphaelites, as well as the Luminists, relied to a considerable degree on the example of the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century English painters. British art was made known in America primarily through the printed page, although the direct source of loan exhibitions and American travel abroad were of large importance as well.

As a self-taught artist in search of a national voice, Lucius O'Brien culled pertinent aspects of style from American landscape painting. These he filtered through the Victorian sentiment which was a reflection of his own genteel upbringing and social class. England supplied the cultural foundation for O'Brien's world view, and America, although itself not unaffected by these same influences, provided a model of North American form. O'Brien's work is uniquely Canadian, borrowing from and transforming the two principal cultures which have shaped Canada since colonial times.

CHAPTER I

PERSONALITY AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Canadian art historians have made frequent reference to O'Brien's upbringing and social standing, and its effect on his art. Newton MacTavish granted O'Brien "some skill as a water-colourist"¹ but concluded that his status as president of the Royal Canadian Academy² "gave to his own work a consequence that is discovered in it even today by art collectors who attach much importance to historical interest."³ William Colgate agreed that O'Brien "by birth, breeding and education was admirably fitted for the task"⁴ of president, but dismissed his pictures, however, as "often destitute of imagination and invention."⁵ More recently, J. Russel Harper noted that the success of "gracious Lucius O'Brien"⁶ was largely due to his "eminently suitable"⁷ schooling and his father's "'respectable' background,"⁸ and Dennis Reid stated bluntly that O'Brien "aspired to the upper classes, was conservative and gentlemanly, and his art reflected this sense of decorum."⁹

The indispensable reference for an understanding of O'Brien's upbringing and milieu is the journal that his mother kept from the years 1828 to 1838. Begun on board ship to Canada,¹⁰ it is a telling document of an English gentlewoman's adaptation to an unfamiliar land. The even, literate tone of the entries,

punctuated with examples of dry humour, reveals an accomplished, educated woman. The Canadian winter is dismissed with "I did not think the snow sufficiently inviting to counterbalance the pleasure of reading German at home"¹¹ and, upon finding it "quite necessary" to take her fiancee's arm on the same icy road she had that morning traversed "alone in perfect safety," she wryly notes "This shows the helplessness consequent on resigning our independence."¹²

For Mary Sophia Gapper, daughter of Edmund Gapper, rector of Charleton, Somerset, arrival in the Ontario bush must have signalled a very different future from the refined household and cultivated life at "The Abbey," the family home in England. Yet, like many of the gentlefolk settlers, she prided herself on her civilized past, and continued to play the piano, read poetry and keep up her knowledge of French, Italian and German. She helped to establish a book society and a library in Vaughan Township¹³ and, in the spirit of charity, undertook to educate a group of neighbourhood children in her own home.¹⁴

In May of 1830, Mary Gapper married Captain Edward O'Brien, an Irishman who, like her brothers, came to Canada as a half-pay officer.¹⁵ Independent from childhood, he had gone to sea at eleven years of age, after receiving his mother's admonition "never to forget his Bible," or that he was "the son of an Irish gentleman."¹⁶ Four years later, he sailed to China under the protection of his father's cousin, Captain (afterwards Admiral) Robert O'Brien. He eventually embarked on a career in the army and served in the West Indies, but ill health forced him to retire with the rank of Lieutenant at the age of

twenty-five.

He arrived in Upper Canada in the spring of 1829, and by autumn of that year was living on his farm in Vaughan Township, very near the Gapper settlement.

An obituary notice in the Mail, 20 July 1875, provides a character sketch so replete with the ideals of Victorian manhood as to seem almost a caricature:

Mr. O'Brien was a man of untiring energy, with a courage that could not be daunted by danger or difficulties, quick in thought and action, of a sanguine and impulsive temperament, with a strong sense of duty, and an intense hatred of anything false or mean, and a generous candid disposition. If sometimes dictatorial in manner, owing to his early training, and with strong views on men and things which he freely expressed, the instincts of his character were such as made him beloved by his relatives and intimate friends, as well as those under his command in early life. He was in short well suited to take part in the manly and healthy development of a young country, of which he was not the least worthy pioneer.

Distantly but distinctly titled,¹⁷ the O'Briens were military men, and as such, adds Samuel Thompson in his reminiscences,

naval and military experience naturally showed itself in Colonel O'Brien's general bearing; he possessed the polished manners and high-bred courtesy of some old Spanish hidalgo, together with a sufficient share of corresponding hauteur when displeased.¹⁸

This rather daunting portrayal is balanced by examples of Colonel O'Brien's compassionate character and strong moral values. His acts of kindness were widely noted¹⁹ and his treatment of the American blacks whom he helped to settle in the area was remarkable for its complete lack of prejudice.²⁰

The O'Briens maintained their old world personae in the roughest of settings. Although their days were filled with the endless chores of homesteading,

Edward found time to sketch the lake,²¹ and discuss literature with his wife,²² who, as she noted in her journals, prided herself on never appearing at breakfast "in dishabille."²³ Their home, "The Woods" at Shanty Bay, was a source of great satisfaction.²⁴ Samuel Thompson, a frequent visitor,

. . . was struck by the comparative elegance pervading so primitive an establishment. Its owner was evidently a thorough gentleman, his wife an accomplished lady, and their children well taught and courteous. . . .It seemed to me a perfect gem of civilization, set in the wildest of natural surroundings.²⁵

Anglican faith pervaded their daily lives.²⁶ Edward was responsible for the design and construction of St. Thomas' Anglican Church at Shanty Bay, and later was a member of its diocesan synod.²⁷ Three months before her marriage, in a letter written to her brother Anthony, Mary tried to convey Edward's high moral character which had so evidently impressed her:

I wish I could make you understand the primitive and religious holiness with which he talks. It would surprise you from a man of gay, courtly, and modern manner.²⁸

Service and charity were major concerns. Even Mary's decision to marry Edward instead of devoting herself to looking after her sister's children was made in the belief that ". . . it is perhaps the work assigned to me by Providence to promote his important interests."²⁹ As Mary's record of their busy days clearly demonstrates the need for a useful, disciplined life was an integral part of their Protestant faith. This belief in the work ethic is revealed in a sardonic description of some comfort-loving American workmen - disclosing as well, perhaps, an impatience with the perceived brashness that comes of Yankee

democracy - which enlivens Mary's journal entry for 8 September 1832:

Edward has been at [Captain] O'Brien's today and found him at a standstill with his mill works. He has dismissed his Yankee millwrights. They could not go on without saucers, puddings, and feather pillows. Were they not, they asked, men like himself and would he sleep without a feather pillow? Their beds they had agreed to endure, but feather pillows were indispensable.

Certainly the O'Briens were not the only gentlefolk in the area, and a substantial number of English immigrants were from literate families.³⁰ British officers in particular were given special opportunities in Upper Canada. With the prospect of land and half-pay for life in exchange for relatively easy duties, many candidates of a type not usually associated with pioneer life, took up the offer of homesteading. A new arrival in Shanty Bay, forty-year old Lieutenant Good, R.N., paid a visit to the O'Brien's. Of the occasion Mary remarked: "He talked besides of his love of Greek and music, his intention of farming... building his own house, etc., etc."³¹

Edward O'Brien, however, had from the beginning advantages over other half-pay officers. Armed with several letters of introduction to the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Colborne, he, like the Gapper brothers, continued to be part of the best society in the new land, as he had been in the old. The O'Briens were often guests at Government House,³² and Edward, as one of the first magistrates in the Simcoe district, was granted far more land than was usual - perhaps as much as one thousand acres - an amount equal to the total grants of all other half-pay officers along the shores of Lake Simcoe.³³ This was due as much to his alliance with the oligarchy of the Family Compact and its self-serving interests

as to his individual merits.³⁴

All the evidence, then, points to the O'Briens as the upper crust of Canadian society; but Canadian society was not simply a reflection of the English. Influenced by American example, where equality was the ideal if not always the fact, Canadians in the early nineteenth century were much freer to rise through class rank than was the case in Europe. Family and tradition mattered less in a country where the vote was based on property ownership, and where any immigrant could through hard work go, as Archdeacon Strachan of Toronto declared, "from an extreme degree of poverty [to] a tolerable degree of affluence."³⁵ Domestic service was despised, since it represented both the constraints of English society, and a bitter parallel to the American practice of slavery. New immigrants, forced by circumstance into domestic work quickly acquired land, and with it political equality. A "hired man" could rent or even buy land out of his wages after about three years of work, and women servants escaped through marriage to propertied labourers.³⁶ With freedom so easily obtained, class structure was much more flexible; yet social stratification nevertheless remained. This was more prevalent in the towns where dependence on one's neighbours was not a matter of survival, but even in the outlying areas "old settlers often felt themselves superior to new; half-pay officers were usually convinced of their ascendancy over other settlers, . . . and they generally supported the ruling clique which was almost always Tory."³⁷

By 1850 the demographic character of Toronto was set. The majority of

the city's inhabitants had emigrated from the British Isles, and thirty-five percent of those were of Irish descent. A large proportion of these English, Scottish and Irish Canadians were of Loyalist stock and had come to Toronto because it was considered (and indeed developed into) the most British, anti-American, anti-French - and therefore anti-Catholic - town in the colony.³⁸ Although many of the Irish were Roman Catholic, it was their fate generally to be relegated to the lower classes. Toronto was predominantly a Protestant town, strongly Loyalist and strongly Tory. This fact was reflected in the names given the principal Toronto streets such as King, Duke, Duchess, Frederick, Caroline and Princes.³⁹ Visiting the city in 1842, Charles Dickens was driven to remark that "the wild and rabid Toryism of Toronto was appalling."⁴⁰

As early as the eighteen twenties and thirties, the leaders of government, business, and society belonged to a ruling inner group known as the Family Compact.⁴¹ This unofficial aristocracy of about fifteen families was unrelated by blood, but united through wealth, political conservatism and the joint and exclusive exercise of power. Like the Family Compact and their dependents, Edward O'Brien was politically conservative. Ruled by the Protestant credo of individualism, plain living and hard work, he believed in the political and economic status quo and upheld King and Empire. A "regular old Tory,"⁴² his motive in purchasing the Toronto Patriot newspaper in 1848 was, according to Samuel Thompson, the manager of the paper, "solely patriotic, and he was anxiously desirous that its columns should be closed to everything that was not

strictly - even quixotically - chivalrous."⁴³

Although not as wealthy as most of the other members of the Family Compact, the O'Briens naturally belonged in their company. They adapted happily to their new country, but they also took for granted their position as members of the elite. It did not seem paradoxical to Mary O'Brien to be, on the one hand, "the nurse of the sick, the comforter of the miserable; wise, discreet, loving, patient, adored by children, the embodiment of unselfishness,"⁴⁴ and on the other, to declare: "We had a very pleasant party at Government House, the only house in the country where I much care to visit."⁴⁵ It was an attitude consistent with the uniquely Victorian interpretation of noblesse oblige. From the Lady with the Lamp in the Crimea to the Oxford Graduate teaching at the Working Men's College, the Victorian virtue of charity included this paternalistic attitude born of privilege.

A picture emerges, then, of the resolutely Victorian character of the O'Brien household. Their faith, gentility and sense of responsibility, both towards the immediate community and to the Empire at large, dictated the course of their daily lives. These ideals of duty, leadership, discipline and hard work, accompanied but not diminished by an appreciation of European culture, were naturally communicated to their children.

Lucius Richard O'Brien, the second son of six children of Mary and Edward, was born at The Woods on 15 August 1832. There are few direct references to him in his mother's journal - and only one is included in the

published version - but the ones that do exist are rather telling. Less than one month after his birth, Mary noted that he "promises to be particularly intelligent."⁴⁶ This observation is often reiterated: "he is not so fond as Willy [his older brother] of working with his hands but makes great use of his head,"⁴⁷ and "he promises, I think, to prefer working with his head . . ."⁴⁸ Of even temper, calm and determined from the very first, young Lucius - or Dick as he was known to the family - gives the impression of having been an unusually self-contained little boy. At two months of age "the decided expression of his countenance [is so noticeable that] even a stranger could not misinterpret it."⁴⁹ As he grows, he becomes "more stout and sturdy without losing anything of the calm dignity of his countenance."⁵⁰ By the time he is almost five, his mother fears that his unusual intelligence might eventually cause him to leave the idyllic life at The Woods for the temptations of the city:

Dick, by the way, is decidedly clever, more fitted perhaps for the bar than the plough but I dread the consequent temptation and still cling in my fancy to the woods and wilds altho' well knowing that the most dangerous temptations are from within & that there is no shield but the shield of faith.⁵¹

Although she need not have worried, as it turned out, about the effectiveness of Lucius' moral education, his evident and determined sense of self did cause her some concern: "I fear we shall not in many ways find him quite so controllable as Willy, tho' he is just as affectionate,"⁵² and "I am less afraid for Willy for he tells me everything that passes in his mind . . ."⁵³

The longest entry in the journal concerns Lucius' love of drawing, a pastime common to many young children, but one which assumes greater

importance in light of O'Brien's future calling:

I don't say that my boy is a born artist but he sometimes torments me very inconveniently to supply him with the implements to "dera, dera" & sometimes by help of the same passion, I can get him off my hands for an hour together - the productions of his pencil as far as I can judge are very much like & quite equal to those of any other young gentleman of a year & half old - just now nothing will serve him but a pen and ink which is not quite convenient - he has latterly become very fond of Edward & frets for him when he is away . . .⁵⁴

It is perhaps coincidental that Mary mentions Lucius' fondness for his father in the same breath as she records his love of drawing, but it may also be that the association was apt. There exist two drawings of The Woods done by Edward's hand⁵⁵ and it has been noted that he sketched the area around Lake Simcoe. Rudimentary instruction in drawing traditionally had been a part of military and naval training, and Colonel O'Brien, trained at Plymouth, seems to have continued this popular, gentlemanly pastime. As well, boats and sailing had been his lifelong passion; he had built the "Coquette" with his own hands⁵⁶ and another, the "Fanqui," we know through a sketch of it done by Lucius in the summer of 1858.⁵⁷ Marine views are by far the most common subjects in Lucius O'Brien's work, and boats are consistently the most carefully rendered objects in these. It is not unlikely that a man of such decided a personality as Edward O'Brien should influence his sons' interests. Henry O'Brien founded the Argonauts rowing club in Toronto, and all the brothers "were early in life taught to love their father's favourite sports."⁵⁸ Indeed, it may be suggested that Lucius O'Brien's later beliefs, and those of his brothers, were largely a product of their exceptional upbringing. This was the view voiced in an article in the Mail, 24

November 1932, in which Mary O'Brien, this time, is singled out for her courage and piety. The author then concludes:

Was it any wonder that from such a home, grew men like Colonel W.E. O'Brien [Lucius' older brother] the doughty defender of Protestantism in the historic fight over the Jesuit estates, one of the "noble thirteen," or Henry O'Brien, that great Christian lawyer whose death we mourned only a year ago.

Whether Lucius O'Brien's youthful decision to attempt a career in art met with his father's approval is not known. The family had moved to Toronto in 1844, in part, certainly, for the education of their children.⁵⁹ Lucius, like any gentleman's son, was enrolled in Upper Canada College and there received elemental instruction in drawing under a Mr. Drury, "an eccentric drawing-master"⁶⁰ from England. He was probably also taught by John Howard, a civil engineer, watercolour painter and architect, and by Sandford Fleming, a Scottish engineer and an important figure in the promotion of art in Toronto in the early eighteen-fifties.⁶¹

At the time of O'Brien's attendance at Upper Canada College, drawing instruction consisted primarily of geometrical or technical drawing. Seen as a fundamental preparation for various professions such as engineering, surveying and architecture, the drawing curriculum was essentially linear and practical in character, consisting of geometry, perspective, orthographic projection and architectural rendering.⁶² By the eighteen-fifties, soon after O'Brien's leaving the college, art education in Toronto offered more opportunities for the student of fine art. Drawing courses at the Normal School and at the Mechanics' Institute

included the practice of copying from casts and paintings, and instruction in the use of painterly media such as watercolours, oil and tempera.⁶³

It is not known why O'Brien left Upper Canada College in 1846, mid-way through the second year. One year later, and most likely through his father's agency, he entered an architect's office.⁶⁴ Little is known of O'Brien's life during the period between 1846 and 1854, other than that, at some time during those years, he began to practice civil engineering. Henry O'Brien, who had left school at age sixteen like his older brother, recorded that in 1852 he "began life as an engineer with L.R. O'Brien on RW [railway] from Toronto Lake Huron, living in Barrie at Mrs. Moberly's [their sister]."⁶⁵ During this time Lucius had begun to keep a sketchbook, in which a drawing dated January 1854, depicting a train fitted with a plough making its way through snowy woods, perhaps refers to this profession.⁶⁶ Of greater interest is the fact that this very fine, detailed line drawing reveals O'Brien's proficiency at the time. Drawn from nature in a sure hand, the result of careful observation and showing great attention to detail, it demonstrates that, whatever else he may have done in the intervening years, he had become an accomplished draughtsman despite the fact that he must have been virtually self-taught.

From the mid eighteen-fifties to the end of the 'sixties, O'Brien was responsible for several family business concerns. Having settled in Orillia, he married in 1859 and did not turn his hand to art again until 1870 when he returned to Toronto.⁶⁷ However, several sketches done during the 'fifties are

evidence of an early interest in caricature and can be shown to reveal, at the same time, some of his own specific prejudices and beliefs.

Shanty Bay Orphan at Family Prayers,⁶⁸ dated 4 November 1852, shows an interest in genre subjects. Genre painting had been a popular type in England since the time of William Hogarth (1697-1764) whose thematic morality cycles were available as prints. More contemporary painters such as Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841) and especially Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827) and George Cruikshank (1792-1878), combined genre subjects with a caricature style and a more lighthearted approach. To this list may be added the name of John Leech (1817-1864), who drew for the humorous publication Punch, and of John Gillray (1756-1815) known for a more biting type of political satire. The works of these artists were available as engravings in numerous publications. O'Brien's own professional debut was as an illustrator. Three of his drawings were engraved and published in England in 1849. One of these, How to get away from a Bear⁶⁹, is an intentionally humorous, anecdotal scene drawn in a lively, lighthearted manner. This charming, animated style is even more pronounced in Forest & Cedar Swamp⁷⁰, in which the fir trees seem almost to be dancing.

Since O'Brien continued to produce drawings for Toronto wood-engravers until at least 1855⁷¹, anecdotal, narrative works such as Shanty Bay Orphan at Family Prayers might also have been intended for illustration. This drawing shows a ragamuffin, with messy hair and a sheepish expression on his face, dressed in shabby clothes and wearing torn boots, perched awkwardly on a chair. It is clear

that the subject had been chosen for his picturesque qualities. The artist's attitude towards the child is not one of ridicule, but the impression of typical Victorian detachment nevertheless remains. The poor could only be integrated into the Victorian consciousness through a process of exoticization which categorized them as being picturesque. It remains a gentleman's depiction of the lower classes, and not a portrayal of a particular boy feeling out of place in a fine home - "Family Prayers" probably referring to the O'Brien family, whose habit it was to include the servants in the daily worship.

In another drawing from the same sketchbook, dated December 1854, O'Brien is openly satirical, again at the expense of the local folk. An ugly old woman is shown coyly displaying a thick ankle encased in a work boot, a scowling brat hanging to her arm. It is a quick, rough sketch, its awkwardness and overworked areas - especially the face - reflecting, perhaps, a lack of familiarity with a more cruel style of caricature. O'Brien titled the work Portrait of a Lady,⁷² thus making his derisive intent obvious.

Another series of narrative sketches, still in caricature, show the proceedings of judicial business at the circuit court at Mono Mills in Simcoe County. A more finished version of these drawings was again published in Britain in the Illustrated London News of February 1855.⁷³ Reminiscent of Rowlandson, these three sketches offer a humorous glimpse at the rustic workings of backwoods justice. A published version of The Court at Mono Mills⁷⁴ clearly distinguishes those in control, on the left side of the railing, from the various low

types on the right. The young judge, especially, is given a heroic profile, in marked contrast to the locals attending the court. A rougher version of this subject found in the sketchbook caricatures the officials as well, while accentuating even more the gentlemanly bearing of the judge.⁷⁵

Going the Circuit - Lunch⁷⁶ shows two men garishly dressed in plaid, enjoying a pint and a pipe - presumably the extent of their lunch - while a tired-looking horse hitched to its wagon stands in waiting. Jury Retiring to Deliberate⁷⁷ (Fig.1) again takes a mildly sarcastic look at the bemused attitude of the rustic jury pondering their verdict. Although the style of this drawing is clearly one of caricature, the composition is freely borrowed from a painting with a different intent, by O'Brien's contemporary, the American genre painter William Sidney Mount.⁷⁸ (Fig.2) This is an early and particularly direct example of the influence of American art on O'Brien's work.

It would not be just to infer too much class snobbery on the evidence of these drawings alone. They are relatively mild jibes at the rough ways of country people, an attitude that itself was part of the genre tradition, but they nonetheless point out the difference between the average inhabitant of rural Ontario, and people of O'Brien's upbringing and education. A British visitor's impression of Upper Canada at mid-century supports this class distinction.

Numerous travellers considered Upper Canada less refined than Lower Canada and the United States....[the] coarse manners of the people and their habits of intemperance were so prominent that I heard more oaths and witnessed more drunk people the first few days I was in Canada than I had met with during my previous wanderings in the States.⁷⁹

This same gentleman attributed much of the bad conduct to newly-arrived British immigrants, an opinion shared by Henry O'Brien, who recalled in 1930 that the newly arrived half-pay officers came

. . . with no experience whatever in pioneering, and some took more liquor than was good for them. It was an evil that had to be met, and my father became the first teetotaller up here.⁸⁰

Consistent with his social conscience, Edward O'Brien, as Mary noted, ". . . has been walking about to plead the cause of the Temperance Society, [which he founded] or, as it should be termed, the Anti-Spirits Society."⁸¹

Leadership came naturally to the O'Brien's; Edward and Mary perceived it to be their heritage as well as their moral and social duty, and they instilled in their children that same awareness of privileged position and social conscience. From his early days with the Ontario Society of Artists,⁸² Lucius O'Brien demonstrated his ability to function easily and effectively in a position of authority. From that point on, who O'Brien was became as important as what he did. He was exactly what Toronto wanted at the time.

CHAPTER II

TORONTO AND THE OSA

With Confederation, in 1867, Toronto, as the capital of the province of Ontario, gained a new strength of national identity, firmly rooted in its British heritage. So strong were its roots, that the Canada First movement, founded by a group of Toronto Tories in 1868, failed shortly thereafter as a national movement because its particular brand of nationalism was considered too resolutely British and protectionist.

Toronto at the beginning of the 'seventies had strong cultural aspirations, as well, partly as a result of the growing sense of nationalism, and partly because of changes in its social structures.¹ The newly prosperous middle class was as anxious to succeed on the cultural front - aware that Montreal had always held that distinction - as on the economic. A new sense of national pride created more of a demand for paintings by Canadian artists. Taste in art, however, remained grounded in the tradition of sixteenth and seventeenth-century old masters,² and was also influenced by the poor quality of European art that was available locally at the time.³

The formation of the OSA in 1872 reflected the newfound interest in native cultural issues. The man initially responsible for the idea was not in fact a Torontonians, but a British-born resident of Québec who had come to Toronto in 1867 as a partner in the photographic firm of Notman and Fraser. John Arthur

Fraser (1838-1898) and Lucius O'Brien were the two best-known landscape painters in Ontario in the 'seventies. The conflict which occurred between them can serve to illustrate both the cultural character of Toronto at the time and O'Brien's unique ability to serve as the representative of the needs and aspirations of his city.

The "feud", as it may rightly be termed, between Fraser and O'Brien had begun with Fraser's attempt, as Vice-president of the OSA, to correct a potentially scandalous situation involving the embezzlement of OSA funds by the Society Treasurer. Fraser and W. H. Howland, the lay President of the Society, acting in what they believed to be the best interests of all, had come up with a solution without consulting the rest of the members. For this, ". . . Fraser was blamed for being too autocratic and not consulting the Executive, for which he was unfavourably criticized by O'Brien and his friends, and the membership divided into two parties."⁴ The following year O'Brien was elected new Vice-president, firmly backed by his followers, but not before Fraser "by his impulsive nature",⁵ in tendering a dramatic resignation which he was persuaded to withdraw at the same meeting, had demonstrated his unsuitability to the office. O'Brien, on the other hand, ". . . was peculiarly fitted through education, ability and social position to do a great deal for the development of art,"⁶ and ". . . had been bred to leadership. . . which invested his every action, his very appearance, with an air of confident authority."⁷

There is no mention of Fraser in the OSA minutes for the years 1875-76,

and he did not exhibit with the Society until 1877.⁸ Yet he apparently did not forget the injuries inflicted by the "O'Brienites" - in April of 1876 he wrote a letter to the Canadian Commission of the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition in which he tried to discredit the painter John Colin Forbes, a close friend of O'Brien's, for relying on photographs for his portrait of Lord Dufferin.⁹ This factionalism continued and seems to have been common knowledge in art circles. A letter dated 30 July 1876, one month after the annual exhibition in which Fraser did not participate, surely refers to the factions caused by the Fraser-O'Brien split. It is written by the Montreal painter Otto Jacobi (1812-1901) to James Spooner, a Toronto art critic who had a tobacco shop-cum-art gallery on King Street East.¹⁰ Jacobi praises "Art and Artists" in Toronto, but says that "it is only a certain equilibrium wanting there, as the different parties and interests are rather unsettled, and this hinders the free and easy bearing in their affairs."¹¹

As late as 1886, differences persisted between the two artists. William Cornelius Van Horne, patron to both Fraser and O'Brien, wrote to the C.P.R. overseas agent regarding the hanging of Fraser's pictures in the Colonial and Indian Exhibition:

I understand that Mr. [John Wm. Hurrell] Watts [Canadian Government Superintendent of the hanging committee] is a disciple of O'Brien whose pictures he will incline awards as regards the selection of good places and being a disciple, as I said of O'Brien's it is fair to suppose that his teachings will have prejudiced him against Fraser's work.¹²

As Dennis Reid has pointed out, class distinctions were likely at the root

of the Fraser-O'Brien disagreement:

Fraser was aggressively lower middle-class and liberal. O'Brien, who aspired to the upper classes, was conservative and gentlemanly and his art reflected this sense of decorum.¹³

That O'Brien's awareness of his privileged position affected his art is one of the contentions of this thesis. An argument can be made that O'Brien's Under the Cliffs, Port Stanley (Fig.3) illustrates his views on class. Shown in the second annual OSA exhibition in 1874, it was favourably reviewed, special mention being made of the foreground figures.¹⁴ Examined in relation to each other, however, the two figures are strikingly different. One man stands erect, facing and posing for the viewer; the other is not only unaware of the viewer, but is evidently anonymous enough to be shown with his back squarely facing the front. He is immersed in, indeed represents, physical labour. In contrast to the standing figure dressed in buttoned, double-breasted jacket, hat and high boots, he is much more simply dressed in shirtsleeves, open vest and woollen cap. The more gentlemanly figure poses with one knee slightly bent, oar elegantly positioned behind him, like a formal attribute in an eighteenth-century portrait, signifying a connection to the sea, but not representing physical labour. The fact that the pose of the working fisherman can be interpreted as a bow accentuates the separation between the two men and heightens the suspicion that the painting is, in part at least, an illustration of class distinctions.

What would O'Brien's "sense of decorum" have made of Fraser's reported exclamation - regarding his own work - "A man that can paint like that should

wear a gold hat!"¹⁵ An apocryphal-sounding remark, but surely in keeping with the way Fraser must have been perceived. It was not a perception that Toronto's cultural establishment wished for itself, although in many ways Fraser's character was representative of the Toronto of the eighteen-seventies. Its aggressive self-confidence was, on the one hand, responsible for its growth and prosperity, but, on the other, left it open to criticism on the cultural front. Perceived as a materialistic, nouveau-riche society, Toronto was often unfavourably compared to Quebec, whose "distinctive culture . . . had already achieved recognition outside Canada".¹⁶ The Canadian satirical magazine Grip, in 1879, made clear its position on the question of Toronto' cultural leadership: One could not do better than to

. . . try to shake the self-satisfied, provincial vanity of this absurd city. One frequently hears that Toronto is the "centre of Canadian cultural life" . . . certainly a most crushing criticism of Canada and Canadians. The truth is that Toronto is infinitely more provincial in habit of thought than any of our other cities, . . . Torontonians [must be made to] recognize that they are in culture and refinement fifty years behind the people of a Yankee State Capital of the same size. . .¹⁷

Although Toronto would have disliked even an equal comparison, it did in fact share many of the same characteristics of emergent American towns, similarities which were strengthened by long-standing commercial links.¹⁸ Perhaps the collective need to distinguish itself from an American city was one motive for the continued interest in British arts and letters in the eighteen-seventies. Certainly the overriding cultural presence was still that of Great Britain. This was the counterbalance to the "rough-and-ready" materialistic side

of Toronto life. It was to this cultural influence that O'Brien was aligned. Despite the budding nationalism of the time, Ontario artists still operated within the cultural framework of the Old Country. Native alternatives had scarcely begun to arise, Canada being too young and the old ties still too strong to allow these alternatives to be widespread. The needs of patrons who "nostalgically demanded pictures reminiscent of those of the homeland"¹⁹ were met by artists who were, for the most part, born and trained in Great Britain and who shared this nostalgia. Prominent Ontario painters such as Robert Whale (1805-1887), Daniel Fowler (1810-1894), Harlow White (1817-1888), William Cresswell (1822-1888), Marmaduke Matthews (1837-1913), T. Mower Martin (1838-1934), Frederick Bell-Smith (1846-1923), and William Cruickshank (1849-1922), among others, continued to work in the old-world patterns. The few Ontario-born artists of the time, like Frederick A. Verner (1836-1928) and J.C. Forbes (1846-1925) had studied in English art schools. Lucius O'Brien was unique in being both native-born and self-taught, although what little formal instruction he had received at Upper Canada College had come from British teachers.

As a candidate for cultural leadership O'Brien was appropriately Canadian-born, yet perfectly versed in English ways. Not only did he possess the social graces and quiet aloofness of a born gentleman, he was moreover related to the Earl of Dufferin, the new Governor-General of Canada.²⁰ As an artist, he relied on the respected cultural patterns imported from England, but, as will be shown, the less exalted model of American art was also a fruitful source. A

combination of influences and ideas, then, affected O'Brien's production in the 'seventies. One of the central issues was the role of nationalism in art.

Aesthetic theory in England, transplanted to its Canadian colony, was at the beginning of the nineteenth century based on the discourses of the eighteenth-century painter Sir Joshua Reynolds, who taught that art and ethics were strongly linked. It was believed that art in its moral function could inspire and elevate the human mind. Exposure to beauty and truth, as expressed in idealized art, refined the individual, benefited the community, and thus aided the overall progress of society, both spiritually and materially. Given this philosophy, art had a clear role to play in opening up the new land, and was actively involved in the emerging nationalism.

This concern for the development of a national art can be noted as early as 1848, with the announcement of an art competition open only to "natives of, or permanent residents in Canada."²¹ This Ontarian brand of nationalism was, at the same time, strongly influenced by the idea of Empire:

. . . Canada has been peopled by a nation distinguished in taste for the Fine Arts; a taste which. . . will secure for England a name rivalling those of the empires of antiquity. Who shall say what Canada may accomplish, as her wealth and means increase.²²

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the public world of art and culture was dominated by a small group of educated and wealthy British emigrés. It was this same British elite that sponsored the early attempts to form art organizations, not least because of the belief that the arts had a formative role

to play in society. The first such organization was the Society of Artists and Amateurs of Toronto, established in 1834. The Society, which had but one exhibition in its one year of existence, had as one of its patrons Sir John Colborne, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada and friend of the O'Brien family.²³ A subsequent attempt to create a lasting art society was made in 1847, this time modelled on an American institution, the National Academy of Design in New York,²⁴ illustrating again the American cultural influences in Canada. The Toronto Society of Arts held perhaps as many as three exhibitions, but clearly Toronto's small art community could not yet support an independent art organization. Until the formation of the OSA in 1872, Toronto's artists had to exhibit under the auspices of Provincial bodies such as the Upper Canada Board of Arts and Manufacturers and the Mechanics' Institute, institutions that, of necessity, combined both aesthetic and commercial interests.²⁵

When Lucius O'Brien was elected to the Vice-presidency of the OSA in June 1874, he proposed that three changes be made. He asked that the organization's name be changed to the Canadian Society of Arts, that other cities establish local branches of the society, and that the art union prize be chosen from the work of Canadian, not European, artists. All these changes demonstrated his vision of the society as not simply a parochial group with local interests, but as an expanded institution which could serve a function on a national level.

By the eighteen-seventies, Reynold's ideas had been superseded by those

of John Ruskin (1819–1900), but the stress on the moral and didactic role of art remained. Art was seen increasingly as a force for cultural progress, with a consequent strengthening of the relationship between the fine arts and national pride. At that time, too, the concept of patriotism became inextricably associated with the portrayal of the Canadian landscape.

Lords of the Forest [Fig.4], an ambitious watercolour shown in the third annual exhibition of the OSA in 1875, links the idea of nationalism with the land. A review of the 1875 exhibition, in which nineteen other watercolours were by O'Brien's hand, recognized and supported this concept:

We rejoice . . . at the genuine indications of the growth of a native school of art. Among our Canadian lakes and rivers may be found scenery equal to anything that the old world presents to the eye; and the evidence of the familiar study of nature, and a discernment of the poetry which lurks under its most homely aspects, are the truest evidence of that artistic feeling on which all genuine progress must depend.²⁶

Answering the call to reveal "the poetry which lurks under its most homely aspects", O'Brien tames nature to fit known patterns. This light-filled, benevolent forest refers more to the old-world Claudian tradition of the picturesque than to native scenery. Blasted tree trunks and the lone hunter, dwarfed in the midst of primeval Nature, are meant to convey the experience of the sublime. It is an image bathed in Victorian sentiment, at once grand and nostalgic. The heroic Indian, however, localizes the scene and puts it firmly on North American soil. He is a symbol of the purity of the new land, and roots it in history.

Although the Indian is the indigenous Canadian content, the ideals he

represents are derived from European myths of the noble savage. He is a hybrid figure, serving the dual functions of nascent nationalism and Victorian nostalgia. The Indian is the sole element in the painting that links it to Canada; if he were removed, the landscape, though meant to suggest wilderness and the ancient forest, could well be a Fragonardian one, awaiting a picnicking couple. Just as Paul Kane (1810-1871), twenty years before, in the painting The Man that Always Rides,²⁷ had given the Indian an arch-romantic European interpretation, so O'Brien borrows from this tradition and dilutes what potentially could be a powerful nationalistic image. Instead he gentrifies the subject, giving the effect of a curtain raised on a tableau of the noble savage. And just as later O'Brien would, in the Queen's pictures, portray Quebec as a shining prize of Empire, so does this picture as a whole derive much of its value from its connection with the larger power; even the title itself suggests an aristocracy of the land. O'Brien's upper class outlook strongly perceived Canada as having meaning only as a part of the homogenous whole of the British Empire, and it is this circumscribed understanding of nationalism that is responsible for such a majestic vision of inherent order.

It has been said that O'Brien's ". . . work is for the eye seeking rest and beauty",²⁸ and certainly the message carried by this painting is one of reassurance. Visually, as well, Lords of the Forest is a pleasing and satisfying picture. The rich and delicate technique reveals the influence of Ruskin, whose campaign for visual sensibility was as pervasive an influence on artists in North

America as it was in his native country. The transparent watercolour applied in delicate dabs, the light-filled atmosphere and extreme attention paid to detail speak of a close observation of nature, the primary lesson taught by Ruskin.

Ruskin's moral theory of art placed as much importance on the artist as on the works. His argument that the whole personality of the man was involved in the making of art seems a particularly valid one in the example of O'Brien:

And what the man is, such is his picture: not the achievement of an ill or well practised art, but the magnificent or miserable record of divine or decrepit mind. There is first the choice of subject and the thought of it, in which the whole soul of the man may be traced - his love, his moral principle, his modes of life, the kind of men among which he moved, and whose society he preferred, the degree of understanding he had of these men; and all this to a degree and with an exactitude which no words could ever reach.²⁹

If Lords of the Forest is compared to an American painting of the time, Worthington Whittredge's (1820-1910) The Old Hunting Grounds (Fig.5), circa 1864, important similarities in style and intent become apparent. Both paintings deal with the theme of an idyllic time in the history of the new world, now looked back upon with a sentiment of pride and nostalgia. This theme of nostalgia was a more immediate one in America, where rapid urbanization and the experience of the Civil War had shattered the pastoral image of the native land as the new Eden, a myth which American artists and poets had held dear.

In the early eighteen-sixties Whittredge had been struggling with the same problem that was occupying Canadian artists in the 'seventies. Having spent the previous decade in Europe, Whittredge was trying to reconcile his familiarity with European landscape painting with the desire to develop a distinctive way of

expressing the uniqueness of America, based on the image of the land.³⁰ In the United States, as in Canada, the landscape was considered the main characteristic which best distinguished the new from the old world, and, as such, it had inherent nationalistic value.

Like O'Brien, Whittredge nevertheless turned to the conventional Claudian manner, long associated with the pastoral landscape. The formal similarities between Lords of the Forest and The Old Hunting Grounds are easily recognized. They both allow a glimpse into a light-filled forest interior, framed by darker overhanging branches. In the American work broken tree trunks and a derelict canoe, vestiges of an idyllic past, evoke the sublime, as do the blasted trunks and dramatic scale of O'Brien's forest. The palette of greens and yellows is similar, as is the vertical composition, and both paintings in fact rely on the work of the Hudson River painter Asher B. Durand. Whittredge's association with Durand, and Durand's influence on Whittredge's painting, has been documented;³¹ O'Brien's familiarity with Durand's work, and with American art in general, will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter.

It is interesting to note that O'Brien may well have derived the title of this painting from the words of the American painter of Indian life, George Catlin (1794-1872). Catlin had devoted his life to chronicling, in words and paint, the Indian customs which he feared were disappearing forever. In his "North American Indians", published in 1842, he described the trees of the American wilderness: "I have immersed myself in the midst of thousands and tens of

thousands of these knights of the forest. . .".³² It is assumed that O'Brien, in his painting, refers to both the majestic trees and the noble Indian.

Whittredge's painting, although it remains a Europeanized interpretation, retains an integrity to the observed scene that O'Brien's lacks. Whittredge's broader, more naturalistic treatment of nature can be partly attributed to his use of oils, although O'Brien's watercolour medium, though more delicate than oil, is also one which is capable of relaying with spontaneity the freshness of a scene. Moreover, whereas the conventions employed by Whittredge do not entirely suppress the reality of the North American land, the opposite is true in Lords of the Forest. Here we are left with a work so replete with Victorian sentiment that one cannot ignore its didactic intent, and experience the landscape as a faithful portrayal. The landscape is the vehicle for the message and this message had less to do with the Canadian experience than with O'Brien's particular upper class views on moral philosophy and British culture.

Although the didactic message in Lords of the Forest is particularly pronounced, due perhaps to the fact that O'Brien recently had been elected head of the OSA and was acutely aware of his new responsibilities, this painting nevertheless illustrates the eclectic approach which characterizes O'Brien's work throughout the 'seventies. American painting provided the stylistic inspiration, and O'Brien's mild, poetic response to nature and his continuing reference to European culture resulted in this his own, and uniquely Canadian, vision.

CHAPTER III

AMERICA: THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL

It is one of the themes of this thesis that Lucius O'Brien was influenced to a large degree by his American contemporaries. The following chapter attempts to describe the manner and extent of this influence.

In mid-nineteenth century America, the genre of landscape painting served as a vehicle for several diverse themes and ideologies. In the eighteen-forties and 'fifties, before the Civil War shattered the popular image of America as the new Eden, depiction of the land embodied the arcadian ideal of unspoiled beauty and harmony. The uncontested leaders of landscape painting, and those who represented this view most clearly, were the members of the Hudson River School.¹ Asher B. Durand (1796-1886), John F. Kensett (1816-1872), Worthington Whittredge (1820-1910), Jasper Cropsey (1823-1900), Sanford R. Gifford (1823-1880), Frederick E. Church (1826-1900) and Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) had worked in New York and in the area of the Hudson River, and had followed its route into the mountain and lake region of Vermont and New Hampshire. All belonged to the most important art organization in the United States, the New York-based National Academy of Design, whose annual exhibitions featured their work. Despite the implication in its name that it was a national organization, the Academy, from its inception in 1826 until 1869, allowed only those artists living

in New York to be eligible for membership.² Moreover, the Academy showed disdain toward innovative styles, and remained a conventional and exclusive institution. Asher B. Durand and Thomas Cole (1801-1848), the latter considered more to be the founding father of the Hudson River School than simply one of its members, were also founding members of the National Academy and thus from the beginning the Hudson River School's interpretation of nature became the official, entrenched view. The Hudson River style, then, was an academic one, and the Hudson River group, for the most part, was a conventional, tribal and reactionary one. Certainly by the eighteen-seventies, the time when O'Brien looked to them for inspiration, they were considered passé. Although immensely popular and successful during the eighteen-forties and 'fifties, by the late eighteen-sixties and through the 'seventies most of the Hudson River painters were suffering a steady decrease in both popularity and sales. Their idealized landscape style was seen as formulaic, and by 1870 they were, as a group, accused of "intellectual monotony".³ The year before, a reviewer in Putnam's Magazine rebuked Durand for his "tamely correct Academic style", and pointed out the fact that the ". . . younger artists, of the new school with which he had no sympathy, crowded him out of public favour."⁴ In 1879, this contrast between the old and the new styles was painfully clear:

It is striking how quickly the new tendencies, the foggy pictures and the innovating pictures, the Hudson River School and the impression school, separate themselves out and assort their families. Never were the old men with their deeds more completely sent to the wall by the new men and their creeds.⁵

By the early eighteen-eighties, the criticism had become openly hostile:

Nothing more alien to what is recognized as art everywhere, outside of England at least, has ever existed anywhere, than the now defunct or moribund school of landscape, once so much delighted in as the American school, but now so slightly spoken of as the Hudson River School.⁶

This caustic tone was echoed elsewhere in contemporary criticism and was aimed as much towards the character and customs of the Academy as towards its highly finished, formal style. The National Academy's practices of partiality and favouritism, also prevalent during Durand's presidency,⁷ represented undemocratic exclusivity, and coercive Academicism was less tolerated as painters turned towards a French-inspired, freer impressionist technique. Linearity and careful finish were left behind, just as a shift towards expressionism superseded the Hudson River School philosophy of artistic surrender to the contemplation and recording of idyllic nature.

In the eighteen-forties, however, the Hudson River painters were producing works that both promoted and reflected the pantheistic philosophy of the time, a particular view of the relationship of Man, God and Nature that was already familiar to Americans through the work of Thomas Cole.

Although Cole was born in England and his art rested on the foundation of English Romantic ideas, he is credited with providing the inspiration for a specifically American interpretation of nature. He, and the Hudson River painters who were his heirs, sustained in their paintings the pre-war idea of the moral landscape, one that was associated with nationalism.

Cole was instrumental in guiding American landscape painting away from

the topographical tradition that had persisted into the early nineteenth century. The purely documentary fact of topography was replaced by a Romantic view in which the landscape symbolized new world purity in opposition to old world decadence. This Romantic view replaced as well the military metaphor for the wilderness, one in which the land was seen as an enemy to be conquered by the settler. In May 1835, in a public lecture given at the New York Lyceum, Cole clarified his views on the nature of native landscape.⁸ American landscape was not like European landscape. It did not contain the cultural vestiges of the past, the antiquities, which led the mind toward higher thoughts. But it did have places where the picturesque, the sublime and the magnificent coexisted: these potentially spiritual qualities were to be found, in combination, in the American wilderness. The associations, then, were not with the past, but with the future, and it is not surprising that this perception of the pure land of limitless possibility came to be identified with the religious image of the Garden of Eden. Cole stated this view clearly: "We are still in Eden; the wall that shuts us out of the garden is our own ignorance and folly."⁹ For Cole, as for his successors in the Hudson River School, painting was a profound moral enterprise, with no less a goal than to reveal the presence of the Divine in daily life.

The primeval wilderness was not the sole worthy aspect of American scenery - the cultivated landscape had an equally important moral role. As the representative of the arcadian pastoral, it provided associations with fertility and plenty and the useful labour of man.¹⁰ The picturesque and the beautiful were

linked to domesticated scenery, while the awe-inspiring sublime was embodied in the wilderness landscape.

Cole's ideas may have been inspired by his adopted homeland, but his approach to painting native scenery was derived from the ideals of the eighteenth-century British Academician, Sir Joshua Reynolds. In Reynolds' view, the true in nature and the true in art were to be perceived in the same way. Through the contemplation of nature, one came to see its characteristic patterns - its essence - which were the result of Divine creation. The incidental and common detail had to be ignored. Similarly, in art, the goal was to render only those ideal qualities which revealed the Grand Design. Thus, in conveying God's visible presence as He communicated with man through Nature, the artist assumed a moral role. Through a divinely guided, meditative process of selection, he could communicate these inner truths through his art. The artist, then, was more seer and prophet than craftsman. Idea, the conceptual image, overruled the mere facts of perceptual image.

Cole's working method involved long contemplation of an appropriate view, after which several studies were made on the spot. Then time was permitted to cast its veil over perception, and filter, in the artist's mind, the essential from the incidental. In painting from memory, and in combining only the ideal elements of the remembered image, the universal truths, so Cole believed, would thus emerge.

By the mid-thirties, however, Cole's sublime, moralistic cycles such as

The Course of Empire, although they brought him fame, brought few patrons, who preferred smaller pictures of recognizable native scenery. Determined to produce "art" rather than "views", Cole nevertheless conceded that:

Fancy pictures seldom sell and they generally take more time than views, so I have determined to paint one of the latter. I have already commenced a view from Mount Holyoke . . .¹¹

This seminal painting, the View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton,

Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm (The Oxbow)(Fig.6), of 1836, demonstrates the conventions upon which Cole relied as well as those innovations with which he was credited. Traditional repoussoir framing and vast Claudian space combine with the sublime props associated with Salvator Rosa - both Claude and Rosa were Cole's adopted masters for previous paintings - but it is Cole's concern with capturing particular conditions of light and atmosphere that pointed the way to a specifically American landscape tradition. The Oxbow illustrates particularly clearly that compromise between the real and the ideal which later was to characterize the work of Durand and the Hudson River School - a compromise which is also apparent in the paintings of Lucius O'Brien.

Faithful to the ideal, Cole's composition displays an essential, grand design, within which carefully observed details specifically locate the scene. Themes of wilderness and peaceful settlement coexist in this arcadian view. The presence of the artist within the scene suggests to the viewer the broad relationship of art and nature, while at the same time relaying the particular fact that the picture upon which he gazes was done from nature. The elements of

the real, the ideal, artistic practice and the sanctity of the American landscape, bathed in freshness and light, combine in a way that discloses less the actual details of reality than the *idea* of the real.

Although The Oxbow and Cole's last important painting, Genesee Scenery¹², showed an increasing departure from traditional formulae, they did not sufficiently reflect the growing obsession of Americans for the purely factual - the nineteenth-century credo of the pursuit of truth. In the first half of the nineteenth century, a general optimism and a universal belief in progress saw no contradiction in linking art, religion and science. The critic James Jackson Jarves stated that art ". . . should exhibit a scientific correctness in every particular, and, as a unity, be expressive of the general principle at its center of being."¹³

With the arrival of Ruskin's Modern Painters in America in 1847, the year before Cole's death, these beliefs became entrenched in contemporary aesthetic thought. Ruskin's ideas finally put to rest the picturesque tradition of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He proposed an almost scientific observation of nature and a commitment to meticulous finish, nevertheless continuing to emphasize that art must imitate nature's general plan. The artist had to be, above all, a highly moral being, since only goodness was capable of generating "good" art, art that could inspire. The artist must surrender personal expression to the selfless study of Nature, so that he could convey her eternal truths - again the selection of ideal forms - to man.

These dicta of Ruskin's had much in common with both Cole's beliefs and

with prevailing thought in America. The "Oxford Graduate," then, was wholeheartedly accepted by Americans, who championed his ideas even after they lost favour in England.

Influenced both by Cole's sublime vistas and Ruskinian truth to nature, Asher B. Durand forged a landscape style that shifted the emphasis from the ideal onto the real. This attitude is best seen in the close-up studies, such as Interior of a Wood (Fig.7) of circa 1850, which were done out-of-doors directly in oil. These detailed studies, however, were exhibited as sketches, and not as finished works. Durand believed that true knowledge of nature came with direct observation, en plein air, but that once this knowledge and a consequent mature style had been achieved, the artist had the freedom to choose or reject certain aspects of this direct vision in order to more efficiently convey his message. This concept of artistic freedom to alter the details of nature in order to better reveal her underlying truths echoed Cole's philosophy, but Durand shifted the emphasis toward greater realism, and his works were truer to the actual detail of the American landscape than were Cole's. Nevertheless, Durand's finished paintings retained the pastoral, idyllic view of nature, and carefully observed detail was enveloped in a palpable, atmospheric haze. If one compares Interior of a Wood with Early Morning at Cold Spring (Fig.8), both painted in 1850, the differences in style and content are striking. The sketch is realistic, unsentimental, the paint is handled broadly and nature is not altered. It deals with texture, shape and colour - the concerns of art, not philosophy. The

exhibition picture, on the other hand, immediately evokes rather than denotes. All natural elements are rearranged to form a clear, open composition. Nature serves as a framing device - here literally, as man and church and the inspiring morning light are sheltered in a graceful archway of trees - for a moral message. "Sabbath Bells" was the alternate title for this work, one that seems more appropriate than the prosaic title by which it is known.¹⁴ The subject is a landscape, and the natural world is observed and presented in meticulous detail, but clearly the intent rests more with the desire to show, in Ruskin's words, "nature's moral analogies", than with the interest to portray reality. Writing in The Crayon in 1855, Durand made known his interpretation of the real/ideal dilemma which occupied many artists at the time ". . . the term Realism signifies little else than a disciplinary stage of Idealism . . . for the ideal is, in fact, nothing more than the perfection of the real."¹⁵

Durand's approach did change with time, and highly romantic works such as Kindred Spirits¹⁶ of 1849 gave way to both less conventional compositions, and a growing preoccupation with the effects of light and atmosphere. Despite the more naturalistic handling of organic forms, Kaaterskill Clove (Fig.9) of 1866 retains the ubiquitous blasted and gnarled tree trunks, but the overall freshness of the atmosphere, though still filled with sentiment, suggest an increasingly American experience.

Lucius O'Brien's life is sparsely documented before his appointment, in 1880, as the first president of the RCA. After that date, and especially with his

involvement in the publication of Picturesque Canada,¹⁷ his links with the American scene become clear. However, there is sufficient evidence to establish O'Brien's connections with American art right from the beginning of his artistic career. It must be remembered, as well, that O'Brien did not abandon his commercial career until 1881, by which time he was securely established in the art world. As a partner in the importing firm of Quetton St. George and Company he travelled often to the United States on business - trips that would not have been documented in the interest of art. It is also likely that O'Brien would have sought out exhibitions when in New York, Boston and Philadelphia - the major art, as well as commercial, centres in America. One can even conjecture that he may have visited the studios of well-known artists, whose addresses and invitations were advertised in contemporary newspapers and guide books.¹⁸

The first documented trip to Albany and New York, on business, occurred in 1859, before O'Brien's partnership in the firm of Quetton St. George, and when he was living in Orillia and looking after some family business concerns.¹⁹ Even before this time, there is evidence that O'Brien had contact with American art. In 1852, woodblock engravings based on his drawings were reproduced in a Boston-based publication.²⁰ It is interesting to note that Colonel Edward O'Brien had accompanied a party of prominent citizens of Ontario to the Boston Jubilee in September of the previous year. The group had remained in Boston for several days, ". . . visiting the public institutions, presenting and receiving addresses, and participating in a series of civic pageants. . .,"²¹ and one wonders if it were not

Colonel O'Brien's connections in this city that were responsible for the publication of his son's work. The next time we hear of O'Brien's presence in the United States - again, it is almost impossible that he did not visit between these two dates - is in 1871, and this time with direct reference art. He had exhibited a landscape, At Six Mile Lake, in the annual winter show of the American Society of Painters in Water Colors, held in the rooms of the National Academy of Design in New York.²² Five years later, six of his watercolours were included in the Canadian section of the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition.²³ As vice-president of the OSA he had been on the selection committee for the Canadian participants, and we know that he visited the exposition in June-July of 1876. On this occasion alone, O'Brien would have had the opportunity of seeing a broad selection of American art, for the American section was represented by seven hundred and eighty-five works.²⁴ O'Brien was in New York and Massachusetts in 1877, and again in 1878, when he exhibited once more at the National Academy, this time sending two oils to the Academy's own exhibition.²⁵ On 4 February 1879 O'Brien attended the Educational Association of the United States' annual meeting in Boston, in order to study the art educational program then in operation in Massachusetts, one actually based on that of the South Kensington School of Art and Design in London. We know this is so because shortly after this trip O'Brien wrote an article for Rose-Belford's Magazine titled "Art Education - A Plea for the Artizan" in which he discussed this event, and aired his views on the subject of drawing instruction in technical schools.²⁶ After 1880, when he

began work on Picturesque Canada as both art editor and principal Canadian illustrator, O'Brien must have crossed the border many times as part of his editorial duties, since he commissioned four hundred and thirteen of the approximately five hundred and twenty illustrations from American artists.²⁷

O'Brien's familiarity with American art was well known. One of the reasons for William Cornelius Van Horne's choice of O'Brien, along with Fraser and J.C. Forbes, as recipient of a C.P.R. sponsorship, was O'Brien's knowledge of and close ties to contemporary American art.²⁸ There is, too, the strong visual similarity between O'Brien's work and the paintings of the Hudson River and Luminist artists in the United States, an influence which will be explored further in this paper.

Although during the eighteen seventies American artists such as James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903), Winslow Homer (1836-1910) and Thomas Eakins (1844-1916) were working in a more experimental, European-influenced manner, it was to the conventional, already outmoded Hudson River School that O'Brien was attracted. The Hudson River Academicians had been, like O'Brien, concerned with their place in society, with achieving wealth and status, and, to that end, with developing a painting style by which they could be easily identified.²⁹ Both Cole and Durand were, by 1847, extremely well known and their names appeared regularly in the press. Cole had been a solitary man, and during his leadership of the New York landscape movement the general perception was of painters "generally of retired habits, often fond of seclusion and in many cases utterly

averse to society. . . .³⁰ After Cole's death and with Durand as uncontested leader of the Hudson River School, the painters had willingly "come into the New York limelight and had become social ornaments".³¹ By 1855 they felt secure of their place in the best society and had no lack of patrons. A review of the 1856 National Academy exhibition refers approvingly to this association of fine art with social occasion: "The Academy, in the pleasant days which bid fair presently to ensue, will be one of the most charming places of resort in the metropolis, both for intellectual and refined enjoyment, and the 'best society' ".³² As befitted the conventions of grand society, many of the Academicians distributed photographic "cartes de visite". Durand, on his card, appeared artistic and sage-like, S.R. Gifford was formal and elegant, and Bierstadt, in a double photograph of himself, the one pouring the other a drink, showed what amusing company he might be.³³ It was, apparently, "not only creditable but aesthetic and refined to have [artists] at one's parties."³⁴ Frederick Church and Albert Bierstadt, who were representative of the more dramatic, even operatic, aspect of American landscape painting, seemed to have equally sensational personalities. Church had achieved true celebrity status in 1857 with his seven-and-a-half foot wide painting of Niagara Falls. He subsequently held one-work exhibitions which were greeted as major cultural and social events and for which he charged admission fees.³⁵ Bierstadt, whom O'Brien had met through his friendship with Lord Lorne and Princess Louise, had throughout his career sought attention, society and important patronage. This predilection occasioned the contemporary art historian

S.G.W. Benjamin to observe that ". . . if he had not [had] a greater ambition for notoriety and money than for success in pure art" he could have fulfilled his early promise.³⁶

As has already been mentioned, the studios of the New York artists were open to the interested public, not least to "promote and widen true and discriminating patronage of art."³⁷ In Ontario, too, the members of the OSA, the first sustained artists' society in that province, recognized the need for promotional tactics. O'Brien's studio journal lists the names of prospective guests to his open studio events, and the Society as a group organized various social affairs to which journalists were regularly invited.³⁸ In Canada, as in the United States, it was understood that art, especially in a young country, needed the support of influential members of society, and that ". . . the artist who earns butter for his bread must necessarily be something of a business man and diplomat, . . ."³⁹ This observation was written relatively late in the century, but, as early as 1847, a reviewer of the Toronto Society of Artists' exhibition recognized this need and ingenuously remarked that ". . . these exhibitions will have the effect, which cannot prove otherwise than beneficial, of bringing artists, millionaires and connoisseurs, as well as the mere admirer, into communion."⁴⁰

Although the Hudson River painters, like their counterparts in the OSA understood the economic needs and realities of art, their work ceased to reflect the reality of American life after the Civil War. For the most part, they

continued to paint idyllic landscapes that did not hint at spreading urbanism or reflect the feelings of alienation caused by the trauma of war. To them, America was still an Eden, and the expression of nationalist pride and confidence still their theme. In his "Letters on Landscape Painting" Durand noted the "cheerful sentiment" that a wash of sunny colour lent a scene, and Kaaterskill Clove of 1866, continued to illustrate this affiliation of sunlit freshness with hopeful spiritual values. Even when later Hudson River - and Luminist - paintings did depict impending storms, overcast skies or end-of-day scenes, the associations are with interior states, with personal meditation rather than with a "fundamental dissatisfaction with American life" as modern art historian O.R. Roque has put it.⁴¹ Allusion to social conditions or forceful expression were not priorities; instead, when contemporary critics defended or supported the Hudson River School, and Durand in particular, it was on the basis of "a power of reproducing poetic impressions with delicacy and grace which the younger and better equipped men by no means always show."⁴² S.G.W. Benjamin, who, it must be admitted, interpreted all American art produced before 1878 as part of a formative stage leading to the truly nationalist, aesthetic production of his own time, wrote of the Hudson River School:

There has been a general average of native ability in the artists - a certain dead level of excellence . . . which was good as far as it went; but, except on rare occasions, it seldom arrested and enchained attention by the expression of daring technique or imaginative power In technique, . . . this school has seemed to be, on the whole, weak and vacillating, being impelled by no definite aim.⁴³

Consistently, O'Brien's work was criticized on the same grounds; what it

lacked in strength it made up in delicacy and grace. Just as Durand's work was judged to be pleasing but unexciting, always well executed but short of genius,⁴⁴ so,

Everywhere and always Mr. O'Brien does his level best. His pictures lack the radiant impress of genius, . . . but they attest the painter's deftness of execution.⁴⁵

Mr. O'Brien is not a powerful artist. His works do not impress one as the outcome of great energy; but they are exceedingly graceful, and attract one immediately by their ease and truthfulness.⁴⁶

And just as Durand's definition of the real was based more on idealization than observed reality, so O'Brien's lack of "ruggedness" was, according to an 1886 biography, wholly intentional. It was not that,

Mr O'Brien's work lacks strength, but as decided evidence that it possesses restraint. As a rule his work is exquisitely natural, and we use the term 'natural', not in the sordid sense. . . . the true artist sees . . . with the loving eye, and the poetic, the interpretive instinct.⁴⁷

There is no unsettling vision or disturbing thought to be found in O'Brien's work, and even his last paintings are only mildly introspective. A statement made in an 1886 exhibition review could serve to summarize O'Brien's whole oeuvre - "They are all carefully painted, pleasant, excellent examples of his style - cheery and fit to adorn any drawing room".⁴⁸

An interesting observation made on the occasion of the first RCA exhibition serves to clarify how O'Brien's work was perceived in comparison with J.A. Fraser's:

It has been said that of these two, the former [O'Brien] paints always with a view to the effect of his picture on the mind of the beholder; the latter

[Fraser] only with the endeavour to represent what he sees as it affects
him.⁴⁹

In this sense, O'Brien's work aligns itself once more with that of Durand. As president of the National Academy from 1845 to 1861, Durand was acutely aware of his social responsibilities. To what extent his public concerns coincided with his own expressive needs is debatable; he nevertheless did not give himself up wholly to pure romantic lyricism, but showed "his enduring concern with the visual formulation of a national ethos."⁵⁰ O'Brien, as well, occupied a similar public position in Canada and was equally aware of his responsibilities and audience. Durand's desire to morally educate his public resulted in a consistency that was judged to be repetitious; pleasing but unexciting. Similar criticism had been made of O'Brien's work.

Fraser, by contrast, had been singled out for his strength. In a review of the 1873 OSA exhibition, O'Brien's watercolours were once again deemed to be "replete with the true poetry of art",⁵¹ while one of Fraser's landscapes is judged "the gem of the exhibition" and in another he is said to deal "boldly . . . with the brilliant tints of . . . autumnal foliage."⁵² An 1878 review in the Mall hailed Fraser's work as being "daring in treatment, honest and uncompromising as to atmospheric effects, and displaying a command of tint as well as truth."⁵³ The painter Robert Harris (1849-1919), in a letter to his mother, describes O'Brien as "a very genial nice man . . . [who] If he had more fire and vivacity it would make him ten times the man he is."⁵⁴ Of Fraser, Harris wrote that his "work in water

colour especially was marked by great strength of colour, dash and brilliance of execution."⁵⁵ Paul Duval has remarked on Fraser's "vigorously rendered water colours",⁵⁶ and William Colgate has said that "In his bold and spirited treatment of the Canadian scene Fraser appears to have been an exception."⁵⁷

The above statements have been quoted not in order to make a qualitative comparison of the two artists and indeed, in their own time, the preference of one over the other was judged to be a matter of taste - "It would be as insidious as it is gratuitous to say which style is most desirable, for each has its votaries."⁵⁸ The consistent difference of description - poetic and charming versus bold and brilliant - illustrates how similar the perception of O'Brien's work in Canada was to that of Durand in the United States.

In the eighteen-seventies, O'Brien and Fraser were the best-known landscape artists in Ontario - in the late eighteen-fourties, Cole and Durand had held that distinction in the genre of American landscape painting. It is perhaps the fate of leading contemporaries of the same discipline to be compared, and invariably strengths and weaknesses are exaggerated for the purpose of good argument, but, nonetheless, several parallels can be seen between the American critics' opinion of Cole and Durand and the perception of Fraser and O'Brien in Canada.

The productions of Cole appeal to the intellect, those of Durand to the heart, . . . Cole is constantly giving birth to a new idea, but Durand seems to lack invention and frequently repeats himself . . . Cole has a passion for the wild and tempestuous; Durand is a lover of the cultivated country when glowing in a mellow sunlight . . . Cole possesses an imagination of the highest order, but Durand only a cultivated fancy - we admire the former, but love the

latter. Cole is unquestionably the more splendid genius, but the talent of Durand is also of a very high order. Cole was born a painter, and for his reputation is indebted to his stars. Durand had made himself a great artist, and may thank his indomitable perseverance for his fame.⁵⁹

It must be said here that Fraser cannot be equated with Cole, and that many of the comments quoted above regarding Durand (and if, by extension, are applied to O'Brien) are extreme and uncharitable. However the comparisons do stand in broad terms and do help to define O'Brien - especially since it can be shown that O'Brien was familiar with and influenced by the work of Durand.

As far as is known, O'Brien did not write down his thoughts on the meaning of art. He had remarked often on the state of Canadian art and culture, and he had repeatedly voiced his concern regarding art societies, art galleries and art education. But he had left no written record of a personal philosophy, his own reasons for choosing to express himself through art. Having been in the public eye throughout his career, it is surprising that he did not do so. It may be reasonable to assume, then, that for O'Brien the role of art was primarily social and national, whereas its function as a vehicle for the exploration of personal expression or artistic complexity was less important. This may be illustrated by a comparison of O'Brien's paintings with some contemporary works.

In analyzing O'Brien's paintings of the eighteen-seventies, one is struck by their visual similarity to American luminist paintings. Yet they do not communicate in the same way. O'Brien seems to have borrowed formal elements - specific compositional devices, atmospheric effects, evocative details - but he did not adopt, or attempt to transcribe, the luminist philosophy. What luminist

paintings convey and what O'Brien's pictures communicate is very different. Herein lies the clue to O'Brien's artistic process. He seems to have appropriated the surface elements without concern for the underlying meaning and emotion.

This process is already evident in some of O'Brien's earliest work. William Sidney Mount's 1836 painting Farmers Noonning (Fig.2), which had been engraved⁶⁰ and therefore was widely accessible, clearly had been the compositional model for O'Brien's Jury Retiring to Deliberate (Fig.1). But O'Brien ignored Mount's monumental classically-oriented genre style and the resulting glorification of the American workman, substituting instead quite the opposite view. Where Mount gives a fine, classical profile to the figure leaning against the tree, O'Brien draws a common weak-chinned character expounding some vacuous point to his rustic company. In Mount's painting, the reclining black man, gloriously lit by the noonday sun, serves as the primary carrier of meaning. Heroically posed against a pyramid-shaped haystack, he is reminiscent of a classical sculpture, and, in fact, Mount based this figure on the Barberini Faun.⁶¹ He embodies the mood of optimism, the satisfaction with the American way of life. O'Brien, on the other hand, eliminates this essential component altogether, and alters each pose so that it is made to look ungainly and anything but heroic. Furthermore O'Brien is, in spirit, clearly not one of the company - a statement that would not necessarily apply to Mount - and assumes an upper-class perspective, indulgent of the simplicity of the common folk, who, it is suggested, will always remain the same.

O'Brien's familiarity with and use of American art is demonstrated again in his 1876 watercolour titled A Glimpse of Glen Onoka (Fig.10). O'Brien had in that year visited the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, and this study of Glen Onoka, Pennsylvania, was a result of the trip. Close-up studies of forest interiors, much like this one, were an important part of Asher B. Durand's working method, and were associated with him and his Hudson River colleagues.⁶² Interior of a Wood (Fig.7) circa 1850, exemplifies this procedure, which consisted of making a plein-air study, directly in oils, in which the goal was to imitate nature as closely as possible. The benefit of these studies, as stated by Durand, was the resulting intimate knowledge of nature. As mentioned, these works were not meant to be exhibited as finished paintings and consequently demonstrate a freedom of handling and composition that was not acceptable in academic productions.

These studies owe much, as well, to the influence of Ruskin who had challenged the artist to paint with an unselective eye. His well-known conclusion to Modern Painters advised the young artist to copy nature faithfully and lovingly, "selecting nothing and rejecting nothing." In America, Ruskin's ideas were to be most completely adopted by The Association for the Advancement of Truth in Art, founded in January of 1863.⁶³ Devoted to transcribing nature in exact botanical and geological detail, and using a brilliant palette and sharp focus, the American Pre-Raphaelites emulated the look of English Pre-Raphaelite pictures. Set against traditional aesthetic values, and committed to

working directly from nature, the members of the Association criticized Hudson River artists for producing "composites" and "conventionalities" which had been rearranged in the studio and were therefore untrue to nature.⁶⁴ In a review of an 1863 exhibition, Clarence Cook, chief spokesman for this group, dismissed the paintings of Thomas Cole as "three pieces of hopeless imbecility".⁶⁵

Although the Association for the Advancement of Truth in Art was the most vociferous exponent of Ruskin's philosophy, his views had widespread influence in American art circles of the time. Since Durand did not write about Ruskin's impact on his own work, it is difficult to judge the extent of the Englishman's influence on him. Durand had begun to paint oil studies out-of-doors perhaps as early as 1832,⁶⁶ and his religious reverence of nature predates Ruskin's involvement in the American cultural world. There is no doubt, however, that Durand's own tendencies were strengthened by Ruskin's philosophy.

O'Brien exhibited A Glimpse of Glen Onoka in May 1876. He evidently considered it a finished picture since he was not in the habit of exhibiting studies. On the contrary, his work had always been singled out for its careful, precise finish. By the mid eighteen-seventies, Canadian critics and art audiences surely must have been able to associate this kind of composition with Durand and the Hudson River artists. Backed by the Hudson River legacy and by Ruskin's ideas and Pre-Raphaelite practice on both sides of the Atlantic, O'Brien's picture, which to an innocent eye would have seemed quite revolutionary and out of place within the body of his work, was in fact legitimized by an already fading

tradition.

Interior of a Wood is a non-traditional, non-picturesque work, which exemplifies the difference between Durand's finished paintings and the "unselected" studies. O'Brien's A Glimpse of Glen Onoka, which suggests the picturesque through its title alone, is a carefully chosen fragment that gives the impression of a finished painting. A definite foreground, middle ground and background satisfy the rules of conventional structure, while Durand concentrates his attention on the immediate foreground alone. Durand's work speaks of its continuation outside the frame, it remains truly fragmentary; O'Brien's satisfies the rules of the picturesque within the frame. Glen Onoka is structured around the central motif of the babbling brook, about which delicate greenery and a gnarled tree trunk provide the traditional framing. Despite the cut-off trees in the background, it is a carefully composed landscape in miniature, arranged by the artist and not by nature. O'Brien's broken tree trunks and stumps are those of tradition, while Durand's jagged-branched dead trees are precisely those elements which attest to the naturalism of the scene.

Durand's landscape paintings embodied his deep belief in the sanctity of nature. This conviction characterizes paintings such as Kindred Spirits of 1849, Early Morning at Cold Spring (Fig.8) and In the Woods of 1855 (Fig.11). These works share, in varying degrees, an idyllic interpretation of nature, energized by the divine spirit. In all the above works, it is the natural forms, especially the trees, which are alive with the message of the Divine. Sentimentalized and

idealized as they may be, they are also highly expressive paintings. The studies, such as Interior of a Wood, are also expressive, but in a novel way. They retain the strength and integrity of natural forms, without the sentiment and idealization. The glorious light and bright future of the idyllic paintings is replaced by an equally expressive mood that conveys the immediate experience of an actual forest interior. In O'Brien's work, neither the paintings nor the study convey a comparable strength of expression. Lords of the Forest (Fig.4), already compared with Whittredge's The Old Hunting Grounds, has formal similarities with Durand's In the Woods as well. The two are very similar in design, showing an almost equal ratio of sky to land, strongly vertical composition, and an ideal view of majestic trees. As usual, though, O'Brien tames the scene and dilutes strong emotion. The pantheistic, spiritual belief that infused Durand's forest with energy now is absent; living forms in the one become painted forms in the other. This contrast is especially evident in the nature studies by the two artists (Interior of a Wood and A Glimpse of Glen Onoka). O'Brien's treatment of natural forms is awkward and hesitant - they have the look of cardboard props when compared to the tectonic strength of Durand's textural shapes. Yet the difference is not one of technical ability alone. O'Brien's sunlit, soft fragment intends to make a pretty picture, it wants to please. Here, again, one can see the particular use that O'Brien made of American art. He diminished, in his own works, the emotional impact imparted by the American models, and replaced their inner spiritual content with genteel expression. This tendency to dilute

expressive force is partly due to the disparate Canadian and American responses to nature. In O'Brien's case, however, the tendency is strengthened by his particular character and upbringing. Both upper-class Victorian restraint and his own goals, directed towards upholding country and Empire, contributed to O'Brien's interpretation of his subject.

The Hudson River artists, striving to resolve the real/ideal dichotomy, chose to retain a romantic ideal, an expression of a deeply felt spiritualism. Transcendental philosophy was central to the creation of their paintings. For the Hudson River artists painting was a moral enterprise. Truth to nature was secondary - what mattered was that each element of nature be made to express a higher truth. O'Brien, attracted primarily by the formal aspects of their work, substitutes the spiritual ideal with the ideal of the picturesque. He is concerned not with romantic transcendentalism, but rather with presenting an image or vista that is "ideally" pleasing.

CHAPTER IV

AMERICA: THE LUMINIST INFLUENCE

Just as the New York landscape painters who had followed in Cole's footsteps were given their "Hudson River" designation by later critics, so the group of artists now known as American luminists was, in its own time, neither distinguished by name nor recognized as a separate movement. The literal definition of luminism indicates simply a preoccupation with the depiction of light. As such, luminism can be seen as an international, trans-historical phenomenon. The specifically American luminism of the nineteenth century has only recently been isolated and defined. With the 1948 exhibition in Boston of the Karolik Collection of American paintings, and John I.H. Baur's introduction to its catalogue,¹ the unique character of paintings by, in particular, Fitz Hugh Lane (1804-1865), John Frederick Kensett (1816-1872) and Martin Johnson Heade (1819-1904), was confirmed. Since that time, art historians have debated the possible sources, interpretations and roles of luminism. Foremost among these have been J.I.H. Baur, William Gerds, Barbara Novak and John Wilmerding.²

The catalogue accompanying the 1980 American Light exhibition of luminist paintings, drawings and photographs remains the most complete treatment of the subject to date.³ It succeeded in clarifying and broadening the boundaries of luminism, rather than attempting to further restrict its definition.

Barbara Novak has suggested, as early as 1969, that luminism had been "one of the most truly indigenous styles in the history of American art"⁴ although she partially qualified this opinion in the American Light catalogue stating that perhaps one could understand luminism "more readily not as a movement but as a mode to which artists had recourse whenever it was formally and philosophically viable".⁵ Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr. has argued, in the same publication, that luminism was in fact an international style. He has demonstrated that paintings from many countries showed tendencies similar to those found in American luminism, and that a surprisingly large number of these works were exhibited in the United States - most notably at the Centennial Exposition.⁶ Stebbins has also claimed that luminism, rather than being progressive, was a conventional style, a "last-ditch attempt to make the Hudson River School style of Asher B. Durand and Church serve the complex psychic and aesthetic needs of post-Civil War America."⁷

Elayne Genishi Garrett, in her dissertation on the British sources of American luminism, has stated, like Stebbins, that American luminism, although it was a distinctive landscape mode, was nevertheless an essentially conservative style.⁸ In her view, "American luminism continued the British interest in the picturesque, which explored the infinite variations offered by atmospheric effects."⁹ She has singled out a specific genre of British watercolour landscape as the primary model for luminist style. Garrett shows that it was not the romantic-picturesque tradition normally associated with early nineteenth century British landscapes that was influential, but rather a parallel, equally popular one

which presented a unimpeded panoramic view. Two watercolours (Figs.12,13) by Peter de Wint (1784-1849), demonstrate these clear differences in style and composition. It is, of course, paintings like de Wint's On the Trent near Burton Joyce, Nottinghamshire [Fig.13] of c. 1835 that may be likened to the tonal, simplified, luminist pictures, compositionally devoid of framing devices. These luminist-like watercolours were an accepted mode, and the artists who produced them - Varley, Cotman, Cox, de Wint, Fielding, Linnel, and Pyne¹⁰ - were working within a conservative tradition, and, according to Garrett, expressing no more than the still, meditative aspect of the picturesque. Of the American luminist painters, Kensett, Heade and Gifford had visited England, but American knowledge of British art had been mostly second-hand, through prints. This situation was changed by the 1857-58 exhibition of more than two hundred English paintings, which was held consecutively in New York, Philadelphia and Boston.

The American artists who developed and most clearly represented the specific qualities of American luminist style were Fitz Hugh Lane, John Frederick Kensett, Martin Johnson Heade, and Sanford R. Gifford (1823-1880). Of these, all but Lane had also worked in the Hudson River tradition, and Kensett and Gifford had been full members of the National Academy. It is significant, too, that O'Brien's work bears a clear resemblance to that of the "Hudson River" luminists, and has comparatively little in common with the work of Lane, who is most closely associated with "pure" luminism.

Luminist paintings may be said to share certain general characteristics. They are small, highly finished pictures, most often of marine subjects, composed with a great clarity that stresses the horizontal. A luminist work is linear, lucid and conceptual. A smooth, mirror-like surface, in which brushstroke (and, by extension, the artist's presence) vanishes, is the carrier of an expressive, serene, meditative calm. Echoing in paint Ralph Waldo Emerson's pantheistic metaphor of the "transparent eyeball," the artist tries to erase all traces of his interpretive presence which might create a barrier between the viewer and the world. Objects and planes are mathematically ordered in space. The resulting composition is easily grasped by the eye, but is made mysterious and surreal by the luminist light which unites matter and spirit in a single image. This luminist light, according to Novak, differs from, for instance, impressionist light in important ways.

Luminist light tends to be cool, not hot, hard not soft, palpable rather than fluid, planar rather than atmospherically diffuse. Luminist light radiates, gleams, and suffuses on a different frequency than atmospheric light. With atmospheric light, which is essentially painterly and optical, air circulates between particles of strokes. Air cannot circulate between the particles of matter that compromise luminist light.¹¹

Opinion is divided as to whether luminism is to be regarded as a continuation of the Hudson River style, or whether it can be accepted as an indigenous movement, as an alternative tradition with separate aims. Baur saw the paintings of Lane and Heade as part of a larger "spontaneous and general movement towards research in atmospheric problems."¹² This American interest

in examining atmospheric effects paralleled the rise of Impressionism in France, and was a development distinct from the Hudson River School, which was influenced by the British romantic tradition. O.R. Roque has disagreed, stating that although "certain peculiarities in the small-picture style" must be acknowledged, American luminism unquestionably has its roots in the Hudson River aesthetic and shows the same preoccupation with light and atmosphere that had been part of the Hudson River style since Cole.¹³ Generally accepted, however, is the conviction that luminism "has clearly supplanted the [Hudson River] School historically as the primary representative of native expression in American nineteenth-century painting."¹⁴

As noted, Fitz Hugh Lane, who worked mostly in Gloucester, Massachusetts, did not associate with the Hudson River artists, but Kensett, Heade and Gifford had been in the mainstream of the School. The strongest luminist works were produced in the years between 1865 and 1875. From the late eighteen-fifties on, however, Kensett, Heade and Gifford were all painting luminist pictures at the same time that they continued to produce works in the familiar Hudson River idiom. Kensett's painterly, romantic Bash-Bish Falls (Fig.14) of 1855 can be contrasted with his sparse, luminist Newport Coast (Fig.15) of 1850-60; Heade's Brazilian Forest (Fig.16) of 1864 can similarly be compared to The Stranded Boat (Fig.17) of 1863, and Gifford's Kauterskill Clove (Fig.18) of 1862 relates in the same way to his Hook Mountain, Hudson (Fig.19) of 1866. Certain art historians have suggested that there is little evidence for the

belief that contemporary criticism recognized luminist paintings as being distinct from Hudson River School landscapes. Howat has said that throughout the 'fifties and 'sixties, the press continued to be interested in the Hudson River salon style, and virtually ignored the small luminist paintings.¹⁵ Stebbins has shown that, far from being a mainstream style, luminist pictures accounted for only five percent of the paintings shown at the New York National Academy in 1867 - at the height of luminism. Furthermore, practically no luminist works were exhibited at that time in Boston, where, as Stebbins points out, landscape subjects were, in general, a much less popular genre.¹⁶ Some evidence exists, however, to support the argument that distinctions between luminist and Hudson River landscapes may in fact have been recognized. In 1867, Henry Tuckerman (1813-1871) had written of Kensett:

There was a time when we feared Kensett, with all his merits, would become a mannerist, - so peculiar and stereotyped were some traits.¹⁷

Tuckerman's description of Gifford's landscapes suggests a similar awareness of difference:

[the] effect [of his best pictures] is the reverse of sensational; their subjects are often destitute of exceptional picturesqueness, but selected simply because they include average and suggestive traits, normal aspects, recognized and familiar charms They do not dazzle, they win; they appeal to our calm and thoughtful appreciation¹⁸

Whether or not one accepts the view that luminism was another branch of Hudson River style, one which brought fresh direction to a tired tradition, it is easy to identify certain basic characteristics common to both. Luminist and

Hudson River pictures shared a fidelity to the general topographical character of a specific place, they both relied on a carefully constructed composition - elaborate or simple - and they both insisted on a high degree of finish. Most importantly, both styles demonstrated an enduring preoccupation with the portrayal of light and atmosphere; hazy, moist and diffuse in Hudson River paintings, and, in keeping with Novak's description, cool, clear and lucid in luminist ones. Contemporary critics tended to include the luminist works of Kensett, Heade and Gifford in the broad category of the New York landscape school, and they evidently minimized the differences in favour of a view that held to an overall consistency of approach.¹⁹ But it is nevertheless clear to the modern viewer that luminist paintings expressed a different kind of sensibility; in contrast to the optimism and nationalism inherent in the confident salon style, which reflected America's expansionist energy, luminist works, though still immersed in the idyllic, at least alluded to the changing times. Given the harsh reality of post-war conditions, and the introduction of Darwinian science which altered the relationship of man and nature, luminism's moody, introspective character may be said to mirror the uncertainties of the age. Luminist paintings, however, like their Hudson River counterparts, remained on the whole pastoral and nostalgic. There is no clear reference to post-war problems, to urban, industrial life, to slum conditions, racism or political division. In 1871, Walt Whitman wrote of this real America, which was soon to face a nation-wide depression:

Society in the states is cankered, crude, superstitious and rotten. . . . Never was there, perhaps, more hollowness at heart than at present.²⁰

Luminism, nevertheless, continued to portray a pure, untroubled world. This may have been a result of a kind of zealous avoidance, or, perhaps, it was an awareness of a disappearing world that occasioned the feelings of nostalgia evident in the small, intimate canvases.

The same motives which led O'Brien to borrow from the Hudson River artists caused him to look to the luminists for inspiration. The luminist pictures were attractive, conventional, picturesque in a newly evocative way, and provided an appropriate vehicle for O'Brien's poetic and genteel sensibility.

When O'Brien wanted to show a scene from everyday life (Fig.1), he turned to America's foremost genre painter; when forest interiors were his subject (Figs.4,10), he looked to the Hudson River artists; when he was inspired by his RCA appointment and the Royal commissions in 1880 to present a suitably proud vision of Canada, he turned, in part, to Bierstadt, America's practitioner of the grandiose. Given O'Brien's preference for marine subjects, it is not surprising, then, that he turned his attention to the restrained, delicate luminist seascapes. These were perfectly suited to his temperament and readily fulfilled the needs of a poetic-picturesque interpretation of nature. The serene beauty and calm, still atmosphere of luminist paintings are retained; but in O'Brien's hands their moody undertones and surreally impersonal surfaces are lost.

Toronto, from the Marsh (Fig.20), a watercolour painted by O'Brien in 1873, has as its primary subject not the city, which is faintly outlined on the

horizon, but the detailed marshland that occupies one-third of the composition. The other two-thirds is taken up by a sweeping expanse of sky. The composition is relatively simple, and despite the evident concentration on detail the effect is one of emptiness.

In both subject matter and composition, Toronto, from the Marsh relates to the work of Martin Johnson Heade. Although Heade was not closely associated with the National Academy in New York, he was a well-known painter who exhibited widely at the Academy itself, at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Boston Atheneum and at the Royal Academy in London.²¹ He was, like O'Brien, self-taught, but from 1840 on he spent extended periods in Europe, studying in England and in Rome.

The depiction of marshes was a recurrent theme in Heade's work, from 1859 until the end of his life. His Duck Hunters in the Marshes of 1866 (Fig.21) is typical of the simplicity and horizontality of the series. Heade's strong colouristic effects, and their consequent expressive quality, would have suited neither O'Brien's present objectives nor his medium of watercolour.²² He therefore ignored these, and adopted only the composition, which is based on the same kind of winding waterline in the foreground and misty outline on the low horizon. Although O'Brien's references to this American work are perhaps not as obvious as in other cases, the essential motif of Toronto, from the Marsh can clearly be traced to Heade.

O'Brien echoes Heade's curious haystacks of the Newbury marshes with a

leafy tree more appropriate to the place, and populates his scene with a duck hunter who reflects the crouched position of the hunter in Heade's painting. The compositional similarities are undeniable, but, again, O'Brien's appropriation is limited to surface elements. His scene remains essentially topographical and specific, whereas Heade's is abstracted and generalized. Heade's work is pervaded by an atmosphere of reverential calm, a stillness that relates more to the vastness and sanctity of nature than to the early hour depicted. The marsh grasses are stylized and their distinctive shapes seem almost anthropomorphized, so that man is joined in partnership with this self-contained universe. The marsh in O'Brien's painting is broken up by various shapes and textures and does not have the unified strength that Heade's geometric composition achieves. In O'Brien's painting it is the realm of man, not nature, that dominates the composition and gives it meaning. Cityscape, centrally-placed sailboat and the figure in the foreground create both a visual and a thematic motif, and the overall mood is one of everyday experience. The even, golden tonality of Heade's work, the enveloping luminist light which is the primary carrier of expression, stands in contrast to O'Brien's crisp, bright colour and painterly brushwork of the sky.

The use of clear, saturated colour, combined with the intense concentration on detail - every reed, every pebble on the foreground shore is isolated and sharply defined - points to O'Brien's awareness of Pre-Raphaelite methods.²³ These he may have garnered partially through contact with Pre-

Raphaelite-influenced American works as well as through the direct example of British paintings. Ruskin's monograph "Pre-Raphaelitism" had been published in England in 1851 and both Canadians and Americans, ardent followers of Ruskin's ideas, were fully aware of Pre-Raphaelite art and principles by the mid eighteenth-fifties.²⁴ Heade's Lake George²⁵ of 1862, a transitional work which combines the atmospheric haziness of the Hudson River style with the spatial and psychological qualities associated with luminism, also shows a meticulously detailed technique that is singularly Pre-Raphaelite. A precisely described, detailed foreground, much like the one in O'Briens Toronto, from the Marsh, was, in the eighteenth-sixties, characteristic of Heade's simplified compositions. A highly influential exhibition of contemporary British art had toured the cities of New York, Philadelphia and Boston in 1857 and 1858, and Heade, like most American artists, must have attended it. Although the majority of the paintings shown were mainstream works, a few controversial Pre-Raphaelite pictures received wide publicity. Landscapes by John Brett, Ford Madox Brown and by Ruskin himself inspired Heade, among others, to move away from picturesque convention and to experiment with a technique based on the use of prismatic colour and scrupulous attention to detail.

This exhibition was, as well, an important influence on the growth of the watercolour movement in America, since half the paintings shown were watercolours. These were, on the whole, judged to be better than the oils and favourable critical opinion fostered a new respect for the medium. This new-

found popularity encouraged the formation, in 1866, of the American Society of Painters in Watercolours, with whom O'Brien exhibited in New York in 1871.

The Pre-Raphaelites treated watercolours and drawings as independent works, not just as preparatory studies. Abandoning the traditional use of sharply outlined single-tone washes, they favoured a technique which involved hatching and stippling, and the application of separate strokes of bright colour. The work of Myles Birket Foster (1825-1899), a follower of the Pre-Raphaelites, and one of the most popular English landscape watercolourists in the latter half of the nineteenth century, demonstrates this method, and comes closest to O'Brien's own watercolour technique.

Indian Summer; a Fishing Party of Rama Indians Outside the Narrows of Lake Simcoe (Fig.22), of 1874, a luminous, clear work, gentler in tonality than Toronto, from the Marsh, relates to yet another stream of luminism in the United States.²⁶ The reference again can be found in American genre painting. George Caleb Bingham's Fur Traders Descending the Missouri (Fig.23), exhibited in New York in 1845, although a work that was not well-known in the nineteenth century, bears an extraordinary resemblance to Indian Summer. The composition, despite the greater simplicity of the proto-luminist American painting, is very similar - the insistent horizontality, the placement of the boat, the silhouetted masses of trees and the black animal at the bow, all are echoed in O'Brien's design. Shared, too, is the preoccupation with describing atmospheric conditions and the effects of light reflecting on water. However, despite the evident formal similarities, the

overall emotional impact of the two paintings is very different. O'Brien repeats his particular method of working; the surface is appropriated, even the surface colour, while the deeper levels of representation are avoided. Intuition gives way to fact, mythmaking is replaced by anecdote.

Bingham's work, in addition to evoking the nostalgia of a disappearing way of life, is at the same time mysterious, haunting and unsettling. The figure in the stern stares directly at the viewer, a half-squint on his face, and the tethered black animal in the bow, faced in the same direction and strangely mirrored in the water, heighten the eerie feeling. The scene is frozen in time, but we are not at all certain as to what sort of time it is. The landscape is enveloped in a warm, romantic haze, while the foreground figures are strongly coloured and harshly outlined. This incongruity between the mood of the dissolved, atmospheric background versus the supra-real foreground adds to the anxious effect.

O'Brien's scene, on the other hand, is skilfully unified. A delicate palette is used throughout and soft shadows break up the solidity of the foreground figures. Other boats are naturalistically positioned to populate the scene, diminishing the emphasis on the central canoes. The occupants of the canoes refer to one another, as they would in everyday life, and are not employed to deliberately engage the viewer. The black creature - most likely a bear cub - of Bingham's painting is replaced by a more domesticated animal, unconcernedly sniffing the air. O'Brien's painting is a sensitive description of reality, strongly evocative of the luminous clarity of a Canadian Indian summer. It is a poetic and

beautifully coloured painting in which the time and place are almost tangible, but it is evocative of specific conditions and does not intend to lead the mind to larger themes.

O'Brien's work of 1877 reveals two new directions - the use of oils and a marked preference for landscape compositions that feature a semi-circular shoreline. This latter device is particularly evident in The Whirlpool at the Chats (Fig.24), but practically all the compositions of that year are structured around a similarly curved waterline. A semi-circular coastline was also an enduring motif of the American luminists. Lane, Heade and Gifford used it recurrently, and Kensett, especially, imbued this design with particular meaning.

The titles of some of O'Brien's paintings document that he had sketched in New York and Massachusetts in 1877, precisely the year in which these changes first appear.²⁷ It will be remembered, as well, that O'Brien had the previous year seen many Hudson River and luminist canvases at the Philadelphia Exposition.

A comparison of O'Brien's The Whirlpool at the Chats with Paul Kane's White Mud Portage (Fig.25) of 1856 can serve to illustrate O'Brien's eclectic use of other works of art. Here one can examine the conventions that O'Brien retained from English-derived Canadian painting, and those he abandoned in favour of a greater naturalism.

O'Brien's work bears a strong compositional similarity to Kane's. The waterfall and the enframing trees - the trees of Claudian convention in Kane's painting - are placed in virtually the same position on the two canvases, and the

positions of the foreground canoes are almost identical. However, O'Brien has made the waterfall more prominent by bringing it forward and enlarging it. He thus succeeds in limiting the panoramic view of trees which, more than anything, gives Kane's picture its European look. O'Brien retains just the top of a hazy tree-line, but even that, and especially the shore-line rocks and the trees enframing the waterfall, has a naturalistic silhouette which refers to observation rather than to artistic convention. An almost photographic realism, in fact, characterizes O'Brien's painting. It is to works such as this that the comment "No other painter seems to understand Nature like Mr. O'Brien"²⁸ best applies. This statement, made in 1877, the year of the exhibition of this picture, no doubt refers to both the truthful depiction of the Canadian landscape, but it also acknowledges the carefully preserved picturesque qualities that a chosen view was expected to display. This attitude attests again to Ruskin's influence, which is evident in the following excerpt from an article titled "The Beautiful in Art", published in 1863.

No good artist is a mere slave of nature. It is true, he loves to study nature, for nature is his school, and his best schoolmaster; but when we say that the artist is not a mere slave of nature, we mean that he can originate ideas It is when we look at the philosophy of art from this standpoint that we see the true dignity of man in one of its important aspects. The all-wise and infinite Artist has endowed the finite artist with those very powers which enable him to conceive and to execute.²⁹

An 1873 Canadian periodical article again calls for poetry in art, in opposition to the crude reality of photographic detail.

. . . but the *art* of the true artist is required to bring his accumulated study of

nature to bear on [his] subject; just as the poet makes "a thing of beauty" out of what seems homely and prosaic to the common eye.³⁰

One need only notice the "charming" red-bird perched on a foreground log in The Whirlpool at the Chats to understand how delicately O'Brien managed to balance the picturesque with the natural.

In The Whirlpool at the Chats, the waterline is bounded by the foreground shore, as is the river's edge in Kane's painting. This was conventional practice, and allowed the viewer a visual stage from which to survey the presented scene. Kane's short, downward sloping shore consciously bows to this convention and produces an awkward effect; O'Brien, by substituting a crisply delineated curve of shoreline that encloses the waters of the little bay, creates a more sophisticated, focused composition. In Kane's painting the eye continually travels around the canvas, from the picturesque trees and waterfall to the stiffly-painted foreground canoes and shore, and finally to the activity on the bare slope of hill on the left. The romantic clouded sky, rather than serving to unify this multi-focused composition emphasizes the differences between the conventional character of the background and the more naturally observed, indigenous subjects in the foreground.

O'Brien opens up his composition by eliminating all visual barriers on the left of the canvas and by enveloping the far view and large expanse of sky in a delicate blue haze. The opposition of the enclosed, solid foreground and the unimpeded view into the far distance - and the resulting sense of visual release -

relates O'Brien's work, once more, to that of the American luminists. Kensett's Newport Coast (Fig.15), circa 1850-60, and Kensett's work of that time in general, shows a preoccupation with expressing this opposition of mass and void. This same compositional format is repeated in other luminist landscapes, such as Lane's Norman's Woe³¹ of 1862 and Brace's Rock³² of 1864, Heade's Stranded Boat³³ of 1863 and Gifford's Hook Mountain, Hudson³⁴ of 1866. All these paintings employ, as well, a semi-circular shoreline to emphasize the contrast between solid land mass, and an open, expanded view toward the horizon.

The majority of luminist paintings owe their expressive impact to the juxtaposition of a geometrically simplified, measured composition, and the portrayal of ethereal atmosphere and light. This combination of measure - which signifies the eternal and immutable - with the ephemeral, transient states suggested by atmospheric effects, is partly responsible for the meditative calm characteristic of luminism. Paradoxical too, is the perception that luminist works are highly personal, despite the elimination of visible brushstrokes and the resulting smooth, impersonal surface. Yet despite the fact that tangible presence of the artist is erased, the perception remains that deeply felt concerns about the nature of existence are being expressed. These internal tensions, particularly strong in Kensett's paintings of the 'fifties and 'sixties, create a highly expressive and transcendental mood.

O'Brien's technique, on the other hand, remains painterly, and his interpretation of the subject matter relies on the tradition of the topographical

picturesque. Moonlight, Shanty Bay (Fig.26), circa 1877, immediately suggests the picturesque, both by means of the prominently displayed rotted tree trunk which frames the view, and by its description of a particular time and condition, suggesting the specific, rather than the luminist concerns with the universal. The interest in showing the opposition of masses and voids is apparent, but, even in those paintings where this contrast is particularly emphasized, it speaks more of the picturesque than of the sublime.

The emphasis on showing atmospheric effects - largely in moonlight, sunrise and sunset paintings - was considered "a quintessentially British picturesque interest".³⁵ It was an equally popular subject with the early Hudson River artists, whose principal influence was precisely the British picturesque. Hudson River paintings, then, could have provided a model for O'Brien just as easily as could have the direct example or first-hand knowledge of British works. Another means for the transmission of British conventions via America can be found in the example of art manuals. Popular in Britain from the end of the eighteenth century through the mid-nineteenth century, the general principles of these manuals were echoed in American editions. No fewer than fifty such landscape manuals were published in America between 1820 and 1860.³⁶ The practice of drawing in America, as taught in the formulaic manner of the manuals, had practical aims. The authors of the manuals stated that, along with the advantage of acquiring a cultured outlook, learning to draw encouraged the kind of thinking that gave birth to practical inventions. This came to be seen as

one more example of the egalitarian nature of American life. The drawing manuals, then, met the demand for a democratic art and stated confidently that "everyone who can learn to *write* is capable of learning to *draw*."³⁷

Consistent with this democratic spirit, the manuals promoted a simplified, precise, linear style. An example of the effects of this method can be seen in a drawing by the American artist Louis Remy Mignot (1831-1870) (Fig.27).

Although the drawing is dated 1846, it nevertheless shows tendencies that are associated with American luminism of later years. The sunken log in the foreground of this drawing was a typical device, taught in the manuals, by which recession into space could be shown. It is here awkwardly placed and stiffly drawn, the artist being only fifteen years old at the time, but it is interesting to note that a diagonally-placed log, partly sunk into the sandy shore, fulfils the same purpose in O'Brien's The Whirlpool at the Chats (Fig.24), and in the earlier Under the Cliffs, Port Stanley (Fig.3). Another example of a common instruction-book technique for showing recession into space - the use of pointing twigs, emerging from foreground water - can be seen in Moonlight, Shanty Bay (Fig.26).

The most popular manuals in Britain were those of John Varley and his pupils, the watercolour painters David Cox (1783-1859), Peter de Wint (1784-1849) and Anthony Van Dyke Copley Fielding (1787-1855). A page from one of Cox's manuals (Fig.29) - various editions were published from 1814 to 1841 - shows the linear style and simplified composition repeated in the American editions. It also shows the atmospheric haze and mood of reverie which so

strongly influenced the American luminists.

Of the principal American luminists, John F. Kensett and S.R. Gifford seemed most comfortable with the idiom of the British picturesque. Kensett, especially, "was well known for his ability to endow a typically picturesque view with his own poetic feeling."³⁸ His ability to communicate the poetry which he perceived to be inherent in nature was already evident in the Hudson River paintings, but it is in the simpler subjects and more unified treatment of his luminist work that this is particularly pronounced. Kensett's deep feeling for nature continued to be transmitted in his luminist pictures, but without the picturesque conventions familiar to the Hudson River style. The Claudian picturesque was replaced by the meditative, "unframed" picturesque style of Varley and his pupils. The shift from the conventional to the meditative picturesque paralleled a change in America in the approach to representation. The concern was less with merely describing the facts of nature than with expressing the truths of nature - the tradition of topographical fact gave way to the expression of "poetic fact."

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, the topographer's concern for recording facts was blended with the landscape painter's preoccupation with realizing the truth of nature. . . . The transformation from topography to poetry and from fact to truth was enhanced by a portrayal of light and the application of principles of design.³⁹

American experience around mid-century transformed the conventional British picturesque style and gave rise to the poetic quietism of luminism. In Canada, the situation was different. There, although the pervasive influence of

the British picturesque remained, as it did in America, it persisted in its conventional form. The reason for this difference can be found in the disparate American and Canadian responses to nature. Many formal elements - the look - of O'Brien's early landscapes can indeed be traced to contemporary American painting, but his work embodies, in essence, the colonial British-Canadian experience of the land.

In Canada, as Marcia B. Kline has shown in her perceptive study of the issue,⁴⁰ the natural world was understood as a threatening force, hostile to human values and inferior to civilization. This outlook was a direct result of Canada's colonial status, and its consequent dependence on the parent civilization. The United States, having broken with the protective power, affirmed the experience of the wilderness. Americans placed their faith not in the security of the parent culture, but in the symbol of Nature - "that state in which Truth, Beauty and Harmony reign"⁴¹ - which to them represented a new order for human existence. American expression of this divinely-inhabited Nature was, then, appropriately hopeful and Edenic. In contrast, the Canadian perception was that the wilderness represented a life inferior to European patterns of civilization, and it was hoped that eventually this wild and natural world might be replaced by the British model. Seeking the protection of a lawful, civilized society, Canadians, then, "[opened] the floodgates to terror when they did have to meet the wild and natural".⁴² Kline's argument that the root of the Canadian response to the land is a conflict between nature and civilization is supported by

Northrop Frye who assesses the artist's response in the same terms.

. . . [Canada] above all, . . . is a country in which nature makes a direct impression on the artist's mind, an impression of its primeval lawlessness and moral nihilism, its indifference to the supreme value placed on life within human society.⁴³

Gaile McGregor, presenting much the same argument as Kline, has termed the Canadian recoil from nature the "Wacousta Syndrome."⁴⁴ She derived this term from the title of an early nineteenth century novel in which Wacousta is the threatening, unknown Indian warrior who represents the fear of the wilderness, of the "uncivilized" land. McGregor points out that,

. . . for all their reliance on American models, Canadian painters were captives of their own conditioning. Repelled by raw nature, they proved incapable of handling the panoramic perspective unless the scene surveyed were fully domesticated.⁴⁵

Reliance upon convention, like the need to domesticate, was a reflex against the reality of the wilderness and an expression of colonial mentality. Again, according to Northrop Frye,

The colonial position of Canada is therefore a frostbite at the roots of the Canadian imagination, and it produces a disease for which I think the best name is prudery . . . the instinct to seek a conventional or commonplace expression of an idea.⁴⁶

The Whirlpool at the Chats and Moonlight, Shanty Bay demonstrate the particular response to nature, discussed above, which focuses on its domesticated, protective qualities. Throughout the 'seventies and into the 'eighties, O'Brien repeated the design of these two paintings. A sheltered bay on one side of the canvas is contrasted with an open view across water on the other. Derived as this formal arrangement was from American luminist landscapes, it

nevertheless developed in ways that expressed the opposite of luminist concerns. The massive cliffs of Black Cape, Bay Chaleur (Fig.29), of 1877, occupy more than half the space of the canvas, and effectively block any panoramic view on that side of the painting. Their solidity is contrasted with the airy space on the right side of the canvas. The compositional division is paralleled by the division of activities taking place in the picture. The picturesque, detailed side of the canvas, populated with labourers gathering kelp, is countered by the still, "luminist" side which shows only a solitary boat, coming in to shore. The painter's interest, it seems, and that of the viewer, is focused on the encircling land formations and on the genre scene in the foreground. The potentially oppressive shadow of the cliffs is moderated by the view into the distance, and the overall mood is one of domestic well-being.

A Kensett painting - Beach at Newport (Fig.30), for example - even when it shows local activity, remains contemplative and emphasizes the space and light that are its principal subject. Voids are still offset by masses, but their purpose is to heighten the effect of the light-filled atmosphere, thus producing a mood of meditative silence which can be described as the "transcendental sublime."

Black Cape, Bay Chaleur, on the other hand, underplays the effect of release into space and concentrates instead on solidity of form and on the comforting depiction of everyday life. It represents a picturesque landscape scene, and despite a certain stillness of atmosphere, it retains the dramatic aspects of the sublime. The sheer size of the cliffs in this painting relate the

work more to the picturesque annuals (Fig.32) popular in both England and America, than to the de-emphasized land forms of luminist works. These annuals combined the romantic picturesque with the unframed picturesque style, and simultaneous use of these conventions can be found in O'Brien's work of the 'seventies. In pictures such as A Watering Place⁴⁷ of 1878 and Natural Rampart at the Ile-aux-Fleurs, Lower St. Lawrence of 1879 (Fig.32), the land mass is overpowering - huge rather than monumental - and the intended focus is on the picturesque properties of the craggy cliffs. The exaggerated change of scale also belongs to the sublime picturesque tradition, while the clear expanse of water and sky, the left side of the canvas, refers to luminism.

Another aspect of Black Cape, Bay Chaleur, and one which links it to both English and American practice, is the strong haze that envelops the landscape in tones of mauve. Mauve-misted landscapes were specifically associated with Cox's repertoire of styles and subjects⁴⁸, but the hazy atmosphere in English landscape pictures in general had had an effect on the American luminists. Gifford, in particular, experimented with light and colour to gain special effects. His growing interest in atmospheric conditions, in mists and hazes, led him to call his work of the 'sixties and 'seventies "air-painting".⁴⁹ G.W. Sheldon, writing in 1877 on Gifford's method of painting, said "The condition - that is, the colour - of the air is the one essential thing . . . in landscape painting".⁵⁰ Gifford's The Wilderness of 1860 displays a discrete, though distinct, mauve light. In his later work Gifford exaggerated these light effects, causing James Jackson Jarves to

comment "Gifford has an opulent sense of colour, but its tone is artificial and strained, often of a lively or deep brimstone tint, as if he saw the landscape through stained glass."⁵¹ Jarves' description applies equally well to the colour of Black Cape, Bay Chaleur, and since this brick-pink tonality is repeated, to a lesser degree, in only one other of O'Brien's paintings (Natural Arches, near Dalhousie, N.B.,⁵² 1877), it may well have had a direct source in Gifford's work. Nor were these sources difficult to find, as both Gifford and Kensett were very popular in the 'sixties and early 'seventies, and Kensett's work, especially, was everywhere to be seen.⁵³

In Northern Head of Grand Manan (Fig.33), of 1879, O'Brien continued to explore the compositional design originally derived from luminist paintings, and yet another luminist work may be suggested as an inspiration, if not a direct model for this picture. O'Brien had most likely seen Alfred T. Bricher's (1837-1908) painting of Grand Manan, which had been exhibited at the National Academy of Design in 1877. Bricher's Morning at Grand Manan⁵⁴ is a study in effects, and shows the cliffs and water dramatically illuminated by the dawning sun. O'Brien, however, downplays the dramatic side of Bricher's picture and generally seems less concerned with exploring theatrical effects. Although derivative of luminism, Northern Head of Grand Manan is not overpoweringly so, and the overall effect is of fidelity to place. It is probably O'Brien's least sentimental and conventional work to this time, and although it is mildly evocative of luminism and of the meditative picturesque, it is characterized by a

personal response to the subject rather than by either luminist or picturesque convention.

O'Brien suspends his preoccupation with the grandiose, although Grand Manan Island would have been an apt subject, and concentrates his attention on evocatively translating atmospheric effects and on rendering painterly descriptions of clouds, water and rocks. It is a work rich in texture and colour and attests to the confidence and maturity that O'Brien had achieved by the end of the decade.

The following year, O'Brien was appointed first president of the RCA, a position which provided the prestige he had long sought and which must have seemed to him the just culmination of his efforts on behalf of Canadian painting. O'Brien was nonetheless required, as were all potential academicians, to submit a diploma work which would contribute to the creation of a national collection. Indeed, the fact that he was the first president of the newly formed National Academy, an institution which represented the emergent Canadian self-awareness and budding nationalism, made the choice of subject and theme all the more important. Lord Lorne, on the occasion of the opening of the first Academy exhibition, stressed the fact that the creation of a National Gallery was as much in the interest of patriotism as in the interest of culture, the two being inextricably bound.

. . . the gentlemen who have been appointed Academicians have patriotically undertaken as a guarantee of their interest in the welfare of art in Canada, that it shall be a condition of their acceptance of the office of academician that they shall give, each of them, a picture which shall become national

property, and be placed here in an art gallery.⁵⁵

O'Brien's diploma piece, painted in 1880, was Sunrise on the Saguenay (Fig.34). This painting can be seen as a culmination of O'Brien's interests of the previous decade, and in it O'Brien finds his own voice. It is a synthesis of his own experimentation to that time, an integration of the various formal influences combined with a clear message of Canadian nationalism. The composition reflects the preoccupations of the last years, but it is now simplified and monumental. It is also more unified, the sublime rise and mass of the cliff being balanced by the intense colours of the sunrise.

The luminous pastel colouring and the dramatic vista of this painting reflect, as well, the influence of another American artist, Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902), with whose paintings O'Brien had been familiar and whom he had met in Quebec in September of 1880.⁵⁶ In Sunrise on the Saguenay as in Bierstadt's grandiose views of the Rocky Mountains and the Yosemite Valley, tall peaks emerge out of coloured mists and a blazing light casts a sublime glow over the scene. Bierstadt painted quietly luminist, silvery-toned landscapes as well, but in Sunrise on the Saguenay, O'Brien is more interested in interpreting the message of nationalism found in Bierstadt's earlier paintings than in adopting the formal elements of his work.

Formally, Sunrise on the Saguenay can be seen almost as a composite of his own previous works. The impressive rise and mass of the cliffs in Black Cape, Bay Chaleur (Fig.29) is repeated in this work, made more powerful still by the

elimination of unnecessary detail. The sublime grandeur of the cliffs, emerging from shadow and defined by the blinding light, is heightened through the use of simplified form. The luminist elements of the earlier painting are also intensified - a large sailing ship takes place of the rowboat and dramatic colour strengthens the emotional impact.

In Northern Head of Grand Manan (Fig.33), the blatant formal divisions of paintings such as Black Cape, Bay Chaleur had already been resolved, resulting in a more confident, unified composition. Sunrise on the Saguenay further attests to O'Brien's new-found assurance. Skilful, painterly brushwork describes a scene of luminist calm, yet one evocative of a specific place. As with Northern Head of Grand Manan, it is the foreground that serves to geographically locate the scene. The dead tree and brush in the foreground of Sunrise on the Saguenay, painted in dark tones and so prominently displayed, fulfill a particular function. With this foreground removed, the work could be described as being transcendental and international; although the familiar forms of the Saguenay cliffs refer to a specific place, the tranquil atmosphere, unified colour and immediate experience of the glassy surface of the water produce a contemplative scene that has more to do with nature and the meditative sublime than with the topography of nationalism. Examined without its foreground detail, the painting is more strictly luminist than any other work of O'Brien's to date. But the very specific character of the framing vegetation, its reference to the British picturesque tradition and the consequent feeling of familiarity and reassurance that this

produces, locates the scene in place. The same scene which would otherwise have produced a transcendent, supra-national feeling, now takes on a specific nationalistic aura. The framing vegetation aside, the techniques used by the luminists to create a meditational mood in their paintings are here employed by O'Brien for a specific emotive purpose. Previously interested in primarily formal elements, O'Brien now is interested in luminist expressiveness and idealism, in order to communicate his nationalistic concerns. It is as if O'Brien now employs luminist techniques to arrive at Hudson River emotion. Light is the bearer of his message - a message of the hope and optimism of a new land, yet one confident in the protection of the Empire at large.

CONCLUSION

O'Brien found his unique voice in the blend of luminist style and nationalist sentiment. This was first successfully achieved in Sunrise on the Saguenay and continued to be explored in the Queen's commission paintings of 1881.¹ In View from the King's Bastion, Québec, it is now the open fact, rather than just the symbol, of Empire, that is used as a framing device. The fortress - cannons ready and Royal Standard flying high - introduces the seemingly endless expanse of water and it is suggested that this inspiring view of the capital, glowing with hope and basking in success, is a direct result of the benevolence of Empire. Although the foreground provides the conventional visual, as well as symbolic foothold, luminist light envelopes the distant view, freed from the tradition of the picturesque and, in spirit, beyond worldly concerns. In the other work commissioned by Lorne, O'Brien again tempers the stark horizontality of luminist pictures with a genre scene on the left side of the canvas. Québec from Point Lévis is a study in colour harmonies and the effects of light, but the objectives of colonial nationalism are still met. Dennis Reid perfectly describes the underlying message of this fine picture:

Surely Quebec City is presented here as though it were a glorious trophy, humming with efficient industry, a great, glowing plum pudding of a prize truly fit for a sovereign.²

Although O'Brien expressed himself most confidently in those paintings which glorified Canada's identity and her place within the Empire, even his previous work was never simply an echo of his European and American models. His sources had been extensive, and his work, as demonstrated, had at times been derivative, but the result had always been something distinct from those examples.

It is this distinctiveness that gives O'Brien his historical importance. He had demonstrated, true to his aim, the existence of a truly Canadian sensibility in his art. His work offers a snapshot of Canadian history, not only through the topographical accuracy of the scenes that he presents, but also through their underlying moods. He succeeds in providing a visual memoir of life in Canada during the Victorian era - albeit one from an upper class perspective. His delicate, restrained paintings are evidence of the artist's own personality, as well as attesting to his lifelong concern with the reception of his work. His painting succeeds in expressing not only his own sensibilities, but also those of his patrons and audience.

Although his style continued to evolve, his consistent aim was that the paintings remain a pleasure for the eye. His devotion to the picturesque led him sometimes to be criticized for lacking strength. When the critic for the Mall suggested that the force of Sunrise on the Saguenay had been impaired because

of the "toning down of supposed coarseness"³, he was expressing a particular viewpoint. In paintings like Sunrise on the Saguenay, however, O'Brien's intention was not only to show the Canadian landscape, but also to establish in the minds of his countrymen the vision of Canada as an integral part of the British Empire, as well as to promote the value of Canada to the mother country. It would have been neither true to his character nor faithful to his aims to exaggerate the "coarseness" of the landscape. Whether or not one agrees with his interpretation of the land, O'Brien's vision was a conscious one, consistent with his Tory upbringing and class. It was not a view universally held, but nevertheless could be said to represent the Victorian aesthetic of the majority of English Canadians.

Although O'Brien was a painter of quality, he was not an artist of the first rank, and he remains of importance primarily because of his historical role. O'Brien neither superimposed a European pattern on the Canadian reality nor attempted to transplant the American experience. In accepting neither the American nor the British prototypes in their entirety, he succeeded in creating a delicate balance, a reflection of the dialectic between the two major forces on Canadian culture. Although the particular interpretation of the Canadian landscape was, in part, a product of his own temperament, it was also defined by something less tangible, and the Canadian identity of the paintings perhaps remains best clarified in opposition to its models.

ENDNOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Lucius R. O'Brien. Visions of Victorian Canada. Exhibition catalogue. Text by Dennis Reid. (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1990). Hereafter cited as O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue.

2. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. xi.

3. Canadian Monthly and National Review v.6 1874, p. 88.

4. Lucius R. O'Brien. Sunrise on the Saguenay 1880. Oil on canvas, 87.6 x 125.7 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Hereafter, for details on illustrated works, please refer to Illustrations on pp. 114-130 of this thesis.

5. The Mail 8 Mar. 1880.

6. The Globe 9 Mar. 1880, p. 304.

7. William Colgate, Canadian Art (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1943), p. 30.

CHAPTER I

PERSONALITY AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES

1. Newton MacTavish, The Fine Arts in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan, 1925), p. 24.

2. Hereafter referred to as the RCA.

3. MacTavish, p. 25.

4. Colgate, p. 30.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
6. J. Russell Harper, Painting in Canada: a History , 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977), p. 203.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
9. Dennis Reid, A Concise History of Canadian Painting, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 85.
10. Mary left England with her mother in order to visit her brother who had settled in Upper Canada. She fully expected to return to England, and the journal was written in the form of letters which were sent to family and friends at home. The prospect of marriage to Edward O'Brien induced her to stay in Canada.
11. Audrey Saunders Miller, ed., The Journals of Mary O'Brien (Toronto: Macmillan, 1968), p.87. Entry for 27 Jan. 1830. Hereafter cited as Journals.
12. Journals, p.91. Entry for 11 Feb. 1830.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-39. Entry for 28 Oct. 1830. "Meantime we have just received a volume of Bishop Heber's 'life', the first fruits of our book society."
14. *Ibid.*, p. 239. Entry for 8 June 1835. "I have unintentionally got more teaching on my hands than I intended, and my spirits sometimes shrink from it. However, I can hardly regret it, as it is truly a charity as much called for as any that ever before presented itself to me."
15. In the early nineteenth century, British officers were given particular opportunities in Upper Canada. They were offered large tracts of land and half pay for life in return for lawkeeping duties and for organizing militia units in the event of trouble with the United States.
16. Obituary notice, the Mail, 20 July 1875.
17. "Family Histories and Coats of Arms. O'Brien of 'The Woods'", Montreal Standard, 18 Aug. 1906. "The O'Brien's are descended from royal stock, their common progenitor having been Brian Boroimhe, born 924, King of Ireland 1002."

18. Samuel Thompson, Reminiscences of a Canadian Pioneer for the Last Fifty Years (1833-1883) (Toronto: McClelland, 1968), p. 133.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 141. Thompson recounts that Edward and Mary O'Brien had brought two of his farm foreman's children, ill with diphtheria, to their home and nursed them themselves. Three other children of the same family had already died.

20. Journals, p. 190. Entry for 16 May 1832. "The three black men we employed before have returned, raising our black establishment to six It is chiefly owing to our popularity among our sable neighbours, or perhaps our lack of prejudice towards them, that we have been able to do nearly as much in the six weeks we have been here as the others have done since the winter set in."

Thompson, p. 140. "His habitual reverent-mindedness led him to respect men of all shades of thought and feeling, while to sympathize with sorrow and suffering was as natural to him as the air he breathed."

21. Journals, p. 66. Entry for 1 Aug. 1829. "Mr. O'Brien brought us his sketches of the lake which he has finished."

22. *Ibid.*, p. 78. Entry for 6 Nov. 1829. "After talking literature with Mr. O'Brien. . ."

23. *Ibid.*, p. 256. Entry for 5 Sept. 1836. "This being done and my own toilet being completed, for I do not breakfast in dishabille, the men come in to prayers and go to breakfast, while we, at more leisure, take our own."

24. *Ibid.*, p. 157. Entry for 11 April 1831. ". . . we were both surprised and amused to find that we were involuntarily congratulating ourselves on the superior air of comfort which our own house possessed over that of any other we had been in."

25. Thompson, pp. 132-33.

26. Journals, p. 138. Entry for 28 Oct. 1830. "As we now feel really settled in our home we have resumed our regular family worship. I first read a chapter in the Bible, and then Edward reads a psalm and prayers from the liturgy. He makes a point on this occasion of bringing the servants as much as possible into the same circle as ourselves."

27. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 8.

28. Journals, p. 96. Entry for 26 Mar. 1830. Letter to sister Lucy.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 89. Entry for Feb. 1830.
30. *Ibid.*, p. xi (Intro.). From about 1820 to 1840, a time of important immigration, many books had been published in England describing the opportunities awaiting settlers in Upper Canada. The reading public would naturally have been the ones to profit from these accounts.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 221. Entry for 16 Nov. 1833.
32. There are many accounts of visits to Government House: Journals, p. 79. Entry for 24 Nov. 1829; p. 87. Entry for 26 Jan. 1830; p. 179. Entry for 23 Mar. 1832.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 299 (author's note 14).
34. Edwin Gullet, The Pioneer Farmer and Backwoodsman. v.1. (Toronto: The Ontario Publishing Co., 1963), p. 276.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 243.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 245.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 243.
38. D. C. Masters, The Rise of Toronto (1850-1890). (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1947), p. 20.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
41. G. P. de T. Glazebrook, The Story of Toronto. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 70. The Family Compact was "a phrase originally applied to an agreement on foreign policy reached between the French and the Spanish Bourbons during the Seven Years War. Though almost meaningless as applied to Upper Canada, it was a useful form of abuse since it somehow had a sinister connotation."
42. Thompson, p. 140.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

45. Journals, p. 179. Entry for 23 Mar. 1832.
46. Ontario Archives, MS 199, O'Brien journals, 12 Sept. 1832, journal no. 73.
47. Ontario Archives, Dec. 1834, journal no. 98.
48. Ontario Archives, 15 April 1835, journal no. 100.
49. Ontario Archives, 25 Oct. 1832.
50. Ontario Archives, 31 July 1833, journal no. 82.
51. Ontario Archives, Jan. 1837, journal no. 114.
52. Ontario Archives, 27 May 1833, journal no. 80.
53. Ontario Archives, 22 July 1835.
54. Ontario Archives, 12 Feb. 1834, journal no. 89.
55. A watercolour, ink and graphite drawing, done in topographical style, and also demonstrating a familiarity with the conventions of picturesque composition, is reproduced on page 10 of the catalogue. It presents the house in a charmingly landscaped setting. Another pencil drawing of The Woods is reproduced in The Journals of Mary O'Brien, in the illustrations between pages 106-107.
56. Obituary, 20 July 1875. The Mail.
57. Lucius O'Brien, Sketchbook I, No. 25, Fan Qui off Big Bay June 17th 1858. Art Gallery of Ontario.
58. Obituary, 20 July 1875. The Mail.
59. Sketch of the Life of the Late Lt.-Col. William Edward O'Brien, LL.B., pamphlet taken from The Canadian Law Journal, Feb. 1915. "There being no educational advantages in Simcoe in those days, Colonel E. G. O'Brien moved to Toronto with his family." Henry O'Brien File, S 154, Baldwin Room, Box 2, Metro Toronto Library.
60. J. W. L. Forster, "Art and Artists in Ontario" in Canada. An Encyclopedia of the Country, ed. J. Castell Hopkins (Toronto: Linscott, 1897), vol. iv, p. 347.
61. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 15.

Nancy Linda Kirkpatrick, "The Promotion of Art in Toronto: 1830-1870" (Masters Thesis, University of Toronto, 1979), p. 64. Both Fleming and Howard taught at Upper Canada College and the Mechanics' Institute.

62. Ibid., p. 64.

63. Ibid., p. 65.

64. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 10.

65. Handwritten note by Henry O'Brien. Henry O'Brien File. Refer also to O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, n. 51, p. 23.

66. Lucius O'Brien, Sketchbook I, No. 8, "Innisfil" dated Jan. 1854.

67. For an account of O'Brien's business activities and early art involvement in Toronto see O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, Chapter I.

68. Lucius O'Brien, Sketchbook I, No. 9, Shanty Bay Orphan at Family Prayers (graphite, pen and ink).

69. J. W. Cook, after Lucius R. O'Brien. How to get away from a Bear 1849. Copperplate engraving on paper, 8.8 x 14.9 cm. For illustration see O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 11.

70. J. W. Cook, after Lucius R. O'Brien. Forest and Cedar swamp 1849. Copperplate engraving on paper, 8.9 x 14.6 cm. For illustration see O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 12.

71. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 185.

72. Lucius O'Brien, Sketchbook I, No. 10, Portrait of a Lady Dec. 1854. Graphite, pen and ink on paper.

73. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 18.

74. Gordon Dodds, and Roger Hall, A Picture History of Ontario (Edmonton, Alberta: Hurtig Publishers, 1978), p. 56, The Court at Mono Mills.

75. Lucius O'Brien, Sketchbook I, No. 2 (sketches numbered on verso), "The Circuit" The Court at Mono Sept. 1853. Graphite, pen and ink on paper.

76. Lucius O'Brien, Sketchbook I, No. 4, "Going the Circuit" - Lunch Sept. 1853.

77. Gordon Dodds, and Roger Hall, p. 56, Jury retiring to deliberate.
78. William Sidney Mount, Farmers Noonng, 1836. Suffolk Museum and Carriage House, Stony Brook, New York.
79. Guillet, p. 148.
80. "Bible The Only Safe Guide States Hy. O'Brien K.C., on 94th Birthday," The Barrie Examiner August 1930, p. 8.
81. Journals, p. 224. Entry for 12 Mar. 1834.
82. Hereafter referred to as the OSA.

CHAPTER II TORONTO AND THE OSA

1. D. C. Masters, The Rise of Toronto (1850-1890). (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1947), pp. 129-30.
2. Nancy Linda Kirkpatrick, "The Promotion of Art in Toronto: 1830-1870" (Masters Thesis, University of Toronto, 1979), p. 16.
3. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 27.
4. Robert Gagen, Ontario Art Chronicle 1919, p. 27, in Dennis Reid, "Our Country Canada" (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1979), p. 220.
5. Gagen, p. 27, in Reid, p. 221.
6. Albert H. Robson, Canadian Landscape Painters (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1932), p. 47.
7. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 32.
8. Kathryn L. Kollar, "John Arthur Fraser (1838-1898)" (Masters Thesis, Concordia University, 1981), p. 42.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

10. Ontario Archives, MU 2252, Ontario Society of Artists papers.
11. Ontario Archives, MU 584, William Colgate papers, Spooner Correspondence.
12. Allan Pringle, "William Cornelius Van Horne: Art Director, Canadian Pacific Railway," The Journal of Canadian Art History No. 8 (Montreal, 1984), p. 50.
13. Reid, A Concise History of Canadian Painting, p. 85.
14. The Nation 25 June 1874, p. 155.
Canadian Monthly and National Review v.6 1874, p. 85.
15. Colgate, p. 22.
16. W. Stewart MacNutt, Days of Lorne (Fredericton, N.B.: Brunswick Press, 1955), p. 137.
17. Grip, 1879.
18. Masters, p. 57.
19. L. A. C. Panton, The O. S. A., p. 10, Ontario Archives, MU 2252, Ontario Society of Artists papers.
20. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 32.
21. Toronto British Colonist 9 May 1848, in Kirkpatrick, p. 21.
22. Toronto Globe 15 April 1848, in Kirkpatrick, p. 23.
23. Kirkpatrick, p. 5. This thesis deals extensively with the subject of early art organizations.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-29.
26. The Nation, II, 14 May 1875, p. 226, in Reid, "Our Own Country Canada", p. 260.
27. Paul Kane. The Man That Always Rides 1849-55. Oil on canvas, 46.4 x

61.9 cm. Royal Ontario Museum.

28. E. F. B. Johnston (1914), p. 605, in Macdonald, Dictionary of Canadian Artists, p. 1414.

29. John Ruskin, The Lamp of Beauty, p. 42. Notes on the Louvre 1849.

30. "It was impossible for me to shut out from my eyes the works of the great landscape painters which I had so recently seen in Europe, while I knew well enough that if I was to succeed I must produce something new which might claim to be inspired by my home surroundings. I was in despair." Whittredge quoted in American Paradise. The World of the Hudson River School, introduction by John Howat (New York: Metropolitan Museum, 1987), p. 180.

31. American Paradise, p. 180.

32. George Catlin, "North American Indians" N.Y. 1842, I, p. 15, in Marcia Kline, Beyond the Land Itself, (Harvard: 1970), p. 7.

CHAPTER III AMERICA: THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL

1. American Paradise "A Historiography of the Hudson River School", Kevin J. Avery p. 3. The group was not called the Hudson River School during its most productive years (1850-70). The name was first applied in print in 1879 and was widely used by 1890. After 1890 this title was often used disparagingly. Before the eighties the group was referred to as the "American", "native", and sometimes as the "New York" School.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

3. "National Academy of Design. Fourth Notice." New York Evening Post 22 June 1870, found in American Paradise, p. 73.

4. "Fine Arts. National Academy of Design." Putnam's Mag. n.s. 3, June 1869, found in American Paradise, p. 73.

5. Earl Shinn, under the pseudonym Edward Strahan, Art Amateur, first issue, 1 May 1879, found in American Paradise, p. 5.

6. Clarence Cook, 1883, quoted in American Paradise, p. 6.
7. Russel Lynes, The Art-Makers of Nineteenth Century America (New York: Athenaeum, 1970), p. 211.
8. American Paradise, p. 30.
9. Cole, "Essay on American Scenery" 1835, in American Paradise, p. 30.
10. American Paradise, p. 22. Governor Clinton's speech (1816) to the New York Academy of Fine Arts in which he praises both the American wilderness and the American cultural landscape.
11. Barbara Novak, American Painting of the Nineteenth Century: Realism, Idealism, and the American Experience (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 76.
12. Thomas Cole. Genesee Scenery 1847. Oil on canvas, 129.5 x 99.1 cm. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design.
13. Barbara Novak, Nature and Culture (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1980), pp. 47-48.
14. American Paradise, p. 111. The two lines "O'er the clear still water swells/The music of the Sabbath bells", from the poem "A Scene on the Banks of the Hudson" by William Cullen Bryant, accompanied the painting.
15. The Crayon I, 6 June 1855, found in American Paradise, p. 37.
16. Asher B. Durand. Kindred Spirits 1849. Oil on canvas, 116.8 x 91.4 cm. The New York Public Library, New York.
17. Picturesque Canada was a two-volume publication (1882-84) which described and illustrated various scenic and "picturesque" spots across Canada. O'Brien was hired by the American publishers of Picturesque Canada to serve as art editor. In this capacity he hired American artists to produce a large majority of the illustrations - 413 of approximately 520 - leading one to believe that he must have been acquainted with the American art scene before this venture was commenced.
18. C. S. Francis, Francis's New Guide to the Critics of New York and Brooklyn 1853, p. 79. "In concluding our notice, it may be added that visitors are generally welcome to the studios of the New York artists." Found in American

Paradise, p. 55.

19. O'Brien had been involved in the management of various family-owned ventures in Orillia - a general store and a schooner trading business among them. He seems to have been a settled citizen of Orillia - in 1859 he married Margaret St. John, a forty-year old widow, and he participated generally in local affairs, serving as a member (and later as president) of the municipal council, and as churchwarden of St. James Anglican Church.

See also O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 19.

20. Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion 24 Jan. 1852, found in O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 16.

21. Thompson, p. 264.

22. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 25.

23. Ibid., p. 33.

24. Ibid., p. 33.

25. Ibid., p. 38.

26. Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly and National Review. Vol.II Jan.-June 1879, pp. 584-591.

27. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 53.

28. Pringle, p. 54, p. 55. Van Horne, aware of the important role that American artists had had in the opening up of the American West, attempted, by means of his patronage of Canadian artists, to do the same for the Canadian frontier.

29. American Paradise, p. 21.

30. Brother Jonathon 5 (8 July 1843), in American Paradise, p. 57

31. American Paradise, p. 57.

32. The Knickerbocker 45 (April 1856), in American Paradise, p. 57.

33. John K. Howat, "A Climate for Landscape Painters," in American Paradise, pp. 49-70.

34. Allan Nevins, and Milto Halsey Thomas, eds., The Diary of George

Templeton Strong 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1952), v.2, p. 397, in American Paradise, p. 57.

35. American Paradise, p. 43.

36. S. G. W. Benjamin, Art in America (New York: Garland, 1976), p. 98.

37. C. S. Francis, in American Paradise, p. 55.

38. Karen Davison-Wood, "A Philistine Culture? Literature, Painting, and the Newspapers in late Victorian Toronto" (Concordia, 1982), p. 102.

39. "Art in Canada Today", Lake Magazine I (Aug. 1892), in "A Philistine Culture?", Davison-Wood, p. 162.

40. Toronto British Colonist 4 May 1847, in Kirkpatrick, p. 34.

41. Oswaldo Rodriguez Roque, "The Exaltation of American Landscape Painting" in American Paradise, p. 21.

"Unlike many of the great American literary Figures of the period (Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Herman Melville among them), who cultivated a degree of detachment and frequently adopted a critical stance in their writings, the Hudson River School painters seldom expressed feelings of alienation or fundamental dissatisfaction with American life."

42. "Asher Brown Durand", Harper's Weekly 30 (25 Sept. 1886), in American Paradise, p. 6.

43. Benjamin, p. 69.

44. American Paradise, p. 104.

45. As reprinted in "Pictures and Painters, the President of the Royal Canadian Academy Exhibiting in London", Witness (Montreal) 15 Aug. 1889, in O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 89.

46. "The Royal Canadian Academy", Evening Journal (Ottawa) 5 Feb. 1886, in O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 64.

47. Geo. Maclean Rose, ed., A Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography (Toronto: Rose Publishing, 1886), p. 551.

48. "Art in Canada. The Seventh Exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy", Globe 8 Feb. 1886, in O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 64 (n. 91).

49. Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly vol. 4 Jan-June 1880, p. 548.
50. David B. Lawall, Asher Brown Durand. His Art and Art Theory in Relation to His Time (New York: Garland, 1977), p. 21.
51. "The Fine Arts in Ontario," Canadian Monthly and National Review V.III Jan-June 1873, p. 545.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 546.
53. "Ontario Society of Artists," The Mail 27 May 1878, in O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 38.
54. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 45.
55. Robert Harris, "Art in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces," in Canada: An Encyclopedia of the Country vol.v, J. Castell Hopkins (Toronto: Linscott, 1897), p. 358.
56. Paul Duval, Canadian Water Colour Painting (Toronto: Burns and MacEachran, 1954), p. 7.
57. William Colgate, Toronto Art Students League: 1886-1904, Ontario Society of Artists papers (Toronto: Ontario Archives, MU 2252), 4th page (unnumbered pages).
58. "Ontario Society of Artists", Globe 29 May 1878, in O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 38.
59. The New York Evening Post 23 April 1847, in American Paradise, p. 36.
60. William Sidney Mount quoted in Painter of Rural America: William Sidney Mount 1807-1868, Alfred Frankenstein (Washington: H. K. Press, 1968), p. 21.
61. The Barberini Faun (Glyptothek, Munich), a marble statue of the second century B.C., was a well-known, even notorious, work in Mount's time. Carol Troyen (in A New World. Masterpieces of American Painting, 1760-1910, p.257) suggests that because the Barberini Faun was in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries associated with drunkenness, Mount's portrayal of the black man may not be as sympathetic as is normally assumed.
62. Several Hudson River artists followed Durand's example of making close-up studies of rock and forest interiors. David Johnson's (1827-1908) Forest Rocks of 1851 (American Paradise, p. 270), and Aaron Draper Shattuck's (1832-1928) The

Cascades, Pinkham Notch, Mount Washington of ca. 1859 (American Paradise, p. 310) can be cited as further examples of this type of study.

63. The most prominent members of the Association for the Advancement of Truth in Art were Thomas Charles Farrer (1839-1891), John Henry Hill (1839-1922), John William Hill (1812-1879), Charles Herbert Moore (1840-1930), Henry R. Newman (1843-1917) and William Trost Richards (1833-1905). The Association founded its own publication, The New Path, in order to promote and popularize its particular philosophy.

64. Linda Ferber and William Gerds, The New Path. Ruskin and the American Pre-Raphaelites (New York: Shocken Books, 1985), p. 41.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 255.

Lawall, p. 327. John Durand, the son of Arthur B. Durand, had written in 1887 that his father had made oil sketches out-of-doors at a very early stage in his career.

CHAPTER IV AMERICA: THE LUMINIST INFLUENCE

1. John I. H. Baur, Introduction in M. and M. Karolik Collection: American Paintings 1815-1865 (Boston, 1949).

2. For a complete bibliography of luminism, see John Wilmerding, ed., American Light. The Luminist Movement, 1850-1875 (Washington: Harper and Row, 1980).

3. *Ibid.*

4. Barbara Novak, American Painting of the Nineteenth Century: Realism, Idealism, and the American Experience, 2nd ed. (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 95.

5. American Light, p. 29.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 233.

7. Ibid., p. 213.
8. Elayne Genishi Garrett, "The British Sources of American Luminism" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 1982).
9. Ibid., Abstract, p. iii.
10. John Varley (1778-1842), John Sell Cotman (1782-1842), David Cox (1783-1859), Peter de Wint (1784-1849), A. V. C. Fielding (1787-1855), John Linnel (1799-1882), James Baker Pyne (1800-1870).
11. American Light, p. 25.
12. American Paradise, p. 15.
13. Ibid., p. 46.
14. Ibid., p. 14.
15. Ibid., p. 47.
16. American Light, p. 215.
17. Henry T. Tuckerman, Book of the Artists, 2nd. ed. 1870 (New York: James F. Carr, 1966), p. 514, in Garrett, p. 30.
18. Tuckerman, pp. 524-525, in Garrett, p. 30.
19. American Paradise, p. 19.
20. American Light, p. 218.
21. American Paradise, p. 163.
22. O'Brien did experiment with colouristic effects in an oil painting of 1877, Black Cape, Bay Chaleur [Fig.29]. For a discussion of this painting see pp. 89-90 of this thesis.
23. The strong linear quality of O'Brien's picture stems partly from his experience in drawing for illustration, and it refers as well to the influence of drawing manuals, which promoted a highly linear style - manuals which a self-taught artist like O'Brien would doubtless have used. For further discussion of art manuals refer to pp. 82-84 of this thesis.

24. The New Path, p. 40. Americans were familiar with both Ruskin's writings and the art of the Pre-Raphaelites in the late eighteen-forties. By the late eighteen-fifties they were common knowledge.

O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 15. Ruskin's principles had been well-known in Canada soon after the publication of his first volumes in the late eighteen-forties.

25. Martin Johnson Heade. Lake George 1862. Oil on canvas, 66 x 126.4 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts.

26. American Light, p. 28. Barbara Novak has suggested that certain paintings from as early as 1811, such as Washington Allston's Coast Scene on the Mediterranean, may be seen as clear forerunners of American luminism. She mentions in the same category William Sidney Mount's Eel Spearing at Setauket of 1845 and singles out Bingham's Fur Traders Descending the Missouri as an "especially . . . archetypical example of luminist structure."

27. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 35.

28. "The Exhibition of the Ontario Society of Artists," The Canadian Monthly and National Review v.3 Jan-June 1877, p. 682.

29. "The Beautiful in Art," The British-American Magazine v.1 July 1863, p. 275.

30. "The Fine Arts in Ontario," The Canadian Monthly v.3 Jan-June 1873, p. 545.

31. Fitz Hugh Lane. Norman's Woe 1862. Oil on canvas, 54.6 x 89.5 cm. Cape Ann Historical Association, Gloucester, Massachusetts.

32. Fitz Hugh Lane. Brace's Rock, Eastern Point 1864. Oil on canvas, 13.3 x 21.6 cm. The Lano Collection.

33. Martin Johnson Heade. The Stranded Boat 1863. Oil on canvas, 57.8 x 92.7 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

34. Sanford Robinson Gifford. Hook Mountain, Hudson 1866. Oil on canvas, 20.7 x 48.2 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut.

35. Garrett, p. 144.

36. For a full discussion of the subject, see Peter Marzio, The Art Crusade: An

Analysis of Museum Drawing Manuals, 1820-1860. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976), p. 3.

37. Ibid., p. 7.

38. American Light, p. 39.

39. Ibid., p. 40.

40. Marcia B. Kline, Beyond the Land Itself: Views of Nature in Canada and the United States (Harvard, 1970).

41. Ibid., p. 5.

42. Ibid., p. 59.

43. Northrop Frye, The Bush Garden (Toronto: Hunter Rose, 1971), p. 146.

44. Gaille McGregor, The Wacousta Syndrome. Explorations in the Canadian Landscape (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

45. Ibid., p. 18.

46. Frye, p. 124.

47. L. R. O'Brien. A Watering Place 1878. Watercolour on paper, 52.5 x 35.5 cm. Musée du Québec, Québec.

48. Garrett, p. 83.

49. American Paradise, p. 77.

50. Ibid., p. 77.

51. American Light, p. 86.

52. L. O. O'Brien. Natural Arches, near Dalhousie, N.B. 1877. Oil on canvas, 51.2 x 76.5 cm. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.

53. Russel Lynes, The Art-Makers of Nineteenth Century America (New York: Athenaeum, 1970), p. 217. Said after Kensett's death in 1872 at a memorial meeting of the Century Association in New York: "There is hardly a parlor, or a private or public gallery in our city, and I might say in our country, that does not contain one or more of the production of Mr. Kensett's hand."

54. Alfred T. Bricher. Morning at Grand Manan 1878. Oil on canvas, 63.5 x 127 cm. Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana.

55. Jean Sutherland Boggs, The National Gallery of Canada (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 2.

56. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p. 49. Bierstadt, who had throughout his career sought the company and patronage of prominent members of society, was a friend of Lord Lorne and Princess Louise. It is by way of this connection that he and O'Brien became acquainted.

CONCLUSION

1. Québec from Point Lévis 1881. Oil on canvas, 55.9 x 111.8 cm. Her Majesty the Queen.

View from the King's Bastion, Québec 1881. Oil on canvas, 91.4 x 61 cm. Her Majesty the Queen.

2. O'Brien Exhibition Catalogue, p.48.

3. See note 3, Chapter I.

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ILLUSTRATIONS



FIG. 1 Lucius R. O'Brien. Jury Retiring to Deliberate 1850
John Ross Robertson Collection, Metropolitan Toronto Library.



FIG. 2 William Sidney Mount. Farmers Nooning 1836
Oil on canvas, 50.8 x 60.9 cm. Suffolk Museum and Carriage House, Stony
Brook, New York.



FIG. 3 Lucius R. O'Brien. Under the Cliffs, Port Stanley 1873
Watercolour on paper, 49.5 x 74.5 cm. Norah Simmelhag Wishart,
Surrey, B.C.

FIG. 4
Lucius R. O'Brien.
Lords of the Forest 1874
Watercolour on paper,
74.3 x 49.9 cm.
Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.



FIG. 5
Worthington Whittredge
The Old Hunting Grounds c. 1864
Oil on canvas, 91.4 x 68.6 cm.
Reynolda House, Museum of American
Art, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.



FIG. 6 Thomas Cole. The Oxbow 1836
Oil on canvas, 130.8 x 193 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York City.

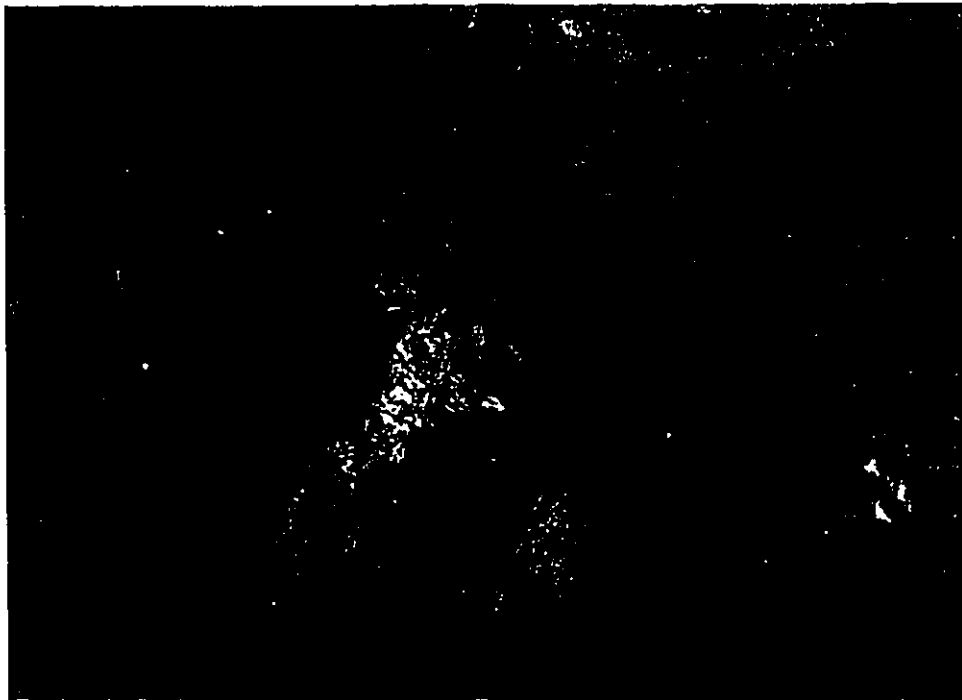


FIG. 7 Asher B. Durand. Interior of a Wood c. 1850
Oil on canvas, 43.2 x 61 cm. Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips
Academy, Andover, Massachusetts.



FIG. 8 Asher B. Durand. Early Morning at Cold Spring 1850
Oil on canvas, 152.4 x 121.9 cm. Montclair Art Museum, Montclair,
New Jersey.



FIG. 9 Asher B. Durand. Kaaterskill Clove 1866
Oil on canvas, 97.2 x 152.4 cm. The Century Association, New York City.



FIG. 10 Lucius R. O'Brien. A Glimpse of Glen Onoka 1876
Watercolour on paper, 27 x 37.5 cm. Art Gallery of Northumberland,
Cobourg, Ontario.

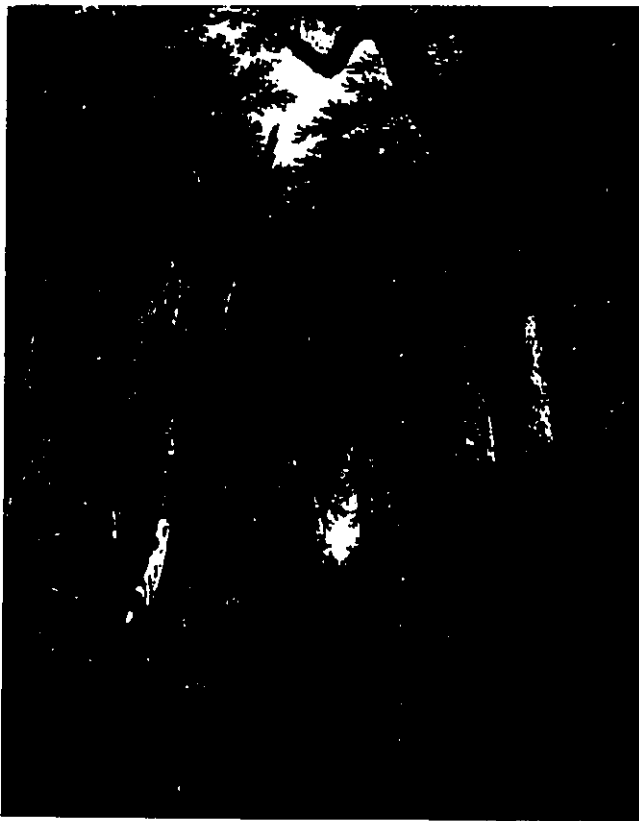


FIG. 11 Asher B. Durand. In the Woods 1855
Oil on canvas, 154.3 x 121.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York City.



FIG. 12 Peter de Wint. View near Matlock c. 1835
Watercolour on paper, 30.5 x 45.1 cm. Usher Art Gallery, Lincoln, England.



FIG. 13 Peter de Wint. On the Trent near Burton Joyce, Nottinghamshire
Watercolour on paper, 34.3 x 55.9 cm. Whitworth Art Gallery,
Manchester, England.



FIG. 14 John Frederick Kensett Bash-Bish Falls, South Egremont, Massachusetts 1855
Oil on canvas, 74.9 x 61 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



FIG. 15 John Frederick Kensett. Newport Coast c. 1850-60
Oil on canvas, 46.1 x 76.9 cm. Richard A. Manoogian.



FIG. 16 Martin Johnson Heade. Brazilian Forest 1864
Oil on canvas, 51 x 40.6 cm. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School
of Design.



FIG. 17 Martin Johnson Heade. The Stranded Boat 1863
Oil on canvas, 57.8 x 92.7 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



FIG. 18 Sanford Robinson Gifford. Kauterskill Clove 1862
Oil on canvas, 121.9 x 161.3 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York.



FIG. 19 Sanford Robinson Gifford. Hook Mountain, Hudson 1866
Oil on canvas, 20.7 x 48.2 cm. Yale University Art Gallery,
New Haven, Connecticut.



FIG. 20 Lucius R. O'Brien. Toronto, From the Marsh 1873
Watercolour on paper, 34.3 x 52 cm. Mrs. Isabel Grant,
Shanty Bay, Ontario.

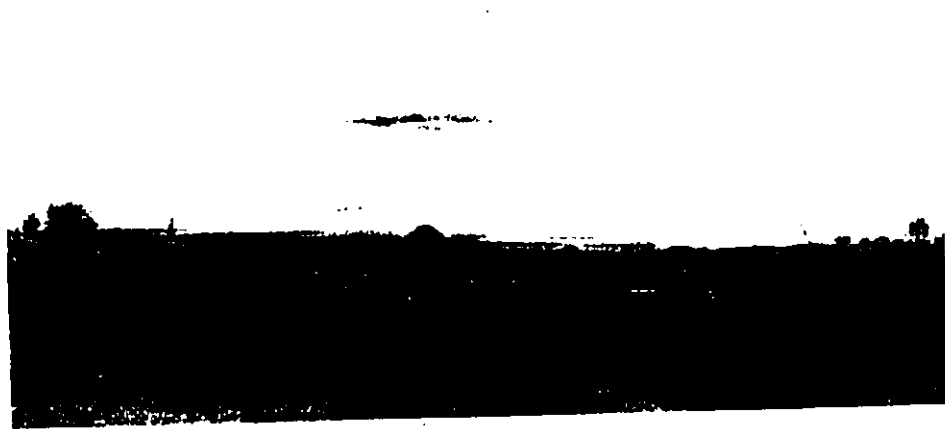


FIG. 21 Martin Johnson Heade. Duck Hunters in the Marshes 1866
Oil on canvas, 76.2 x 152.4 cm. Private Collection.



FIG. 22 Lucius R. O'Brien. Indian Summer; A Fishing Party of Rama Indians
Outside the Narrows of Lake Simcoe 1874
Watercolour on paper, 23.8 x 46.7 cm. Private Collection, Toronto.

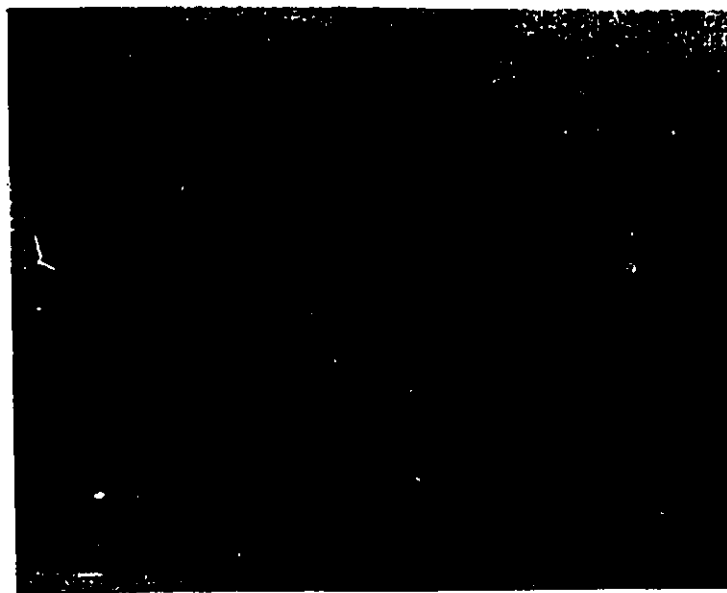


FIG. 23 George Caleb Bingham. Fur Traders Descending the Missouri 1845
Oil on canvas, 73.7 x 92.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York.



FIG. 24 Lucius R. O'Brien. The Whirlpool at the Chats 1877
Oil on canvas, 60 x 105 cm. The Weston Collection.



FIG. 25 Paul Kane. White Mud Portage 1856
Oil on canvas, 44.5 x 72.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



FIG. 26 Lucius R. O'Brien. Moonlight, Shanty Bay 1877
Oil on canvas, 25.5 x 40.8 cm. Mr. Murrough O'Brien, London, Ontario.



FIG. 27 Louis Remy Mignot. New York at the Entrance of the Hudson from Hoboken 1846
Graphite on cream wove paper, 10.6 x 26.4 cm. Private Collection.



FIG. 28 David Cox. "Calm. Hastings Fishing Boats"
Coloured soft-ground etching. From A Treatise on Landscape Painting and Effect in Water Colours, 1814.



FIG. 29 Lucius R. O'Brien. Black Cape, Bay Chaleur 1877
Oil on canvas, 51 x 76.5 cm. Emerich and Draha Kaspar, Toronto.



FIG. 30 John Frederick Kensett. Beach at Newport c. 1850-60
Oil on canvas, 55.8 x 86.4 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

FIG. 31
Thomas Creswick
"Fair Head, County Antrim."
Engraving from Heath's Picturesque
Annual for 1838: Ireland.

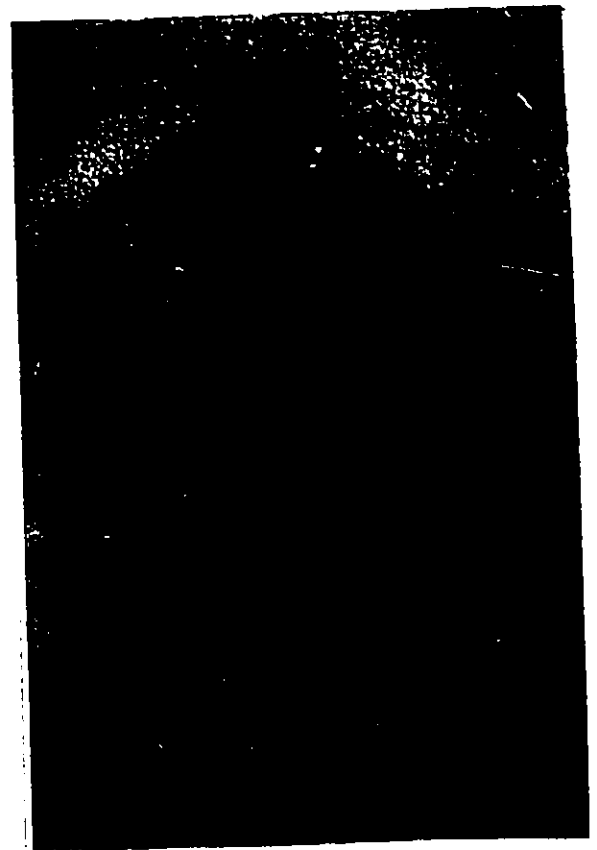


FIG. 32
Lucius R. O'Brien
Natural Ramparts at the
Ile-aux-Fleurs,
Lower St. Lawrence 1879
Watercolour on paper,
51.4 x 34.3 cm.
British Columbia Archives
and Records Service, Victoria.



FIG. 33 Lucius R. O'Brien. Northern Head of Grand Manan 1879
Oil on canvas, 60.2 x 121.9 cm. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.



FIG. 34 Lucius R. O'Brien. Sunrise on the Saguenay 1880
Oil on canvas, 87.6 x 125.7 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.